



The Yin Yang Balancing Act

by Shoshanna Katzman

According to Wikipedia, the metaphysical definition of balance is “a desirable point between two or more opposite forces which minimizes the negatives of both. “ When applied to Chinese medicine, this definition relates to the healthful state of being gained by balancing the complementary, yet opposing forces of yin and yang. Establishing the balance between yin and yang results in an abundant

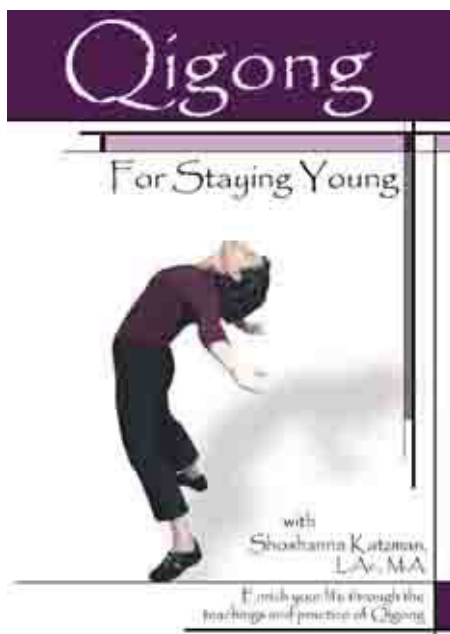
flow of life force, commonly known as qi (pronounced ‘chee’). Maintenance of flow over an extended period of time leads to vibrant energy, peaceful spirit, mental clarity, relationship success, and optimal function of the physical body. This happens by creating physical and energetic homeostasis, allowing for positive change and life enhancement to take place. Accordingly, establishing yin yang balance is one of the primary

goals of Chinese medicine treatments for health recovery and long life.

Yin and yang have to do with the relationship of opposites in both nature and the body, which are interdependent, and at the same time never fully separate from each other. The Yin Yang Theory also teaches that even with their individual nature and quality, these energetic forces balance each other to form a complete whole – whereby yin cannot exist without yang, and vice versa. In fact, there is always a little bit of yin within yang, and a little bit of yang within yin. The goal is to establish parity between these polar opposites, without one taking control over the other. Otherwise, energetic imbalance takes hold and qi flow becomes disrupted, eventually producing unwanted physical symptoms or disease.

At its most extreme, yin or yang become so excessive that it turns into its opposite. An example of this would be when an individual has coldness and yin deficiency to such an extreme degree that it turns into excessive heat, which is yang. This is traditionally called “empty heat” and manifests in some form of heat symptoms, such as feeling of heat in the chest, palms, and soles. Seeking help from a Chinese medicine practitioner for this and other conditions necessitates an analysis of an individual according to the principles of yin and yang. This information is then used to determine the best treatment approach in order to re-establish a balancing point for restoration of proper qi flow. Characteristics analyzed may begin with assessment of one’s behavior, whereby an individual who is more quiet and withdrawn is yin, and more extroverted and forthcoming is yang. Body type is another factor, whereby a person that has a thin and weak body is classified as yin, and a thick and robust body is more yang. Moreover, a pale complexion and tendency toward feeling cold is yin, whereby a bright red face accompanied by feeling uncomfortably hot a lot of the time is associated with yang.

The choice of Chinese medicine treatments includes one or a combination of the following: acupuncture, herbal medicine, food therapy, massage therapy, and lifestyle recommendations. Each treatment serves to re-balance the energetics of the specific organ systems exhibiting a preponderance of yin or yang, while rectifying qi and blood flow

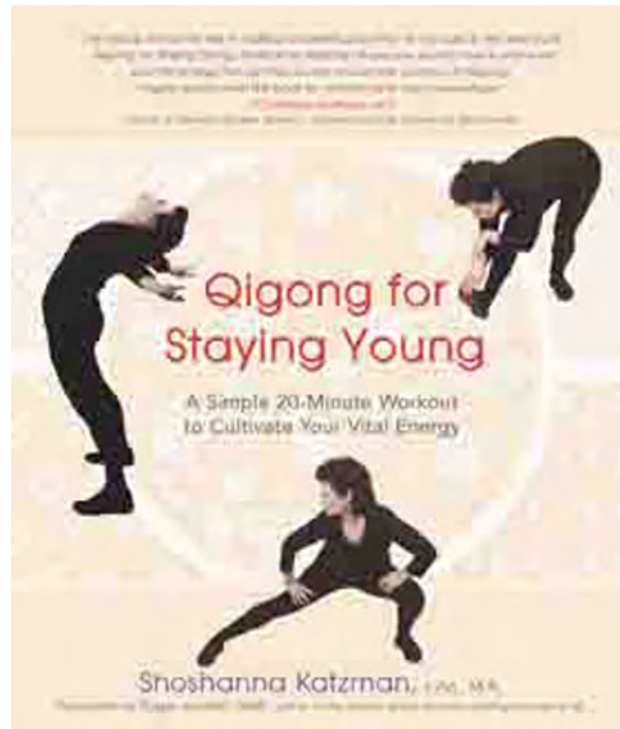


throughout the body. The Law of the Five Elements is also applied to address the organ system relationships and the emotional/spiritual aspects of an imbalance. The slow, gentle exercises of tai chi and qigong (pronounced 'chee-gung') are Chinese methods that an individual can practice to open qi flow and achieve energetic homeostasis, whereby every aspect of the body and each movement contains a yin and yang aspect. For example, the process of weight shifting during tai chi moves energy from empty (yin) to full (yang), and then back again. This becomes especially noticeable when hands and feet move in opposite directions, together with shift in weight from one foot to another. Repetitive yin yang balancing in this way leads to harmonious qi flow throughout the body - one of the most powerful and healing components of tai chi movement.

A profound sense of order and wholeness happens when energy flow and yin yang balance is restored through Chinese medicine healing methods. However, it is important to always remember that the forces of yin and yang are in constant flux, and balance gained can be quickly lost. Therefore,

it is essential to commit to creating and maintaining balance in life. In doing so, feelings of frustration and confusion are transformed into clarity of purpose and inner peace, while negativity is released and replaced with compassion and love for self and others.

Shoshanna Katzman, L.Ac., M.S., is the author of Qigong for Staying Young, co-author of Feeling Light and the director of the Red Bank Acupuncture & Wellness Center in Shrewsbury, NJ. For more information, visit www.healing4u.com.



Red Bank Acupuncture & Wellness Center

Balance Your Energy

Acupuncture • Chinese Herbs • Therapeutic Massage
Tai Chi & Qigong Lessons

Shoshanna Katzman, L.Ac., M.S., Director

Red Bank Acupuncture & Wellness Center is a caring group of individuals who are dedicated to helping you heal naturally

Enhance Your Health Today by Calling : **732-758-1800**

830 Broad St. Suite A, Shrewsbury, NJ 07702

www.healing4u.com

Gift Certificates Available