

# No Worries

by Shoshanna Katzman



Chinese medicine teaches us that the emotion of worry is associated with the Earth Element and directly impacts the energetics of its yin organ, the spleen. The spleen organ system is responsible for digesting thoughts and feelings (in addition to transformation and transportation of food). When the spleen is healthy and balanced, knowledge gained from processing information turns into wisdom used to navigate and move forward in life. Yet imbalanced spleen energy causes a person to get stuck in their thoughts and in their tracks. A prime example is when they can't stop worrying about something to the point of becoming anxious and unable to decide on what to do.

The emotion of worry is a form of extreme concentration stemming from intellectual stimulation, over-thinking, and excessive mental effort. It includes pensiveness (preoccupation and obsessive thinking) along with a tendency toward anxiety. When excessive, worry causes stagnation of qi which interferes with the spleen's ability to transform and transport food within the body – typically resulting in poor appetite, indigestion, bloating, and loose stool. Fatigue, lethargy, and difficulty concentrating ensues when excessive worry becomes chronic due to the knotting up of qi and even more stagnation.

Prolonged spleen deficiency results in accumulation of fluids and dampness which is known in Chinese medicine as “spleen dampness” – associated with abdominal distention and digestive disturbance. It further weakens the spleen and weighs a person down physically, mentally, and emotionally. Excessive spleen dampness further impairs capacity to focus and think clearly, leaving a person susceptible to more worry.

Chinese medicine dietary recommendations include consuming more warming foods and drinks as it helps strengthen spleen energy and allay spleen dampness. Chewing foods carefully and completely also helps as does being careful not to overeat. Be honest with

yourself about how much bandwidth you actually have. Then take responsibility and create healthy boundaries for yourself around these sorts of activities.

Acupuncturists have many point combinations to build and balance Qi (vital energy) of the spleen. Furthermore, practicing the ancient Chinese exercise of Tai Chi and Qigong helps with clearing, calming, and sharpening the mind.

## Qigong Exercise to Release Excessive Worry

Prepare: Sit up straight on a comfortable chair with your feet flat on the floor and palms resting on your lap. Look downward and rest your eyes as you center yourself.

Breathe through your nose with mouth closed and take a deep breath into your lower belly. Simultaneously concentrate your mind on your spleen below your ribs on the left front side of your body. Upon doing so, apply your mind to bathe your spleen in the color yellow.

Next, exhale through your nose with your mouth closed. Simultaneously, vocalize the sound “whooooo” and release excessive worry from your spleen, sending it downward into the earth.

Repeat 12-36 times.

Lastly, take a moment to sit quietly and reflect on your experience. Allow yourself to feel your feelings. You may sense a change in the way energy is flowing within your spleen system. And when you are ready, begin to move and stand up. Then brush yourself off to release any kinks and get on with the rest of your day.

Integrate this Qigong exercise into your daily meditation and exercise protocol.

Become more conscious about how you use your time and engage your mind. Know that establishing a strong mind body connection is essential for long-lasting health.

Shoshanna Katzman, L.Ac., M.S. has been director of Red Bank Acupuncture & Wellness Center ([www.healing4u.com](http://www.healing4u.com)) for 35 years in Shrewsbury, NJ providing acupuncture, Chinese herbal consultation along with Taiji and Qigong private and group classes. She is author of "Qigong for Staying Young: A Simple 20-Minute Workout to Cultivate Your Vital Energy", co-author of "Feeling Light: The Holistic Solution to Permanent Weight Loss and Wellness" and recently released "Center of Power: Life Mastery through Taiji" a comprehensive online curriculum ([www.yourcenterofpower.com](http://www.yourcenterofpower.com)). For more information call or text 732.758.1800.



"Life energy is truly the key to looking and feeling youthful at any age. In her new book, *Qigong for Staying Young*, Shoshanna Katzman shows you exactly how to enhance your life energy through the ancient and simple practice of Qigong. I highly recommend this book for women (and men) everywhere."  
 —Christiane Northrup, M.D.  
 author of *Woman's Eosios*, *Woman's Wisdom* and *The Wisdom of Menopause*

## Qigong for Staying Young

A Simple 20-Minute Workout to Cultivate Your Vital Energy

Shoshanna Katzman, L.Ac., M.A.  
 Foreword by Roger Jahnke, OMD, author of *The Healer Within* and *The Healing Promise of Qi*

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

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