

h three important sessions as static posture,

As I learn Qi Gong at the Qi Gong research Institute of Shanghai, I am surprised that in France, even teachers don't practice for themselves the standing posture or have in mind that they can't teach it to French people. It seems the same about meditation. In France, they speak about mindfulness, the concept is the same but the word is lighter and easier to use for the teachers and most of them open specific class about mindfulness but don't link them with qi gong practice. So in my ideas, it is difficult to understand. Even if teachers said they can't do it, I am convinced that this is a whole tool of qi gong and we will lose some important part of the practice and the benefits if we don't use the qi gong globally.

I observed three directions with interest: **Emotions, mind and health**. And I start to think about it and how we can better understand all the benefits we can have with a practice of Qi Gong included static, movement and meditation?

What about emotions ? It exists two pathways for the recognition of facial emotions as it has been suggested by researches¹. The first one is a subcortical pathway and the second one is a cortical pathway². Even today scientists are unsure how emotions work. How do the brain responses to it? That's why there is a variation of study on the subject. John Brebner did an experience³ in 2003, based on eight emotions: affection, anger, contentment, fear, guilty, joy, pride and sadness. Brebner wanted to see if there is a difference in emotions depending of the gender, by testing there frequency and intensity when they experience those emotions. Turns out women score higher for every emotion except pride were men have the higher score. One of the main differences Brebner found were women report generally more intense emotion and have more negative affect than men however they do obtain both in equal happiness⁴.

It has been discussed that **facial expression** is a key to interaction⁵. Goren and R. Wilson said it was possible to see a dangerous situation. From a "evolutionary perspective" the facial expression someone will do would alert others if they were a predator. However it has never been clear which part is the most important one to express emotions. An emotion is also seen as social information⁶. By finding how someone is feeling people interact differently. However individuals do it unconsciously⁷. For example when people have an

¹ De Granelle, Koulier, 2012; Rotshtein, Vuilleumier, Winston Driver, and Dolan, 2007

² Gao, X., & Maurer, D. (2011). A comparison of spatial frequency tuning for the recognition of facial identity and facial expressions in adults and children. *Vision Research*, 51(5), 5085-19. doi:10.1016/j.visres.2011.01.011

³ Brebner, J. (2003). Gender and emotions. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 34(3), 387-394. doi:10.1016/s0191-8869(02)00059-4

⁴ Fujita, F., Diener, E., & Sandvik, E. (1991). Gender differences in negative affect and wellbeing: The case for emotional intensity. *Journal Of Personality And Social Psychology*, 61(3), 427-434. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.61.3.427

⁵ Goren, D., & Wilson, H. R. (2006). Quantifying facial expression recognition across viewing conditions. *Vision Research*, 46(8-9), 1253-1262. doi:10.1016/j.visres.2005.10.028

⁶ Sweeny, T. D., Suzuki, S., Grabowecy, M., & Paller, K. A. (2013). Detecting and categorizing fleeting emotions in faces. *Emotion*, 13(1), 76-91. doi:10.1037/a002919

⁷ (Li, Zinbang, & Paller 2008; Murphay & Zajonc, 1993; Sweeny, Suzuki, Grabowecy, and Paller, 2009; Whalen et al., 1998

as rude or unhappy⁸. It is now our days a common
and a positive image and often seen as a sense of

warm hospitality. This means when two people are socializing they are continuously analysing the person face to know how they feel. It has been proven to recognize that a facial expression is a lot influenced by the body language⁹. Body expressions do not need any verbal's labels to accompany it because it's a universal. The **whole body** isn't a way of communication only for emotion but also for action attention.

Install a smile during Qi Gong Practice: In our practice of Qi gong, install a smile on our face is important during the practice. Even if the smile is not permanent, often, when you see the teachers practicing, you can observe that this smile is coming slowly by slowly by itself and stay more constantly on their face. We can understand with those studies about facial emotions why just a smile can bring in our brain a lot of differences about the management of our emotions and gives also to others some messages, without any word, but just by smiling, as perception of quiet and harmonious atmosphere, which can be propitious to install the state of qi gong in our mind and body, then develop the benefits of qi gong practice.

In fact, during the practice of qi gong, when the teacher is smiling, the smiles arrive on student's faces and when people are practicing in groups, it can probably send to others the hospitality, deep wellbeing and share with the group harmonious atmosphere, install a state of qi gong harmonious, joyful and peaceful. It could increase the benefits of qi gong.

Our mind, our stress, how does it work? A study was published on Science direct, in 2008: "the effect of mindfulness based stress reduction on immune function, quality of life and coping in women newly diagnosed with early stage breast cancer"¹⁰. Integrative approaches to promote wellness and reduce the distress associated with cancer are increasingly considered as essential components of cancer care. Mindfulness based stress reduction (MBSR) is a program that shows promise as an approach to not only manage the emotional distress that accompanies disease, such as cancer, but to also produce biological benefits that may promote health and contribute to cancer control. As **stress** is a vital phenomenon to adapt ourselves to stressful situations, to answer to it, the chronic stress can create a lot of problems for our health as insomnia, anxious, digestive problems, nervous breakdown, and cardiovascular disorders and so on... If we can act against external factors, we can influence on our perception of those factors and on our abilities to face those situations by meditating practice. The problem of **depression**¹¹ is its frequent relapse. More than one in two will relive a second depressive episode and this rate increases after each new episode. A person with a history of depression may reactivate often negative thoughts back loops

⁸ Park, Han and Hyun, 2015

⁹ Van den Stock, J., Righart, R., & de Gelder, B. (2007). Body expressions influence recognition of emotions in the face and voice. *Emotion*, 7(3), 487-494. doi:10.1037/15283542.7.3.487

¹⁰ Witek-Janusek, L., Albuquerque, K., Chroniak, K. R., Chroniak, C., Durazo-Arvizu, R., & Mathews, H. L. (2008). Effect of mindfulness based stress reduction on immune function, quality of life and coping in women newly diagnosed with early stage breast cancer. *Brain, Behavior, and Immunity*, 22(6), 969-981. doi:10.1016/j.bbi.2008.01.012

¹¹ Ramel W., Goldin P. R., Carmona P. E., McQuaid J. R., The effects of mindfulness meditation on cognitive processes and affect in patients with past depression, *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 28, 433-455, 2004

lessness or self-critical) if it feels even the slightest
matic and repetitive negative thought processes can

then trigger a relapse.

How meditation can promote health? MBSR, as developed and propagated by Jon Kabat-Zinn, stems from contemplative Eastern spiritual practices that use meditation to cultivate conscious awareness (i.e., mindfulness) of one's experience in a non-judgmental or accepting manner (Kabat-Zinn, 1990). In predominately noncontrolled studies of individuals with a variety of medical conditions, MBSR has been shown to assist individuals to more skillfully manage emotions and somatic reactivity to life stressors. Given that MBSR reduces psychological distress, it is possible that it may also reverse stress-associated immune dysregulation in cancer patients. Optimal immune function is important for cancer control, especially at times when tumor burden is removed by surgery and immune mechanisms become more essential in defending against any nascent tumor cells¹². The preponderance of evidence supports the importance of optimal immune function in individuals with cancer. Therefore, interventions that not only reduce psychological stress but also support immune function are advantageous to individuals with cancer. But it seems also important for everyone, in our world where stress is so present.

Meditation helps to increase a better view on our relation to those stressful situations and on our reactions. It can also help us to be familiar with our emotions, our thoughts, even if they are uncomfortable without running away, avoid them or amplify. More we meditate, more we are able to answer to stress without reacting to it automatically and unconsciously.

Why meditation can help us? A better understanding of ourselves, increasing awareness of the feelings of stress can grip the stress reaction before it, develops and turns it into a freely chosen answer. It is a way to be more free in front of our emotions by regularly meditation. Mindfulness via the MBCT program (Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy) raises awareness of this mode of mind. By focusing on the present moment, it induces a different way of being in relationship with thoughts, emotions and sensations. This practice allows to operate a shift from negative thoughts which are focused on the past or future anxiety and less identify with it. Back to present experiment gives the opportunity to act to live better and rediscover all those moments of happiness that can provide the daily.

Nei Gong or internal power: When you practice and learn a qigong exercise movement, there are both external movements and internal movements. These internal movements or flows in China are called *neigong* or "internal power". Internal neigong movements make qigong a superior health and wellness practice. Many physical problems are at least partially due to, or aggravated by, mental or emotional stress, so the importance of the inner tranquility developed through Qi Gong cannot be overestimated. The practice of qigong helps to manage the stress, anger, depression, morbid thoughts, and general confusion that prey on your mind when your qi is not regulated and balanced. Strengthening and balancing

¹² Avraham and Ben-Eliyahu, 2007; Lutgendorf et al., 2007

ability to detect subtle nuances and to perceive the
g levels of complexity¹³.

Benefits of nei gong practice: So it seems that the most important is to work with the internal power, the nei gong to have the best results and only movements are not enough powerful to conduct those results as soon as the qi gong practice can give to people who need more results than sports. The results of the cortisol concentration (stress hormone) and measurement of brain waves (alpha and beta) indicate a significant decrease for those who participated in a real session of Qi gong. Similarly, participants in the actual meeting, experience significantly more satisfaction, calm and relaxation.¹⁴ The benefits of qi gong practice included reduce rheumatism, pain, insomnia, nervous disease, increase muscle strength and flexibility, improve lower back pain, less painful premenstrual symptoms¹⁵, encourage blood circulation, reduce diabetic symptoms¹⁶ helps combating stress and depression¹⁷, better functioning of internal organs, helps with Diabetes, Heart Problem, Kidney problems, reduce high blood pressure, Improvement on mental attitude and power of perception as well as overall physical fitness, improvement on flexibility of joints, thus beneficial to people with Arthritis. Reduce the loss of Calcium thus improve bone density, thus beneficial to people suffer from Osteoporosis, the cardiovascular¹⁸ and respiratory functions are markedly improved, reduce Parkinson symptoms¹⁹. According to a study published by a scientific journal in 2007.²⁰ 12 clinical trials involving more than 1000 participants with hypertension, compared the only practice of Qi Gong with other practices: medication, muscle exercises, placebo effect, effects combined. The results indicate that regular practice of Qi Gong has positive effects on lowering blood pressure. It is known for its many health benefits and is a practical, effective and long-term fix for dealing with the stresses that modern living brings. A clinical trial was conducted in 2002, 86 men were involved in a heroin withdrawal treatment. Only participants of Qi gong subgroup experienced an efficient detoxification process and accelerated. The study reveals for the group, a reduced level of anxiety and withdrawal symptoms. For authors, the practice of gong is also has the advantage of not inducing side effects common in conventional

¹³ Strub L. et Tarquinio C., Une analyse des effets de la Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) du champ princeps de la dépression à une pluralité de troubles psychiques : une revue de la littérature. *L'évolution psychiatrique*, 77 (4), 469-490, 2012

¹⁴ Lee MS, Rim YH, Kang CW. Effects of external qi-therapy on emotions, electroencephalograms, and plasma cortisol. *Int J Neurosci*. 2004;114(11):1493-502.

¹⁵ Jang HS, Lee MS. Effects of qi therapy (external qigong) on premenstrual syndrome: a randomized placebocontrolled study. *J Altern Complement Med*. 2004;10(3):456-62.

¹⁶ Liu X, Miller YD, et al. A preliminary study of the effects of Tai Chi and Qigong medical exercises on indicators of metabolic syndrome, glycaemic control, health-related quality of life, and psychological health in adults with elevated blood glucose. *Br J Sports Med* 2010;44(10):704

¹⁷ Lee MS, Jang JW, et al. Effects of Qi-therapy on blood pressure, pain and psychological symptoms in the elderly: a randomized controlled pilot trial. *Complement Ther Med*. 2003;11(3):159-64.

¹⁸ Hui PN, Wan M, et al. An evaluation of two behavioral rehabilitation programs, qigong versus progressive relaxation, in improving the quality of life in cardiac patients. *J Altern Complement Med*. 2006;12(4):373-8.

¹⁹ Schmitz---Hubsch T, PyferD, et al. Qigong exercise for the symptoms of Parkinson's disease: a randomized controlled pilot study. *Mov Disord*. 2006;21(4):543---8.

²⁰ Lee MS, Pittler MH, et al. Qigong for hypertension: a systematic review of randomized clinical trials. *J Hypertens*. 2007;25(8):1525-32.

the advantage of not inducing side effects, frequent practice of Qi Gong has influences on the production of various immune cells such as monocytes, lymphocytes, natural killer cells (NK cells) and neutrophils in particular.²²

Qi Gong practice with meditation, static and movement, a holistic method: Qigong represents a total system of energy work and personal development system. Qigong practices are all necessary to maintain high-level health and increase overall awareness. This set of exercises can also serve as warm-up exercises for internal martial artists and energetic healers. Qigong can be practiced by individuals who only want to become physically healthy and do not care about psychological or spiritual matters. For generations, qigong has been used by martial artists, many of whom remained unconcerned with spiritual development. Nonetheless, all Taoist spiritual practice begins with qigong practice, no matter what level of attainment one wishes to finally achieve. The internal movements also differentiate qigong from almost every other form of exercise in the West that often emphasizes prolonged cardiovascular movements (such as in running and biking) or that focus on muscular strength training (weight lifting). These will give the average person at least as much internal benefit as they would most likely obtain from the practice of qi gong with the vast majority of the tai chi or qi gong teachers in the West, as most teachers either do not know or do not share information regarding the internal energy work of Qi Gong. This is not a mysterious process, but a natural one that can be acquired with time and effort.

In the West, most systems of tai chi or other internal martial arts are taught from the viewpoint of movement, with principles such as softness, relaxation, and body alignment thrown in. However, most of the internal components of tai chi that bring about health are commonly overlooked. Whether this lack of information is due to the reticence of teachers or the language and cultural barriers between China and the West, a large vacuum of knowledge does exist for Westerners. As we have seen, meditation is a basic of integrative method, we should practice regularly.

In France, the first health qi gong conference in 4th june 2016, was organized by Medicine faculty Pierre and Marie Curie and Qimateo, school of Qi Gong in Paris at the Hospital La Pitié-Salpêtrière. This was the first time that university integrates course of qi gong in University Diploma of Mind-Body Practices in Traditional Chinese Medicine in France (Duprac : Diplôme Universitaire des Pratiques Corps-Esprit en Médecine Traditionnelle Chinoise) included Mind and body practice and also a program with Qi gong/Dao yin, meditation, tai chi, Tuina/massage and auto massage. It is a very big change in France ! Insurances start to work on reimburse qi gong class because the social system realizes that qi gong can help to reduce the medical expenses. There was interesting conferences by doctors

²¹Li M, Chen K, Mo Z. Use of qigong therapy in the detoxification of heroin addicts. *Altern Ther Health Med.* 2002;8(1):50---4, 56---9

²² Ryu H, Lee MS, et al. Modulation of neuroendocrinological function by psychosomatic training: acute effect of ChunDoSunBup Qi-training on growth hormone, insulin-like growth factor (IGF)-I, and insulin-like growth factor binding protein (IGFBP)-3 in men. *Psychoneuroendocrinology.* 2000 Jul;25(5):439-51. RYU H, Jun CD et al. Effect of qigong training on proportions of T lymphocyte subsets in human peripheral blood. *Am J Chin Med.* 1995;23(1):2736.



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and explained the benefits that Qi Gong can have on

A new way: Hope that this kind of conference, integration in university a program of body and mind training with practice can help teachers of qi gong to better understand the interest of all those qi gong practices and learn more about them to be able to teach and share with others Meditation, static posture and movements' exercises of qi gong as a whole complete tool. As the university UPMC wrote the overall goal is learning to personal practice and acquire experience for training and information to patients, particularly in the context of chronic diseases. Recently a way is opening in France, a way of Qi Gong, a new way between China and France, a new way between medicine and public or patients, a hope for a lot of people needed help for their health or their daily life. Qigong can support this way, for sure and on the way there is static posture, meditation and movements of health qi gong.

As people are not the same, have not the same body, it is important to work with all the tools of qi gong as meditation, movements and static posture indeed we can loose the opportunity of the best tool appropriated for them. Missing one of them, is taking the risk that the people don't find the help they need with our qigong class. With those three types of exercises, we are sure to teach them the best experience they can have with qi gong. Then, you are on the way... Let it be natural, qi gong's alchemy will do the work for us !