



# Tips & Key Points For Qi Gong Practice

## Qi sensations and phenomena

Qi Gong (pronounced Chi Kung) teaches how to understand and control the body's energy field. In order to improve and be successful in your practice it is important to learn the correct method of Qi Gong for your individual situation. It is therefore necessary to understand the various phenomena experienced during Qi Gong practice in order to monitor progress and recognize and correct deviations (Incorrect Qi flow). One of the first and most important tips is to *avoid anticipation of results*. Just relax and have no expectations. A tranquil mind state is one of the roots of Qi Gong.

Advance understanding on what to expect during Qi Gong practice may help avoid any confusion and assist in preventing your mind from wandering. Regular practice will result in many different sensations in the body and sometimes mental phenomena, which are completely natural and spontaneous. Most sensations are very common and experienced by many people; these are usually a result of posture, breathing, timing, and Qi Gong method. Similar sensations are sometimes felt during Qi Gong or acupuncture treatment. Some sensations can be an indication of Qi that is not flowing correctly, it is important to note these sensations and use the correct method to remedy them. For example, shallow, rapid breathing may cause dizziness – relaxing and making the breath regular will quickly help rebalance the problem.

### **Common Qi Gong sensations.**

• Warmth and tingling especially in the hands. •Wriggling and crawling. •Itching. •Magnetic. •Cold. •Shaking. •Heaviness • Lightness. •Swollen feeling. •Full feeling

### **Subtle sensations.**

•**Awareness of Qi movement in lower abdomen.** Qi circulating through the lower Dan Tian may be felt and Qi will begin to circulate through the body increasing heat .

•**Feeling of physical lightness.** This stage is reached when the body is profoundly relaxed, the breathing very slow and regular and the mind extremely calm and peaceful.

•**Sensation of emptiness or brightness.** When this happens the mind and body have reached a much higher state of relaxation. The physical body seems to disappear and the mind and Qi mix with the surrounding Qi. Attempting to focus upon or control this state usually causes it to cease or disappear.

**Below are listed some tips and key points on common Qi Gong experiences:**

• **Cannot concentrate, relax or keep falling asleep.** This is very common in beginners and is a stage that must be *patiently* trained through.

• **Feel cold.** The slow, regular, deep breathing of Qi Gong makes the body more Yin, it slows the pulse rate and the body temperature naturally drops. It may also occur as part of the body's Qi rebalancing.

• **Numbness and aches.** Commonly experienced in beginners to standing and sitting methods. Correct posture, method and training will usually correct this problem. Start with short but regular practice sessions, gradually increasing the length of practice. In cases of acute pain, close off practice and massage the area.

• **Heat in the body.** As the body and mind become still the Qi circulation increases. This will naturally increase body heat and may induce sweating. As the body's pores are open it is important to ensure you are dressed warmly.

• **Headache.** Usually caused through incorrect breathing. It is important to keep the breath quiet, smooth and regular. Headaches can also occur through forceful guiding of Qi – keep the mind relaxed and remain patient.

• **Shaking and trembling.** This spontaneous movement can be a sign of the body rebalancing itself and generally can be considered a positive sign of progress as the body is now relaxed enough to allow spontaneous Qi redistribution. However it can also be a sign of tension which will prevent the Qi flowing smoothly. You must therefore first learn to correctly relax the mind and body. It is important to not try to

encourage shaking or trembling (including rocking) as this may damage the Qi flow and also indicates the loss of concentration.

• **Fright.** This sometimes occurs in beginners as Qi Gong sensations may be quite strong and come as a surprise. The nervous system is making rapid adjustments to the Qi Gong exercises and this may cause nervousness or discomfort. It is necessary to avoid fear as the mind can then continue to generate further distracting phenomena. If this occurs during deep Qi Gong meditation this can cause you discomfort and perhaps illness. This is why it is vital to learn to control your emotions and maintain mental calm and tranquility during Qi Gong practice, allowing no extreme reactions to positive or negative experiences. If fear occurs due to physical Qi sensations, remain calm and lead the mind and Qi down the lower abdomen and use the closing method. With the correct method and patience the emotions can be calmed and regular.

## Qi Gong problems and their corrections.

### **Potential causes.**

•**Incorrect method.** It is important to use the right method for *you*. For example, someone who is very stressed, suffers headaches, feels hot and is quick to anger would not improve using strong, Yang Qi Gong methods.

•**Lack of patience.** It is important to be patient and to practice regularly in order to maintain confidence and motivation and to get results.

•**Expectation of results.** The key for successful practice is a quiet mind, looking or hoping for (or worrying about) Qi Gong results and sensations is not having a quiet mind. This point cannot be stressed enough.

•**Body and mind are tense.** Any muscular tension will block Qi circulation. Excessive emotions will damage your Qi. It is important to relax the body, quiet the mind and regulate the breath *before* commencing Qi Gong.

•**Relying too strongly upon visualization and imagination.** Remember that Qi Gong is *the science of working with the body's energy system*. In the beginning, the purpose of basic visualization techniques is to focus the mind during certain Qi Gong exercises. Like training wheels on a child's bike, they are to be removed as soon as control is gained. Encouraging or looking for visualizations causes many problems including the inability to recognize genuine phenomena when it spontaneously occurs and is one of the major causes of fear. It is important not to attempt to mix religious or superstitious beliefs with your practice.

•**External interference.** Sudden shock during meditation such as phones ringing, loud noises etc are to be avoided to prevent damaged Qi flow due to shock. It is also important not to be exposed to cold drafts, strong wind, intense heat, strong sun and damp conditions. The body and mind are open like a filter during Qi Gong practice and your external environment must be considered.

### Some Qi Gong corrections.

- **Headache.** It is important to regulate the breath *without trying too hard*. Forceful control of the breath and mind can cause Qi to stagnate. If the headache is acute, sit or lie down, hands on the lower abdomen, and simply regulate the breath by allowing it to slow down *naturally*.
- **Stagnant Qi between the eyebrows.** Use the closing method and Qi Gong self massage techniques.
- **Abdomen feels uncomfortable.** Usually caused through forceful use of the abdominal muscles. Remember, if the muscles are tense, Qi flow is hindered. Use both palms to rub the abdomen in slow circles with gentle pressure. Breathe with no effort in order to relax the muscles.
- **Soreness in the back or arms during practice.** Incorrect posture is usually the first cause of pain, the second is muscular tension. As Qi flow is improved and stagnation removed, aches will disappear. Remember where the mind goes the Qi flows. Focussing upon areas of pain will simply increase the

stagnation, lead Qi instead to the palms or use the closing method. With practice, Qi flow will be improved and pain will not be experienced. If back pain is intense try sitting methods until Qi flow has been improved and gradually introduce the standing method.

If the body is thought of as a car that the mind is driving, Qi Gong methods turn the body into a sports car. If you do not fully understand how to control your Qi, this can be like driving without knowing how to steer. It is important to first regulate the body and mind before trying advanced Qi Gong methods. For this reason it is necessary to spend a considerable amount of time learning physical relaxation techniques, posture control, breathing techniques and mental training before attempting advanced Qi circulation, absorption and emission.

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