



Philip Lai Qi Gong Association

July Newsletter 2020

My dear Qi Gong friends:

I will share with you the thoughts on treating chronic pain by my colleague and student Vera Stern at a Qi Gong conference in Oct. 2016.

After three years of intense Qi Gong study, Vera healed from 14 years of chronic pain from Fibromyalgia.

Look around you. Do you see it? There is an elephant in the room. It is called Chronic Pain.

We all know it, but we share the knowledge only with the doctor who diligently writes a prescription and we hang our hope on this.

The fact is that there is no cure for chronic pain.

There is however, healing.

Healing is a journey through a mental and physical nebula (to borrow a word from Star Trek's Voyager). Our destination is living a life free of chronic pain and medication.

To get there we need to first believe that one day we will. Then we take the first step followed by many more. On the way we need to be courageous, compassionate, disciplined visionaries. Like every journey with a destination, intense dedication is the hallmark.

Most success stories will involve a combination of mental and physical energies.

In his recent book "The Brain's Way of Healing" Dr. Norman Doidge describes the relationship between our senses and the brain: "all our senses take energy from outside and translate it into another form of energy inside the brain".

The brain has plasticity (ability to change) and with the help of mind and body, will realize its potential. That is our destination!

The path that will take us there is paved with millennia of experience.

The masters who dedicated their life to observing, learning and practising the Qi Gong arts of healing have passed on to us a meaningful treasure.

We learn through our bodies that change is motion. Tai Chi and Qi Gong are change in motion which slowly, through daily persistence and personal commitment, change a philosophy of life into living spirit. Through various techniques of breathing, moving and visualization we improve every system in the body. We can level out the blood pressure, release tensions in nerves and muscles, achieve

flexibility, get a stronger more resilient body, clear our mind activating the Alpha waves, balance our emotions achieving a peaceful, harmonious state of being.

Less than six years ago, when I started working with Qi Gong master Teresa Yeung, she said to me one day: "you hold on to pain; you must drop it".

I frowned and thought "how does one do that?"

Then I read about the latest research of Dr. Doidge on how the brain heals itself: "neurons that fire together, wire together". The fight for brain territory is competitive. When a brain area is processing pain, it uses about 5% of neurons in that area, but in chronic pain there is reinforcement of almost 20%. By concentrating on an image of the brain which changed from being lit up by pain activity to being calm and pain free, the patient can quiet the pain receptors.

I finally put together Master Teresa's observation and the latest brain research on pain processing and realized this is exactly what I have been doing during Qi Gong breathing meditation exercises.

It has taken China thousands of years to build a system of exercises that connect mind and body. Our conscious attention is far more limited than the complex moving mechanism of our body.

Through repetition, what begins as an external exercise becomes more and more a source of inner strength and a natural part of everyday. Paradoxically, it leads to freedom: for the duration of practice, mind and body become one.

The latest research has revealed that every thought has a physical aspect. The brain sends messages that are very real. The mental part of Qi Gong breathing exercises has a clear physical message. We need to focus our minds on the specific message and shut out the doubts.

To quote Don Juan:

'...the crux of sorcery is the internal dialogue.. when a warrior learns to stop it, everything becomes possible...".

Vera's testimonial - <https://youtu.be/dKCOBWMrwJc>

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