



Philip Lai Qi Gong Association

## October Newsletter 2020

My dear Qi Gong friends:

**Stress.** We are now in the start of the eighth month of the pandemic which has shaken the world and taken 1 million lives so far. Everyone is affected even if they haven't been personally touched by the virus. We miss close in-person contact with friends and family. We miss not being able to attend places of worship, entertainment venues and recreational centres. We worry about how our livelihoods will be affected if the shutdown continues. We worry about the safety of our children going to school. We worry about ever being able to visit elderly relatives in care homes. Our reaction to these situations which we cannot control causes stress and anxiety.

The brain interprets the changes in your environment and body and at some point turns on the stress response (fight or flight). The point at which the brain triggers the "alarm bell" varies from person to person. Some people seem to be islands of calm while others around them panic at the slightest disruption.

**Dangers of Chronic Stress.** Unrelieved chronic stress can lead to high blood pressure, headaches, ulcers and intestinal disorders. The hormonal system can be disrupted leading to conditions such as diabetes, menstrual difficulties and mood swings. The immune system can be depressed leading to higher susceptibility to disease.

**Exercises to Relieve Stress.** We may not be able to control all the external stressors in our life but we can control how we breathe. One of the easiest and most effective ways to relieve the symptoms of stress is to pay attention to your breathing. Focus on your diaphragm as you inhale and feel it move down as it draws air deep into your lungs. Allow your belly to expand as you do so. Try to make your breathing deep and slow. Just a few minutes of diaphragmatic breathing will bring a relaxation response. Try this twice a day for 10 or 20 minutes. This is especially effective if done immediately before bed.

Exercises like sighing deeply as you release the air from your lungs or yawning and practicing exercises

such as Qi Gong stretching and Qi Gong for Hormones can also relieve stress.

**Qi Gong Exercises to Relieve Excess Emotions Related to Stress.** Fear and anger are emotions which are often related to stressful situations. These emotions can damage the kidneys and liver if they persist over a period of time.

Concentrate on the kidneys and inhale the feeling of wisdom into the kidneys. Exhale and expel the feeling of fear. Repeat several times.

Concentrate on the liver and inhale the feeling of kindness into the liver. Exhale and release anger from the liver. Repeat several times.

**Qi Gong Trains the Mind to Reduce Stress.** If your mind is constantly recycling many negative thoughts, you will be unable to relax. Practicing Qi Gong regularly will allow your mind to replace "1000 thoughts with one thought" as you progress through each movement. You will notice your heart beat slowing, your breath becoming deeper and more even and feel the waves of calm wash over you. You can train yourself to do this anytime you feel anxious or unsettled. You can be in control of your emotions and have a more positive outlook on the world no matter what happens.

We will offer online workshops and on-going practice to help you to manage your Stress, control your emotion and improve wellness. For details, please contact me by:

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Thanks,

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