

**Qi Gong Workshop**  
**Zi Ran Men Kung Fu Academy, St Kilda**  
**February 2007**

**A Brief Introduction to Health Qigong**

As an important component of Chinese culture with a long history, Health Qigong is a traditional Chinese national sports event whose main form is the combination of the postures of the body, control of breath, and regulation of mentality.

Qigong is time-honored. Archaeological findings show the colored portraits of practicing Qigong on the colored gallipots in the period of Majiayao Culture (about 5,000 years ago), which were excavated in Qinghai Province of China. In the ancient Chinese classic *Shangshu* written in the Han Dynasty (206 B.C- 220 A.D.), there were literal records on Qigong. In the cultural relics from the old tomb Ma Wang Dui in the Western Han Dynasty (206-24 B.C.), excavated in Changsha, Hunan Province, there were many descriptions on Qigong. For thousands of years, Qigong has been immensely popular with people, especially those in middle or elderly ages, playing an active role in helping them dispel diseases, promote health, and prolong their lives.

At the beginning of the new century, Chinese Health Qigong Association developed Four Health Qigong Exercises on the base of excellent traditional Qigong, including Health Qigong·*Yi Jin Jing* (tendon-changing classic), Health Qigong·*Wu Qin Xi* (frolics of five animals), Health Qigong·*Liu Zi Jue* (the art of expiration in producing six different sounds), Health Qigong·*Ba Duan Jin* (eight excellent movements), to fit the people's needs of promoting their health and bodybuilding, and to develop traditional Chinese national culture further.

During the process of developing Four Health Qigong Exercises, we followed methods of scientific research strictly, and took Traditional Chinese Medicine, Modern Medicine, Psychology, Athletic Science and other related subjects as a guide, and performed certain primary experiments. Four Health Qigong Exercises, the precious result of the experts in various fields, in which their wisdom and labor are agglomerated, have selected the essences from the

related Qigong in various schools, inherited and developed traditional Chinese national culture. They are popular in the experiments for their characteristics of abundant contents, elegant postures, remarkable effects, and the movements that are easy to learn.

## **Health Qigong · *Yi Jin Jing***

*Yi Jin Jing* is a method of health-building exercise that comes down from ancient China, and its purpose is to strengthen the muscles and tendons. By the textual research, *Yi Jin Jing* germinated from regimens in the Qin(221 B.C.-A.D.) and Han ( B.C.- 220 A.D.)Dynasties. Legend goes that the monk Bodhidharma, the founder of Zen in China, advanced *Yi Jin Jing*. And then the monks in Shaolin Temple developed it and used it for health promotion. In the Tang (618-907) and Song (-1279)Dynasties, *Yi Jin Jing* developed greatly. It began to spread out of the temple from the Ming Dynasty (1368-1664). *Yi Jin Jing* has been greatly influencing the traditional Chinese national sports.

Health Qigong·*Yi Jin Jing* embodies the essence of traditional *Yi Jin Jing* 12 forms. It has been developed, simplified and standardized on the modern theory and methods of health science, so as to be a smooth and coherent set of movements. Hence it is of more remarkable characteristics in health promotion.

When practicing Health Qigong·*Yi Jin Jing*, what should be emphasized is the movements of turning, bending and extending, pulling and drawing of the muscles, bones and joints, especially those of turning, bending and extending of the spine. These actions, characterized by elegant, natural and smooth movements, being in good taste, and coupling hardness with softness, benefit regulating and controlling the function of the spine. The flexible postures, the point kept in the mind, and the frequency of breathing fit the needs of people of any ages and in different health conditions.

The result of the scientific study shows that Health Qigong·*Yi Jin Jing* can improve the functions of the cardiovascular, respiratory and digestive systems, raise the balancing ability, and better the flexibility and force of the muscles,

improve the mood, lessen the anxiety and depression. Also, it plays an active role in healing some common diseases in the middle-aged and elderly people.

## **Health Qigong·*Wu Qin Xi***

Wu Qin Xi (Frolics of Five Animals) was developed by Hua Tuo, the most famous doctor in the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220). It imitates the actions of animals based on the habits of the tiger, deer, bear, monkey and bird, and combines *Tu Na* (the art of expiration and inspiration) and *Dao Yin* (The movements of the limbs in Qigong) with the theories of Viscera, Channels and Collaterals, *Qi* and Blood in Traditional Chinese Medicine.

Health Qigong·Wu Qin Xi embodies the essence of the traditional Wu Qin Xi, and combines the designed actions with the Aesthetics of the body and Modern Athletic Science. It presents the scientific concept and the character of the modern time sufficiently, and accords with the traditional principles of regulating the body, breath and mind in Qigong. As a result, it fits the needs of people to promote their health.

The movements of Health Qigong·Wu Qin Xi are not restricted in the imitation of the behaviors of the animals, but try to present the spirit of the “five animals”. It simulates the power of the tiger, the ease and comfort of the deer, the steadiness and calmness of the bear, the dexterity of the monkey, and the agility of the bird. The movements are gentle and unfold, harmonious and symmetrical, and its extent of physical exercise is suitable for most people.

The result of the scientific study shows that Health Qigong·Wu Qin Xi exerts an active influence on the people’s physiological functions, physical nature and state of mind. Moreover, after a period of practice, the functions of the cardiovascular and respiratory system are enhanced; agility of the joints improved; and the vigor and grip power strengthened; psychological condition and self-confidence are built up.

## **Health Qigong·*Liu Zi Jue***

*Liu Zi Jue* (the art of expiration in producing six different sounds) is a traditional exercise of health promotion. It is practiced through the art of expiration. *Liu Zi Jue* is of a long history and has been spread widely. There existed the records of *Liu Zi Jue* in the Southern and Northern Dynasties (420-589). During the process of its spread, the masters of medicine and regimen in various generations replenished and improved it in different aspects.

Based on the traditional *Liu Zi Jue*, by the related modern scientific theories and methods, the order of the six characters, the pronunciation and the degree of lip-rounding have been regulated and standardized to make it more scientific and reasonable.

The six characters in the Health Qigong·*Liu Zi Jue* form a whole entity, and each of them is independent as well, and may be practiced separately. In respiration, pronunciation practice is being taken up with simple actions of Qigong. The respiration and actions can supplement and complement each other.

Scientific studies show that in general, the survival quality of the exercisers has been remarkably improved compared with that before they practice *Liu Zi Jue*. There is a trend of improvement in physical and psychological states, and in the human relations. Their family members live in harmony. Furthermore, the investigation about the healing of sick people shows that Health Qigong·*Liu Zi Jue* is helpful to middle-aged and elderly people who suffer from certain chronic diseases.

## **Health Qigong·*Ba Duan Jin***

*Ba Duan Jin* (eight excellent movements) emerged before the Song dynasty (960-1279), and gradually developed to a perfect degree during the periods of the Ming(1368-) and Qing dynasties (-1911). Being a traditional health-promoting exercise jointly developed by the masters of the regimen and practitioners in the past dynasties, *Ba Duan Jin*, the treasure of the Chinese regimen culture is popular with the broad mass, for its movements are simple and easy to learn, and bring about good results in health-building.

Health Qigong·*Ba Duan Jin* embodies the essences of different schools, and preserves the formed movements and style in the main. On the bases of the Modern Athletic Science and physiology, the order of the movements has been changed and the amount of physical exercise regulated reasonably, so as to make it more suitable, effective and standardized.

The characteristics of movements of Health Qigong·*Ba Duan Jin* are gentle, slow, smooth and coherent, unfold and elegant; and it couples tension with relaxation, activeness with quietness. *Ba Duan Jin* leads to good health by harmonious conjugation of mind, breath and movements.

Scientific studies show that Health qigong·*Ba Duan Jin* can enhance the functions of the respiratory, nervous and cardiovascular systems, build up the cellular immune function and the ability to resist senility, adjust the psychological state, strengthen the limbs and joints, and improve the equilibrium of the body.