

Session 7: How to nourishing life: From perspective of Qi nourishment 养气

- HPPH 5015=6015
- Week 3
- 10am -1pm
- Tuesday 20th April 2021
- Face to face teaching at Arts 5

Qi, Qi Channels and health

- Life= Jing + Qi + Shen
- Qi is the most important one because of its connection with both material Jing and spiritual Shen
- Healthy Qi is the harmony of Yin and Yang
- Yin and Yang and Five Phases and Internal Organ Systems, and Meridians (Qi Channels)

Life Death and Qi

- Seen in its most general terms, human life is the accumulation of qi, death is the dispersal of Qi.
- After receiving a core potential of primordial and prenatal qi at birth, people throughout life need to sustain it.
- They do so by drawing postnatal qi into the body from air to food, as well as from other people through sexual, emotional and social interaction.
- Livia Kohn, *Chinese Healing Exercises: The Tradition of Daoyin*, University of Hawai'i Press, 2008, p.3.

Health and working with the Qi

- But they also lose qi through breathing bad air, living in polluted areas, overburdening or diminishing their bodies with food and drink, or getting involved in negative emotions and excessive sexual or social interaction.
- Health and long life come through working with qi to the best of one's ability, attaining a state of perfect balance, utmost harmony, and complete self-fulfillment.
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- Livia Kohn, *Chinese Healing Exercises: The Tradition of Daoyin*, University of Hawai'i Press, 2008, p.3

Category and functions of Qi

- 元气(Yuan qi)Primordial/先天气 (Xiantian Qi)Prenatal qi = the Qi that a Life obtained originally at birth, restored in the kidneys, rely on the nourishment of feeding of the prenatal Qi.
- 后天气 (Houtian Qi)/血气 (xue Qi) is the Postnatal Qi that a life obtained from air to food, as well as from other people through sexual, emotional and social interaction.
- 卫气 (Wei Qi) is the Qi flowing outside the meridians to provide protection to the physical body
- 营气 (Ying Qi) is the Qi flowing in the pulses together with blood, which is produced by the nutrition of the food and water, to provide nutrition for a physical body.
- 正气 (Zheng Qi)= Proper positive Qi, Qi with righteousness feature.
- 邪气 (Xie Qi)= negative or evil improper Qi.

Functions of the Qi

- 1. activated the growth of life;
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- 2. to bring sunshine to warm up the organs to make it potential function to be developed;
- 3. to provide protection to the body to avoid invasion of the evil Qi;
- 4. to make the transformation and the exchange within the body happening.
- 5. to solidate and strengthen the function of the body.

Qi 气 & Health 健康

- Energy can be increased in a human being. Consequently, the development of chi/qi can make an ill person robust or a weak person vibrant; it can enhance mental capacity too.
- The concept of Chi/Qi also extends beyond the physical body, to the subtle energies that activate all human functions, including emotions and thought.
- Unbalanced chi causes your emotions to become agitated and distressed. Balanced chi causes your emotions to become smooth and more satisfying.
- From the perspective of thought, when your mental chi becomes more refined it enhances your creativity at all levels—art, business, relationships, child rearing, etc.
- Spiritual chi makes it more possible for us to personally enter into higher states of consciousness, which lie at the heart of religious experience.
- Bruth Frantzis, *Tai Chi: Health for life*, Blue Snake Books, Berkeley, California, 2006, p.7.

Yuan Qi/Chi 元气 & Human Life 生命

- Simply speaking, Yuan Qi is that which gives life.
- In terms of the body, Yuan Qi is that which differentiates a corpse from a live human being.
- A strong life force makes human being totally alive, alert, and present; a weak life force results in sluggishness and fatigue

Zheng Qi (upright Chi) 正气 and Health

- Health, then, is not just the absence of symptoms and ailments. It is the presence of a strong vital energy and a smooth, harmonious, and active flow of Qi.
- This is known as the state of Zhengqi or proper Qi, also translated as 'upright qi'. The ideal is to have qi flow freely, creating harmony in the body and balance state of being in the person.
- This personal health is further matched by health in nature, defined as regular weather patterns and the absence of disasters.
- It is also present as health in society in the peaceful coexistence among families, clans, villages and states.
- This harmony of all levels, the cosmic presence of a steady and pleasant flow of Qi is what the Chinese call the state of Great Peace 太平, a state venerated by all different religious, philosophical and political schools in traditional China.
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- Livia Kohn(Edited), *Daoist Body Cultivation: Traditional Models and Contemporary Practices*, Three Pines Press, 2006, p.3-4.

Xie Qi/Chi 邪气 and Unhealthy

- Xie qi (wayward qi) is also called deviant qi, pathogenic qi, or evil qi.
- In a condition of xie qi, humans have lost their harmonious relation to the cosmos, the Qi field has fallen out of balance, and people's qi no longer supports the dynamic forces of change.
- Whereas proper qi moves in a smooth, steady rhythm and effects daily renewal, helping health and long life, wayward qi is disorderly and dysfunctional and creates change that violates the normal order.
- When Xie Qi becomes dominant, the qi flow can turn upon itself and deplete the body's resources. The individual loses his or her connection to the universe, no longer operates as part of a greater system, and is increasingly out of tune with the basic life force.
- This in due course results in irritation: mental irritation that appears as negative emotions and physical irritation that shows up as bodily discomforts and eventually leads to disease.
- Livia Kohn (Edited), *Daoist Body Cultivation: Traditional Models and Contemporary Practices*, Three Pines Press, 2006, p.4.

Zheng Qi 正气 and Xie Qi 邪气

- Qi can be divided into Zheng Qi (positive Qi or harmonious Qi) and Xie Qi (negative Qi or stagnant Qi).

Zheng Qi :The Qi that can strengthen one's energy and health is Zheng Qi, it can be Yin Qi, or Yang Qi, depending which Qi the body needs dearly.

Xie Qi:All unhealthy Qi which can bring disharmony or disorder of the body energetic programme can be named as called Xie Qi or evil Qi.

Yang Qi: To keep one's health is to is to strengthen one's Zheng Qi 正气 and avoiding from the influence of the Negative Qi (xie qi 邪气), the process of this is called as Yang Qi 养气。

Yang Qi 养气 in Chinese Tradition

- Yang Qi 养气 (Qi Cultivation) is to nurture and cultivate one's Healthy Qi and avoid from unhealthy Qi.
- **Confucian Tradition of Yang Qi**
- Xunzi makes a detail discuss on 'controlling breath and nourish life' and the 'Art of Controlling Vital Breath and Nourishing the Mind' in chapter 2: 'On Self Cultivation':
- Mencius Said he is at cultivating his Vast Flowing Qi
- **Daoist Tradition of Yang Qi:**
- Dao Yin 导引 / Qi adjusting / skills of breath ;
- Fu Qi 服气 / Qi Swallow
- Nourishing Qi through Bigu 辟谷 Avoiding Grain
- Nourishing Qi through food medicine and Medicine Food

Xunzi's Discussion on the Important of Cultivation of Qi

- 'If you employ the measure of excellence in every circumstance to control the vital breath and nourish life, you will outlive even Patriarch Peng, and if you use it to cultivate your character and strengthen your self, you will establish a reputation equal to that of Yao and Yu.' (Xunzi: 2.2)
- John Knoblock (trans.): *Xunzi*, Hunan People's Publishing House, 1999, Volume I, p.27.

Xunzi's Art of cultivation of Mind

- **'The Art of Controlling the vital Breath and Nourishing the Mind:**
- If the blood humour is too strong and robust, calm it with balance and harmony.
- If knowledge and foresight are too penetrating and deep, unify them with easy and sincerity.
- If the impulse to daring and bravery is too fierce and violent, stay it with guidance and instruction.
- If the quickness of the mind and the fluency of the tongue are too punctilious and sharp, moderate them in your activity and rest. (Xunzi 2.4)
- John Knoblock (trans.): *Xunzi*, Hunan People's Publishing House, 1999, Volume 1, p.31.

Xunzi's Art of cultivation of Mind (2)

- What is so narrow and restricted that it has become mean and petty, broaden with liberality and magnanimity.
- What is base and low from greed for selfish gain, life up with a sense of high purpose.
- What is common and mediocre, worthless and undisciplined, overcome with the help of teachers and friends.....
- In summary, of all the methods of controlling the vital breath and nourishing the mind, none is more direct than **proceeding according to ritual principles**, none more essential than **obtaining a good teacher**, and none more intelligent than **unifying one's likes**.
- Truly this procedure may properly be called 'the method of controlling the vital breath and nourishing the mind'.
- John Knoblock (trans.): *Xunzi*, Hunan People's Publishing House, 1999, Volume 1, p.31.

Mencius Idea of Cultivation of Qi

- When Mencius is asked for what was he good at, he replied, 'I understand words. I am skillful in nourishing my vast flowing passion nature [Qi]'. 我知言。吾善养吾浩然之气。
- **What is 浩然之气?**
- 其为气也，至大至刚，以直养而无害，则塞于天地之间。
- It is exceedingly great, and exceedingly strong. Being nourished by rectitude, and sustaining no injury, it fills up all between heaven and earth
- 其为气也，配义与道，无是馁也。
- It is the mate and assistant of righteousness and reason. Without it, man is in a state of starvation.
- 是集义所生者，非义袭而取之也，行有不慊于心，则馁也。
- It is produced by the accumulation of righteous deeds; it is not to be obtained by incidental acts of righteousness. If the mind does not feel complacency in the conduct, the nature becomes starved
- (Mengzi: 2A2 Gongsun chou shang)

Mencius' Discussion on the Role of One's Will in Qi Cultivation

- 'The Will is the leader of the passion nature [Qi]. The passion nature [Qi] pervades and animates the body.
- The will is first and chief, and the passion nature [Qi] is subordinate to it.
- Therefore, I say, Maintain firm the will, and do no violence to the passion nature [Qi].'
- 夫志，气之帅也，气，体之充也。夫志至焉，气次焉。故曰，持其志，勿暴其气。

Qi Cultivation in Dao Yin/Qi Kung

- To increase congenital Qi levels by linking to the energy of Heaven and Earth.
- When we make our breathing more efficient we also increase the degree by which acquired Qi is taken from the environment into our body.
- This helps to regulate the flow of Qi in our 12 organ channels which in turn are called the acquired channels in Taoism.
- They help to maintain the health of our organs as well as circulate Qi throughout the body.
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- Damo Mitchell, *Nei Gong: Taoist Process of Internal Change*, Lian Hua Publishing, 2009, p.101.



Tai Chi Practice and Harmonization of One's Body and Mind

- Tai Chi and Chi Gung can change our internal environment so that life become a joy to live and not burden to drag into old age.
- These arts can help our bodies let go of the past and our minds calm down and cease churning.
- Tai Chi and Chi gung help us to positively engage with life and relax in any circumstance.
- Bruth Frantzis, *Tai Chi: Health for life*, Blue Snake Books, Berkeley, California, 2006,p
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