

Qi Dao

Qi = vital energy, link of yin-yang; Dao = law behind everything

June/July 2006

Qi Dao, the monthly E-newsletter of World Institute for Self Healing, Inc. (WISH: <http://www.wishus.org>), promotes philosophy and methods of human self-healing and mind power, and shares knowledge and experiences with those who are interested in human self-healing and consciousness power and their applications in health and healing. It is FREE to WISH members, and to those who are interested in the subjects. All contributions are welcome.

From the Editor...

A number of years ago, I had become ill with Tetanus – a rather scary illness. It was due to a dormant vaccination – not an encounter with open wounds, etc. Nevertheless, it took me over a year to totally be relieved of the symptoms. My sister, who cannot work, and I lived on my retirement income for that time. Since I was not 59 1/2 I paid large penalties in taxes. As a result we could not afford to pay our rent and received an eviction notice. From the moment we received it, I told my sister – not one negative thought –not one. We must keep positive.

Friends came almost every day to help us pack. They would bring lunch or dinner and we would laugh a lot. We had two people say that we could temporarily move in with them and we had scheduled the movers. Three days before we had to be out, the movers cancelled. Two days before, our temporary rooms were no longer available. We did everything we could to remain positive, repeating over and over again – “we have a place to live.” We each talked to a friend; one said she would have to talk to her husband, the other said he would have to talk to his wife. The day before we had to move, both responded with a yes, you can come. We chose the closest place, about 18 miles away.

We were truly blessed. We were given a mansion to live in for a year. There are two things which I credit for this gift: 1) the power of positive thinking and 2) the power of friendship. We all have these gifts available it us. To make use of them and to see their outcomes is an incredible challenge. Give it a try!!!

The World Institute for Self-Healing (WISH) is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting self-healing and mind power through medical qigong via research, education, exploration of new frontiers and practical applications. We would like to work closely with all those who are interested in human self-healing and mind power and its applications in health and healing to form a self-healing movement.

Welcome to the *Qi Dao* newsletter! We wish you a growing experience of self-healing. If you like what you read, please share *Qi Dao* with others. You are invited to submit articles and comments to the Qi Dao Newsletter. It is a newsletter on mind power and self-healing, and all who have information or a perspective that they would like to share may contribute. We ask that you meet the following requirements: 1500 word maximum, MSWord format. Send in before the 10th of the month. Include your name, address, email address and a telephone number where you can be reached. Articles should be sent to WISH_Qidao@yahoo.com.

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[Research Updates]

Following are a few abstracts from the Fifth World Medical Qigong Symposium (Beijing, June 26-28, 2006).

- **Physiological Effects of Respiration Method of Inner Qigong – MACHI and Liu (Japan)**

Qigong has a long history in China and has been used to maintain health and treat diseases since ancient time. Nowadays, fast development of western medicine and other healthcare methods provide effective ways to maintain health and treat diseases. However, people are still seeking a way to be healthy and long-life without adding load to body. Qigong, as the essence of Chinese traditional medicine, attracts people all over the world. In Japan, Qigong has become a subject of national research and practice as a part of the combined medicine (western medicine and traditional medicine).

For the Japanese, herbs and acupuncture are relatively easy to understand because they are somewhat similar to methods of western medicine. However, they are confused about why and how Qigong may maintain health and what effects Qigong may produce. We have carried out research on Qigong on the stance of scientific concept. The number of researchers on Qigong in Japan is increasing and people's understanding of Qigong is deepening. We will describe one of the most importance concepts of Qigong here - The Three Adjustment (i.e. Adjustment of Posture, Adjustment of Respiration and Adjustment of Mental Activities). Our focus of discussion will be Adjustment of Respiration. And we will report some physiologic effects of Qigong produced by 2 to 3 Inner Qigong on the basis of physiology.

Standing Posture Qigong:

Standing Posture Qigong is a complex method of Qigong based on multiple methods. Fig.1 shows data of brainwaves, brain terrain chart and physical data besides body infrared data. The abdominal that conducts Adjustment of Respiration is very attractive. Its respiration activity is totally different from that before the practice of Qigong. For the still time before the practice of Qigong, there are 15-16 shallow respiration activities a minute. When Standing Posture Qigong is started, numbers of respiration activities are significantly increasing and vibration amplitude of abdominal is also increasing. Abdominal pressure meter shows an abdomen pressure of 3kPa. This status keeps repeated in the practice of Standing Posture Qigong. When staying still, carbon dioxide density of nasal respiration is 4%, while the number increases to 6% in practice of Standing Posture Qigong, representing that inner movements of the body are increasing. At the same, due to the status change of abdominal respiration, electric potential on R point of cardiogram is influenced by abdominal respiration. For normal respiration, this influence is not evident. For proper practice of Standing Posture Qigong, the change of electric potential on R point is synchronized with abdominal respiration. See Fig.1. Analysis shows that the peak value for 0.05-0.15Hz is LF and the peak value for 0.15-0.30Hz is HF. LF/HF is the dynamic representation parameter of autonomic nervous system. The result show that activities of sympathetic nerve increase in practice of Standing Posture Qigong. The ration of LF/HF of Qigong masters is 10 times higher than common persons, representing that Standing Posture Qigong is an effective method to regulate autonomic nervous system.

Fig.2 shows increasing of blood flowing through neck artery and glabella in practice of Standing Posture Qigong. Increase of blood flowing through brains may prevent aging of brains for aged people. The figure also shows that oxygen density of blood declines in practice of Qigong. Decline of oxygen density means increase of oxygen consumption. Inhaling fresh oxygen may produce overall positive effects for body. The figure does not give a chart on blood pressure. However, blood pressure may increase when autonomic nervous system is active. For aged people, too strong nerve stimulation may produce cerebrovascular damages. Therefore, Standing Posture Qigong must be practiced properly.

Six-Word-Practice:

See Fig.4 and Fig.5 for physical examination results for Six-Word-Practice. Six-Word-Practice is a unique method of Qigong as people make sounds in the practice. Compared with Standing Posture Qigong, the number of heartbeats will increase when making sounds. The figures show that making sounds are closely related with abdominal respiration. Potential value of R point in cardiogram has not apparent changes when people keep still. However, the value increases significantly with sounds in practice of Six-Work-Practice. See Fig.6. Blood flow through neck artery increase with making sound. The flow of blood is not corresponding to the strength of sound. Increase of blood flow is not very significant for "He". The third word "Hu" is not stronger than "He", but the increase of blood flow is much higher. For "Chui", both the sound and the increase of blood flow are high.

Additionally, the maximum blood pressure in practice of Six-Word-Practice is over 160 mmHg, higher than that of Standing Posture Qigong. Although the maximum blood pressure is higher than that of Standing Posture Qigong,

the duration of increase of blood pressure in shorter, which will not bring addition load for aged people. The examination of Six-Word-Practice shows that oxygen density in blood of end blood vessels keeps decreasing. The decreasing happens in practice of "Chui" and "Xi", showing that the load is much higher in the short time. Cycle change of respiration is synchronized with cycle change of oxygen density in blood of end blood vessels, meaning that level of practice may reflect the coordination level of inner respiration and outer respiration. Fig. 6 shows data similarity of Standing Posture Qigong, Six-Word-Practice, ZhanZhuang without making sounds, Six-Word-Practice with making sounds, abdominal respiration, heartbeats and cardiogram.

Nei-Yang GONG:

This method of Qigong is created by Liu Guizhen of Bei Dai He on the basis of absorbing some folk Qigong methods. NEY YANG GONG includes two respiration methods: soft (1) respiration and hard (2) respiration. See Fig.7 for physical data. Soft respiration is a process of inhaling-exhaling-stopping. See the figure for the maximum value of blood pressure. As soft respiration delays inhaling, the increase of blood pressure is delayed. Therefore, through repeated practice of soft respiration, blood pressure may be decreased. Hard respiration is a process of inhaling-stopping-exhaling. Different locations of stooping respiration may prevent blood pressure decreasing, so as to increase blood pressure. Fig.8 shows the results for a rather long time examination. The maximum value (the upper limit) represents maximum blood pressure, while the lower limit represents the minimum blood pressure. The figures shows that soft breaking increase maximum blood pressure value while hare respiration decrease maximum blood pressure value. The figure also shows that number of heartbeats is not varied from number of abdominal respiration. But for nasal respiration, the different is obvious. The temperature change of nasal respiration in practice of soft respiration shows that the inner body temperature has limited increase, while the temperature change of nasal respiration in practice of hared respiration shows that the inner body temperature has significant increase, meaning the increase of inner activities.

Fig. 9 shows LF/HF status of autonomic nervous system for NEY YANG GONG. The average value of LF/HF for soft respiration is 2.5, while that for hard respiration is 3. Activity density of sympathetic nerve in practice of hard respiration is higher than that of soft respiration.

Nei-Yang Gong present effects on adjustment of hypertension and hypotension. It may solve some blood pressure problems especially for patients who need to take medicine for long time.

Conclusion:

The report describes physical effects of some traditional practice methods of Qigong. May Japanese people believe that taking medicine is the most effective method for recovering from diseases. The healthcare effects of Qigong still need to be illuminated on the basis of scientific data. Introducing Qigong widely is helpful. People shall choose to take medicines or practice Qigong according to their actual conditions.

Through long time of observing on people practicing Qigong, we have concluded an evaluation standard of practice. The standard may be helpful for those who want to learn Qigong. We will continue to provide reliable technical theory for practice of Qigong through conducting physical examination.

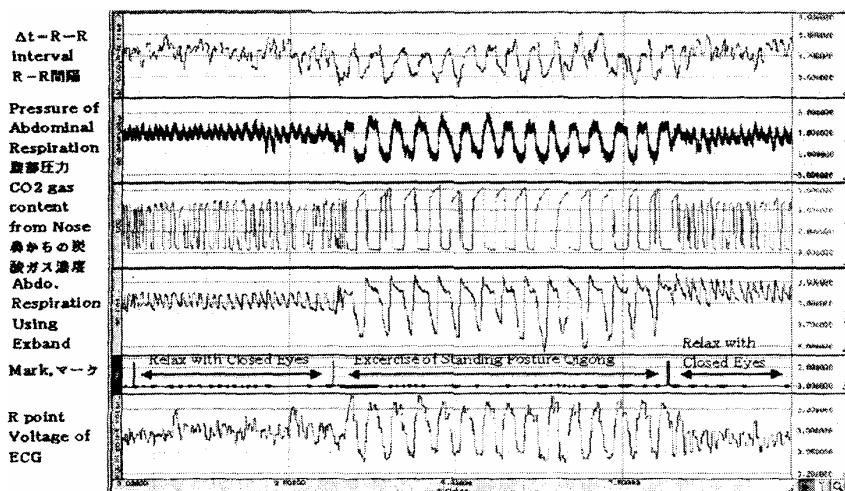


Fig.1 Several Physiological Data due to Abdominal Respiration at Standing Posture Qigong: 站トウ功における腹部呼吸による各種の生理学的なデータ

Fig.1 Physiological Data due to Abdominal Respiration at Standing Posture Qigong

- **The Effect of the External Qi of Qi-Gong on the Heartbeat of the Toad** -- Deying Chu, Peking University, Beijing 100871, China.

The effect of the External Qi of Qigong (EQQ) on the isolated and perfuse toad heart was investigated by monitoring the change of cardiogram for heartbeat with a bio-information collector RM6240. The changes of intensity and rhythm of the heartbeat were measured to test how External Qi affects the heartbeat. 12 Qigong masters took part in the experiments with in total 117 sessions. 6 volunteers participated in 39 sessions of contrast and simulated experiments. The results demonstrated that the External Qi of Qigong had a distinct effect on the cardiogram of the toad heart including strengthening the intensity and rhythm or abating them with two-way regulation. Eliminating intermission for heartbeat EQQ makes the heart return to its normal rhythm. EQQ can revive the heart on the verge of death to beat again.

- **The Effect of Baduanjin to the Function of Human Cardio-Vascular** -- Li Yuhuan, Li Dongjun, Zhang Haibo, Hou Beichen (Institute of Acupuncture and Moxibustion , Beijing University of Chinese Medicine

We recruited some college students and trained them to practice Baduanjin. Then we monitored systematically six kinds of physical indications. They were blood pressure, electrocardiogram, pulse pressure, degree of oxygen saturation of blood, temperature of the limbs ending skin, the delaying time between heart beat and pulse, and do some contrast experiments, using multi-parameters recording device. At last, we got the data that Baduanjin could improve the body's cardio-vascular function and discuss its effect to the human's cardio-vascular function made by practicing Baduanjin. The result has showed that after 10 weeks' concentrative training, there were some effects to the students in the experimental group, such as the electrocardiogram, the degree of blood oxygen saturation, the temperature of the ending skin, the delaying time from the heart beat to pulse. Statistical significance could be found in these data ($P < 0.05$). A series indications showed people who practice Baduanjin day after day can get certain positive effects to the function of human's heart and lung. Meanwhile, these targets supplied us with practical experimental basis on how and how long to practice and how much to practice.

- **A Clinical Observation on Acupuncture and Health Care Exercises of Visual Acuity for Treatment of 74 Cases with Juvenile Myopia** --- Tao X, Wei YL, Xu W, Yang J, Mao M, Liu T (Insititute of Acupuncture and Massage, Beijing University of TCM, Beijing 100029, China)

Objective: To observe the clinical therapeutic effects and influencing factors of the acupuncture combined with health care exercises of visual acuity for treatment of juvenile myopia. Compare the difference of therapeutic effects between the combined therapy and pure acupuncture. Methods: After obtaining informed consent, patients 115 cases were randomly divided into Qigong group (120 diseased eyes) and acupuncture group(120 diseased eyes). Results: The visual acuity of these two groups were improved. There was an obvious clinical therapeutic effect in statistics. ($p < 0.01$)=The curative effect of Qigong group was better than that of acupuncture group. It had a significant statistical difference in these two groups. ($P < 0.01$) Conclusion: There is a definite clinical therapeutic effect on juvenile myopia. The therapeutic effect of acupuncture combined with health care exercises of visual acuity is better than that of pure acupuncture. Age influences therapeutic effect. Myopic degree isn't clearly correlated to therapeutic effect.

All of modern physics is governed by that magnificent and thoroughly confusing discipline called quantum mechanics ... It has survived all tests and there is no reason to believe that there is any flaw in it. We all know how to use it and how to apply it to problems; and so we have learned to live with the fact that nobody can understand it.

— — —Murray Gell-Mann

[From the Master]

Four Key Elements in Qigong Cultivation-Practice

Master Binhui He

In order to be successful in qigong cultivation-practice, in addition to the basic instinct understanding and perseverance of the practitioner himself, there are four key elements, namely, method, partner, money matter and location.

Over the past several thousand years, there have been numerous *qigong* practitioners, but the accomplished ones are very few, that is why we say “the practitioners are as many as the hairs of an ox, but accomplished one is as rare as the further of a phoenix or the horn of a giraffe.” In addition to personal factors of the practitioner, the four key elements mentioned above play an important role in deciding the success or failure of *qigong* practice.



1. The Method (Form)

The beginning *qigong* practitioner should first select a proper *qigong* style and learn to practice it under the guidance of an experienced *qigong* master.

Quite a few *qigong* beginners plunge into *qigong* practice with immense enthusiasm, but they can not learn it well and may go astray because they have failed to select a proper *qigong* style or a qualified *qigong* master.

Nowadays people practice *qigong* for different purposes. Most people practice *qigong* to maintain good health. Others practice *qigong* to study it, or to learn a skill with which to make a living, or to develop extraordinary capabilities, or to cultivate themselves according to Daoist doctrine and to realize *Dao* or the Way of Nature.

Among the five major long-standing *qigong* traditions in China, namely, Confucianist *Qigong*, Buddhist *Qigong*, Daoist *Qigong*, Medical *Qigong* and *Wushu* (martial-arts) *Qigong*, there are multifarious *qigong* styles. For example, there are 3,600 orthodox *qigong* styles within Daoist *Qigong* and 58,000 orthodox *qigong* styles within Buddhist *Qigong*. Based on different philosophies and approaches, each of the five major *qigong* traditions has a different objective with different training methods. Confucianism attaches great importance to peace and the golden mean. As Buddhism regards the human body as the sticking skin-bag, the purpose of Buddhist *Qigong* practice is to achieve release from samsara and seek eternal life in the Western Paradise or the next life. In contrast to Buddhism, Daoism tries to preserve the human body and seek immortality. *Wushu qigong* aims at improving the skills of unarmed combat. The goal of Medical *Qigong* is to cure disease.

The beginning *qigong* practitioners should be clear about their objectives in *qigong* practice, and select a proper *qigong* style and *qigong* master accordingly. Otherwise, they may fail to achieve their goals.

2. Partner or Companion

Here “partner” refers to one’s close personal relationships, such as one’s spouse or relatives and close friends.

Qigong practitioners should remain nonchalant and tranquil, which requires understanding and support of their spouses as well as close relatives and friends. Otherwise, their *qigong* practice will be frequently disturbed by those who do not understand and support them.

Most patients, especially those afflicted with serious illnesses such as advanced cancers, face such a problem. As doctors could do nothing about their diseases, some patients came to seek *qigong* therapy for help. At this moment the best treatment for them was to stop worrying about their diseases and devote themselves to *qigong* practice. However, some of them could hardly keep their minds tranquil due to the repeated disturbance from their spouses, relatives and friends, who were ignorant of the mechanism of *qigong* therapy and suspicious of the capability of *qigong* therapy to

cure persistent ailments that neither western medicine nor traditional Chinese medicine could treat. As a result, the determination, confidence and perseverance of the patients in overcoming their illnesses were weakened, thus making the *qigong* therapy less effective.

On the other hand, with whole-hearted support of their spouses, relatives and friends, some patients afflicted with advanced cancers put trust in *qigong* therapy and achieved a very desirable curative effect. By practicing *qigong*, some patients suffering from proliferation of cancers, who were considered “incurable” by modern medicine, were restored to health.

Besides patients who practice *qigong* for the sake of curing illness, ordinary *qigong* practitioners also need the support of their spouses, relatives and friends. For example, during the initial stage of *qigong* practice, called *bai ri zhu ji* (building up the foundation in one hundred days), the *qigong* practitioner should refrain from sleeping together his spouse so as to convert *jing* to *qi*. If the spouse of the practitioner fails to understand this and does not support his or her partner, misunderstanding will arise between the couple. As a result, the practitioner may fail in the initial stage of *qigong* practice.

3. Money Matter

Qigong practitioners should be indifferent to wealth and fame, and be contented with what they have so as to maintain a tranquil mind. However, they should have a continuing source of income to support their normal lives. Those who cannot secure necessities of life can hardly keep their minds peaceful and thus cannot practice *qigong* well.

Nowadays most people can live a fairly comfortable life, but some patients with serious diseases still have to work to support their families. It is very difficult for such people to be indifferent to money matters and practice *qigong* with the necessary concentration.

However, this is not the case with some patients I knew. They went on working in spite of their serious diseases in order to enjoy a high standard of living, such as maintaining the mortgage for a big house. They failed to see the proper relationship between life and wealth. Which is more important for the patient: to gain more worldly goods at the sacrifice of life, or to be contented with having the necessities of life and concentrate on *qigong* practice to regain health without unnecessary mental and physical tension? After realizing the proper relationship between life and wealth, I believe, patients and their families will make a correct choice. The obsession with material gains runs against one of the principles in *qigong* practice—be indifferent to wealth and fame.

4. Location

To attain a desirable result, it is very important for *qigong* practitioners, especially *qigong* beginners, to find a suitable place to conduct *qigong* practice. This is because *qigong* beginners do not possess sufficient *ding* (tranquility) power and their minds will wander due to the slightest outside interference. It is desirable to practice *qigong* in a place with green mountains and rivers and far away from the urban crowded area. If possible, *qigong* practitioners should often go to famous Daoist and Buddhist mountains to practice *qigong*, because such places, carefully chosen by the ancient masters, have a fine *qi* field. Of course, we should not pay too much attention to the location if such a location is not possible. Those who cannot go to the places mentioned above can regularly practice *qigong* in a fixed place at home, which also can form a *qi* field.

In brief, the above-mentioned four key elements are essential to successful *qigong* practice, and they are important not only for ancient *qigong* practitioners but also for contemporary *qigong* practitioners.

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Master Binhui He is founder of the Taiji Five-Element Medical Qigong and the lineage holder of a secret Daoism tradition. He is the honorary president of Jiutian Daoism Temple at Luofu Mountain (sacred Daoism site). His first book has been translated into English; this essay is part of Chapter 1, entitled “On Correct Dao.” For more information about master He, go to: <http://www.wishus.org/masterhe.asp>

[Illuminating the Dao]**Your Mind: the Natural Cure for What Ails You**

Michelle K. Wood

Why is it that most people have no difficulty believing the mind can cause illness through negative thoughts and emotions, but won't believe the mind can cause wellness through positive thoughts and emotions? Have you ever heard the saying, "You can do anything you put your mind to"? The natural power of the mind, through the processes of conscious direction and sustained attention, can create anything, including perfect health!

Your mind is a very powerful creator that does not judge its creations as good or bad, it just creates. Illness and wellness are a matter of perception, a matter of how the creation that is the physical "you" is influenced and judged by your emotions. Your thoughts influence your emotions; your emotions influence your physical body. If you are not sure that is true, you can test it right now. Take a moment to think a neutral thought like "the sky is blue." You have very little reaction to a statement of fact that is not part of your personal creation. Now, think of a sad or angry experience you had and notice how your body suddenly feels tense and uncomfortable. Now, think of a happy experience you had and notice how your body changes to feel relaxed and comfortable.

You have the natural ability to choose illness by thinking negative thoughts and having negative feelings, or choose wellness by thinking positive thoughts and having positive feelings. The natural state of your body is health and wellness; it wants to work harmoniously with you to return to that state of good health.

The last four lines of verse 51 of the Dao De Jing (Peter Merel interpolation) offer some suggestions on how we can use our mind to effect our own healing.

"Bearing without possessing," Carry the illness, but don't own it. Every time you think or say "my disease" you are confirming it is a part of you. If you have to refer to it at all, call it "the disease." Do your best to not think of it at all. When you stop feeding the disease with the energy of your thoughts, you will deny it the energy it needs to exist.

"Nurturing without taming," Take care of yourself without trying to change the nature of the illness. Don't try to make the illness something you can "live with." If, in your mind, you decide you can live with it, you won't cure it. Always try to nurture yourself back to perfect health.

"Shaping without forcing," Shaping in this sense means creating your healthy body without resistance. Self-doubt is resistance, disbelief is resistance. If you must work so hard to convince yourself of the healing power of your mind, all your energy goes toward the convincing and none toward the healing. Making statements like "I'm going to do this or else!" is resistance which can set up an internal power struggle or fear of failure that may do more harm than good. Create good health persistently but gently.

"This is harmony." Give yourself permission to allow your body to follow its natural tendencies. Spend time influencing your body with intentional and sustained positive thoughts. Fill yourself with health and there will be no room for disease.

[Michelle K. Wood offers stress management and holistic relaxation services through her consultancy Be Well With Michelle ~ Naturally! She publishes the free, bi-monthly newsletter "Natural Stress-Free Living." Visit the newsletter group website at <http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/BeWellWithMichelle/>]

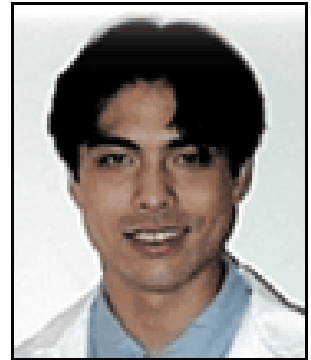
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[Methods of Better Meditation]**Taking Dan-Tian Breathing a Step Further**

By Ken Andes, L.Ac.

When people first come to qigong, they're often surprised to find out that they've been breathing the wrong way for most of their lives. Most people come to WISH and other qigong centers with the bad habit of breathing shallow breaths from the chest. This alone is one of the major culprits in health problems involving low energy, headaches, immune dysfunction, stomach disorders, and emotional problems.

As the new qigong student begins to change their breathing pattern to a slow, deep, rhythmic breath from the Dan Tien (the area 2-3 inches below the navel), the most common reaction I've seen over the years is that the person feels as if they are "reborn".



As the qigong aspirant begins to make Dan Tien breathing a regular and eventually habitual form of life, the increased oxygenation of the body results in greater energy, a clearer head, relief from gastrointestinal problems, and relief from chronic aches and pains. Additionally, the increased oxygenation from Dan Tien breathing gives people a higher metabolism and reduced cravings for sugar and junk food. Yes, you heard me right, the breathing methods taught in qigong have helped countless people overcome obesity and weight gain problems after other methods have failed.

Another interesting benefit of Dan Tien breathing is that it forms the basis for the meditation practices in many eastern systems of spiritual cultivation (Zen, Vipassana, Yoga, etc.). Without realizing it, many qigong students find that they are happier, more content, and less prone to emotional instabilities such as rage, anxiety, and depression.

With all these changes that come from the practice of Dan Tien breathing, it's no wonder that the word "reborn" is so commonly used to describe the experience of the new qigong student.

If you are one of the many who have reaped the benefits from learning Dan Tien breathing, I congratulate you on being open-minded and proactive enough to take charge of your health. However, the practice of basic Dan Tien breathing is just the beginning. There are many advanced levels of practice that will take your study of qigong to the next level of growth and evolution. Today, I'd like to share with you what I consider to be the next step in the art and science of breath control.

Huiyin Breathing.

"Huiyin" is the acupuncture point located directly over the perineum (the area between the genitals and the anus). If the Dan Tien is located 2-3 inches below the navel, you'll notice that Huiyin is considerably lower. In fact, it's the lowest and most "yin" point on the torso.

"Huiyin" means "meeting of yin". In Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) this point is a gathering point for the yin energy of the body. Yin is the energy of grounding, calming, and centering qualities. Huiyin is also the meeting point of the two most important acupuncture meridians in the body, the Ren (front centerline) and Du (back centerline over the spine).

Directing the breath to this point instead of the Dan Tien will take your qigong practice a step deeper. Activating Huiyin through the breath will provide a deeper stimulation to the abdominal organs and lymphatic system. It will take all the physical benefits of Dan Tien breathing a step further.

From an energetic perspective (this may be a bit complicated so feel free to skip this paragraph), the activation of Huiyin will energize and open both the Ren and Du meridians in the body. The Ren meridian is the source of yin in the body while the Du is the source of yang. Because both of these vitally important channels meet at the Huiyin point

they can be harmonized and activated through Huiyin breathing. The benefits of this practice from a TCM perspective are enormous and too lengthy to go into detail in this article. Since disorders of the human qi field involve imbalances or deficiencies in yin or yang energy, the activation of Huiyin can be viewed as a “cure all” that will help harmonize and rebalance the opposing energies of yin and yang in the body.

How to learn Huiyin breathing.

It's easy. Start by practicing Dan Tien breathing (while either lying down, sitting, or standing), then once you are in a relaxed and centered state, direct your breath down to the Huiyin point over the perineum instead of the Dan Tien.

Visualize in your minds eye that the breath is moving all the way down to Huiyin then spreading out over the bottom of the abdominal floor in all directions, not just to the front. The expansion of the breath in all four directions (front, back, left and right) is what makes Huiyin breathing different from Dan Tien breathing where the expansion is primarily to the front. If you are keeping your entire body relaxed, especially your lower torso, you'll notice that the sides of your abdomen as well as your lower back will expand outwards along with your belly.

This method of breathing will teach you to relax your whole torso including your lower back.

When I teach this breathing method to students, I'll have them place one hand on my stomach and the other on my lower back. As I breathe, the student will feel both my stomach and lower back expanding outwards as I inhale. They will then feel both my stomach and lower back contract on exhalation. Try having a friend do this to you when you are learning Huiyin breathing. Be sure to relax completely, direct the breath to the perineum, and feel your abdomen expand in all four directions.

From a personal perspective, Huiyin breathing helped me overcome the pain from several debilitating back injuries. Years of full-contact martial arts, weight lifting, and general craziness left me with severe back pain and range of motion problems by the time I was 21. By faithfully practicing this method of breathing, I was able to progressively relax and correct my lower back area by breathing into it. After a few weeks of Huiyin breathing my back felt normal again.

Since then I've taught Huiyin breathing to hundreds of my patients and qigong students with amazing results. Huiyin breathing is excellent for relieving back pain as well as hip problems. It fills the body with qi and corrects the imbalances in yin and yang energy which so often result in disease and illness.

Practice Huiyin breathing for at least 10 minutes per day. Remember, it's better to practice a little bit each day than a whole lot two or three times per week. Also, practice this breathing method at odd moments. With a little discipline, waiting in line, driving in traffic, and other situations can be turned into qigong practice and the cultivation of self.

[Citation of the Month]

"The thirty spokes converge at one hub, but the utility of the cart is a function of the nothingness inside the hub. We throw clay to shape a pot, but the utility of the clay pot is a function of the nothingness inside it. We bore out doors and windows to make a dwelling, but the utility of the dwelling is a function of the nothingness inside it. Thus, it might be something that provides the value, but it is nothing that provides the utility."

Dao De Jing - Chapter 11

(Recommended by Patrick Pujda)

[Qigong Practice]**Feelings and Logic**

Marcy Tavernier

Several books, articles, and videos that explored feelings and logic recently came my way. They gave me a new way to put my Five Element Qigong practice into words. For that, I'm grateful.

In one, Radical Knowing by Christian de Quincey, the author discusses circumstances that lead us either to feelings and intuition or logic and reason or, more likely, some combination of the two. Ideally, we fully develop both. One interesting observation he makes is how a full development of feelings helps us to live a happy life. However, if we only develop logic without feelings, then our tendency is not much more than making goals to be happy.

With our feelings fully developed we show greater perception of the myriad effects resulting from our actions. We sense better how our thoughts and actions affect us and others. We simply have more information to make better decisions and live healthier lives.

Personally, I think Five Element Qigong practice helps us develop both feelings and logic. Our practice of "forgetting" those things that habitually hold us back brings us greater calm and relaxation. We release tension that obstructs mind and body. We expand our ability to feel -- and experience how good it feels to be free from conflict. As far as logic goes, is there anything more logical than recognizing and following our own nature?

"The Valley Spirit"

"Taoists use the metaphor of *gu shen*, "the valley spirit." A valley supports life, feeds the animals who live there and provides fertile earth for agriculture. It can do this only because it is empty. It accepts the flow of the river because it is most low and most humble. It receives the warmth of the sun because it is wide and not filled with anything to block the light. It brings forth life because it supports all who come to it."

– Deng Ming–Dao, *Scholar Warrior*, p. 182

The Valley Spirit never dies

It is named the Mysterious Female.

And the doorway of the Mysterious Female

Is the base from which Heaven and Earth sprang.

It is there within us all the while.

Draw upon it as you will, it never runs dry.

-- *Tao De Jing*, Chapter VI, Translated by Arthur Waley

[Practical Methods of Self Healing]**The Power of Guided Imagery**

Imagery has a long history in the healing traditions of mankind. The knowledge that imagery or visualization is a critical component of all healing experiences is distinguished when we consider the vital roles played by placebos, suggestion, and positive expectant faith.

The term “guided imagery” is used to describe a range of techniques from simple visualization and direct imagery-based suggestion, to metaphor and story-telling. Guided Imagery is generally considered as an updated version of visualization therapy, a remarkably creative and effective way to take advantage of the mind-body connection. It’s one of the natural therapies psychotherapists recommend most frequently to their patients.

Interactive Guided Imagery (IGI) utilizes imagery, the natural language of the unconscious mind. IGI is a powerful modality helping a patient/client connect with the deeper resources available to them at cognitive, affective and somatic levels. The guide’s role is not to provide “better” images for the client, but to facilitate an enhanced awareness of the unconscious imagery the patient/client already has, and help clients learn to effectively work with this imagery on their own behalf. This process is capable of bringing about profound psychological and physiological change, as it simultaneously empowers and educates the patients.

The premise of this therapy is that the patient’s unconscious mind has valuable information on the origin and nature of illness as well as on its potential resolution. The job of the therapist is to facilitate movement of this information into consciousness and encourage the patient to act on it.

The therapist might ask you (the patient) to picture yourself in some actual scene where you feel very comfortable and to describe the details of that scene. (People who do not visualize well can get just as much benefit by paying attention to body sensations rather than visual images.) Next, the therapist might direct your attention to the part of your body that is ailing and ask you to enter into an imaginary dialogue with it. In the interaction between you and the therapist and you and your body, opportunities open for intuitive, unconscious knowledge to bubble up into waking consciousness. The therapist can then help you interpret the information and put it to use.

Interactive Guided Imagery is an empowering method because it assumes that you have the answers. It’s worth trying for a wide range of problems, from chronic infections to chronic pain. It’s my first choice as a mind-body approach for allergies, certain immune conditions, skin and digestive disorders, and any persistent or mysterious medical problems. Guided-imagery therapy does not harm, is time-and-cost effective, and can often be fun.

Two California physicians, Martin Rossman and David Bresler, claimed that they developed this therapy, and have it – Interactive Guided Imagery -- registered as their special service mark (sm). They even created the “Academy for Guided Imagery” to promote it. The Academy offers training and even home study programs in this mind-body method for medical doctors and other interested health professionals. However, if they had learned the Daoism traditional “Daoyin” exercise in China or other inducing techniques in Chinese meditation, they should realize that Chinese have practiced the “guided imagery” for thousand years, and the service mark should really belong to the Chinese sages.

Physically, imagery has the ability to directly influence the autonomic nervous system, and the power of imagination can be recruited to promote specific physiological changes as an aid to healing. In addition, many studies indicate that certain imagery techniques may stimulate physiologic processes including immune and endocrine responses which can accelerate the healing process.

The IGI approach is more than just imagination. It is eclectic, holistic, humanistic and non-dogmatic, incorporating skills from many related disciplines including hypnosis, Jungian Psychology, psychosynthesis, self-actualization and ego-state psychology.

There are few physical, emotional or behavioral symptoms or illnesses that are not affected to some degree by the mind. IGI mobilizes the latent, innate healing abilities of the client to launch rehabilitation, recovery and health enrichment. IGI techniques are easy to learn with proper instruction, and carry few, if any, negative side effects when properly utilized; thus making them an ideal adjunct to any other type of therapy. It is our sincere hope that health professionals from all disciplines will begin to utilize these techniques to help their patients and clients more effectively help themselves.

There are many studies involving guided imagery in clinical settings. For example, Dr. [Kwekkeboom](#) (2003) from the University of Iowa College of Nursing, applied guided imagery to help cancer patients to relieve pain. A sample of 62 hospitalized cancer patients experiencing moderate or heavy pain completed questionnaires and used an audio-taped **imagery** intervention. Pain outcomes included mean pain intensity and distress, positive and negative affect, and perceived control over pain. Their multivariate models explain 10% to 52% of variance in pain outcomes, suggesting that imaging ability may be a useful variable to assess in order to determine whether guided **imagery** is an appropriate intervention for individual patients.

Bakke and colleagues (2002) at Oregon Health and Science University examined the effect of hypnotic-guided **imagery** on psychological well-being and immune function in patients with prior breast cancer. They first measured the patient's psychological profiles such as natural killer (NK) cell number and activity at baseline, then measure them again after the 8-week **imagery** training and at the 3-month follow-up. They found significant increases in improvement in depression ($P < .04$) and increase in absolute number of NK cells, but these were not maintained at the 3-month follow-up.

Halpin and the cardiac surgery team (2002) in the Inova Fairfax Hospital of Virginia implemented a guided **imagery** program to compare cardiac surgical outcomes between two groups of patients: with and without guided **imagery**. Data from the hospital financial cost/accounting database and patient satisfaction data were collected and matched to the two groups. A questionnaire was developed to assess the benefits of the guided **imagery** program to the participants. They found that patients who completed the guided **imagery** program had a shorter average length of stay, a decrease in average direct pharmacy costs, and a decrease in average direct pain medication costs while maintaining high overall patient satisfaction with the care and treatment provided. From then on, guided **imagery** becomes a complementary means to reduce anxiety, pain, and length of stay among their cardiac surgery patients.

Eller reviewed 46 studies that used **guided imagery** for management of psychological and physiological symptoms, published between 1966 and 1998, and found that there was preliminary evidence for the effectiveness of **guided imagery** in the management of stress, anxiety and depression, and for the reduction of blood pressure, pain and the side effects of chemotherapy. However, overall results of this review demonstrated a need for systematic, well-designed studies, which explore several unanswered questions regarding the use of **guided imagery**. These include the effects of different **imagery** language, symptoms for which **guided imagery** is effective, appropriate and sensitive outcome measures, method of delivery of the intervention and optimum dose and duration of the intervention, and individual factors that influence its effectiveness.

Since imagery has powerful physiological consequences and also conveys important and otherwise inaccessible information from the unconscious mind, there are virtually an unlimited number of situations where it can be used in health care settings. However, according to Rossman and Bresler, the "creators" of IGI, it may be helpful to consider three major categories of use:

- 1.) Relaxation and stress reduction, which is easy to teach, easy to learn, and almost universally helpful to patients;
- 2.) Active visualization, or directed imagery, where the patient is encouraged to imagine desired therapeutic outcomes while in a relaxed, open state of mind. This affords patients a sense of participation and control in their own healing, which is of significant value by itself. In addition, visualization can be used to alleviate symptoms, stimulate healing responses in the body, modify health endangering behaviors, and provide effective motivation for making positive life changes;
- 3.) Receptive, or insight oriented imagery, where images are invited to enter conscious awareness where they are interactively explored to gather more information about a symptom, illness, mood, treatment, situation, or possible solution.

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History: Daoist Canon (Dao Zang)

In 471 A.D. Daoist monks brought together the first Daoist Canon (Dao Zang) consisting of 1200 scrolls, which drew from all the main traditions of Daoism. All the sects recognize the Dao De Jing. The Dao Zang consisted mainly of Daoist masters' interpretations of this text and included writings on alchemy and immortality, the lives of immortals and heroes, and good works and longevity. It also contained philosophical essays and folktales, magic words and meditation, ritual and liturgy, and many other aspects of Daoist thought.

In 748 A.D. the Tang emperor Tang Xuan-cong, who traces his ancestry to Lao Zi, sent scholars all over China to collect Daoist works. Not wishing to disappoint the emperor, the scholars reputedly returned with 7300 scrolls. These scrolls became the second Dao Zang.

Around 1016 A.D. of the Song dynasty, with printing already established in China, the Dao Zang was revised and many works collected during the Tang dynasty were cast out. This third Dao Zang consisted of only 4,565 scrolls.

In 1444 A.D. of the Ming dynasty, a final version was produced consisting of 5318 scrolls.

Guodian Tao Te Ching

In 1993, an astonishing discovery was made at a tomb in Guodian in Hubei province (east central China). Written on strips of bamboo that have miraculously survived intact since 300 B.C., the "Guodian Laozi," is by far the earliest version of the "Tao Te Ching" ever unearthed. There were three bundles of bamboo strips (71 strips total), and they contained only chapters 1 to 67 of the modern Dao De Jing.

To read more about Taoist scriptures, go to:
<http://www.edepot.com/taotext.html>.



[Power of the Mind]**Positive Thinking Your Key to Success**

Remez Sasson

Positive thinking brings inner peace, success, improved relationships and better health. The daily affairs of life move more smoothly, life brightens up, and there is more happiness and satisfaction.

Positive thinking is contagious. People around you pick up your mental moods and are affected accordingly. Think about happiness, good health and success, and you will cause people to like you and desire to help you, because they enjoy the vibrations that a positive mind emits.

In order to make positive thinking yield results, some inner work is necessary. You need to develop a positive attitude toward life, expect a successful outcome of whatever you do, and also take any necessary actions to ensure your success.

Effective positive thinking that brings results is much more than just repeating a few positive words or telling yourself that everything is going to be all right. It has to be your predominant mental attitude. It is not enough to think positively for a few moments, and then letting fears and lack of belief enter your mind. As said earlier, some effort and inner work are necessary. Are you willing to make a real inner change? Are you willing to change the way you think? Are you willing to possess a mental power that can positively affect you, your environment and the people around you?

Here are a few actions and tips to help you develop the power of positive thinking:

- Always use only positive words in your inner dialogues. Use words such as, I can, I am able, it is possible, it can be done, etc.
- Accompany your inner dialogues with feelings of happiness, strength and success
- Do not heed negative thoughts. Calmly refuse to think these thoughts, and substitute them with constructive happy thoughts.
- In your conversations with other people use words that evoke scenes of strength, happiness and success in their minds.
- Before starting with any plan or action, visualize clearly in your mind its successful outcome. If you visualize with concentration and faith, you will be amazed at the results.
- Read at least one page of inspiring literature every day.
- Watch movies that make you happy.
- Listen to the news and read the papers, but do that sparingly and with detachment.
- Associate yourself with people who think positively.
- Always sit and walk with your back straight. This will strengthen your confidence and inner strength.
- Walk, swim or engage in some other physical activity. This helps to develop a more positive attitude.

Think positive and expect only favorable results and situations, even if currently your life is not as you wish it to be, and in time your mental attitude and your your life circumstances will change accordingly.

More information on positive thinking is available from Ramez Sasson's website:

http://www.successconsciousness.com/index_00003a.htm

[Food as Medicine]

Food as Medicine

Rhonda Wilkinson

"Treat an illness first with food. Only if this fails should medicine be prescribed."

(Sun Simao, court physician in the Tang Dynasty, quoted in "The Chinese Kitchen", by Eileen Yin-Fei Lo)

I had an interesting experience once while shopping at a candy store in Chinatown. After ringing up my purchases, the cashier pressed several small containers into my hand. Each was roughly the shape of a thimble but much larger, and contained an orange-yellowish gelatinous substance. "It's mango with coconut meat," she said, "good for the digestion."

What's interesting is that I had been suffering from periodic bouts of heartburn. Was there something in my appearance - perhaps shadows under the eyes - that made this fact obvious to someone with a basic knowledge of Chinese medicine? Unfortunately, I didn't have the time to stay and talk with her further. However, I thought it would be interesting to explore some of the different ingredients - many exotic, others a staple of the Asian marketplace - that are used in the treatment of various illnesses and medical conditions.

- **Bird's Nests and Shark's Fin** - Besides sharing an exorbitant price tag (not surprising considering that the first is made from the hardened saliva of the swiftlet bird, while the second requires days of preparation before arriving at the pharmacy) both of these exotic foodstuffs are reputed to be good for the complexion. Fortunately, so is the less expensive **Fish Maw**. Made from the air bladder of certain types of fish, it works well in soups and stews, absorbing the flavors of the foods it is cooked with.
- **Chinese Black Mushrooms** - No need to visit the Chinese pharmacist for these - you'll find bins of black mushrooms packed to nearly overflowing in any Asian grocery store. Used in soups and stir-fries, they are thought to be helpful in lowering blood pressure.
- **Cordyceps** - A worm in winter and a plant in summer? - surely I had misunderstood the pharmacist. In fact, the Chinese name for *Cordyceps Robertii* means "winter worm summer grass." As *The Oxford Companion to Food* explains, during the winter the Cordyceps fungus grows solely inside its host. However, in summer it produces an outer growth, and it is these brown stalks that are eaten. Grown mainly in Szechuan and Tibet, Cordyceps is quite expensive - \$120 an ounce Canadian at the pharmacy I visited. Thought to increase stamina, it is used in soups, often in combination with chicken or duck. In addition, preparations containing Cordyceps are sometimes used by long distance runners wanting to increase their aerobic capacity.
- **Dried Gecko** - The sight of a gecko skeleton - bearing a marked resemblance to a translucent bat - can be a little unnerving. Cut up and heated in rice wine, the hardy lizard is used to treat everything from coughs and kidney infections to asthma.
- **Ginger** - Besides being appreciated for its distinct flavor and ability to diffuse other strong odors, ginger has long been used as a digestive aid. Thought to get rid of air in the body, it is used to treat both stomach acidity and motion sickness. In China, women customarily drink a mixture of ginger cooked in wine and sesame oil shortly after giving birth.
- **Hair Moss** - The next time you spot a black rectangle of something that looks like human hair, but feels more scratchy (like the hair on a doll), chances are you've stumbled across hair moss. Also known as hair seaweed, black moss, and hair vegetable, this ingredient is served in a vegetarian dish during Chinese New Year. It grows in the Gobi desert, nourished by mountain springs after heavy rainfalls. Its curative properties are thought to include cleansing the colon. Hair moss must be soaked before use.
- **Sea Cucumber** - A gelatinous aquatic creature that gets its name from its shape, sea cucumber is thought to contain minerals that help build healthy joints, as well as improving blood circulation disorders and lowering blood pressure. Many Chinese pharmacies carry dried sea cucumber, which must be soaked before use. Sea cucumber works well in soups, and is often found in combination with bamboo shoots, mushrooms, chicken broth, and various seasonings.

- **Tangerine Peel (Dried)** - If the price tag of some of the more exotic items on this list has dampened your interest in Chinese medicines, you'll be happy to know that this particular treatment can be made at home - just leave the peel of a tangerine to dry and then store in an airtight container. Tangerine peel is used in many Chinese dishes. It is thought to improve digestion.

The author adds this disclaimer: Please note that the information contained above is intended for general interest only. I am not a doctor; nor do I claim to be an expert on the subject of using food to improve bodily health.

For full text of this article, recipes and links to more articles on Chinese Food as Medicine: Go to <http://chinesefood.about.com/library/weekly/aa092200a.htm> and read the entire article on Chinese food as medicine.

SEA CUCUMBER: FOOD AND MEDICINE

by Subhuti Dharmananda, Ph.D., Director, Institute for Traditional Medicine, Portland, Oregon

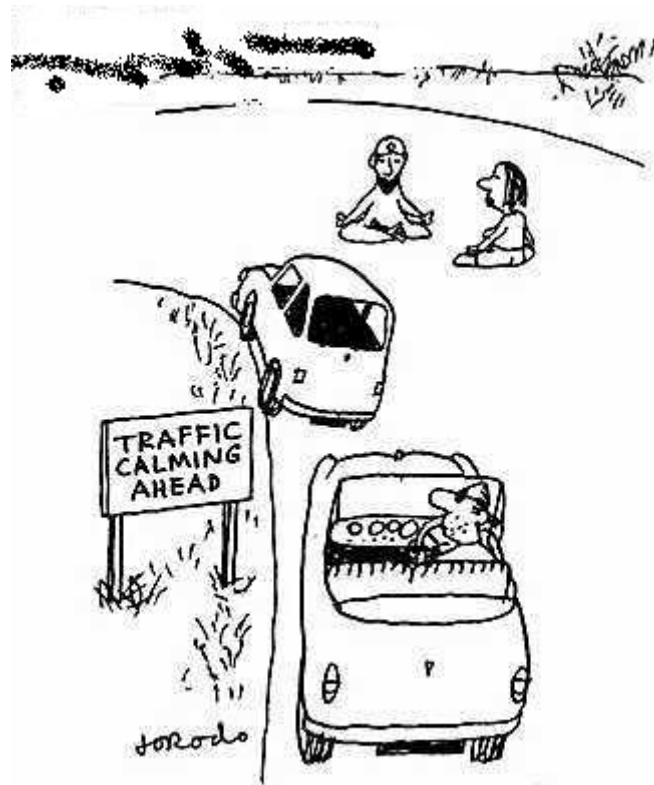
The pacific sea cucumber (*Stichopus* species and other members of the family Holothurioidea) has been revered by Chinese cooks since ancient times. In particular, sea cucumber meals have been offered on special occasions, especially New Year celebrations. An ancient Confucian recipe, translated roughly as "The Eight Immortals Crossing the Sea" and made with sea cucumber, shark's fin, and 5 kinds of fish and shellfish, is one of the classic banquet dishes. The sea cucumber is valued-along with several other delicacies, such as shark's fin, ginseng, cordyceps, and tremella-as a disease preventive and longevity tonic. It was listed as a medicinal agent in the ***Bencao Congxin* (New Compilation of Materia Medica)** by Wu Yiluo in 1757. The popular Chinese name for sea cucumber is *haishen*, which means, roughly, ginseng of the sea. It is often known in medical literature as *fangcishen* (*fang* = four-sided, *ci* = thorny; referring to the spiky protrusions that emanate from four sides) or, in abbreviated form, *fangshen*.



Pacific sea cucumber (with branching tentacles extended)

From the Institute for Traditional Medicine: <http://www.itmonline.org/>

[A Comedy Moment]



[What's New at WISH]

- For the first time WISH is having a **Special Summer Sale** on all its products until August 4, 2006. All orders will receive a 20% discount and WISH members will receive an additional 10% discount. Orders with more than 10 items will receive a 30% discount and for WISH certified instructors it will be a 40% discount. You can place the order by completing the order form and emailing it to us at qigong4us@aol.com or faxing it to us at 732-699-0099. Alternatively, you can also order by phone at 732-699-0900. The order form can be found on our website at <http://www.wishus.org> under the 'Products' link. Credit card, money order, and check are all acceptable means of payment. If you wish to send a money order or check, it should be made out to WISH and sent with the order form to:
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