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A TRANSDISCIPLINARY EXPOSITION OF TAIJI QIGONG

*Individual Empowerment Through Applied Self-Therapeutics:
Eikonic Enablements Towards Optimisation of Mental
and Physical Well-being.*

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ABSTRACT

Self-Therapeutic Adjuvant Modalities (STAM), refers to actions taken by individuals for the benefit of their health and well-being. They are an accepted component of illness prevention, health maintenance, optimisation and or treatment of illness and injury. The potential benefits of applying STAM have not yet been fully realised by Australia's population. Consequently neither has the health infrastructure fully realised the economic benefits which accrue from the wide scale application of STAM, particularly the preventative aspect.

Australia's health providers are increasingly stressing the benefits of STAM in their health promotion campaigns. However the fact that almost half the population of NSW is sedentary indicates that education on benefits of STAM as a modality for fostering physical activity still has further to permeate.

Evidence strongly suggests that in conjunction with nutrition and hygiene, Moderate-Intensity Activity (MIA) and meditation are of major importance in the physical and mental well-being of people. The author found there is a need for a STAM programme which is suitable for the general population to address their needs for MIA and meditation. Taken into consideration in evaluating research for such a programme were the following parameters:

- Efficacy from application for a variety of situations;
- Efficiency of use;
- Broad based applicability;
- Specific relevancy for Australian health needs; and
- Economy of implementation.

Research and experiment lead the author to conclude that with only slight modification to suit Australian conditions a Traditional Chinese Medical (TCM) programme of Medical and Health Care *Qigong* (*Qubing Yangsheng Gong*, QYG) as researched by the Shanghai Institute of Hypertension appeared most suitable for use in Australia. An appropriate term for this programme in Australia was concluded to be *Taiji Qigong* (TQ). This thesis presents a manual of a program suitable for use by Australians of all ages and levels of fitness.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ACRONYMS	viii
HANZI AND PINYIN	ix
GLOSSARY OF TERMS	xii
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	
1. AIMS	18
1.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	18
1.2 AN OVERVIEW OF QYG	19
1.3 THE CORE PRINCIPLES QYG	22
1.4 WAYS	23
1.4.1 ORIGIN OF THE WAY OF QIGONG	24
1.5 THE SITUATION IN AUSTRALIA: STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	26
1.5.1 AN EXAMPLE PROBLEM ADDRESSED	27
1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: HEALTH PROMOTION IN AUSTRALIA	28
1.6.1 CONTINUING CONCERNS AND REASONS FOR THE RESEARCH	30
1.7 REASONS FOR THE PARTICULAR PROGRAM CHOSEN	32
1.8 NOMENCLATURE	34
1.9 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	36
CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	42
2.1 JOURNAL ARTICLES	42
2.2 BOOKS	59
2.2.1 NSW HEALTH INFORMATION SERVICE PAMPHLETS	64
2.3 INTERNET	64
2.4 VIDEO	67
2.5. CONCLUSIONS FROM THE LITERATURE	67
2.5.1 ONLY 1% OF LIFE	69
2.5.2 DANGERS OF VIE	70
2.6 SUMMARY	72
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	
3. INTRODUCTION	78

3.1	DATA: BACKGROUND RESEARCH FOR PILOT STUDY ONE	78
	3.1.1 DATA COLLECTION BY WAY OF EXPERIMENT	78
	3.1.2 ETHICS APPROVAL	82
3.2	PILOT STUDY ONE (PS1)	83
	3.2.1 COURSE STRUCTURE	84
	3.2.2 COMMENTS FROM PARTICIPANTS ON THE FIRST SET OF FORMS	85
	3.2.3 SUBSEQUENT RESEARCH TO PILOT STUDY ONE WHICH LED TO FURTHER MODIFICATIONS OF THE PROGRAM.	86
3.3	PILOT STUDY TWO (PS2)	90
	3.3.1. COMMENTS FROM PARTICIPANTS ON VERSION TWO OF THE PROGRAM	92
	3.3.2 SPECIFIC POINTS ADDRESSED IN DISCUSSION WITH PARTICIPANTS	92
	3.3.3 ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE AND RESEARCH WHICH INFLUENCED VERSION THREE (V3) OF THE PROGRAM	93
3.4	PILOT STUDY THREE (PS3)	94
3.5	CONCLUSIONS FROM THE THREE PILOT STUDIES	95
3.6	THE FINAL <i>TAIJI QIGONG</i> PROGRAM	96
3.7	CHAPTER SUMMARY	96
CHAPTER 4 ANCIENT WISDOM IN THE MODERN WORLD		
4	INTRODUCTION	100
4.1	ORIGINS AND HISTORY OF QIGONG	100
4.2	AFTER THE DAOJIA	112
4.3	TAIJQUAN	113
4.4	THE NINETEEN EIGHTIES	114
4.5	SUMMARY	115
CHAPTER 5 A PROPOSAL FOR THE USE OF TAIJI QIGONG		
5.	THE POTENTIAL VALUE OF THE ADDITION OF A PROGRAM OF TQ SUITABLE FOR AUSTRALIAN ENVIRONMENT	117
5.1	THE BENEFITS OF TAIJI QIGONG	118
5.2	TAKE CARE	120
5.3	A CHOICE FOR THE WORKPLACE	123
	5.3.1 WORK-RELATED STRESS	125
	5.3.2 THE BENEFITS OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY	126
5.4	MEDITATION & MIA AND THEIR BENEFITS FOR HEALTH	126
	5.4.1 WHAT IS STRESS?	127
	5.4.2. WE ALL REACT DIFFERENTLY	128

5.4.3 SELF-PERCEPTIONS	129
5.4.4 DEPRESSION	130
5.4.5 RECOGNISING STRESS	131
5.4.6 POSITIVE STEPS FOR DEALING WITH STRESS	132
5.4.7 THE TQ APPROACH TO DEALING WITH STRESS	134
5.5 MIA: THE FUNCTIONAL PHYSICAL BENEFITS	135
5.6 SUMMARY	137
CHAPTER 6 APPLICATION OF THE TQ FORMS	
6. INTRODUCTION	141
6.1 THE BENEFITS OF APPLICATION	143
6.2 A SAMPLE DISCLAIMER	144
6.3 APPLICATION OF THE PROGRAM WHILE IN THE LEARNING STAGE	145
6.4 I. YUBEISHI:PRELIMINARIES, STEPS FOR GETTING READY	145
6.5 SITTING, LYING, STANDING	145
6.5.1 THE SEQUENCE FOR SITTING	148
6.5.2 APPLYING THE FORMS LYING DOWN	149
6.5.3 STANDING	152
6.6 SOME SPECIFIC USES FOR THE FORMS	
6.6.1 TO RELAX THE BODY & MIND TO RELIEVE STRESS AND TENSION	176
6.6.2 ENHANCING MOBILITY	177
6.6.3 STANDING SEQUENCE FOR THE FLUID MOVEMENT THROUGH THE FORMS	178
6.7 PREVENTION OF SIDE EFFECTS	180
6.8 SUMMARY	181
CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSIONS	182
APPENDICES	
A Non-Invasive Procedures Form A	188
B Plain Language Statement and Consent Form	193
C Additional <i>Forms</i>	195
BIBLIOGRAPHY	197

ACRONYMS

AJCM	American Journal of Chinese Medicine
ALFF	Appropriate Level of Functional Fitness
AM	<i>Adjuvant Modalities</i>
ATO	Australian Taxation Office
ASEM	<i>Aviation, Space, and Environmental Medicine</i>
CQSRA	Chinese <i>Qigong</i> Scientific Research Association
CQ	<i>Concentrative Qigong</i>
CRPS-I	<i>Complex Regional Pain Syndrome</i> type I
GST	Goods and Services Tax
IAM	Institute of Aviation Medicine, Air Force, People's Liberation Army of China, Beijing
JTCM	<i>Journal of Traditional Chinese Medicine</i>
KP	<i>Kundalini Psychosis</i>
MIA	Moderate Intensity Activity
MSD	Muskuloskeletal Disorder
NCQ	<i>Non-Concentrative Qigong</i>
NHMRC	The National Health and Medical Research Council
OSHA	U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational, Safety and Health Administration.
QYG	<i>Qubing Yangsheng Gong</i>
QD	<i>Qigong Deviation</i>
QEQ	<i>Qigong-emitted External Qi</i>
RSI	Repetitive Strain Injury
SIH	Shanghai Institute of Hypertension
ST	<i>Self-Therapeutics</i>
STAM	<i>Self-Therapeutic Adjuvant Modality(s)</i>
STQ	<i>Simplified Taijiquan</i>
U3A	The University of the Third Age
TCM	Traditional Chinese Medicine
TQ	<i>Taiji Qigong</i>
VIE	Vigorous Intensity Exercise
WBA	Weight Bearing Activity
YG	<i>Yangsheng Gong</i>

HANZI AND PINYIN

The English translation of the Hanzi is to be found in the body of the text.

闭目养神	Bì Mù Yǎng Shén
陈	Chén
大夫	Dàifu
丹田	Dāntián
丹田之气	Dāntián Zhī Qì
道德经	Dàodéjīng
道家	Dàojiā
道教	Dàojiào
导引	Dǎoyǐn
动	Dòng
动中运气	Dòng Zhōng Yùn Qì
风水	Fēng Shuǐ
功夫	Gōngfu
郭林气功	Guō Lín Qìgōng
挥手如云	Huī Shǒu Rú Yún
皇帝内经	Huángdì Nèijīng
静	Jìng
精	Jīng
经络	Jīngluò
静中按摩求养生	Jìng Zhōng Ànmó Qiú Yǎngshēng
静中运气	Jìng Zhōng Yùn Qì
老子	Lǎo Zǐ
理	Lǐ
沐浴气	Mùyù Qì
内养功气功	Nèiyǎnggōng Qìgōng
排肩击腰	Pài Jiān Jī Yāo
普通话	Pǔtōnghuà
气	Qì

HANZI AND PINYIN

气功	Qìgōng
气海	Qìhǎi
去病养生功	Qùbìng Yǎngshēng Gōng
入静	Rùjìng
三元站	Sānyuánzhàn
师傅	Shīfu
神	Shén
双轮还丹	Shuāng Lún Huán Dān
舒展沐浴	Shū Zhǎn Mù Yù
孙	Sūn
太极	Tàijí
太极图	Tàijí Tú
太极开合	Tàijí Kāihé
太极拳	Tàijíquán
吐故纳新	Tǔ Gù Nà Xīn
吴	Wú
武术	Wúshù
无为	Wúwéi
心平气和	Xīnpíng Qìhé
杨	Yáng
养神功	Yǎngshén Gōng
养生功	Yǎngshēng Gōng
阴阳	Yīn-Yáng
意拳站桩气功	Yìquán Zhànzhūāng Qìgōng
元宝气功	Yuánbǎo Qìgōng
预备式	Yùbèishì
庄子	Zhuāng Zǐ
庄周	Zhuāng Zhōu

HANZI AND PINYIN

逐渐地从气功状态出现

Zhújiàn de cóng Qìgōng Zhuàngtài Chūxiàn

抓住鸟尾巴

Zhuāzhù Niǎo Wěiba

自发功

Zìfā Gōng

自然

Zìrán

坐忘

Zuòwàng

GLOSSARY OF MAIN TERMS

Where possible the definitions of the terms have been taken verbatim from recognised authorities on the subject. The author found no reason to paraphrase or truncate technical terms

ADJUVANT

A non-primary modality which enhances the effect of other, especially the primary, modalities. A form of treatment that can be used within the parameters of Australian medical practice. This includes the existing physical infrastructure, e.g. hospitals, community health centres, and doctors in private practice.

DANTIAN

Dantian is the name given to a point in the *Jingluo* where *Qi* is stored. There are three *Dantians* in the body; one at the body's centre of gravity, the next in the area of the heart and the third in the head. The lower *Dantian* is the primary *Qi Hai* (Ocean of *Qi*) where the storage of *Qi* first begins.

DAN TIAN ZHI QI

Deep breathing controlled by the diaphragm.

DONG

Physical motion of the body.

FORM

Form refers to the method (Dynamic or Static, *Internal Qigong* or *External Qigong*, *Concentrative Qigong* or *Non-concentrative Qigong*) and body position for a particular *Qi* flow. There are supposed to be thousands of *Forms*.

JING

Stillness, tranquillity of the mind and body

JING

Essence, *Jing* is the substance that underlies all organic life.

It is the source of organic change. *Jing* is supportive and nutritive, and is the basis of reproduction and development. *Jing* has two sources which are also its characteristic aspects.

Prenatal Jing or congenital essence imported from parents. The quantity and quality of this is fixed at birth, and together with original *Qi* determines an

individuals basic makeup and constitution.

Postnatal Jing derived from the purified aspects of food.¹

JINGLUO

Jingluo is the theory of the flow of internal energy throughout the body, which forms the basis of all traditional Chinese medicine. The term meridian which is used in western texts on acupuncture is the equivalent of *Jingluo* ²

The word meridian as used in Chinese medicine came into the English language through a French translation of the Chinese term *jingluo*. *Jing* means to "go through" or a "thread in a fabric". *Luo* means "something that connects or attaches," or "a net." Meridians are the channels or pathways that carry *Qi* and *Blood* through the body. In TCM blood does not refer to sanguine fluid, but to another form of energy. They are not blood vessels. Rather the *jingluo* comprise an invisible network that links together all the fundamental substances and organs. ³

There are also many small, finer, netlike minor *meridians*, called *Luo Meridians*. The twelve regular Meridians along with the Governor and Conception Meridians are the fourteen major Meridians: They and the minor Meridians are the warp and woof of the body.⁴

LI

Underlying patterns in Nature. Originally said to refer to the striations in jade or the grain of wood.

MEDITATION

Meditation in TQ refers to the act of practising a *Form*. With TQ, when a person applies a *Form* they are said to be *meditating*.

METHOD

Concentrative TQ-Specific visualisation or attention to breath.

Non-concentrative TQ-Non-specific or nil visualisation.

MOVEMENT

Dynamic-involving movement of limbs.

Static-enacted without movement of limbs.

TAIJI

Means the best point of balance between *Yin* and *Yang*.

TAIJI QIGONG

Taiji Qigong means: to skilfully (*gong*) self-apply the body's life energy (*Qi* pronounced *chee*) to achieve the best possible point of balance of the body's *Yin* and *Yang* (*Taiji*). Traditional Chinese Medical theory holds that the attainment and maintenance of good health depends on the balance of body *Yin* and *Yang* which are constantly in motion and change.

QI

Qi not only maintains life and health, it governs almost all activity in the body including:

- (i) It activates the life force, and the growth, metabolism, regeneration and repair of the body.
- (ii) It has a warming effect regulating body temperature and keeping the organs in an active capacity.
- (iii) It guards against invasion of the body by disease.
- (iv) It restores and maintains the level of blood and body fluids circulating in the body.

In summary, *Qi* is of vital importance to the health of the entire body. A person with strong *Qi* is both healthier and stronger than a person with weak *Qi*, and any disturbance of the flow of *Qi*, or weakening of *Qi*, will result in illness.⁵

'It [*Qi*] flows from the *Dantian* along the meridians to all parts of the body.'⁶

TYPES OF QI

There are many types of *Qi*, five of them however are especially important.

(1) ORGAN *Qi* (*zhang fu zhi qi*)

Every organ has its own *Qi*, whose activity is characterised by the organ to which it is attached.

(2) MERIDIAN *Qi* (*jingluo zhi qi*)

Meridians are the channels through which *Qi* flows, adjusting and harmonising the activity of the organs and body parts.

(3) NUTRITIVE *Qi* (*ying qi*)

Intimately associated with the *blood* - it manifests itself in the blood and moves with it through the blood vessels. Its activity helps transform the purest nutrients derived from food into blood.

(4) PROTECTIVE *Qi* (*wei qi*)

Responsible for resisting and combating external pernicious influences when they invade the body. Considered the most *Yang* manifestation of *Qi* in the body, it moves within the chest and abdominal cavities, and travels between the skin and muscles. This *Qi* regulates the sweat glands and pores, and moistens and protects the skin and hair.

(5) ANCESTRAL *Qi*. (*Qi of the chest zong qi*)

It gathers in the chest where it forms a Sea of *Qi* [cf. Ocean of *Qi* above]. The *Nei-Jing* states that it "collects in the chest, goes out through the throat, connects with the heart and vessels, and moves respiration."

Its main function is to aid and regulate the rhythmic movement of respiration and heartbeat, and so is intimately connected with the lungs and heart. The strength and evenness of respiration, voice, heartbeat and movement of the blood are all related to the *Qi* of the chest.⁷

QIGONG

The variety of activities collectively known as *Qigong* have in common the manipulation of *Qi*. *Qi* has sometimes been translated into English as "breath," "pneuma" or "vapour", but these translations treat *Qi* as a substance and miss its other essential aspect, captured in the alternative translations, of "energy" or "vital energy." According to traditional Chinese cosmology, which informs medical theory, *Qi* is found in all things, including people, and circulates through them. If *Qi* is a problematic term in English, *gong* is no less so. A word that covers the range of meanings of "merit," "achievements," "exploits," "skills," its use in the compound *Qigong* is, perhaps closer to "powers." The verb, *lian*, that is normally

used in conjunction with *Qigong* (which would function as the word *practice* would in English) translates literally as "to cultivate" or "to refine." Thus the meaning of the words that describe the practice of *Qigong* point back to traditional ideas of self cultivation, to Daoist Inner Alchemy, or to Buddhist meditations.⁸

RUJING

Rujing means to enter into a state of tranquillity (*Jing*), through the use of *Qigong*.

SHEN

Best translated as spirit, it is a quality unique to humans. If *Jing* is the source of life, and *Qi* the ability to activate and move, then *Shen* is the vitality behind *Jing* and *Qi* in the body. *Shen* is the awareness that shines out of our eyes when we are truly awake. The origin of shen is analogous to the origin of *Jing*, yet the *Shen* is also continually and materially nourished after birth. Although regarded as spirit, it does have a material aspect and is a fundamental substance of the body.

Shen is the capacity of the mind to form ideas and the desire to love life when it loses its harmony the eyes lack lustre and the thinking is muddled. A person so affected may be slow and forgetful or suffer insomnia and incoherent speech.

Extreme disharmony can lead to unconsciousness or madness.⁹

TECHNIQUE

Neigong internal energy technique. Circulation of *Qi* within body.

Waigong external energy technique. Projection of *Qi* externally.

WUWEI

Not interfering with the natural process of existence.

ZIRAN

Natural spontaneity.

ZUOWANG

Sitting and forgetting.

ENDNOTES

¹ T.D. Kaptchuk, *Chinese Medicine, The Web that has no Weaver*, Rider, Melbourne, 1986, p.43.

² *ibid.*, p.34.

³ *ibid.*, p.77.

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 78.

⁵ G.X. Kan, & P. Lam., *Chen Style Taijiquan the 36 Forms*, East Acton Publishing Pty Ltd., Sydney, 1992, p. 34.

⁶ *ibid.* p. 34.

⁷ Kaptchuk, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-39.

⁸ Zhu X., B.Penny, 'Editor's Introduction', *Chinese Sociology and Anthropology*, vol. 27, # 1, Fall 1994, p.4-5.

⁹ Kaptchuk, *op. cit.* p.45.