



[Click to view this email in a browser](#)

## Center for Traditional Health Arts Newsletter

Greetings,

I hope that you are having a great late spring/early summer (from the traditional Chinese calendar, we have just entered the summertime!).

We had a great program here with Elisabeth Rochat de la Vallee last week and I am excited to announce that she will be back here in Petaluma on **Wednesday, July 18th!** We are still working out the details, but the date is set for those of you that need to plan a little ways in advance.

In addition to our regular programs ([see our update page here](#)) we are also going to have a special Quiet Qigong Medical Qigong workshop on June 23rd - I have listed the details below and on the update page.

The feature article in this newsletter (scroll down a bit more) is The Movement of Life Part 2: Exercise. I hope that you enjoy this perspective on movement and exercise and find it helpful. Questions on exercise come up frequently in the office. I have also seen that if people work with different types of physical activities and exercises and eat in balanced way many of the chronic health problems that show up get better with minimal intervention!

---

### **A quick story about our membership program.**

The membership program here provides funding for Traditional Chinese Medicine services and herbs for those that wouldn't otherwise have access to this important system of health care.

When she first came to our office, G. couldn't work more than an hour or so a day, a few days a week. She was debilitated by fatigue, muscle pain and lung issues. Even though she was in such bad shape and had heard great things about Chinese medicine, she hadn't been able to try traditional Chinese medicine as she couldn't afford more than her most basic expenses. Because of our member supported program we were able to provide comprehensive care. Now, 6 months later, she is working 4-5 hours a day (of physical work) at least four days a week without excess fatigue and pain. Her most recent comment to me, after thanking me (and the Center membership program) for all the support was "it seems like a miracle!"

So if you are already a member, thank you! If not please consider joining - there are also many great member benefits ([member website](#), discounts, member programs, etc.) - I recently had two people independently say to me that the information that was available on the member website was their "real health insurance." Take a look [here](#) for more information.

---

### **Quiet Action: Quiet Qigong Workshop - Saturday, June 23rd 1:30-3:30**

Within traditional Chinese medicine and qigong, quietness is not so much the lack of movement as it is the beginning of the proper movement. Developing quietness and the consequent rhythm of movement and stillness in life provides a powerful basis for cultivating health.

One of the simplest to learn yet most profound qigong practices, Quiet Gong forms the basis for all other practices within Medical Qigong. It trains the body, breath and mind to adapt to change and face challenges with inner stability and clarity. This is the exercise that is most commonly used by my teacher as well as in my practice to help people restore their health.

This workshop will include discussions on the philosophy of quietness, applying yin yang (quietness/activity) principles to daily activities and detailed instruction on the practices of Quiet Qigong.

The workshop will be on Saturday, June 23rd at the Center for Traditional Health Arts from 1:30-3:30. \$35, \$30 for members. Registration fee includes a CD with audio instructions and a follow-

along practice session and articles/handouts. Please contact me for more information by email or at (707) 763-8040.

**Keep scrolling down for our feature article!**



## **The Movement of Life Part 2 - Exercise**

by Sean Fannin

We need to move to be healthy. From the perspective of Traditional Chinese Medicine all kinds of movement are described as qi. This idea of movement is essential to understanding the theories of Chinese medicine. Without considering the movement of life we are reduced to mechanistic explanation of the body, which limits the effectiveness of any kind of self-care or medical intervention. Even at the acupuncture colleges there is a tendency to limit discussions of process and function to their material counterparts. For example, mai is often translated as blood vessels and jing mai as channels and vessels. However, while these terms encompass the structures of the body the actual meaning is closer to a function of "vital circulation," or the "network of vital circulation." Another common term in Chinese medicine is jin, which gets translated as tendons. However, the more accurate meaning is muscular force - or the ability of the tendons (and muscles) to contract and generate force.

These ideas of muscular force and vital circulation are important to keep in mind when we are discussing movement and exercise, particularly within the context of activities that are more physically demanding. In a previous article I discussed daily activities and qigong practices as the most fundamental levels of exercise. These remain the basis of all of our movement and activities and they provide a foundation that we can build upon. Once that foundation is in place, we can begin to increase the level of activity in our life; as I mentioned, we need to move to be healthy.

So while it is important to have some kind of relatively intense activity, we need to keep in mind why we are doing it. Working progressively with higher levels of physical activity is one of the most important ways to ensure that the vital circulation of the body is in good order and that the muscular force is appropriately strong. These are not so much about the physical structures of the body, although they do provide the basis for that, but rather about the healthy functioning of the body, including our mental and emotional health. When we exercise with this in mind we don't need to worry about our body looking a certain way, etc. but can instead focus on how we feel when everything is in the right order within the body - clear, calm and strong.

There are a couple of key points that I would like to emphasize that can be applied whatever the specific exercises are. The first is that there must be variation in intensity. The second is that the activity needs to be progressively more challenging. In terms of intensity there are two ways to look at this. The first is a variation in intensity within the time that you are exercising. The second is that there is a variation in intensity between the sessions that you are exercising within a week. For example, if you are swimming (or hiking or whatever) it is not effective to go at the same pace for the whole time that you are swimming. You will either go too hard and burn out early, or not go hard enough (in order to last) and not get the larger benefits of the exercise. Instead, vary the intensity: one lap go hard, then take it easy the next lap, then go at a medium pace for the third and so on, rotating these three levels throughout the whole time that you are swimming. Of course, it is the same principle if you are hiking, running and so on.

In terms of variation between sessions, you can emphasize one phase of the exercise intensity each day for example if you are exercising 3 days a week. The first day you might spend more time in the higher intensity, the second day on the light or easy side and the third day more at a medium level. The last thing to say about intensity is that it is relative. The high, medium and low levels of intensity are dependent on you, not on any external measure. An important aspect of

this is that if your circumstances shift and you have more going on, what would be medium or even low level of activity and intensity become high and we need to adjust accordingly. Don't think that you are missing out by doing less. In fact the overall benefit is the same as the relative intensity (the body is working harder to do the same amount) is the same, even though you are doing less. This is important to keep in mind, because if we don't adjust to our circumstances we will be easily injured or depleted. The point is to cultivate supple strength and vital circulation. Pushing too hard, too fast, depletes the strength and weakens the circulation.

The second point is that the exercise or activity needs to be progressively more challenging. There is a benefit to following a particular routine, but if we never change that routine the benefit levels off quickly. We are constantly changing and adapting. This is, in fact, one of the most important things to keep in mind when we are discussing health. The environment, season, life circumstances and so on are constantly shifting around us and within us, and we need to shift with them in order to restore the health and stay healthy. The same is true of our exercise. In order to benefit from exercise we need adapt by increasing the level of challenge. This is the fundamental principle of any system of strength training. It doesn't mean that every time you exercise you need to do more, but, over time, you do need to progressively increase what you are doing...

[Become a member of the Center for Traditional Health Arts and read the full article.](#)

[Direct link to the full article for members here.](#)

---

As always, please feel free to contact me with any thoughts or questions.

All my best,

Sean

Sean Fannin, CH, Dipl.CEM

Contact Information:  
Center for Traditional Health Arts  
5 Keller Street, Suite A, Petaluma, CA 94952  
707.763.8040

---

If you no longer wish to receive these emails, please reply to this message with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line or simply click on the following link: [Unsubscribe](#)

---

Center for Traditional Health Arts  
5 Keller Street, Suite A  
Petaluma, California 94952  
US

[Read](#) the VerticalResponse marketing policy.

