

# Energy Play Qigong

## Thoughts on the power of Observation

The process of learning and understanding Qigong is a long one. The initial emphasis will inevitably be on the sequence of movements but once this 'dance' has been learnt, once the mind no longer needs to be engaged in the mechanics of the dance, *this* is the point that we can start to gain the true benefits of the work.

Think back to when you learned to ride a bike. The concentration and focus that you employed initially compared to the relaxed nature of the movement once you have gained the confidence in your new ability is quite marked. You can watch someone who is just learning to ride and it's easy to see that they are not comfortable in their movement, but as soon as the concentration and focus on the movement are allowed to relax, the body relaxes and the act of riding becomes second nature.

When the aim of the movement is to allow you to travel from one place to another in an efficient manner (as is the case with riding a bike) it is easy to ignore the way in which we respond to the act of riding; the act of riding a bike (and the benefits that can be found in it) are not a million miles from the benefits that we can find within Qigong. The movement, once learned, enables the mind to be free. Next time you are riding a bike or walking in nature - performing any action that has become second nature to you - ask yourself what is the mind doing? Can we be happy to simply exist within the activity that we are doing? Try disconnecting the ipod, removing our usual distractions and see what the sensation of 'just being' in the movement feels like.

When we take the time to simply 'be' with the movement, we can allow the mind to explore the finer details. It could be that the finer detail that you are noticing is the squeak of an un-oiled bicycle chain, the thud of a footstep or the noises of the wind in the trees, but we can look deeper than this. We can recognise our emotional state, we can spot tension and discomfort within the body, we can use the time to explore and develop our understanding of all manner of things.

Within Qigong the ability to observe is the key to developing our understanding. The movements may be cleverly developed to explore specific aspects of the physical and emotional, but learning from these movements is based on our ability to observe the information that comes to us while immersed in the movement.

# Energy Play Qigong

When we make these observations we must be careful to accept them simply as observations. If we focus on something, if we try and understand it or we hold on to the sensation we stand to not only miss additional information that may be present in the form but we also run the risk of misinterpreting the information that is presented to us as we are making assumptions about the reasons for the observation.

An observation may appear to be transitory but we shouldn't underestimate the way that this can affect us; sometimes we need to glimpse things many times, from many perspectives before we can start to accept them. It's not important that we can recognise or describe the glimpses, it is only important that when they happen we can 'be' with them so that the understanding can build.

Similarly, it's not important to be able to fit our observations into a framework. We can become too focused on a particular explanation; a particular academic model. If we find something that explains our observations then we should embrace it, but do not cling on to it. Your observations are your own and Qigong should be a personal journey of discovery. Different explanation, different teachers will come and go but ultimately it should be about what we can learn not who we can emulate or how well we can quote books and systems.

The power of observation is in the ability for us to learn from our own experiences, it is without ego or expectation, it is simply allowing us to observe the way the deeper understanding manifest within our daily lives.