List of Classes

Bodymind Healing Qigong:
Embodying Cross-Cultural Wisdom Traditions

1. **Summer Solstice all Year Long: The Psycho-spiritual Path to Birthing Light and Energy in our Lives,** 6/22/24

   The Summer Solstice is the day of greatest light. In this first class of the 25-video series, we'll explore the exoteric and esoteric cross-cultural significance and practices related to the Summer Solstice and creation of energy. You'll learn how to apply the cultivation of imaginal light and energy to your everyday lives.

   Some of the topics discussed:

   • The Eastern idea of cultivating light and energy is contrasted with the Western mystery tradition.

   •Transmuting and Transcending traditions: Bringing imaginal light and energy to healing your personal issues can involve transcendent Qigong practices as well as working through (transmuting) psychological issues that block the chi. Subpersonality work, finding which of your psychological complexes is blocking you is analogized to finding King Arthur at your inner round table of subpersonalities. How to develop "executive function" to rise out of a limiting psychological complex using psychological and qigong methods. How to "shape shift" from a limiting subpersonality to your higher healing self. For example:

   • To find one's higher self in this way one can use Qigong practices to activate the light, and find and heal with the *mysterium tremendum*. Such practices from the BMHQ curriculum are: Standing Meditation Practices such as "shape shifting" into being a tree *(Zhan Zhuang*) , finding the universe in one's hands, Internal organ healing exercises, walking meditation, monkey qigong, bowing, etc.

   • Move the light through your joints for limberness.

   • Use Qigong practices for healing emotional dysregulation. For excess of light (arrogance and inflation), adapt your practice to realize that the sun is also a star.
   • Learning to cultivate healing energy by tonifying and relaxing practices: A fundamental element of medical Qigong.
   • Various BMHQ practices are mixed with poetry to bring forth their deeper meanings. For example," Human beings are just stars wrapped in skin; the light you've always been seeking has always been found within," says the great poet Rumi.

- Practices in the Western and Eastern mystery traditions for the time of death

After an initial lecture, the Bodymind Healing Qigong set is practiced to experience the topic of the day and discover other meaningful tributaries in the Qigong wilderness.

Bodymind Healing Qigong – Extended Short Form

30 *Minute Practice Routine by Michael Mayer*
You'll learn practices to: improve flexibility, balance, & relaxation, center your Self, limber joints, optimize energy flow, reverse reactivity when under stress, cultivate your self-healing resources, etc. Discover a state-specific mind, body, spirit practice that may stay with you for a lifetime — hopefully:-)

Pre practice Warm up:
A. Arm Swinging
B. Loose elbows
C. Straighten elbows to activate the Penetrating Extraordinary Channel (*Chong Mai)*
D. . Finger flicking: To activate Kidney Yang
E. Bouncing: To activate piezo electric effect to strengthen bones and tonify internal organs

1. Standing Meditation Qigong*
   A. Standing like a Tree
   B. The Circle that Arises from Stillness
   C. Holding Golden Balls in the Waters of Life
   D. Finding your own Stance- Opening the Golden Ball of the Heart
2. Dispersing Stagnant Chi
   A. Massaging, rubbing, squeezing, tapping
   B. Transforming your hands into electromagnets to remove iron filings from the skin, internal organs, washing the bone marrow
3. Ocean Wave Breathing
4. Tai Chi Ruler
   A. Change Fingers into Straws in the Garden of Eden
   B. Pouring Honey— Preventative medicine for kidneys
5. Selected *Daoyin Tu* type exercises: Guarding the Knees, Abductor stretch, Psoas stretch, the healing connection between neck and hips, Spiraling a Snake through your Joints, Dipping your Hands into the Waters of Life, Opening your Heart to the Heavens, Spiraling a Snake connecting Heaven and Earth —The Physician's Staff
   a. Healing the Internal Organ exercises:
      A. Wood (Gall Bladder Meridian)- Buddha Holds up the Heavens
      B. Fire- Opening the Heart, Sound *HA* 3 times
      C. Earth (Spleen Meridian)- Raising the Chi to Tan Tien and back to the Earth; Crane Walking, Crane flying, Sound HUH. for healing worry and correcting imbalances in leg strength."
      D. Metal- Lung chi, arrow to the Heavens; Lung chi, scooping up slurping and swinging down palms behind the back palms up sound *shhh*, 2nd Lung exercise: Moistening, clearing & tonifying the Lungs (slurping and expelling sounds)
      E. Water- Kidney Yin, outstretched palm to the side, Sound *Whoo*; Kidney Yang,

sound *Chirr- EEEE*; Yi Chuan Dragon
F. Wood- Liver, as in Tai Chi Shoulder stroke, Sound SSS

6. Animal Forms of Hua Tau (taught in the larger Bodymind Healing Qigong training). Short set, just Crane Walking and Flying —as in the Earth Healing the Internal Organ Set above).
7. Yi Chuan Walking Meditation Qigong' (Long term students learn the eight Yi Chuan postures and the twelve palms. In the short set we do just a few.)
8. Wuji and Yi Chuan Standing Meditation Qigong

* These practices are described and illustrated in *Secrets to Living Younger Longer: The Self- healing Path of Qigong, Standing Meditation and Tai Chi* (Mayer, Bodymind Healing Publications, 2004), and in *Energy Psychology: Self-Healing Practices for Bodymind Health* (Mayer, North Atlantic/Random House, 2009. This abbreviated 20 minute set comes from the whole 10 system set illustrated in the *Bodymind Healing Qigong DVD*. For information contact drmichael@bodymindhealing.com. Available at www.bodymindhealing.com

2. Deer Kissing Eyes: Finding your Medicine Animal—through Vision Questing and Shamanic Animal Form Qigong Practices, 9/4/24

Hua Tau, the Chinese Shaman Chinese Dr, developed the Animal frolics, (the crane, tiger, bear, monkey and deer) for patient's self-healing practices to complement acupuncture treatments. A basic element of Shamanism is to discover the healing lessons in animals' movements and to find one's medicine animal. In this class you'll hear the story of Dr Michael's 40-night vision quest where a deer visited him in a lucid dream. Hopefully this will inspire you to search inward for identifying your medicine animal.

In this class you'll be introduced to the broader cross cultural shamanic purposes of animal form practices to heal and "shape- shift." You'll begin to learn the healing practices of various animal frolics from the point of view of broadening the purposes of these qigong practices. In this class the Deer and Tiger forms will be introduced and practiced from this wider perspective.

Some juicy tidbits you'll learn about:

• Traditionally Deer practice helps the practitioner to develop agility, gentleness, readiness, stillness and finding balance between your civilized and wild self. In addition, you'll learn how the deer opens "listening channels" which can be helpful to embody non reactivity when listening to others' criticisms.

• The Tiger Form is associated with fierceness, confidence, and the ability to handle challenges. You'll learn how to find the spirit of the Tiger for your own self-actualization.

• You'll discover how the shamanic idea of "human beings as shape shifters" helps in the healing of trauma.

• You'll be introduced to techniques for integrating animal forms into daily life, and healing practices of Hua Tau's Animal Frolics are demonstrated.

After an initial lecture, the Bodymind Healing Qigong set is practiced to experience the topic of the day and discover other meaningful tributaries in the Qigong wilderness.

3. **Shamanic Cave Creation Myth: Your Entryway into Shape-shifting for Bodymind Healing.** 9/7/24

Creation myths are psycho-mythological teaching tales to induce healing pathways. The animal forms of qigong are stories and practices to invoke healing pathways when our civilized selves create a disconnection from our primordial nature.

Some specific things you'll learn about:

• You'll hear a Native American creation myth that tells of human beings being created by animals' shape shifting game; and similarly as the human begin closes his/her eyes a shape shifting into animals takes place. So, this teaching story is an induction into how in our primordial essential nature we are born from our animal natures and when things get rough healing can come from closing our eyes and going back to that aspect of our primordial animal nature that is needed. Joining East and West we explore how Qigong and the practice of intention can help us to shape shift when we're in moments of emotional dysregulation, trauma, etc.

• In the West we think in opposites. You're either relaxed or enlivened. Learn how to activate the Chinese state of "Fongsung"- which combines relaxation and vibrant aliveness.

•A shamanic perspective on Tai chi/Qigong highlighting the importance of embodying the elements of nature and animals to heal and connect with one's primordial self.

• An embodied Qigong Wounded Healer Morning Prayer.

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4. **Autumn Equinox Qigong: Cross cultural Perspectives on finding Balance and 'Lightening' up your Day** 9/21/24

The Autumn Equinox is the day of equal balance of light and dark. It is symbolic of the day of finding one's central equilibrium. We explore how various cross-cultural traditions celebrate the Autumn Equinox. The Great Mystery celebration in Greece at Eleusis and Epidaurus ritualizes the journey to the underworld that Persephone took and how she symbolizes the journey into the darkness and rebirth into light. Perspective and practices for developing ones' central equilibrium are explored.

For example you'll learn about:

• Contrasts between the Eastern and Western mystery traditions' approaches to finding inner light and discovering one's central equilibrium are discussed and practiced.

• Tai Chi/Qigong postures are mudras to bring balance into one's life both physically and psychologically. For example, if one is inhibited in speaking up to authority figures, "White Snake Sticks out its Tongue" can be practiced and a speaking truth to power mudra.

• Embodied metaphors lead to restoring psychological balance, for example if one's desires are overly voracious one can practice the Tai Chi movement "Taming the Tiger."

• Animal postures from Hua Tau's animal frolics can be used to restore one's energy from the imbalances created by civilized life. For example, the Deer lives on the boundary line between civilized and wild life. You'll learn how deer antlers are chi extenders, deer jumping over the stream restores agility, deer Bagua reactivates the spiral of healing in your body.

• As part of your initiation into one of the Great Mysteries of East and West, you'll learn about the importance of the Western Alchemical dictum, "Perform no alchemical operation until you first reduce the substances in the alchemical vessel to the "prima materia." You'll experience how the practice of Wuji Qigong is an entryway into the *prima materia*, and how this can be used for your healing, relaxation, and cultivation of central equilibrium.

• The hieroglyphic alphabet of Tai Chi movements is described as a way to embody ancient healing elements and achieve central equilibrium. Specific movements and their purposes are detailed, such as the White Snake posture for throat chakra balance.
• Qigong movements for balancing excessive and deficient energy are discussed and practiced such as Tai Chi Ruler. Ocean Wave breathing etc.

After an initial lecture, the Bodymind Healing Qigong set is practiced to experience the topic of the day.

5. New Name: **Beating the Heavenly Drum: Post-modern, Taoist Alchemy Practices**
   9/28/24

Just another Bodymind Healing Qigong Extended Short Form class emphasizing the activation of life energy through specific movements and postures. Key exercises include activating the Penetrating Vessel) *Chung Mai* meridian, flicking arms to create energy, finding stillness in movement and movement in stillness, etc.

However, today we add a transformative practice from Taoist Alchemy, which is included in greater detail in the Bodymind Healing Qigong Long Form. The "beating the heavenly drum" technique of sealing ears and opening them is a way to open the ears to the esoteric sound current, to enhance chi. Hearing and sound are the first sense to be developed and the last sense to remain before death, so in this class we'll discover how Qigiong practices enhance this primordial sense. The opening of the listening capacity and awareness of the sounds of silence are also enhanced by Deer Qigong practices. You'll learn how an esoteric benefit of Deer practice is being able to listen with two ears, so your other ear listens to another's critiques without defensiveness and with your imaginal antlers connected to the wider whole of which you're part— reversing reactivity to criticism and transforming defensiveness into agile responsiveness.

We explore theory and practice of the importance of Standing Meditation to activate the energy of life (Wuji), the symbolism of various animals like the tiger and deer in Qigong. Practical exercises involved dispersing stagnant Qi, ocean wave breathing, and Tai Chi ruler movements, all aimed at enhancing energy flow, healing, and spiritual awareness.

A few other points that you'll discover:

• Human beings in our deepest essences are "shape shifters" You'll learn how this is relevant in your everyday life for healing. For example, grounding and rooting in life can be enhanced by *zhan zhuan* qigong practice (standing like a tree).

• Learn how the concept, "The smaller the circle the greater the chi, " enhances your practice and self -healing abilities.

• What do you Stand for? Intentionality (*Yi)* is key for developing the spiritual dimension of Yi Chuan Qigong practice and activating joy, compassion, and gratitude in your practice. How does Yi Chuan Qigong practice add intentionality to the chi field. One spiritual intention of Standing Mediation Qigong is to find the stance of being "a star" in your life, giving light to help worlds to grow.

• Learn how Hua Tua's Tiger Animal Frolic Qigong in addition to being associated with preventative medicine for the spine and lungs, it can help to find your pathway to increased confidence, dealing with multiple simultaneous overwhelming inner or outer attacks. The practice of Tiger qigong is explored in relation to helping to heal trauma by gaining agency over dysregulation and activating your parasympathetic nervous system.

• The role of the Tiger and Deer scissor step in activating spiraling chi. The cross-cultural spiritual healing purpose of the spiral from the Caduceus staff of Aesclepius, Chinese Qigong.

• What is a postmodern practice of Tai Chi/Qigong? Honoring the classical old approaches while finding our own unique meanings for how age-old postures apply to our lives.

After an initial lecture, the Bodymind Healing Qigong set is practiced to experience the topic of the day.

6. **Shape Shifting: Cross-cultural Views and Practices to "Trance-form" and find your Way Home,** 1/5/24

You'll learn about how the ideas and practices of various cross-cultural traditions views on shape shifting relates to transforming your everyday life and mind-body health.

> *Human beings in our deepest essences are shape-shifters, we are the elements of creation: fire, earth, metal, water wood. We are empty space, as modern physics teaches us…And if modern research is correct when we shape shift into the appropriate element for the occasion and return to our primordial selves, natural health is restored and we live younger longer* (Mayer 2004, p. 6) .

As Menelaus in Greek Mythology finds his way home by holding on to the God of the Sea, Proteus, in his many shape-shifting forms, so can we find our way home through this embodied metaphor. Shape shifting into the qualities of a seal, a lion or a bird are all aspects of our primordial essences, and can be called on in various appropriate circumstances. In this class we experience how various elements of the Chinese tradition of Qigong can be a pathway into shape shifting into various aspects of our primordial selves to find our way home. In particular the Yi Chuan Qigong tradition cultivates "intention" to activate different aspects of our primordial selves. In this light we practice the teachings of Deer form, since the deer knows how to heal trauma help

heal trauma. We learn from the deer how change the hypervigilance of PTSD to increased mindful awareness, how to listen with two ears when criticized, and raise our antlers to be in touch with a higher realty when triggered emotionally. In this class we experience shape shifting into the essence of being a tree (*zhan zuang*) .Most importantly we experience how coming home involves shape shifting into the experiential state (or non-state) of *Wuji* the mother of chi in the Chinese tradition, and *Ain Soph* in the Kabballah.

A few other related topics discussed:

• Qigong's unique elements as a spiritual tradition, and why self-defense aspects are an integral part of activating the state specific healing and spiritual elements of the tradition.

• Tai Chi Qigong as a system of hidden mudras and how these mudras relate to cultivating aspects of your primordial self.

After an initial lecture, the Bodymind Healing Qigong set is practiced to experience the topic of the day.

7. Deer -Full 10/26/24 New Name: **Qigong in Everyday Life (with a little help from your Deer Teacher)**

How does one make everyday life into Qigong practice? As the deer walks in the boundary area of being civilized and wild, so we can bring our wild primordial nature into our everyday civilized lives. Discovering your personal meaningful meanings to Qigong practices: What do you Stand for? What meanings can you discover in the posture of "just Standing," and in other Qigong movements.

Note: In this class there is no introductory lecture. The Deer practices are done late in the class.

Other elements of today's class:

• Learn how a Qigong practice of Dispersing Stagnant Chi can be transformed into a morning ritual Prayer of the Wounded Healer.
• You'll hear the story of how a deer "counted coup" on me while I was backpacking in the wilderness, and how this led to my interest in Deer Bagua. You'll be introduced to Deer Bagua circle walking.
• How does the spiral symbol of the Greek Aesclepian caduceus become embodied in Qigong practices.

• Discover a practice to help friends who have not experience of chi, to experience it: Using Ocean Wave Breathing and discovering the Golden Ball of the Heart.
• Bodymind Healing Psychotherapy and Bodymind Healing Qigong are two sides of a healing coin. Be introduced to the importance of transcending and transmuting traditions in your mind-body healing.
• Deer antlers are chi extenders .Learn how the deer antler mudra opens deep powers of the bodymind.
• How does Tiger Qigong enliven everyday life.
• Imagery and healing. What does Qigong add to imagery traditions? Using the imagery/ somatic dialectic for your internal organs, forming a relationship to the world of plants, Turtle Qigong for the neck, Tiger Qigong for confidence, etc.

After an initial lecture, the Bodymind Healing Qigong set is practiced to experience the topic of the day and discover other meaningful tributaries in the Qigong wilderness.

8. **Halloween: Hidden Meaning and Practices** 11/2/24
   A key Halloween pumpkin's symbol is a light (candle) hidden behind a mask. This class explores cross cultural ideas and practices involving the masks (roles) we wear in everyday life and how that awareness creates a path to finding the light behind the mask we wear. Being able to shape-shift into various aspects of our primordial selves is fundamental to psycho-physiological transformation. In the temple of Aesclepius the initiate would be instructed to wear a mask in the Dionysian theater to enact a ritual to heal various physical and psychological issues—the origin of psychodrama. The Shape shifting of the Monkey King in Chinese folk traditions teaches various life lessons, including healing arrogance. The Greek mystery tradition uses the symbol of the shape shifting Proteus to invoke various animals on our path to finding our "true home."
   We explore various cross cultural traditions pathway to finding our true home in light and primordial energy, called *Wuji* (the mother of chi)

   Some Juicy Tidbits:

   • We explore Qigong practices for finding the light and energy behind the masks we were in everyday life.
   • We explore various animal forms of Qigong as steps on the path of finding one's inner light: The Monkey to activate playfulness and fun;
   • "Sinking your chi" is a learnable practical skill. Learn how Qigong practices help one to shift from sympathetic nervous system reactivity when criticized, dysregulated, or triggered.
   • Shape shifting's role in Medical Qigong
   • The role of Standing Meditation Qigong in "finding light." As Wang Xiang Zhai says, " Standing Meditation Qigong: Doing Nothing and Finding contentment in being A-Light."

After an initial lecture, the Bodymind Healing Qigong set is practiced to experience the topic of the day and discover other meaningful tributaries in the Qigong wilderness.

9. Condensing and Expanding of Chi: To Cultivate the Sphere of your Self, 11/10/24

Condensing and expansion of chi are parts of Yi Quan Qigong training and learning how in cultivate "the sphere of your Self." Integrating these two qualities are fundamental to intermediate practice. For example, the importance of these qualities can be seen in developing Wei chi (protective chi),

Some tidbits:

• How does the practice of the consolidation (gathering) of the chi ball help with various psychological issues in your everyday life: boundary issues, bantering with an abusive critic, in your everyday life?

• The expansion and contraction of chi in Turtle Qigong is a useful practice for neck issues.

• How does the Yi Quan Tiger activate simultaneously the balance of chi consolidation and expansion?

• How does the Deer Qigong practice correct the beginner's mistake of getting "stuck chi" when one is over emphasizing compacting the chi?

As always, the topic of the day is woven into the practice of the Bodymind Healing Qigong set so you can discover meaningful tributaries in the Qigong wilderness.

10. Condensation of Chi Part 2: Balancing Opposites and Finding your Central Equilibrium, 11/17/24

This is the second class on condensation (gathering) of chi. Here we emphasize the importance of balancing the opposites of consolidation and expansiveness of chi. This balance of opposites is part of the practice that creates the experience of the Golden Ball.

Juicy Tidbits:

• The dangers of excessive consolidation of chi by forcing/ efforting is exemplified with a case example of an advance practitioner's excessive force likely having created a tumor.
• You'll be inspired by the classic story to the Taoist Rainmaker and his restoring balance, and finding his central equilibrium, which brought the community back into balance, creating rain.

• Cloud Hands practice is used to enter the imaginal realm and restore our central equilibrium. Learn about the many psychospiritual purposes of Cloud Hands practice.
• Embodying the spirit(Gr. *pneuma*) and the soul (Gr. *Psyche*) of Tai Chi. Using Tai Chi movements for psychological transformation.
• Practicing the Yi Chuan Crouching Tiger to experience simultaneous gathering and expanding chi.
• As always multifaceted purposes of the practices are addressed: longevity, self-defense, spiritual centering, changing your psychological stance in life.

As always, the topic of the day is woven into the practice of the Bodymind Healing Qigong set so you can discover meaningful tributaries in the Qigong wilderness.

11. Healing Dysregulation: What does Qigong practice add to controlling your flight /fight/ freeze response? 12/15/24

Healing dysregulation, the impairment in regulation of our psycho-physiological energy state, has become one of the most addressed subjects in psychotherapy today. When we are when verbally attacked, overreactive versus responsive, triggered, or suffering trauma we lose connection with our higher, regulated selves. You'll learn what Qigong adds to modern treatments for dysregulation and working with our fight/flight/freeze mode.

Some Juicy Tidbits:

• What does deer Qigong have to offer to the treatment of dysregulation? For example, after all, deer are in continuous danger; they shake but they turn their shaking into increased awareness. You'll learn various deer movements for empowerment, increasing primordial awareness, antler qigong , deer Bagua circle walking for inner strength, spiraling energy and meridian activation.
• What does age-old Taoist Alchemy's, "Sinking the Plumb Line, have to teach about modern dysregulation?

• How combining psychological methods of cognitive restructuring with Qigong enhances the ability to cope with dysregulation.

• Using Standing Meditation Qigong to find a new stance towards triggered trauma. What do you stand for?

• Metaphors of self-defense become embodied methods for dealing with inner and outer critics.

• Explore various Qigong movements for healing trauma: Dispersing Stagnant chi, tapping meridians and acu-points, breath work for dysregulation, cultivating Wei chi (protective chi) .

• What secrets do various Qigong animal movements have to offer for handling dysregulation: Dragon, tiger, deer, snake.

As always, the topic of the day is woven into the practice of the Bodymind Healing Qigong set so you can discover meaningful tributaries in the Qigong wilderness

{NOTE *Eliminate #12Deer Kissing Eyes 1/1/25 REPEAT/}

12. **Winter Solstice Qigong in Everyday Life: Cross cultural Practices for Rebirthing your Life's Energy,** 1/4/25

The Winter Solstice is a time for rebirth and renewal, and Qigong practices all year long provide a pathway for renewal of energy and finding the light when you're feeling in darkness. In this class we explore the significance of the Winter Solstice in various traditions and how Qigong adds to, and can be integrated with, the practices of those traditions— such as the Greek Mystery tradition, the Jewish mystical tradition, and the Celtic tradition. You'll learn how the practices of these traditions can be applied to rebirthing the light in your life. For example, in the Celtic Yule Log celebration the community writes down personal issues and burns them in community log; in the Lung Qigong practice the student shoots an imaginary arrow with a problematic life issue written on it and imagines shooting the arrow out into space where it burns up. Practicing embodying imagination.

Some specifics of what you'll learn:

• Practices for activating the heart's compassion, joy and light when you're feeling low energy or stagnant.
• How to transform your inner critic into a helpful coach using such movements as the Tiger. Discover the wider psycho-spiritual purpose of common movements such as "Taming the Tiger."
• The transcending/Transmuting dialectic. How finding the light of your transcendent self and developing the ability to transmute psychological issues are both parts of transformative practices of rebirth.

As always, after a brief introductory lecture, the practices of Bodymind Healing Qigong will be used to embody the topic of the day.*

13. **Integrating Modern Psychological Knowledge with Ancient Qigong practices: Affect tolerance, affect regulation, etc.** 1/4/25

Bodymind Healing Qigong's quintessential practice is the integration of modern psychological knowledge with the Qigong/Tai Chi tradition.

Some juicy tidbits you'll learn about:

• Every Tai chi/Qigong posture is a rite of renewal.
• The esoteric secrets of a postmodern perspective on classical Tai Chi Ruler Qigong practice: How to reverse the fear response in your body, cultivate the ability to use embodied intention for healing, use "no force" to heal, etc.
• Developing protective chi (*Wei chi*) and transforming psychological issues through integral psychological and Qigong practices: Standing Meditation, Deer qigong practices, Taming the Tiger Low to tame arising psychological complexes in your underworld.
• You'll learn various ways to deal with some of the psychological issues that can arise in every day life: Affect tolerance skills, how to deal with "projective identification" (which involves identifying with others criticism of you), techniques for managing dysregulation, Transforming negative beliefs with cognitive restructuring, etc.
• Learn a "wounded healer prayer"

As always, the Bodymind Healing Qigong set will be practiced to experience and build upon the topic of the day.

14. **Qigong as a Rite of Renewal,** 12/28/24

Tai Chi Qigong's wider purpose can be enhanced when we look at the tradition as a cross-cultural rite of renewal. In this light, various cross-cultural traditions are discussed, for example: The Mikvah of Jewish mysticism, the Yule log of the Celtic tradition, the pagan prayer to the night, the Vision Quest of Native Americans, Western alchemy's *dissolutio,* and Persephone's journey to the underworld. Rites of renewal often involve finding a new identity and a new name and "shape shifting" into a new identity. Each Tai Chi/Qigong posture can be seen a creating a rite of renewal for different state specific purposes.

Some juicy tidbits:

• Using the intention of Qigong postures to transform into another subpersonality

• How stillness in movement and movement in stillness is fundamental to the Chinese internal arts' rite of renewal. Parallels between the Qigiong *Wuji state*, stem cell research and cross-cultural rituals for returning to one's primordial self.

• Shape-shifting into the elements (fire, earth, metal , water, wood,) to restore balance to your weakest element.

• Qigong and the wheel of life: An archetypal psychology view of rites of renewal—embodying the symbolic meanings and energies of specific parts of the wheel of the zodiac.

As always, the Bodymind Healing Qigong set will amplify on the topic of the day.

15. **Qigong as a Rite of Renewal #2: Transforming and Embodying your Psycho-spiritual Self,** 1/12/25

This is the second class on Tai Chi /Qigong as a rite of renewal. We said that every posture in Tai Chi and Qigong can be viewed as a rite of renewal. This week we'll focus more on the transformative elements of various specific postures. From a postmodern perspective we can make the meanings of the postures be suited to our specific psycho-spiritual purposes.

For example:

• For example, if one is wimpy in standing up to authority figures, you'll learn how the Tai Chi movement "White Snake Sticks out its tongue," activates the energy to speak truth to power.
• Lean how the four purposes of each Tai Chi movement (self-healing, spiritual unfoldment, self-defense, and changing one's life stance psychologically) can be applied to transforming one's self in these different spheres.

• The importance of activating energy before Standing Meditation and dispersing stagnant chi after Standing.

• Moving with "integral force."

• Everyone who learns Tai chi Chuan learns that the word "Chuan" means fist. You'll learn an esoteric meaning of "chuan,"which will perhaps change the way you make a fist for the rest of your lfe

• Standing on your weakest leg; research shows its correlation with longevity. *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, **http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bjsports-2021-105360**.

• Putting our intention into the field of energy (or is the field of energy putting various intentions into us?

• Using the metaphor of Japanese Tea ceremony, to find the "big pot" for renewal by returning to the source of chi (*Wuji)*.

• "Keep shining like the stars you are." A Bodymind Healing Qigong invocation to activate the star you are. Rumi Quote, "Human beings are just stars wrapped in skin. The light you've always been searching for has always been found within."

As always, the Bodymind Healing Qigong set will amplify on the topic of the day.

16. **Bodymind Healing Psychotherapy & Bodymind Healing Qigong: Integral Healing and Changing your Life Stance, 1/19/25**

Bodymind Healing Psychotherapy (BMHP)and Bodymind Healing Qigong (BMHQ) are part of an integral self-healing system. The two can't really be separated because physical, energetic, and mental health are intertwined and part of a greater whole, like the Yin-Yang symbol of the Tao.

Some specifics you'll learn about:

• Energetic blocs and many illnesses are often due to the somatization of psychological issues; and healing of these issues can be best served by a combined psychological and energetic approach.

• You'll be introduced to "The River of Life Protocol " which combines Gendlin's Focusing, Cognitive Restructuring, Taoist breathing practices, a guided visualization and other methods. For example, in Cognitive Restructuring one takes a negative belief, and says "This is an Opportunity to…" Then one finds a more truthful and constructive belief. This can create a felt energetic shift in the way you hold a troubling belief and create "a new life stance." You'll be introduced to how to integrate this proven efficacious method with somatic and energetic elements . You'll be introduced to a pathway to experience how the manifestation of negative beliefs in the body can be transmuted with this integral protocol.

• Practical exercises included activating meridians, standing meditation, and specific Qigong postures like the deer and tiger to balance yin and yang energy and clear energy blocks.

• Standing Meditation Qigong: Transforming your Life Stance.

• Dealing with chronic illness with an integral healing paradigm— theory and practices.

• Learn methods to shift from being a victim to having an empowered sense of agency with your life issues.

• Learning from the animals. Shamanic Shape-shifting into the healing form needed for your health: a cat, a tree, a bear, etc. "Trance-forming" your life stance.

• You'll learn how "The Path of a Reluctant Metaphysician" involves learning to be a wounded healer by taking one's illnesses and utilizing them to connect with the world behind the world of energy and archetypal possibilities.

As always, the Bodymind Healing Qigong set will amplify on the topic of the day.

17. Cross Quarter Holidays: Expanding your Qigong Practice to the Eight Directions, 1/25/25

Cross Quarter holidays refer to the midpoints between the equinoxes and solstices. For example: Candlemas (February 2), Beltane (May 1), Lammas (August 1), and Samhain (October 31). Though they are not as well-known as the equinoxes and solstices, In the Western Mystery tradition they are called Avatar points (points of maximum descent of divine energy). These points are 15 degrees of the fixed astrological signs (15 degrees of Taurus, Leo, Scorpio and Aquarius. In an integral, postmodern practice of Tai Chi or Qigong one can practice each posture or movement to the eight directions to focus on bringing back into balance earth, fire, water and air in your life .
Drawing from various cross-cultural traditions i.e., Native American, Jewish mysticism, and Chinese internal arts we see how a pluralistic cross-cultural view can enhance the meanings and purposes of our practice.

Some tidbits:

• You'll learn to "walk the circle" integrating the wisdom of Chinese Bagua and other cross cultural wisdom traditions,

• Learn the benefits of practicing the Hua Tao tiger to the eight directions

• You'll be introduced to embodied psycho-spiritual practices from the Western and Eastern mystery traditions the four and eight directions.

• Discover parallels between the Bagua Lion and Jewish group healing rituals and how to make use of them for healing from and for the heart.

• Turning the Zodiac into an embodied Bagua Qigong practice for healing mind-body imbalances.

As always, the topic of the day will be woven into our practice of the Bodymind Healing Qigong set.

18. **Cross Quarter Holidays #2: Creating your own Qigong Healing Ritual to the Eight Directions,** 2/1/25:

Building upon the topic of last week's class, we go further into the value of practicing the internal arts (Taiji, Xing Yi, and Bagua) in alignment with the eight directions. Joining cross cultural and cross temporal traditions we explore the larger purposes that can be derived from this amalgamation.

Some specific things you'll learn about in this class.

• Learn how to create your own healing ritual by embodying the specific archetypes and energies of the eight directions as you practice Bagua Qigong while walking the circle of the zodiac. For example, if you're out of touch with your heart you can tailor your practice to stop, turn and absorb at the Leo spot on the Zodiacal wheel.

• What does it mean to walk with "integral force?"

• How to practice Standing Meditation Qigong emphasizing and de-emphasizing "intention."

• Creating a community healing event by combining Bagua Qigong Lion posture and the Jewish Tikkun Olam healing circle ritual.

As always, we'll apply the topic of the day to the Bodymind Healing Qigong set.

19. **Qigong as a Non- Herbal Adaptogen,** 2/8/25

Does Qigong relax or stimulate us? In response to a student's question, Dr Michael makes the analogy that Qigong is like an herbal adaptogen. Herbal adaptogens, like Holy Basil, can adapt to the particular need of an individual's medical condition restoring homeostasis. This class explores how the energy of Qigong postures and movements similarly can give energy when needed or relaxation when one is overstimulated.

Some specifics:

• How to work with intention (Yi) and non- intention to maximize the activation of homeostasis and the adaptogenic nature of Qigong practice.

• How is the Golden Ball Qigong practice adaptogenic in nature?

• Learn how Qigong's adaptogenic nature can be used to cultivate the Three Treasures: *chi* (energy), *yi* (intention), and *shen* (spirit) .

• Featuring the healing benefits of Snake Qigong: to limber joints. Medical Qigong's spiraling energy by "moving a snake through your joints," Tai Chi's "snake creeps low." Exploration of cross-cultural snake symbolism and practices i.e., the Greek Temple of Aesclepius, in the female mystery tradition, etc.

As usual, the Bodymind Healing Qigong set will be used to illustrate and build upon the topic of the day.

20. Working with Intention to Heal: Bringing Love and compassion into our Practice, 2/19/25

How to bring intention into our chi field. Do we bring intention into the chi field or does it bring it into us?

Some specifics of the class:

• How can a beginner experience chi? Taoist Breathing methods activate *wuji,* the mother of chi. The relationship between the western relaxation response and activation of chi; paradoxical intention as a key to opening the chi of compassion.

• Distinguishing between healing and curing.

• Standing Meditation Qigong with and without intention. What do you Stand for? What are you rooted into in your life?

• How to access "the heart of space" while practicing Yi Chuan Standing Meditation?"

• Tai Chi Chuan: Four Dimensions of Purpose. Self-Healing spiritual unfoldment, self-defense and changing one's life stance psychologically.

• What does the statement in Western Alchemy mean? “Perform no alchemical operation until you first transform the substance in the vessel into the prima materia.” What is the analogy between this Western Mystery Tradition instruction and the Eastern Mystery Tradition’s practice of *Wuji qigong.* How is this foundational teaching a key to healing?

• How to find the “Golden Mean” of chi cultivation by not over extending or collapsing.

*Correction: The author of the book *Energy Medicine: The Scientific Basis* is James Oschman.

As always, we’ll apply the topic of the day to our Bodymind healing Qigong set (and more).

21. : **Cultivating the Golden Ball: (in the Eastern and Western Mystery Traditions),** 2/22/25

One key element of the Western Mystery Tradition are symbolic process traditions such as astrology, alchemy, Tarot and esoteric interpretation of myths, and folk tales. In this class we take the classic Brother’s Grimm folk tale of Iron Han’s, or as Robert Bly calls it the tale of the Wildman and the King’s son. In the tale the King’s son Golden Ball rolls into the cage of the captive Wildman. The Wildman give the Golden Ball back in return for being freed from the cage. An initiation process then takes place where the King’s son goes into the woods to learn from the Wildman and be initiated into the path of becoming golden. We ask the question how have we lost the Golden Ball in our lives and how can methods from the Eastern Mystery Tradition provide an answer to how the King’s son (daughter) in us can be initiated into to activating the Golden Ball in our lives.

Some elements of the class:

• The quest for the Golden Ball in the Western and Eastern Mystery Traditions.

• How to cultivate the Golden Ball through Tai chi/Qigong practices.

• Joseph Campbell’s definition of a myth, “An untrue story that’s truer than life.”

• Myths as a hypnotic induction into the world behind the world.

• The psychology of the Golden Ball. What gets in the way of your radiance shining?

• Exploring the esoteric metaphors of the King’s son putting his hands into the forbidden Golden pool. The role of the forbidden in peaking a student’s interest in going further with the tradition.

• Yi Chaun Qigong's Golden Ball of the Heart posture's role in cultivating the Golden Ball and developing the sphere of the self. Multi-faceted dimensions of how to cultivate the Golden ball in the following spheres: spiritual, healing, psychological, and self defense.

As always, we'll apply the topic of the day to our Bodymind healing Qigong set (and more).

22. Golden Ball #2 3/1/25 New title: **Cultivating the Golden Ball #2: The Psychological and Energetic Dimensions**

A delving deeper from last weeks' class into tales and practices of the Golden Ball. Robert Bly's book *Iron John* and the original Brother Grimms *Iron Hans* are used to invoke the Wildman's initiation of the king's son in his loss of the Golden Ball and his initiation into how to find his golden wild self. Psychological and energetic elements of the loss of the Golden Ball are also focused upon.

Some specifics you'll learn:

• The Wildman tells the Kings' son, who doesn't know where the key is to open the Wildman's cage, that the key is under your mother's pillow. The class addresses how freeing oneself from psychological complexes is one key to recovering the Golden Ball.

• Freud's book "Civilization and its Discontents" is used to understand the loss of the Golden Ball in Western civilization due to suppressing the "Id" in service of the ego. Getting in touch with our Wildman gets us back to our instinctual self. We explore how both Western psychotherapy and Eastern Qigong practices can join in finding the key that opening the way to opening our primordial energies.

• The journey from Anima Mundi to Anima Personalis and back to Anima Mundi— the key to restoring one's connection to our essential nature and a secret to healing the loss of a personal relationship. Finding primordial chi (yuan chi) when we have lost our way in life.

• How to find ,and tap into the energy of, "The Sea of Elixir."

• Qigong exercises (dynamic and static) to cultivate the Golden Ball. "Standing Mediation doing "no-thing" and finding contentment in being alight." Cultivating the Golden Ball of the Tan Tien and Ming Men (belly)

As always, the Bodymind Healing Qigong set is used to illustrate and build upon the topic of the day, i.e., how bodymind healing Qigong movements and non-movements can be used to cultivate the Golden Ball.

23. Cultivating the Golden Ball #3:Cross-cultural, Mystical Pathways to Bodymind Healing, 3/8/25,

We delve further into the concept of Body, Mind healing Qigong, drawing parallels between Western and Eastern mystical traditions, particularly the story of the king's son. The golden ball symbolizes primordial energy, often lost due to societal expectations. Practices like Tai Chi and Qigong aim to reconnect with this energy, emphasizing the importance of aliveness and playfulness. Techniques include visualization, sound, and movement exercises to activate chi, such as the penetrating vessel and the golden thread. The session also covers the significance of the five elements, the importance of stillness and movement, and the metaphorical journey of integrating the golden ball into daily life.

Some specifics:

• How does the concept of the forbidden fruit enhance teaching and learning Qigong (and enhance finding the Golden Ball)?

• What does Western Alchemy have to teach a Qigong practitioner on the path to restore our primordial radiance. Examples, the *Nigredo,* and *Solutio* processes.

• "As above so below." Joining the microcosm and macrocosm through embodying the Golden Ball of the Zodiacal Archetypes for healing, shape-shifting, and psycho-physiological transformation of stuck life issues.

• How can the Golden Ball practice be made useful for dealing with criticism. How to "roll with" criticism.

• Learn the four purposes of the Qigong posture, "Holding Golden Balls in the Waters of Life."
•The mystical tradition of Tai Chi/Qigong: Reeling silk and reeling the golden thread through your body.

• Learn how the Golden Ball is a metaphor for the energy of life and finding "the heart of space."

• The Golden Ball of Healing. Emitting chi from your Lao Gung points in your palms
• A Qigong Wounded Healer's prayer ritual: A cross-cultural synthesis.

• Ocean Wave Breathing Qigong: For those who have a hard time experiencing chi or the Golden Ball.

As always, the Bodymind Healing Qigong set will be used to illustrate and build upon the topic of the day.

24. Cultivating the Golden Ball #4: Discovering Multifaceted Meanings, 3/16/25

This is our 4th class on the quest for the Golden Ball in the Eastern and Western Mystery traditions. We continue the Grimm's Brothers teaching story of Iron John about the king's son losing his golden ball, symbolizing the loss of one's inner child, and the wild man who helps him recover it. The thesis is presented that the answer to the Western mystery tradition's loss of the Golden Ball can be found in the Eastern mystery tradition of Tai Chi and Qigong. The mythopoetic dimensions of Golden Ball practices are explored. We emphasize importance of the dimension of meaning in Bodymind Healing Qigong and Tai Chi.

Some specifics:

- How to find the Golden Ball in Qigong/Tai Chi practice when practicing static Standing Meditation Qigong and dynamic Moving Qigong.

- The Old Testament has four dimensions of interpretation without which Torah study is incomplete: *P'shat* (the plain or literal meaning), *Remez* (hints or allegorical meaning), *Derash* (inquiry or homiletic meaning), and *Sod* (secret or mystical meaning).Similar to Kabbalistic study of the Torah, the thesis is presented that Tai chi/Qigong is incomplete without knowing its movements' four esoteric purposes: self-healing, spiritual unfoldment self-defense and changing one's life stance psychologically.

- The shamanic underpinnings of Tai Chi are revealed in the names of the postures and provide and entryway into Tai Chi/Qigong as an age-old shamanic practice.

- To embody the archetypal qualities of the Zodiac that we are lacking, we can use the Tai chi movement corresponding to each sign of the Zodiac and each of its elements (fire, earth, air, and water.). For example, practicing "Grasping the Birds Tail" in four, eight, and twelve directions to draw in the archetypal qualities of those directions. Develop your own unique practice based on your missing elements.

- Healing psychological imbalances through Golden Ball practices. The wounded healer's Qigong prayer.

- Fajing-Cultivating the explosive power of the Golden Ball through filling Ming Men (lower back)—for healing and self-defense.

- "How long should I practice for?" The student asks the Sifu. Hear the answer in this episode to the length of time of practice needed to find the Golden Ball.

- What is the relevance of the Caduceus (healing staff) of Aesclepius to Tai Chi practice and our health?

- Some Golden Ball practices: Using the posture Holding two Golden Balls in the River of Life to practice not getting knocked off by the cross currents of life. Shape shifting into a Golden Ball and Tree simultaneously. Using classic Tai Chi Ruler practice to find the Golden Ball. Playing with the Golden Ball of Life. Rolling with Life the *Wu Wei* way.

- Views on esoteric qigong practices related to where we may go when we die. Becoming the Star you are.

As always, the Bodymind Healing Qigong set will be used to illustrate and build upon the topic of the day.

25. : **Finding the Spring Equinox in Everyday Life: Balancing Yin and Yang, finding your central equilibrium, etc.,** 3/23/25

This class focused on the Spring Equinox, the time of equal balance of light and dark, emphasizing balance of opposites and new beginnings. We explore the fundamental role of the balance of opposites in Chinese Qigong practice in our everyday lives for our mental , emotional, and spiritual health: balancing yin and yang, finding our central equilibrium, and balancing excess and deficiency. The interplay and balance of opposites is shown to be an essential part of creating chi for healing in our postures, movements, emotions, and thoughts.

Some specifics:

• Bodymind Healing Qigong practices for birthing energy when we're feeling stagnant or depressed.

• Standing Meditation, Tai Chi, and Qigong as pathways to repeat the cosmogenic creation myth and give birth to light from "no-thing." Cross cultural creation myths in China from *Wuji* to *tai chi*; in Jewish mysticism from *Ain soph* to the Tree of Life.

• A next step on the path of Herbert Benson's "relaxation response:" The Chinese relaxation response involves discovering "fongsung" relaxed aliveness. Balancing the opposites: experiencing light and heavy simultaneously in your practice.

• Healing imbalances in the body through a return to the origin of things. What is "the prima materia" in Western alchemy and how does it relate to "Wuji" of Chinese Qigong?

• Postural corrections and alignment in Standing Meditation for finding the stance of equanimity and "fongsung"(relaxed aliveness) .

• Balancing meaning and non-meaning, intention and no intention, in your practice.

• The story of the legendary founder of Tai Chi, Chang San Feng, tells of his finding such equanimity and "no thingness" that a bird couldn't take off from his hand because there was nothing to push off from— an inspiration for how to practice of the Tai Chi movement "Grasping the Bird's Tail."

As always, the Bodymind Healing Qigong Extended Short Form set will be used to illustrate and build upon the topic of the day.

26. New Title: Passover East and West: Cross-cultural Rituals for moving out of Inner Slavery towards the Promised Land, 3/30/25

The final class and culmination of a 26-week Body-Mind-Healing Qigong series focused on integrating Eastern and Western wisdom traditions, emphasizing the concept of sacralizing time, the human body, movement, and the human psyche. Fittingly as our final episode, we use the symbolic meaning of Passover, the escape from *Mizraim* (the Egyptian land of constriction) as a metaphor for the pathway to freedom from personal constraints through actualizing your transpersonal Self. .

Some specifics you'll learn about:

• The psychological challenges of Life turn us into Reluctant Metaphysicians as we are induced by the vicissitudes of life into needing to find "the world behind the world" to heal. As described more fully in the book "The Path of a Reluctant Metaphysician," our life challenges lead us to find healing pathways in the world behind the world, of energies and symbols. The word "symbol's" etymology comes from the word "symbolin," which originally was a trading stick broken apart when two people did a trade deal. The buyers stick symbolized the bigger trading stick from before the deal was struck. Similarly, symbols link us to the wider whole of which we are a part. So, the symbolism of Passover links us to a mythic reality that can restore our wholeness, particularly when we practice it as embodied imagination.

• Each symbolic part of the Torah, when read on four levels, contains not just the literal meaning (P'shat). You'll learn how a deeper Interpretation of the Torah (*Remez, Derash* and *Sod)* can involve seeing the journey out of Egypt as a cosmogenic creation myth, and how the Israelites' path is a metaphor for the pathway to transformation and finding the promised land. For example, after the Red Sea waters are divided and the Jewish people go through the Red Sea, Miriam(Moses' sister), leads the freed slaves in a circle dance of gratitude. We'll explore the cross-cultural symbol of the circle in the Jewish ritual of using a group circle to heal a sick member of the tribe, and the Chinese Bagua practice circle walking for healing. You'll discover the synchronistic parallels of the Bagua Lion practice and Jewish mystical group healing rituals.

• The symbol of the circle and the embodiment of its healing meanings are explored in indigenous and mystical traditions. Walking the Bagua circle of the Zodiac, a ritual for embodying the archetypes of the circle of life. Walking the Bagua circle while embodying ancient animal Qigong practices: The deer, dragon, and lion.

• Energy exchange with nature. Everything in life is connected and part of the greater whole. You'll be introduced to sounds and Qigong postures for activating a *unos mundos* trance state with plants.

• Rebirthing your energy through Bodymind Healing Qigong practices: Qigong bouncing for activating the piezoelectric effect on the bones and tonifying internal organs; discovering the circle that arises from stillness for healing, lifting hands Tai Chi mudra for preventative medicine for the lower back (Ming men), dispersing stagnant chi,

• Opening your central channel by turning light headedness into experiencing "the light divine."

• A Wounded Healer's Morning Qigong Ritual

• Walking Meditation Qigong, a next step on your Path

• As you move out of your own slavery to whatever you're enslaved by and is constricting you, you can find the pathway through the Red Sea, into the circle dance of life, embody the chosen archetypes of the circle, and practice becoming the sphere of your true primordial Self. Learn how to put this into practice through imaginal Qigong practices. Blessings on your journey to the Promised Land.

As always, the Bodymind Healing Qigong Extended Short Form set will be used to illustrate and build upon the topic of the day.

~ BONUS CLASSES ~

Creative Energy: A Cross cultural bodymind healing perspective on removing blocks

In response to a student question, a cross cultural perspective on the creation of energy is explored. Some of the lenses we look through are: psychological, Chinese medicine/ Qigong, and Greek mythology.

What you'll learn from this class?

- We look through a psychological lens and see how negative beliefs create blocked energy. You'll hear about various methods to clear blocked energy through integral Bodymind Healing Psychotherapy methods. For example, you'll be introduced to the River of Life which combines cognitive restructuring and Taoist breathing methods.
- Discover how to activate your *Tan Tien* through Taoist breathing methods. You may discover The Sea of Elixir which the Taoists believe is one place from which energy is born in the bodymind.
- Learn an integral psycho-mythological and psycho-energetic approach which opens a pathway to reverse sympathetic nervous system. flight /freeze response, which can block creative energy from manifesting.

- Using the Greek mystery tradition as a transformative imaginal tool you'll learn how the myth of Perseus and Medusa is a teaching story containing the symbolic pathway to clear energy blocks. You'll learn how the symbolic tools given to the hero Perseus by Athena, Pluto, and Hermes relates to freeing your blocked energy. Learn how the winged horse Pegasus relates to birthing creative energy into your life and how integrating Qigong with Greek mythology provides an experiential pathway to creative energy.
- Practice the esoteric Taoist "sinking the plumb line and dropping your eyes method" to sink your chi and find the place from which your creative energy manifests to counter your sympathetic nervous system freeze response.
- How can Tai Chi rollback movement help to counter your defensiveness when you're criticized?
- The Eastern and Western Mystery Traditions are discussed and contrasted regarding how to birth block energy.

Wesak Full MoonTime: A Cross-cultural Initiatory Perspective.

In this class you'll be introduced to making the enlightenment of the Buddha at Wesak Full Moon time into an entryway into cross cultural wisdom tradition practices. Wesak Full Moon time (full moon in Scorpio/Taurus) can not only be seen a a time of Buddha enlightenment under the Boddhi tree, but as a pathway to esoteric teachings of related themes in esoteric early buddhism, astrology, Qigong, Jewish mysticism, Sufism, Native American spirituality, Taoism and Greek healing traditions.

Qigong is not just physical movement. It is a full body-mind-spirit practice for turning emotional attachment into compassion, stagnation into energy, and ordinary movement into a pathway toward "enlightenment."

Some specifics of what you'll learn:

• Cross-cultural examples of Buddhist insights and teachings of how spiritual practice is about transforming attachment, emotional reactivity, and inner imbalance into awareness, compassion, and embodied light.

- The symbolic importance of the Wesak Full Moon astrologically: Scorpio/ Taurus Full moon. The initiates path to mastering emotional reactivity: the esoteric lessons of transforming the Scorpion of our emotions into an Eagle. Examples from our everyday emotional life with encouragement for students to find their own examples.
- The Buddha said there were four pathways of Enlightenment: lying, sitting, standing and moving. Did you know that the Buddha and Bodhisattvas after him practiced Standing Meditation?
- What is the controversial idea about the esoteric purposes of Buddhist Standing Meditation Qigong practices? Is the Buddhist Bodhisattva Warrior tradition connected to Chinese internal arts practice?
- How can Standing meditation be used for transforming attachment, emotional reactivity, and inner imbalance into awareness, compassion, and embodied light?

- Is the Buddhist Standing Meditation connected to Standing Meditation Qigong practices in the Chinese internal martial arts.
- What are four purposes of Standing Meditation practice and how do these connect to the early Bodhisattva Warrior tradition?
- Hypothesized Standing Meditation lineage from the Buddha to modern Yi Chuan Qigong practices and other traditions of "postural initiation."

• Yi Chuan Eagle Standing Meditation practices, Eagle Bagua circle walking movements and their use in embodying archetypal solutions to life issues—Bagua healing practices for the symbolic signs of the zodiac.

- Using Qigong/ Tai Chi/animal form practices to actualize and embody solutions to the attachments of life.
- Qigong Wounded Healer's Prayer ritual
- Applying Wesak Full Moon wisdom to Bodymind Healing Qigong practices.

This transcript is from a **Body, Mind, Healing Qigong class** centered around the **Weesak Full Moon**, the Buddhist holiday associated with the Buddha's enlightenment. The teacher connects the Buddha's enlightenment to **cross-cultural wisdom traditions**, astrology, Qigong, Tai Chi, Buddhism, Jewish mysticism, Sufi mysticism, Native American spirituality, Taoism, and Greek healing traditions. The main theme is that spiritual practice is about transforming attachment, emotional reactivity, and inner imbalance into awareness, compassion, and embodied light. The class uses the symbolism of **Scorpio transforming into the eagle**. Scorpio represents toxic emotions, anger, attachment, depression, and the instinct to "sting" or destroy what hurts us. The eagle represents rising above those emotions with clarity, balance, and higher consciousness. The teacher uses this as a metaphor for enlightenment and emotional healing. A major point is that **standing meditation may have been part of early Buddhist practice**, not just sitting meditation. The teacher presents a theory that early Buddhist postures were used for spiritual growth, healing, self-defense, and working through psychological issues. He connects this to Qigong and Tai Chi practices passed down through his lineage. The practical portion of the class includes a variety of Qigong and Tai Chi-inspired movements: swinging the arms, bouncing, standing meditation, "standing like a tree," ocean wave breathing, Tai Chi ruler, organ-healing sounds, kidney/liver/lung exercises, walking meditation, and eagle-inspired movements. Each movement is framed as a way to cultivate energy, release attachment, heal the body, and embody spiritual insight. The teacher repeatedly emphasizes **intention**: instead of simply doing a movement because it is part of class, students are encouraged to decide what they are standing for — joy, compassion, gratitude, healing, forgiveness, or letting go. The practice becomes a way to send healing energy to oneself, loved ones, nature, and the world. Overall, the class teaches that Qigong is not just physical movement. It is a full body-mind-spirit practice for turning emotional attachment into compassion, stagnation into energy, and ordinary movement into a pathway toward enlightenment.

God's Location: The Cloud of Unknowing in Taoist, Jewish, and Greek Mystical Traditions.

It's been said that God's location is everywhere and in everything. But how does one get in touch with the felt experience of "G-d," which is beyond description and words. How does one find the felt experience of G-d in everyday life? Where is that experience located?

Every different religious and spiritual tradition has unique and valuable pathways for finding this divine experience. In this class we focus on perspectives from Taoism, Jewish mysticism, the Greek Mystery tradition, Jungian psychology and Qigong. The experiential part of the class, following the introductory lecture uses Bodymind Healing Qigong as an entry way into the felt experience of divine altered states of consciousness.

Some specifics of what you'll learn in this class:

- What is the mystical teaching of the biblical cloud that lay over the tabernacle when the Jews wandered thought the desert. You'll learn how "the cloud of unknowing" in the Jewish mystical tradition (as transmitted by Rabbi Zvika Krieger) hides and reveals the guidance of G-d. What insight and teaching does this *parsha* (section of the Torah) offer for living an authoritarian versus an openminded curious life?
- You'll discover how a Taoist teaching story mirrors Jewish mystical teachings regarding how the state of unknowing leads to being better able to flow with the vicissitudes of life.
- Cross cultural traditions of "stillness" are an entryway to finding "the mind of G-d." The primordial Goddess Metis in the Greek mystery tradition is a symbol for, and leads a pathway to inner divine wisdom. How does the pre-socratic philosophers wisdom of *hesychia* (stillness practices) and *elenchos* (not knowing) *iatromantis* (altered states), *oulios* practices mirror Taoist and Jewish mystical teachings. How can Taoist Qigong practices an experiential embodiment of these teachings?
- What wisdom is contained in the Greek mythic story of Mars that can be of import to authoritarian political leaders?
- In Jungian psychology the transcendent function rises above the opposites of life and reveals that place that transcends the certainty of authoritarian personalities.
- Become aware of how the mind of G-d speaks to you if you know how to listen.
- Bodymind Healing Qigong practices are not just physical practices but evoke divine states of self-haling, spiritual unfoldment, self defense and changing ones life stance psychologically.*
- Experience how stillness in the Qigong tradition creates energy, healing, balance, and insight.
- How to find your divine life stance: Through Qigong, become the Star you are.
- Not addressed substantially in this class, an important corollary tradition: Eugene Gendlin's Focusing method is a modern embodiment of exploring "the "cloud of unknowing." After his researchers listened to thousand of hours of tapes of psychotherapy sessions, Dr Gendlin reverse engineered the answer he discovered to the question, "What makes psychotherapy work in diverse traditions." He found that what created change was not fundamentally "feelings," but rather the unclear edge around a feeling, which he called "the felt sense." The felt sense contains "felt meaning." For

example if a man is angry with their wife for burning the dinner, psychological change is not found by expressing anger, but finding what makes one "so angry." So, as the man realizes that a childlike part of him wants mothering and his neglectful mother was not there enough, then that realization can help him let go of his childlike rage and change the quality and tone of the way he holds and expresses his disappointment or judgement. Thus a key to successful therapy is not "knowing" one is enraged, but rather "not knowing" what makes one so angry. From stillness and out of the cloud of unknowing comes the journey to the underworld, and out of one's depths the voice of the unconscious, G-d, Metis speaks.

- One can find more about Focusing from reading the Bantam Book 1978 paperback. As well on the psychological areas of this website one can find Gendlin's Focusing method a a key part of Dr Mayer's Bodymind Healing Psychotherapy approach. He was Eugene Gendlin's East Bay Focusing Training coordinator for ten years.

As related to this current video it is interesting that "the cloud of unknowing" in cross cultural wisdom traditions is operationalized in Gentian's focusing. Focusing training involves learning to sit silently in the unclear edge around a feeling to allow to arise the felt meaning of what makes one so upset about X issue.

God's Location & The Cloud of Unknowing Part 2

We revisit the theme from the previous class — God's Location: The Cloud of Unknowing — and add some material I felt was missing. It's a commonly expressed idea that God's location is everywhere and in everything, but the mystics' teachings explore how to have a direct bodily felt experience of this. One way is through being in the state of non-knowing rather than certainty. And in our last class on this we explored Rabbi Zvika Krieger's (Rabbi of Chochmat Halev) Torah interpretation, where the cloud that led the Jews through the desert becomes a metaphor for our own inner cloud of unknowing. This is a symbol for the Jewish (and other mystical traditions) view that divine knowledge, wisdom, and experience is found by accessing our inner receptive state of not-knowing. The Jewish mystical tradition reads Torah on four levels — literal, allegorical, interpretive, and mystical — and the deepest teaching is to be with not-knowing rather than acting as if we have all the answers. Out of unknowing, wisdom arises.

In the last class and this one we explore how to find "G-d's location" across various traditions: The Greek myth of Zeus swallowing Metis (feminine wisdom/insight), who gives birth to Athena from within — wisdom born out of the patriarchal self (in its process of transformation). . Socrates held still Standing for many hours while the army came and went, what was he doing? The Taoist farmer's teaching story of never knowing what will happen next in life and being non attached to life's ups and downs. All these traditions point to the same truth: insight arises from stillness and unknowing.

The key addition from the previous class is Eugene Gendlin's Focusing practice — the idea that the felt sense in the body is where wisdom actually lives. Gendlin studied hundreds of therapy recordings and found that the turning point in effective therapy was always a moment of pausing and feeling into something beneath the surface emotion. You'll learn how this is a modern psychological operationalization of what the mystics have always taught.

In this class we'll explore how the practices e of Bodymind Healing Qigong is a Taoist path to experience "the location of G-D."

Some specific things You''ll learn:

- What are the Four levels of interpretation of the Torah, and how does this relate to the Four Purposes of Tai Chi/Qigong practice?
- • What makes therapy work according to Dr Eugene Gendlin's research. How do feelings differ from "the felt sense," and how does this differentiation relate to various cross-cultural wisdom traditions, for example the soul of Qigong/Tai Chi practice.
- How are the Greek mystical tradition, Jewish and Taoist mystical traditions similar with relationship to "not knowing" and how does stillness bringing one closer to a divine state? How does this differ from "authoritarian knowing."
- Lesser known Tai Chi Ruler postures: "Pouring Honey" for preventive medicine for the kidneys and hip joint. "Rolling the Bowling Ball" for developing sticking and listening power (Ting Jin and Nian Jin).
- Learn the distinction between a "feeling" and your "felt sense," and its importance for your psych-spiritual healing. Discover how Standing Meditation Qigong can be a path to finding not only the spirit of Qigong but also the "soul of Qigong," by incorporating Gendlins' Focusing.
- Learn how you are and have always been a Qigong master.

Opening / Lecture

Dr. Mayer opened by revisiting the theme from the previous class — the Cloud of Unknowing — and adding material he felt was missing. The central idea is that God's location is everywhere and in everything, but the mystics teach that the way to experience this is through non-knowing rather than certainty.

He drew on Rabbi Zwika Krieger's Torah interpretation, where the cloud that led the Jews through the desert becomes a metaphor for our own inner cloud of unknowing. The Jewish mystical tradition reads Torah on four levels — literal, allegorical, interpretive, and mystical — and the deepest teaching is to be with not-knowing rather than assuming we have all the answers.

He connected this across traditions: the Greek myth of Zeus swallowing Metis (feminine wisdom/insight), who gives birth to Athena from within — wisdom born out of the patriarchal self. Socrates holding still for hours while the army came and went. The Taoist farmer's story of never knowing what's good or bad. All pointing to the same truth: insight arises from stillness and unknowing.

The key addition from the previous class was Eugene Gendlin's Focusing practice — the idea that the felt sense in the body is where wisdom actually lives. Gendlin studied hundreds of therapy recordings and found that the turning point in effective therapy was always a moment of pausing and feeling into something beneath the surface emotion. Dr. Mayer sees this as a modern psychological operationalization of what the mystics have always taught.

Practices Covered

- **Arm swinging** — activating yin and yang, stimulating the chongmai (penetrating vessel)
- **Bouncing** — single heel bounce to build energy
- **Standing meditation** — with the question: "What are you standing for?"
- **Shape-shifting into a tree** — rooting, reaching for light, using the tree as a model for boundaries and resilience
- **The circle that arises from stillness** — not making a circle but allowing it to emerge; the smaller the circle, the greater the chi
- **Tai Chi commencement** — the first movement arising from doing nothing, holding golden balls in the waters of life
- **Postural initiation** — each posture as an initiation into something personal
- **Ocean wave breathing** — letting go on the out-breath, receiving on the in-breath
- **Classic Tai Chi Ruler** — reversing circles, breathing coordination, building kidney chi, fear response reversal
- **New Tai Chi Ruler movement (from Chris's request)** — hands out, shifting weight side to side, making smaller and smaller circles; includes a partner visualization for developing listening skills and redirecting incoming force
- **Dispersing stagnant chi** — wiping off, tapping, milking, axis rotation, electromagnet hands, wounded healer's prayer
- **Turtle practice** — neck stretch, sending healing to others
- **Golden ball from heaven** — entering the imaginal realm, bringing divine energy down to the heart
- **Internal organ exercises** — wood, fire, earth, metal, water sequence with sounds, crane balance, lung arrow release, kidney sounds
- **Walking meditation** — weight shifting, wrists rising naturally, animal forms (wrapping snakes, monkey grasps fruit, tiger)

Closing Theme

The practices kept returning to the same thread: out of stillness and not-knowing, movement arises. Out of unknowing, wisdom arises. The body is not separate from the mind — it is the mind. Every posture has four dimensions: physical, psychological, spiritual, and martial. The smaller the circle, the greater the chi. The less you force, the more that comes.

Closing image: human beings are stars wrapped in skin. The light you've been searching for has always been within.

Q&A

One student asked for clarification on "knee straight" in Tai Chi Ruler. Dr. Mayer clarified that straight means the knee tracks forward over the middle toe — aligned in direction, not locked.