

Roger Jahnke, OMD

A Conspiracy of Miracles:

Qi, Spirit-Mind-Body, and the Transformation of Healthcare

Interview by Bonnie J. Horrigan | Photography by David J. Horrigan

Roger Jahnke, OMD, is a contemporary multidisciplinary—a doctor of Chinese medicine (30 years); CEO of a *new era* healthcare company; author, lecturer and researcher; healthcare historian and futurist; consultant to hospitals, agencies, and corporations for the development of breakthrough programs in integrative medicine; master teacher of Qigong and Tai Chi; cocreator of a health and wellness coaching system—the Circle of Life; and cofounder of the Healer Within Foundation, which focuses on preserving and integrating global medical traditions and delivers wellness coaching and mind-body practice to communities in the United States and globally.

Dr. Jahnke's work is part of a dynamic international effort to understand the "naturally occurring, internal, self-healing resource" that the Chinese and Ayurvedic traditions have called Qi and prana. The core principal of his work proposes that "the most profound medicine is produced within" through a dynamic interaction of energy, consciousness, and physiology. This breakthrough means that "true healthcare is free" when people are simply supported in understanding the magnitude of their own natural powers and capacities.

Dr. Jahnke studied Chinese medicine at the North American College of Acupuncture in Vancouver, British Columbia, in 1972. In 1975, he transferred to the Tai Hsuan School of Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine in Honolulu, Hawaii, where he

completed his master level of study and internship. In 1978, Roger became the first director of the Department of Oriental Medicine at the Beechwood Clinic in Columbus, Ohio. He completed his doctorate in Oriental medicine at the California Acupuncture College in Los Angeles, California, in 1983.

For the next two decades, Dr. Jahnke was fully dedicated to the clinical practice of Traditional Chinese Medicine as the chief physician and administrator of the Health Action Clinic in Santa Barbara, with an interdisciplinary staff of acupuncturists, physical therapists, massage practitioners, and health educators.

Dr. Jahnke is currently CEO of Health Action Synergies. The clinic has transmuted into a consulting firm that works with hospitals, healthcare organizations, agencies, and corporations nationwide and internationally to integrate the advances in alternative and complementary medicine. The training director of the Institute of Integral Qigong and Tai Chi and Health Action Synergies' Institute for Health and Wellness Coach Training, he is the author of two books—*The Healer Within* and *The Healing Promise of Qi*. His fascination with Qi and Qigong has inspired him to take eight research and study groups to China to investigate Qi in the universities, Qigong institutes, temples, and sacred mountain sites.

EXPLORE interviewed Dr. Jahnke in Santa Barbara, California, in the summer of 2006.

Roger Jahnke, OMD, has studied and practiced Chinese Medicine since the early 1970s. He describes it as a "beautiful system that honors the person at every level—Spirit (the eternal), HeartMind (emotions and attitudes), and Body (the substance)—all infused with Qi."

EXPLORE: I started following your work 15 years ago. Your expertise ranges—Qi and energy medicine, the consumer-centered healthcare revolution, the business

of integrating complementary and integrative medicine, even the convergence of physics and consciousness. Let's begin with the changing tide.

JAHNKE: Healthcare is deconstructing and reengineering itself. We have proven that people can heal themselves of the greatest health threats for free. This changes everything!

With the arising Spirit-Mind-Body revolution, the deconstructive findings of physics (now over 100 years ago), a greater understanding of the relativity of energy and consciousness, the integration of ancient and conventional medicine, personal Spirit-Mind-Body practice, and wellness coaching, our wounded healthcare system may potentially heal itself. Qi and energy medicine are my personal favorite areas of the emerging new health system. But even more striking is empowering patients to become self-directed health optimizers. Perhaps the most awesome health breakthrough of the current era is the emergence of forces in the health insurance marketplace wherein individual citizens are now insuring themselves through health savings accounts. With self-insurance, health and wellness coaching, and the implementation of energy-based mind-body practices like Qigong and Tai Chi (also yoga), people are healing and preventing disease for a tiny percentage of the cost of postsymptomatic medical treatment—a kind of practical miracle.

EXPLORE: What are the most compelling concepts that are driving the transformation in healthcare and medicine?

JAHNKE: I took my first Tai Chi class in 1967 in Berkeley. Back then, these ideas—Chinese Medicine, Tai Chi, Qigong, meditation, the human energy system, drug-free healing strategies, and the relationship between Spirit-Mind-Body—were considered esoteric ideas. Today these concepts have pushed into the culture so efficiently, they are not esoteric anymore. They are considered wise decision making on the part of smart people and innovative employers.

For thousands of years, the proof of the relevance of Qigong, Tai Chi, and energy medicine was the subjective collection of impressions and observations of purposeful practitioners. In our culture, such research has historically been perceived as flawed. We now have dozens of studies done in our revered objective-scientific framework on Qigong, Tai Chi, acupuncture, and many other holistic and energy-based methods and treatment modalities.

According to the former editor of the *New England Journal of Medicine*, “Once a therapy or protocol has been tested rigorously, it no longer matters whether it was considered alternative at the outset. If it is found to be reasonably safe and effective, it becomes an accepted part of the medical system.” Acupuncture, energy-based mind-body practice (Qigong, Tai Chi, yoga), and a whole array of ancient and modern modalities of clinical and behavioral healing are now accepted as parts of the healthcare and medical system.

At our Health Action Synergies training institutes, we have trained Qigong and Tai Chi teachers and Circle of Life wellness coaches who are now working in high schools, churches, social service agencies, corporations, and more. It is not uncommon for conventional fitness and physical activity classes in spas, community centers, and hospitals to begin or end with Qigong or Tai Chi. In addition, now thousands of people have been able to actually feel the Qi and direct it to others with a healing intent.

All of this conspires to create a steady foundation for an international integrated medicine, based on health sustainability and operating from fundamentals of energetics (energy medicine), cell biology, and consciousness that will be of lower cost and accessible to all. The key is that people make medicine within, for no cost, that can heal and prevent most diseases.

EXPLORE: What do we know now about Qigong, Tai Chi, and Chinese Medicine that we didn’t know two decades ago?

JAHNKE: Chinese Medicine is a marvel in its own right. Acupuncture, the herbal medicines, the manual or body therapies, with the wellness programs of Qigong, Tai Chi, meditation, nutrition—it’s a miracle of human insight. This ancient model of healthcare is helping us redesign our healthcare system, with a greater wellness focus. Historically speaking, Chinese Medicine began at least 5,000 years ago. However, when you look at early Chinese writing, the discussions on herbal medicine, energy (Qi) function, and the concept of the merging energetics of heaven and the earth were eloquent and refined. Scholars suggest that it’s possible, given that the conversation was very advanced at the point when writing started, that the discussion had been going on for some

thousands of years previous. This means Chinese Medicine might have had its beginnings 10,000 years ago or more. It is a beautiful system that honors the person at every level—the Spirit (the eternal), Heart-Mind (emotions and attitudes), and Body (the substance)—all infused with Qi.

The rules of Chinese Medicine are collected in the *Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen* (*The Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine*), which is parallel to our *Hippocratic Corpus*. They are similar in historic time and structure—they share a focus on natural healing. The first rule in Western medicine is “First, do no harm.” The first rule in Chinese Medicine is “First, honor the Spirit.”

The second rule in Chinese Medicine is “Treat individuals while they are well, to keep them well, instead of trying to fix them after they lose their health.” Chinese Medicine is prevention and well-being based. And the third rule is “The superior physician teaches people to sustain their well-being.” Chinese Medicine is based on informing, inspiring, and empowering. The first three rules do not even mention disease. Even in the treatment of disease, the focus is on maximizing that which is right, rather than finding and fixing what is wrong.

Our culture is just discovering the idea that a wellness program may have some relevance, whereas in the Chinese tradition, the wellness program was woven in from the very first historical instant that the story of medicine was told.

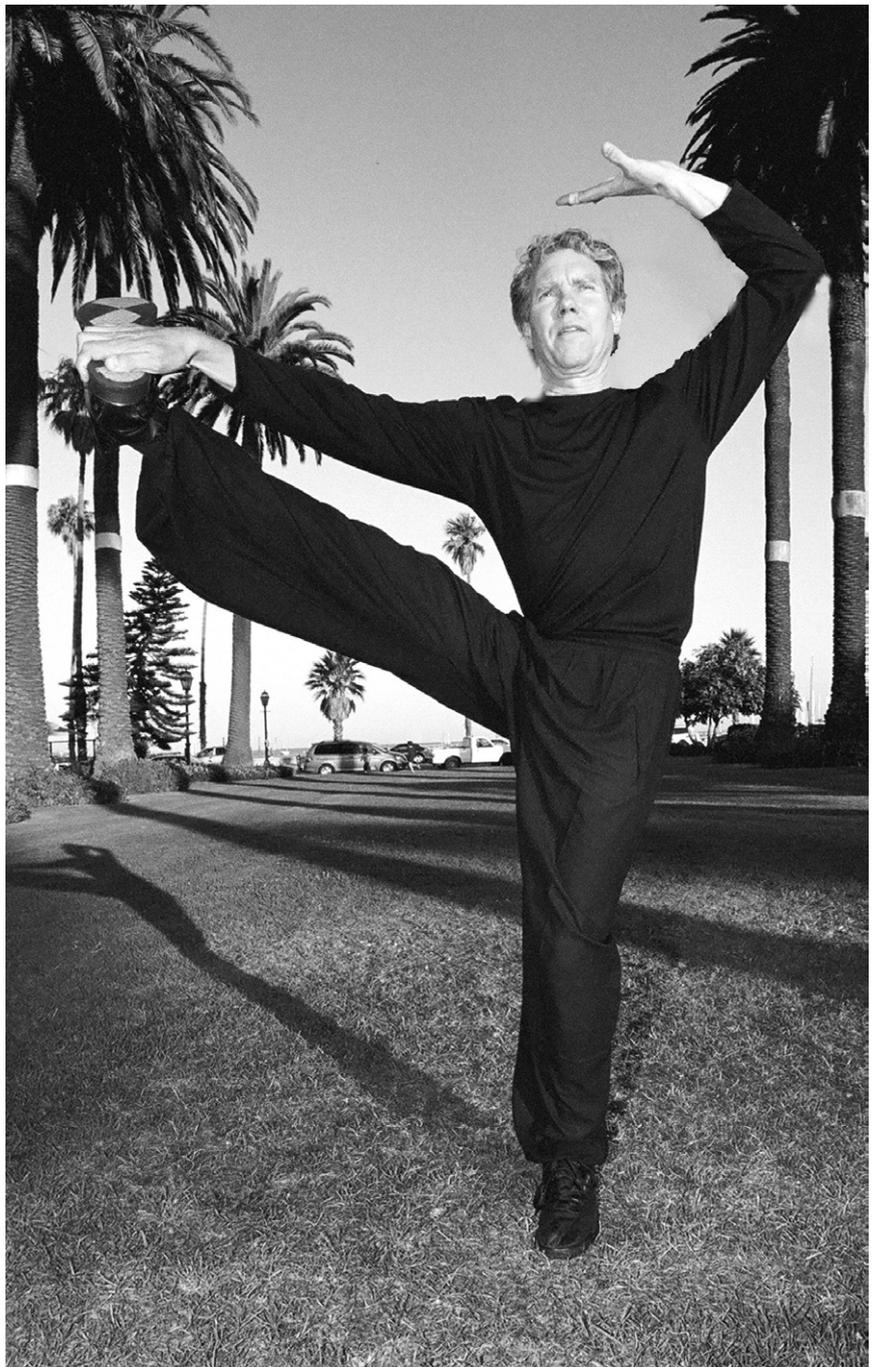
Go back to Hippocrates; you’ll notice that there is a rich discussion about Spirit and the natural capacity for self-sustainability and self-recovery. Functional life is driven by the mysterious presence of a force—*physis*—the natural functionality of systems, including the human system. So Hippocratic medicine actually has its foundation in the idea of maximizing function, which is exactly the same as Chinese Medicine. The key points are (1) in Chinese Medicine, the wellness program is in the delivery system from the first instant and (2) the roots of Western medicine, as evidenced in the *Hippocratic Corpus*, recognize coherent function as a fundamental. That means that while Asian and Western medicine seem quite divergent, at their basis both revere well-being enhancement.

In the 1960s and as a new doctor of Chinese Medicine in the 1970s, I was asking the question, why isn't the medical profession implementing well-being-based healthcare. The concepts of dietary medicine, meditation, and cultivating a relationship with nature were simply not in our culture at the time. So, at the Health Action Clinic, we instituted natural healing and wellness. We taught Tai Chi and Qigong classes and developed a methodology for health and wellness coaching.

It became clear that everyone has *resident wisdom*. Each of us already knows a lot about health. Implementing resident wisdom turns on the *healer within*, the natural self-healing capacity of the human system. In China, this is known as the *medicine within*—a natural inner elixir.

The most profound medicine is produced within the human body for free. In our conventional medical world view, however, we have doubted the relevance of inherent or inner knowledge and wisdom; we have historically disassociated from natural wisdom and leave people with the nail-biting sense that they need an expert to tell them what to do. The healer within and the medicine within have been considered unworthy of attention until recently. In fact, the medicine within is a miracle of human life, a gift from God, the architect of the universe. People are now understanding this and taking action.

So, at the original Health Action Integrative Clinic, we developed two powerful tool sets for maximizing the healer within and fostering health self-reliance: Circle of Life coaching and an approach to Spirit-Mind-Body practice based on Qigong, Tai Chi, and yoga. Circle of Life coaches assist individuals and wellness groups to leverage resident wisdom. It is very similar to the wisdom circles of traditional cultures. Spirit-Mind-Body practice is based on the four self-healing methods of all cultures—body movement, breath practice, self-massage, and meditation. Both coaching and self-enhancing health practices are crafted for application in contemporary culture from the precious wisdom and practice of the ancients. The breakthrough is that it is easy and the cost is minimal to turn on the healer within. It's often simply remembering how much we already know and applying it.



Demonstrating the practice of Qigong, Roger Janhke says that “the real miracle of Qigong is that, through the practice, people can heal themselves.”

So, the foundation of our clinical model, and later our consulting and training, is the fact that healthcare starts with caring for health, rather than as a system for financing medical intervention. And Qigong, Tai Chi, and health coaching are the foundation pieces of wellness. People don't have to wait until they are sick. Following the rules of

Chinese Medicine instead of healing disease, we maximize well-being. Having more fun, getting better jobs, making more brilliant decisions, meeting the lover of our dreams, and making more income because we have more energy, more insight, and more focus—why wait to get sick to become more well?

Here's the punch line. Our culture is finally moving into an awareness of the relevance of well-being sustainment and that medical intervention should be the last resort. It used to be that people would say, "As a 'last resort,' we'll have you see the acupuncturist or practice Qigong." Those are much better as the "first resort." We are always talking about the "third party." Well, what about the "first party?" That's where all the intelligence, the heart, the power, and the Qi resides. Health maximization as the first resort for the first party—that is a system that cares for health. **EXPLORE:** Where has the Qigong and Tai Chi research taken us?

JAHNKE: The findings of early explorations into the basic outcomes of Tai Chi, Qigong, yoga, and meditation have been fairly robust. The next stage was more rigorous study designs. These types of studies have now generated a large body of excellent data, especially on balance and falls prevention and the prevention and management of heart disease, plus numerous other areas—immunity, neurological and mental function, asthma, etc.

Traditionally, there has been the idea that Qigong and yoga come from highly esoteric traditions and that if you make them simple and accessible, something very critical is lost. I agree that something does get lost. The beautiful philosophy of these cultures with their concepts of yin and yang, the chakras and nadis—those bodies of information are absolutely eloquent and rich and should forever be protected and refined.

However, for application to people who need to support themselves in recovering their vitality—from life-threatening diseases, from surgical procedures, or from stress—it is my personal opinion that there is everything right with creating an Americanized version for practical applications. In fact, I would say that when a person finds how much value there is in utilizing those methodologies, they are all the more inclined to want to know about yin and yang, Qi, prana, chakras, and nadis. In simplifying, something awesome is gained—a profound set of accessible tools to apply in very practical situations. And, by the way, this also opens a wider gateway for people to become more interested in the deeper levels of this knowledge.

Our Institute of Integral Qigong and Tai Chi (IIQTC), for which I am the director,

was called upon by the National Council on Aging to look at the idea of generating an approach to Qigong and Tai Chi that would be very accessible to people who have absolutely no interest in Daoist philosophy or Qi. Drawing on the best of ancient wisdom we created Tai Chi Easy.

Tai Chi Easy was implemented in a demonstration project in which over 400 people participated from all over the United States. They were able to embrace the protocol very easily. This was not a randomized trial; however, we did pretests and posttests based on respected assessment scales. The number of participants was impressive and the findings were all very positive and significant.

The National Council on Aging and the University of Illinois took this concept and, over a period of time, secured a grant from the Archstone Foundation for \$250,000 to explore an array of questions about Qigong and Tai Chi. The IIQTC, the National Council on Aging, the University of Illinois, and the Archstone Foundation convened the National Expert Meeting on Qi Gong and Tai Chi. Thirty-five experts from all over the world gathered at the University of Illinois and came to consensus on how to responsibly bring Qigong and Tai Chi to the masses. What would a class look like? What is the least amount of training needed for a facilitator to be competent? And so forth. The consensus document can be reviewed and downloaded at http://TaiChiEasy.org/National_Expert_Meeting.

Two demonstration projects are being conducted in relation to this. One is at the University of Illinois and the other is here in Santa Barbara at the IIQTC. We are taking the conceptual framework that was agreed upon by the thirty-five experts and demonstrating the relevance of those ideas with moderately sized populations.

EXPLORE: Why does Qigong work?

JAHNKE: There are three levels of answers. These same mechanisms operate in yoga, all forms of moving meditation, and even holistic support groups and wellness coaching. The first level is physiological. We already know that benefits of mind-body practice, including Tai Chi and Qigong, cross numerous physiological systems. Take oxygen. We know that oxygen is a powerful healing factor, so we don't have to prove that. We also know that diffusing oxygen into the system, so that it's superavailable, is key. So the real

question is: Does Qigong and Tai Chi maximize in some way the utilization of oxygen in all the ways that we know that it is utilized? And the answer is yes.

Now, to dispel a myth—breathing deep doesn't increase the amount of oxygen in your blood. There is actually 98% oxygen perfusion in the blood of almost everyone, even those with chronic obstructive lung disease. So the issue isn't getting oxygen into the blood. The issue is getting oxygen out of the blood and into the tissues. When you go into a deep state of relaxation, the gentle movement associated with all forms moving meditation like Qigong, yoga, and Tai Chi cause the natural body intelligence to pull oxygen out of the blood toward the tissues.

Interestingly, when you practice sitting meditation, you lose this benefit. With moving meditation, you gain this. In vigorous exercise, what happens is that oxygen is being diffused out of the blood and into the tissue, but it is spent as fuel for the muscles. You do get the great muscle buildup desired by most people. For healing, do I want oxygen to burn as fuel for muscles or do I want oxygen to be more available in the system as a healing resource? In a state of deep relaxation, the blood vessels—particularly the capillaries—get larger and you have a larger volume of oxygen-rich blood available. This oxygen is available everywhere—in your liver, in your thymus gland, in your adrenal glands, in your hypothalamus. So, gentle movement plus the deep relaxation equals more oxygen diffused more deeply into the system.

In the same vein, the science on psychoneuroimmunology is established. So we only have to ask one question: do you relax in Qigong and Tai Chi? Yes! So everything we've found in the domain of psychoneuroimmunology is applicable to Qigong and Tai Chi.

The next physiological reason Qigong works has to do with the lymph. The simplest story on metabolism is "get the good stuff in, get the bad stuff out." And we have a massive amount of intelligence about the blood and the heart, which is the delivery system for oxygen and nutrition. But we don't know a lot about the mechanisms for getting the bad stuff out. In fact, many physicians are resistant to concepts like toxins and detoxification. Toxins are actually metabolic by-products, and detoxification is activating the

natural capacity of the elimination system. The system for removing metabolic by-products and any other kind of pollution that has been delivered into the body, such as cigarette smoke, street drugs, or medical drugs, is the lymphatic system.

When a tumor in a person's body is deconstructed, by chemotherapy or by visualization, how does it get out? Through the lymphatic system. Yet we give only a small percentage of the attention to the lymph that we pay to the cardiac and the blood system. This is just an insight into how our thinking has been biased and imbalanced.

If you look at Qigong with the lymph in mind, you could easily say that Qigong is primarily a lymph-based methodology. There are five components to the *lymph heart*. The first is compression; contracting and releasing of the muscles puts pressure on the lymph system, causing flow, and any massage contributes to this as well. Second, when you metabolize oxygen, one of the by-products is water. Any volume of water coming into the tissue spaces pushes the water ahead of it. Third is the intrinsic propulsion mechanism; the lymph vessels open up, reach out, grab water, and pull it in. It actually looks like they are doing Tai Chi, by the way. And they do this most efficiently when the body is in a state of rest. It's very interesting—within you thousands of lymphatic endpoints are doing Tai Chi movements when you authentically relax.

The fourth mechanism is inversion against gravity. Any time you raise your arms up in the air, the lymph falls and pushes the lymph ahead of it. But if your arm is down by your side, the lymph has to climb against gravity. Any inversion or even leveling of limbs in Qigong (yoga), accelerates lymph propulsion. Fifth, the most impressive lymph propulsion mechanism of the lymph heart is the breath. When you take a small breath, you do not pump lymph. But when the diaphragm is fully engaged, it compresses the cisterna chyli (a balloonlike sac right below your diaphragm) that fills with lymph from throughout the body. When it's compressed, it propels the lymph forward. The nature of the lymphatic system is that lymph cannot go backwards. There are gates. When you move lymph, the gates open, if lymph flows back, the gates close. So the balloon gets compressed, and this

fountain of lymph goes shooting up through the thoracic duct and into the subclavian vein, and from there it goes into the blood and becomes a part of the serum that is delivered to the liver and the kidneys for the final detoxifying portion of the elimination process. In other words, Qigong, Tai Chi, and yoga are programmed to maximize lymph propulsion and thus significantly enhance well-being.

“The practice of Qigong is intended to mindfully and on purpose create an increased harmony between yin and yang energies.”

EXPLORE: What is the second level?

JAHNKE: Qi, energy, life force! The Chinese will tell you that the practice of Qigong is intended to mindfully and on purpose create an increased harmony between yin and yang energies. When you compare the solidity of the earth with the openness of space, you get an idea of the difference between yin and yang. Yang Qi is related to function and openness and activity, Yin Qi is related to substance, containedness, and rest. When yin of earth rises and yang of heaven descends, they merge to create life.

Qi is distributed throughout the universe, some speculate that it is associated with what Einstein called the cosmological constant, a subtle energy that is apparently everywhere in the universe. The Qi of the human system derives from Heaven and Earth. Qi is inherent to the human system, from the original yin and yang received from one's parents. We call that X and Y DNA. Qi is often called “information.” It is the essential nature of everything to be integrated and communicating. In humans, the Qi segments itself into functional association with organs and energy channels, but it also gathers in three key Qi reservoirs called the three *Dan Tian*. The lower *Dan Tian* (earth) is below the belly button, your lower abdominal area. The middle *Dan Tian* is associ-

ated with the heart, the Chinese say HeartMind. And the upper *Dan Tian* (heaven) is associated with the brain. These reservoirs are associated with the “three treasures”—*Shen-Qi-Jing*. We might say Spirit-Mind-Body.

These three reservoirs, associated with the three treasures, are the foundation of how Qigong operates, and they are a parallel system to the yoga-based chakras. The definition of *Dan Tian* is beautiful. *Dan* means medicine (actually elixir) and *Tian* means field—elixir field. In the Asian paradigm, the body is designed to make medicine that we cultivate in the three elixir fields.

The lower *Dan Tian* makes and stores an elixir for the body, associated with the subtlest aspects of physical function—the neurotransmitters, hormones, the DNA, enzymes, co-factors, etc. *Jing*, which is the lower *Dan Tian* treasure, is associated with sexuality and physical function. The female holds the integrity of the original yin force and the male holds the integrity of the original yang force. When those energies meet, you get a new life and a body is constructed within the Qi field.

The middle *Dan Tian* is the HeartMind. The Chinese do not have a word for heart and another for mind. They have one word, HeartMind—*Xin* (also *hsin*). The HeartMind is not the body, but it is also not the spirit. Ask yourself this question: what am I that is not the boundless nature of my spirit and not the substantial nature of my body? Intelligence, emotions, feelings, consciousness, dreams, creativity—all that is the HeartMind. Panic, paranoia, anxiety, sadness, and confusion. Also trust, esteem, and courage. Your capacity to focus is HeartMind. Intent and will are HeartMind. The HeartMind elixir is really the essence of Qigong; it heals the character. HeartMind elixir is the capacity to purposefully choose what to do, what to think, and even what to feel. HeartMind elixir is a created through Qigong methodologies that foster the capacity to elect, choose, and decide.

We all live from our conditioning, even the best of us. So Qigong, at this level, is not an exercise associated with the body. It has an influence on the body, but that influence is mediated through the psyche. For example, the capacity to influence the immune system, heart rate variability, or the productivity of healing neurotransmitters is directed by the HeartMind.

And the upper *Dan Tian* is associated with the Spirit. The head is the part of the body that is the furthest from the substantial earth we stand on, the part that is the closest to the boundlessness of heaven. Spirit Qigong helps to answer the question: how can I have the eternal, spiritual part of myself, that is free from trauma and conditioning, be making my decisions for me?

Spirit elixir heals everything. Spirit does not need to be healed, instead it is revealed. Because of the ineffable nature of spirit, this is difficult to articulate. There is one thing that is absolutely clear in all traditions of medicine, and that is “first honor spirit”. One must necessarily undergo the healing of the HeartMind (the clearing of mental/emotional conditioning) to bring forth—reveal—the eternal radiant essence of oneself. This means clearing feelings, attitudes, opinions, biases, and traumas that cause one to make decisions and act out of accord with the essence of one’s wholeness. We all know, unfortunately, how this works. It is common to find ourselves acting and thinking in ways that are not consistent with our deepest self. It is exhausting. So, the point here is that to fully express our spiritual self, the golden key is to heal and cultivate the HeartMind—the character, the mind, the mental/emotional aspect of our being.

Qigong is a power tool for self-observation. Any practice or path that forthrightly investigates the difference between conditioned nature and the essential nature reveals spirit and heals trauma and conditioning. Use Qigong to get into the present and disassociate from the regrets of the past and anxieties of the future. In the present, Spirit naturally emerges and heals the complexities of the HeartMind spontaneously.

EXPLORE: The third level?

JAHNKE: Timeless, boundless being. Physics, the shamanic view, and the great wisdom traditions agree that time and space are relative. One hundred and one years ago, Einstein deconstructed the view that time, space, and mass are the fundamentals for how things work. Time and distance are based only on perception. Physics has been without a clear view for over 100 years—the Mystery rules. In the Western scientific cultures, we tend to abhor the Mystery—it is dangerous and must be solved. In the ancient cultures, how-

ever, the Mystery is the mother of everything.

Given the findings of later quantum explorers—Hiesenburg (Uncertainty Principle, 1927) and Bohr (Indeterminacy Principle)—intention and attention have a major influence on what probabilities become actualities. The *wave-particle duality* (a form of yin and yang) declares that we are to some extent creating the world we experience.

My physics colleagues insist that this is an anthropomorphization of nonhuman systems, but if you look at the Daoist, Buddhist, shamanic perspectives, and even democracy, the notion of self-determinism prevails.

According to the emerging views of physics and the wisdom traditions, the fundamentals of our world are more like consciousness and light. Given time may not be limited to its perceived trajectory—forward toward the future—we may be able to heal ourselves by getting into the timeless present and influencing our own apparent past. This adds a special dimension to Qigong. Not only does the practice enhance physiological function (level one) and harmonize Qi (level two), it may also influence our own past to alter our future. But this is just too much for us to explore efficiently today.

EXPLORE: Most people think of Qigong as exercise, an activity one does for oneself. There is also an aspect wherein we can influence others through focused intent called Qi transmission, correct?

JAHNKE: Qi transmission is not only possible, we are doing it all the time. The transmission of intent as prayer is, according to the Chinese, Qi transmission. If I say I am fine but you sense that I am not, that awareness may be your capacity to read my Qi transmission. When a great poet or teacher inspires me, that is Qi transmission.

A quick story. I was in China with a group of people who were learning Qigong. We were visiting hospitals and certain places in the mountains, but mostly we were practicing Qigong. We went to one hospital to meet with a man who ran the Qigong department and he gave a beautiful lecture about the omega point, which is the place where yin and yang meet in balance and harmony. His idea was that we move toward that point when we are in direct relationship with our

eternal self as opposed to our local, more conditioned self. It was a beautiful lecture.

Someone in the group requested that he demonstrate Qi transmission so he asked for a volunteer. A woman who had been having headaches stood up and he started to do his Qigong practice near her, with some implication that he was manipulating her Qi. But he said, “I am not doing anything to you. What I am doing is supporting you in getting into the omega state and I am going to do that by entering into my omega state.”

Three times he said, “It is not my intent to do something to you. It is my intent to support you in doing something for yourself.” And the woman’s headache went away and all were impressed. Then on the plane, on the way back home, she told me that she had to start saving her money so she could come back to see the Qi master.

EXPLORE: She missed the point.

JAHNKE: Yes. The Qigong master had said over and over how it works, how he was helping her to do what she could be doing on her own, and then she comes back with that. He was saying that Qi transmission is possible and incredible, but it is never more important than personal Qi cultivation.

I think it’s a great reflection about the average person’s inability to pay attention, because they are so busy trying to find somebody somewhere who will provide something marvelous and miraculous for them, as if they didn’t have that something already.

This is one of my favorite stories about Qi transmission. Number one: we don’t need a Qi healer. Number two: we are a Qi healer. And number three: we would best spend our time supporting people in learning about their power to heal themselves. Qi transmission is interesting and exciting, but the real miracle of Qigong is that people can heal themselves. When healthcare profitability is dependent on keeping people powerless—whether we refer to a surgeon, an acupuncturist, or a Qigong healer—the truth about an individual’s power to heal his or her self is repressed. My opinion—this is a sin against human possibilities. I love the story in which we let ourselves in on the fact that every human being is powerful. To me, the suppression of this fact is the greatest human tragedy right now, and the greatest opportunity.

EXPLORE: I want to go back to the narrow gate and the need to repair the Heart-Mind. Does that happen naturally in the physical practice of Qigong or is there also a mental practice?

JAHNKE: The reason why we called my second book *The Healing Promise of Chi* is that there are many promises that are fulfilled when one sustains a cultivation lifestyle. One of these promises is that if you, in good faith, in a sustainable way, do the practice, you will derive benefit. It doesn't promise a miracle (though small and large miracles are common). It does promise, however, personal improvement or evolution with practice.

As the Spirit is revealed through the practice of present moment focus, the body and mind are healed by the natural arising of the eternally well aspect of the self. My sense is that by doing the practice, we put ourselves into a more unrestrained relationship with the part of our being that is already healed. So, when you stop doing everything else (buying, selling, worrying, thinking, etc.) and you just do the practice, that naturally well aspect of being shows up more fully. Practice brings you into the harmony point between yin and yang and the balance point between past and future. When you are truly able to sustain the focus on the present, the personality and its worst habits are trumped by the radical and radiant presence of the eternal Spirit. Once a person has a significant experience of this state, they will love it, seek it out, and even become habituated to it. This is the healing promise of Qi.

EXPLORE: Speaking of promise, I know you are a big proponent of self-determination in healthcare; is there promise in health savings accounts?

JAHNKE: A key question in our society today is how can we compete and be profitable? Recently, one of the most awful things that ever happened in health insurance and also one of the best has occurred. It was originally called cost shifting. That means that the companies pay less for an employee's healthcare and the employee pays more. The criticism was that the companies were just dumping the cost onto the employees—big bad companies doing horrible things to innocent people. Let's change the view. Instead of calling it cost shifting and thinking of it as a bad thing, let's turn it into a brilliant opportunity. So, here come health savings accounts

(HSAs). It is the same thing; the employee is still paying but instead of paying an insurance company, the money is going into a bank account. Now I've got my money in my bank account that is exclusively for my healthcare. The first benefit is that when I spend, it is a pretax dollar. That's like getting \$1.00 worth of services for .75 cents. The second benefit is that I am incentivized to improve myself.

“As the Spirit is revealed through the practice of present moment focus, the body and mind are healed by the natural arising of the eternally well aspect of the self.”

Most people are inclined to personal improvement and needing less medical services, especially when they retain more money in their savings account. Caring for health becomes wise retirement planning. While companies are shutting down pensions, they are opening up HSAs. The fact that the company is no longer taking responsibility for us in our old age is not bad. In fact, you could say that companies taking responsibility for people's health compromises independence and self-determinism. Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness is not somebody else's responsibility, it is my opportunity.

So, instead of being disempowered, people are now more encouraged by forces in the market place to become more empowered and more self-reliant. Personally, I see that as a brilliant breakthrough.

I am interested in people and in the power that people have to refine how society and culture work. Like Gandhi said, “Become the world you want to see.” Let's do that. Every time the healthcare industry precludes people from self-reliance, it is a kind of crime. When companies re-

strict employee self-reliance, it is counter-productive; when they foster self-reliance, let's celebrate. So, I wouldn't call this cost shifting. Ask: does this empower people? Do HSAs make it so that people who make better decisions can have a better life?

Given that you can heal yourself and make medicine within, at home for free, there is a possible conspiracy of wonder here. This conspiracy leveraged efficiently into the market has the potential to transform this culture. With HSAs, a person does not need permission to use holistic healthcare and trigger a third-party payment. The first party makes the payment, the first party sets up the appointment and decides how often to go, and who to go to. The first party decides to get healthier so that he or she needs less medical visits, pretax dollars grant an automatic discount. This scheme is aligned with natural healing and human empowerment.

EXPLORE: I know you help businesses design wellness and productivity enhancement programs and health systems design complementary and alternative-integrative medicine (CAM/IM) centers. What are you seeing?

JAHNKE: With my experience as head of a department at the Beechwold Clinic from 1977-1980 and then as director of the Health Action Clinic, we created an integrative medicine framework including clinical pathways for acupuncture, physical therapy, occupational therapy, body therapy, coaching and group support, Tai Chi, Qigong and meditation. Starting in 1990, I continued to refine these strategies through the Health Action consulting and program design work. At Health Action Clinic, we had a rule—we will not treat you unless we have communication with your doctor. So integration with conventional medicine was built into our infrastructure. The foundation of this work and our key consulting deliverable is a process that honors all stakeholders involved in a new wellness or CAM/IM initiative.

It is widely known that many of the CAM/IM centers developed in the 1990s failed. One of my best clients has been a six-hospital system in Virginia that has a fitness center with every hospital. Interestingly, they did well because they did not build a CAM center. I watched those failed CAM/IM centers come and go and I consulted against CAM therapeutics in

many instances. One organization called their CAM/IM failure the \$6 million dollar learning.

What got left out was the simple process of getting buy-in from obvious stakeholders—a critical oversight, the difference between success and catastrophe. Never do anything provocative without enrolling the enthusiasm of the most important stakeholders. Many of these centers were built when good-hearted philanthropic individuals gave multimillion-dollar gifts. But the vetting of the plan often missed the most important step of getting the buy-in of all the parties who were going to be providing the referrals. Millions of dollars were wasted.

Another thing happened too. David Eisenberg did those two profound watershed studies (*New England Journal of Medicine*, 1993 and *JAMA: the Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1997). However, did people actually read them carefully? In my opinion, no. Were they misinterpreted? Yes, immensely. I read those studies carefully and reported on this to all of my clients, and they did well by paying attention. Truth is, the big breakthrough was not alternative therapies. It was citizen self-determinism. Less than 15% of the people in those studies actually used what we would call nonconventional therapies. But over 85% of the people in those studies used what we would call alternative or nonconventional health behaviors. Yoga, Tai Chi, vitamins, weight loss, biofeedback, counselors—these are behaviors, not therapies. So the public was saying, “We want a new healthcare system rooted in behaviors and life choices and based on self-reliance.” They did not say, “We want a healthcare system based on alternative clinical therapies.” This is a profound and frequently missed point.

During the early 1990s, a research question was asked, “What is the most important thing in healthcare to you.” The answer was “Chose my physician.” Three years later, the same question was asked and the answer was “A wide array of healthcare choices.” The finding was not that people want alternative medicine, it was simply that they want access to a diversity of behavioral and wellness services to complement and integrate with all therapeutics.

Isn't that amazing? One of my clients right now is a consortium of 30 Catholic

healthcare organizations in Cleveland, and they are building what is called the Abundant Living Model. They have integrative therapeutics in the discussion, but the core of the system focuses on the fact that a person is a spiritual being—first rule in Chinese Medicine.

Another of my clients is a major manufacturer that grants \$1,000 per year to employees to buy wellness services of their choice. What I have seen with most of my consulting clients, whether they start out thinking that they want CAM/IM therapies or a wellness program, is that most initiatives want two basic services—mind-body practice and wellness coaching. It is so much easier to inspire people to remain well than to fix them of life threatening illness after their health is lost. These are the least costly (coaching and mind-body practice are delivered in groups) and they are the most empowering.

EXPLORE: What is your personal edge in all of this?

JAHNKE: More and more, I am able to sustain a sense of the eternal aspect of myself that is boundless and eternal. Through meditation and Qigong, I am—like an aspiring alchemist—intending to make gold from the rough ingredients of myself. I am overcoming my addiction to feelings of doubt. I am electing to focus on gratitude and set my intentions with purposefulness daily. I have stopped listening to bad news because I can hear more of the good news that is happening all around me. Because I love my work as a kind of inspired play, I am making more friends with the people in the holistic field—playmates toward a preferred new world where the best in human nature is cultivated for the good of all beings. Every day in my practice of Qigong, I learn more about the cultivation of inner peace. And I am enjoying learning more about transmitting prayer and intent by visualizing others—people I know, people I do not know, and world leaders—acting from their own spiritual nature. There is a distant Qi transmission practice called *light delivery method* wherein I practice seeing people in their perfect state, overflowing with light.

EXPLORE: That's nice. To visualize others in a perfect state.

JAHNKE: It takes little time and no expenditure of energy, and it is absolutely cost free to send a wave of Qi and intent to another. Nor does it take any real time or

energy to acknowledge my gratitude and set my own intentions.

In one of the great wisdom texts of the Chinese, it says, “Make a medicine of the challenge.” So, I am creating a new habit in my life—to make medicine within, even (or especially) when I am challenged. It is easy to discuss, but not always easy to do. One of the promises is that if we “become the world we want to see,” it builds a wave of possibility, which can trend toward greater and greater probability and finally to actualization.

EXPLORE: So what is the bridge between the profound and deep, and the very practical?

JAHNKE: The most practical concerns about profitability in business, as well as peace in our world, require vitality and productivity. The deepest, most profound concerns for human nature require overcoming our conditioning and revealing our true nature. In both cases, the key strategy or method is to choose to become more conscious. This is not a medical program, it is not a treatment—it is more a well-being maximization lifestyle, simultaneously practical and profound. The first key piece is to have a system for achieving greater personal effectiveness and living from purpose. This is coaching and wellness support. People are gathering in circles to support each other and reach for the purposeful life. The second key is a practice of self-care and self-realization. This means having a Spirit-Mind-Body practice. The yoga revolution is in full force; Qigong and Tai Chi are building like a benevolent tidal wave.

The most profound medicine is not at the drugstore or the doctor's office. It is produced within us for free, through a natural interaction between the Spirit-Mind-Body. The magnitude of good that can arise from this simple concept is huge—good for people, families and communities, and good for business and the bottom line.

For more information, please visit Health Action at <http://HealthAction.net>; Institute of Integral Qigong and Tai Chi at <http://IIQTC.org>; Tai Chi Easy at <http://TaiChiEasy.org>; The Healer Within Foundation at <http://HealerWithinFoundation.org>; or <http://FeeltheQi.com>.