

# Moving into Thankfulness with Qi Gong

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Why don't we feel thankful more often? Most of us have so much to be thankful for - our health, our family and friends, our

job, our home, and the country we live in. Yet on a normal daily basis, there is often more resentment than thankfulness.

Resentment and anger become a constant background noise to our lives as we struggle with wanting things to be different than they actually are. Thankfulness arises as we see how things truly are and appreciate what we have. Being present and aware enough to do this can be quite a challenge. Sages of all religious and spiritual persuasions have been teaching the world for ages how to find this presence. Qi Gong is one of these tools to release resentment and let thankfulness blossom.

Resentments can be big or small and can cause huge stress on our physical and emotional well-being. Chinese Medicine and Qi Gong look at this resentment as relating to the Liver energy system. The Liver system includes the liver and gall bladder, their respective meridians, the eyes, glands, tendons and ligaments, the peripheral nervous system, as well as nonphysical elements such as decision-making, action taking, and the emotions of anger and frustration.

Symptoms such as depression, anxiety, cancer, ovarian cysts, fibroid tumors, endometriosis, constipation, headaches, allergies, twitches, muscle cramping, PMS, or menopausal problems can all come from the stress on the Liver energy from bottled up emotional resentment.

Chinese Medicine looks at the combination of physical and emotional symptoms as indications of imbalance in the energy of the body. Once the

imbalance has been identified, there are several ways you can use Chinese Medicine to help. Through Qi Gong exercise and diet changes, profound improvements in health can be found.

The following exercise helps to clear energy imbalances in the Liver energy system. It can help with both physical and emotional issues.

## Liver Sound Exercise

To do this exercise, sit on the edge of a chair or your bed with your feet flat on the floor and knees at a 90-degree angle. Place your palms facing up on your lap, elbows out slightly and away from your body. There should be a small amount of space under your armpits, like you are holding a ping-pong ball there. Keep your back straight and relaxed and your chin in slightly. You can have your eyes closed or opened slightly.

Begin the posture by bringing your hands out from the sides of the body. Stretch them out as far as they will go while keeping the elbows bent slightly and the shoulders relaxed. Continue to raise the hands up until they meet over the head. Interlock the fingers and turn the palms over to face the ceiling. Stretch slightly up with your right shoulder and lean to the left side. This should allow you to feel a gentle pulling on the right side of your body where your liver is. Look up and open your eyes wide for this posture.

Exhale and make the following sound. "Tshhh" like water hitting a very hot frying pan. As you breathe out and make the sound, picture the negative emotion of anger coming out of your liver. When you have finished the sound, relax and inhale. Release your hands, turn them palm down and lower them slowly in front of your body down to your lap and place them palm up on your lap. Relax and feel the positive emotion of kindness growing in your liver. Also imagine a green color filling your liver. Relax as long as you want and repeat this exercise as many times in a row as feels good. Do this twice a day.

Through doing the Liver sound exercise, you can gradually release the bottled up anger and resentment that is holding you back from appreciating the life around you.

The food that you eat directly affects the energy of your body. Foods that are green are very healing for the Liver energy. The sour flavor helps to stimulate flow through this system, although too much sour can harm it and craving sour can be an indication of Liver energy imbalance. Typical sour foods are lemon, vinegar (salad dressings, pickles), or tart fruit. Too much greasy food can also cause trouble with the Liver energy as well.

If the Liver energy has been congested for a long time, then cleansing it may be appropriate for you. Before beginning this treatment, check with your health care provider to make sure it is appropriate for your particular situation and that there are no other underlying causes for your symptoms. A simple, mild cleansing for the Liver is to combine two ounces of aloe vera juice with two tablespoons of chlorophyll juice in one quart of water. Start out drinking one cup per day and you can increase up to one quart a day. If you get any increase in symptoms, cut the dose in half. You can continue with this until Liver symptoms are gone.

Moving the energy inside the body creates space for change in our life situations. Anger and resentment don't have to be a constant companion. Trying to "think" our way out of feelings can be helpful, but sometimes we hit an impasse where the words don't help anymore. Thinking becomes hollow. The power of Qi Gong allows us to continue our progress without the need for more thinking. With proper cultivation, thankfulness can grow.



Liver Sound  
"Tshhh"  
(lean to the left)