

# 5th Principle - Exploring Yin / Yang



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## August Principle Qigong Focus: Exploring Yin Yang

This is the Fifth Qigong Principle in our year long, exploration of Self through each of 8 Qigong Principles. We will share perspective on all three layers: physical, mental and emotional. With this Principle, we begin to also explore social impact. The level at which you participate is always up to you.

### Qigong Principle 5 - Exploring Yin Yang

Yin / Yang is the concept of dualistic - monism: Duality forming a whole, where the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. In this case, one part can not truly exist without the other. Yin and Yang are interconnected halves of a whole. However, when one has an excess of Yin or Yang in their personal makeup (physically, mentally and/or emotionally), they will find themselves out of balance. Yin and Yang are not absolute, nor are they static. When creatures find themselves out of balance, they will make efforts to bring themselves back into balance. However, often times, humans will seek methods that over compensate and take themselves to extremes as if on a see/saw.

Exploring Yin Yang as a Qigong Principle means observing deeply and learning how these forces interrelate within ourselves. Near the center, balanced between the two halves of the whole, lies harmony on our physical, mental and emotional levels.

**Physical Level Goal:** Develop an understanding of how Yin Yang Energies can be used to move the body toward balance and strength. This involves the act of allowing release or relaxation in an effort to decrease localized tension and increase circulation in an area of the body. On a physical level, Yin represents release, relax and emptiness, while Yang represents structure, strength and integrity. By increasing intention to one energy, you can affect the other. This cycle of energies reduces stagnation and stimulates healthy flow of blood and lymph throughout the body.

**Mental Level Goal:** Develop an understanding of how Yin Yang Energies can be used to move the mind toward balance and focus. Mental Yin Yang Energies perform an intricate dance, typically moving so quickly, it can be difficult to recognize where one begins and one ends. Yin tends to be more passive in nature and Yang more active. If my mind is scattered, having a difficult time focusing, I am experiencing an overwhelm of Yang Energy which can be soothed by introducing Yin, maybe in the form of breath work or meditation practice. If I continue to feed the Yang Energy scatter, I will only amplify the feeling of overwhelmed distraction until my mind gives me no choice but to let go into Yin Energy, possibly in the form of a nervous breakdown, exhaustion or depression. If my mind is in an extreme Yin state, then I may experience mental fog, inability to focus, plan or organize. A balanced mental state allows me to think clearly, plan ahead and be present to this moment in time.

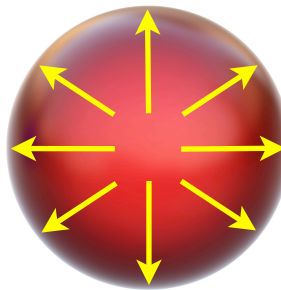
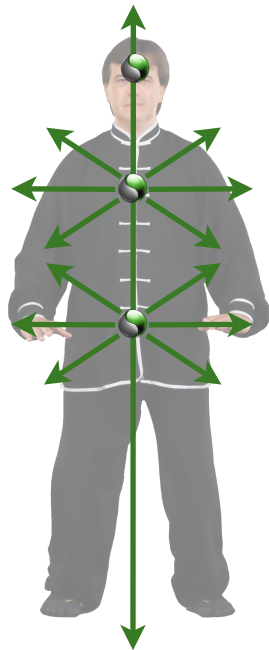
**Emotional Level Goal:** Develop an understanding of how Yin Yang Energies can be used to move the emotions toward balance and integrity. Emotions can become overwhelming while in either the Yin or Yang state. If you feel that out of control, rage level anger, your Yang Energy is so strong that your ability to regain control with Yin Energy will be very weak. That is until you expend some of your excess Yang Energy, allowing Yin to become stronger, for a time. In this scenario, it usually does not take long for Yang Energy to regroup and push Yin Energy back down, causing another outburst and sense of overwhelm. If a Yin emotion is overbearing you may feel deeply sad, depressed or apathetic. This leads to lethargy, stagnation and inaction. This is one possible reason why anxiety (Yang Energy) is often coupled with depression (Yin Energy) in that the internal cycle is trying to motivate itself out of a deeply Yin state. When our emotions are more balanced, we experience them all, however, none are overwhelming or prolonged.

### Training Cautions Reminder:

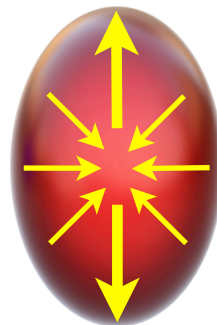
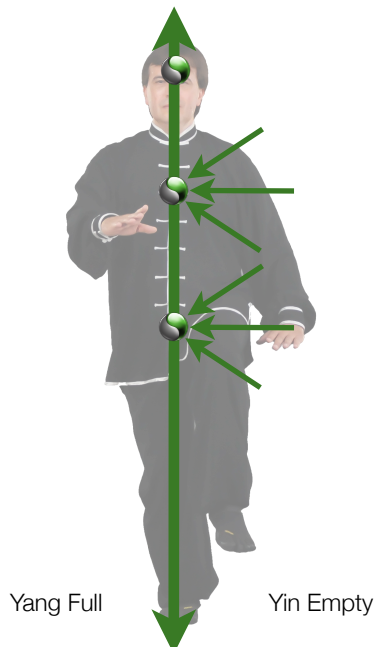
Throughout the year the Qigong practices we share will become progressively more challenging. With this in mind, it is important that each of us work within comfortable limits. There are three layers of attention we ask you to keep in mind for all manners of physical training; strength, flexibility and pain. Please do not push past what your body is willing to do, today. Learning to respect boundaries, is a vital part of our journey together.

### Cloud Step:

This Qigong practice allows us to experience the subtle shifts from Yang to Yin to Yang as we shift weight slowly, with a strong focus in structural integrity and stability. Breathe deeply, move slowly and listen carefully to how your being responds to the transitions.



We begin Cloud Stepping from a neutral, Wuji Posture. With all 8 Principles engaged, you become the connection between Yin Earth and Yang Heaven - The balance between the two.



As you begin to shift weight to one side, first Yang Energy descends, from the Lower Dan Tien, to create a strong root system under your load bearing foot. Next, Yin Energy rises, from the Lower Dan Tien, to lift the spine and support the Sky (Heaven). These opposing forces divide their attention at the Lower Dan Tien and cause the load bearing side to become very strong (Yang) while the other side becomes very light (Yin).