

易筋经 Yi Jin Jing Muscle and Tendon Strengthening Qigong

"The basic purpose of Yijinjing is to turn flaccid and frail sinews and tendons into strong and sturdy ones. The movements of Yijinjing are at once vigorous and gentle. Their performance calls for a unity of will and strength, i.e. using one's will to direct the exertion of muscular strength. It is coordinated with breathing. Better muscles and tendons means better health and shape, more resistance, flexibility, endurance, and is obtained as follows:

- Posture influences the static and nervous structure of the body
- Stretching of muscles and sinews affects organs, joints, meridians and Qi
- Torsion affects metabolism and Jing production
- Breathing produces more and better refined Qi
- Active working gives back balance and strength to body and mind (brain, nervous system and spirit).

Power and endurance are of paramount importance if we look at becoming qualified in whatever practice we choose, be it Tuina, martial arts, or simply better health and wisdom. Already another known Qigong system, Baduanjin, in its more radical and strong forms was used in the past from schools of Xingyiquan and Taijiquan as bodily preparation to fighting arts, in order to make body strong and flexible. Baduanjin still remains the first, entry-level routine to learn at Shaolin training schools in Song Mountains. We can still see today Japanese Kata like Sanchin, postures and forms like Siunimtao in Wingchung, "Iron thread" in Hung Gar and all sorts of Neigong in Neijia. Martial artists need to be powerful in the martial practice, like non-martial people need to be healthy. But there is also something supple and flexible inside of Yijinjing. Movements are energetic and intense, but you can see through a kind of peace. Yijinjing unifies in fact Yi (intention) with Li (strength), consciousness (yang) with muscular force (yin). The mind is free from thoughts, has a correct and well-disposed attitude, the breathing is harmonious. Internal and external movement must be coordinated, like movement with relaxation. Externally must be fortification; inside must be purification; unifying matter and spirit.

Some classic recurring points of Yijinjing can be described as follows: - Most of the movements use open palms, fists are used only for stretching the tendons. - The name of exercises changes, but often the basic idea of movement remains the same. I.e. Wei Tuo greets and offers something (Nanjing Ac. of Tuina); Wei Tuo offers gifts to the sky (Liu Dong); General Skanda holds the Cudgel (Zong Wu-Li Mao). - Movements are done standing, sometimes bending forward, but never lying or sitting. - Eyes are always open, never closed. - Movements are slow but full and tensed, face and body shows relaxed attitude. - All directions of the upper body section (especially shoulders) are active and moved. - Dynamic tension rules the moves. - All parts of the body works together. - There are different ways of practicing the same Yijinjing form, according to the basic rules, to the body shape, to the time of practice and to the general health conditions.

According to traditional verbal formulas, we have that: - The first year of training gives back physical and mental vitality - The second year enhances blood circulation and nurtures meridians - The third year allows flexibility to muscles and nurtures the organs - The fourth year meridians are better and viscera are nurtured - The fifth year the marrow is washed and the brain is nurtured

The Five rules of Yijinjing are: - Quietness Like lake water reflects the moon, a calm spirit allows energy to move inside the body - Slowness In order to use and flex muscles deeply, to get maximum extension and move Qi and Xue, slow movements are required - Extension Each movement must be brought to the maximum - Pause Efficacy comes through waiting and keeping tension for longer time - Flexibility Limbs and trunk must be extended so that blood and energy can circulate, so we have flexibility.

Breathing in Yijinjing is a controversial point. Modern sources insist on a deep, forced, reverse breathing in order to develop power. Other sources, and among them Robert W. Smith, in his article on the J.A.M.A. in 1996, suggest that there are differences between the northern and the southern way of breath. The southern systems seem not to have a deep understanding and good use of breathing and working on Qi as energy. In his work on "Breathing in Taiji and other fighting arts", Smith analyses not only Taiji veterans and classics, but also known fighters out of his personal experience, and invariably the right kind of breathing, be it for martial or for health purposes, is located between classic abdominal breathing and a slow, unconscious breathing, where there is place for sudden explosions, typical of martial arts and hard blows."

易筋经 Yi Jin Jing Names of Moves

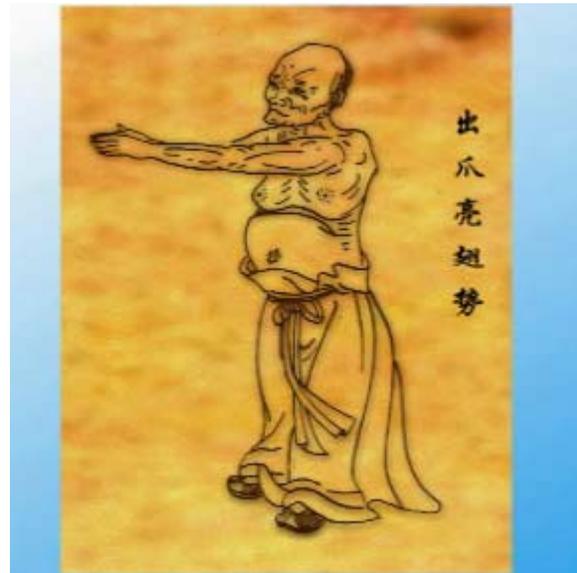


倒拽九牛尾势
Pulling Nine Cows by their Tails



3

出爪亮翅势
Showing Talons and Spreading Wings



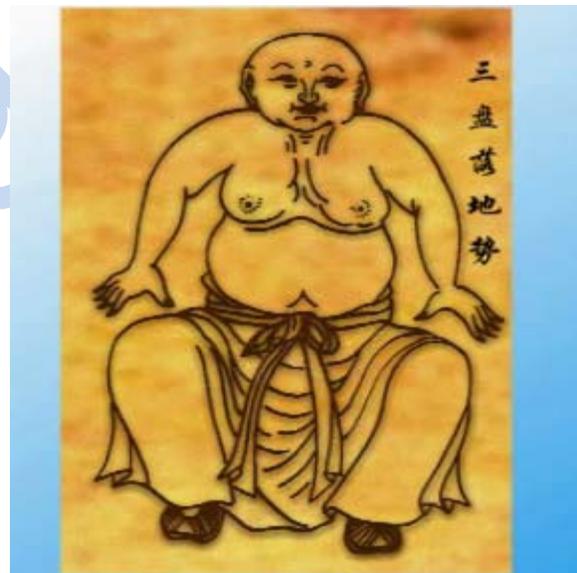
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九鬼拔马刀势
Nine Ghosts Drawing Sabers



5

三盘落地势
Sinking the Three Bodily Zones



6

青龙探爪势
Green Dragon Displaying Its Claws



7

卧虎扑食势
Tiger Springing On Its Prey



8

打躬势
Bowing Down in Salutation



9

掉尾式
Swinging the Tail



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