



Official Newsletter of the National Qigong Association



Welcome to our Spring newsletter!

Great news from the NQA: Jennifer Eash is our new Board of Directors Chair! Many of you may recognize her from hosting Syner-Qi, and her work on so many other NQA events. Her vast experience will make her an excellent Chair to move us forward! Check out Lauren Thomas's article about her and all the amazing work she is doing for the NQA.

**CONGRATULATIONS JENNIFER!**

There are many exciting events coming up to enhance your spring Qigong teaching and practice! Check out our Events section and register for anything and everything you would like to attend!

Two overseas Qigong events are also approaching: Solala Towler's Qigong/Cha Dao Retreat in Taiwan and Jessica Kolbe's "Going with the Flow" Spiritual Journey to Japan. Find links in our Events section!

This issue includes an interview with Chris Shelton, who recently released the book "Chris Shelton's Easy Guide to Emotional Well-Being With Qigong". He was also featured in our February Qi Talks where he presented "Qigong and the Secrets of the Face". The NQA Library has videos on business strategies to start your own Qigong business that Chris contributed. Check out my interview with him to learn more about his background, teachings, and Chinese Face Reading!

Astrologist Mark Reinhart contributed the article "What is a Snake Year?" that delves into Chinese Astrology. He offers an excellent and very interesting overview of Chinese Astrology in general, and also the meaning of this Snake year. A must read for this new year!

Former NQA President and Board member Michael McComiskey sadly passed away earlier this year. Many of you will remember Mike for all the NQA events and activities he was part of. We have included a tribute to him as a way of honoring his life and work in the NQA.

Enjoy this newsletter, and may this new year bring much health and luck to all of you!



**Linda Kiesler**  
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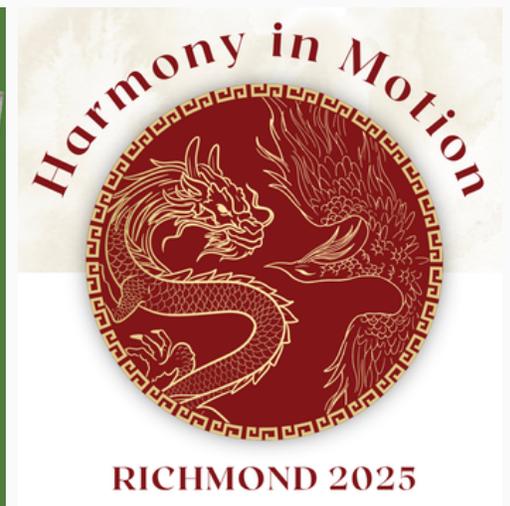
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# UPCOMING EVENTS

| DATE     | MEMBER                         | EVENT  |
|----------|--------------------------------|--|
| 4/1/25   | Sue Crites                     | Spring Forest Qigong Level 3 Immersion Retreat                   |
| 4/9/25   | Francesco Garripoli            | Qigong Workshop with Francesco in Boulder, Colorado              |
| 4/10/25  | Francesco Garripoli            | EMF- Emotions, Minds, Fields- Training- Beyond Qigong in Boulder |
| 4/26/25  | Sheri Nicholson                | WTCQD 2025 Free Event in Jacksonville, Florida                   |
| 5/12/25  | Solala Towler                  | Taiwan Qigong/Cha Dao Retreat                                    |
| 5/29/25  | Marisa Cranfill                | Teacher Training Certification- Live Immersion- Georgia, USA     |
| 6/7/25   | Ted Cibik                      | Medical QiGong Practitioner and Therapist Certification          |
| 9/12/25  | Damaris Jarboux and Rachel Lee | Qigong Healing Program at The Center Place                       |
| 10/22/25 | Jessica Kolbe                  | Spiritual Journey to Japan: Going With The Flow                  |

Must be a professional member of the NQA to submit an event



# Remembering Mike

BY ALI WOLF

Some of you may already know that Michael H. McComiskey passed to his next life on February 6, 2025. Most NQA members knew Michael as a very active member, joining in March of 2004. In 2005, he was elected to the Board of Directors, elected VP in 2009 and President in 2010. He also served as an integral part of the conference committee for many years, and several as the committee chair.

He was a dedicated member of this organization, and those of us who knew him will remember his smile and his kindness – and his hugs. I remember him always willing to help, and to give you his undivided attention; to him all were equal and all were treated kindly. Plus he was a great conversationalist – and he had many great stories to share. He will be greatly missed and always remembered for bringing light to everyone.

When I joined the Conference Committee, we spent many hours working together to help produce the best NQA conferences possible. He was always very creative and available to do any of the many tasks required. He frequently taught classes at the conferences and his description of his class always ended with “And we laugh a lot!” His sense of humor was contagious. Even in our many conversations we did “laugh a lot”.

His obituary called him adventurous and I was unaware of his colorful life experiences until I read it. For those who are interested here is a link to the obituary: (<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/brooklyn-ny/michael-mccomiskey-12236580>)

It seems he was among other things, a seminarian, a captain’s steward on a transatlantic ship, a missionary in South America, a beloved High School teacher; and of course his practice and teaching of Qigong and Reiki.

He was married to Julia McEvoy for 51 years. Please keep her and his family in your thoughts and prayers.

Remembering Michael,



**Ali Wolf**

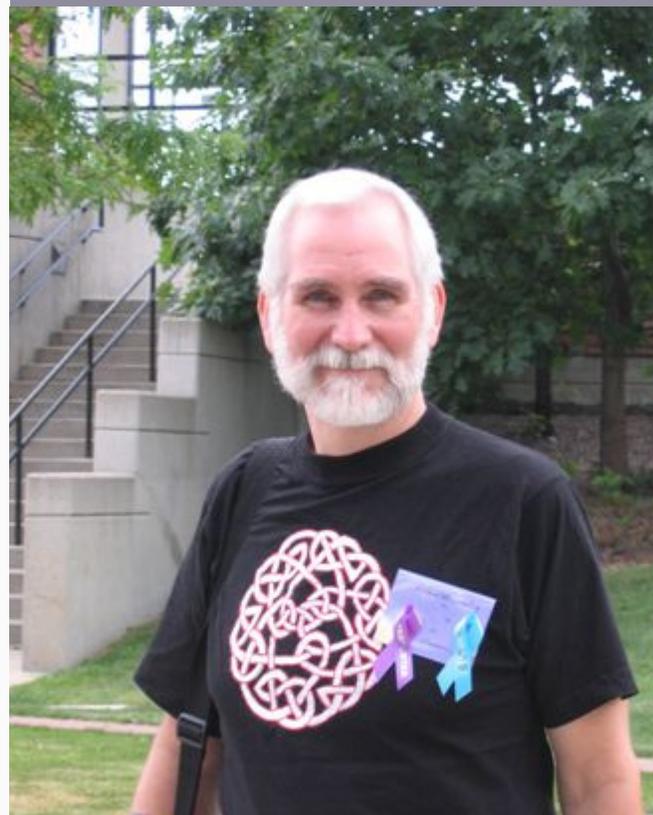
Former NQA Office Manager

Former NQA Conference Committee Chair

[ali1813wolf@gmail.com](mailto:ali1813wolf@gmail.com)



The NQA Board of Directors voted to honor Mike's legacy by renaming our conference scholarship the McComiskey-Sullivan Memorial Scholarship.



## Interview with Chris Shelton

BY LINDA KIESLER, NQA PUBLICATIONS CHAIR

Chris Shelton is the founder of Morning Crane Healing Arts Center. He is the author of two books, *Chris Shelton's Easy Guide to Fix Neck and Back Pain* and *Chris Shelton's Easy Guide to Emotional Well-Being with Qigong*.

Q: Your bio mentions you had two heart attacks and then a severe back injury. How did Qigong help you heal from these serious issues?

Chris: I grew up in a dysfunctional home. I took drugs and was involved in many fights. I had two heart attacks before my 19th birthday from meth overdoses.

After my second heart attack, I thought I was going to die, go to prison, or both. It drove me to martial arts. Tae Kwon Do gave me discipline, but healing my back injury led me to Qigong.

I started taking Tae Kwon Do. It helped me get off the drugs, but I sustained a major back injury sparring before a match one night. As a result, the doctors were telling me if I didn't have spinal surgery, I would not walk again or even be able to do simple functions if I turned the wrong way.

This is how I was introduced to Qigong, which helped me reverse the back injury and improve many other health issues.

Several years later, I was introduced to Esther Su, a Tong-style acupuncturist. I studied as a private tutorial intern for two and a half years in her clinic. She was the first acupuncturist ever licensed in California.

Her teacher was Miriam Lee, who was arrested back in the 70's because it was illegal to practice acupuncture in California back then. All the people she helped came to testify on her behalf. California developed the acupuncture body because of Miriam Lee, and Esther Su was her protégé.

I wasn't only studying Tong points with Esther, but she also introduced me to the deep and rich Chinese medicine philosophy. Esther also translated her mentors' teachings of Confucianism into English. She played a significant role in developing my understanding of Qigong and Chinese medicine.

Q: What made you decide to teach Qigong?

After my second heart attack, I thought I was going to die, go to prison, or both. It drove me to martial arts. Tae Kwon Do gave me discipline, but healing my back injury led me to Qigong.

CHRIS SHELTON



I picked up the phone to tell her no, and a very clear voice said, ‘This is your last chance in this lifetime.’



Chris: I was a single dad with two kids, a butcher, and a meat manager for many years. I spent all day cutting meat in a butcher’s shop and studying Qigong and Chinese medicine at night.

One of my teachers and his wife kept encouraging me to get out there to teach and see clients. Then, I received an opportunity from one of my Qigong peers, who offered me office space at their acupuncture clinic.

My ego kept talking me out of it because of fear. I couldn’t imagine how I would transition from a butcher to a healer. It didn’t make sense at the time.

I picked up the phone to tell her no, and a very clear voice said, “This is your last chance in this lifetime.”

So, I took a chance.

I didn’t quit being a butcher right away, but rather cut back my hours slowly.

Students came and went from my classes, so I had a lot of self-doubt in the beginning that I was doing the right thing.

At a book signing, I met the psychic Sylvia Browne and asked her about my new career path. She said, “You are a healer and teacher, and this is what you were meant to do.”

I ran into her again two years later, and she confirmed it again. I also had a Chinese birth chart reading from Master Hua Ching Ni, and everything confirmed I am on the right career path, and here we are, almost 24 years later.

Q: How did you start working with the Special Olympics, professional athletes, and celebrities?

Chris: After recovering from my back injury, I started competing in Tai Chi tournaments again. I met the former UFC fighter Cung Le, who did San Shou Kung Fu, and I participated in a few amateur kickboxing matches with his fight team. I was also his Chinese Medicine doctor. He got me all kinds of advertising as he was winning fights. Showtime, NBC Sports, and the UFC came to my office in San Jose. When Cung Le started getting into movies, he introduced me to Eric the Trainer, a Hollywood physique expert in Hollywood. When Eric discovered my healing success in my clinical practice, he said nobody was doing that in Los Angeles and started referring all his celebrity clients to me. So, I flew back and forth between Los Angeles and San Jose for seven years to see clients.

My client, Patrick Schwarzenegger, introduced me to his mother, Maria Shriver. In 2015, she pulled me into the Special Olympics World Games, and it was the first time Qigong was presented at the US Games, then the World Games. Soon after, the Special Olympics started a program called Healthy Athletes, Strong Minds, and we became the Volunteer Clinical Directors for California and Nevada.

I give the athletes simple Qigong practices to help prepare them for competition and handle social situations like bullying or fighting. I taught them techniques like Pulling Down the Heavens and healing sounds, so it not only helps them physically and is easy to do but also gives them tools to help with emotional stress and trauma.

For example, a torch bearer for the Special Olympics had to carry the torch to the Los Angeles Colosseum and give a speech at the opening ceremonies for the World Games. Before that, he went to give a speech at the US Games, froze, and walked off stage. Because he had to give a speech in various cities across the US en route to the World Games, he was afraid that because he froze once, he would freeze in every town he had to pass through. I gave him the heart movement and the heart-healing sound. A few months later, when he carried the torch to Los Gatos, CA, he successfully gave the speech! He told me he had done the daily practices and could now speak to over ten thousand people.

Q: Tell us about your film and TV show

Chris: Two years ago, we shot a short documentary called *The Healer's Journey*, which will be released at the film festival this year. Last year, we filmed a dramedy called *The Healer* that will be made into a series on YouTube. Our purpose in Los Angeles is to educate the world about Tai Chi and Qigong and show people that it can help them with anything they are going through in their lives. Right now, it's important we show those in Los Angeles recovering from the fires and others going through depression, addiction, or anything else how Qigong and Tai Chi can help them.

Q: You recently released a book on emotional well-being with Qigong. Can you tell us about the benefits of practicing the Five Elements with the healing routines in your book?

Chris: Chinese Medicine believes the leading cause of death and disease are negative emotions. These negative emotions attack different organs of the body. Organ function and dysfunction intertwine back to the Five Element theory, which is an extension of Yin/Yang theory.

I gave him the heart movement and the heart-healing sound. A few months later, when he carried the torch to Los Gatos, CA, he successfully gave the speech! He told me he had done the daily practices and could now speak to over ten thousand people.

CHRIS SHELTON



I grew up in a violent home with abuse and neglect, and I can relate the stomach problems that I had to repressed anger. Since then, I have been able to transmute my anger and heal myself through these practices.



For example, one of the tools I use for assessment in my clinical practice is Face Reading. When I see a particular line on your Face that connects to the heart or lungs, for example, it tells me that the emotion or trauma is still there. I break down the Five Element movements so that when you perform the movements, you also look at who or what you are angry, sad, anxious, or resentful at and why or what makes you upset about the person or situation. When you visualize a particular event, past or present, along with the movement and healing sounds, you can release it.

This comes from personal experience. I grew up in a violent home with abuse and neglect, and I can relate the stomach problems that I had to repressed anger. Since then, I have been able to transmute my anger and heal myself through these practices. We need to be able to transmute these feelings. I don't teach Qigong only because it feels good. I teach it for what we are doing medicinally, according to the Five Elements inside the body.

My motto is if I can change, you can too.

Q: What is the importance of learning face reading, and what is the benefit of knowing it?

Chris: Face reading is relevant because it shows a person's personality, how they think, what emotions are trapped in which internal organs, and what potential diseases are inside the body. Face Reading relates to the Five Elements as well. It is an opportunity to point out underlying conditions. In my work, I also check the tongue and pulse, but the face also says a lot about a person's inner state.

I have a website where people can send in a picture for me to do a reading. It can also point out health and mental health issues. I recommend specific Qigong practices, as I can help people transmute all of this.

Q: What got you interested in learning Chinese Face Reading?

I was at a Chinese New Year celebration at Yo San University, and one of the booths did Face Reading. A friend of mine had her face read, and I was amazed that the reader was accurate about everything they saw in my friend's face. I was so intrigued that shortly after that, I bought the book Face Reading by Lillian Bridges. I combined book learning with what I was seeing in clinical practice, which would then solidify the meaning of specific facial features in my clients. It's fun to learn how to read others, but Face Reading is ultimately about introspection into yourself.

Q: Your wife, Parisa, is integral to your work. Can you tell us about her and what she teaches?

Chris: Parisa is amazing! It's nice to have a life partner who shares my values, ambitions, drive, and purpose. We could work a 10 to 12-hour day, and at the end of the day, we have the same goal of

showing the world that you don't have to live with chronic pain, inflammatory diseases, and mental anguish. And that Qigong, Tai Chi, and Chinese Medicine can help alleviate and transform these conditions. Parisa teaches in the Qi Club, sees patients, and handles our technical and business work. She has a background in Qigong, Yoga, and Pilates.

Q: What else would you like our readers to know about you and your work?

Chris: Our mission is to empower people to live the ultimate life we are all designed to live. We have Qigong Teacher Training courses. The next one starts on March 24, 2025.

Check out the videos I contributed to the NQA Library about what Qigong is and business strategies to get your practice going.

Check out The Qi Club. These weekly live classes on Zoom allow you to practice Qigong directly with Parisa and me, every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. It started during the pandemic and is a community of health-conscious individuals cultivating and developing our energy together.

My book, *Chris Shelton's Easy Guide to Emotional Well-Being with Qigong*, is now available for purchase. I have an art background, so I created all the illustrations for this book.

My book, *Chris Shelton's Easy Guide to Fix Neck and Back Pain*, has just been released and is available for purchase.

Chris's classes and offerings are available on these sites:

<http://qigongteachertraining.com/>  
<http://sheltonqigong.com/>  
<http://theqiclub.com/>  
<http://youtube.com/chrissheltonqigong>  
[www.tiktok.com/@chris\\_shelton\\_qigong](http://www.tiktok.com/@chris_shelton_qigong)  
Instagram @chrissheltonqigong



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Our mission is  
to empower  
people to live  
the ultimate life  
we are all  
designed to live.

CHRIS SHELTON



# Announcing Our New NQA Chair: Jennifer Eash

BY LAUREN THOMAS

We are thrilled to announce that Jennifer Eash has been appointed as the new Chair of the NQA Board of Directors! Many of you already know Jennifer as the host of Syner-Qi, a monthly gathering that has become a space for Qigong practice and community connection. Thanks to her dedication, Syner-Qi has grown into a valuable offering that unites and strengthens our membership.

Jennifer's leadership within the NQA has been extraordinary. Over the past year, she has simultaneously served as a Board Member, Vice President, and Chair of the Membership Committee—playing a pivotal role in the NQA's expansion and success. Her tireless efforts have helped grow our reach and strengthen our organization. As she steps into her new role as Board Chair, Jennifer has gracefully transitioned from her positions as Vice President and Membership Chair, leaving a lasting impact in both roles.

Reflecting on Jennifer's contributions, Steve Goldstein, her former colleague on the Membership Committee, shared:

*"Jennifer is one of the hardest workers in the NQA. She is always open to new ideas while looking for new opportunities for the organization, and Qigong in general, to grow. Her humane and practical approach is an asset to the organization."*

NQA President Clayton Crosley also expressed his enthusiasm for Jennifer's new role:

*"I am excited that Jennifer Eash has graciously accepted the role as the Chair of the Board of Directors. She has been an integral part of the expansive growth of the NQA. Her extensive work with the Membership Committee and her role as Vice President have been a tremendous contribution to the NQA. Jennifer will provide a clear direction in the continued growth of the organization."*

Please join us in celebrating Jennifer Eash as she steps into this exciting new leadership role. We are grateful for her dedication and look forward to the continued growth, connection, and community-building she will inspire.

Feel free to send your congratulations and welcome Jennifer directly at [chair@nqa.org](mailto:chair@nqa.org).

Together, we can achieve great things. By fostering a spirit of collaboration and mutual support, we can amplify the practice of qigong and strengthen our organization.

JENNIFER EASH



# A New Free Offering to Professional Members

BY STEVEN GOLDSTEIN

Found in the “Resources” - “Learning Library” - “Professionals Only” tab on the NQA website are a deck of QiFlow Cards – Your Personal Guide to Qigong Practice

The QiFlow Cards are a thoughtfully curated 108-card deck designed to support and enhance your Qigong practice. Divided into six key areas, these cards offer a structured yet flexible way to cultivate balance, relaxation, and energy flow in your daily routine. By choosing cards and laying them out sequentially you make up your own qigong sequences. Whether you select cards intuitively or follow a structured sequence, let your body and energy guide you.

Categories of Practice:

**Breathing** (10 cards): Center yourself with foundational breathwork to calm the mind and awaken Qi.

**Warm-Ups** (12 cards): Gently prepare your body for movement with easy, flowing exercises.

**Stretches** (16 cards): Improve flexibility and release tension with simple, effective stretches.

**Flows** (40 cards): Engage in dynamic Qigong sequences to enhance Qi circulation.

**Balance** (20 cards): Strengthen stability and focus through mindful balancing postures.

**Endings** (10 cards): Conclude your practice with grounding and centering movements.

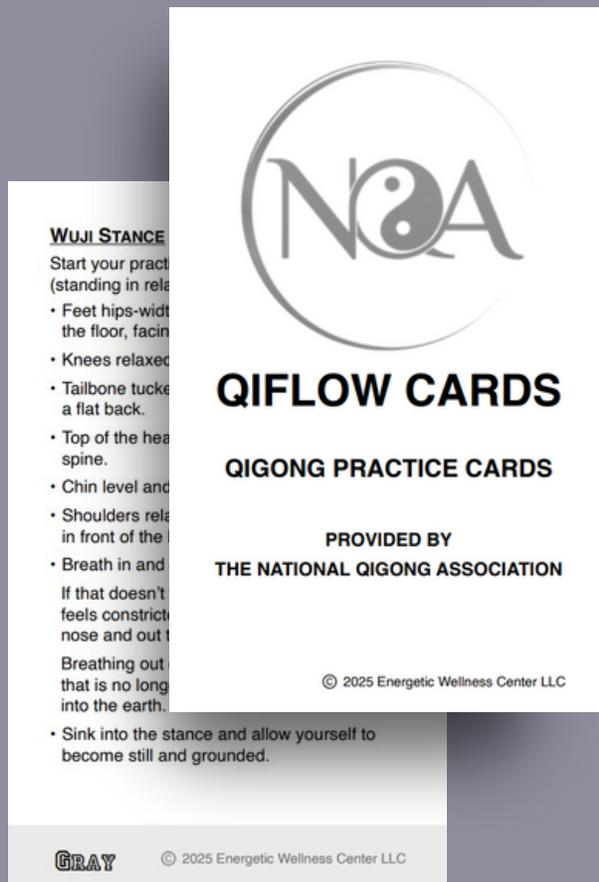
Additionally, two special cards provide four curated routines—Balance, Emotional Release, Sleep, and Tight Back—combining postures from the deck for targeted benefits.

Whether you are a beginner or experienced practitioner or a teacher trying to lay out a routine to teach your students, the QiFlow Cards offer a simple yet powerful way to integrate Qigong into your life—anytime, anywhere.



**Steve Goldstein**  
Energetic Wellness Center  
NQA Membership Committee Member  
<https://www.stevesqigong.com/qiflow@verizon.net>

The QiFlow Cards are a thoughtfully curated 108-card deck designed to support and enhance your Qigong practice. Divided into six key areas, these cards offer a structured yet flexible way to cultivate balance, relaxation, and energy flow in your daily routine.



#### WUJI STANCE

Start your practice (standing in relaxation)

- Feet hips-width apart, flat on the floor, facing forward
- Knees relaxed
- Tailbone tucked under, creating a flat back.
- Top of the head, crown of the head, spine.
- Chin level and relaxed
- Shoulders relaxed, in front of the hips
- Breath in and out naturally

If that doesn't feel comfortable, feel constricted, nose and out through the mouth.

Breathing out that is no longer into the earth.

- Sink into the stance and allow yourself to become still and grounded.

GRAY

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# What is a Snake Year?

BY MARK R REINHART

Every year sometime between January 21 and February 20 of the Gregorian calendar, we celebrate the Chinese Lunar New Year. Part of the celebration, which goes on for fifteen days from the New Moon until the Full Moon, is heralding the arrival of the Animal that will sit in residence for the year.

There are 12 Animals, which represent the 12 Earthly Branches (Di Zhi) of the Chinese interactive Branch and Stem System (more on that shortly). Each animal has a corresponding two-hour period during which the Qi circulates through the individual organs/meridians in a high tide/low tide relationship. For example, the optimal time to eat would be between 7:00 and 11:00am – 7:00 – 9:00am being the high tide for the Stomach (Dragon) and 9:00 – 11:00am being the high tide for the Spleen (Snake). The less optimal time would be at low tide occurring 12 hours later, between 7:00 – 11:00pm (Dog 7:00-9:00pm and Pig 9:00 – 11:00pm).

That's just one example of the correspondences of the 12 Animal Cycle. There are also associations with the Five Elements, calendrical periods, growth cycle stages, etc. Pertinent with our discussion of Animal Years are their associations with the Five Elements. Each of the Animals has a link to an element of the Five Element cycle: Rat (Zi) with Yang Water, (Ox Chou) with Earth, Tiger (Yin) with Yang Wood, Rabbit (Mao) with Yin Wood, Dragon (Chen) with Earth, Snake (Si) with Yang Fire, Horse (Wu) with Yin Fire, Sheep (Wei) with Earth, Monkey (Shen) with Yang Metal, Rooster (You) with Yin Metal, Dog (Xu) with Earth, and Pig (Hai) with Yin Water. Notice that the Earth element does not have a Yang and Yin component in the 12 Earthly Branches Cycle. That is because, in this cycle, Earth is the grounding factor between the other elements. That is why there are 12 Earthly Branches. A traditional Chinese Coin demonstrates this relationship: The solid circle with the empty square center. If you draw a line from each of the corners of the square, you get four quadrants, each representing one of the Four Elements; Wood, Fire, Metal and Water. The square in the center represents the Earth Element: that which grounds the other four.

This brings us to the 10 Heavenly Stems (Tian Gan, a much simpler image to grasp. The influence of Heaven consists of a Yang and Yin of each of the Five Elements: Yang Wood (Jia), Yin Wood (Yi), Yang Fire (Bing), Yin Fire (Ding), Yang Earth (Wu), Yin Earth (Ji), Yang Metal (Geng), Yin Metal (Xin), Yang Water (Ren) and Yin Water (Kui).

It's never about a single herb, oil, acupuncture point, or stone; it's about the relationships between you and all the energies in the world around you.

MARK R REINHART



Time to put it all together. Heaven and Earth are constantly interacting, so the Chinese Stem and Branch System turns into an interactive cycle of 60, which is the lowest common denominator of 10 and 12. The cycle starts with the First Stem – Jia – and the First Branch - Zi – (Yang Wood Rat) and continues through all other 59 combinations until arriving back where it started. This interactive cycle of 60 is going on through the years, months, days and hours and is what forms the foundation of the 'Four Pillars of Life Principles' (si zhu ming li xue) and 'The Eight Characters of Birth Time' (sheng chen ba zi).

Now that you're all experts at the Stem and Branch System, let's talk about this current Year of the Yin Wood Snake. On January 29, 2025, the Yin Wood Snake (Yi Si) which consists of the Second Heavenly Stem and the Sixth Earthly Branch took up residence. This is the 42nd of the Current 60 Year Cycle and the year 4723. If you are a Snake, you will be celebrating a birthday this year in the multiple of twelve since the animal returns every twelve years. If you were born in 1965, congratulations, you are celebrating your 'Century' and you will be completing your 60th Lap Around the Sun. Since the Animals follow the 'Creative Cycle' of the Five Elements (Wood – Fire – Earth – Metal – Water) every 12 Years your Animal returns in the next element: Born in 1965 = Yin Wood, 1977 = Yin Fire, 1989 = Yin Earth, 2001 – Yin Metal, 2013 = Yin Water which brings us full circle to 2025 back to Yin Wood, and the completion of your first cycle of 60. In traditional thought, we are supposed to live for two cycles of 60 years. The first is for external fertilization: gifts we give to the outside world of children, career and the things we do for others. Our second 60 is for internal fertilization: a time for internal/spiritual work as we contemplate and cultivate what comes next.

To be able to tell what this Year of The Yin Wood Snake has in store for you individually, would be impossible without working with you, individually. There are so many factors the go into assessing what's ahead. One of the lasting principles of Chinese Medicine rings true when it comes to assessing what's ahead: treat the individual. Another appropriate saying is to 'Know Thyself.

Some advice I could suggest is to develop s good working understanding of the Five Element Cycles, especially the Creative (Sheng) Cycle (Wood – Fire – Earth – Metal – Metal – Water) and the Control (Ke) Cycle (Wood –Earth – Water – Fire – Metal) and how the current year may influence you and the world around you. But remember that you must take into consider the Stems and Branches that comprise, not only your Year, but your Month, Day and Hour. It's never about a single herb, oil, acupuncture point or stone, it's about the relationships between you and all the energies in the world around you.

Blessings to you and yours.



**Mark R Reinhart**  
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Note: Mark Reinhart offers personal astrology readings. He will be available for in-person readings at our 2025 Annual Conference. If you can't attend, you can reach out to him via email for a personalized reading.