



Official Newsletter of the National Qigong Association

As chilly weather, time changes, holidays, falling leaves, rain, and snow slowly begin to envelop us, we have reading and online events to support our days of continued Qigong practice and learning during this changing season.

The NQA has some great events coming up this month and ongoing to enhance our practice. Check the events page and click the link next to the event to register.

The NQA Conference held in Savannah September 24-26 was a success, thanks to the hard work of the NQA Events Committee, the conference sponsors, and presenters! We are thanking everyone that was an integral part of producing this monumental event. We also are honoring award winners and newly certified NQA teachers who received their certifications at the conference! If you attended the conference and enjoyed the presentations, or couldn't attend but were drawn to the presenters, our ["Thank You" page](#) lists the presenters and their websites so you can check out their wonderful offerings and teachings.

Damaris Jarboux, one of the conference presenters, has graced us with a beautiful article on Centering and Using the Breath to Clear the Mind. This article is a MUST READ for techniques on clearing and maintaining peace in our minds during changing times, and always!

My own trip to Savannah and attending the conference was filled with great energy and joy in meeting so many wonderful people and a fantastic national community! You will find some of my thoughts on the conference in the article [The Qi Vibes of the NQA 2024 Conference](#).

I don't know if much thought is ever given to the effects that holding conferences such as this have on the locals. I was walking down the street next to the venue with another attendee, when we were stopped by a young man. He said; "I notice you are having an event in the building. I live across the street and am watching people coming and going to the event." We told him this is the NQA conference, and he said; "I have been thinking about taking Qigong classes for a while, so maybe this is a sign!" (True story!) Hopefully, this young man did engage with Qigong practices. I find it so serendipitous that the simple act of holding a conference with loving intent and presence can spur others to look into this beautiful path!

Linda Kiesler
NQA Publications Committee Chair

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UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE	MEMBER	EVENT
11/5/24	Sue Crites	Spring Forest Qigong Level 2 For Healing Others (Virtual)
11/9/24	Zhongxian Wu	Mystical Warrior Qigong Zoom Class
11/10/24	NQA	VA Credentialing Webinar
11/16/24	Ted Cibik	Shamanism From a Taoist Point of View
11/22/24	Richard Clear	Qigong Healing Workshop
12/21/25	NQA	Winter Solstice Event with Solala Towler- Information coming soon
12/21/25	Zhongxian Wu	Winter Solstice Internal Alchemy Zoom Class
1/10/25	Marisa Cranfill	Silent Meditation and Qigong Retreat
1/31/25	Damaris Jarboux and Rachel Lee	Qigong Healing Program at The Center Place
2/1/25	NQA	Qi Training with John Munro- Information coming soon
3/1/25	Ted Cibik	Medical Qigong Therapist: Certification
3/4/25	Sue Crites	Nature's Rhythms Baja Qigong Retreat
3/22/25	NQA	Qi Training with Marisa Cranfill- Information coming soon
4/1/25	Sue Crites	Spring Forest Qigong Level 3 Immersion Retreat

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



The Qi Vibes of the NQA 2024 Conference

BY LINDA KIESLER

This was my first time attending an NQA Conference, so I wanted to share some thoughts.

Attending the NQA 2024 Conference added a different vibrational dimension and learning to Qigong teaching and practice because it brought a large community together in person.

First of all, the location called Kehoe Iron Works was a beautiful historic venue set around greenery. There was a beautiful, comfortable main room for the presentations, and also a back section offering free hot and cold drinks and healthy snacks (Courtesy of the NQA Events Committee). It was a perfect setting to sit, sip, and snack while getting to know other attendees.

There was excitement for those of us wanting to see the beautiful city, because short drives to Savannah's most iconic locations such as Forsythe Park, museums, and River Street were easy and could happen quickly in the evenings after the conference. Good food was everywhere within walking distance where attendees could get together and walk to lunch, and sit and bond over local cuisine. My own food adventure included dining at the Pirate's House three times! Each time I met other conference attendees to talk about teaching Qigong, and getting to know each other's Qigong backgrounds and experiences (Luckily, the ghosts at this supposedly haunted restaurant did not ask for a Qigong class, but the kind wait staff were always eager to share their ghost stories!). Bonding over good food and drinks definitely created good Qi energy while nourishing our bodies, hearts, and minds!

The talks and Qigong practices the conference presenters gave were all very valuable lessons to take home, whether you are a teacher or student. For a list of presenters and their websites, see the page ["Thank You to NQA 2024 Conference Organizers and Presenters"](#). What stays with me about each of the presenters is their kindness and willingness to take time to answer questions and talk with anyone that wanted to speak with them. They really embody the true spirit of Qigong not only through their teachings, but personalities as well!

On the second day of the conference, Kevin Siddons led a wonderful early morning Qigong practice under the large, beautiful, historic trees and fountain in Forsythe Park, another must see location in Savannah. Fortunately, the weather held up for his session! When I drove by the park two days after the conference had ended, some of the giant trees had toppled from the storm that came through on Thursday night! If you attended this session, you were indeed lucky to experience Qigong energy with the trees that made up the park!

On the last day of the conference, Solala Towler created a wonderful and meaningful tea ceremony in the main room and served a cup of tea to the large audience! He talked about the tea he served and his connections with tea and its ceremony. What a wonderful ending to this event, sharing a cup of tea in Qi blessings and peace with old friends, new friends, presenters, and NQA staff!

These are the most priceless moments of an in-person conference, syncing with the fantastic vibes, making new friends, and seeing old friends in shared community that lasts long after the event has ended!

The efforts of all the NQA staff and committees, presenters, sponsors, and attendees made this a truly remarkable and memorable event, one that will continue to hold wonderful memories for years to come!

The 2025 NQA Conference is in the planning stages, so watch for upcoming information in this newsletter and on the NQA website!



Linda Kiesler

NQA Publications Committee Chair
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Centering and Using the Breath to Clear the Mind

BY DAMARIS JARBOUX

Using your breath to clear the mind is a practice that is really helpful to move out distracting thoughts. A distracting thought is really anything outside of the moment you're in – whether it's past or future. And where do distracting thoughts move out to? The edge of our personal energetic field (which we call the egg), has a particular consciousness (shen/light) that is not personal, so we are not aware there. We call it a filter because once developed it filters out what is not conducive to your greater and higher good and allows in what is. It is not a barrier or brick wall - you don't need to be encased in steel. Any practices you do that acknowledge this layer of shen, at the edge of your personal field, strengthens or reinforces it. It is roughly 3-6 feet out, ruled by your heart, and responds to the state of your solar plexus. It is your true protection and is capable of "burning up" negative thought imprints and invasive energies. When we practice Centering and come to the mind (the Upper Tan Tien) after focus on the Lower Tan Tien we use our breath to help clear our mind by moving distracting thoughts out to the edge of our personal field. This filter is where our field transitions into outer Shen.

Now for some people meditation is just watching the mind. Maybe calming the mind too, but usually just watching it. In Taoism it's different. Watching the mind is really not our end-goal, Centering in the heart is. Our process is not to judge anything in our mind, but to use our breath to help move the thoughts out. It's an entrainment. If you do this every time you Center, you're entraining your ability to let your breath help you clear your mind. It is your right and privilege as a human being to have an empty and clear mind. This is going to promote your freedom. A full or scattered mind is not. With a distracted mind you can not gain access to your deeper Self, through your heart, which is very different than your personal mind. This is our goal. When in deep Center, you have the experience that the mind calms like a "sea of glass". There's a purpose for that.

We're not dismissing the part of our mind that is discerning (questions what it doesn't understand), we are just setting it aside so that we can have the experience of Centering. If the mind is in there always judging the experience, we are not going to really have the experience that we are trying to practice. If we don't have the experience, then what is there to question later? After Centering, based on the experience we have, then we can evaluate, usually from a bigger view.

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DAMARIS JARBOUX



Compassion is not a thought, it's not an action, it's not a duty or responsibility. It's an energy. And it has to fill you first.



When we have experiences out of time and space, one's questioning mind does emerge. Is that discernment? Maybe, but it's often resistance of the lower ego mind. When, in our everyday life, we probably should be applying a lot more discernment. Our personal mind is in the habit of judging when it's not in control. We are just pausing this thought process, not negating it. True discernment comes from the heart, responds to the state of the solar plexus, and holds a big view. When one is in fear, the solar plexus contracts and therefore real discernment is near impossible.

When your mind comes to a calm state like a "sea of glass", that means that for this period of time, you have given yourself the gift of freedom of being, without being bombarded by your mind. This means that your personal mind and your ego that is connected to it, have learned to step back. They have trusted the experience enough to remain calm instead of filling the space with things that can protect you, or keep you safe, or take you out of the moment, or deal with something down the road, or be depressed about something that did or didn't happen, or whatever it is. That part of your mind (personal mind / ego) has learned to suspend control and witness exactly what else is possible. This is a gift to yourself. If you do it enough, you'll feel a deep inner compassion for yourself, which, if you don't normally feel this, it brings you to tears... because it's so true. If you don't have compassion inside, how can you really be compassionate to anyone outside? Compassion is not a thought, it's not an action, it's not a duty or responsibility. It's an energy. And it has to fill you first. And that's what you're experiencing, internal compassion. Only you can give yourself this space, quiet and peace. Then, compassion fills you. And, it can emanate from you in various ways which might look like a thought, action or whatever, for other people. But, it's all false, unless you are filled first. Because that's just how the energy of compassion works. This is EARTH in the 5-phases, which rules our mind. But an even deeper way to understand earth is through the I Ching. K'un (The Receptive) is the earth and The Mother, quintessential yin, with the attribute of Devotion. Inner devotion leads to outer devotion, today this is one of the least understood or embodied human qualities. We must reverse this to save the 'captured' human mind.

Clearing the mind in this way is a practice to come back to and keep working with, over and over, even if it doesn't feel like at any particular moment you are successful. You've sent those thoughts out there and then boom, they bounce back. You're training your mind and it takes practice. For everyone, it takes practice. And, through the practice, you get a glimpse of what the gift is. The practice is your willingness to give yourself that space. Clearing your mind allows you to access the middle space, the heart. And only if you get into the middle space can your heart regain supervision of your mind. Without that, your mind, which has no real power of its own, will remain dualistic. So sinking awareness into the Middle Tan Tien, your heart (the energetic center of your body), is the 3rd phase of Centering.

The idea in Taoism is never transcending this life...it's transforming it...through full engagement, full incarnation. That can only happen by going through the "middle" space of the heart. People talk about all the ways the energy of Jing, supports the physical body and the organs, which is true, but the name "Jing" tells us that it is about "Essence", in full incarnation and "Essence" is the unique frequency of love that you are. Jing holds the 3rd dimensional physical/material body which, if we know anything about quantum physics, we know it's not solid like it seems, but the frequency is held that way. In this dimension the frequency is held as if it were solid. But it's your essence, your spiritual essence, in the incarnational state. For human beings, our spiritual essence is the force of love, and, we have committed, through freedom, to incarnate here and manifest our unique love frequency. Love is our divine nature & our individuality. It is the sacred aspect of being-ness, not doing-ness. It is our inner power and, as such, has no opposite. Spirit is One, our Unity, and it is everywhere, there is no place that it is not, and it always resonates to the force of love. This is why the pure force of love can command the physical world. And why Taoism implores us to be a "centered person between heaven and earth". It means that we are in a middle place, a non-dualistic state, truly connected to both, a bridge between, not a free-floating entity.

We clear the mind, so we can drop into a deeper level and really grow Center. Before we do enough practice, Center is only a dot. We're there and we're out, usually through the front door. Or, we're there and then we're out through the back door, we fell asleep or mind went into who knows what. Then we come back, and we're there again. Every time we're "there", we're expanding the space, the state of consciousness. In brain wave terminology, Center is called alpha, or it's called the qigong state. All these are true, but we grow it. We grow it until we have an actual place we can go that can hold us, where we can rest. I like Rudolf Steiner's image of Center as a hut. A little hut. That's why at the winter solstice we talk about the manger, meaning the inner manger which births the inner light thro the process of the holy nights, balancing the summer solstice, where we are gathering outer light in.

In older times, shamans did not work this way. Our practice is Centering because we're more individualized now than we were in collective societies. In collective societies, people may not have had what we call a manger or a hut or Center, and the idea was to leave the body and travel in the collective and do battle for the tribe or the group. But they had to have a

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the force of love, and,
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DAMARIS JARBOUX



This is a space that children are in mostly through their middle childhood until about 12 years old, naturally. They are in deeper states of consciousness before this age.



spotter, someone who was protecting their body, from invasion. However, the more individualized you are, the stronger the ego, and that is why we practice one of the many versions of centering.

In modern times we have to quiet our ego and our personal mind. It's not a collective mind on the conscious level. We do that by creating the "sea of glass". This experience is in the "middle" state. There, you're connected with both your inner world and your outer world, the world of substance and the world of Spirit. You're between awake and asleep, beyond all polarities. You're in a middle state. That's what the middle state means, you have access to both conscious mind and subconscious mind. Your personal (conscious) mind does not have access to your subconsciousness mind. You can't talk to it. Only the middle place, this part of your being in Center, has access to both. The middle place holds the present. It's not interested in "diving" into the past and future. It's a space between, a "pit stop", from the past and future. That's why it's such a sacred space. A treasured space. A place where your inner essence of love consciousness can connect to you and teach, heal & guide you.

This is a space that children are in mostly through their middle childhood until about 12 years old, naturally. They are in deeper states of consciousness before this age. This is the natural best state for learning anything. In this state, you have access to visual imprints as well as the essence behind words. Dreams & poetry live here. Through Centering, you're giving yourself this brief opportunity where you're not controlled completely by your personal mind or your ego. You're giving yourself an empty restful space. You will return to your thoughts later if they are important. Some of them are not important. What do you think is going to happen to those thoughts if they are not important? Are they going to bounce right back? No. That's the beauty of the edge of your field, the filter. If things are entering your field that are not conducive to your greater and higher good, what does it do? It "burns" them up. It's like a fire circle at the edge of your field. When you send thoughts there, if they're really needed, they will return to you. If they are thoughts that you don't really need, that are just bombarding you and cluttering your mind, then, they won't be coming back because they will be dissolved.

That's why we clear the mind this way. The part of your intelligence at the edge of your field knows. It's not personal, it's an impersonal state of consciousness, of shen. It knows that we do not need 9 of these 10 thoughts that bounced into this field. You're offering it these thoughts and it's going to filter out what is not for your greater and higher good. If you're going to hold Center as a background state for the rest of your day, or whatever period, that means that you don't need those thoughts. As you continue to practice, you start to trust that there is a part of you that is bigger. That has your answers. This part actually knows what your questions are – which you may not. It's a journey for your personal mind (including ego) to trust that the Higher Mind is, "A" there, "B" to be trusted and "C" not going to get you into trouble. Your personal mind, particularly your ego, thinks it's there to protect you and sometime it does. However, the more you're connected with your Higher Mind through

Center the more protected you are.

In this world, there are a lot of things that look fine to our personal mind that the heart knows are not fine - that there is something wrong here. We need to teach this to our children because as young people go out in the world, they need that discernment, because one can easily be fooled. Your "I" / Higher Mind / Higher Ego or Impersonal / Deeper Self (they are all the same) can read that and give you signals and if your personal mind is quiet enough you can receive the signal or alert warning that something or someone is not what it seems. This is your inner teacher, healer and guide. It is worth practicing Centering so that you don't turn over your inner sovereignty to other teachers, healers and guides. That is disempowering. They are only there to help you, not to micro-manage you or your practice.

This is why we practice clearing the mind and creating a "sea of glass" to develop and grow Center. You have to practice Centering for it to become an embodied state of consciousness. You are creating the elemental field of trusting this process for clearing the mind. Your personal mind and your ego will learn not to battle against it to protect you, but instead to allow it, to surrender to it. And, to take a pit stop from continuously talking to you so that there are long periods of time where your mind actually doesn't talk to you. It's empty / It's clear. That's what produces peace and a purer kind of perception. In our world, that is a valuable state. Most people don't have it. There are plenty of things to be concerned about, but we have to have breaks. Quieting the mind and Centering in the heart is a way of creating a real break, a drug-free break. This will effect the rest of your life; it will enhance your sleep & your heart's superior discernment. Deep Centering connects us with the brilliant light of "Inner Certainty", the only place that this can exist, because only our heart is master over illusion.



Damaris Jarboux

Founder & Director of The Center Place
NQA Advisory Council Member
NQA Co-Founder
<https://www.thecenterplace.com>

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DAMARIS JARBOUX



Announcing Richmond, VA as the Host City for the 2025 Conference

BY LAUREN THOMAS

We're excited to announce that the NQA will be hosting our 2025 conference in the vibrant city of Richmond, Virginia! Known for its lively cultural scene and accessibility, we think Richmond is going to be the perfect backdrop for our gathering.

One of the great things about Richmond is its affordability. With competitive pricing for hotels and dining, we expect more attendees to join us. Plus, being centrally located on the East Coast makes it convenient to reach by air, rail, or road.

Our Events Committee Chair, Jo Chern, is especially excited: "Last year's vote on where to have conferences put Virginia second to Georgia. Our member base is strongest in the Northeast, but the Southeast conference in 2024 sparked new interest and brought in new members. Richmond sits in a sweet spot between the two, with an easy-to-navigate international airport."

Richmond is also packed with artistic energy, featuring galleries, theaters, and live music. Our events committee member Paras Kaul, who lived in Richmond for a while, has this to say about the city: "Influenced by the Virginia Museum of Art in Richmond, the many galleries, and the creative pulse of the city, I developed a lifelong passion for art and cultural experiences."

In 2024, CNN named Richmond the top city to visit in the U.S., thanks to its rich culture, outdoor activities, and fantastic dining options. With top-notch museums and neighborhoods like Jackson Ward and Shockoe Slip, there's so much to explore. You can savor delicious meals at renowned spots like Lillie Pearl and The Mantu, and don't miss Maymont Park—a great place to relax and enjoy nature.

Jo adds, "The beauty and art scene of the city has already been mentioned, but on a truly personal level, I'm excited to go to the city my parents eloped to. Convenience, beauty, history, romance! What more could we ask for in a location?"

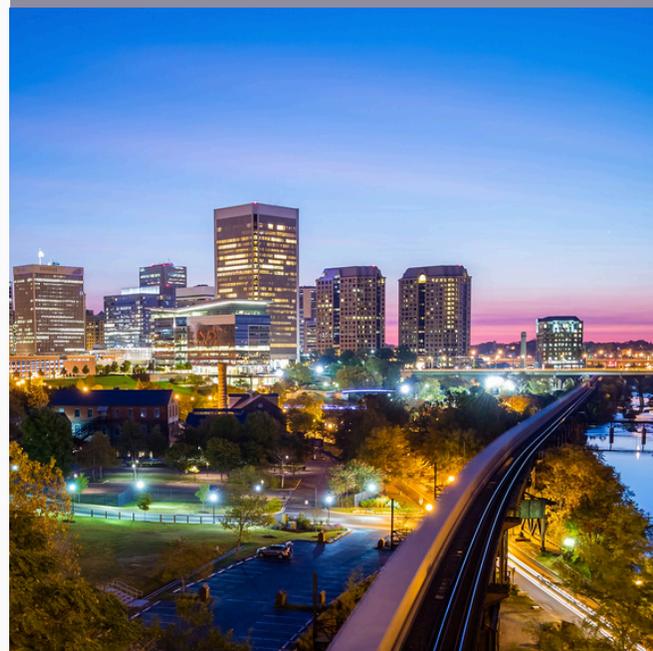
As we gear up for this gathering in Richmond, we can't wait to come together as a community to learn, connect, and dive into all that this amazing city has to offer. Stay tuned for more details about conference dates and registration information!



Courtesy of Maymont.org

Convenience,
beauty, history,
romance! What
more could we ask
of a location?

JO CHERN



Certification Committee

We were very happy to see so many of our members at the Conference in Savannah. Good connections with lively discussions were had by all. We were able to complete an in-person interview to award a Qigong Senior Teacher Level IV Certification along with Qigong Senior Clinical Practitioner Certification to past president Chris Bouguyon.

The Certification Committee joins the NQA Board in congratulating these Professional Members of our organization who have been awarded national certification by our Application Review Committee and for all they do to bring Qigong into their communities.

Our newly certified members are as follows (in no particular order):

Nilash Ramnarine *Qigong Instructor Level I*

Rachel Lee *Qigong Advanced Instructor Level III /Qigong Clinical Practitioner*

Clayton Crosley *Qigong Advanced Instructor Level III*

Sarah Lantier *Qigong Instructor Level I*

Chris Bouguyon *Qigong Senior Teacher Level IV / Qigong Senior Clinical Practitioner*

Dan Fields *Qigong Instructor Advanced Instructor Level III*

Robin Brooks *Qigong Instructor Level I*

Kevin Siddons *Qigong Advanced Instructor Level III*

Jeremiah Duke *Qigong Clinical Practitioner*

Note: Clayton Crosley is current President, Chris Bouguyon is Past President

Please forgive us if we've missed anyone. If we did, please let the office know at info@nqa.org.



Linda Close

Chair of Certification Committee
certification.chair@nqa.org



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Thank You To NQA 2024 Conference Organizers and Presenters

Thank you to the NQA Events Committee for their efforts in creating this wonderful conference!

- Jo Chern
- Clayton Crosley
- Frank Hanley
- Kathy Lindsay
- Michael McComiskey
- Kerry Ruiz
- Lauren Thomas

Volunteers include: **Jennifer Eash, Judy Chancey, Rose Wippich, John Munro, and Herb Lindsay**

Thank you to all the conference presenters for sharing their enlightening teachings and practices!

- **Vicki Dello Joio** <https://www.vickidellojoio.com/>
- **Rhett Farber** <https://www.thefarbergroup.com/>
- **Rod Ferguson** <https://australianacademyoftaichi.com.au/>
- **Annette Franks** <https://www.annettefranks.com/>
- **Francesco Garri Garripoli** <https://www.communityawake.org/>
- **Gayl Hubatch** <https://blueheroncenter.com/>
- **Damaris Jarboux** <https://www.thecenterplace.com/>
- **Daniel Jones III** <https://www.movingstillneshealingarts.com/>
- **Shoshanna Katzman** www.healing4u.com
- **Jessica Kolbe** <https://www.qigongsb.com/>
- **Matthew Komelski** Hunyuan Taiji Virginia on Facebook
- **Richard Leirer** <https://richardleirer.org/>
- **John Munro** <https://longwhitecloudqigong.com/>
- **Mark R Reinhart** <https://www.threepurerivers.com/>
- **Michael Rinaldini** <https://dragongateqigong.wordpress.com/>
- **Camilo Sanchez** <https://3energywellness.com/>
- **Christine Sanmiquel** <https://www.sacredheartqigong.com/>
- **Harinder Singh** <https://www.sifusingh.com/>
- **Kapil Taneja Qigong**, Meditation and Yoga Instructor at Toivo Center
- **Solala Towler** <https://abodetao.com/>
- **Kevin Siddons** <https://www.gentletaiji.net/>
- **Clayton Crosley** NQA President, VA Community Care Network Provider (Qigong Teacher), Senior Instructor, Long White Cloud Qigong

