



Official Newsletter of the National Qigong Association



To Our Dear Qigong Community

Welcome to our quarterly newsletter!

This newsletter features interesting articles from NQA committee members and two accomplished teachers. Solala Towler read a beautiful piece he wrote on Qigong practice during the conference that had many attendees requesting he send it to them. He kindly gave us permission to publish it in our newsletter so all our readers have the opportunity to absorb his wisdom! Chris Bouguyon kindly allowed us to publish a blog post from his website that gives a different take on New Year's resolutions. Additionally, there's an enlightening interview featuring NQA Professional Fay McGrew, discussing women's Qigong.

The online 2023 NQA conference was a great success! Every presentation was filled with wonderful knowledge for health and healing, and included practices anyone can incorporate into a daily routine. Whether you missed the conference or attended, recordings are still available for purchase. The sessions are listed here: <https://www.nqa.org/2023-annual-conference-video-library>. Contact info@nqa.org for information on purchasing sessions.

Preparations for the 2024 IN-PERSON conference in beautiful Savannah, Georgia are in full swing! The conference theme is: RETURN TO THE FLOW. In case you are wondering what to expect in Savannah, check out NQA President Clayton Crosley's article on the city! Keep checking the website for information and upcoming conference news: <https://www.nqa.org/annual-conference>

As the year closes, we thank you for your participation and membership in the NQA, and look forward to continue serving you next year!

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UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE	MEMBER	EVENT
12/30/23	Vicki Dello Joio	Nourish the Flame For 2024-Online
1/6/24	Lorelei Chang	Qi Pharmacy I & II
1/6/24	Zhongxian Wu	Winter Seasonal Zoom Cosmic Orbit Qigong
1/10/24	Lorelei Chang	Essence of Zhineng Qigong II
2/2/24	Damaris Jarboux	Qigong Healing Program
4/26/24	Richard Clear	Chi Kung / Fa Kung Healing Workshop
5/1/24	Solala Towler	Taiwan Qigong Tour
9/26/24	Abbot Michael Rinaldini	Annual 3-Day Retreat in Qigong and Daoist Meditation

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



Become A Member

Become a member of the National Qigong Association and unlock a world of well-being! With access to exclusive resources, cutting-edge research, and a supportive community of practitioners, NQA membership offers opportunities for growth and learning.

Whether you're a seasoned Qigong enthusiast or just beginning your journey toward balance and vitality, join us to delve deeper into this ancient practice, connect with like-minded individuals, and explore the transformative power of Qigong. Embrace wellness. Join the NQA today! .

WWW.NQA.ORG/MEMBERSHIP



NEW QI TRAINING

COMING FEBRUARY 2024

More Info Coming Soon

Rethinking New Year's Resolutions

BY CHRIS BOUGUYON

New Years tradition dictates that once the feasting of the holidays is over we need to focus on New Year's resolutions and a "git-er-done" attitude. FORGET THAT!

Having been in the wellness / fitness industry for over 40 years, we have a running joke about the new year and the resolution driven gym / training floor crowds. "They will all be gone by the end of February and we will have our space back." I was at a loss to understand why we start out with the best of intentions but somehow lose steam, and fade away in such a short time, until I started studying the 5 Element Model of Traditional Chinese Medicine.

I strongly believe this "false start cycle" comes from our lack of seasonal awareness. Look around. What is nature doing right now? In the northern hemisphere, nature is in retreat from the cold. Animals are in dens, or hibernating. Deciduous trees have shed foliage and pulled all their energy down into growing healthy roots so that in springtime they can take that new found energy and build a stronger, broader canopy. From a Daoist philosophy, this IS "the way". Observe nature and work with it, not against it.

Starting a rigorous January 1 training routine, in the middle of a down energy cycle, is ill advised for many reasons. This is our time to rest, nurture our internal landscape with meditative, quiescent training practices like gentle Qigong, Tai Chi or Yoga. Forcing yourself to push past this natural cycle invites further energetic draining. It is a lot like trying to run a marathon with a bungee cord attached that is almost certainly going to snap you backwards, painfully. It is far better to build your root system now and come out in the spring time recharged and ready to take on that list of resolutions.

Here are a few suggestions to take advantage of this powerful recharging time:

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CHRIS BOUGUYON



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Take time alone to reflect on the year behind you, without judgement, guilt, or shame.

- What are three things you did well?
- What are three things you could have done better?
- What are three things you wish to make amends for?
- Make amends. This returns energy to you, and them.

Create a daily meditation routine

- Start with between two and five minutes.
- Set a timer so your mind can let go.
- Seek an instructor / beginner classes to help you maximize your practice.
- [App Download - Insight Timer](#) is a wonderful training tool for this and we have some free meditation training tools available on our website.

Gentle Exercise - Consistency is far more important than force

- Take slow walks in the sun / out in nature.
- Gently stretch / open up your body with Tai Chi, Qigong or Yoga.
- Find a well-qualified teacher.
- Go to [SimplyAware Training Programs](#) for local and online classes.

Release attachments / Make room for possibilities

- Recycle things you no longer need to a thrift Store or shelter.
- Clothing - Start with one box of old clothes that could be used by someone else.
- Furniture - That one piece that seems in the way or unused.
- Relationships - Release one-sided connections that feel draining / imbalanced.
- Is it better to have two or three solid friendships than a bunch of acquaintances?



Chris Bouguyon, MMQ-CP

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NQA 2024 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

WELCOME TO SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

I am absolutely thrilled to share the wonderful news that Savannah will be hosting the NQA 2024 Annual Conference. As a proud resident of this enchanting city, I warmly welcome you to my beloved hometown. There's something truly magical about Savannah, and my greatest hope is that, just like me, you'll leave the conference with a deep love and admiration for this remarkable place.

Our Qigong community here in Savannah is truly exceptional. We are fortunate to have a diverse group of certified teachers representing various Qigong styles, including esteemed individuals like Roger Jahnke IIQTC, Dr. Robin Murphy of Lotus Wellness Cottage, and John Munro of Long White Cloud Qigong. Throughout the city, you'll find numerous free Qigong practices set against the backdrop of our historic parks, charming squares, and picturesque marinas.

Savannah boasts an array of remarkable "firsts" that add to its rich tapestry of history. This city was not only the first settlement and original capital of Georgia, founded by General James Oglethorpe, but it has also played pivotal roles in events like the Revolutionary War, Civil War, and the Civil Rights movement. In fact, it was in a local Baptist Church here that Martin Luther King delivered his iconic "I Have a Dream Speech" before presenting it in Washington DC. Savannah is home to the first Women's Hospital, The Telfair Hospital, and it also witnessed the establishment of the first Jewish settlement in Georgia, complete with the only gothic style synagogue in the entire United States. Additionally, the Girl Scouts of America had their beginnings right here in Savannah.

Wandering through our city, you'll be captivated by the stunning architecture that graces our streets, including the elegant Edwardian, Victorian, Gothic, and Federal styles. Savannah holds the distinction of being the first city in the US to incorporate a master plan prior to the settlers' arrival, a testament to its thoughtful design and layout.

I encourage you to consider arriving a bit early, perhaps the weekend before the conference, so you can fully immerse yourself in the charm of Savannah, lovingly known as "The Hostess City." Here's to a warm welcome, unforgettable experiences, and cherished memories in our beloved Savannah!



Clayton Crosley
US Army Veteran
NQA President
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“There are countless treasures waiting for you to explore, from the exquisite Telfair Museum and the historic Owens-Thomas House to the picturesque Wormsloe Plantation.”



Interview with Fay McGrew

BY DINA JOY BAHRANI

I had the pleasure of sitting down for a chat with Qigong Master Fay McGrew, and hearing her incredible story of learning, perseverance, healing, and deep wisdom.

Fay has a powerful story, not only in what she learned, but in how she brought it to so many others in places that rarely had access to this healing wisdom, including hospitals, working with active-duty military on bases, and with veterans, and how she is an incredible pioneer in Qigong for women. When I first read her impressive resume, I realized I'd need a few read-throughs to even begin to absorb how much this dedicated woman has done to bring Qigong into the world as a living, embodied healing practice.

Of course, the first question that came to mind was, how did she start her journey? What sparked a lifetime of such dedicated learning, teaching, and advocacy? Her answer:

"I began in martial arts and internal martial arts for 20 years. My teacher was an "underground teacher" — in the 70's it was hard to find anyone to learn from.

As I approached my 40's, I felt like it was time to shift from fighting (Fay is the First Women's World Full Contact Karate Champion, 1975) to going deeper, slowing down, and said that I'd like to learn Taiji. But how do you find one when they aren't listed in the Yellow Pages?

One day, I was in Manhattan taking the crosstown bus, and I looked up at one of the lofts, and saw shadows of people in the window doing Tai Chi. I didn't know what street it was, and with the angle of the sun changing, I had to wait another 9 months until I saw their silhouettes from the bus again! I finally saw it, ran off the bus, ran into the building, which had no signs. I knocked on the door, and a Chinese man opened it. I asked him if he taught Taiji; he said yes, gave me a flyer, and closed the door in my face."

No one had ever shown up at this teacher's home before, asking to learn, but she did end up being able to train with this teacher, beginning a new life path, leading her to healing, teaching, and being a powerful voice for advocacy now over 25 years.

I fell in love with all of it.
But in particular,
women's Qigong. It was
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FAY MCGREW



“It healed me. Women have so much trauma. There’s this profound healing that happens here, in layers. These layers are self-revealed to you as you’re either being treated or doing it yourself through the Qigong.



Something significant happened for Fay during her training time. She noticed that energy she experienced wasn’t the same as what she felt in martial arts, even the internal systems.

It was something different.

There was a particular part that she thought was a warm-up to the Taiji, and found out that it wasn’t a warm-up, it was Qigong...and she loved it. She dove deep, learning Taiji, Qigong, women’s Qigong, Chan meditation, and energy healing through Medical Qigong.

“I learned all of that all at once and fell in love with all of it. But in particular, women’s Qigong. It was very liberating. Because of being in martial arts for so long and so hard, and so male-oriented, it was a liberation. It was like finding an oasis in the desert. It just changed everything on so many different levels.”

As someone who values the healing power of softness myself, Fay’s comment on women’s Qigong had me eager to learn more. I had to ask her what she noticed as different in her journey into women’s Qigong. Her answer was powerful.

“It healed me. Women have so much trauma. There’s this profound healing that happens here, in layers. These layers are self-revealed to you as you’re either being treated or doing it yourself through the Qigong.

And something you have to understand is that as women, we have significant energetic differences. Our Dantian is different than men, because it includes the energy of the uterus. There’s an empty space for the guys there. So that’s where their cultivation comes in. Our uterus is our second heart, so it goes right to that heart-mind connection. We’re hardwired for that, and sometimes, our cultivation can go even faster because of it.”

Fay went on to write her first thesis on inner alchemy for women, and through her deep dive, gained profound understandings about the evolution of Qigong with the different phases of women’s bodies, which has had an incredible impact on her own vibrant transition into menopause.

“When a woman becomes menopausal, what happens to our energies? Chong Mai closes. But women’s Qigong keeps it open. The women Qigong masters I’ve researched are Daoist women masters, who are always accepted as priests, as great teachers, and in the pantheon of the Daoist gods and goddesses.

In medieval China, even before then, once a woman's sons were married, the daughters-in-law took over all the house duties, freeing the woman to begin her path of mastery. One woman who stands out is Lady Sun Bu'er Note 8 add (Sun Pu-erh), who very few even know about. Legend has it she was known as the woman who developed the first women's practice when she was menopausal."

So, how does that translate into Fay's personal experience, as a woman going through the aging process, while doing this work?

First, people often mistake her for being 10 years younger than she is, even in the Qigong world. But, more powerful than that, she says, "I am the captain of my body." In a time of social media where women are constantly bombarded with messaging about how they should look, how they should feel, what they should do to have a specific aesthetic or body type, this is a beautifully refreshing message. Especially when aging women often feel invisible, or feel like they're losing their sovereignty and vitality while they're shuffled off to an array of surgeries and inundated with medications. Qigong offers an option of increased dignity, joy, and connection.

Fay emphasizes that for her, one of the most meaningful parts of Qigong is the practice of breathing and centering, centering, centering. Of coming back to ourselves in a world that is constantly pulling at our attention, emotion, and energy. Of nurturing the deepest parts of ourselves.

It's important to note that this focus on self-nurturing isn't just a nice idea, but an essential practice of healthy living. Fay found that when working with breast cancer patients, there was a common theme of them giving and giving to everyone else, but not receiving, not being nurtured themselves. There can be so much pressure to do it all, to be it all, and we can sometimes forget to fill our own cups with practices and meaningful connections that support us. Qigong can be a way in, to nourish our emotional health as well as our energetic and physical wellness.

Fay went on to share that things will naturally come up during the aging process, and that Qigong has been a huge support in her mental outlook and her relationship with her body, which empowers her to navigate her choices wisely and confidently.

I asked Fay, looking forward, what she saw for the future of Qigong and our ever-changing world. She shared:

"We're starting a new 60-year cycle and a new 20-year cycle. In Chinese Astrology's 60-year cycle, we start with wood dragon, wood spring, that's the first. And then the 20-year cycle is the cosmic Feng Shui, where the dominating energy goes from what it is now earth to fire. So, we're starting off next year, fire and wood. It's a time of death and rebirth, the phoenix rising."

Our uterus is our second heart, so it goes right to that heart-mind connection. We're hardwired for that, and sometimes, our cultivation can go even faster because of it.



We may be looking towards a time of many changes, and Qigong can be an important aspect of moving in a centered way through the currents that these changes may present.

An insight Fay shared here is that an important thing to remember is that it's not all about learning new moves, new forms, moving energy simply for the sake of doing so. What are you moving, and why? Perhaps a more important thing to focus on is where they're supposed to take you: to the center. To find your center in life's storms. To nourish your center through the aging process. To keep coming back to the breath, to the center, to your essence, as you navigate your life's journey.

As our conversation came to a close, I asked her what she believes are the most important aspects of being a teacher and being a student of Qigong. She shared two powerful points:

"Always be a student, especially as a teacher; I can't separate them. Once you become a teacher, you are always a student. You learn from your students all the time. There's a journey in learning to develop language for something there's no words for."

The other point Fay brought to light is how the heart needs to be open to receive, that it's about becoming a vessel for transmitting to your students. It's a completely different experience; you can feel the generations of the lineage that come with these transmissions, rather than just learning information. Even when the mind can't hold all the information, these transmissions allow it to be absorbed into our bodies, on a cellular level.

Part of that ability to have your heart open to receive is to find a teacher that you can feel a connection with. Find a teacher that resonates with you, and is the kind of person you feel good being around, who is a living example of qualities you want to grow into. There are so many qualities in Fay that I hope to grow into myself, and I am so grateful for her living embodiment of the heart of Qigong.

To learn more about Fay and join her newsletter, you can reach out at fay@qigongwithfaymcgrew.com



Dina Joy Bahrani
NQA Publications Committee Member
Master of Chinese Energetic Medicine
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Always be a student,
especially as a teacher; I
can't separate them.
Once you become a
teacher, you are always a
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FAY MCGREW



Membership Committee Updates

Allow us to take a moment to bring attention to the dedicated members of your NQA Membership Committee (Steven Goldstein, Cloe Couturier, Mary Beck, and Jennifer Eash- pictured below L to R). We come from diverse backgrounds, each bringing a blend of entrepreneurial insights and business acumen that we wholeheartedly channel into serving our beloved NQA community.

Our primary focus revolves around you, our cherished NQA members. Through collective brainstorming sessions, we've aimed to infuse our initiatives with a sense of purpose—to uplift and enhance your experiences within our community. One shining example is our efforts in creating the end-of-year donation drive, a project born from our desire to give back and support the growth of our NQA family. If you would like to learn more about giving a donation to the NQA, please visit this link: <https://www.nqa.org/donate>

The Membership Committee is excited to share some exciting developments we have been crafting with great care and enthusiasm. We're thrilled to introduce not just one, but two new spaces designed exclusively for our community!

First, get ready to enjoy an engaging forum within our very own member hub. Our new forum will be designed to foster connections, ignite discussions, and celebrate our shared love for Qigong. Expect this new forum to be available February of 2024.

Moreover, we're proud to announce the re-launch of NQA QiChat, our dedicated Facebook group! This vibrant space will serve as an extension of our community forum, offering a familiar platform for discussions, sharing resources, and staying connected on a daily basis. This group is available for NQA members and non-members alike to join now. Just do a quick search for NQA QiChat and you should be able to find us.

Both the community forum and NQA QiChat are curated with your involvement at the forefront. Your voice, your experiences—they are the essence of these spaces. We envision these platforms as mirrors reflecting the richness of our community, where each of us contributes our shared knowledge and support.



What Are We Doing When We Do Qigong?

BY SOLALA TOWLER

Just what is this mysterious, miraculous, marvelous practice called Qigong? Just what are we doing when we do Qigong?

In a sense, we are stepping out of our mundane, limited sense of reality and opening ourselves up to a richer, wider, and deeper form of experience. We are allowing what is infinite to be contained by what is so finite-our own bodies. Our own energy system a microcosm of the very planets and stars turning gently in space. Our own minds growing so expansive as to contain the universe. Our very own sense of self expanding into a greater, richer sense of divine self or what the Chinese call Wuji, the primordial origin of all life.

When we do our practice, our form, our breathing, our visualizations, our movements – we align ourselves with our own origin, our own divine birthright. We are allowing ourselves to become “empty vessels,” ready to be filled with the energy of the universe itself. As all of the sages, down throughout history, tell us, we-in our humble and often confused states of being-are still a part of the whole, a piece of the totality of it all. What better way to step forth into new dimensions of experience and knowledge? What better opportunity to allow ourselves the freedom, the strength, the deepness of character and intelligence to begin to let go of the chains of illusion and limitation that we have all been told we are? We are ever and so much more than that!

When we do Qigong, we are saying yes to magic, miracles and an openness to change, healing and growing. We are taking the first of a thousand steps into the unknown, into the very Tao itself. We are, at the very least, allowing ourselves to heal, to grow, to change along with the great changing that is always and constant. We are aligning ourselves with those great cycles of change, and in doing so we are freeing ourselves from the tyranny of time and the limitations of life. We are setting ourselves free so that we can soar like the butterfly and flow like the water that was so beloved to the ancient Taoist sages. We are, in the end, practiced by our Qigong as much as we practice it. One breath at a time, one movement at a time, one moment at a time.



Solala Towler

Editor/Publisher of The Empty Vessel: The Journal of Daoist Philosophy and Practice
<https://abodetao.com/>

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SOLALA TOWLER



Syner-Qi: Monthly Online Event

Syner-Qi is a monthly NQA event designed for exploring Qigong practices collectively, followed by an interactive session for questions and discussion about the practice. Each month features a distinguished Qigong teacher, offering an opportunity for our Qi community to delve into and gain insights from their expertise.

We welcome all enthusiasts, from beginners to experienced practitioners, to join us on Zoom for this enriching journey of understanding and experiencing the profound benefits of Qigong. It's a vibrant space to connect, share knowledge, and cultivate a deeper understanding of this time honored practice.

Since its launch in October 2023, Syner-Qi has been a space guided by seasoned Qigong practitioners featured on Qi Talks. Francesco Garri Garripoli, founder of Community Awake, graced our October session, while in November, Vicki Dello Joio, founder of The Way of Joy and host of Qi Talks, led an enlightened practice called "Transition".

During our most recent Syner-Qi in December, we practiced boosting our immunity with Mark R. Reinhart, founder of Three Pure Rivers. As we eagerly anticipate January's gathering, we are thrilled to announce that Jessica Kolbe, founder of QigongSB, will be leading us in practice called "5 Element Qigong: Medicine for the Emotions".

If you are interested in practicing with leading Qigong instructors and fellow community members, then please join us every second Sunday of the month at 3 PM EST for Syner-Qi! NQA members enjoy complimentary access to these sessions and the recording archive, making it a valuable part of your membership.

While non-NQA members can attend Syner-Qi events by paying a \$25 registration fee per session, it's worth noting that opting for a general NQA membership at only \$45 per year will significantly lower your costs in the long run. Attending multiple sessions throughout the year quickly adds up, making membership a more cost-effective choice.

Register now and explore a new Qigong practice every month! For more information, visit [HERE](#). For more information about NQA membership, visit [HERE](#).

We're genuinely excited to meet and practice with each of you at our next Syner-Qi session!

Warm Regards,

Syner-Qi Committee



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Research and Education Committee

The Research and Education Committee continues to be involved in several projects:

1. We are working on the content of the NQA website's <https://www.nqa.org/what-is-qigong> page. We are adding content to the site that makes the recent research results on Qigong more accessible and usable to our members.
2. We are working on the content of our recent "Know the Evidence'" report to make the content more accessible and usable to our members. This content will be added to a Meta Study Review Update page.
3. We are working with the QiTalks committee, the Membership committee, and the executive team to create membership drives that focus of the non-NQA members that register for and/or attend a QiTalk. Our goal is to build the membership of the NQA.

We are always looking for interested members that would like to join our committee. We would love for members with education and/or writing skills to join us. Also, anyone with research skills that can read a research study and translate it into accessible information is welcome to join us.

We have been collecting research studies on Qigong and Taiji for over 5 years. We plan to review the study summaries that have been collected during those years and write the summaries to make the information more accessible.

We will also keep reviewing current research studies on Qigong and Taiji for new information on how Qigong and Taiji are being used to improve quality of life.

We meet once a month to review our progress on our projects and plan new projects. We have members from around the country. Our meetings are always fascinating learning experiences.



Kevin Siddons, Ed. D.
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History of the NQA

Hello Everyone!

In this NQA Newsletter we want to delve into NQA history, as well as our goals and mission for the future. NQA is a not-for-profit organization that was created in 1996 by a group of individuals who saw a need to connect teachers, students, and the Qigong community who share the love of practice. Over time, we learned through research the ever-expanding benefits of regular Qigong practice on overall health and well-being for everyone. Thousands of studies have shown Qigong is effective in helping to heal life challenges, ranging from high blood pressure and chronic illness to emotional frustration, mental stress, and spiritual crisis.

Our mission has stayed the same: to promote the understanding of Qigong for present and future generations with a focus on core values of community, integrity, and compassion. Qigong is not just a practice, but a way of living where we recognize all life shares the same energy and desire for a full meaningful life. In everyday life, we sometimes lose track of how we can create an environment of nourishment, healing and protection for ourselves and others. Qigong creates that environment.

Our organization has much to offer through participation of our community (YOU) and resources you can find on the web site, NQA.org. A history of presentations in [Qi Talks](#) and our newest venture [Syner-Qi](#) are well worth a visit. You will find that there are many different styles of Qigong and instructors, and we encourage you to look at it all! There is a list of professional members, blogs from experts in their field and the latest research.

To get started:

- Explore some of the many excellent instructional books and videos available to get a feel for modalities and instruction styles.
- Seek referrals in your area and visit local classes, talk to instructors to get a feel for their teaching style. You can search the NQA's [teacher directory](#) to find someone in your area.



Founders (from L to R): Hongfei Lin, Jessie Dammann, Russell DesMarais, Roger Jahnke, James MacRitchie, Mark Johnson, Damaris Jarboux, Richard Leirer, Berkley Freeman (legal counsel), Gunther Weil.

- Attend the **NQA Annual Conference** and check out the NQA **events** page to sample many styles of Qigong and practitioners from around the world.
- Once you find a style and instructor you feel comfortable with, it is important to develop a consistent, daily practice.
- When beginners ask, "What is the most important aspect of practicing Qigong?" The answer is always...**"just do it!"**

All Qigong paths begin as a personal journey of self-discovery through use of movement, breath and intention. It is not important what you practice but how you practice. In other words..**"DO YOU!"**



Mary Beck
 Membership Committee Member
 Qigong Teacher | Yoga Teacher | Reiki Master

Publications Committee

The Publications Committee continues its mission to create a quarterly newsletter that informs our readers about NQA events, classes, and shares important news from NQA committees. We will also continue to publish articles about Qigong practice and teachings written by our wonderful members and teachers that are part of our community.

As we head into a new year of steady quarterly publications, we are always striving to improve our content, process, and ideas to keep the newsletter relevant and engaging for our readers.

If you love Qigong and possess writing, editing, formatting, or interview skills, please join us-we would love to have you as part of our journey!

Linda Kiesler
 Publications Chair
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During the winter months all things in nature wither, hide, return home, and enter a resting period, just as lakes and rivers freeze and snow falls. This is a time when yin dominates yang. Therefore one should refrain from overusing the yang energy.

Maoshing Ni "The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Medicine"