

Qigong in Australia

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Traditional Chinese Medicine has been known to the people of Australia for many years and has enjoyed a steady increase in acceptance over the last thirty years as in most parts of the world today. Taijiquan has become a popular form of health exercise due to the hard work of a few Doctors and Taiji Masters promoting the health benefits of this ancient art. Qigong has also experienced an increase in popularity and awareness of this traditional healing method, especially Chinese Medical Qigong exercises, to restore the natural harmony of mind, body and spirit.

Since 1999 Qigong Master Simon Blow has been leading groups of students and more recently other teachers and natural therapists on study tours to China. During 2005 and 2006, thirty five students have studied Guigen Qigong with Professor Xu Hongtao, a Qigong Doctor from the Qigong Department at the Xiyuan Hospital in Beijing. All these students have received certification from the World Academic Society of Medical Qigong (WASMQ) with some becoming members. These groups also travel to the sacred Wudangshan for internal Qigong and meditation training from the Taoist Priests from the Purple Cloud Monastery.

Simon Blow has been a professional Qigong teacher for over fifteen years. He instructs at various community colleges and seniors centres and for specialist health groups. Simon is a sought-after speaker and workshop presenter who has had the great fortune to travel to China on many occasions, studying Qigong, touring the sacred mountains and experiencing the rich culture of the Chinese people. The purpose of these tours is education, growth and awareness, bringing people to the source to experience personally the Qi energy, ask questions and receive guidance from some of the most qualified Doctors, Masters and experts in China.

There is now a steady growth of Qigong teachers and Natural Therapists with personal experience of the rich culture of Traditional Chinese Medicine spreading the healing benefits of Qigong throughout Australia.

At the 2004 WASMQ meeting Simon presented a report on the Survey of Benefits of Qigong Practise with a Drug Rehabilitation Population. Of the 634 surveys taken 88% felt they were deepening spiritually. 89% felt stronger emotionally and less frustrated. 93% said they felt more peaceful since learning Qigong and their future would be a better one. 95% felt Qigong helped them to be calm and relaxed. Qigong self-healing exercises as taught in these programs are an important tool helping these individuals improve their quality of life. These Qigong groups continue in their fourteenth year. The We Help Ourselves (WHOS) group is a Government supported drug rehabilitation program and has now expanded. Female teachers who are members of the World Academic Society of Medical Qigong are leading groups at women-only centres helping women with their special needs.

A separate section within the WHOS network is the Methadone to Abstinence Residential (MTAR) program established in 1999, MTAR is the only residential methadone reduction program in Australia. Methadone is a pharmaceutical drug taken orally, used in the treatment of opioid dependence (usually heroin addiction) helping reduce the risk of premature death, reduction of blood borne infectious diseases (HIV and Hepatitis C) and reducing crime and drug use. It creates a stable state so as the individuals can start to address the complex issues of drug dependence. But the ongoing use of methadone creates long term health problems. In this unique program patients live for six months in a safe, drug free therapeutic community. Qigong has been a part of this successful program since its inception, helping reduce stress, improving health and vitality as well as developing peace of mind.

Qigong enjoys a steady increase in popularity in Australia, helping many types of people improve their quality of life. Qigong truly is an exercise for Mind, Body and Spirit.