

How did we get here and why?

As pure spirit, we cannot communicate with one another. However, as humans, or spirit in a physical body, we are capable of interaction. The physical world is defined by a balance of opposites known as the principles of Yin and Yang which apply to all aspects of life and represent complementary energetic qualities.

We are spirit first, integrating into the physical world through the process of becoming human. This integration of spirit begins when Yang Heavenly energies mix with Yin Earthly energies to create a myriad of energetic interactions by which the fetus is conceived and able to receive the spirit. Once the physical body is birthed, assimilation into the physical world of Yin and Yang begins. This time, defined as the development of self-awareness or ego (“I”), takes an average of three years.

In a perfect world, with a balanced ego, this begins the spiritual dance of play and the discovery of the magical phenomenon, for the sole purpose of expanding our spiritual awareness. This spiritual awareness occurs through our self-cultivation and spiritual exchange with others.

The world most of us live in today is imperfect. Because of our out-of-balance ego, we attempt to control and manage, resulting in the disconnect most of us experience today. Fundamentally there are only two ways to show up in the physical world: from the inside out (spirit first in a physical body) or from the outside in (physical body managed by ego). These are two sides of a coin with extremely different outcomes.

This distinction is very complex to explain to those who see themselves from the outside in. The gatekeeper is your out-of-balanced ego and it will do everything in its power to maintain a false sense of truth, having no regard for you as spirit. You can't think your way out of this illusion. A balanced and healthy ego manages your worldly experiences, maintaining both the function of your physical body and your safety in the outer world. Techniques such as meditation may lead you to experience the physical world from the inside out (spirit first). The problem with meditation as a still, short-term practice, is that once you move, you begin to shift back into the physical world, the home of your ego. The only way to awaken spiritually is to find the exit, the backdoor to your ego. However, the more educated you become, the cleverer your ego becomes.

I have experienced this dilemma first-hand with some of my students and clients. They have spent much time and money seeking to find the truth, only to develop a cleverer ego that thwarts their effort. They keep expanding their intellect by acquiring more knowledge and techniques that only point them in the direction but never lead them through the exit. This approach is contrary the practices of Buddha who sat in stillness for a very long time until he found the exit and became enlightened. Buddha understood that the true nature of mind and spirit could only be achieved by letting go of external stimulation and attachments.

I can spend much time on what is not. There are many well-intentioned people attempting to help others “wake-up”. These attempts can seem helpful, but they will not move others through the exit. As humans in the physical world, we have difficulty functioning with an out-of-balance ego, and we find it challenging to return to our center because of the nature of duality which is influenced by the principles of Yin and Yang. Our dualistic intellectual development and over-stimulation in the outer world feeds the needs of the out-of-balance ego, blocking self-cultivation and spiritual awareness. To return to this state of awareness, one needs to be in one’s center like a stone thrown into a still pond. The point of entry is you, the outward ripples are your expanded state of awareness, and the movement out of the center is also you. This is very different from operating in the physical world, from the outside in, because the outer world is influenced by Yin and Yang wherein you shift from one state to the other not from your center.

The Daoist practice of Qigong is considered a moving meditation which provides a means of integrating movement and stillness. This is the key to returning to your center, the other side of the coin. Just as there are many different flowers, there are many different forms of Qigong. I believe that you first need to clear and activate your energy (“Qi”) by becoming completely aware of yourself breathing all day, every day. As you become more aware of your breathing there will be times when you will shift away from that awareness. The moment you realize this, disconnect and simply return to your breath awareness. Do this not from the outside looking in on yourself breathing but by witnessing inwardly, experiencing from the inside out, the act of breathing.

Start by sitting in a quiet, still space and witness the act of breathing. Once you have accomplished this, slowly get up and walk without shifting your focus away from your breathing. Begin to expand this practice into your everyday life (be patient with yourself as this could take a month or so). After a few successful days of witnessing your breath while moving in the outer world begin writing a journal, only a few sentences, on how your sense of self is changing. Keep this journal as an ongoing process. Once you are present and aware of your breath, it is time to invite into your practice a simply Qigong form, one that can be assessed by the type and number of movements. I would suggest finding a class that is rooted in medical and/or longevity Qigong.

There are many good teachers in the world, today. This is both a gift and a complication as it becomes more difficult to assess whom to choose and whether he/she is the “right” teacher for you. Those questions are not easy to address, and there are many different answers to consider. As a Guide/Teacher, I can only describe how I have come to see my role in all of this. Without question, there are many ways to find the exit. I can remember seeking the truth from the age of 3. Then, in 1974, I was introduced to the Daoist practices, Qigong and meditation. I believed then, as I do now, that I found my KEY and it has become the key for many others. I was like a moth drawn to a flame. I consumed all that I could find and all that found me. In the late 1980’s, when I began to teach Qigong, Tai Chi, and meditation I asked myself one question, Why? The answer was easy...I wanted to guide others, as others had guided me, toward finding the exit and becoming the other side of the coin. Guiding others using Daoist practices of Qigong and Tai Chi to clear Qi blockages in the body and teaching (or helping others to develop) meditative practices to calm the mind (ego) helps one to attain stillness. Learning Daoist practices such as these may lead one through the door of self-realization that is in all of us.