Yi Quan -- A Powerful Qi Cultivation Practice for Yogis
By Dr. Roger Jahnke

There are numerous Qi cultivation practices that help you to attune your awareness so that you can discover and access the subtle energy of the Qi or your life force energy. One of the most ancient is Yi Quan, a foundation method for personal Qi cultivation and accessing the mind-body-spirit promises of Qi.

Yi Quan, means “mind skill” or “mind boxing,” as you must “box” with the mind to get it to quiet. Yi Quan standing meditation benefits your posture and balance, increases inner body awareness, and builds stamina.

While outwardly there is no movement, inwardly the deep relaxation of the Qigong state triggers physiological and psychological benefits strengthening your mind-body connection, reducing stress, promoting serenity and improving circulation thereby enhancing your overall health.

Do not try to do anything during this practice. Just notice what you feel in your body without creating thoughts or judgments. If you start to feel uncomfortable, focus on your area of discomfort and adjust your posture, moving gently and breathing easily.

Be aware of your attitude toward your practice and your body, and treat your body with loving kindness. Build your endurance gradually. Begin with aligning your body in Tadasana or Mountain Pose. In this practice, stand with your feet hip width apart. When you align to initiate your practice, whether you practice Qigong, Tai Chi, or Yoga, it sets the tone or intention for your practice.

Imagine that as you stand in Tadasana, you are opening to the influences of Heaven, pouring down through you like a healing waterfall while the grounding influences of Earth are rising through your feet.

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Stand with your shoulders relaxed, and arms at your side. Knees are slightly bent, the bowl of the pelvis is upright, and suspend the head balancing it on top of the spine and shoulders.

The Tao Te Ching says, “Like a lake, the heart must be calm and quiet, having great depth beneath it.” Yi Quan practice calms the heart, as well as the mind and allows you to create and cultivate inner stillness.

Start with 5 minutes of Yi Quan practice a day. You may notice that your body begins to move spontaneously while doing this standing meditation practice. Allow the spaciousness of the sky and the solidity of the earth to meet within you, creating a powerful charge of life force that allows the body to release and dissolve any tension that arises.