

How to Regulate Mind Effectively in Exercising Health Qigong

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Mind regulation is a critical point of Health Qigong distinguishable from other body movements and exercises. However, in practice, the so-called “exercise” mostly emphasized on how to meet the specifications of body movements and the mental and meditation regulations were forgotten, which undoubtedly may affect the interests and effectiveness of Health Qigong exercise and become a bottleneck of the practicers in improving their practicing levels to some extent. There are two reasons for this status: first, the instructors failed to clearly introduce the importance of mind regulation and caused the learners to pay less attention to this invisible mind regulation practice; second, the instructors failed to tell the learners about the approaches of mind regulation, the learners know that the mind regulation is important but lack of specific operating approaches, so they have to focus on the body regulation and breath regulation. How to regulate “mind” effectively in exercising Health Qigong? Hereby I would like to make a brief introduction to my individual knowledge and understanding.

First, the mind regulation is a gradual process, which must be achieved through intuitive understanding. China’s Daoyin, meridian and collateral theory and Indian yoga are discovered and invented by intuitive experience of life, and the western anatomy or cytology was unworkable. Japanese philosopher Yasuo Yuasa also stressed and pointed out that “the real knowledge cannot be obtained just relied on theoretical thinking but should obtain through the body’s understanding or comprehension”. Therefore, the “mind regulation” process is understood through intuition. A Health Qigong practicer should have a different body and mind feeling after every exercise. This sort of body and mind feeling is a simple understanding, which has a good effect of unifying state of mind. Only through long-term practice of the exercising methods can we truly realize the inherent mystery of Health Qigong and can the life state be optimized continuously in the process of self-regulation. Inspired by the sentences of *Zhuangzi • Da Zong Shi (Great and Venerable Teacher)* that “staying out of the world; staying out of things; staying out of life; perceiving the light of dawn; seeing the oneness; staying out of

past and present; seeing no life and no death”, I think that the mind regulation of Health Qigong should be a gradual process. Only through the tempers of “staying out of the world; staying out of things; staying out of life” can the realm of “perceiving the light of dawn” be achieved, that is to say, achieving a sort of peace and quiet, untamed and unblocked mental state through exercise.

Second, the mind regulation should pay attention to “reducing desires”. As early as over 2,000 years ago, Lao Zi said, “the man’s desires are insatiable; people are always chasing fame, interest and richness endlessly, which is not only unprofitable for the preciousness of life but results in moral hazard and loss of fortune and honor. *Huai Nan Zi* also stressed the importance of reducing desires on health and pointed out that, “remaining empty-minded, tranquil, detached and pleasant, while reducing appetites and desires”. Health Qigong, as an exercise emphasized on body and mind regulations, should reduce desires to play the best function of mind regulation. The “reducing desires” includes two aspects: first, the “ignoring the materials while emphasizing the life” should be achieved, don’t damage the value of your own life because chasing secular materialism, that would be ignoring what is near and seeking what is far away; second, the “being contented and knowing where or when to stop” should be achieved. In Lao Zi’s opinion, all disputes in the community were derived from the people’s “insatiable”. If a person is “insatiable”, he will inevitably ask for troubles; the person who is able to reduce desires can achieve the state of “staying out of the world”. The so-called “staying out of the world” means excluding everything in the world that can trigger all sorts of people’s desires, such as fame and fortune, etc. and achieve “cultivating mind and reducing desires”. Only when a person reduces his desires can he regulate mind to a state of “contented”. Thus it can be seen that, the practitioners of Health Qigong exercise who want to regulate the mind effectively must first achieve a state of “staying out of the world” and reducing desires. In today’s complex society, only a person who does not pursue money, wealth, fame and status excessively can his body and mind obtain peaceful and create good conditions for deep-seated mind regulation.

Third, the mind regulation should achieve the state of “sticking to one principle”. “Neither using ears to listen nor using mind to think in treating outside

interference” but using “empty-mind” to experience, thus to seek for learning from virtue and awaking to truth. Therefore, *In the Broad and Sacred Teachings of the Perfect Book of Dao and its Virtue (Daode Zhengjing Guangsheng Yi)*, Du Guangting reiterated that “one who cultivates his moral character should take his heart as the king and the internal organs as princes. If he enables the heart king to maintain tranquil, and adheres to truth and keeps the right way, the Qi of original essences of the universe will be incorporated into his body and converted into jade pulp and sweet dew therein.” That is to say, only by excluding the interference of external substances and achieving the state of “sticking to one principle” can one achieve the unity of essence, Qi and spirit and can the body’s vital functions be better adjusted, thus prolonging life and dispelling illnesses and strengthening health naturally. As a matter of fact, no matter what kind of Health Qigong exercise, no matter what sort of mind used, in the final analysis, is to help the practicers to exclude distracting thoughts and make the mind enter the state of “sticking to one principle”. However, this state of “sticking to one principle” does not occur in exercise every time, sometimes occurs occasionally, sometimes occurs frequently, although this situation is related with our own conditions and exercise environment, one thing is for sure that this state of “sticking to one principle” is an important goal of mind regulation in exercise, which is obtained through the practicers’ continuous trial and error and accumulation in practice and occurred in conscious exercise and unconscious circumstance. Only the “sticking to one principle” was achieved through the use of a variety of ideas that the mind regulation in exercise can achieve the desired goal.

Finally, the self-restraint and morality is the highest state of mind regulation.

The ancients said, the practicers must accumulate merits before exercise. Health Qigong exercise is a fashionable health-preserving exercise and a lofty moral self-restraint practice. Although the purposes and levels are different, the self-restraint and morality must be observed consciously. The weakling people do exercise for the sake of disease-preventing and body-building, the emotional disorders may lead to imbalances in internal organs and Qi and blood and make the body weaker and even lead to occurrence of diseases. People with certain practicing foundation have stronger regulation ability in mental activity than ordinary people, if the emotional disorders occurred due to bad

self-restraint and morality, the suffering will be more serious than ordinary people. In the Romance of the Three Kingdoms, Zhou Yu died due to his anger to Zhuge Liang, that's the evil consequence triggered by rage. When the practice reached a higher level, the self-restraint and morality have become major practice contents, the practitioners are required to maintain the mental balance, cool and refreshing moral nature and even lucid and unobstructed awareness. "If regarding this mental activity free from direct stimulus of external conditions as the exercise of self-control ability, the self-restraint and morality can be regarded as the exercise of mental activity self-control ability under the interference of external environment. Thus it can be seen that the self-restraint and morality are mind regulation, the extension of mind regulation in exercise, and the mind regulation at a higher level". Hence, the good self-restraint and morality are essential for regulating the mind effectively and achieving the effect of physical and mental health.

Mind regulation is the key and core for practicing Health Qigong exercise. We should take the initiative and consciously enhance mental regulation to conform to the requirements of exercise and life harmonious movements, especially when the vacant and lucid mind of "transforming the outside world into oneself, transforming oneself into outside world, forgetting both the outside world and oneself, and unity of the outside world and oneself" is achieved through all sorts of endeavors, the good health effects of "long-lived, mind-nourishing and virtue-preserving" will be achieved naturally.