



Video Transcript

Five Element Qigong Flow for Balance, Renewal & Earth-Connected Healing

We're working with the small movements at the bottom of the spine and the top of the hip. And then spin that circle in the other direction. As you lift your arm, it's as if water flows through your palm. You're inhaling and rotating through the shoulder. And when you're ready, you're going to scoop with one hand into the energy. This is called tea cupping. You're going to carry the teacup over your shoulder as you press down to the opposite side.

My name is Dr. Judith Ehrman Shapiro. We're here today with you and Gaia Goddess for a very special

practice called Five Elements. qigong this is a beautiful practice that celebrates the passing of the seasons cyclical nature of life the seasons can be seen as youth and adulthood and becoming an

elder and moving through them they can be seen as the seasons of the earth they can be seen as any

cycle, day and night, or cycle of life that changes.

The other thing I'd like to say before we begin is that this is a wonderful practice to do either standing or seated. You can do it either way. We're going to be standing in Wuji's stance and moving from there. So let's begin with Wuji's stance,

rising from the crown of the head as you drop your shoulders, right away feeling yin and yang, rising and falling,

allowing the arms to hang by the sides, little sparrow's egg beneath the armpits,

feeling the flow down your arms, little cotton balls between each finger.

soft through the chest, through renmai, and then becoming aware of the support through the qua,

right in the inguinal joint of the body, rotating the knees to be over the center of the feet.

Feet are about shoulder distance apart. And then feeling the weight gently touch the floor through each of the toes, the ball of the foot. through the beautiful arches of the feet into the heel. Tip of the tongue to the roof of the mouth completes the small heavenly orbit, the cycle of energy within the body.

And we're going to begin with a little bit of a warm-up through Jibengang. There is a full practice of Jibengang here on Gaia Goddess. Today we're going to do a shortened version to help us warm up before five elements. So beginning with Wise Owl, turns its head. And we're going to keep the movement going today. Just going to your natural range of motion. Side to side, beginning to floss the fascia in the body. One more time, right and left. Coming to the center of the body. Looking up and then bringing the head down for Chicken Pecks the Rice. Feeling extension of the spine and flexion of the spine. And feeling that through all the muscles, through the skull, the neck, the shoulder, the back and the belly, down to the hips. Let's do two more. Flexing and extending the spine, noticing where your tension is today, or any feelings of ease within the body. And then we're going to take the shoulders and roll them back just three times. Up, back, down. Readjusting our spinal alignment, our muscular effort. Hands to lower Dantian. allowing that movement to become our scooping movement, flexing movement, the shoulders, the elbows, and the hands in relationship to one another. And then go ahead and reverse that. Press away from yourself. Scoop up, flex, and open. Flip the arms down. Scooping in, flexing out, and flipping down. Here, we're not going to do too many of these because it's actually part of our movement of five elements. Let's do one slow inhale and exhale to feel the rotator muscles in the shoulder. And then we're going to reverse that. Inhaling and exhaling. Feel the warming of the body. Other side. Inhale and exhale. So you'll see this movement again in our five elements. Reversing the movement, palm down to palm up. Hands come to the kidneys, resting gently, either palm down or using the back of your hands if you need to. We'll take three times, three big circles through the hips like you're spinning a big hula hoop. One more time in this direction. And then spin the hoop back in the other direction. Feel your feet grounding your body. Feel your dynamic balance. Hands go to the knees. Small movement, just spinning the weight inside the thighs. So we're working with the small movements at the bottom of the spine and the top of the hip. And then spin that circle in the other direction, preparing the body for movement, flossing the fascia. Feet come together, hands to the knees, gentle, small circles. This in and of itself is a wonderful balancing motion. As you feel your weight shift to the different parts of your foot,

go ahead and reverse that.
Notice how you're feeling today,
drawing yourself to your full height, stepping back out, feet shoulder distance apart.
We'll post to one side as we gently massage the foot on the floor.
And if you're looking for more challenge in your body, you can always lift the foot and roll the ankle. Feel your stability and strength. posting to the other side,
rolling through the ankle.
Each movement is a self-discovery. Notice how you're feeling,
how all your joints, muscles, and bones are connected. And we'll prepare for five elements
Qigong,
journey through the seasons, a journey through the yin or... of the body and through the elements.
So inhale, bringing your hands to chest level. Exhale and hold.
Our first season is autumn. Our element is metal.
And we're going to inhale and open. And our organ is the lungs.
Exhale, a little bit of sinking.
Inhale, rising and opening through the lungs. Exhale and sinking.
So in the autumn, the trees begin to lose their leaves.
Color begins to drain from the landscape.
If there's an emotion off balance with
the lungs, that emotion is grief or loss. We have a sense of holding in the lungs.
So here we seek to provide the body balance. We see the continuity of time,
the turning of the cycles, turning of the circle. And metal,
a stabilizing element, the strength of metal, the firmness.
So we're going to do three more times. Inhaling, opening and rising.
Exhaling. receiving, sinking.
Tip of the tongue to the roof of the mouth, rising from the crown of the head,
softening through the qua and the back of the knees. Tip of the tongue to the roof of the mouth.
So autumn will transition to winter. We're going to inhale and open the arms.
And we're going to do just a short transitional movement. As one arm comes to the kidney,
the other sweeps across.
Inhale and open back up to the end of autumn.
The days are becoming shorter and darker.
The wind may be picking up. One more time each side. This is our transition from autumn into winter.
Feeling those balancing. forces within the body.
So holding here, we begin our winter movement. My hand,
the back of my hand is towards my kidney. The other hand is open and this is the movement
that you
saw in our warm-up. So our element in the winter is water.
As you lift your arm, it's as if water flows through your palm. You're inhaling and rotating
through the shoulder. As you exhale, it's like you're pushing a buoy underwater.
Allow the arm to sink.

And then we continue the cycle. So inhale and rise.
Notice the rotation at my hips. Exhale and fall.
So the element here is water. The season is winter. And the organ is the kidney.
The kidneys filter toxins from our body.
Healthy kidneys equal a healthy constitution. And the thought is to allow things to run like water,
like the clearing of water in the body. We move obstacles,
energetic obstacles through our system.
When we're doing Five Elements Qigong, we do not reverse this movement. We go in this
direction,
so one more time. Inhale and rise. Rotate towards that kidney side.
Exhale, press down through the buoy, and then exchange. That hand goes to the other kidney.
The next hand rises. Inhale, the water pours through the hand.
Exhale, pressing the buoy underwater.
Inhale and rise. Sometimes when I do this movement, I think of being in the middle of a
snowstorm,
but standing inside and looking out the window and watching the dynamic movement of falling
snow.
Winter is a time for restoration, for inner growth and awareness.
And it's very important to keep the kidneys flowing in the cold of winter and the stillness.
One way we can do that is through movement, through Qigong.
Exhale and press one more time. So inhale and rise.
Exhale and fall.
Now here's our transition. Winter to spring. Bring your hand palm up by your waist.
And as you rotate it, look up and out as if you're looking into the forest.
Release that hand back to the kidney. Your other arm reaches back,
palm up, passing through liver, and looking out into the forest.
And now we'll begin our springtime movement. Here there's an exchange of energy from one
side of
the body to the other, and the hands come back to the area of the liver.
This is our liver movement. It's okay if you feel a little rhythm taking over here and you want to
move a little bit faster. You can also massage the sides of your body as you do this by passing
your hand into the side of the body.
It's as if you're looking out into the forest and you're beginning to see color on the branches.
First, a little bit of red. then a little bit of green. The snow is melting.
The season of winter is passing. The element of spring is wood.
And here we begin to feel more vital, more energy moving from the inside towards the outside.
When the liver gets irritated, the emotion we feel sometimes is anger.
And it's one way to know that your liver is not functioning at its best.
You feel irritable about everything. So this exercise is...
those feelings right to left, rocking them,
soothing them. So
let's go just a little bit more from side to side,
the spring element.

And then the days begin to seem like they're getting a little bit longer, a little bit warm through the breeze. And we're just going to take that movement and gently fan side to side as we transition from spring into summer.

The element of summer is fire. So here we begin to see, to feel that life inside of us. As the flames become brighter and warmer, we begin to feel ourselves move into action. We come out from our houses, come out from our shelves. The organ is the heart.

So you'll see in this next movement, we're going to pause to the side, turning the palms towards each other till they're faced away from you, and then pressing across the chest to massage the pericardium, the muscles around the heart. And then we release into the yin phase. We gather, turning the palms towards one another, pressing across the chest, massaging the heart. This is full summer now, full warmth, allowing the heart's expression, feeling active, feeling young energy of the sun.

And as the summer lengthens, there's a fifth season. And the fifth season is known as late summer.

So we're going to form this shape with our hands. And then we drop back into summer. Here's our transition. Turn the palms. Press across the chest. Find late summer. We call this the viewfinder. And now we're going to take that and look at the horizon as we scan around the body. So in late summer, the element is earth. The apples are ripening in the trees. The pumpkins are growing. We have that sense that the leaves are just about to change and there's an autumn smell coming to the air. So when I do this movement, I stare through my hands. I'm looking at the golden horizon, hearing the crickets chirp.

The organ we're taking care of here is the stomach. So we're making space in the body for good digestion. And good digestion means the digestion of nutrients through food, but also the digestion of experience, the digestion of emotion, giving the body time and space to integrate.

So by way of integration, we're going to move on to what's called the San Zhao exercises. This is an integration for the upper torso, the middle torso and the lower torso so we're going to take all the movement that we've done during five elements practice and really allow our body time and space to integrate them so for the upper torso you begin with that idea of holding the ball of energy and you're going to begin to provide a little friction kind of like a train just moving the energy between your hands. You may even be able to feel the vibration between the hands. We let that build. And when you're ready, you're going to scoop with one hand into the energy. This is called teacupping. You're going to carry the teacup over your shoulder as you press down to the opposite side. I think of this as pulling the sides of a rubber band, stretching across the upper body. Your eyes are down to the lower hand. You stretch open through the chest. Exhale, let go of that rubber band. Let it come back to its natural form. And then we begin again for the other side. So we're agitating and building that energy.

We're going to scoop into it, tea cupping, bringing it over the side,
 pressing down low, stretching across the upper body and
 letting the body come back to form. One more time each side for the upper body.
 Teacup and rise. Allow the eyes to sink. Stretch through the upper torso.
 And as you exhale, let the body come back to form. Last time.
 Agitating. Coming through. Carry that energy up and over your shoulder.
 Press down through the hand. And then release through the body.
 Now, as you return, you're going to come back to Zan Zhuang, holding that bigger beach ball in
 between you. And to integrate for the kidneys and the liver and the stomach in the center of the
 body, we're going to do a movement called Lion Plays with the Ball. So here we go.
 We're going to move that ball, holding onto each side of it, over to the side with curiosity.
 with time gently moving through the center torso. And just take a few times so that we integrate
 in
 the center torso.
 Allow the air to flow naturally. So this is a form of what's called cloud hands.
 Coming back to center for the lower torso, we're going to do a movement you've seen before in
 other
 segments. We're going to do old man offers the alms or santicia,
 but this time we're going to move it from side to side. Think of the energy coming up from the
 lower torso, from the lower dantian and rising. So we're going to carry that from one side of the
 body to the other. This is for the pelvis, the organs in the lower body.
 We exchange the energy between hands. And then as if the pivot happens from lower to upper,
 we carry that across the body. integrating everything we've done into the lower part of the torso.
 One more sweep. These are called the Sanjiao exercises for integration.
 And then coming back to your Wuji stance, we're going to do a loving kindness closeout.
 So a slightly different closeout. So allow your arms to raise until your fingers touch above you.
 Taking that energy and as you exhale, sending it out into the world to anyone or anywhere or
 any
 place you'd like to send it where it needs to go. Then as your hands rebound,
 you're going to gather that energy and bring it to your center heart to replenish yourself.
 And we'll do that two more times, completing our practice of the five elements.
 Exhale, send that energy out.
 Inhale, bringing the energy back up and into the center heart.
 Last time to finish our practice. Inhale,
 send that energy with intention, with compassion out to where it needs to go.
 and then gather restoration through your own body,
 allowing that to settle and complete your practice.
 This is Judith Ehrman Shapiro with Gaia Goddess. May you be well.
 Thank you.
 We hope you enjoyed this practice with Gaia. And if you did, make sure to heart it above and
 explore more suggestions below. Till next time, love,
 Light and Gaia.

