



Video Transcript

Ji Ben Gong Foundations: Qigong for Mobility, Fascia & Nervous System Support

Just bringing the body into its energetic core and accessing what's available for you today. Feel Lao Gong, the center of the palm where we gather Qi or energy and it comes from the marriage of all the joints from the hip through the knee down to the bones of the feet. My name is Dr. Judith Ehrman Shapiro, and I'm here today with you and Gaia Goddess. We're doing a practice, a traditional practice of Qigong that's called Jibengong. And Jibengong is the flossing of the fascia. The fascia is a layer of... skin of tissue that goes from the head all the way to the toes. So as we floss down the body, kind of like flossing your teeth in the morning, we're preparing the body for movement. Ji Bengang can be done as a sequence for itself, or it can be done as warm-up or integration after practice. So we will start this sequence in Wu Ji stance. And Wu Ji stance will go over every time we practice because postural alignment is one of the main ideas in Qigong. So we're rising from the crown of the head. And if you don't know where the crown of the head are, you can take your hands, put them right above your ears, touch the middle finger and drop them down to your scalp. Right there where your finger was, you're going to tap. So this is neuromuscular retraining. We're rising from the crown of the head as your arms settle down to your sides. Rising from the crown of the head, sinking in the shoulders. Right away, we establish yang rising like the sun and yin coming down and grounding towards the earth. The shoulders are relaxed. Roll them up. And back, imagining there's a sparrow's egg right under your armpit so that you don't condense the

energy in your body, but you allow it to flow. Like water pouring down the hands, feel Lao Gong, the center of the palm where we gather chi or energy into the body. I like to imagine I have a cotton ball between each finger. loosening my hands, letting go, practicing yin.

Then right in here, this is called the qua, the inguinal joint, I'm softening. It allows the back curve of my body to be gentle and to release into the weight of my knees, which I'm rotating from the hips over my feet, spreading my toes out on the floor. This is Wu Ji's stance.

Wu Ji means empty, but it also is the place of all potentiality in the body, aligned, balanced, calm, and ready. And we begin Ji Beng Gong with a movement called Wise Owl Turns

Its Head. So very gently turning your head over one shoulder, not forcing the range.

Letting the head glide back to the other side, looking over your other shoulder.

You can breathe with this. Inhale or exhale as you turn the head.

Exchange the breath on the side.

Inhaling back center and exchanging the breath.

But in jibangang, you can also take a faster movement if you're feeling a rhythm in the body and just allow your breath to be natural while you turn your head from side to side.

Remember from our learning with Gaia, what is qigong? We're only using 70% effort here.

We're reserving part of the energy to stay aware of our alignment and what's happening internally

within the body. Now we move on to chicken pecks the rice,

where we extend the spine and flex the spine.

So extending the spine, careful not to drop the head back just to the diagonal,

opening the body. Feel the muscles all the way down to the waist and the stabilization through your

feet on the floor. And then as you move your head towards your chest, feel the muscles on the side

of your neck. Feel your trapezius muscles in the back body. And then allow yourself to move through

your range of motion, allowing the breath to flow and allowing the body to feel.

the limits and the benefits of its movement.

Now we're going to take the hands and place them on the lower dantian. So the dantian is our energy

center. Your circle can be around your belly button. Your hands are lying on the top of your abdomen. This is where we store energy. And as we raise the shoulders,

roll them back and drop them, we get a little massage on the belly at the same time,

remembering to drop our weight, our sense of balance, our sense of calm into the base of the body,

leaving the shoulders back so we don't reverse the movement. Gravity takes us this way.

Our movement brings us back into alignment. We are now going to begin some upper body movement.

So you can take what's called a tiger claw and place it in the well of the arm.

And we're going to very gently scoop the movement across the body.
Let it turn and then palm down, press slightly behind you.
Remember, if your range of motion, if this is bothersome, if you feel impingement in your shoulder
at all, it's okay to take it just like this. It's still as beneficial.
So any impingement, we move slower and with a smaller range of motion.
Or if you're feeling your full body, then just massaging the fascia here.
This is connecting my shoulder, my back, my elbow, my fingers,
all together in movement. So next time your hand comes down,
let's reverse that. Palm down, rotating the arm, bringing the palm back.
Remember to keep the flow of breath to the body.
Breathing in and breathing out.
Slowing down.
In Qigong, they say, if you can't do it slow, don't do it at all.
So we gain mastery, control, and presence in the breath. Go do a little,
this is called wild horse shaking. All that controlled movement. We can toss our head like a horse.
Remember our freedom in our movement. Claw to the wind, the well of the arm.
And here we go with the other arm.
And here we're practicing radical acceptance, our experience of the other side of the body.
So this side of my body may have the same range of motion, but it may not.
It's adapted in its own way. And the only way I can know that is being present to my movement,
present to my body, feeding the body with air as I breathe in and out.
Let's do one more full rotation, just noticing.
As the arm comes down, we're going to reverse the arm in the other direction.
Remember, it's okay to be seated during Ji Ben Gong. It's okay to use 50% energy.
It's okay to use 10% energy if you're not feeling well.
Just bringing the body into its energetic core and accessing what's available for you today.
So freeing the arms. We're going to draw the arms into the center of the body.
Extend them out. Flip them down and scoop.
Scoop that energy into the belly. flexing the arms and extending them,
flip them over and scoop again. Feel the connections between the shoulders,
the elbows, the hands, and as you rise and fall, begin to sense the movement in your hips,
in your belly, and in your feet and knees. It's okay to take this movement and move it side to side
to improvise with it a little bit. So not worrying too much about the sequence,
just scooping towards the body. Let your energy guide the way.
Next time you come down and bring the energy into your body, you're going to reverse that.
So scooping away, the hands will flip up. You flex them and come down.
Flex, scoop down. And again, giving yourself a little grace.
Can you make that movement? bigger or smaller, or let it travel in the orbit around your body.
This is a dance for you, your energy, inviting movement into the layer of tissues around your body.

One more time. And now we're going to take the hands and place them on the kidneys. So if your range of motion is such that you can put the palm on the kidneys, you can also do this with the back hand. along the kidneys. Separating the feet just a little further, but maintaining your wooji stance rising from the crown of the head. Place the tip of the tongue right above the teeth, the roof of the mouth. We're going to begin hip circles. So side, back, side, forward. Again, observing your range of motion here. So if this... has pain for your discomfort, slower and smaller. So this is like hula hooping. Big circles in the body, forward and back. Keep your breath flowing through the body, your intention on the movement. When you're ready, holding where you are and reversing the circle. Notice the body dips as we come forward, trying not to allow the upper body to do the movement, but moving through the hips, allowing the hips to take that movement. Now we're going to step our feet together. We're going to put our hands right on the quad, the inguinal joint, and we're going to do a small movement like dangling a... crystal from the tailbone and just moving that crystal gently between the thighs. So very small movement connects to the lower spine and pelvis, to the hip joint, and then reverse that movement, go the other way. Beginning to feel the warming of the body from the crown of the head down to the hips now. We're going to step the feet together. Take this movement, this shape, right above where the knees are, bending the knees to the extent that's comfortable for you. We're going to create circles, but notice that the circles are not coming from the knees because the knee is a hinge joint. It extends and it flexes. So where does the circle come from? It comes from the hips. It comes from the ankles and it comes from the marriage of all the joints from the hip through the knee down to the bones of the feet. Go ahead and reverse that. Take your time. Keep your breath focused and flowing. We'll move right into flexion and extension. So now we're just focusing on the knee joint. Notice that I produce. extension by moving my hips up and over my body. So I'm not pulling up on the legs, I'm pulling up on the hips. This can be as deep or as shallow as serves you. Let's do two more. And then drawing yourself to your full height, return to Wooji stance. One more set of movements. So here we're going to do something called posting. We're going to move the weight over the right foot. I'm mirroring you. And taking the other foot, we're just going to put the ball of the foot to the floor. And here we're going to massage the foot. So I'm holding about 80% of the weight on this leg. Maybe about 20. If it presents any challenge for you in balance, you can put your hand on the wall. You can put your hand on a chair. You can hold somebody's hand. Whatever helps you balance. But if you'd like to work further on your balance, you can also do this movement by raising the

foot and rolling through the ankle. And of course, you can do a little of each.
Moving the fascia down through the earth and the feet now. Take a moment to feel central balance.
Moving over to the other foot. We're going to roll. through the foot, noticing any difference between right and left, not with criticism, but with acceptance.
Rolling the foot in the other direction, rising through the crown of the head, little sparrow's egg beneath your arm, tip of the tongue to the roof of the mouth. And then if you want to experience balance on that side, drawing up through the foot, Rolling through the ankle. Feel the dynamic balance through the torso as your body works that out.
How to balance in this way. And then returning to Wu Ji's stance, we're going to close out with three movements called pouring the cream on top. So we inhale and gather the benefits of Ji Bengang, of vitality. balance, warming of the fascia, allowing the joints to work together. And we seal it in by bringing the energy back down to the lower dantian.
So gathering the benefits and focus, allowing that chi to fill in the energy, the life force, anywhere in your body that it's needed. It knows where to go. Your body knows exactly what to do. Last time, breathing in, breathing out, completing your movement.
This is Dr. Judith Ehrman Shapiro. Thank you so much for practicing with me and Gaia Goddess.
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.