



Video Transcript

Qigong Standing Practice for Embodied Stillness, Grounding & Energy Balance

We take the elbows and bend them 90 degrees as if you're holding a big beach ball of energy right

in front of you. And we're going to move to the second pattern of swings, the Tai Chi swings, where as I rotate now, I'm going to tap my foot, rotate and tap, rotate and tap. Notice this really frees my arms to swing now.

So we'll be holding for two minutes on this side, feeling the yang energy lifting, yin energy pressing.

Hi, this is Dr. Judith Ehrman Shapiro here today with Gaia Goddess for a very interesting practice

where we're going to practice standing still postures, finding the movement in the stillness and the stillness in movement. This practice is calming and at the same time will build your strength of vitality. We begin as always in wu-ji stance, rising from the crown of the head, tip of the tongue to the roof of the mouth.

Give your arms a little shake, turning them in and out and feeling their vibrancy and movement. And then let gravity fill in your shoulders. This is our first standing posture, wu-ji.

You're feeling that sparrow's egg right underneath your armpits. And that's so that we don't compress or hold the energy in, but we allow it to flow. As if waterfalls come down your arms and

through the front channel called renmai,

cotton balls between your fingers. Here we align ourselves right over the qua,

the inguinal joint. So we're softening and sitting into the pelvis, softening the back of legs so that we're not perching, but we're yielding down to the ground. Feel the spread of your toes on the floor, feeling the arch of your foot, feeling the heel, the big toe, and the small toe, leading you to feel the outside blade of the foot and the inside blade of the foot. And I'm giving you a deep explanation of Wu Ji here because it begins our practice right like this for two minutes.

So how do you make a posture, a standing posture, sustainable? Keep feeling rising through the crown of the head and the drop of the shoulders, allowing the breath to flow in and out naturally. directing your attention down to the lower dantian, feeling grounded, feeling your tailbone drop. And we practice the embodiment principles that we discussed during learning with Gaia, what is Qigong. We practice song here.

And the embodied principle of song means I am relaxed, but I am not collapsing. So the image that I have sometimes here is of the autumn trees letting go of their leaves. The tree doesn't collapse, but it lets go of the leaves, the tension, the worry, the thoughts. They fall off with the breeze, and I maintain my height and my structure.

Wu Ji is both a beginning posture, and the most advanced qigong that you can practice so feeling the energy flow down renmai the front channel comes up through the perineum and then rises through the spine as energy as yang energy it goes over the top of your head the tip of the tongue to the roof of the mouth flowing down renmai again

And you've been holding this posture for about two minutes. Excellent.

Now we're going to do add a little bit of bare medicine or bare energy to bring our body into a little bit of motion. So you're going to take your thumb, fold them into the center of the hand, closing your hands around your thumb and letting your arms sit heavy on the body. Small bend at the elbow. And we're going to rotate and push a little bit into one leg. Rotate and push into the other. Just very gently turning on your axis here. Letting the eyes and the face be easy as you look in front of you.

This movement is called constant bear. And it's just subtle and gentle turning. around the central axis.

Make sure your breath continues to exchange in the body. You don't have to force the musculature at all. This is your dance with gravity, your dance of presence being here in this moment.

So bare energy is grounding, shaking. Song, letting go, relaxing without losing any of your structure.

So we're going to keep going just like this for another minute.

Feel your shoulders relax. Let go of any tension in the jaw and the face.

Feel the energy traveling up your spine. Sometimes I picture Christmas lights lighting up each vertebra. bringing the energy up to the top of my head and rising just like this, allowing the body to move its weight from one foot to the other, constant bear,

beginning to slow that movement now, breathing deeply in and out,
releasing the hands. Allow the flow to come through your palms,
weighted hands. bringing constant bear to a close. Our second standing posture is called Zan
Zhuang. We take the elbows and bend them 90 degrees as if you're holding a big beach ball of
energy. right in front of you. Otherwise, all of your Wu-Gi alignments hold sway here.
So rising from the crown of the head, sinking in the shoulders,
feeling a little bit of space under the armpits, feeling space between each of the fingers.
tip of the tongue to the roof of the mouth completes what's called the small heavenly orbit going
down the front of the body and up the back like a bicycle chain softening in the qua in the pelvis
softening behind the knees feel the softness and the strength of the movement
As you travel down the legs, making sure you're rotating from the hips to place the feet right
over
or underneath the knees. If you look down, and it's okay to look down,
you'll see your kneecap and then see your toes. So they're in alignment.
So it's okay when doing standing postures to hold in stillness,
but still feel the dynamic quality of what you're doing.
Your body continues to breathe. Your crown of your head continues to rise.
And your body seeks solace in the solidity of earth beneath you.
You are the conduit between heaven and earth.
Deep breaths now to fuel your posture.
About 10 more seconds, just like this.
So when you're practicing on your own, holding standing postures is a form of Qigong.
It strengthens you. It will calm you.
Gives yourself a moment to perceive presence, to let go of thoughts like leaves.
perceive emotions, welcome the heart,
gently inviting your spirit to be present. They say that the spirit can be like a deer.
We saw a deer this morning as we were filming this. It can be frightened away.
It can be shy. And so we gentle the body to invite the spirit to be present.
And you've been holding this posture almost three minutes.
So now very gently, we're going to lower the arms back into Wuji stance.
And we're going to come into our Taiji swings. So the same motion that we were doing in
Constant
Bear, but this time you're going to allow your arms to swing. So we're rotating and pressing,
rotating and pressing.
And as you do that, you release the arms, release the shoulder joints. Where does the swing of
the
arms come from? It comes from the hips.
So we let this movement, notice we're in movement now. Can you feel the stillness of the
movement?
Here you can practice tapping, tapping the body. So we can tap the hips,
tap the kidneys.
This is a health. practice to improve circulation in the body,
improve movement. You can even tap up towards the lungs as you move,

stimulating the lungs, the body, the shoulders, sense of balance.
 And we're going to move to the second pattern of swings, the Tai Chi swings,
 where as I rotate now, I'm going to tap my foot, rotate and tap,
 rotate. and tap. Notice this really frees my arms to swing now.
 So this is the second one of our swings.
 Just feeling everything rotating around your second, your center balance.
 Sometimes I get so relaxed when I'm doing Qi Gong, my words just flow into interesting places.
 Tapping the body.
 The third is even more intentional in swings. So here,
 as I tap my foot, it's like throwing a bucket of water over my shoulder. I plant my foot and swing
 my arms around, coming to the other side and throwing the bucket over my shoulder.
 And then I swing back and throw, swing up and throw.
 Big breaths here, bringing the body into dynamic movement. All the while feeling stillness in the
 movement. Where does the stillness live in your body? Dantian, the heart,
 place that sets you right in the head.
 All the nerve endings in your body, your proprioceptive system. Just a few more times here.
 And we'll move into our San Tisha practice, which is our third standing posture.
 Two more.
 Feel the circulation in your body. Coming back to Wu Ji stance.
 You may feel a little bit of vibration in Lao Gong points rising through the crown of the head.
 Go back to your Wu Ji alignments. And I'm going to just kitty my corner a little bit so that you
 can see this full posture. Here I am going to step through,
 so my standing leg and my arm, and then I'm going to balance in that stance with my opposite
 arm.
 This is called Old Monk Offers the Alms. My legs are straight,
 but I'm not... or pushing back on the knees. I'm soft through the Kwa.
 And this is called Santichir.
 So we'll be holding for two minutes on this side, feeling the yang energy lifting,
 yin energy pressing,
 rising from the crown of the head, tip of the tongue to the roof of the mouth,
 soft gaze in front of us.
 usually about six to eight. eight feet away. You don't have to stare though,
 you can move your eyes, adjust, feel the energy in your body.
 So instead of putting tension into the shoulders or hips, see if you can go back to the small
 heavenly orbit that we discussed in what is Qigong, our learning section.
 So soft waterfall going down the front of the chest, lighting up.
 through each vertebra behind you, rising from the crown of the head, tip of the tongue to the
 roof
 of the mouth.
 There is a process of strengthening when doing the standing postures of Qigong.
 I remember when I first began to do them, the effort that it took. And now I feel like I could
 stand here all day, but I promise you that I won't.
 So very gently, we're going to lower our stance, come back into Wuji's stance,

and we're going to do the other side. But let's take this movement just for a moment.
We're going to inhale. We're going to do downward pressing palms just to bring our energy back down
to lower Dantian, back down to the floor to help us root. And then taking one foot forward and one
foot back, standing on straight legs, but not perching, yielding.
The other hand will now offer the alms as your opposite hand from the back foot, same as the back foot, presses down.
And then we're balancing all those forces in the body, the forces that lift up, the forces that ground.
You can do a little body scan as you do this and just notice where those places are in your body, what helps you stabilize, what helps you lift.
So there's an embodiment principle called Chen. And Chen means we root to rise like a pine tree
deep in the roots of the earth, rising through the upper branches.
But with that sense of internal movement, even as you stand in stillness, the body is always moving, growing, breathing, evolving. We're never stuck in one place.
So three more sets of breath, just like this, in Suntisha, wedging towards the forward plane in the body, balancing with the strength of the back foot. and the spine rising through the crown of the head.
Gently lowering the arms. We're going to close this practice with pouring the cream on top.
So gathering the benefit of the practice.
Exhale and lower. Gathering all that chi and bringing it down to lower dantian to store.
You can breathe naturally here.
Feel the strength and vitality you've built. And one more time, big gather, settling into the body.
This is Dr. Judith Erman Shapiro with Gaia Goddess. Thank you so much for practicing with me.
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.