

The Most Profound Medicine The Ancient Practical Science of Inner Elixir Alchemy

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Introduction

The contemporary quest to understand the essential nature of mind and consciousness matches a pervasive fascination with discovering the most fundamental energy that infuses all. This quest is not new, but the same impulse also influenced methodical observers in ancient times. The ancient scientists of consciousness and energetics and contemporary physicists differ little in their passion to grasp the fundamental components of the world, universe, cosmos. Their findings are not very different. The immense gap between ancient and contemporary explorers is evident primarily in the enormous diversity of their methods of investigation and the huge difference in the nature of their laboratories.

Sincere, ancient inquirers into the nature of beings and things did not have the capacity to build a cyclotron and split the atom, deploy an atomic bomb, or capture and analyze photons to investigate the dual, wave/particle nature of light. Yet they developed eloquent models of the universe. Arising naturally from their unique approach their working understanding of mind and energy was deeply profound. This understanding created practical tools and applications for medicine, healing, and positive self and social engineering, as well as a way of thinking and being that allowed individuals to arrange and manage their personal lives. As science anywhere means the observation, investigation, identification, and description of natural phenomena to determine essential nature and fundamental principles, it is obvious that the ancients were scientists in their own right.

Chinese Breakthroughs

Among the many diverse ancient societies, the Chinese contributed a whole array of powerful innovations that had radical implications for both consciousness and technology. These emerged from an ancient system of organizing principles-Daoist science and its unique methods of exploration. Originally, what we now know as Daoist monasteries, were called “observatories” (guan 觀). A natural area such as a park or even an auspicious location in the wilder-ness is similarly described as an observatory. Daoist observatories were communities of devoted investigators of nature. Most modern scientists only observe outside themselves to explore the macrocosm and the microcosm. The profoundly innovative method in the Daoist observatory communities was the

inclusion of inner observation to understand the macrocosm and the microcosm. In well-developed contemporary science this is referred to as “interoception,” the act of being focused internally in both body and mind.

The parallel observation of both the inner and outer worlds characteristic of Daoist observatories created an irrevocable link between humans and nature-a direct experience of the seasons and the cos-mos. This remained a key dynamic in Chinese society until Western culture began to have its deconstructive effect in the 19th and 20th centuries. Now, unfortunately, China is worse than the West at persecuting those who pursue inner exploration.

Through this inner science of Daoists, the findings that arose were astoundingly parallel to modern quantum physics. For example, Einstein’s cosmological constant is close to the pervasive universal resource of the Chinese-the vital energy known as qi. The medical framework that arose from the Daoists’ inner observations, such as particular wellness and healing arts, has remained constant and now exerts an increasingly significant effect on Western healthcare and even science. Inner cultivation methods from these ancient scientists are important for medicine, disease prevention, mental health, and spiritual cultivation throughout the contemporary world.

An amazing list of practical innovations arose from the ancient Chinese approach to science. The Plow was developed in China in 600 BCE, over 2000 years before it appeared to trigger the agricultural revolution in Europe. The decimal system and the place for zero in mathematics were in use in China 2300 and 1400 years, respectively, before their adoption in Europe. The recognition of sun-spots, the theory of deficiency diseases, the mechanism of the circulation of blood and the seismographic capacity to measure earthquake location and intensity were all in use in China between 1400 and 2000 years before their adoption in the West (see Temple 1986). Acupuncture, still not well understood in the West although it has been used on and off since the 1800s. It was utilized in China with metal needles in the final centuries before the Common Era and with stone instruments as far back as 2000 BCE.

Is it possible that the understanding of consciousness and energy derived by these early Chinese scientists was not only relevant in their own time, but also relevant for our current era? With such a long and impressive list of ancient Chinese innovations, should we be seriously considering that the findings of the ancients on energy and consciousness could just as likely inform our scientific revolution of the 21st century as their findings on plowing likely informed our agricultural revolution of the 16th century?

Employing observation, introspection, and interoception, the ancient Chinese scientists were able to determine that material (matter), distance (space, dimension), and time (duration) were not the essential features of the universe. Instead, using their experiential tools they determined that vital energy (qi 氣), mind or consciousness (yi 意), light/radiance (ming 明 / guang 光), and information/wisdom (zhi/neng 知/能) were the essential, fundamental features of their world. In fact, the Complete Reality School, a branch of the most serious Daoist investigators, constructed a model of the universe similar to that of our current physics community wherein the apparent world is actually an array of perceptual impressions, mediated by our highly conditioned sensory apparatus. These and other Daoists conceived that a boundless field of undifferentiated potential was actually “true” reality.

One of the most recognized of these investigators of energy and mind from China was Laozi (ca. 500 BCE). The Daode jing says:

Can you master your wandering mind
And embrace original unity?
Can you calm your breath, cultivate essential energy
And sustain the suppleness of a newborn with no cares?
Can you clarify and refine your inner vision
Until you perceive nothing but pure radiance. (ch. 10; Author’s rendition)

If material, dimension and time were still considered to be the fundamentals of our world, as they were in the Newtonian era, then Laozi’s questions would simply seem foolish. However, given our emerging understanding, since the breakthrough revelations of relativity and the quantum, “mind”, “original unity”, “essential energy” and “pure light” are currently among the candidates for what scientists of the current era are considering as the fundamentals of our world.

Laboratory, Method, Beneficiaries

In their investigation of energy and mind, Chinese scientists over several millennia determined that embodied science gave the most practical results. While in the West, science has evolved based on principles of objectivity with a focus on the elimination of subjective input, the Chinese in their investigation of energy and mind embraced subjectivity as a relevant methodology. Interestingly, according to Werner Heisenberg’s infamous Uncertainty Principle, the observer alters the observed by the act of observation (1958). This proposes a primary place for the observer in science and re-mains unchallenged in current models. Princeton physicist John A. Wheeler even proposed the word “observer” be replaced with “participator” [1]. Clearly there is significant evidence in the emerging models of physics for the fact that objectivity is impossible.

The venue of the ancients for scientific investigation was frequently internalized and body centered, focused on introspection, interoception and subjective observation. It has been said by quite a few of our best current era scientists, “Whatever is ‘out there’, may not be ‘out there’.” The ancients operated as if this

were true and created an eloquent embodied science of mind and energy by purposefully and respectfully turning inward.

The laboratory of the ancients was the self. Acupuncture points were associated with the stars in the heavens; the organs were residences for celestial influences. The body was considered the meeting place of earth influences (yin) and heavenly forces (yang), an alchemical mixing cauldron, within which the refinement of human experience occurs. It was discovered through multigenerational investigation that when certain ingredients were brought to bear within the human laboratory or observatory, there were positive findings regarding both health and healing and the nature of energy and mind.

The Chinese used this laboratory to make two major discoveries at least two thousand years ago. Both of these are being re-discovered today through current era science. The first: the most profound medicine may be produced within the human system. The department of Health and Human Services announced in Healthy People 2000 that 75 percent of all illness is preventable [2]. Certainly, among the most incredible current breakthroughs in medicine in the current era is the prevention of disease using the self-healing methods that are based in managing energy and mind. The second breakthrough of ancient science: the ultimate, fundamental nature of the universe may be transcendental. As science works through to a more conclusive conception of its fundamental components, there is more and more discussion of consciousness, plus as yet unfamiliar energies (subtle energy), as possible candidates.

For these ancient scientists a primary method of investigation was qigong. It employs tools of breath practice, intention, visualization, mindfulness, meditation-to generate internal states that allow for the investigation of energy and consciousness. Coincidentally, these methods are gaining in relevance in the current era as tools for health sustainability and healing. They are, however, generally perceived as subjective and therefore not eligible to serve as tools for scientific exploration. The Chinese scientists ascribed these tools with a dual application-methods for personal cultivation and methods for their unique approach (Dao science) to the investigation of energy and mind.

Qigong is one of the most interesting aspects of Chinese medicine, something of an equivalent to yoga from India. It combines purposeful focus on posture, breath and mind to refine and enhance energy and mind. The terms can be translated in many ways. The most useful in this context is “working with and cultivating natural forces and functions.” In both qigong and yoga, the component methods are used as embodied science methodologies for investigating the true nature of the universe and oneself. Immense bodies of literature have grown up from the qigong and yoga traditions of embodied science. A number of scientists of the modern era have referred to these bodies of literature as the scientific “data” of the ancients.

The key rationale for most scientific exploration has been the common good. Most investigations into mind and energy, whether by the scientists of ancient time or the current era, are driven by the human tradition of seeking to create human benefit-relieve suffering, heal disease, reduce work and strain, accelerate productivity, etc. In the domain of science associated with practical benefits, the exploration of mind and energy promises an array of useful applications. There are other drivers to investigation where the benefit is less clear. In this domain of science, the impulse is to understand, explore the unknown, satisfy curiosity, etc.

The investigation of subtle energy and consciousness operates in both of these domains. This creates a significant challenge. The scientific test in the first domain is to demonstrate whether that which may have benefit is safe and effective. This does not particularly require the demonstration of the mechanism of action. However, in the second domain, absolute demonstration of the mechanism is crucial. In the arena of energy and mind the first and second do-main have become entangled.

An example of this is the view of acupuncture in America, a health care modality with roots in an original Chinese rationale based on qi. The Western scientific community has worked vigorously for decades to leverage acupuncture into the arena of Western science with the gate theory, the neurotransmitter theory, the ion conductance pathways theory, etc. The practical application of acupuncture was detained because investigators had not satisfactorily defined the mechanism of action.

In 1997, the National Institutes of Health created the Consensus Opinion on Acupuncture [3]. According to this, acupuncture shifted from the second domain, where the mechanism is critical, to the first domain where safety and efficacy are the criterion. It was determined that acupuncture is safe and that it is effective for a number of specific health problems. It stated in the document, that the concept of qi used in traditional Chinese medicine or any “energetic” mechanisms, could not be confirmed by scientists. Evidence for alternative mechanisms for the acupuncture effect including mediation through ion conductance pathways, nerve tracks, neurotransmitter changes and micro injury as well as effects based in the placebo and other mind associated mechanisms have so far proven inconclusive as well.

Scientists and policy makers were moved to give the green light for the utilization of acupuncture based on clinical evidence of efficacy and safety. This does not mean that research on the mechanism will be discontinued. Instead, it means that practical applications of this therapy, which may eventually be found to have a primary mechanism mediated through energy or mind, can be used for the common good in the absence of a clear understanding for its underlying mechanism. Many of the tools and methods that are in-volved in the arena of energy and mind have practical applications that are safe and effective. The Consensus Opinion on Acupuncture serves as a powerful precedent for accessing the benefits of energy and mind methods while we continue to explore for their mechanisms of action.

Western science is historically driven by the urge to reveal the un-known. Mystery has been seen as a problem to be solved. It is one of the historic conventions of science to, in the words of Francis Bacon, “torture nature into revealing her secrets.” While revealing the secrets of nature is also a goal in the ancient sciences, the realm of the unknown was considered to be beneficent and associated with Dao, the boundless and undifferentiated field of all possible outcomes. Dao is the origin and the destination of all things, beings, events. Through the embodied sciences, ancient investigators were able to map much of their internal and external world, the rest was allowed to remain the mystery (xuan 玄) [4].

Ancient scientists proclaimed that mystery is a good thing and celebrated its ineffable ultimate nature. Neither the perspective of the ancients, nor of current scientists is ultimately correct or incorrect. True, essential nature is objectively incalculable using the tools of science which, for now, cannot quantify beyond our dimensional realm. Instead, for both ancient and contemporary explorers, observers, scientists, the mystery-sometimes referenced

as “the consciousness problem”-remains a compelling and abstruse area for exploration.

The Challenge of Subtle Energy

Many energies-bio-energies, biofield, ambient energies and cosmic energy-are well understood in current science. And yet a whole category of energies remains a mystery-subtle energy. Deep into the shamanic era these influences were all grouped as one composite phenomena: qi in China, prana in India, mana in Polynesia, etc.

Glucose and oxygen in the presence of Adenosine Triphosphate (ATP) creates metabolic energy or ergs. An electrical charge builds up in the heart and discharges causing the heartbeat, ions discharge along the neurological pathways to deliver information throughout the nervous system, ions flow in pathways largely made up of fluids in the preferential ion conductance pathways, extra low frequency energies regulate the opening and closing of the channels in the semi-permeable membrane of the cell wall. Some excellent new theories for internal energy conductance have emerged with Harold Saxton Burr’s L-fields, Albert Szent-Györgyi’s system of internal water and protein crystal lattice energy continua, Robert O. Becker’s direct current perineural control system, Bjorn Nordenstrom’s vascular-interstitial ion conductance closed circuit, and Herbert Frohlich’s quantum founded biological coherence system [5-11].

It has become clear also that there is energetic activity that has an effect outside of what is typically considered to be the edge of the human body. J. Zimmerman in the US using the superconducting quantum interference device (SQUID) and A [12]. Seto in Japan using a special magnetometer have demonstrated that the human bodies, particularly those who focus on healing through high level intention, emit pulsing bio magnetic fields (7-8 Hz, Zimmerman; 8-10 Hz, Seto) [13]. Lu-Yan Fang, chief scientist at the laboratory of the China National Institute of TV and Electro-Acoustical in Beijing, demonstrated (I was actually in the lab for this) the emission of infrasonic acoustical waves, emitted from the hand of qigong practitioners, described as a measurable aspect of qi between 6 and 16 Hz (i.e., 8-12.5) [14]. The emitted frequencies in these studies fall largely in the alpha range of brain activity (8-14 Hz) which is associated with triggering spontaneous healing and self-repair with-in the human system.

Every specific form or manifestation of energy, it has been found in the current model, is one four types of force-electromagnetic, gravitational, weak and strong. Yet, certain phenomena (clairvoyance, remote viewing, distant healing through prayer and intention) and a huge body of evidence are conspiring to mandate that science entertain additional forms, “subtle energy.” There is robust debate from the point of view that these phenomena are not mediated by energy but are associated with mind-non-local, non-personal mind. Whether energy or mind these phenomena, frequently called PSI Phenomena, create a significant challenge that will likely leverage our science to evolve significantly. In the Chinese paradigm, the realm of PSI is known as transdimensional unity (wuji 無極).

The Chinese have embraced a qi-based world view from before written history. The concept of qi was fundamental to the science of the ancient Daoists. Qi is the foundation principle in diagnosis and treatment in traditional Chinese medicine and PSI phenomena including distant healing, group generated healing fields, clairvoyance and other qi-me-diated phenomena are considered common in China. As Ge Hong of the 4th century says,

Humans are immersed in qi and qi circulates within each human being. Heaven and Earth and the ten thousand things of creation are dynamic or alive due to qi. A person who knows how to cultivate and harmonize qi preserves health, potentiates longevity and banishes disease [15].

No single word in English can reflect the meaning of qi. In the translations of texts of medicine, philosophy and science, it is rarely translated-it simply appears in the text with all of its implications. Some of the words that have been suggested to translate qi are energy, pneuma, vitality, breath and information. Qi potentiates; it is that which quickens biological forms and organizes the structure of material. It is more than energy, it is that which “causes, enlivens or drives” everything from body function, living systems and geophysical events (weather, tides) to the fundamental tendencies of the cosmos toward both order and chaos. For humans, body and mind, qi is function-biological function and mental emotional function. qi is that which is present in one who is vital (ample and harmonious) and compromised (deficient or deranged) in one who is unwell. Qi makes it possible for the oak and the redwood to thrust upward against the natural force of gravity. It fuels and directs the process wherein the sperm and the egg become a full-grown human with a multitude of constitutional, intellectual and emotional qualities that are unrelated to the biology of the original cells. As Sima Chengzhen 司馬承禎 of the 8th century notes in his *Fuqi jingyi lun 服氣精義論* (Essential Meaning of the Absorption of Qi), “Qi is the germinating effectiveness and the subtlety of Dao. As its germinating effectiveness, it sets Dao in motion. As its subtlety, it puts Dao into function. Thus, it creates the oneness of all life [16].

In the domain of the ancient Chinese scientists, there is no evidence of speculation on the essential components of qi. Fundamentally it infuses every being, thing and non-thing across all cosmic transdimensionality. Just as we in current era science describe the fundamentals of a paradigm by what arises functionally from the inherent interactions, the Chinese described qi by its expression through function-from cells to galaxies. Health and disease were described in terms of qi, cosmic events were described in terms of qi. One’s relationship to the Dao (cosmos, universe, god) and one’s possible association with universal nature is directly linked to qi. Thus, Sima Chengzhen says, “Who assimilates qi will forever roam in Dao. When qi is complete, life is enduring.”

This suggests that “assimilate” is investigating the nature of life extremely deeply and accommodating to that. “Complete” suggests that this process is fulfilled. Interestingly, the Chinese after many millennia, still do not specifically define qi. It is felt that qi is best left as a dynamic, ubiquitous, multi-faceted quality/factor that is behind everything from the ability to remember, to the effect of acupuncture and non-local healing (prayer, intention, external qigong). New ideas, fruit ripening, the smile of a young child-anything that is driven by the invisible and mysterious is attributed to qi. The Chinese love the question, “What is qi?” so much that I have witnessed serious debates on the subject on every one of ten research trips to China. In China, the question itself is much more important than the many possible answers.

Ancient scientists used their understanding of qi, to develop numerous specific techniques for personal improvement and social good. The laboratory for the discovery and development of these technologies was the self in body, mind, and spirit-known collectively as the Three Treasures. Embodied energetic methodologies were developed that could simultaneously heal

disease, neutralize the effects of stress and strain, manage and enhance personal vitality, create understanding of life, reduce emotional disharmony, access intuition, gain inner guidance toward one’s destined work and purpose, refine personal ethics, maximize social order and more.

The primary benefit of the revelations of science, whether ancient or current, is usually the common good. Currently, powerful benefit is arising from what the ancient scientists found regarding subtle energy-qi and prana-through their embodied sciences. Thus, clinical research has demonstrated that qigong and yoga have profound effects that are completely consistent with the usual goal of science to create benefit for the common good [1].

Uncharted Realms of Mind

In recent years it has become obvious that the mind is not in the brain. Neuro-muscular memory has been demonstrated that aspects of mind are in the tissues. The capacity of the DNA to hold the code which remembers how to deliver the individual’s unique qualities in the constant replacement of living tissue puts a kind of memory in the genetic material-pervasively throughout the body. The intuitive relationship that people have with their animals, or that twins share suggests that certain aspects of mind or consciousness are not limited to the body. The great explorers of the psyche Carl Jung and Joseph Campbell helped to reveal that groups of people separated by entire continents are closely associated. Jung called this the “collective unconscious”, a kind of world mind. William James wrote, “there is a continuum of consciousness . . . into which our several minds plunge as into a mother sea.”

Experts from neurobiology and psychology to anthropology and physics have been asking, “Where in the world is the mind?” The original scientists, ancient shamanic investigators, were very clear about this: the mind is everywhere. Evidence of a boundless “field of mind” has been demonstrated in numerous studies on prayer and non-local intention [17,18].

Studies with random numbers generators have demonstrated significant effects in small, large and even global studies which suggest a field of global, transpersonal consciousness [19]. Studies with groups of meditators have revealed a capacity to decrease deaths, injuries and violence through group intention. The effects in these inquiries have demonstrated that the specific characteristics of known energies are not prevalent: the effects do not fall off as distance increases and there is no time lapse-the effect is instant over small and great distances. In fact, it has been determined in some research on remote viewing and random numbers generation that consciousness or mind can actually “know” the outcome of an event before the event occurs, called time reverse phenomena.

What is the mediating infrastructure for such phenomena? If it is not an unknown subtle energy, as yet undiscovered by Western scientists, then perhaps it is some mysterious and as yet unexplained manifestation of universal mind. Given the immediate effect at great distance and the absence of any decay across distance, it appears that such phenomena are not mediated by known energy fields. It is speculated then, that the medium for these effects must be the field of consciousness: mind.

Practices for mind focus or mind clearing from every ancient culture have been found by current science to have a powerful effect on the body and health. Meditation alters the brain frequency to-toward alpha (8-14 Hz), modifies the autonomic nervous system

function toward homeostasis by modifying sympathetic function, delivers increased oxygen and nutrition deeper into the organs by expanding the blood capillaries and shifts the neurotransmitter profile from the adrenergic to the cholinergic. Hundreds of studies of clinical outcomes confirm the benefits of purposeful mind clearing in a multitude of diseases [2].

For the ancients it was possible to travel the universe by simply sit-ting quietly. In all of the original traditions including native shamanism, Taoism and Buddhism, the mind is a tool for investigation and learning. The Chinese scientists were particularly active in their pursuit of the boundless nature of the mind. Again, the Daode jing:

Without opening your door
You can open your heart to the world.
Without looking from your window
You can experience the essence of the universal Dao. (ch. 47)

To the Chinese ancients, mind resides in the heart. In traditional Chinese medicine when we treat states of mind the most likely acupuncture points lie on the heart (and the associated pericardium) channel. The mind and emotions, in Daoist medical science, are directly linked to qi and blood. As already the Liji 禮記 (Classic of Rites) says, “Every human being has an inner nature which is made up from the energy of the blood in conjunction with the mind that resides therein.”

The mind is literally in the body [20]. Each of the organs, according to the Daoist view expresses certain emotions in health. The same emotions, if repressed literally damage the organs and eventually the integrity of the whole person. With focus individuals can cultivate personal qualities that will heal mental and emotional damage to the organs. More specifically, as the medical textbook, Huangdi neijing 黃帝內經 (The Yellow Emperor’s Inner Classic) specifies, each comes with certain emotions and healing qualities:

Organ	Mental Attitudes and Emotions	Healing Quality
Heart	Joy and Hate	Acceptance
Lungs	Caring and Sadness	Inner Strength
Spleen	Concentration and Worry	Trust
Liver	Clarity and Anger	Forgiveness
Kidneys	Courage and Fear	Will

The same mind that can be cultivated purposefully to sustain harmony and health within can be cultivated to understand the world without. In certain states the mind becomes a tool for the investigation of models of reality and the universe. As the 13th-century master Li Daochun 李道純 says in his Zhonghe ji 中和集 (The Book of Balance and Harmony) [21].

When the mind is clear and free of preoccupations,
It is possible to fathom the design of reality [world, universe].
When personal thoughts and feelings are cleared,
It is possible to fathom the essence of reality.
When selfishness and desire disappear,
It is possible to arrive at Dao [universal consciousness].
When one is plain and simple,
It is possible to know the celestial. (Cleary 1989)

Through their embodied science, ancient Chinese explorers use mind to investigate Dao, the natural flow of the universe. They be-came convinced that one’s personal cultivation of mind is a tool with which to know, understand and work with the entire universe. Zhuangzi in the work of this name tells the story of Yan Hui, a disciple of Confucius and thus a persistent investigator of ancient Dao sciences, as he realized that his great breakthrough:

I am not attached to the body
And give up any idea of using my personal mind for knowing.
By freeing myself from personal concerns,
I am one with the infinite

We are tempted to judge this idea as an expression of scientific innocence and subjective philosophical zeal. Yet, the best of our evolving physics suggests that we are not separate from the infinite. The ancients felt that this knowing could be harnessed for personal and social wellbeing. As Li Daochun also notes,

By powerful practice of Dao,
One can bring the body into the realm of healthy longevity,
The mind into the sphere of mystery,
And the world to Great Peace.

What more could we ask from the scientists of any era of than peace, awareness of the mystery and healthy longevity?

Energy and Mind Interact

One major clue that current science can use from the ancient Chinese is that there is a dynamic relationship between energy (qi) and mind (yi). The two interact and may even be aspects of a continuum. In the words of the Master of Purple Yang:

The reason that mind is considered wondrous is that energy comes from its opening.
When mind is harmonious the energy is harmonious,
And when the energy is harmonious the body is harmonious.
When the body is harmonious,
Heaven and Earth respond

He here suggests that mind and energy are in a dynamic relationship and that energy is most effectively activated or coordinated when the mind is in a certain state. When it acts to quicken, mobilize, and organize, this congruity and coherence potentiates energy. Harmony arises to such an extent that the Heaven and the Earth respond. This is no small outcome and one worth investigating [21-22].

Intentionally organizing or focusing the state of mind is necessary to cultivate qi. An ancient proverb of qigong says, “When the mind is distracted, qi scatters.” Also, intentionally cultivating and organizing qi creates the capacity to experience non-personal, expanded mind. As the ancient collection Guanzi 管子 has it, in the chapter on the “Arts of the Mind” (Xinshu 心術) [20].

When the mind opens up and the energy expands,
We refer to this as the circulation of energy

The Dao scientists considered qi-energy as a resource that operates spontaneously in nature. For example, the forces that hold the planets in their orbits naturally occur. In the West we know that the energy that creates the charge that makes the heart beat (ions) oc-curs spontaneously from before birth. Similarly, in the Chinese view the heart-qi spontaneously creates and sustains heart

functionality from before birth. Ample and balanced heart qi helps to sustain a calm residence in the heart for the mind, emotions and spirit [22-30].

However, there are many influences that can affect energy, both negatively and positively. The negative influences are known traditionally in Chinese medicine as the internal and external causes of disease- extreme emotional states, indulgences in food, activity or sex, excesses in work and stress as well as, exposure to severe climates of hot, cold, wind, damp etc. Positive effects are rest, relaxation, meditation, and a state of being carefree. In the absence of negative influences, in the presence of balance and health-inducing life choices, qi circulates in an unrestrained state and health is robust [30-35].

How do we, according to the Chinese ancients, sustain a harmonious energy state? There are two possibilities and both are related to the mind. The first is the choice of what to do; the second is the choice of how to be. Choice is clearly associated with mind [35-40].

Choice in doing is deciding what to do, eat, wear, pursue. Choice in being is expressed by how one acts and reacts. In the Chinese model, the interaction of energy and mind is at the foundation for health and other effects like insight, emitting healing energy to assist others and entering transpersonal states [41-50].

Purposeful cultivation of qi-energy, can only occur when the mind is unencumbered. Energy is the ultimate resource, yet mind can be cultivated as a powerful modifier. The level and efficiency of the amplitude and circulation of energy can be purposefully modified and enhanced through awareness, intention and will-leading to certain kinds of action and behavior. These are expressions of mind. Accelerating and focusing these qualities of mind influences the qi. The Chinese model suggests that through awareness, intention, will, and action energy can be cultivated in a number of ways. It can be directed, purified, stored, transformed, and even projected or emitted. It will be fascinating to see what evolving science discovers about this in the years ahead [51-58].

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