



Drache und Phönix

Verein zur Gesundheitsförderung durch Qi Gong
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9th INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM FOR QI GONGSCIENCES - SHANGHAI 2004

HEALTHY WITH QI GONG

Qi Gong project for pensioners in Burgenland - Austria

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

I am very honoured having got an invitation to report about Qi Gong projects for healthcare in Austria at the 9th international Symposium on Qi Gong Science in Shanghai. I am from Austria, a very small country in the heart of Europe. It is well known for its famous composers, especially for the New Year's Concert on the first of January and maybe you know the world champion of table tennis Werner Schlager.

My name is Toni Werschlan, I am a teacher for mathematics and physical education in my home country. For more than 10 years I have studied Qi Gong in Asia and Europe. At the moment I am here in China for the 11th time. Five years ago I spoke to the financial director of all the hospitals in our federal country Burgenland. I offered Qi Gong courses like in China to our hospitals. His answer was, „Are you crazy? We have big financial problems and therefore we can't pay for all the doctors we need. We have no money for such things like Qi Gong, but if you like you can offer Qi Gong exercises in an old people's home.“

I was disappointed to hear that, because many people attending my courses in my home village could solve their health problems with the help of Qi Gong. He couldn't understand how precious these exercises are although I showed him a list of people, their photos, their special illness and their reports about how they got skills to heal themselves thanks to Qi Gong. But his advice „Go to older people“ changed my intentions. I remembered the big amount of older people who I saw in the parks in China every morning. Watching them doing several exercises deeply impressed me.

In my home country there live a lot of pensioners and our population of people aged over 60 years will increase enormously in the next years. More than 30% will be pensioners. This fact will cause more and more medical treatment. Therefore I'd like to show our government that it is really possible to keep the older people fit, to help healing illness and to reduce the consumption of medicine thanks to Qi Gong. This is the reason why I founded a Qi Gong Association together with my Qi Gong friends. Three women, my dearest friends, were spontaneously enthusiastic to help that more and more people of our federal country get to know Qi Gong:

Eleonora could solve her spine problems and an ovary operation was not necessary.

Maria could stabilize her variable blood pressure and her circulatory distress.

Jelka her lung function improved from only 50% to normality - said, „I'd like to participate but all political parties and different religions should be members of our Club.“

Our project is named „Healthy with Qi Gong“. It is a health campaign especially for older people in cooperation with the health department of our federal country and Dr. Peter Rezar, our minister of health. Our medical attendant is Dr. Gerhard Hubmann from the „Medicus - Therapy Centre for Holistic Medicine“ in Vienna. Our courses started in October 2002 in three little towns. We practiced for one hour once a week and the whole course lasted for 3 months. The number of participants - 162 at the beginning and 286 in the following course block - was a sensation in our country and TV, radio and local newspapers reported about our courses. In the meantime more than 1.000 people took part.

We introduced „Qi Gong Passports“ with questionnaires so that documentation and evaluation could be made after every course block. Our results after two years are:

- more than 1000 participants from 109 towns and villages
- about 80% of the participants are women and only 20% are men
- more than 85% of the participants are 50 to 90 years old
- more than 80% practice Qi Gong daily, most of them 15 to 30 minutes



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Now I'd like give some examples of the results of the questionnaires:

- 70% of the participants report that Qi Gong could improve their body-consciousness
- 74% improved their physical well being
- 74% improved their mental balance
- 54% improved their resistance against stress
- 46% improved their ability to concentrate
- 47% improved their mobility
- 36% reduced their spine problems
- 37% improved their digestion
- 32% reduced their blood pressure problems
- 40% could cope better with their illness
- 21% need less medication

The main motivation for attending Qi Gong courses is the word of mouth report 63% of the participants. The evaluation shows that Qi Gong is really effective for health care and for reducing medical treatment. The problem of our evaluation is that we haven't had any medical check-ups before and after the courses. So this is only the personal information and feeling of the participants and not a medical documentation. Therefore I offered our federal government a Qi Gong course for government clerks for one year only on condition that a medical check-up is made before and after the course. In this way I can show the positive effects of Qi Gong with the help of „medical“ documentation. 38 clerks were willing to be tested. On the 25th of November 2004 we are going to start the course which will last till the end of the year 2005. I'm sure if the clerks practice daily, this project will be successful and will convince our politicians and doctors of the value of Qi Gong.

I also wanted to show the positive effects of Qi Gong at school. Therefore I initiated a project with children, aged 9, who attend primary school. I worked together with a female teacher who has been my student for 3 years. Every day at the beginning of the first lesson the teacher and her pupils practised special Qi Gong exercises which I had taught before. At the end of the third lesson they did special Qi Gong exercises for the spine. Both lasted 8 minutes including the well known Chinese eye massage. Once a month I visited the class to make sure that the exercises had been carried out correctly, to give further information and to watch their progress. The teacher reported that the children always practised with seriousness. During the 5 months of practice the group became calmer and more concentrated. The relationship between pupils and teacher became closer and more intensive. All parents and children reacted positively. We invited our school authority to show them how joyfully the pupils practice and they were deeply impressed, but we couldn't get any financial support because there is not enough money for such a project at the moment. Nevertheless we initiated a new 4 years lasting project.

Our primary schools last for 4 years and the former mentioned teacher is going to stay with her pupils and is going to practice with them for the whole 4 years. This is a possibility for a „long time project“ to document the effects of Qi Gong on the pupils. At the beginning of the project and also every year the pupils will be checked up by a doctor who is very interested in Qi Gong. Pupils and parents will be asked to fill in questionnaires so that we can observe and document the progress of the children.

All the results of our projects and reports of the children and the adults can be seen on our homepage www.dracheundphoenix.at in German and English.

When I travelled to China for the first time, I didn't intend to teach Qi Gong one day or to found a Qi Gong association. But the large amount of positive effects of these wonderful exercises gave me the strength to learn and to teach. According the saying "a good teacher always stays a pupil" I would like, as long I am able to, to make a contribution by teaching and learning that those people who want to bring their body, spirit and soul into harmony by Qi Gong, can achieve that aim.

Thank you for paying attention.