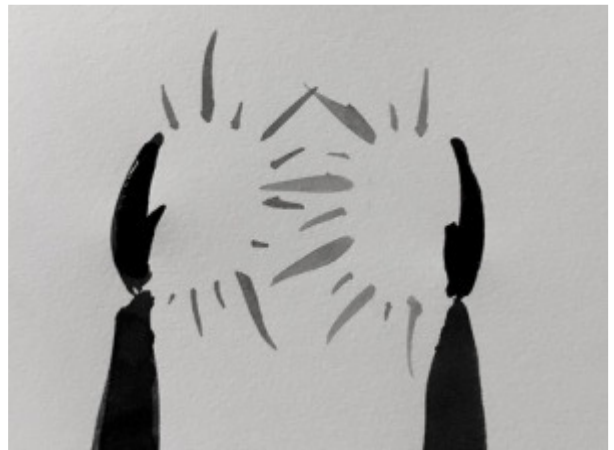
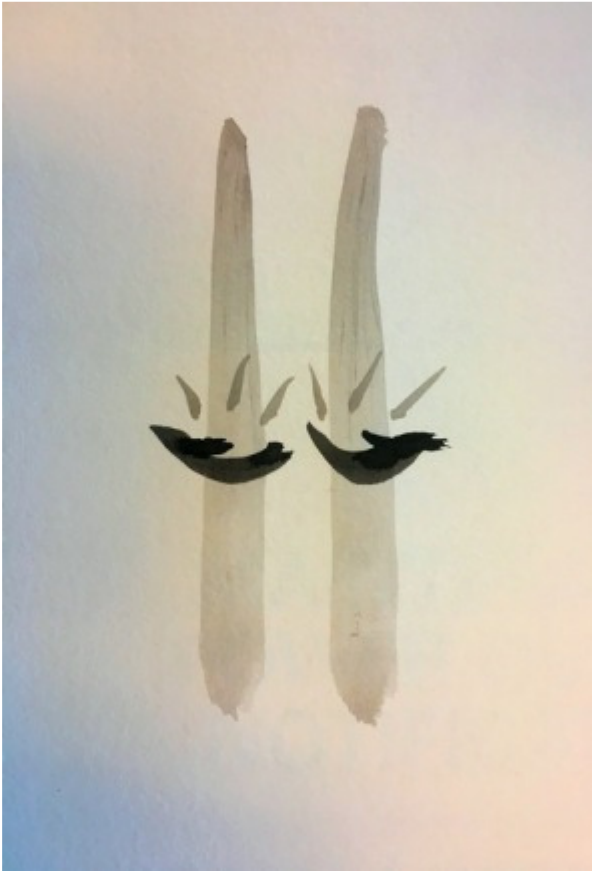


# Qi Sphere: Beginning

pdf version of the essay at [JohnDaoProductions.wordpress.com](http://JohnDaoProductions.wordpress.com) ver 2024-Feb-07

The hands' qi sphere is one of those things that is taught in the beginning and then shows up repeatedly, in various ways, throughout intermediate and advanced development. It is simple, immediately accessible, yet has depth. So, to it:

## ***Forming the Qi Sphere***



**1.** *hands as bowls, resonant internal columns. lights on.*      **2.** *press hands' spheres together ...*



**3.** *... into one sphere.*

## ***Working with the Qi Sphere: Most-basic Guidelines, Maneuvers***

### **1. Guidelines: Integrity of Shape, Magnetic Feel**

Whatever work you do with the sphere, sustain these two felt qualities throughout. a) The integrity of the spherical shape. b) The magnetism felt between the hands, especially via the acupuncture point “Lao Gong” (P8, Pericardium 8).



*LaoGong,  
Pericardium-8*

### **2. Maneuver: Small Circular Motion**

The hands make a small circular motion in relation to each other, which stimulates processing of energetics. Sifu Matsuo demonstrates in the video below from 2:25 to 3:00.

### **3. Maneuver: Expand ~ Condense**

The qi sphere is alternately, repeatedly, expanded ~ condensed.

While much could later be said about the theory and progression of the sphere, I find that – for beginners – the most important is the simplest: get a feel for it, enjoy. Feel free to experiment with hand positions side-by-side, top n’ bottom. The benefits are largely built-in and emerge naturally as a result of practice, even while knowing next-to-no theory. Especially for beginners, it’s important not overwhelm yourself with too many parts: simplest establishes foundation.

## Sifu Matsuo's Kuan Yin Magnetic Qigong (KYMQ)

I learned qi sphere work from Sifu Matsuo's excellent Kuan Yin Magnetic Qigong video. The 9 minute KYMQ *preview* video, below, contains fully applicable instruction as well as hints of larger topics.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z8TwiDZPP54>

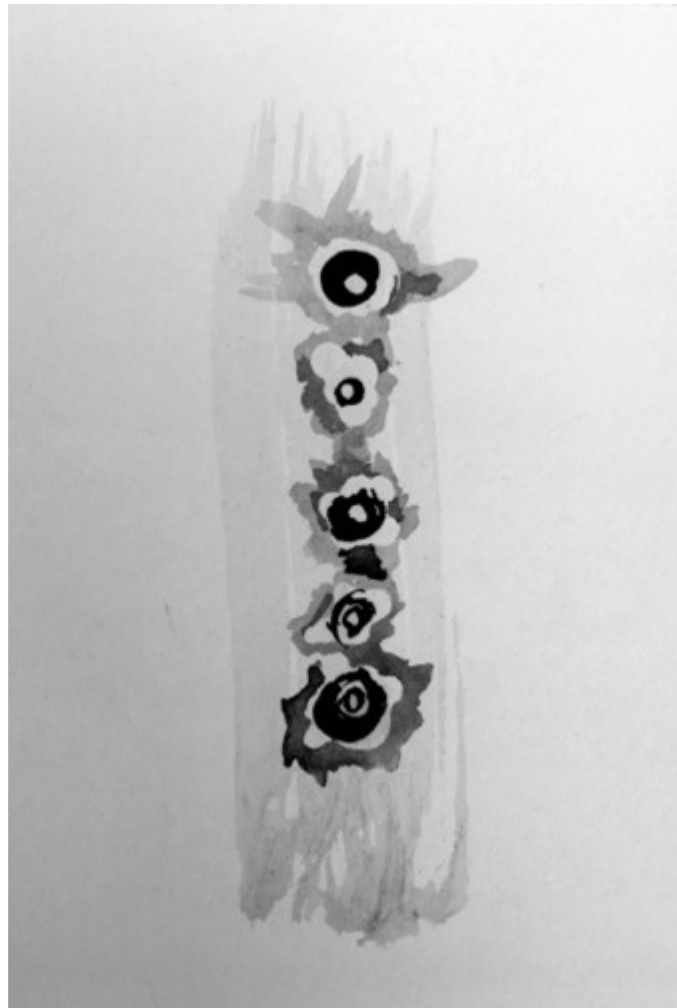
Sifu Matsuo's full 1hr20min Kwan Yin Magnetic Qigong (KYMQ) video goes through quite a number of qi sphere maneuvers in detail, starting with the basics of the sphere itself and including the refining of several of the deeper channels, relevant breathing methods, principled effectiveness & safety tips throughout, and an emphasis on left ~ right brain integration. All resting upon an equipoised posture, including gentle circular movement, that is both structurally coherent yet fluently releasing. Beyond KYMQ proper, qi sphere work is applicable throughout [Sifu Matsuo's bagua qigong system](#). Again, I suggest that you first become comfortable with the most simple guidelines and maneuvers described above. (If you are interested in purchasing Sifu Matsuo's detailed full length KYMQ video, ordering info is in the [youtube video](#) description.)

## Hands' Sphere Activates Core

Ok, now for a little bit of “what’s next?”. You’ll find that, as the qi sphere of your hands gets established that it will resonate and activate the spheres (chakras, etc) inherent in your torso along your center-line (aka, “central channel”, “sushumna”, “golden thread”). For instance, alternately expand ~ concentrate your hands’ sphere at the height of your heart center and simply include your heart center in your awareness. Through resonance, if you allow it, your heart center will participate in the cycling of expansion ~ concentration. So, the hands’ sphere becomes a tool to activate and refine all of the torso’s spheres, up and down as far as your hands reach.



There are some standard maps (spine & nerve plexuses, sushumna & chakras, channels & acupoints) that are often presented to guide this kind of work and, while they’re likely useful later, I’d like to temporarily set them aside in favor of three simple ideas about what it *feels like* on the inside – because that’s mostly how you navigate internally, by *feel*. So, a kind of tactile map for beginners: **1. center-line**, **2. pockets**, and **3. knots**.



The **center-line** is of course right through the center of the torso, top to bottom. When working on sections of the center-line by playing with the hands' sphere in front it you'll have an increased sensation of the center-line and of the general core of your torso. Physically, emotionally, whatever is there... it's your own excavation process. As you move the hands' sphere up or down resonating in parallel along the center-line you'll occasionally feel a "**pocket**", a *space* along the center-line where the sphere settles in a little. *That's* where you want to spend more time expanding ~ concentrating the sphere. Those pockets (aka, "deep-centers", "still point", Hindu: "bindus", Daoist: "mysterious pass" and other monikers) are keys to gradually deeper centering and harmonization. There are major and minor pockets of varying potency, some will correspond to standard simplified maps, others won't. Find whatever you find as you travel up and down your own center-line. Explore for yourself. "**Knots**" I'm using to mean any obstruction of any degree along the center-line, or pain etc around a pocket. Be kind to yourself: spend some extra time with the sphere to dissolve some knots.

Pretty simple: center-line, pockets, knots. Through this process of working with the hands' sphere and torso's sphere in tandem, you're basically harmonizing, centering and integrating yourself vertically.

**An example practice session:** Create and start working with the hands' sphere at a level somewhere in the lower torso (anywhere below the belly button). Then slowly work the sphere upwards, feeling into your core, and spending more time at any blockage along the way, and at each pocket you arrive at successively. Once you are up to the level of your solar plexus, move back down to the lower torso, then back up to the level of the heart, then back down to bottom, then again up further to the next mark, and so on. You can work with any variation of this that suits you, along any section of the center-line that feels appropriate. Conclude by pressing the hands' sphere into your torso.

### How Much Practice Time?

As to “how much time to put in practicing?” I’ve an array of answers below, largely based on your own interest level. Higher priority than any set of stock instructions/answers, however, is your feel of how much is appropriate for you at any given time. **#1: Listen to your own body.**

**Practice balance:** The lower centers have denser energy and generally need more practice time to refine. Conversely the upper centers naturally have more refined circuitry and, if focused on too much, can be opened excessively out of balance or even temporarily kind of burnt / blown out.

The promotion of centeredness, integration and structural integrity are inherent in sphere qigong. However, if you do go through a destabilizing cathartic episode after a stretch of longer practice sessions then please be kind to yourself and slow down: shorten your practice sessions (or take a break, get some exercise, etc, etc) in order to re-stabilize.

Amongst methods, sphere qigong is relatively easy to access and establish. Typically (assuming some sensitivity, resonance, interest with this method) (and acknowledging that people vary \*so\* much)... anyway, typically: A student will put in some progressive work (practice most days / week, often twice a day) over 1 – 3 months in order to **prompt and establish an initial opening**, after which beginning-the-harmonization-process becomes more readily accessible, with little practice time. Once thus established you can then ease off, practice maintenance, progressively cycle deeper ... all in your own timing.



**An array of practice times**, take your pick:

**1. 30 seconds**

Sphere qigong is often felt as quickly as you can guide someone through the practice. It's one of the few internal arts practices that is accessible and fun enough to share with others in a social setting, or to access for yourself when you have just a moment. Results: Don't expect to make any progress beyond initially feeling the hands' sphere – which people often like immediately, so that's pretty good for almost nothin'.

**2. 5 minutes, 5 minute sets.**

You can actually accomplish a little bit with this in 5 minutes. I suggest that you can even practice while watching TV, 5 minutes or longer. Do this off and on during a movie and you could easily put in an accumulative 20 or 30 minutes of practice during that leisure time. Granted that it is not as effective as exclusively focused practice time, but not everyone is that seriously into it, nor need they be. :). And, imho, the more important thing is to get in consistent practice time over the longer term. However you get that done, good on y'.

**3. 15-30 minutes, once or twice a day.**

Progress becomes more substantial in this territory, even progressive (strongly moving forward).

**4. 1 hour per day (for a few days only)**

An hour per day is the *\*maximum\** that I suggest that you practice sphere qigong. And, if you practice for 1hr/day then I suggest limiting it to a stretch of just a few days, perhaps 3-10 days. New students often are encouraged to practice a lot in the beginning in order to initially open things up: good idea. However, I've seen new students practice variations of sphere qigong for an hour a day for an entire month and it ends up being excessive, way too much to process.

In the long run you'll experience faster, sounder, stronger results if you limit yourself to moderate digestible amounts of practice on a consistent basis, versus exceeding the speed of harmony out of unwisely applied enthusiasm which typically leads to crash and repair.

**Finally, a couple of points of theory:**

As to **the ends** (hands and feet), Chinese medical theory says that the qi goes through especially dynamic changes of quality distal to the elbows and knees (that is, from the knees to the feet, from the elbows to hands) and *\*especially\** at the ends (hands and feet). The acupoints along there (called "shu" or "antique" points) are especially potent and the qi channels that run through the limbs are the same that continue and run deeply through the torso. This means that the energetics of the hands are not only especially effective at refining energy in the sphere itself but also that by working with hand energetics you're activating channels that run through the torso. Simply put: Over time, hands' sphere practices open up a kind of ventilation system into the rest of the body.



As to **the core**, the potent points along sushumna that are the “seeds” (bindus) of the chakras have a latent and inherent connection to the deepest spiritual energies (“Luminous Emptiness” or “The Big Light”). So, working with the chakras in a way that refines, opens, and concentrates into our deepest centers, over time, gradually, connects to our Deepest Nature.



Working with qi spheres does both at once: Activates the ends and connects to the core.

– *John Dao*



**p.s. variations:**



**1. Footh' sphere? Feet sphere? Football? The hands assist activation of the feet. Beneficial re: standing practices.**

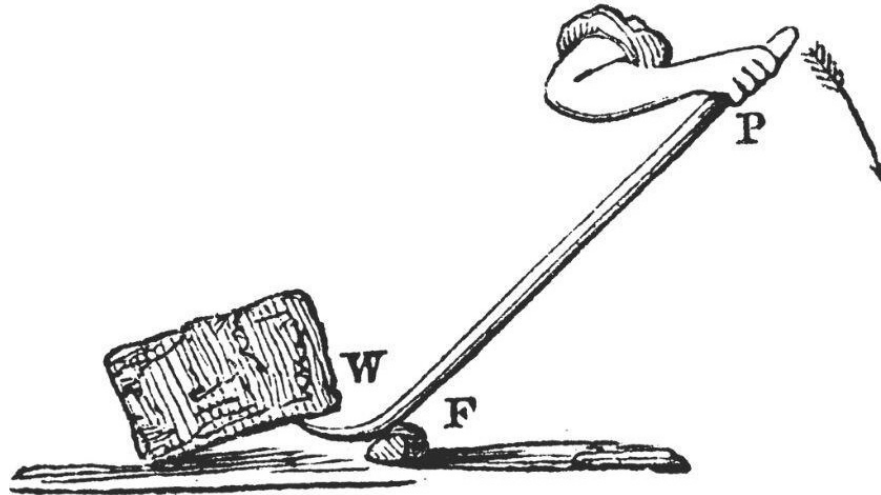


**2. KYMQ(cb):** Kwan Yin Magnetic Qigong around a crystal ball. An occasional supplement to KYMQ.

Hands' qi sphere \*around\* ( hands not touching ) a geologic sphere. Geologic sphere rests stationary on a surface. Standing (pictured); bend knees to adjust relative height. Same hand qigong maneuvers, for the same purpose: self-healing.

“Geologic sphere” ... who am I trying to kid? Part of my *own* reaction when stumbling upon this method, “I’m getting into the silliest thing ever, a crystal ball!”. Silly irony: also the heaviest...

My impression is that the crystals, to some degree, transmit the dynamics under which they were formed: subterranean pressures such that rock *flowed* and changed. The effects (condensing, circulating, clarifying) of this method *strongly* address **dense** layers – so much so that I recommend practicing kymq(cb) *\*only\** at the levels of the denser centers (solar plexus on down).



You might find that stubbornly heavy internals suddenly move easily, and it may be unsettling at first.

KYMQ(cb) is such a deeply effective abdominal method, both in terms of energetics and physicality, that some may need to lay down for several hours after a brief practice session: best before bed. Small steps are advisable, integration time away per your own compass. Separate sessions of regular hands' sphere qigong assist in harmonizing the intensity of this crystal ball variation. Also kuji-in, and walks.

Of significant **subtle** note: clarifies transformational pockets along the abdominal center line.

Opening the tissues and channels through the deep abdominal region is preliminary and integral with core sinew changing and meditative methods.

Geologic spheres are available via ebay & elsewhere. Minimum diameter for this purpose: ~ 11cm. Quartz is an effective choice (which ever color you prefer), as is obsidian, perhaps among others. Key quality: conductive.



**Bracelets** are a smaller n' milder, fun n' flexibly effective way of experimenting with healing stone infusions.

If, after some experimentation, you want to try a strong channel-coursing treatment, in the laziest possible way, with bracelets:

1. Bracelets on all 4 ends (both wrists, both feet).
2. Take a nap (or sleep for the night).