

The Healing Benefits of Baguazhang.

-By Erle Montague

The great benefits to health are not as well documented, as for the mother art of 'T'ai chi ch' uan but none the less, Bagua does have great benefits. If we look at the documented ages of many of the Bagua masters we have a fairly good indication of the healing benefits of the art.

All of the internal systems of martial art all work in the same way where healing is concerned. They all work upon the acupuncture meridians sending life giving Qi or life force to all of the internal organs. This Qi is a sort of electrical energy which literally holds our very cells together. Qi is said to be used in the healing arts as well as in the martial arts but beware! For as long as the martial arts have existed, man has been claiming supernatural feats in the name of Qi, things that defy the laws of nature. Like being able to catch a raindrop and hold it intact! Or being able to ward off a spear attack to the neck. All of these 'games' are purely circus tricks and should not be taken seriously.

However, Qi is able to help one in the three main areas of martial arts, that of timing, coordination and balance and that's a great help in itself. The Qi mends one's body and mind and in doing so simply makes one stronger and able to use one's body to its greatest use, utilizing all of one's muscular power rather than just the outer extremities of muscle. We gain relaxation through the practice of Bagua, another major pre-requisite for any martial art.

Each movement in the Bagua form causes the Qi to be routed along a particular organ and thus healing that organ associated with that movement.

The internal arts also work as preventative medicine in that if you have some disease which is in the very early stages then the art tends to bring that disease out in to the open so that we know it's there. For instance, a normal looking businessman came into my school because he had heard that these arts might help him to feel better. I placed this person in the normal standing qigong stance and told him how to breathe, then left him to it. About five minutes later he had fainted and had turned bright yellow indicating some liver ailment. I suggested that he got to the doctor and having done that was diagnosed as having the very beginning stages of liver cancer. Luckily they were able to save him as it was discovered so soon.

Everyone who comes to a Bagua class is not that seriously out of good health but we all of us, through twentieth century living have some small things wrong with us and these can be helped if not cured altogether with Bagua. Your ailments are literally twisted away, every acupuncture meridian is gently twisted as is every joint, muscle and tendon. The whole body has a thorough work out with no real stress being placed upon the system. Being a little more rigorous than the modern forms of t'ai chi, the whole body is given an aerobic work out. The fast or linear form of Bagua is probably the longest of all of the martial arts forms or katas.

Combine this with the circular form and you have quite a formidable exercise where at the finish you aren't tired but feel greatly enlivened.

Each of the postures from Bagua treats a particular organ and so if we take some of these postures out of context, we are able to treat certain organs sooner and with greater effect. For instance, the posture of 'Duck lands on water' works on the kidneys, or 'transfer flower connect to wood' works upon the stomach meridian.

It is important when a teacher is trying to heal a certain organ that he or she 'knows' his student as different postures are able to take out much poison from the system and one must know when to stop the therapy. One particular posture when used as qigong could very well heal the kidneys but it could also have an adverse effect upon the liver etc. If when you start to practice Bagua and feel a little ill then stop and wait a while before continuing to allow whatever it is that is making you feel ill to take its course.

Bagua is able to enhance your whole life and only takes a few minutes each morning to perform. It is indeed one of the treasures from China.

Each of the static Qigong stances imparts something different in one's training. So you might be performing the first of these static postures called "Embrace The Sun" which will work upon the ground Qi or Stomach Qi to give great grounding skills. The next of the Qigong postures is called "Holds The Heaven/Sky" which works upon the Life Force Qi. Or you might be performing the next in the Static Qigong stances called "Play The Instrument", which will work upon the Heart and Lungs which are the power house of the body's energy system. This posture is normally followed directly by the first Static Posture called "Embrace The Sun" which grounds the Qi that is stored and gathered during this posture.



"Embrace The Sun"



"Holds The Heaven/Sky"



"Play The Instrument"

