

Six months ago, I took my first qigong class with Karl, and my life has not been the same since. When Karl said in the first class that he has never known something that qigong couldn't help, I somehow believed him (his integrity is palpable) and committed to see what the practice could do for me. When Karl said, "don't try to manage the movements; the more you let go, the more profound the energy," I knew he was talking about a way of living that he models and that is transformational. When Karl said, "don't look at me; go within," I knew I had found the right teacher for me. Through his clear, powerful example, Karl has inspired me to change my life through qigong practice. The real teacher is qi itself, but Karl models beautifully how to connect with qi in his classes.

In the first three months of doing qigong daily, I noticed physical improvements that have been sustained:

- The habitual knots in my shoulders have disappeared.
- I sleep better.
- My hormonal balance has improved (as reflected in my cycles).
- I feel good more of the time.

In the fourth and fifth months, other people started noticing differences in me. Someone asked if I had new makeup; someone else asked if I had gotten a suntan. Even more important than changes in my appearance, I noticed that I showed up differently at work. I stood my ground and spoke my truth more often. For me, standing up for myself was a huge shift and wasn't easy, but it has led to more balance and less anxiety in my life. Now in my sixth month, I notice that I pay more attention to my physical and emotional energy and the energy of my choices. I commit to making choices that honor my positive energy. For example, I take time to connect with colleagues at work and I walk during the lunch hour. Recently, I trusted myself enough to say "no" to a traditional holiday trip to see extended family in order to have some relaxing, restorative time. I am learning that little changes made from positive intentions carry the power to transform my life, just like little qigong movements imbued with presence and clear intent carry the most powerful energy.

If you are considering learning qigong, I'll give you this warning: consciously experiencing the power of your own qi may lead gradually to profound transformation that you can't control or predict. When your embodied sense of *who you are* expands, you navigate in your life with more clarity, wisdom, and joy. This is not as threatening as it sounds. In fact, it feels like coming home--to who you've always been. The very best gift of my qigong practice is that I know how to "come home" to who I really am and bask in that glow. Welcome home, friends.

Chris Morris, January 2011