

**Stress Reduction Exercises for Child Welfare Professionals**  
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**“Qigong”:** (Qi means “air”, “breathing”; Gong means “mastery of techniques”)

- For body-mind-emotion connections
- For relaxation
- For therapeutic applications

**POSTURE**

**Posture 1: Straighten Your Back**

- Put both hands on your waists
- Move and extend your thumbs to touch your back
- Focus on the pressure points on the out side next to your spine
- Press up and down the five groups of pressure points; breathe out when pressing and breathe in while not pressing

**Posture 2. Hand Pose**

Function: Straighten your back

1. Inhale slowly through the nostrils and raise the right hand over the head and bend the right elbow. Reach behind the back with the left hand and clasp the fingers of both hands
2. Hold the posture as long as you can comfortably hold the inhale breath.
3. Exhale slowly and then repeat the posture with the left hand. Repeat 1-3.

**Posture 3. Hand Prayers**

Function: Straighten your back

- Close your hands in front
- Put your hands on the side with palms facing outward
- Move hands to your back and rotate them so that the little fingers in both hands are next to each other
- Move both hands as far up as possible and relax

**Posture 4: Tree Pose**

Function: Balance the body system

1. Stand with the feet together and the arms by your sides.
2. Bend the right leg at the knee, raise the right thigh and bring the sole of the right foot as high up the inside of the left thigh as possible.
3. Balancing on the left foot, raise both arms over the head keeping the elbows unbent and joining the palms together. Hold the posture while breathing gently through the nostrils for about 5-10 complete breaths.
4. Lower the arms and right leg; return to standing position with feet together and arms at the sides. Pause for a few moments and repeat on the opposite leg.

**QIGONG EXERCISES**

**Qigong#1: Qi Stretches**

Function: Relax body muscles

1. Move arms to the side and move up
2. Move arms down in front toward the floor
3. Hold both hands onto legs
4. Shift right hand around left leg and hold tight
5. Raise left hand up straight and rotate head to follow left hand's movement
6. Move down left hand and hold left hand onto right leg
7. Repeat 6 & 7
8. Repeat 1 to 7 three times.

## **Oigong#2: Open-and-Close**

Function: Re-gain energy

- Sit down or stand up
- Place your hands in front, all fingers pointing outward vertically, palms facing each other
- Open hands to both sides quickly (about 8" apart) for 10 times and close them until almost touching
- Open hands to both sides slowly (about 36" apart) for 3 times
- Repeat steps 3 and 4 for 5 times

## **Oigong #3: Left & Right**

Function: Re-gain energy

- Place hands in front with palms facing each other but apart about 8" like holding a small ball
- Move both hands at the same time to the right, then to the left, then to the right, and then to the left repeatedly for 10 times
- Feel the air and breathe naturally and place hands to the side and relax

## **Oigong #4: Elbows and Hands**

Function: Prevent tendinitis (tennis elbows), carpal tunnel syndrome (hand stiffness), and bursitis (torn rotator cuff or other shoulder pains)

1. Take both hands up (like the surrender's position, right angled; abs in)
2. Slowly move elbows to the front until almost touched (palms facing each other)
  - Move to position 1 and return to position 2 five times
  - Put hands down (rest position)
3. Move left hand up (palm up) in front of body and make it straight
4. Use right hand to hold left and bend it down without moving the arm down
5. Hold and deep breathing
6. Return to rest position
  - Repeat 3-6 with the other hand

## **Oigong #5: Treating "3 Anxieties"**

Functions: Take care of digestive system; straighten back; tighten abdominal muscles

1. Stand up with feet apart comfortably
2. Join fingers of both hands in front
3. Take a deep breath
4. Slowly move hands up and hold your breath until hands are straight and abdominal muscles tightened
5. Release hands to the sides while exhaling
6. Energy concentrating at finger tips
7. Imagine holding a big watermelon when hands are back to your front
8. Join fingers and repeat 10 times slowly each day

## **Oigong #6: Single-Hand Holding**

Functions: Reduce anxiety; re-gain energy; straighten your back

- Place both hands in front, right hand fingers pointing left and left hand fingers pointing right, palms facing each other; right hand up and left hand down
- Rotate both hands so now left hand's up and right hand's down (palms are opposite)
- Move left hand up until reaching the top and left hand down slowly so that both hands are moving at the same time to form 2 points of a straight line (so that palms are pressing in both directions)
- Turn both hands so that palms are facing each other
- Concentrate the power on the palms while moving them down until they almost meeting each other
- Rotate hand positions so now right hand's up and left hand's down (palms are opposite)
- Repeat with the same procedure for the other side

### **Oigong #7: Feet Down**

Function: Restore body functions

- Pulling up hands while stepping down feet
- Hands turning at the same time heels stepping on the floor with force so that palms are facing down
- Do 10 times a day

### **Oigong #8: Arrow and Bow**

Function: Increase concentration power

1. Ready position (feet distance same as shoulders)
2. Squat lightly down in a comfortable and firm position
3. Move head to the right while move right hand (w/ thumb and index finger up) to the right and left hand to the left (mimicking the pulling-a-bow action)
4. Rotate hands to the left and repeat the same action on the other side.

### **Oigong #9: Balancing Act**

Function: Balance body

- Take one foot up in a straight angle while holding the same side hand up and pushing the opposite side hand down

### **Oigong #10: Big Circles**

1. Find your space
2. Put your hands in front (horizontal height)
3. Move right hand down to the back (don't overextend it) and then left hand with right hand back to its original position (x10)
4. Move both hands up, then to right, left, and up, and then right in circular motion (x5) then reverse the circle (make sure your hands are straight with flexibility)
5. Stop and slowly move both hands back and forth until relaxed

### **Closure: Oigong Meditation**

Functions: Meditate and re-gain body-mind connection

- Move your hands in front by placing the palms toward each other (10" apart)
- Feel the energy in between your palms by slightly moving your hands a few times
- Stay in the position for about 2 minutes
- Move the hands toward your stomach area, one hand covering the other and at the same time tucking in your stomach
- Feel the energy go into your body and heal your body psychologically
- Open up your hands to the earlier position and move them back to the stomach area with the opposite hand covering the other hand while tucking in with air.
- Take a deep breath and relax your hands on the side.
- Concentrate when you move your hands toward yourself
- Think positive

### **Prescription for Self Care**

- Pick 3 techniques that suit you and practice them in slow motion
- 10X daily each technique
- Can be done any time in any place
- Can be done in three separate times but each technique must be performed 10X at the same time to achieve its fullest effect
- Take slow motion and deep breathing
- The environment does not have to be completely quiet, but your concentration is required.