GET YOUR KI (QI) MOVING WITH BRAIN WAVE VIBRATION

By Wendy Oden

It's mid-morning as I sit at my computer desk and feel my energy waning. I slept well last night and ate breakfast, but already I feel the drain of "information overload" – a series of meetings, emails, phone calls and internet searches that have kept the neurons in my brain firing non-stop since I arrived at the office.

In past years, I would have hit the soda machine and grabbed a Snicker's bar. But now, more aware of how to regulate internal energy flow, my colleagues and I have made a pact to support one another in regular, twice daily breaks from the intense focus normally directed at our computer screens to boost our ki (qi/chi).

Luckily, we work for a company that allows such activity, knowing that short "energy breaks" can help to improve our metabolism, stimulate our brain's ability to focus, and actually increase our productivity.

Michela plays a rhythmic beat on her computer speakers and we begin a series of movements specifically designed to stimulate the flow of ki and calm our brain activity.

Virtually all oriental medicine and martial arts theories assert that the body has natural patterns of energy that circulate along key channels in the body, called meridians. When the ki is strong and flowing smoothly, we are living in a state of health and balance. When the ki is weak or blocked, dis-ease or various health imbalances arise. Ki is believed to affect our organs, our emotions, and our brain's ability to function.

Within moments, the tension in my neck and shoulders begins to release. After about ten minutes, the music fades and we resume our seats. The entire office feels alert and refreshed and the clicking of our computer keyboards resume as if they never missed a beat.

What is Brain Wave Vibration?

My co-workers and I have discovered a powerful, easy-to-follow brain fitness and holistic healing method that helps stimulate the flow of ki to bring our bodies and minds back into balance. It's called brain wave vibration. It combines ancient healing practices and ki training techniques from Korea with modern scientific understanding of the brain. In its simplest form the practice merely requires moving our bodies to our own internal, natural rhythms in order to slow down and balance our brain wave activity. The therapeutic benefits are similar to those of Qigong which regulate the activity of the cerebral cortex, the central nervous system, and the cardio-vascular system. The advantage of brain wave vibration is that it does not take years to master and can be performed any-time, anywhere by people of all abilities. It is a shortcut to tapping into your own inner, vibratory resonance.

It is so simple that you can take a break from reading this article and try it right now:

Simply close your eyes and begin to gently shake your head back and forth. Slowly follow your body's own natural movements from side to side. Breathe in through your nose, and exhale through your mouth. As you do so, focus on the movement of your head and the base of your neck, and try to let go of any thoughts. Practice for about two minutes, at whatever pace is comfortable, and then slow your head to a stop. Remain still, with your
eyes still closed, and feel the subtle vibration tingling inside you.

Do you feel a bit more relaxed? Have you released tension in your neck and shoulders? Can you sense your own essence—your ki? Now open your eyes and see if you don’t feel a bit more refreshed and able to focus.

**Stress, Brain Waves and Beliefs**

It is common scientific knowledge that the human brain consists of three basic parts—the neocortex, the limbic system, and the cerebellum and brain stem. The neocortex, or human brain, is where we perform high-level thinking and complex integrative tasks such as deductive logic, language, and creativity; the limbic system, or mammalian brain, controls our emotions, appetites and urges that help us survive; and the cerebellum and brain stem, or reptilian brain, regulates our vital functions for life such as our respiration, circulation, digestion and motor function.

Scientists have also established that the human brain emits five basic kinds of brain waves that are associated with various states of consciousness: gamma, beta, alpha, theta and delta. Most people agree that we spend far too much time in the high-intensity, high-frequency gamma and beta waves generated by the neocortex, which contribute to our many stress disorders. If we can find ways to more easily access the lower frequency waves (alpha and theta) associated with our subconscious mind and deep states of meditation, we can go a long way to positively impacting our health. Further, if we can have more control over our thoughts and the messages we tell ourselves, we can do much to alleviate stress since it is not so much the people, environments and activities we encounter that are stressful, but rather the way we react to such things.

When we use methods like brain wave vibration, we become more sensitive to our ki and can ride its wave into the depths of our brain stem where our unconscious deep-seated thoughts and beliefs are held. Here, we can dip into our subconscious mind and change negative beliefs to more positive ones. Further, when we embrace ourselves in the envelope of ki energy surrounding us, we naturally place our neocortex into a state of rest.

In his book, *The Biology of Belief*, author, medical school professor and research scientist, Bruce H. Lipton shared new discoveries about the interaction between our mind, our body, and the process by which cells receive information. His research proved that genes and DNA do not control our biology, and that instead, DNA is controlled by signals from outside the cell, including energetic messages emanating from our positive and negative thoughts. This breakthrough—that a cell’s life is controlled by its physical and energetic environment, not by its genetics—supports the concept that we should all become better managers of our body’s internal ki.

**Experiencing Brain Wave Vibration**

Brain wave vibration offers a way to silence our thinking mind and more readily access the power within the brain stem. It is a means through which we can easily tap into our own ki and utilize the body’s inherent rhythm to calm higher-frequency brain wave activity, so that we can more readily access deep meditation. This type of moving-meditation is far easier for most people to do than traditional forms of sitting meditation that may take years to master.

I have found brain wave vibration to be incredibly simple, yet profoundly effective in relieving stress and easing the endless chatter of my mind. A session can be just a few minutes or a full one-hour practice combining meridian stretching, vibration exercises, ki-gong movements, energy dance and sitting meditation. While it is helpful to use some type of rhythmic music when you first begin, it can be done with no music at all since the essence of the practice is to move to your body’s own internal rhythm.

Although there are various brain wave vibration exercises, the practice typically incorporates three distinct elements:

- **Deliberately making vibrations in your body**—you make vibrations consciously, but relax your body as you move to the rhythm. As you quiet your thinking mind and let go of self-conscious inhibitions, the sensations move down your body releasing tension as you exahle.

- **Allowing your body to ride the rhythm**—once you are fully relaxed, you let go and follow your own natural rhythm. As you focus on your physical sensations your body begins to make its own spontaneous movements, becoming more pronounced as you get more deeply into the rhythm.

- **Following the flow of energy**—once the vibration becomes natural and familiar, you become increasingly aware of the movement of energy within your body. Your movements become more graceful and free-flowing as your natural instincts take over.

Following are some of the most common forms of brain wave vibration:

**Head Nod Method**

The head nod method is the simplest form of brain wave vibration. It can be done standing, sitting or lying down and is designed to deliver vibrations directly to your brain stem for deep relaxation and tension release. Even just three minutes will clear your head, enhance you focus, and leave you feeling more energized.

Sit-up straight with your arms resting at your sides. Close your eyes and breathe comfortably, relaxing your body completely. Begin to gently shake your head from side to side. Breathe naturally and fully, emphasizing the exhalation, as you envision all tension draining from your body. Focus on your brain stem at the base of your neck. You may hear slight noises
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or popping sounds at the base of your skull. Allow your head to move up and down, side to side, or even in the shape of an infinity symbol as you go deeper into the motion. After a few minutes, slow to a stop, take a deep breath and return to your external awareness.

**Full-Body Vibration**

The goal with full body vibration is to create total relaxation and a calm, meditative state. This method is very similar to the body vibration and shaking medicine techniques that indigenous cultures have used for centuries. With practice your inhibitions will loosen and you will intuitively take on postures that your body desires for its own natural healing. Most practitioners use some form of rhythmic drum music to get into the flow. You can do this form for 10 minutes or more.

Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, hips forward, knees slightly bent, and weight naturally balanced on the balls of the feet. Close your eyes, drop your arms forward slightly, and bounce your hips up and down, following a rhythm that feels natural to you. The vibrations may be gentle or intense, dance-like or flowing. As you naturally slow down and return to full consciousness, shake out your arms and legs, and sweep the ki energy down your arms and torso.

**Abdominal Vibration**

Most of us are familiar with the “water up/fire down” concept in oriental healing and martial arts practices. In the body, Yin energy—the energy of water—originates in the kidneys, and Yang energy—the energy of fire—originates in the heart. In an ideal state of equilibrium, water energy rises from the kidneys along the Governor Vessel to clear the head, and fire energy descends from the heart along the Conception Vessel to the lower Dahn jon, to warm the abdomen. The Dahn jon, also known as the Dan Tien or Tan t’ien, correlates to the second chakra—the seat of the soul.

When we are in an ideal state of balance, we are said to have “a cool head and fire in the belly.” We are calm, steadfast and centered. However, when we are under chronic stress or spend too much time in our heads, the ki energy in our abdomen is weakened, and fire energy rises to our head. The Yin-Yang balance is broken. We become overly anxious, ill-tempered and plagued by troublesome thoughts.

The abdominal vibration technique helps to restore balance by bringing warm energy back into the lower dahn jon. It is the most effective form of brain wave vibration for improving the overall balance of energy in the body.

This method can be done standing or lying down. Shake out your arms and legs to relax completely. Stand with fee shoulder width apart, knees slightly bent, and pelvis curled slightly upward so you feel tension in the lower abdomen. Focus your mind just below your navel, cup your hands slightly, and begin to rhythmically strike the lower abdomen area with your palms. Begin with 100 strokes and increase as you progress. Often, your head will naturally shake from side to side with the rhythm.

**Chest Vibration and Vocal Toning**

The chest vibration and vocal toning method opens up the chest and stimulates the heart chakra. This form also helps to release pent-up emotions like sadness and disappointment, which are often held in the chest and throat areas. This exercise can be done standing or sitting. Lift your elbows out to your sides and place your hands on the center of your chest. Begin to tap your chest. As you exhale, let out a strong “ahhh” sound. You will feel the vibrations spreading throughout your chest, expanding into your ribcage and upper abdomen. Tap under your collarbone and around your chest until it feels comfortable and light. As you exhale, focus inside and let your voice instinctively take on various vocal tones. Do this for as long as you feel comfortable. When finished, sweep your palms down your chest and let out a soft, contemplative “ahhh.”

**Energy Meditation and Ki-gong**

This form of brain wave vibration requires deep, relaxed concentration so it is a good idea to stretch or use another method to loosen up before beginning. It is designed to help practitioners increase their sense of energy awareness in their palms. You can sit in lotus or half lotus position, or with your legs outstretched. Use some soft, soothing music with this form.

Place your hands on your knees, palms face up. Breathe in and out, and rotate your upper body in a circle at your waist. Relax the shoulders and focus on your dahn jon. Raise your palms and rub them briskly together. This action stimulates heat energy in the palms and creates a slight tingling sensation or magnetic-like attraction. Hold your palms 2-4 inches apart and focus on the energy flowing between them, as you pull your hands apart, then bring them back together for about 10 minutes. Allow yourself to sink deep into the sensation and feel the vibrations throughout your body. As your ki rises, allow your hands, arms and upper body to move naturally to music. Your body will instinctively take on postures that help it to realign itself and stimulate circulation. Do this as long as you feel comfortable. When you return to your initial position, you’ll be in a state of complete serenity and ready for deep meditation.

**Coming Full Circle With Ancient Ways of Healing**

As I reflect back on my experience with brain wave vibration, I realize that the concept itself is really not all that new. Almost every element of the practice can be traced to various other energy training and vibrational healing techniques. In fact, the ancient shamans of the past can be considered the original “brain wave doctors.” They instinctively knew that the shaking of the body and dancing to distinct tribal rhythms
could enable them to achieve higher states of consciousness, connect with the spiritual realms, and stimulate their own innate healing abilities.

Through years of investigative research, Dr. Michael Winkelman, a former neuroscientist at Arizona State University, concluded that shamanistic healing practices worked by integrating the older (i.e., brain stem) and younger (i.e., the prefrontal cortex) parts of the brain. “Shamanistic healing practices achieve this integration by physically stimulating systematic brain wave–discharge patterns,” says Winkelman. This integration allows “unconscious or preconscious primary information processing functions and outputs to be integrated into the operations of the frontal cortex,” he notes.

Similarly, Bradford Keeney has traveled the world investigating the oldest medicine on Earth—the ecstatic shaking of the human body. In his book, Shaking Medicine: The Healing Power of Ecstatic Movement, Keeney noted that all of the ancient indigenous healing practices relied on achieving deeply relaxed states of consciousness (i.e., low frequency brain waves). Most primitive cultures relied on ecstatic movement, such as dancing or shaking, to achieve such a state.

Musicians and mystics have long recognized the power of rhythmic music. Cultures throughout the world engage in ritual drumming and rhythmic prayer. Recent interest in sleep, meditation and hypnosis research is also spurring scientists to take a closer look at the therapeutic benefits of musical rhythm. In 2006, Stanford’s Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics hosted a symposium, “Brainwave Entrainment to External Rhythmic Stimuli” that brought together a diverse group of scientists, ethnomusicologists and musicians.

According to the Stanford press release, “A small but growing body of evidence suggests that music and other rhythmic stimuli can alter mental states in predictable ways and even heal damaged brains.” Further research has shown that “music with a strong beat stimulates the brain and ultimately can cause brainwaves to resonate in time with the music. Slow beats encourage slow brain waves that are associated with hypnotic or meditative states. Faster beats may encourage more alert and concentrated thinking,” it stated.

The uniqueness of brain wave vibration lies in the way the elements are combined into a single mind-body practice that offers a complete relaxation, energy stimulation, and meditative experience. Using various techniques, it combines the elements of music, vibration, and movement to build ki and then sink into meditation. These elements are grounded in ancient, time tested techniques for tuning into our body’s natural rhythm, calming our brainwaves and reaching deep meditative states that independently of one another, have been proven to be safe and effective for fostering greater health.

Wendy Oden is a freelance writer based in Sedona, AZ who has been exploring her own qi through various indigenous healing arts, including Qi gong. Tai chi, yoga, shamanic practices, and vibrational medicine for more than a decade. She is a certified REIKI Master/Teacher and practitioner of brain wave vibration. When not exploring her own qi, Wendy writes for various publications specializing in body/mind/spirit healing, sustainable living, and responsible tourism. She can be reached at woden9@commspeed.net. To learn more about Brain Wave Vibration, you can read: Brain Wave Vibration: Getting Back into the Rhythm of a Healthy, Happy Life, by Ilchi Lee (ISBN 978-1-935127369/$14.95) available at online and neighborhood booksellers. To experience a one-hour session, pick up the Brain Wave Vibration Guided Training CD (ISBN978-1-935127314/$17.95), or visit www.brainwavvibration.com to find a practice center near you.

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