**What is Qigong?**
Qigong (pronounced chee gung) is a traditional Chinese energy medicine practice combining breathing, movement, and meditation. In Qigong, the term “qi” (or “chi” ) means “vital energy of the body” and “gong” means the skill and achievement cultivated through regular and disciplined practice. It is part of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), which works with the Qi as a key feature of human psychology, physiology, and biology for healing and improving health conditions.

Qigong has a long history in China as a type of traditional exercise for maintaining health and fitness. The Qigong exercises known as the “Six Healing Sounds” are an excellent traditional Qigong practice, involving the formation of sounds and their vibrations in order to cleanse, re-energize, balance and harmonize the internal organs, thereby creating optimum health.

Meditation is also an important part of Qigong practice. Da Mo, the first Buddhist Patriarch Bodhidharma, came from India to preach Buddhism in China during the Liang dynasty (502-557 A.D.). He is considered the ancestor of the Chinese Chan Zong sect of Buddhism.

Later, the Chan Zong sect of Buddhism and its training was brought to Japan and became Zen meditation in Japan. Meditation is an important practice in Qigong training because it is a necessary process for training the mind to direct and regulate the energy flow in the body.

Once the energy is activated it must be coordinated with the activities of the mind, so that mind and body can benefit from the synchronization and mutual influence. The mind, when trained by meditation, is able to perceive the subtle levels at which the Qi functions, both at the level of the mind and at the level of the body. As an example, in recent times, Yan Xin Qigong is known as a meditation-based form of Qigong practice.

Source: <http://www.iqim.org/qigong-history/>