



AN INTRODUCTION TO QI CULTIVATION: THE FUNDAMENTALS OF QIGONG AND INTERNAL ALCHEMY

COURSE JOURNAL WORKBOOK



INTRODUCTION

This journal is your personal space for deepening your journey throughout the course.

It's not about right or wrong answers, or polished thoughts — it's about creating a place to meet yourself honestly and attentively as you explore the art of energy cultivation.

It is designed to help you track your progress, deepen your understanding, and document your experiences as you journey through the Course.

As you engage with the practices, teachings, and experiences offered in this course, your internal landscape will shift — sometimes subtly, sometimes profoundly. This journal gives you a structure to witness that evolution.

Keeping a journal will allow you to reflect on your energy work, notice patterns, and measure progress over time. Writing things down helps integrate them into your awareness, and becomes a powerful mirror for your inner growth.

You're invited to use this journal regularly — after practices, during contemplation, or at the close of each session. Return to it when something clicks... or when something feels confusing. Let it be a witness to your process and a container for your insights.

Each section of this workbook corresponds to a module in the course. Use the provided prompts and structured pages to record your observations, insights, and any challenges you encounter.

Trust Your Process

There may be times when you feel deeply connected, and others when you feel distracted or unsure. Both are part of the path. The practice of journaling is not to fix anything, but to create a thread of presence — a line you can trace through the subtle unfolding of your own alchemical journey.

Your words, sketches, or observations don't need to make sense to anyone else. They are offerings to your own inner being, to your future self, and to the mystery of the path itself.

Let your journal be a sacred conversation between you and the life-force that animates you.

SECTION OF Welcome

- What drew you to this course?
- What do you hope to achieve through Qigong practice?
- How do you currently feel in terms of physical energy, mental clarity, and emotional balance?



SECTION

Introduction to Qi: Theory & Practice

A. Theory

- What are your initial thoughts on Qi as an energetic force?
- · Which concepts resonated with you the most?
- Did any aspects challenge or expand your understanding?

SECTION ON Introduction to Qi. Theory & Practice

B. Practice

Reflection After Practice:

- What did you experience in your first practice session?
- Could you feel any energy movements?
- How did your body and mind respond?
- What was the Inner Smile exercise like for you?

SECTION Order Observed Section Observed

Lesson 1: The Long-Life Set

Reflection After Practice:

- How was the practice for you?
- · Notes on sensations, emotions, insights or challenges
- Did any particular movement feel especially beneficial?

- How did your body feel before and after warming up?
- Did you notice any tension release or energetic shifts?

SECTION Oigong Warm-Ups

Lesson 2: Shaking Practice

Reflection After Practice:

- How did shaking affect your physical, emotional, or energetic state?
- Did you feel any loosening of tension or energetic "lightness"?

Energy Awareness Check-In:

• Observations about the flow, density, or movement of *Qi* during the practice?



SECTION Posture Notes and Balancing Exercises

Lesson 1: Introduction

- How do you think posture influences the ability to focus, feel grounded, or connect with *Qi* during practice?
- How do I know when I'm physically aligned vs. subtly aligned (or misaligned)?
- Are there recurring imbalances (e.g. tension, restlessness, fatigue) I've noticed after practice? What helps restore harmony?

SECTION 04

Posture Notes and Balancing Exercises

Lesson 2: Simple Stance for Standing Exercises

Posture Awareness:

- Were you able to hold the stance comfortably?
- Could you feel rootedness and connection with the earth?

Energetic Feedback:

- What sensations did you experience?
- Could you feel the earth force coming up through the tailbone?

SECTION OF Posture Notes Balancing Exe

Lesson 3: Posture Notes for Seated Exercises

Posture Awareness:

- · Reflect on the posture suggested
- How does sitting like that feel to you?

Energetic Feedback:

• What sensations did you experience?

SECTION 04

Posture Notes and Balancing Exercises

Lesson 4: Balancing Routine After Seated Practice

Posture Awareness:

- What physical sensations did I notice in my spine, back, or hips before beginning the Spinal Stretch Flow?
- Did I feel more integrated or embodied after this practice? What changed in my posture or awareness?
- Was there any area that felt especially tight or spacious?

Energetic Feedback:

- How did the flow of Qi shift during or after the stretching sequence?
- How did this transition impact my emotional or mental state after seated meditation?

SECTION 04

Posture Notes and Balancing Exercises

Lesson 5: Discharge Technique

Reflection Prompts:

- Have you ever had uncomfortable sensations after meditation or *Qigong* practice?
- What did you do about them?

Energetic Feedback:

- What sensations or shifts did I experience while doing the technique?
- How did I feel afterward physically, emotionally, energetically?

Energy Centre Breathing

Lesson 1: Introduction

- What are your "energy centres" to you? How do you relate to them?
- Have you engaged with them in the past? If so, what has your experience of them been?

Lesson 2: How to Find and Breath With the Lower *Tan Tien*

SECTION **5**

Energy Cent Breathing

Reflection After Practice:

- How was the practice for you?
- Could you feel your breath settle into the lower abdomen?
- · Which of the two first abdominal breathing exercises felt more natural to you?

Energy Awareness Check-In:

• In the final exercise, or anywhere throughout these exercises, did you feel tingling coming out through your fingers? Could you sense the movement of *Qi* out through your fingers?

Lesson 3: Further Energy Centre Breathing and Awareness Techniques

"3 Minds Into 1" Technique:

- How was the exercise for you? What did you experience?
- · Any insights from this technique?

Walking with Attention at the Lower Tan Tien:

- How was the exercise for you? What did you experience?
- · Any insights from this technique?

SECTION SECTION Energy Centre Breathing

Chakra Breathing:

- How did focusing on different energy centres affect your awareness?
- Was anything challenging or distracting during the exercise?

SECTION 5 Energy Centre Breathing

Energy Awareness Check-In:

• Observations about the flow/ movement of Qi during the exercises



Enlivening the Organs with Energy

Lesson 1: Introduction

Reflection Prompts:

- How do you feel about relating directly to your internal organs?
- Thoughts about the Taoist emotional and energetic associations?

Energetic Feedback:

• What sensations did you experience?

Enlivening the Organs with Energy

SECTION

Lesson 2: Filling the Organs with Smiling Energy

Reflection After Practice:

- How was the exercise for you?
- Which organ did you have the strongest response from? Which organ did you get the least response from?
- Did you notice any emotional responses?

Energy Awareness Check-In:

• How did the exercise affect your energy levels/ emotional state?

Enlivening the Organs with Energy

SECTION

Lesson 3: Filling the Organs with *Qi*

Reflection After Practice:

• How was the exercise for you?

- How did your organs feel after the exercise? Did they feel energised?
- Did any organ respond stronger than another?

Organs with Energy

SECTION

Lesson 4: Virtue Cultivation Practice

Reflection After Practice:

- How was the exercise for you?
- Did any virtue feel easier to connect with than another? Why do you think they resonated with you?
- Any virtue feel more difficult to connect with? What personal experiences, memories, or emotions do you think are connected to this difficulty?

- How did your body feel before the practice? How did it feel after?
- Did you notice any specific areas of the body where energy flow increased during the exercise?
- Was there a particular virtue that caused a noticeable shift in your internal energy (e.g., warmth, opening, tingling)?

Earth and Sky Breathing

Lesson 1: Introduction

- What are your initial feelings about working with Earth and Sky energy?
- Did the concept of breathing from two directions resonate with you? Why or why not?
- What intentions would you like to set for this part of your practice?

Lesson 2: Breathing from the Centre of the Earth

Reflection After Practice:

- How was the exercise for you?
- How did you experience the sensation of connecting with the Earth's core?
- Did any particular part of your body respond noticeably to the Earth breathing

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earth and Sky Breathing

- Did you notice a difference in the energy response from the different distances down into the earth?
- After breathing from the centre of the Earth, how did you feel? Did you feel more grounded, stable, or heavy? Describe the sensations.

Lesson 3: Sky Breathing

Reflection After Practice:

- How did it feel to breathe energy down from the sky?
- What differences did you notice between Earth breathing and Sky breathing?
- Was it easier to connect with one than the other? If so, which, and why do you think that would be?

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Earth and Sky Breathing

- After breathing from the sky, how did your mental and emotional state shift?
- What was the quality of Sky energy for you?

Lesson 4: Earth Meets Sky, Sky Meets Earth

Reflection After Practice:

• How was the exercise for you? Any notable experience occur?

SECTION Earth and Sky Breathing

- Could you feel a clear point of merging between the two energies?
- How would you describe the feeling of the merged energy?
- After practicing Earth and Sky meeting within you, how would you describe the quality of your Qi?



Generating the Qi Ball

Lesson 1: Introduction

- How do you feel about the idea of consciously gathering and forming an energy ball in your body?
- What expectations, curiosities, or uncertainties do you have before starting the *Qi* Ball practices?

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Lesson 2: Qi Ball of Earth Energy

Reflection After Practice:

- Could you form a tangible *Qi* ball from Earth energy? How did it feel in your body?
- How did the *Qi* ball of Earth energy feel compared to previous energy sensations you've worked with?
- Were there any parts of your body that responded more strongly during the practice?

- Were you able to change the size, density, or warmth of the Qi ball?
- How easily did the Qi ball respond to your intention?
- How did the 'collection process' go for you?

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Lesson 3: Qi Ball of Sky Energy

Reflection After Practice:

- Were you able to feel a Qi ball form from Sky energy?
- How would you describe the difference in sensation between the Earth *Qi* ball and the Sky *Qi* ball?
- What emotions, images, or qualities arose as you worked with Sky energy?

- How did the Sky *Qi* ball feel in terms of texture, temperature, or movement?
- Did you notice any difference in how quickly the Sky *Qi* responded to your focus compared to Earth *Qi*?

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Lesson 4: *Qi* Ball of Earth and Sky Energy

Reflection After Practice:

- How did it feel to combine Earth and Sky energies into a single Qi ball?
- Was one energy easier or more challenging to integrate into the ball?
- What sensations or imagery came when you combined the two energies?

Energy Sensitivity Check-In:

- How did the Earth and Sky combined *Qi* ball feel different from the single-energy *Qi* balls?
- Was the ball more stable, more dynamic, or did it have a unique character?

Working with the Qi Ball

Lesson 1: Introduction

- What excites or intrigues you most about learning to work with the Qi Ball after forming it?
- How do you imagine the ability to move, store, and project *Qi* could affect your life or wellbeing?

Lesson 2: Gathering *Qi* from the Six Directions

Reflection After Practice:

- · How was the exercise for you?
- How did it feel to gather energy from each direction?
- Did one particular direction feel stronger, weaker, or more natural to connect with?

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Energy Sensitivity Check-In:

- Did the quality of the Qi (density, brightness, temperature) feel different depending on the direction?
- How did your tan tien feel after gathering Qi from all six directions?
- Did you notice emotional or mental changes when connecting to each different direction?

Working with the *Qi*Ball

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Lesson 3: Three Fires and Six Directions

Reflection After Practice:

- How was the exercise for you?
- · How did it feel to create and connect the three fires?
- How did you feel after the practice?

Energy Sensitivity Check-In:

- Did the "sacred fire" change in quality after gathering from each direction?
- Was there a shift in your breathing, posture, or awareness during or after the exercise?

Working with the Q Ball

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Lesson 4: Filling the Bones with *Qi*

Reflection After Practice:

- How did it feel to send Qi directly into your bones?
- · Were there areas where the absorption felt stronger or weaker?
- After filling the bones, did you notice any changes in posture, groundedness, or a feeling of internal support?
- How would you describe the feeling of your energy body after completing the bone-filling exercise?

- Did you experience any emotional or energetic shifts during the bone-filling process?
- Did the image of your bones filled with radiant energy affect your sense of vitality, resilience, or confidence?

Lesson 5: Dedication Practice

Reflection After Practice:

- How was the exercise for you?
- What goal, intention, or cause did you choose to dedicate your energy toward today?
- How did it feel internally to offer your Qi toward that purpose?

Working with the Qi Ball

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- After sending out the energy, what changes did you notice in your tan tien, heart, or mind?
- Were there any unexpected feelings that arose (joy, sadness, peace, excitement) during or after the dedication?
- If you could visually describe the energy you sent out what would it look like (a light, a colour, a movement, a shape)?



SECTION The Microcosmic Orbit

Lesson 1: Introduction

- Before beginning the Microcosmic Orbit practice, how do you feel about the idea of circulating energy in a loop through your body?
- What personal hopes or intentions do you have for learning this practice?

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Lesson 2: The Microcosmic Orbit Practice

Reflection After Practice:

- Were you able to feel distinct sensations at the different points along the Microcosmic Orbit?
- Which point(s) were easiest for you to connect with? Which were most challenging?
- Did any points feel blocked or activated?

- Did you have a sense of energy moving in a circuit? If so, how did the energy feel once it began moving in a full circuit?
- Did you notice any changes in your internal state such as greater warmth, tingling, emotional shifts, or mental quietness?
- Did you feel a smooth flow, or did the energy feel interrupted anywhere along the circuit?

SECTION he Microcosmic

Lesson 3: Enhanced Microcosmic Orbit Practices

Reflection After Practice:

· What variations helped refine your practice?

- How did adding enhancements (such as rolling the eyes, spinning the points, or syncing with breath) affect the flow of *Qi*?
- Did the orbit feel faster, brighter, heavier, or more powerful compared to your earlier practices?

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Full Body Circuit Check-In:

- Were you able to feel the circuit move through the legs, creating the figure-8 pattern?
- How did this full-body integration of the orbit impact your sense of balance, strength, or spaciousness?

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Lesson 4: Understanding Each Point of the Orbit Better

Mind-Body Mapping Prompt:

- Which anatomical or energetic points on the orbit felt most awake or alive for you?
- Were there any points that felt "blank," numb, or harder to locate? What might these areas be telling you?

Integrative Reflection:

- As you spent more time getting to know each point, did you notice an overall change in the quality of the orbit (such as smoother flow, brighter sensations, or more internal quiet)?
- How do you imagine a fully open and flowing Microcosmic Orbit could influence your life beyond the practice session?

SECTION

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Working with *Qi* Pressure & "Cooking" *Qi*

Lesson 1: Introduction

Reflection Prompts:

- How do you relate to the idea of *Qi* becoming stronger under pressure?
- Reflect on how the metaphors (like water under pressure or air lifting a plane) helped you understand *Qi* pressure.

Lesson 2: *Qi* Pressure Exercise #1: Cultivating Awareness of *Qi* Pressure Reflection After Practice:

- Could you feel the natural Qi pressure on your inhalation?
- Was it easy or challenging to maintain the feeling of *Qi* pressure during the breath-hold?

Body Sensation Check-In:

- What physical sensations arose while holding the breath expansion, tingling, lightness, or tension?
- Did you feel a difference between the inhalation, breath-hold, and exhalation phases?

1 Qi Pressure &

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Lesson 3: *Qi* Pressure Exercise #2: Reverse Breathing

Reflection After Practice:

- How was the exercise for you?
- How did the reversed abdominal movement change your internal sensations compared to normal breathing?
- Was it challenging to keep the chest relaxed while applying reverse breathing?

Energy Awareness Check-In:

- Did you feel the increase in *Qi* pressure as a result of reverse breathing?
- Did you feel more energised, grounded, or pressurised after practicing reverse breathing?

SECTION 11

Working with *Qi* Pressure & "Cooking" *Oi*

Lesson 4: *Qi* Pressure Exercise #3: The *Maha Bandha – Ujjayi* Breathing

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Reflection After Practice:

- How was the exercise for you?
- Were you able to feel the contraction of perineum, abdomen, and throat (the three locks)?
- Were you able to direct energy into the cauldron of the tan tien?

Energy Awareness Check-In:

- Was there a sensation of building internal pressure, power or heat at your navel centre?
- What did the experience of the "cooking" of *Qi* lead to for you?

Lesson 5: *Qi* Pressure Exercise #4: Step Breathing

Reflection After Practice:

- How was the exercise for you?
- How did breaking your inhale into smaller steps (mini-breaths) affect the feeling of *Qi* pressure compared to a normal breath?
- Did you experience a cumulative building of energy during the step breathing?

Body Awareness Check-In:

- Could you feel more *Qi* being absorbed into your body during this method?
- Was there a particular body area where the Qi seemed to collect more?

Working with Qi Pressure & "Cooking" Qi

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Lesson 6: *Qi* Pressure Exercise #5: Packing Process Breathing

Reflection After Practice:

- Could you sense the *Qi* moving into your kidneys, intestines, and other internal zones as you guided it?
- Was it easier to direct Qi to some organs than others?

Body Awareness Check-In:

- After the whole-body packing practice, did your body feel fuller, more buoyant, more integrated?
- Were there specific zones (front, back, left, right, centre) where you noticed more or less *Qi* accumulation?

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1 2 Inner Alchemy

Lesson 1: Introduction

Reflection Prompts:

- What does the idea of "alchemy" transforming inner states evoke for you personally?
- How does the concept of using imagination and intention to shift energy resonate with your view of healing?

12 Inner Alchemy

Lesson 2: Inner Alchemy Exercise #1: Charging the Organs with Light

Reflection After Practice:

- How easy was it to visualise the suggested colours?
- Which organ(s) felt the easiest to connect with during the light visualisation?
- Which colour felt most natural to you? Were there any that felt challenging or resisted?

Energy Awareness Check-In:

- Did you notice changes in the emotional tone or energy of the organs during or after visualisation?
- Was there any part of the body that felt especially vibrant or dense afterward?
- Was there a sense of inner "brightness" or renewal by the end of the practice?

12 Inner Alchemy

Lesson 3: Inner Alchemy Exercise #2: Transforming Negative Emotions into Qi

Reflection After Practice:

- How did you feel emotionally before beginning the practice?
- Was there a specific emotion that stood out or felt dominant during your self-scan?
- Did the emotional tension dissolve completely, shift into a new emotion, or simply become lighter?
- Were there any insights, memories, or inner messages that arose as you worked with specific emotions?
- After completing the practice, how did you feel emotionally and physically?

12 Inner Alchemy

Energy Awareness Check-In:

- How did the *Qi* feel when it entered the body during the inhalations?
- What physical sensations arose as you transformed the emotional energy warmth, tingling, lightness, spaciousness, etc.?
- Was there a sense of energetic movement or flow during the practice?

Colour & Visualisation Exploration:

- What colour(s) did you naturally perceive during the emotional transformation?
- Did you use the traditional Taoist colour associations, or did you intuitively choose a different colour? Why?
- How did the chosen colour affect the feeling in the organ or emotional area?
- If you repeated the practice for different emotions or body parts, did different colours appear each time?

SECTION 1 2 Inner Alchemy

Lesson 4: Inner Alchemy Exercise #3: Saliva Qigong

Reflection After Practice:

- How was the exercise for you?
- How did the process of gathering saliva feel for you?
- Were you able to feel the sensation of energy being drawn into the saliva?

Energy Awareness Check-In:

- What physical sensations did you notice in the mouth, tongue, or jaw as you worked with saliva?
- After swallowing the saliva and sending it to the lower tan tien, what changes (if any) did you feel in the tan tien area or your body as a whole?

Absorbing *Qi* from Nature

Lesson 1: Introduction

Reflection Prompts:

- How does the idea of absorbing energy from nature feel to you?
- Which natural energies (Earth, Sky, Trees, Sun, Moon, Water) are you most drawn to?

Absorbing Qi from Natur

SECTION

Lesson 2: Absorbing *Qi* from Trees

Reflection After Practice:

- What was your experience when connecting with a tree's Qi?
- Could you feel a difference between different trees or types of energy?
- Did you feel a sense of communication or exchange with the tree?
- Was there a sensation of gratitude or mutual respect during the practice?

Energy Sensitivity Check-In:

- Did the quality of energy feel stronger, softer, or different depending on the tree?
- Did you notice any shifts in your body, breath, or emotions afterward?

Absorbing Qi from Nature

SECTION

Lesson 3: Absorbing *Qi* from the Sun and Moon

Reflection After Practice:

- What differences did you feel when absorbing *Qi* from the sun compared to the moon?
- Was one energy easier or more nourishing for you than the other?

Energy Awareness Check-In:

• Was there a noticeable shift in your energy field after absorbing these celestial energies?

Absorbing Qi from Natur

SECTION

Lesson 4: Absorbing *Qi* from Bodies of Water

Reflection After Practice:

- How did it feel to absorb Qi from a body of water?
- Was there a particular type of water (ocean, river, lake, mist) that resonated most strongly?
- What imagery or sensations arose spontaneously while connected to the water's *Qi*?

Energy Sensitvity Check-In:

- Did you notice a cleansing or cooling effect in your body or emotions?
- Was the quality of the water's energy distinct (flowing, still, powerful, gentle)?
- Did you feel a sense of emotional or energetic "washing" or purification?

Absorbing Qi from Nature

SECTION

Lesson 5: Eight Elements Practice

Reflection After Practice:

- Which of the Eight Elements (Heaven, Earth, Fire, Water, Wind, Thunder, Mountain, Lake) felt most natural or powerful to connect with?
- Was it easy or challenging to sense the differences between them?
- Which elements felt like they "filled" something missing in your system?

Energy Sensitivity Check-In:

- After working with all Eight Elements, how did your energy body feel as a whole?
- Was there a sense of deeper internal balance or clarity after absorbing from the full spectrum?



14 Empty Force

Lesson 1: Introduction to Ming-Gong

Reflection Prompts:

- What new insights did you gain about the distinction between internal (*Ming Gong*) and external (*Xing Gong*) cultivation?
- How did the concept of "Empty Force" resonate with you? Did it feel inspiring, confusing, intriguing, or something else?

SECTION 14 Empty Force

Lesson 2: Practice – Conscious Involuntary Breathing

Reflection After Practice:

- How was the exercise for you?
- Were you able to "receive" the breath and not "take" it? Did it feel difficult or easy to let go of control and allow the body to breathe naturally?
- How did consciously observing your breathing without controlling it affect your sense of connection to your body?

Energy Awareness Check-In:

- Did you notice any shifts in your internal energy during or after the practice?
- Was there a sense of "something greater" behind the breath an awareness, spaciousness, or subtle energy?

SECTION 15 Meridian Slapping

Lesson 1: Introduction

Reflection Prompts:

- What is your initial impression of the idea of activating *Qi* flow by tapping the meridian lines?
- How did the philosophy behind this simple, physical method resonate with you?

Body Awareness Check-In:

- Before beginning the practice, where did you feel tightness, stagnation, or energetic blockage in your body?
- · Were there any areas you felt intuitively drawn to energise?

Meridian Slapping

SECTION

Lesson 2: Meridian Slapping Exercise

Reflection After Practice:

- How did the body feel after tapping along the meridian pathways?
- Did you notice any immediate changes in energy flow, warmth, tingling, lightness, or release?
- Did any emotions arise spontaneously during or after the slapping practice (such as sudden laughter, irritation, sadness, or relief)?

Energy Awareness Check-In:

- Which parts of your body felt more "alive" or awakened after the practice?
- Were there any areas where you felt resistance or discomfort while tapping? How did you respond to those sensations?



16 Seeing the Qi

Reflection After Practice:

- Were you able to notice any changes in the "empty" space between yourself and the wall?
- What shapes, colours or patterns emerged?

Visual Awareness Check-In:

- Did your perception of the Qi field grow stronger the longer you watched?
- Were you able to maintain soft, unfocused vision for extended periods?
- Did you notice any difference between viewing stillness and movement (e.g., moving your hand through the field)?

Final Reflections

Integrating Your Journey

Overall Reflection:

- What have been the most meaningful discoveries for you during this course?
- Which practice(s) resonated with you the most, and why?
- How has your relationship to Qi and to yourself changed?

Energetic Transformation:

- In what ways have your energy levels, perception, or inner awareness shifted?
- What emotional or physical changes have you noticed over time?

Challenges and Breakthroughs:

- What challenges did you face during the course, and how did you meet them?
- Were there any "breakthrough" moments that shifted your experience significantly?

Your Ongoing Practice:

- Which practices do you feel drawn to continue exploring or deepening?
- How might you structure a daily, weekly, or monthly routine to support your ongoing cultivation?
- What new intentions or goals have emerged for your energy work going forward?

"The journey of *Qi* cultivation is never finished — it continues to become more refined, more embodied, and more luminous.

May your inner practice continue to nourish your life and ripple outward into the world."

Ryko Kalinko