



The Natural Healing Podcast

with Dr. Setareh Moafi & Salvador Cefalu

Episode 68: Demystifying Internal Martial Arts with Brandon Gilbert

Salvador Cefalu: [00:00:00] Well, hello, Brandon. We are so excited to have you back for another discussion. And today we're going to deal with something that's really meaningful to your heart and passion in life. And I'm going to let Setareh introduce you first before we get into that.

Dr. Setareh Moafi: [00:00:15] So for those of you who are not familiar with Brandon Gilbert, you can go back to episode 58 to listen to him talk about medicinal mushrooms and tonic herbs. A really intriguing discussion. But today we're going to go a little bit deeper. And just to reintroduce you to Brandon, Brandon Gilbert has been deeply interested in studying Eastern philosophy since the age of 14. A serial entrepreneur, he started his first business in 2006 after going deep in the alternative health field to resolve his own health issues. Brandon felt motivated to share his views and experiences with a larger audience. He created the YouTube channel HyperionTv.com in 2009, built up a following, then founded Hyperion Herbs in 2010 to share purely potent tonic herbs and make them accessible and easily available like never before. Brandon has taught many classes and workshops both online and in person on a wide variety of subjects, ranging from alternative health and healing modalities, herbalism, internal arts and Eastern philosophy. In addition to running Hyperion Herbs and Hyperion TV, Brandon spends and invests many hours every day training internal arts like Qigong, Neigong, Tai Chi Chuan and various sitting practices. Welcome back, Brandon.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:01:38] Hey, thanks so much for having me back on. Very glad to be here.

Dr. Setareh Moafi: [00:01:41] Yeah, it's our pleasure. Yeah.

Salvador Cefalu: [00:01:43] Brandon And what we're learning is what you really want to discuss today is the internal practices, the cultivating Qi, and they call it Neigong in the, I guess you would say, the martial arts field.



Dr. Setareh Moafi: [00:02:21] Welcome to the Natural Healing Podcast. The show designed to guide, inspire and empower you to elevate your health so you can achieve your goals and dreams. We are your hosts, Dr. Setareh Moafi.

Salvador Cefalu: [00:02:35] And Salvador Cefalu.

Dr. Setareh Moafi: [00:02:37] A husband and wife team of acupuncturists and owners of A Center for Natural Healing an integrative wellness clinic based in the heart of Silicon Valley.

Salvador Cefalu: [00:02:46] We're here to make the ancient wisdom of healing practical and accessible for your modern lifestyle.

Salvador Cefalu: [00:02:59] So you have a lot of experience doing this and we really are excited to hear about what you've discovered and what you've experienced through your years of training.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:03:09] Yeah, absolutely. I think just to set some context, some of the things that, you know, really confused me a lot early on and I think still confuses a lot of people because we often lump all these different arts into the same kind of bucket. Like we hear terms like Chi and Meridian systems and energy channels and we assume that it's the same for like qigong, Neigong, Tai Chi, Bagua, Xing Yi, Chinese medicine, herbalism. It's all the same, because it's kind of similar terminology and I thought that for many years in my life as well. And then as I got deeper into many of the arts and had much more highly skilled teachers, I realized, Oh, actually these are all very distinct things. And like within Neigong, for example, qi has a specific meaning within Tai Chi, it has a completely different meaning within Chinese medicine, it has a completely different meaning. And then even in our colloquial everyday context, it has a different meaning. So it's like I was like, okay, wow. It was actually really great for my kind of OCD side of my brain that really likes nuance and specific definitions and context and clarity and understanding all these things. Then also just going through many of the processes myself and realizing the concepts tangibly, viscerally and really in my body, because a lot of these things I realized are not actually very subtle. They're actually quite mechanical, quite physiological, quite gross, quite tangible in how they interface with the body. And of course, I'm not denying that there are levels that are completely



beyond the physical. Absolutely. But in terms of like getting there, I think you have to go through the body first. And that's kind of always been kind of the Daoist way is like you have to use the body because we're here.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:04:52] We are physical beings. So it's like it's cool if you have an amazing spiritual experience, that's great, but what does that translate to? And that kind of ties into the model of the three treasures and how Jing Chi and Shin all interrelate. So like the dense physical aspect of yourself has an inner relationship with kind of like your energy body, the kind of second layer of subtlety that you have. So chi but then also the Shen, which is, you know, kind of your mental faculties, but also your potential connection to something higher that also interrelates with your physicality and also interrelates with Chi, let's just call it that. So it's like you benefit one and it can benefit the other. You degrade one, it degrades the other. It's kind of this interconnected system that definitely is a conceptual thing that translates over to many of the internal arts. So it's like, of course you have to start with the body, build the body up and that can have knock on effects. And then you build a solid foundation within the body. You build more qi for example, so you have more of an anchor, more of a route, more fuel for your system. So then you can go and start working with the mind, create certain mental qualities in the mind, which then you pass back to the body and that creates like a whole other feedback loop. And that's the engine really for a lot of the arts. So we can definitely kind of unpack the differences between things like Neigong, Neidan, Tai Chi and even Chinese medicine, because there's some differences and nuances there. Even with meditation, that's something distinct and different as well.

Dr. Setareh Moafi: [00:06:17] I really like where you're going with this because and especially the point you made about using the body to cultivate ourselves essentially, because I think oftentimes in the West a lot of people jump into doing seated practices and meditation and going into the mind and exploring the mind and doing all these changes there before they've cultivated their body. And it's a very ungrounding experience. That's why you see a lot of people who go into those practices prematurely they end up having a lot of actual health issues. So you might get like more chronic headaches, you might have high blood pressure, you might just generally feel ungrounded, like spacey.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:06:53] It just kind of makes them worse.



Dr. Setareh Moafi: [00:06:55] Yes, exactly.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:06:57] Well, two things I can say about the first is like mind based practices are traditionally only for people who were taken away from their family as children or teenagers, and they jumped right into a system. So they didn't have 30, 40 years of modern programming messing them up that they had to then overcome. Then the other thing about the mental stuff is what I learned and have experienced firsthand many times is you actually sort out the body and the physiology. The mental stuff just goes away. Like for someone who had pretty significant PTSD for most of my life, I did literally didn't sleep for years, had nightmares, night terrors. My digestion just didn't work like I felt genuinely terrible. And then, you know, going into the healing world and meditation and spirituality, it's like all the things it's like can be so complicated. You got to sort out this and you got to sort out that and you got to go here. You got to go there and you got your spirit, your energy, your higher self, your lower self, your shadow, your all these different like complexity things that people kind of get lost into and I did for many years as well. And I just kind of felt worse. But then actually when I just sorted out my body and opened that up, all that stuff went away and I realized what the actual solutions to pretty much the vast majority of mental problems feeling internally more comfortable and at ease in your physiology, and then your mind just kind of goes because a lot of the reason why people are so mentally wound up and think of it like a tube of toothpaste or something.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:08:28] If you squeeze the bottom, it all shoots up out to the top. So people's physiology is just so constricted and constrained. It's just shooting everything up. And that's stress, anxiety, insomnia, lack of focus. But then you think about it. That's the problem. That's the underlying pathology, right? So people think, oh, the solution is to just be more up here. It's like, well, no, you need the opposite. Actually, if you can get things to actually drop in sync and release, so many things will just go away. And even within internal arts, all of them share basically the same initial introductory phase, which is getting your qi to sync and then getting that whole process of everything to drop down and your whole physiology opening and transforming. They all share that regardless. And then once you have that, then it's something completely different. So yeah, you definitely mentioned a very, very good point there that I think



unfortunately trips a lot of people up and, you know, tripped me up as well for many, many years.

Dr. Setareh Moafi: [00:09:24] Yeah, because the mind is stubborn as heck. I mean, it's really hard to change your mind, but it is possible to use your body to change your mind. That's the empowering piece about doing these physical practices and not just going running and doing physical activity like that, but mindfulness practice, which will start defining what these different practices are for listeners as well.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:09:45] Yeah, I think that's also too, just one of the beauties of Chinese medicine is like in one level, you could not even talk to the person, don't care about your story, what you're feeling, your subjective experience is. I'll just look at your pulses. I can see what's going on, put a needle in, you adjust the function of your channel and then maybe, hopefully get you back to a better place of equilibrium or function. And then you can go on your way and hopefully integrate and stabilize that higher degree of functionality. It's kind of a concept and a theme that's really throughout all the arts. And I think that's, you know, why Chinese medicine is really so extremely useful and effective for a lot of people.

Salvador Cefalu: [00:10:24] I've heard actually medical doctors kind of criticize acupuncture, and the criticism was in particular, well, everybody has a liver problem. You know, So it's like that's like your standard diagnosis. You know, you've got to. Well, and the fact of the matter is, it really is such a common problem and that liver controls in Chinese medicine is controlling the diaphragmatic function. And it's that diaphragmatic constriction that is blocking the circulation to get the energy to sink. And while the energy is stuck in the chest, why it's stuck in the heart, why it's stuck, why the mind is just can't settle down. So it does often reside in regulating the liver's chi to harmonize what we call the heart kidney communication, which we've talked a number of times on the podcast.

Dr. Setareh Moafi: [00:11:19] And what's a great way to regulate liver Qi?

Salvador Cefalu: [00:11:21] Well, in terms of movement, it's twisting movements. You want to open up your ability to your torso, you have to open up your torso, your pelvis, because the gallbladder actually the meridian that couples with the liver meridian helps



siphon off that heat that's generated from that qi stagnation. And the gallbladder sinews in particular, is what really controls that, the pivoting motion in our life. And, you know, we often talk about when you can't pivot in life, you can't see both sides of an issue. So you become more rigid person. You become very fixed in your own dogma and you can't really see the other side.

Dr. Setareh Moafi: [00:12:01] So I think it's important just because I want everyone to feel welcome to listen to this this episode in a way that's accessible to define some of the terminology. So you mentioned the three treasures. We can start with that if you want to go into that. Brandon, you gave us a little overview and then maybe you can get into the different arts that you are familiar with and, you know, give us like a short description of each so that we understand the differences.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:12:27] You know, the three treasures, the way I come at it. Though, might be slightly different than kind of the common understanding, but it's just kind of relative to some of the arts. So basically Jing kind of in the simplest, easiest terms correlated with. I mean, the thing is with Jing is you can take it extremely far. You can start talking about Ming, you can start talking about like, you know, your life path and then like so many other aspects of life. But I guess in the simplest terms, the way I understand it is really your, your process of development while you're alive from point A, when you're born to point B, when you die, that's basically your journey through Jing and it can be very smooth and it can also be very bumpy. And then depending on how we live, can speed up that process or it can slow down that process. And that's a whole conversation in and of itself in terms of differences for men and women for regulating their behavior and their conduct for how it affects their Jing. Because at least within Chinese understanding men and women, the process of storing and processing Jing is a little different because obviously women are menstruating and have a uterus, whereas guys, we typically don't do those things. So there's some differences there.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:13:42] But just in the simplest terms, like Jing is kind of like this underlying process that determines your point A to point B like Born and you die in this lifetime. And then qi is kind of like kind of like an animating aspect of that or how that kind of plays out, which how that relates to something like Neigong we can start talking about yin and yang because yin and yang qi are a little bit different. Start talking about like the magnetic fields of the body versus the electrical activity. That's kind of a different



thing, which we can circle back to when we when we get to Neigong. But qi kind of just in the basic sense like animating force, that kind of in a colloquial term we're a bit familiar with, but we can take it further as we get into the other contexts. And at least the way I understand, Shen, is some people translate it as like spirit, which the way I've understood it through understanding neidan and alchemy and the other things, is that firstly a lot of the Chinese terminology or the Chinese medical terminology was kind of pulled from Neidan and some of the other systems, but of course through the Communist revolution and just history in general, a lot of the actual meaning and connection to the larger picture was just kind of removed.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:14:54] And then also just cultural translation, language translation, a lot gets left on the table. So people kind of assume Shen is like, Oh, it's spiritual and it's this higher thing. But actually what that's referring to is that there's a relationship between kind of our acquired mind, which can have a relationship with our Shen or like our heart mind, which then can have a relationship with our Xing, which is like our larger nature, which that can happen eventually bridge over and connect to Shen with a capital S. So it's not that it is that thing, it's just it's referring to a process that a person could potentially go through that would allow them to genuinely connect with something. But most of us, at least myself included, is, is down on the on the level of the acquired mind. So Shen is also referring to someone's kind of like mental emotional health, so to speak, with obviously the potential for a lot more. But so that's kind of how I understand those three terms and how I use them typically. And you know, each of them is a huge subject, which I'm sure you guys talked about before and are quite well versed in with your, you know, Chinese medicine background.

Salvador Cefalu: [00:16:00] Yeah, that's well put, Brandon. I like the way you break that down. They talk about or we talk about the Shen in the same way. I mean we'll say the literal Shen the little Shen is stored in the heart and that's like your acquired experiences. And then the Big Shen is, you know, the spirit outside of us. You kind of hit it on the head there.

Dr. Setareh Moafi: [00:16:23] AD// What if you could wake up each day feeling inspired and on purpose with your life? What if you could have total freedom from anxiety and overwhelm regardless of what's going on in the world or what life throws your way? All of this is possible because the potential already lies within you and all it takes is to



implement the simple practices you'll learn in the From Surviving to Thriving online experience. From Surviving to Thriving is now open for a limited time. Enroll now to get research backed tools, practices and support to transform your anxiety and overwhelm into consistent joy and calm and begin living the meaningful, purpose driven life you so deserve. Join me at joinfstt.com and begin your journey from surviving to thriving now. That's joinfstt.com //AD

Salvador Cefalu: [00:17:22] Oh. I wanted to mention to the audience we also talk about Jing and Brandon talked about how you know, relates to reproduction. And reproduction is not about just creating babies. It's about reproducing ourselves on a moment by moment basis. So it relates to the DNA on the deepest physiological level. So we're talking about something that's very profound in our lives and something that's why we want to preserve it and also keep it purified so the DNA does not get crazy and create some distortions.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:17:56] Yeah. And just as just kind of like a funny anecdote. So the process of consolidating, refining and turning the DJing into something else. Basically that can eventually, at the higher stages, lead to what's called think. In Chinese, they call it jade fluid, but with an Indian traditions, they call it Amrita but actually had know people that are at that stage and basically like you literally produce like a black, insanely sweet substance from your back of your palate. And basically all of your internal fluids are sweet, your tears are sweet, your sweat is sweet. And basically when you're in that stage. All of your fluids are sweet, and then people that are around you, they start kind of kind of coming into coherence with that. So then their fluids get sweet. And then if they leave, they have that effect on other people. And then obviously it dissipates and it's not quite as strong as obviously the original person. But that's the like kind of one of the higher expressions of where Jing starts off as like, you know, basically what we in terms of alchemy and neigong we what we mean by Jing is specifically the Jing Qa, which is like the Yang aspect of the Jing that's at least for men, goes into action when we either have an erection or ejaculate. I think it's just arousal. The Jing Qa serves down in the kind of perennial huaiyin region and then that original spark is what something like Neidan would be using and then basically consolidating, refining it, and then eventually turning it into something else that moves through the system and literally turns into a legitimate fluid substance that drips down through the inside of the



body and that renourishes the endocrine system and that takes the person back to a state of health, like healthier than they were when they were a child.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:19:48] And it's quite a profound thing and quite a high level skill that really not many people are at. I'm definitely not in no way, shape or form, but one day hopefully we'll get there. But it's pretty profound because Jing is one of those things that people think is finite and like you kind of use it and you lose it. Which 99.9% repeating is true, but there are actually practices or you can actually get it back and reverse it. It just tends to be a huge hassle because Jing is completely, at least for men related to your base desires. So actually Jing is something that men tend to struggle with a lot more because we operate more from our base desires in terms of like chasing reproduction and status and competitiveness. And women have their own thing which can't really speak on with expertise because don't I'm not one. So that's kind of why I just focus on men, because I have that experience with, um, but yeah, that's, that's like a whole thing. And that just kind of is a little anecdote that relates back to, you know, some of what we're saying. And it's kind of the higher levels of alchemy teachings. So they were talking about, you know, regulating it. And with men, there's like recommended timelines for if you're in your 30s, you can have sex this many times if you're in your 40s this many times it's kind of like trimmings left over from some of these alchemy traditions that were like, Look, if you want to maintain and preserve, here's kind of what we recommend. So it's just kind of a funny anecdote.

Salvador Cefalu: [00:21:09] Well, in the fluids aspect, just to kind of make it a little bit practical, it relates to the stomach fluids, you know, and stimulating that you that's why they do a lot of swishing of the tongue to try to generate the saliva. And it's interesting because you'll we'll see in clinic people who drink a lot of fluids and they're still dehydrated. They're not like, you know, holding the fluid. They're not like regulating the fluid. They're just creating dampness, you know, where they just get pathological fluid. But it's the stomach yin. The stomach fluid that does convert into that into the gene, you know, and that's why having a diet that's more moistening is going to help preserve that that aspect of the body as well, rather than eating a lot of dry food and. Cereals and wheat is such a big part of our society. Wheat is such a drying food, you know, So people hardly eat vegetables. You know, you get a lot of moisture from those things. And, you know, people just eat a lot of foods that just are not contributing to really hydrating their bodies in a natural way.



Brandon Gilbert: [00:22:17] Our society is pretty much set up to burn us out as quickly as possible. All the dietary stuff you're talking about. But then, you know, coffee, obviously that's pretty heating and drying, stimulating kidney yang. And then also just how overstimulated we are and how much we all function from stress, conflict and chasing based desires that'll burn your gene out quicker than anything else. Those things are what really deplete people, but that's like that's the norm and it's only just getting more and more intense.

Salvador Cefalu: [00:22:44] So for our audience, you know, preservation of life is about preserving your yin. And so what Brandon is saying is that life as we know it in modern society is very young. It's it's overstimulating, it's very heating. Our diets are too acidic. You know, these things are all contributing. That's why we hear the word inflammation so much. You know, it's an epidemic, you know, in our modern culture, essentially.

Dr. Setareh Moafi: [00:23:09] If you slow down and then build back the fluids, like have more moistening diet, do more internal arts, you actually can slow down the aging process not just to live for many more years, but to live those years with a quality of life.

Salvador Cefalu: [00:23:24] Yeah, that's what I always talk about. It's not necessarily like longevity, like you want to live to be like. As recently reading about one of the oldest men in history in China was like 256 or something. I'm not sure I'd really want to do that. But the years I am going to be here. You do? I think it's good to have years where you're functional and comfortable and.

Dr. Setareh Moafi: [00:23:46] Enjoying yourself.

Salvador Cefalu: [00:23:46] And hopefully contributing to society, you know, as long as you can.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:23:50] Yeah, you want as a high quality of life as you can for as long as you can. Yes.

Salvador Cefalu: [00:23:54] Yeah, essentially.



Dr. Setareh Moafi: [00:23:55] So how will these internal arts help us do that?

Brandon Gilbert: [00:23:58] Well, I think the potentiality is absolutely there. I mean, that's for sure a thing. I think the deciding factor is kind of one of the harsh truths of reality is you kind of get in what you or you get out what you put in. So, I mean, at least for me, you know, I train at least somewhere about three hours a day, every day for the last however many years and only in the last year. I feel like I've actually really started making some progress. But that's actually that's contingent upon having access to like the correct methodology and being able to apply the methodology as best as you can because we're all human and you know, we all screw things up most of the time. So that's, you know, why you have a teacher to, you know, help you. Circling back to guess your question, what I realized is the better I got at things, the more benefits that I had. And I realized that's amazing. But I also have the luxury of time. Like I have my own business so I can set my own schedule so I can train three hours a day, I can travel and go to workshops all over the world. I can do this, whereas a lot of people can't. So that's why I say, first and foremost, you have to have a good teacher, you have to find them and study with them in person. And then, yes, you can supplement it with online tutelage and things of that nature. But like you cannot replace the amount of time and value you get out of face time with like a skilled teacher. And that to me is like one of the most important things.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:25:20] So it's actually finding someone that's quite skilled and then putting in the time and energy, which then we also have to qualify. Something else that I think is maybe not too comfortable in our modern culture, which is that there are levels to things. And what I mean is someone who just casually maybe wants to relax or improve their health a little bit is not the same as a person who dedicates their entire life to something. A person who is a complete renunciate and completely left. The reality of life is not the same person who works like 9 to 5 and just wants to, like, chill out. Obviously there are different things, so obviously things will have to be adjusted and regulated depending on those things. And I mentioned that because in modern times we don't have that real distinction. In actuality, like at least for Buddhism, most of the stuff that's out that people were trying to incorporate into their life was never intended for like regular people. It was only for Renunciates and monks who were on a completely different trajectory, completely different path, completely different practices, completely different philosophical system. But it's just where we live in this world, where all these



ideas are mixed and matched. We don't necessarily have the discernment or the background or the capacity to really understand what's actually appropriate. And I mentioned that because I just meet so many people, they like beat themselves up like, Oh, I'm just I can't be non-attached. I'm so emotionally reactive or I can't sit still. I can't do all these things. They beat themselves up and it's like, yeah, because it's like you're trying to do like, trigonometry when you can't even do like, one plus one equals two.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:26:58] So of course it's going to be like a massive conflict. So coming back and being like, I need to learn my ABCs, I need to learn my one two threes. That's a little more going to be useful and helpful for people. So just kind of wanted to paint like a slightly different context and put some different kind of frameworks on those things because it's absolutely relevant when you get into the arts. So you kind of have to like see what is your intention, what are you really wanting to get out of it? Someone who's like going to be a freak and just go in, all in and train like four hours a day or just like, ah, I got 15 minutes and I kind of just need to chill because those are two different things. And obviously the benefits each people will get is going to be proportionally different, which is kind of just a common sense of life. Like if I if I played basketball ten minutes a week growing up as a kid, I probably would have never gotten very good. But if I practiced two hours a day for a decade, I probably would have, you know, improved my skill level. And as it pertains to internal arts, it's absolutely the same. It's the same mechanism because it is just a skill that you're acquiring, but the skill is actually inside of you, which is a whole other kind of like tricky thing. So yeah, hopefully that makes sense and answers your question.

Salvador Cefalu: [00:28:11] Brandon We've been talking about this internal practice neigong this Daoist cultivation and I'm sure many people in the audience are wondering, what are we talking about here? And you have a lot of experience. I'd like for you if you would, you know, go into that maybe with some of the specifics and then also some of the challenges, because cultivating has its pitfalls and I'm sure you have some stories to share.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:28:40] Yeah, I'm familiar with a lot of the challenges, let's say, because the thing is, it's something that I learned early on is at least from getting better at something, it's actually admitting how bad you are at. The thing is, the way you get better. It's kind of this counterintuitive thing where the more I realized like, Man, I suck at



this, here's all the ways I'm not good at this, then actually I could start making corrections and getting better. And I was like, Huh? The way to get better is to realize how terrible you are. That's just the way my brain pieced it together. And I just thought it was hilarious. Like it was just some kind of cosmic joke. But I'm like, That's true. Like, you really have to correct your errors. You really have to. Because I was always, you know, kind of a naturally critical person. I was like, Great, I can actually use this for my benefit now. Like, you know, but think like, oh, that's true. Probably for any discipline you're trying to get good at, you have to be willing to admit where you're not good, where you need to improve, and that's how you actually improve. It's like, Wow, what a concept. Like, wish I would have learned this.

Salvador Cefalu: [00:29:37] I just saw a little a little Instagram from Eckhart Tolle. There are no failures and your failures are your greatest gifts. I mean.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:29:45] Yeah, kind of. You know, they can be, but I'm just like, Man, I wish I would have learned that when I was younger. Like, maybe I could have been a pro athlete or something. But yeah, so neigong versus qigong versus Tai chi. It's easy to kind of have this be overlapped. I mean, in the most basic sense, Neigong just translates to like internal skill. Wow, Profound. Wow. What does that even mean? Cool. Because the thing is like different schools, different systems, different teachers will use that term to mean different things. So what I mean, in how it was taught to me specifically, in the simplest terms, neigong is basically just the process of. Reconsolidating the Yin field and your lower Down to yin and then filling it with Yang qi. That's basically it. And then once you reach the highest stages of that, you basically have a nuclear generator in your abdomen. You generate inhuman amounts of qi and that can fuel your healing practice, that can fuel your martial arts, that can fuel your meditation, can fuel whatever you want to direct it towards. Because at least for spirituality, it's like it's like if you have a rocket or you have a spaceship but no rocket, you can't really leave the ground. So you obviously need a rocket, you need fuel, you need an engine. Neigong is like the engine. So if you have the engine built, everything you do gets more potent, whether medicine, martial arts, exercise, anything. You have way more juice than basically everyone else that you'll ever encounter, which that starts to open up a lot of moral issues and side effects and, you know, challenges that we mentioned earlier.



Brandon Gilbert: [00:31:22] But in in the simplest terms, that's basically the process. So by going through that process, you also open the channels in your body because kind of mechanically speaking, neigong is just like, fill the damn thing with Yang Chi, build the yin container and then pressurize that out through the system and that internal pressure opens up the channels. Which what does that mean? It releases all the adhesions and blockages and stagnation inside of the body, which that's great for your health. Obviously, like you free up all that stuff in your body, your health goes way, way, way, way, way, way up. You have way more energy. You have like a soft fluid kind of spongy body that's really internally strong, kind of like you did when you were a baby or a child or something. You have that fluidity and flexibility. You have insane strength and power, but it's not built by muscular contraction because it's a completely different opposite mechanism. And it's actually quite an unnatural process. Just to, as a caveat, people be like, Oh, tai chi and all these arts are natural. They're not. They're at the exact opposite. They are completely unnatural, completely inefficient, and go completely opposite to how normal life actually functions because they have completely different aims and goals and objectives.

Dr. Setareh Moafi: [00:32:38] AD// Balancing your yin and yang energies can shift mental, physical and emotional patterns that would otherwise lead to accelerated aging, illness and disease. The Microcosmic and Macrocosmic Orbit meditations help circulate energy through the primary source channels of yin and yang, known as the doyen ren Meridians, to bring greater clarity and vitality throughout your life. For a limited time, you can purchase my one of a kind guided introduction to both of these Daoist meditations for just \$36. Visit our online store at acenterfornaturalhealing.com/shop to begin your transformation through the Microcosmic and Macrocosmic orbit Meditations. That's acenterfornaturalhealing.com/shop //AD

Brandon Gilbert: [00:33:35] So in the simplest terms, Neigong is kind of like building the engine to the car, opening up the pathways so that that stuff can move around and then you can use that for a lot of different things. So that's kind of how I understand the process. It's quite lengthy and it's quite an intense process. Like your channels opening is very literal, it's very tangible. Yang Chi Moving through your body is extremely literal, is extremely tangible. It has a whole wide variety of effects that are visibly perceivable by other people and extremely tangible within your own body. For example, when more Yang Chi really starts going into your due channel, it's common for people to like



prostrate or get pulled to the ground because it's basically like if you think about the Earth is this big yin magnetic field, and then you start having more Yang Shi going through the back of your spine up to your head, which is what I mean by the due channel, which is all the tissues on the side of the spine as those things start opening up. So if your body is like, Oh, this is too much, then the yin field of the earth pull you down. And it's one of those things, when heard about it, I was like, Nah, that doesn't really make sense. Like, that's weird. And it was. It was so strange because I heard about this, I saw it and I believed in it, but I was still skeptical.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:34:49] I was like, Yeah, I don't know. And then one day it actually hit me and I was like, Oh. Okay, so there's this other thing that's not me. And I remember when I first like workshop, I went to just standing and then I realized like this massive wave of heat went through my body and I was completely drenched in sweat like I'd just gotten out of a sauna. And I was like, uh. Been doing Qigong for however many years. Never felt that before. And then afterwards teacher was like, Oh yeah, like you're Yang qi moved a little bit. I was like, Whoa, that's what that is. Oh my God, that's a real thing. So yeah, it is very tangible. It is very real. And why that is beneficial is because you want your energy, body and your physical body to really interface and interact. So once you build that engine, then if you do something like Tai Chi, you can actually really do it. You can really get your foot in the door. You can do any of the other internal martial arts because you have an engine in place and you have an open system that you can then apply and utilize in many different ways. So hopefully that makes sense. And it's kind of it's kind of like the simplest way of understanding neigong And like I just want to reiterate the tangibility. There's no visualization, no imagination, no make believe, no nothing. It's basically as real as anything else in our physical body, but it's basically coming from the interaction of guess our energy body with our physical body.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:36:14] And that sets off a whole other process of transformation, which to me is probably the easily the most healing and beneficial thing that I've ever done. Subsequently, the most challenging and annoying and most hassle of a thing that I've ever done. Because within the idea of within the philosophical framework, the reason why our channels are closed is because of our personality. Our personality is more or less just our set of learned responses. Coping mechanisms, defense mechanisms, memories, emotional stuff or whatever. But that according to all the



internal arts, that's what's make us sick. That's what makes us ill, and that's what makes us have closed channel system. So the implicit thing is to really open your channel system means that stuff kind of goes away, which actually does happen. Like I can give you an extreme example of a guy that I knew had never trained before and was going to go to like a three month retreat. His girlfriend dropped him off at the airport. With the idea of picking him up in three months on the agreed upon date and time. When he was done with the retreat, he went to the retreat. Came back and he walked right past her in the airport. He had no idea who she was. He had completely wiped, like men in black, just, like, wiped it.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:37:40] Had no idea who she was. I can also tell you a story of another person I knew was riding on a train somewhere and saw a person sitting across from and thinking, Man, this person looks really familiar. I feel like I know them from somewhere. Come to find out it was their ex-wife. They had gone so deep into that process that the memory, the emotional glue, all the stuff just was gone. And obviously you don't become like a complete buffoon, like you still retain your ability to function in the world, even though actually in many ways you become completely useless because like, part of the process is you overcome your fight or flight response if you have no fight or flight response. You're kind of useless to the world in many ways, which is why at a certain stage a lot of practitioners leave the world because they have no fight or flight response. I mean, if you have no fight or flight response, you have no conflict. People can say and do anything to you. And it's like, what? Okay, nothing. I mean, I've heard stories of one person at this stage. They're driving a car. Another person's at the stage. They're pretty skilled, but not at that stage. They're driving down the highway at like 80 and they hydroplane cars spinning around, weaving through other cars, person in the passenger seat screaming because they're scared. They're like, Oh my God, the person driving is just like. Nothing.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:39:02] No elevated heart rate, no reaction. Just. You okay? Because they have no fight or flight response. That can be a problem. I mean people will have ruined their relationships, ruined their job, ruined their career, ruined their life. Because we get into relationships oftentimes it's kind of like this mutual balancing act and kind of this agreement. And a lot of it sometimes is built on stress. But if you remove all the stress and all the conflict from your system, now, that thing that was a balancing act just doesn't really work anymore. So people, their whole lives can fall



apart. I mean, that's pretty uncommon. It would have to hit someone really hard for that to happen, but it does happen. Fortunately. You want it to be more gradual. For me, it's been more gradual. And also, honestly, I don't really have a lot going in my life anyways, so it's like I have my business, I have training, I have my friends, my family. That's pretty much it. So for me, it wasn't that big of a deal, but it just definitely created many, many, many interesting situations relating with other people across a wide variety of things where I just started realizing the effect I was having on people was quite a lot different than what it was before. The way they were reacting to me was different, and I just had to kind of like adjust my behavior a bit and adjust some of my reactions as a result.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:40:23] Because, you know, having more qi in your system just feeds whatever's there. All your good things get better and all your negative things can get stronger as well. And you know, like we were talking about earlier, sometimes people, they get really quote unquote good, but they die early or they have these negative things that happen to them. So, I mean, just putting more chi in your body can be actually quite negative, quite problematic. And this is the importance of building the proper foundations, putting the proper cause and effect relationships in place so that when you introduce more input to your system, it feeds those appropriate cause and effect things. It doesn't just feed your desire for power or your desire for status or whatever other stuff that we all have in our in our unconscious, because we're all human. Like according to these traditions, we are basically just barely one step above apes. Like that's our starting point. It's like and I remember when I first heard this, I was like, That's not true. Because he was like, People mostly function off of conflict and reproduction. He was like, sex and fighting. That's what drives the vast majority of people, the vast majority of the time. And I was like, There's no way. I'm like, that's probably not true. And then over the course of like three years of of reflecting, I was like, Damn, like that actually does drive a lot of stuff. But I was like, Maybe I'm just a simpleton.

Salvador Cefalu: [00:41:48] But yeah, that's survival. I mean, that's just.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:41:51] How it is. Yeah. I mean, that's this is what drives us because we are like kind of, we are mammals. I mean, so that's kind of why, you know, a lot of the videos I've done over the last few months I think are great. They've a lot of people have liked them. A lot of people have disliked them because I'm basically just



pointing out that what a lot of people are construing as spirituality these days is just some aspect of their fight or flight response. So I'm like, Well, wait, you're saying that the lowest aspect of your mammalian organism is equated with the highest, most transcendental capacity of human beings? I'm like, That doesn't really make sense. I just think like, we live in the Kali Yuga. Everything is upside down. Everything is reversed. So I'm like, This makes sense. People think, you know, doing drugs and stimulating the nervous system or having sex or doing anything that stimulates their fight or flight response that's transcendental. I'm like, No, that's just stimulating your fight or flight response. It's not anything to do with spirituality in the classical traditional definition of the term.

Salvador Cefalu: [00:42:48] Well, it's like people doing Kundalini yoga, you know, they're they're like opening up the du mei when they're not cultivated. And I was going to ask you, you're a neigong teacher, you were saying? Correct.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:43:00] Yeah. Qigong and Neigong level one. Yeah.

Salvador Cefalu: [00:43:02] So how do you help your students stay grounded as they're building this internal power? Because it could really have some side effects. They could have more insomnia, more anxiety problems.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:43:14] Basically, when people generate more energy in their body, it does one of three things or all three things goes to their head, goes to their heart, goes to their genitals. So where they get hyper cerebral and like maybe they get smarter than people, so they get more eloquent, so people think they're attained, but, you know, they're just a little bit smarter or it goes to their heart and they have like emotional catharsis and emotional like ups and downs, which whatever, or it goes to their genitals and they get kind of hypersexualized and I mean there's so many examples of that happening in modern times within spiritual traditions. So that's basically it. You generate more chi in your body, goes to your head, you get more imagination, more fantasy, more delusion goes to your heart. You get emotionally unstable or it goes to your genitals and you get more of like a creepy person. How you resolve that, hopefully, or try to avoid that is actually opening your body up. At least in the beginning. That's where something like yoga asana was always used. Stretch open



the body, open the channels, lengthen the tissues, remove the blockages, like create some pathways so that if you do generate energy, it has somewhere to go.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:44:18] So like, you know, within doing neigong in the beginning, it's a lot of focus on just opening the body, opening the body, giving it the pathways for things to actually move and move through and not just get jammed up and get stuck. And then corollary starting to build the quality of attention versus intention and then allowing things to actually drop in sync, which just that distinction and conversation is a really important one, attention versus intention. Because basically why people get problems with internal arts is because they operate from intention, not attention. And those are two different things in actuality. Because there's that common phrase of like where the Yi goes, the qi flows like that kind of thing, or like Yi leads the qi, right? That's the, the kind of the common idea, basically, that's only two thirds of that line. It's Yi leads. The qi affects the li. That's the third part. It's the most important part in the li. In that context means like the physicality means something tangible and dense. So people often miss that third part of it and just kind of go off on that other thing. But actuality, it's it's not that your intent is doing it, it's actually a tension.

Dr. Setareh Moafi: [00:45:31] And by Yi you mean Y-I- Am I correct? That you're talking about which is the mind. Yeah.

Salvador Cefalu: [00:45:36] Which is like your focus. Yeah.

Dr. Setareh Moafi: [00:45:37] Your focus. Yeah.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:45:38] Yeah. Or intention. And that's honestly, that's what causes problems. People's focus is too strong, it's too focused, it's too constrained and it's carrying too much of their personality and too much of their emotional makeup. So then obviously, when a lot of Yang qi hits that it's not going to be a good scene. So that's kind of how you would try to avoid some of the negatives, is open the body, learn to actually get the breath to drop and sink down to the lower things. So basically, yeah, the lower dantian and the lower part of your body can grab the upper part. So there's a way to basically calm the body down and build that mechanism. And then through those kind of the combination of things, you can avoid a lot of the side effects. But the thing is like, we're all human, we're all people, so we're going to screw it up. I mean, you're going to



have problems, you're going to have issues, you're going to have side effects. And correcting problems is kind of how you learn anything with power obviously has risks associated with it. And that's just kind of an unwritten rule, I think.

Dr. Setareh Moafi: [00:46:35] AD// The Daoist believe that anything is possible, including miracles, and that when you open your heart, you open your world to endless possibilities. My audio guide, How to Attract Endless Possibilities will teach you the exact steps to help you create your ideal life. And it's yours free when you sign up now at setarehmoafi.com/miracles, you'll learn the four pillars that will allow you to shift your internal experience so you can begin manifesting exactly what you want. The life of your dreams is closer than you think. Visit setarehmoafi.com/miracles to start creating it now. That's setarehmoafi.com/miracles //AD

Dr. Setareh Moafi: [00:47:32] So just circling back, Brandon, you did a good job of defining what Neigong is. Maybe you could get a little bit into Qigong also so we understand the distinctions.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:47:41] Yeah, absolutely. Qigong is something that becomes extremely accessible once you have some kind of neigong stuff going on, meaning more interface with between the mind and the body, more tissue mobilization. Because basically what happens as the Yang Qi moves through the body, it unbinds, it breaks up all the layers, tissue layers that are stuck together and then eventually individual tissue layers can move individually over the bone. And actually just in a simple term, when people are talking about internal arts, it's not hinging your joints, it's not the normal way we move our body. That's just normal way we move our body. It's actually the mobilization of the tissues over the bones. That's the internal movement. And then it's not. Whatever else, it's a completely different opposite mechanic. So having that, you know, some prerequisite in neigong to whatever degree makes Qigong much easier because now you have something you actually can move through your system. You have either an electrical current that can kind of move through or you have something kind of like a magnetic field that can kind of move through. And qigong is mostly just dealing with those two things, either or addressing some quality of a yin or magnetic field or pumping Yang Qi through some region as basically a qigong is actually like mechanically speaking, very simple. And it's kind of like a hydraulic system where you're literally pumping things through your body and it's not really the way people think



because we think energy channels, we think like acupuncture and these things. We just think like something's moving in a line through my body or it's moving up and moving down. It's these kinds of things. It's more so like pumping water. Those like old water pumps, you know, you pump the bottom and it just like pushing the water up.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:49:23] It's actually more like that is how that feels. And then that pushes and moves things through the body. And that confused me for many years as well, because I'm like, Well, what is this? And then eventually I got to the point where it's like, Oh, it's really just you're pumping and pushing this internal pressure through your body. So qigong is basically like kind of that you really learn to create this internal pressure and then you kind of move it around and adjust it in your body. And how you do that is you first have to kind of build the connection between Lao Gong, which is the center of your palm, which is a major kind of magnet, let's say, for the body. So what you do is you build the connection. So when you move Lao Gong, it mobilizes your soft tissues over the top of your bones. So like, for example, if I have my hands up here and my palms are just facing down and then I just soak into it all the tissues, I'm like getting squished down now, basically. Whereas if I go like this. Now I'm like, everything wants to stretch up and open it just basically like. How Qigong really works is from first you have to have the connection of Lao Gong to be able to influence the inside of the body, to be able to mobilize things, the tissues over the bones. So what I was demonstrating is if my palms were facing down, that causes things to descend down. It causes all the tissues to stretch from my head down to my butt. They're getting pressurized down. It feels like it feels like someone just jumped on my tissues and are just ripping them down. Pushing them down.

Salvador Cefalu: [00:51:00] Creating a yin field.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:51:01] Yeah, exactly. It's just I built that connection. And over the years and it's over the years from just building the connection, I can just move my hands around and inside of my body will copy and match it. And that's really how that. Mechanic would work. So if you don't have the mechanic, then when you do the practice, the results are going to be quite diminished.

Salvador Cefalu: [00:51:22] And then you were talking about saying when you have your hands up, your palms facing up.



Brandon Gilbert: [00:51:26] Yeah, it did the opposite. I just put my palms up and it caused everything to stretch and go upwards, which that's also how people talk about the Jing and the Trigrams and energies of, you know, heaven and earth and these things honestly, like there's certain practices and mudras and stuff where you actually create those energetic patterns in your body. Like obviously heaven is pure yang, so everything goes up. So postures that are kind of like this heaven meaning palms facing up and out, which is like heaven. The quality of like the heaven trigram is everything is going up and out. Quality of the earth trigram is everything's going down and in and then like fire and water are kind of variations on that. So you could do like a fire mudra or something which causes the energy from the heart to expand outwards, do a water mudra which causes everything in your body to descend and go back towards your kind of lumbar pelvis region. So it's like these kind of energetic things become extremely tangible and extremely real effects on your body when you build the foundations through Neigong having some engine and then building the connection for like Lao Gong, the center of your palm, to be able to influence and interact with the tissues and the inside of your body. And then now you have like you have a workshop, now you can do things with your workshop, you got tools. So now you can do qigong and do learn different movements and have many different effects. You can do Tai chi and have different mechanical forces through your body and whatever else. So it's kind of sets the foundational tone.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:52:58] Whereas I think from what I've seen time and time again, what we are missing in modern times is the foundational piece in the engine. People build the foundations and the engines. Everything they do will get way more potent. But it's like we have all the stuff, but we don't necessarily have all the stuff to make that stuff actually work and be useful for people. So I think that's why neigong and some basic qigong stuff is, is really important and just qigong in the simplest terms is literally just up, down and out. That's all qi can do. That's it. It goes up. It goes down, it goes in, it goes out. Or it does some combination of those. That's it. That's qigong in general. Tai chi in general is just variations on up, down and out. People will talk about trigrams or elements within Tai Chi. It's just referring to those types of qualities in a mechanical way. It's it can be quite simple. So that's why real qigong movements are usually kind of dumb looking. They're kind of simple. They're not that cool or interesting to look at because it's just up, down and out or working with some field. But guess could define



what also what I mean by Chi within this context because I think it's kind of also an important thing. So qi is basically within Neigong and I would say across the board of all the internal arts, qi is basically the fluid of the mind that is able to soak into the body, kind of like water into a sponge or like ink onto paper. It's something that actually soaks and saturates and fills through the body.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:54:28] Now obviously when you start, that just kind of goes like it's nothing there because the body isn't open. Part of what happens is the more you open the body, the more is the mind is able to soak in, the more space it's able to fill and eventually, you know, reaches the bones and reaches the glands and other higher level stuff, which is pretty far down the line. But at least originally it's you work through different tissue layers, which that relates to some of the medical side of the practice because as we know, within Chinese medicine, every organ system has a tissue system that goes along with it, like the liver goes with like the jin or like the tendons, basically. But the thing is, through doing certain practices, you actually can like at least for the liver, for example, I can do something specifically for my liver just by adjusting my mental quality drop in. But instead of dropping into my body, I just go for attended quality. So my whole body gets kind of like really springy and like all the tissues get really kind of they really just feel like tendons. If you feel a tendon, it has a specific quality that's different than muscle or soft tissue or fascia or bone. So it's like I put the tendon quality in my body and then saturate into that, and then that will have a knock on effect for the liver system. And then for each system there's a similar thing. But what happens is, is you basically increase flow through that tissue system and that makes thereby that organ system better.

Dr. Setareh Moafi: [00:55:49] And you're talking about doing that just through your mind.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:55:52] Yeah, it's just a different mental quality. I can say, Hey, I want fascia, I want the Huang, which is like the more springy firm soft tissue or I want Jin or I want bone or I want joints or I want nerves or I want blood. Just change that mental frequency and can interact with that system independently. Like if I want to sit on the couch and move my blood and make myself sweaty, I can do it with. No external movement. I just drop internal pressure into the big veins and stuff in my legs and then just move the internal pressure. And then within a few minutes I'm like sweating. But it's



just basically learn how to generate the internal fluid pressure and just can decide what system to put that to. And eventually people can do it for their cerebral spinal fluid, their interstitial fluid. I can't yet because that's pretty subtle and refined, but it's definitely an evolution of that. So that's what I mean by qi is the ability for the mind to soak in. And then that creates like an animating quality because the inner interaction of the mind and the body can start to create different reactions. There's also a piece of it to where you need certain input from teachers. You need a certain energetic, let's just say, interference, but like transmission from a teacher to basically get the process going. That's also quite useful.

Dr. Setareh Moafi: [00:57:12] One important thing you said was about getting your qi to soak in and that, you know, that happens. You cultivate the mind, you cultivate the body to have that happen more strongly. But that's a very good and important point in general about movement and exercise versus doing the internal arts, because most of the exercise that we are doing as a society for its health benefits is actually can be very damaging for our health because we're generating a lot of Chi without directing that anywhere. So it's just building up in different parts of the body and then we end up having headaches and high blood pressure and back aches and, you know, because everything in the body, instead of getting more free and open, which is the intention, it becomes a more locked up and tight. That's why you see people who do a lot of go to the gym a lot. They're always injured, they always have pain and all the major joints of the body. Whereas because they think that if you just do these kinds of internal arts, this kind of cultivation, a maybe they feel overwhelmed because it's too complicated or B, they think, well, it's not really exercise because you're not getting your heart rate up, you're not doing this. And that's just totally untrue. It's where your attention and intention is and how much you cultivate that determines how these movements affect your body and mind.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:58:25] It's definitely a real tangible thing that transforms the inside of the body. But it was one powerful distinction that I'll make is that just doing internal arts can actually make people worse. It's like what you were saying is how you do it. And for example, if I just do Tai Chi, if I'm doing Tai chi or qigong or whatever, and I'm just kind of like my tissues are collapsed, my joints are collapsed, my joints are closed, which is what a lot of people do. You weaken the spleen, you weaken your digestive system because your tissues, you're putting like whatever quality you train is, what



feedback you put into your body that you're telling them you want more of. So if you're telling your soft tissues and your spleen system to go slack, to be super soft and squishy, your spleen is going to be like sweet and just going to be all soft and squishy and relaxed. And over time your digestive function goes down, your mental focus goes down, your energy levels go down. And I've seen a lot of people do that. So the the most important thing in the core teaching between all of the arts is goes to something called the Jin Jing, which people think it's like a set of exercises or they think it's like a book or whatever, but it's actually a set of principles that transform the inside of the body.

Brandon Gilbert: [00:59:38] And the most important aspect is basically being able to basically create differential differentials in the body. So what I mean by that is, going back to the example I was just using of like things being slack and closed is throughout all of the arts, there's always the separation of the bones and the tissues. So mentally I pin my skeleton in space and I drop all of my tissues off of the skeleton. And that creates an internal stretch that allows gravity to pull through my body and move through my body like a fluid force that then unbinds all the tissues and starts opening things up and allows she quote unquote, to naturally sink. So without that separation of the tissues and the bones, internal arts will make you weaker and less healthy and be take you in the wrong direction. You absolutely, positively have to have that separation because that's what actually can start opening the channels and lead to any of the benefits.

Salvador Cefalu: [01:00:33] I'm glad you mentioned that because I was going to just ask you to touch on that concept that when you're trying to become Yin, you're also extending your yang. So there's like this separation that's always occurring.

Dr. Setareh Moafi: [01:00:45] So Brandon, I know we talked about so many different aspects of the internal arts and it's all so fascinating. Where do we go from here? Where would you like to lead our listeners and where can they find out more if they want to get started with something like this?

Brandon Gilbert: [01:01:00] Yeah, absolutely. Just kind of want to say first off, I mean, I applaud anyone that's made it this far. Hopefully they didn't fall asleep or get a headache or get upset or anything because I know it's been a journey. I know this can



easily sound overwhelming and complicated. It and ridiculously whatever and mean. To be honest, it is. I'm overwhelmed by it at times. It is complicated, but we're also talking about working with human potential and working with some of the most powerful mechanisms that make up our life. So it's like, of course there's probably going to be a little bit of a learning curve because that's just it just is what it is. I mean, if we want to be a multi-billionaire, there's probably going to be a learning curve to get to that degree of success and competency or, you know, you just get lucky and you're born into it. But for most of us, it's like a process of development, right? So I just tried to come at it from a lot of different angles and share different opinions and perspectives. Then I think what is commonly available and commonly out there, which might make people uncomfortable or annoyed or kind of like, I don't know, this is confusing, which personally I think is a good place to be. And you know, it can because I say it's a good place to be because it can cause people to reflect and ask themselves deeper questions. What am I doing? Why am I doing this? What do I actually want? What is my actual motivation and intention? What is my actual goal? And I think those are all very important questions to ask because, you know, life is short, time is money.

Brandon Gilbert: [01:02:25] You have to make the best of it. So I think people could definitely take away some of the distinctions that I tried to make and that people want to learn more and go more deeply into it. Of course, I have a bunch of videos on my YouTube channel for just theoretical things. And then in terms of the most important thing I think is finding a person in person to study with and to learn with on a fairly regular basis. So people could reach out to any of the three teachers that are easily available and accessible that I think are quite skilled. So Bruce Francis, his company is called Energy Arts. He teaches a ton of stuff online. He's kind of an old, grumpy man at this point, but really pretty darn good, easily accessible, especially for people who may for people who just kind of want more healing, health, relaxation. He's probably the best option because that's more his aim. He's a little more medically oriented in his approach and in terms of healing the body, he's like, It's incredible what he can do if people are a little more like young and aggressive and crazy and kind of mentally disturbed, someone like Adam Meisner or Damo Mitchell would be great because their training is going to be a lot more demanding, a lot more rigorous, but obviously you're going to get a lot out of it as well.



Brandon Gilbert: [01:03:37] And they teach really high level tai chi and neigong and qigong and you can also find them online and then they each have teachers. So Adam Miser, his is called Heaven Man Earth. You can find that he has teachers all over the world. And then Damo is Lotus Neigong. He has teachers all over the world as well that people can go and study with. And then also people can study with. They can study with all three of those people, either in person or their subsequent teachers or study with them online. And just want to reiterate the importance of studying with someone in person and how much time and energy that can save you. Because the thing is like. If something's new and foreign to you, you're basically like, How can I figure out something I've never experienced before? Maybe you'll get lucky. Or maybe it'll take a long time. Or if you have someone who can just say, Hey, this is exactly what you do and exactly what you're looking for. It saves so much time and so much energy. So that's really the power and the importance of having a teacher and then also just putting in the time because it's just like with anything. Herbs don't work if you don't take them. Acupuncture doesn't do anything for you unless you actually get a session. And like internal training doesn't benefit you unless you actually do it and put in the benefits. And the last, most important distinction that I'll make and leave people with is that the power and the efficacy is not in the movement.

Brandon Gilbert: [01:05:00] It's not in the form. It's not in finding a new, unique, crazy, esoteric form or movement. The transformational potential and the benefits come from more like how you do it, the internal qualities that you put into it, and then how those internal qualities transform your internal environment. That's the benefit. That's the mechanism. The movements and everything else is secondary. And that's kind of like what I was saying earlier about the Jin Jing hanging the tissues from the bones, the mind fluid soaking through the body. All of that stuff is what will actually have the benefits, the movements, everything else. That's all kind of secondary and it's really just it's just as good as what you're putting into it, let's just say. Because if you have the right internal foundations and skills, you can do the most basic, stupid, silliest movement and it can have the most profound effects. But if you don't have any of those qualities in place, you can do the greatest movements in the world. You can do the best Tai Chi form ever created for 12 hours a day and it won't really have the same potency. So I feel like that's just the last kind of distinction that I would leave people with and then just highly recommend reaching out to one or all three of the people that I mentioned, or at least finding one of their teachers somewhere locally.



Salvador Cefalu: [01:06:15] Brandon I think you said you're a level one teacher. Is that with Lotus Neigong?

Brandon Gilbert: [01:06:20] Exactly. Yeah. But actually don't really teach.

Salvador Cefalu: [01:06:22] Oh, so you're not doing much now? Okay.

Brandon Gilbert: [01:06:24] Yeah, I'm not active actively. I just do my YouTube thing and my own practice.

Salvador Cefalu: [01:06:29] All right.

Dr. Setareh Moafi: [01:06:29] And as part of your cultivation, you can also explore medicinal mushrooms. If you go back to episode 58, we talked about that in depth. And also, you know, teas that are more adaptogenic like gynostemma. If this is very nerve wracking for you or if you're feeling overwhelmed by this whole discussion. Drink a cup of gynostemma, which you can get on Brandon's website at Hyperionherbs.com. That's a really great way to regulate your nervous system. It is, for me at least.

Salvador Cefalu: [01:06:57] And your blood sugar?

Dr. Setareh Moafi: [01:06:58] Yeah. And your blood sugar.

Brandon Gilbert: [01:06:59] Absolutely.

Salvador Cefalu: [01:07:01] Brandon, thank you so much for joining us again. This was a great talk.

Dr. Setareh Moafi: [01:07:04] Yeah.

Salvador Cefalu: [01:07:06] Brought up a lot of interesting points that simply are not things that we generally discuss.



Dr. Setareh Moafi: [01:07:14] Brandon I also really appreciate that you brought up the challenges with this type of cultivation because I think it's often glorified that you can pretty much do any of these internal arts kind of casually. And of course, yes, you're going to get some sort of benefit, but you also have to be very cautious with the way that you move forward and the way that you cultivate yourself, because doing this kind of internal practice as a healing can give you a lot of benefits, but it can also create a lot of problems if it's not done properly. So I appreciate that you highlighted that so people know.

Brandon Gilbert: [01:07:46] Absolutely. Happy to do it.

Dr. Setareh Moafi: [01:07:49] Now we want to hear from you. Visit acenterfornaturalhealing.com/internalarts and let us know in the comments. The biggest takeaway you got from this discussion and if you have any questions about anything we talked about, you can leave us a comment also so that we can get you the answers.

Salvador Cefalu: [01:08:08] And thank you for joining us for another episode of the Natural Healing Podcast, and we certainly look forward to next time.

Dr. Setareh Moafi: [01:08:14] Bye. Thanks, Brandon.

Brandon Gilbert: [01:08:16] Thanks. Thanks for having me on.

Dr. Setareh Moafi: [01:08:18] Hey, if you haven't already done so, be sure to rate and review us on Apple Podcasts. This ensures that we can share this invaluable information with more listeners just like you.