

Six Healing Sounds or Six Word Secret (Liu Zi Jue)

Six Healing Sounds is one of the classical qigong systems. The term Liu Zi Jue was first mentioned by Tao Hongjing (420 - 589) in his book *On Caring for the Health of the Mind and Prolonging the Life Span*. Tao Hongjing was a Daoist master, an alchemist and very knowledgeable in Traditional Chinese Medicine. He was the first systematiser of Shangqing Daoism and became its ninth patriarch. The Shangqing tradition focusses on meditation and visualisation practices.

The original practice of the Six Healing Sounds involved only breath and sound. Later, in the Ming Dynasty, both Hu Wenhuan and Gao Lian wrote books which added physical exercises to the practice.

The popularity of the practice in modern China owes a lot to Dr. Ma Litang who wrote *Liu Zi Jue Health and Fitness Exercises* and taught the technique to both students and hospital patients.

The first five sounds correspond to the Five Elements (Wind, Fire, Earth, Metal and Water) and the Five Yin Organs (Liver, Heart, Spleen, Lungs, Kidneys). The sixth sound corresponds to the Triple Burner, one of the Yang organs which has no equivalent in Western medicine. Here it refers mainly to the function of balancing the heat in the body.

The sounds are used to purge excess or toxic qi from the body on the exhale. On the inhale fresh qi is taken in. As with most classical systems, there are variations in what is taught today. Some teachers recommend the sounds are made sub-vocally and others recommend they are vocalised. There are also some variations in the sounds used. The sounds are widely used by medical qigong practitioners to purge the organs.