

## Moving Energy, Spiritual Fitness, and Personal Power Presence



### Episode 47: Moving Energy, Spiritual Fitness, and Personal Power with Vicki Dello Joio

**Gregory Anne:** Hey, welcome back peeps to another episode of rebellious wellness over 50. We're going to talk about all things spiritual and movement and aging, and the nurturing that your soul and spirit need as much as your body needs. Vicky Delo Joio. My guest, welcome Vicki.

Is an expert in, am I going to say it right? G gong.

**Vicki Delo Joio:** Qi gong.

**Gregory Anne:** Which is something that may bring to mind a picture of people on a beach or a park moving their hands and swaying slightly and think what are they doing? Vicky's going to take us on a journey about how that works and why it is good for us, mind, body and soul. Welcome again, Vicky.

**Vicki Delo Joio:** Thank you so much. It's a joy to be here. I love rebellious eellness just completely feels right. It's right where I want to be.

**Gregory Anne:** Oh, great. Yeah. I think after meeting you virtually and reading your site and watching you perform and tell your stories, I realized that we are kindred in that. And when I say rebellious wellness for anybody, who's just new to this podcast or my way of thinking, it really is an act of rebellion, in this day and age to stand for the way we want to be treated medically relationally, we have to say no when it doesn't feel like it fits and that's hard to do so today we're going to talk about saying yes and learning some new ways of moving.

And when I say move, people think exercise so we could call what you do, the practice of Qi Gong, exercise or movement or a spiritual embodiment.

And I feel like we have got to learn to move as we age, we can't stop moving. Would you explain to people what Qi Gong is.

**Vicki Delo Joio:** Big umbrella words like dance. So, you say, oh, I'm taking a class in dance. Well, was it Alvin Ailey style. Is it ballet? Is it tap? Is it Martha Graham style?

Uh, so Qi Gong is like that. It's one of these ? And it's actually a fairly recent, as it came out as an umbrella to cover basically movement practices that combine meditation, breath, work visualization. There's probably over 6,000 exercises or more that get called Qi Gong so when you see people in the park moving very slowly like this, that's a one branch that's called Tai Chi, which most people are familiar with that which is more of a martial art version.

So it's very specific form that every angle that you move your hand at, where your weight is, everything is very prescribed. Qi Gong in general as a practice is a little bit more forgiving. So the movement is really more about how you feel and what the energy is that's moving through you as opposed to

just being in a very specific form, which has its uses is important, but it's a little differentiated. But like I said, Tai Chi, the marshal version is one side of Qi Gong, there's medical chigong, which a lot of people in this country are mostly familiar with when they hear about Qi Gong, if they heard about Qi Gong at all.

Medical chigong tends to be working with the ways in which the different organs connect to the different seasons. It's associated with acupuncture sort of like without the needles.

Then there's a spiritual component to Qi Gong, which is really where it goes into more meditative ,self empowerment, self improvement part of the practices. So very wide range. So that's what Qi Gong is in a nutshell.

**Gregory Anne:** I appreciate that. I didn't realize that Tai Chi was within that umbrella, as you said, I thought they might've been two separate practices.

**Vicki Delo Joio:** It was the first Qi Gong practice that came to this country. And so it's, the one is most familiar and it's when I started I was actually 17 or so.

**Gregory Anne:** Oh gosh, 17. Yeah, fun. But don't necessarily want to go back there.

**Vicki Delo Joio:** I actually had somebody recently send me a movie of me doing early pushing.

Tai Chi for two people. And there I am with really long hair and I look like a baby practicing this thing. And it was just amazing to watch. And I remember those moves now.

**Gregory Anne:** Do you remember what caught your attention about this if you've started so young.

**Vicki Delo Joio:** Oh yeah, absolutely. So I had never heard of Tai Chi, when I started, but I grew up in New York city.

In fact, when you were talking about rebellious. Some of my clients call me a rebel woo, or a Renegade woo coach, because I coach people and I kind of combined very nitty gritty New York style. Right. I grew up in a very, what you see is what you get, very practical type of environment.

And when I came to California, which is where I live now, I was really afraid I was going to become one of those people, their feet don't touch the ground, you know? Of course I become my own worst fear. But what intrigued me to begin with I was at an early as an actor. I was an actor.

I was extremely shy as a child and my mom thought it would be a good idea to put me into a a summer stock production of Gidian's rainbow. And I fell head over heels with acting cause I could be somebody besides me, which was my initial

desire was to, what that meant was not be so shy, be more out there and were more visible.

And I came to California in the late sixties to a theater school here, ACT, actors conservatory theater, and they had Tai-Chi for actors. So that was my first introduction to it. But I have to admit that this wasn't totally intriguing because this was an 80 something year old man.

His big claim to fame was he had a young wife who had just had a baby so that showed us virility and as a young lesbian, that didn't particularly interest me. But when I started doing the movements, it felt like coming home, there was something about it and this is where we knew. I don't know if I can talk about past lives.

I don't even know what to say about that, but it felt so familiar in my body. It felt so good. So when I went to college, one of my main teachers turned out to be a Tai Chi teacher and I went to a school where that physical education was important.

So, I started to dive in pretty deeply there. So that was my intro.

**Gregory Anne:** I love that you felt like you were coming home. That's nice. Yeah. And so from there you made this your life's work, but you didn't exactly give up, I'm going to say acting speaking. A form of acting right. Taking the stage and telling your story.

You're very good storyteller. Everybody. If you want to go to her website, which is Vicki DeloJoio right? That's your website.com some great videos there. Tell me about having done public speaking and learning. You know how to get over the fear and tell a story and all this stuff. What happens in your mind on stage?

Do you stay present to what's happening or do you, does it because I know acting is slightly different. Presenting and speaking, but,

**Vicki Delo Joio:** Well you know, I hardly see any of them as being separate anymore. It's so funny because I've been doing these Qi practices for so long that I don't know what isn't Qi practice in a way. So when I go on stage, particularly to perform and I am in a theater company .

And I do, as you say, I do speaking, I was doing speaking when I started to think about the Qi Gong work as a business, because I hadn't really thought it was just sort of like go with the flow and people wanted to learn it, so I would teach and it was all fine. And at some point I thought, you know, I really should do something about this and start thinking about retirement, all that stuff.

So, when I started taking it on as a business, I started doing speaking and a couple of people, one person in particular came up to me and said, I love how you speak. I want to learn how to do what you do. Can you teach us? And so I thought, well, yes, I can teach you, but I can't teach you to be like me. I can teach you to be a better you on stage.

And it's really comes down to two different parts, which is what is the energy that is in you that allows you to bring your power presence forward? That's part of the Qi Gong work. How do we move energy in such a way that we can transform that stage fright or anxiousness, which is actually really useful when you want it to create a big presence, right?

It's just a question of how to translate that energy into something that goes out instead of constricting us and pulling us back or making us more fearful. So, I started coaching people. I started teaching Qi Gong and also my skill as I've directed many one woman shows . I'm in an improvisational theater company called Living Arts Playback Theater, where we take stories from people's lives.

Somebody could come up on stage and the actor, there's a conductor who would ask them the story about their life and then the actors and musicians play it back on the spot.

**Gregory Anne:** Oh my God. That sounds so cool.

**Vicki Delo Joio:** It's an amazing thing. It's almost drama therapeutic, although it's entertainment too.

It's not like comedy improv. I'm amazed at how vulnerable people can be when they tell a really deep story and we get to play that back. It's an honor, but you can imagine that in order to be able to listen really well to what the promises are in that story, what's the essence, what's the story under the story really requires being present.

You can't be floating off and just how's my hair look? What are they thinking? You can't go there. You need to really stay in that moment. And I find that Qi Gong has been very helpful for me on stage for many reasons.

**Gregory Anne:** Let's talk about the power of our presence.

**Vicki Delo Joio:** Yes.

**Gregory Anne:** We talked a little bit before we came online about you're offering a class, which you can talk about in just one second, but I think where I wanted to

go with you is if you, is, you are offering a class on personal presence, how you present yourself in the world to people, whether they're in business or not, although you work with entrepreneurs and other business people, I'm curious about that, did you see a need because you feel that there are people who are not bringing their whole powerful self to the conversation with their grandkids. I think you mentioned with your family, with your kids, did you see a need for that, or is it just a sense that you have that?

Sometimes we as women, especially as we age start to lose track of our essence.

**Vicki Delo Joio:** I love that question. It really makes me think harder about how and why I'm doing it. The power presence came about because I was working a lot with entrepreneurs and speakers who wanted to up-level how they were doing their work, that they could really engage their audience.

Part of what it was was I saw a lot of people on stage that I'd be doing a talk, maybe other speakers on stage too, and a lot of times I would notice that while they were speaking, people were texting or and it broke my heart because a lot of the people that I was on stage with shared stages were women over 50 right.

Women who were older. And we live in a culture where old women become irrelevant or invisible. There was a wonderful story about that, that I can't remember if it was Octavia Butler. It doesn't matter that of sort of disappearing and what that meant. I really believe that women

Who have gone through, what many of us have gone through, in terms of how we've adapted to our lives in different ways over time, that as we get older, there's a lot of wisdom there that I'm dedicated to tapping into and supporting women to bring that forward. So for me, the bottom line is energy.

There's energy, both in terms of what you've experienced and then there's energy in the stories that you tell. I also am a trainer in something called powerful non-defensive communication, which was created by Sharon Strand Ellison. Very wonderful way of expressing yourself. And there's an element that in Qi Gong and that's called Wei Qi and it means basically outer energy in Chinese medicine.

It's what keeps you healthy from pathogens and allergens and those kinds of things. Another way to look at Wei Qi is the energy that you're putting out. So you know how you can be at a party and somebody can walk in the room and you can kind of either feel like, oh, I don't think so. Or you can be, oh, I want to get to know that person, that's Wei Chi you're responding to something. That's nonverbal and I'm not talking about romantic attraction or something like that. I'm talking about something bigger. It encompasses more. So I think that for women as we get older,

and for me personally, it's been a little bit of a relief, not to be so attractive to certain people anymore.

I don't have to worry about that anymore. Partly it's not that I don't want to be attractive or I don't want to look my best or be shiny. I do. I, of course, but, that sense of needing to kind of care so much about the prioritize that over what it is, I'm really wanting to bring forward or what I'm wanting to highlight.

That's what's important to me. So I've sort of pulled together this powerful non-defensive communication. What's like to be able to speak from your empowered place, whether it's on a stage or whether it's to our recalcitrant grandchild, and then what it's like to feel that energetic power to support that.

So I've sort of brought these three branches together. So your power presence is really about staying empowered and emanating this. I'll say one more thing, which is that when I first encountered powerful non-defensive communication, which was 27 years ago now, as Sharon was talking about her work, I realized this was the language for Wei Qi.

It was. How do you speak from a place where you don't have to be defended, which is basically not feeling safe, to a place where you're so grounded in yourself, stimulus or self doubts kind of fall off the edge of this Wei Qi field this field that we put out.

**Gregory Anne:** Cool.

**Vicki Delo Joio:** That was a lot of words, I know.

**Gregory Anne:** Yeah, I was processing and trying to understand how do we learn the Qi Gong? How much do we have to learn to incorporate what you're talking about to have it be a part of us?

**Vicki Delo Joio:** That's a great question. There are basic Qi Gong moves that you can learn in minutes. Just really fast. There's definitely more complicated forms and more that go in the direction of Tai Chi . Right now I have Qi Gong classes and I'm going to start a new power presence class soon, that's in the works. For right now, it's more the Qi Gong for health. So we're right now in winter time. So winter is all about replenishing and nourishing and listening inside, right? Most parts of the Western hemisphere are cold. So this is a time of, replenishing the kidneys.

The kidneys are associated with winter. So that's all the health piece of it but the kidneys at this time of year, also your reserve tank of strength. So how do you

replenish, what does self-care look like for you? And they're just movements that help sort of move energy through the kidneys so that they stay really healthy, which is really helpful because we can get so fatigued, particularly as we age.

Fatigue can be a big piece of what's happening for us. Like just not feeling like we have access to the same amount of energy that we did when we were at twenties and thirties. Um, so building up kidney Qi is always very useful to be able to just show up in your life in the ways you want to.

So interesting.

**Gregory Anne:** Those two little guys sitting back there,

**Vicki Delo Joio:** The little guys right behind the bottom floating ribs. For people who are listening, they can just put their hands on their back. If they can reach, and just rub up and down, that would be a Qi Gong exercise that would stimulate some Qi and warmth into the kidneys, which tend to run cold.

Or if they can't because they have a shoulder impingement with some people do even putting it on the front of your floating ribs and then just imagining sending energy from your palms back to those organs until you start to feel warm in your solar plexus space.

**Gregory Anne:** There are listeners who have not experienced we are energy.

When you're talking about moving the energy, and I think for people that are Western medicine minded

we think about moving our blood, moving energy through our body is probably a concept that's hard for some people to understand because the body does its own thing, right? The body moves things without us really having much to do.

But I guess if we can harness or understand the energy flow in our body versus the lymphatic flow, the blood flow, the breathing, they're different. Right? Can you help me out here? I'm stumbling.

**Vicki Delo Joio:** I love your processing. It's very accurate. Look, Qi basically, and the blood are intertwined. So Qi rides the blood.

This concept of Qi or energy is really, we can understand it when we think about, the electrical impulses that happen on the neural system, right? There's impulses that happen, these things travel through our body. This is basically totally integrated with how we move energy.

In Chinese medicine, every disease comes down to stagnation, whether it's emotional, mental, physical. Something basically starts to either slow down or get stuck. In Western medicine, I think they said like 90% of diseases boil down to microcirculation, how the circulatory system works, our blood circulation works.

And then if the blood stuff stops moving through your body, life stops. Right? It's that simple. So, they're intertwined. There's Qi Gong practices where you do something called plum hands, where you start to make your palms modeled red and white or red and brown.

If your skin is brown or black, that, that, you know, that, that, that, or or pink, there's a pinkening that happens in the palms. Where you're sending your energy, which is the same thing as blood. But I think anybody who has experienced a really warm hug where they feel at peace and safe knows what energy is or anybody who responds to, like I said, if somebody comes into a party and you feel like want to stay away. That's energy.

So it's not mysterious. Everybody has it. Everybody has access to it. And it's actually simpler than you think. It's not like you have to study a whole other system. If you rub your hands together. And then cup your hands so that they're facing each other. And then you just relax your fingers and bring your hands a little further apart and see how far apart you can move your hands and still feel the heat, that energy comes out as heat.

So when people, you know, that when people who are more in the woo world, see an aura or see light around people's body, that is actually Qi coming off their body and that's your energy field that you can expand in your Wei Qi field or contract.

**Gregory Anne:** That was a great help. Thank you.

We put so much emphasis on our physical body as we age. We have to take walks. We have to get our checkups. Whatever we have to do, meditate. Is Qi Gong part of that way of staying physically healthy as well as spiritually energetically healthy?

**Vicki Delo Joio:** Absolutely because it is movement. When you're moving, this is a way of being alive and for people, particularly older folks who aren't necessarily comfortable sitting in a chair or sitting on the floor with their legs crossed or something like that.

As we get older, our joints might get stiffer if we're not in a lot of practice. There's definitely Qi Gong has these moves that are very, very gentle.

And so for people who can't meditate because it's physically too uncomfortable or they just don't like to sit still. It gives you something to focus on. So as you're moving your body, you're focusing on say the heat between your hands or you're focusing on your breath or there's also visualization that comes with a lot of it.

There's a movement that I love. That's called the shower where you're basically bringing the arms up over your head and bringing your hands down in front of you. So you're just making circles. So if people want to check on YouTube and see what I'm doing, but basically I'm bringing my arms out to the sides, then going down to the top of the head and down the front of the body.

And that's a way of bringing the sense of your connection to your mind, but beyond mind, your higher power or your sense of being connected to something bigger than just you and then just letting it settle into the cells of your body. It's almost like you have a thought, you have

a picture in your mind. And then it gets put into the cells and the cells can carry it. Whether you're thinking about it or not.

**Gregory Anne:** And let's speak about the woo side, the spirit side. We, don't age spiritually because of course it is ageless.

It being pneuma, spirit, breath. But you talk about spiritual fitness. What does that actually mean?

**Vicki Delo Joio:** For me, spiritual fitness is the same thing as the power presence. There's a concept in Qi Gong of the heaven realm or what's called Shen, which has to do with the spirit, the human realm, which has to do with how we interconnect with one another and how we take

say our guidance and putting it. So I'm going to write a book and then you start to think about how am I going to do that? That's the human world we're working with strengths and limitations, and also with our interconnectedness, with one another, that sense of being part of a, what Thich Nhat Hanh calls intervening.

And then there's the earth realm which has to do with we walk our talk, what is our empowerment? What gives us a sense of health and wealth? And for me, spiritual fitness is alignment of all three, our wisdom, our sense of joy and love and connection, interconnection, and our sense of health and our sense of being able to really manifest and create what we want to our own sense of empowerment.

Being able to take steps in the path that we want, that we're choosing to walk. Spiritual fitness is all 3 of those in alignment.

**Gregory Anne:** And that's another rebellious concept in my mind to choose how we want to walk this life that we have. And I think at this age, I'll speak for me in my sixties. It is a lot easier than it was when I was 30 and 40 to say, This is what I want to do, and I'm gonna try it and it might work or it might not, but I got to do it right?

Okay. I wrote a book now there's some other book that wants to maybe come into being. I'm going to try it. It doesn't even feel like it has to be discussed as much as when I were younger. And of course, I go to people for a conversation. Can I run this by you, get somebody's input, maybe they're a mentor, how does this fit in?

What's your experience of that alignment and saying, this is how I'm going to walk as you've aged? Has it changed?

**Vicki Delo Joio:** Yes. I think that I've gotten more trusting as I've aged, I've got more trusting of myself of knowing that I can move the values that I hold, which are of service.

Serve and love them comes different.

**Gregory Anne:** That's a nice distinction.

**Vicki Delo Joio:** Yeah. I just thought of it just now, when you were talking, I was thinking about it, but what was it for you, which I'd love to know? What was it for you that what starts to drop away? But for me, I think it was just, I think it's more about inner trust and also I'm blown away by how smart women are.

I am. Even young women. As women age and as, as we get to a place where we have put aside the parts of ourselves that maybe needed to do more, more of other oriented activities that as we, you know, as we kind of come more to ourselves, which isn't true for every woman as we age, and I want to be really clear to acknowledge that, but there is a sense of there's a call.

This is what I think, I don't think we talked about this online, but the concept of being in a second spring, which is Qi Gong, this one of the concepts of Qi Gong of how to address metaphor within being in a second spring. The second birthing of who you are, rebirthing the part of yourself that's

Coming back to the source. We come from someplace when we're born, we die and we might go to some place we don't know. But that sense of that source part, how that lives inside of us. I feel like I knew some stuff when I was just opening my eyes. I have really early memory.

Having a sense of what I was perceiving in the world. And then of course it gets colored by all the different experiences that I've had, but sort of coming back to that part, which to me comes back to love. I feel that the source is about love. How do we love each other?

How do we love ourselves? How do we stay in that field of love? Because that's ultimately where I feel like the planet needs to go. I feel like that's what the shifts are that many women I know are called to make in their own type of ways. And the diversity of who we are is so beautiful. Right. We all have our different way of doing it, a different way of accessing that knowledge.

So that's what I think, how about you? What is it for you as, as you've come into your 60s?

**Gregory Anne:** I think in part it's being able to say, I believe in these other things. You said "I don't know whether I can say past lives, where do we go from here? Early on delved into paranormal and afterlife and past life regression, all these things, but it was never something that I would talk about.

And I feel that in order for me and maybe somebody listening, in order for me to feel like I'm using all the curiosity I was given. I want to explore those things and be out about it. Talk about it with other people, get involved in, you know, I'm looking into a place in Holland to do a psychedelic experience, a retreat.

And just because I want to, I want to experience as much as I can. And. That is the thing that as I've gotten older, it's been this like, just stop worrying about what other people think about.

The idea that whatever your interests, are just explore. And if it turns out that that was just a whim, like I started painting for a while and I thought, oh, this is going to be my winter activity. And I did one thing and it was not the thing that held my interest. Right? But to me, the world and cultures and experiences that we can have is endless.

And I just want to be more in that idea of curiosity and exploration.

**Vicki Delo Joio:** Oh, I just love that. I love that. I love curiosity and exploration as claiming that, in our sixties. That feels so strong to me. , what I was thinking is that it also takes us out of any kind of victim mindset, right?

Where. It's very easy to feel overlooked or misunderstood or irrelevant, or I don't know how this technical thing works or technology, whatever it is that can kind of grab us and make us feel less than. The idea of going into whatever it is that is

drawing us with curiosity and exploration. I love those really tag words to hook on to just like you said,

**Gregory Anne:** I just thought of that while we were talking.

So it's going to be my new phrase.

**Vicki Delo Joio:** I love it. I'm all be following you. I think that's the bottom line is, back to your power presence, that if we feel like our lives are just at effect about what happens to us. That there's a way in which we move into a victim mindset and that's never going to be either healthy or it doesn't help you.

It doesn't help the people that you care about it doesn't do anything. When we're empowered. When we feel like we can move into that place of curiosity and exploration, all that stuff kind of drops away. I think it just kind of pivots the focus.

**Gregory Anne:** Well, I don't want to end this conversation, but I feel like in deference to our listeners who probably have other things on their plate for the day.

I wanted to make sure that they know how can they get introduced to more of what you are talking about.

**Vicki Delo Joio:** The best way at this point is for them to just connect with me directly. If people are interested in any of the things that we've talked about, particularly around self-empowerment spiritual fitness storytelling, any of that, I'd love to connect with you.

So that would be going to your power presence.com. And you can just schedule a 20 minute talk and I can see what are the ways your energy could be further supported to do what you want to do.

**Gregory Anne:** That's great. And if like some people are shy like you were when you first started. If they're too shy to make a call...

**Vicki Delo Joio:** Check out the website, Vicki Dello Joio.com you can see what classes are coming and various activities that you might be interested in, or you could follow me on Facebook.

Just use my name. I also have a group on Facebook called your energy matters You can go to Facebook slash your energy matters. And that's all matters energy.

**Gregory Anne:** I love that. Well, great. So, and Vicki, I'm going to spell your name for people that are, it will be on the web page for my podcast, but in case

nobody's there, it's Vicki, V I C K I Dello, D E L L O last name Joe, J O I O put those all together, put a.com at the end, and that is her website and where you can learn more about what she does.

So wrapping this conversation up, what do you think in terms of how important is it for us to learn about energy? Let's just go there as a, as a closing point.

**Vicki Delo Joio:** I think it's fundamental. I think when we start to understand that energy is what our whole being is based on. It gives us such a sense of freedom and joy and a sense of really being able to make choices that we wouldn't otherwise get to make.

Essential. We're using energy, whether we pay attention to it or not, in the same way our hearts are beating and our breath is going, whether we pay attention or not, it's that important. So why not pay attention and actually use it to direct it in the areas that you feel like you want to build in you?

**Gregory Anne:** I love that. And that's a perfect ending. Thank you so much. Thank you again, people for listening, I'll be back next week with another fabulous guest be well till then. Thanks.

Thank you so much Gregory.