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THESIS APPROVAL

The abstract and thesis of Steven C. Andress for the Master of Public Health in Health Education / Health Promotion were presented May 10, 1996, and accepted by the thesis committee and the department.

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Abstract

An abstract of the thesis of Steven C. Address for the Master of Public Health in Health Education / Health Promotion presented May 10, 1996.

Title: Understanding Ki in the Daily Experience of Advanced Practitioners of Aikido: A Phenomenological Study.

Ki, Japanese for living energy (Chi in Chinese), is at the absolute core of the Oriental model of medicine and wellness. Complementary to this model, many Oriental martial art exercises have evolved to cultivate Ki for optimal health. However, the concept of Ki remains poorly understood and relatively unexplored in traditional Western health and medical literature. Further, the health focus of martial art research has remained primarily concerned with the arts' contribution to psychological health. This has left a significant gap in our understanding of the other health benefits that these arts and Ki have to offer.

To begin closing these gaps, Moustakas' phenomenological research method was used to develop an enhanced understanding of Ki. Twelve advanced practitioners of the traditional martial art of Aikido were asked to illuminate how they perceive and describe the experience of Ki in their lives. Aikido was an excellent art through which to study Ki because of the art's focus on developing the Ki of its practitioners and its recognition in the literature as psychologically beneficial.

The co-researchers described Ki as a force that they perceived to be influencing their lives in multiple ways. They believed that the Ki they developed through their Aikido practice enhanced the health of their minds, bodies, and spirits. Ki was described and explained through its perceived immediate and long term effects. They expressed Ki as an integrated part of their beings that enhanced physical and psychological health and well-being, and fostered calmness and clarity of mind. Ki was also perceived as a tool for recovering from injuries and illness and for achieving personal goals. Further, over time they perceived that Ki engendered great trust in the universe and that Ki protected their health.

Several key differences between the traditional definition of Ki and the co-researchers' everyday experience emerged from the analysis. These were the differentiation between the long and short term effects of Ki, the description of Ki as a tool, and the attribution to Ki of the feelings of trust in the universe.

UNDERSTANDING KI IN THE DAILY EXPERIENCE
OF ADVANCED PRACTITIONERS OF AIKIDO:
A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

by
STEVEN C. ANDRESS

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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in
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Portland State University
1996

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Introduction

This study seeks to understand how the advanced practitioners of the martial art, Aikido, perceive and describe the experience of Ki in their lives. Aikido is purported to improve the health and performance of its practitioners and enable them to enjoy more healthy, productive, and successful lives. These positive outcomes are accomplished through the systematic development of living energy or as the Japanese call it, Ki. This active expansion and promotion of Ki is central to the study of the Japanese martial art of Aikido (Reed, 1992; Tohei, 1980, 1984).

The concept of Ki (called Chi in Chinese and Prana in Sanskrit) is at the absolute core of the Oriental model of medicine and wellness and has its foundation in the cultivation of Ki for optimal health (Beinfeld & Korngold, 1991, 1995; Eisenburg & Wright, 1985). Since the showing of Bill Moyers' PBS program *Healing and the Mind* there has been increased interest in the ways this traditional Oriental model of health may augment our understanding of health and wellness. However, the concept of Ki is so removed from our traditional Western view of the universe that it is difficult to comprehend its mechanisms and usefulness.

Although there is no modern English equivalent for the term "Ki", it is sometimes expressed in the West as living energy, universal energy, or the life force. The closest Western counterpart is the archaic concept of vitalism, a vital force, or a soul. Once a dominate concept in Western thought, vitalism has fallen into obscurity over the past three centuries with the rise of empirical science.

Ki can't be touched, seen, measured, or quantified in any way and, as such, it is difficult for our culture to understand or accept. Orientals, though, perceive Ki indirectly through its effects on the fostering, maintaining, and protecting of health. They believe that all matter is made up of Ki and the processes of life are driven by the movement of this energy. Disease or illness is thought to be the result of an interruption in the flow of Ki in an individual. When people live out of balance, Ki no longer flows freely and stagnates, like the air in a closed room, thus, disease can manifest. Traditional Oriental medicine strives to maintain the balance and flow of Ki. Further, many Orientals practice daily martial art exercises to promote their own flow of Ki and thus good health.

Contrary to the stylized brutality often depicted in the cinema, the purpose behind most martial arts training is the ongoing physical, mental, and spiritual development of the individual (Weiser, Kutz, Kutz, & Weiser, 1995; Fuller, 1988; Levine, 1984). For example, the underlying purpose for studying the Japanese martial art of Aikido is not to acquire fighting skills or even self-defense techniques; it is to develop the practitioner fully and improve their health through the active cultivation of Ki. Traditionally, the martial arts claim to promote relaxation, self-confidence, self-mastery, serenity, enhanced mind and body coordination, and higher states of consciousness. Indeed, research shows that the most accomplished of martial artists have high levels of personal achievement and self confidence and low levels of anxiety and hostility (Fuller, 1988; Weiser, Kutz, Kutz, Weiser, 1995). Further, some psychologists consider the art of Aikido as an active agent for psychotherapeutic change and a training that can enhance a therapist's

professional skills (Saposnek, 1980; Fuller, 1988; Regets, 1990; Hall, 1991, Windle & Samko, 1992; French, 1993). Although important, most of the research on Aikido, as well as other martial arts, relies on mechanistic measures of outcomes. Ki, which forms the foundation of this art, is only mentioned in the vaguest of terms in published research, if at all.

By its very nature, Ki lies outside of a positivistic framework, therefore, it is mostly ignored in deference to the more measurable facets in the scientific investigation of the martial arts. However, something as fundamental to these arts as Ki, no matter how foreign, must be understood to fully comprehend these arts and their impact on health.

This research project provides a unique opportunity to illuminate how some Westerners, who are advanced practitioners of an Oriental martial art, perceive and describe their experience of Ki in their lives. Traditional Aikido is an excellent art through which to study this phenomenon both because it is regarded as one of the most highly evolved of the martial arts and because its underlying goals are to actively develop the Ki of its participants.

Columbus and Rice (1991) believe that a qualitative approach, particularly a phenomenological one, is essential to begin to understand the intricacies of the Oriental martial arts, especially as they are taught and applied within a Western setting. This study will begin to close the gap in research through a phenomenological exploration of perceptions and experiences of Ki in the lives of individuals who are actively involved with cultivating their Ki through the practice of an Oriental martial art.

Literature review

The purpose of this review is to provide the necessary background and context through which the intent of this study may be better understood. This section will briefly outline the relevant literature in the areas of the Oriental model of health, the vital force in Western science and medicine, the martial arts and health, and Aikido as a method to develop Ki.

Ki in Oriental Health

In the Orient, health is defined as "the ability of the organism to respond appropriately to a wide variety of challenges while maintaining equilibrium, integrity and coherence." (Beinfield & Korngold, 1995, p. 45) From the Oriental perspective, the body is seen as a garden that must be carefully cultivated and tended to foster and maintain health. This garden, like any ecosystem, has an innate capacity to return to its original state of equilibrium or balance when challenged. Thus, Oriental medicine is based on preventive practices that focus on the whole person and promote this natural capacity for balance. In this model, the role of diagnosis is to identify imbalances in the patient and the goal of treatment is to restore the patient's state of harmony (Beinfield & Korngold, 1991, 1995; Krippner, 1995). Chin (1995) illuminates this point by using kidney disease as an example. Instead of focusing on the kidney as an independent organ, the physician would see the disease process as an indication of an energy imbalance existing in the patient and prescribe a treatment to correct this imbalance.

From the Oriental point of view, the living energy of Ki drives all life processes and is responsible for balancing mind, body, and spirit, and promoting health and wellness (Beinfeld & Korngold, 1991; Yuasa, 1993; Chin, 1995). Illness manifests itself when an individual gets out of balance and Ki no longer circulates properly (Kaptchuk, 1983; Beinfeld & Korngold, 1991, 1995; Krippner, 1995; Chin, 1995). Multiple factors, internal and external, can cause these imbalances. From a Ki perspective, individuals with strong living energy are resistant to illness and disease and can usually recover from challenges easily. For these people, their Ki exchanges freely with the universal Ki, like the wind blowing through the trees. However, people with weak Ki are more susceptible to illness and have difficulty recovering from challenges. Their Ki does not flow freely, instead, it stagnates like the air in a closed room. Further, when a person dies Ki no longer flows in them.

This concept of life energy has underpinned Oriental philosophy since ancient times. In China, the term Chi is used to express the essential principle of harmony, the source of creativity, and the vital fullness of life (Hamano, 1987; Seitz et al., 1990). In Japan, as Ki, the Chinese meaning is expanded to include the power that drives all natural forces and humankind's interactions with nature. The changing of the seasons, the cycles of life, and the essence of human interaction, interrelationships and interdependency are all manifestations of Ki. This connection is expressed as part of the everyday language. When the Japanese want to know how another person is feeling, they ask "How is your Chi flowing?" (O genki des ka). They may respond by saying either "My Ki is flowing!" (Genki des) or "My Ki is rotten!" (Byoki des).

Health practices have evolved in the Orient based on this living energy model of Ki. These medical practices manipulate and direct Ki in patients to activate their body's natural healing processes and improve the overall flow of Ki. Although many different therapies have been developed which use a wide range of techniques, they are all grounded in Ki theory. The practices of acupuncture, acupressure, raiki, and kiatsu are just a few examples of these diverse methods. These examples are similar in their use and manipulation of Ki to promote healing and their reliance on energetic maps of the body.

Over the centuries the Orientals have mapped the human body to show the invisible network of meridians or energy channels and acu-points that carry and direct Ki (Kaptchuk, 1983; Tohei, 1983; Beinfield & Korngold, 1991; Yuasa, 1993). In acupuncture there are twelve regular meridians that connect the distal, limbic and visceral organs and eight irregular meridians that are Ki reservoirs (Yuasa, 1993). Acupuncture uses needles inserted into acu-points located in the skin to manipulate Ki as required to help the patient. The body is seen as a vessel for the flow of universal Ki and the skin is the boundary of exchange between the inner and the outer world (Yuasa, 1993). Raiki and kiatsu utilize many of the same energy meridians as acupuncture but the practitioners send external Ki, Ki emitted through the therapist's hands, to the patient to promote the healing process (Tohei, 1983; Reed 1987; Rand, 1991). Although forms of these arts have been used for centuries in the Orient, their use and effectiveness are still highly controversial here in the West.

Ki is elusive, even with current technology, and it still defies direct measurement or quantification. Further, there are no structures within acupuncture's meridian system that can be identified anatomically (Yuasa,

1993). However, empirical investigations of the meridian system strongly suggest these energy circuits do exist (Leskowitz, 1992; Yuasa, 1993). Yuasa has translated Chinese and Japanese research studies that show that there are areas of high conductance on the skin which correspond closely to acupuncture points and meridians. Further, the sensations felt by sensitive individuals while receiving acupuncture correspond to the acupuncture meridians.

In Yuasa's (1993) and Shen's (1986) translations and reviews of Oriental studies they found that quantifiable differences exist between external Ki therapists and non-therapists. For example, while Ki therapists are sending Ki from their hands the measure of infrared energy varies dramatically from that of the hands of normal individuals. Additionally, thermal imaging studies have shown an increase in skin temperature of between 2 and 4 degrees centigrade on the arms of Qigong masters during Ki transmission. Further, Ki therapists, while doing therapy, have very changed EEG's. These patterns resemble those found in meditators and master martial artists when they are focused. Interestingly, the brain patterns of the Ki-therapist and the recipient of Ki, align themselves during a Ki session in a sequence uncharacteristic to normal brain patterns.

The Vital Force in Western Science & Medicine

Although the application of the concept of living energy to science and medicine is less prevalent here in the West than in the East, the idea is far from new. It has only been during the last three hundred years that the concept has move from its originally dominate position into one of obscurity.

Sheldrake (1994) reminds us that three theories of life have woven their way through Western thought since the time of ancient Greece. He identifies these as the concepts of vitalism or vital force, the mechanistic model, and, most recently, systems theory.

Vitalism dominated Western science and medicine for almost two thousand years, from approximately 300 BC until the 17th century (McGirr, 1992; Sheldrake, 1994; Federspil & Sicolo, 1994). According to Federspil and Sicolo (1994), Aristotle (384 - 322 BC) was the first to represent vitalistic point of view. Aristotle held that living entities are composed of matter and soul. He believed these two elements to be inseparable and saw no duality in them. The soul was not something added to matter, rather, it was that which gave form and specific determination to matter. It was the soul that gave the body its very life. He further believed that each living entity had a meaning and purpose in life, and tended to move toward fulfilling its individual end. Unlike the Oriental version of living energy, this vitalistic notion of life was tied directly to the idea of soul.

Aristotle's vitalistic philosophy had great impact on the biological and medical thought of Galen (129-189 AD) (Federspil & Sicolo, 1994). Galen believed that the vital spirit of life entered the body through the breath and that this spirit was derived from the Universal spirit (McGirr, 1992), and the parts of living beings were built according to a design that had the function of preserving life and the species (Federspil & Sicolo, 1994).

Galen's philosophy of vitalism was embraced through the medieval times and into the middle ages. However, as the centuries passed, the idea of the integrated nature of soul and matter gave way to a more dualistic perspective.

More over, the vital force was ascribed only to living entities. The philosophy of Telesio (1509 - 1587) illustrates this major departure from the classical model of vitalism (Federspil & Sicolo, 1994). He separated the soul and body into two separate entities that coexist together and influence each other. This departure, according to Federspil and Sicolo, made way for vitalism to be replaced by empirical science and the mechanistic perspective of Descartes (1596 - 1650). When the empirical method was applied to the two entities, body and soul, only the material body could be measured and observed. Since the existence of the vital force, or soul, could not be proven, the mechanists violently opposed any position that postulated its existence (Federspil & Sicolo, 1994).

According to Sheldrake (1994), the mechanistic theory of life sees the difference between living organisms and dead or inanimate matter as only a matter of degree. The mechanists believe that all matter, whether living, dead, or inanimate, must obey the same universal laws of physics and chemistry. From this perspective, life is not seen to involve any additional principles outside of these disciplines.

Until the beginning of the twentieth century, a controversy between the vitalists and the mechanists raged but the vitalistic perspective has never again held a dominate position in Western scientific thought (Federspil & Sicolo, 1994). During this time, vitalists would continue to point at the failings of the mechanistic model to adequately explain all natural phenomena or the purposefulness of living organisms. To them, a vital force was necessary to explain many of the deficiencies in the mechanistic model for explaining certain biological phenomena. For example, vitalism better explains the development

of embryos into adult beings, and the instincts of animals whether it be migration patterns, nest construction, or web building (Sheldrake, 1994). However, the vitalists' arguments were discounted and disproved as simplistic and romantic notions with no scientific basis.

Systems or holistic theory, new since the 1920's, transcends this controversy by agreeing with elements of both views (Sheldrake, 1994). It agrees with the mechanistic view by affirming the unity of nature and sees life as different in degree to the physical world but not different in kind. However, it agrees with vitalism in stressing that organisms are organic wholes that can't be reduced to the physics and chemistry of simpler systems. Systems theorists hold that all of nature is alive and that all matter contains structures or patterns of energetic activity. Further, the organization of organisms and nature is believed to be through embryonic or morphogenic fields. Through systems theory some of the questions that have been left unanswered by the mechanistic and vitalistic perspectives are starting to be explored and explained.

Systems thinking is also influencing how health professionals define and practice their professions. For example, in the field of health promotion, Nicholas and Gobble (1991) have created an alternative definition of a health promoting system. They define it as "one in which all the levels of the system are intact and free from excessive perturbations or disruptions to the self-regulating, homeostatic nature of the system" (p. 33). In comparison, there is close resemblance between this and the Oriental definition of health. It appears that, from a Western standpoint, the systems approach closely parallels the Oriental model of health.

Ki in the Martial arts

As a complement to medical practice, Oriental health exercises have evolved to promote health, balanced living, and self-development through the improved flow and cultivation of Ki. Most of the exercises practiced in the Orient originated from martial art disciplines. Of the martial arts, Tai Chi, Qigong (also spelled Chi Kung), and Aikido work the most directly and expressly towards developing the Ki of their practitioners. In the Orient, as well as the West, millions of people practice these types of Ki exercises daily to maintain and improve their health and well-being.

The arts of Qigong and Tai Chi are practiced extensively throughout China. Qigong, which literally means the manipulation of Ki, is known there as therapeutic martial art (Shen, 1986). Although there are thousands of schools of Qigong in China, there are five main categories of study: Qigong for maintaining health, curing sickness, prolonging life, martial art and reaching enlightenment (Yang, 1989). The core elements of Qigong are polishing and refining the character of the practitioner, exercising Ki, and connecting with a higher spirit. Tai Chi originated from a combination of Taoist breathing and spiritual practices and Shaolin boxing (Levine, 1984). Tai Chi utilizes slow stylized movements to develop the practitioner's breathing, Ki movement, and inner control.

Since the twelfth century, the Japanese have used the martial arts as tools for self cultivation and spiritual development as well as for learning lethal fighting skills (Levine, 1984; Yuasa, 1993). The concept of bushido, the way of the warrior, underscores this martial practice. The goal of this bushido ethic is

to conquer one's self and develop a mature personality through the disciplined practice of fighting techniques, spiritual pursuits, and the arts (Yuasa, 1993). In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century many of the Japanese martial arts were transformed from their lethal intent into tools for personal and spiritual development. The martial art of Aikido was created by Morihei Ueshiba at this time to teach the harmonious blending of Ki (Levine, 1984; Stevens, 1987).

Over the past several decades, the martial arts have become recognized, here in the West, for their ability to promote mental health. Many empirical studies concur that martial art training increases self-esteem and confidence, improves the management of the emotions (especially aggression, hostility, and vulnerability), and decreases sleep disturbances and depression (e. g., Fuller, 1988; Weiser et al., 1995). The few qualitative studies on martial art practice concur with and expand on these findings.

For example, Columbus and Rice (1991) asked their co-researchers to describe an experience when they realized that the martial arts were a good thing to know. These co-researchers reported that the martial arts became meaningful to them when they were able to apply the knowledge, skills and values of the arts in their lives. Their life applications included coping with life changes and criminal victimization, and pursuing personal growth and self-discovery. Epstein (1986) asked a group of therapists, who were also advanced Aikidoists, to describe their experience of being centered in therapy. His co-researchers reported attentional shifts, expanded awareness, and a sense of balance and unity. They further described the aspects of increased self trust, self-acceptance, trust of their intuition, and a present-centered

orientation. Finally, Hall (1991), through a case study, described how a novice Aikidoist had a marked decrease in anger and feelings of aggression after a short term of training.

The benefits of martial art training may be due in part to the positive effects attributed to the physical exercise itself, although the benefits manifest themselves much slower in the martial arts other types of exercise programs (Weiser et al., 1995). However, Weiser and colleagues note that an additional and enhancing effect, unique to the martial arts, is the mechanism through which practitioners learn to confront themselves and others. They further describe the traditional martial arts as important teachers of social values. These values include honesty in communication, assertiveness, empathy, courage, humility, perseverance, gentleness, respect for others, responsibility and self improvement. Indeed, Levine (1984) finds many similarities between the intent, developmental history, and goals of liberal arts education and martial arts training. He regards the martial arts, in many cases, as exemplary liberal educational programs because of their focus on personal growth and development.

From the Oriental perspective, self development and improved health are ultimate goals for studying the martial arts and these are achieved through the cultivation of living energy (Tohei, 1980; Ueshiba, 1984; Reed 1992; Yuasa, 1993). Jung (1967) recognized Ki as an archetypal idea in Chinese alchemy. He saw that, in the Orient, the careful and continual cultivation of Ki is necessary for developing the whole person and that this process leads to the integration of the whole personality, or individuation.

Aikido: A Practice for Ki development

Again, Aikido is a contemporary martial art that was created in the early part of this century by Morihei Ueshiba (1883-1968). Aikido literally means the way to harmony with Ki and is based on a non-competitive ethos of harmonizing with the Ki of one's opponents. The purpose of Aikido is to help the individual to maximize his or her potential through cultivating Ki (Tohei, 1980; Reed, 1992). Morihei Ueshiba described the relationship between Ki and the martial arts: "In all matters related to the arts, including the martial arts, superiority is determined through training and practice, but true excellence is dependent on Ki." (Ueshiba, 1984, p. 23)

Koichi Tohei (1980, 1983, 1984), the living master of Ki and Aikido, likens the human condition to that of an iceberg. While only a tip of an iceberg is visible above the surface of the water, there is a much larger portion that is hidden from view. People usually only use a small portion of their physical or intellectual abilities; this is analogous to the iceberg's tip. However, by using Ki, people can tap into the full iceberg of their abilities.

Although the techniques of Aikido are highly effective as self-defense techniques, the fighting aspects are de-emphasized in the training hall. Aikido is not intended to do harm or injury to others. Furthermore, within the form itself, there are no offensive postures or attacks. The art simply serves as a useful metaphor for daily life which is dynamic, unpredictable, and hectic. When attacked by a fellow student in practice, the Aikidoist is constantly challenged to stay calm, focused, and relaxed in the midst of the action. Practitioners of Aikido learn to sense the Ki of his or her opponent's attack and move in harmony with that energy. Tabata (personal communication,

December 17, 1989) uses the Japanese phrase Ki-Sho-Ten-Ketsu to describe the dynamic nature of Ki in the application of an Aikido technique. Ki -- the opponent's Ki moves in the direction of the attack before his or her body moves. The Aikidoist has Ki extended already and senses the opponent's Ki movement. Sho -- the Aikidoist's mind moves and redirects the attacker's Ki in a non-harmful direction. Ten -- the physical attack arrives and the Aikidoist moves in a direction that doesn't collide with the opponent. Ketsu -- the Aikidoist completes the move with confidence and harmony.

This sequence can be illustrated by the example of pulling a chair out from under someone just as they are about to sit down. Ki -- the opponent decides to sit down in a chair. Sho -- the Aikidoist senses the intent to sit and decides to pull out the chair. Ten -- the opponent begins to sit and the Aikidoist pulls out the chair. This happens at the moment the opponent is fully committed to sitting in the chair. Although they now realize the chair is gone, there is nothing they can do to stop themselves. Ketsu- the opponent falls to the floor and, if they are an Aikidoist themselves, tucks and rolls safely.

Without Ki, many of the Aikido arts either work poorly or don't work at all. Therefore, testing for the ability to use Ki is a major portion of the training. Aikidoists are constantly tested by their peers and instructors to provide direct feedback about their capabilities and to help increase their capacity to harness Ki (Tohei, 1980; Reed, 1987, 1992). In addition to Aikido arts, students learn about Ki through exercises that unify mind and body (extending Ki, relaxing, centering, and balancing), health exercises, meditation techniques, and Ki breathing methods. These methods were created as tools for improving the daily life of the Aikidoist through the active development of Ki. Aikidoists are

encouraged to utilize the principles of Ki and harmony outside the training hall to enhance their health, abilities, and relationships.

Aikido has received wide attention in the psychological literature as a model for developing effective and harmonious interpersonal relationships. It is considered, by some, as an effective supplement to therapy and as a methodology that can enhance the therapists' skills. Saposnek (1980) discussed the Aikido encounter as a model for brief strategic therapy. Windle and Snider (1987) argued that Aikido and Erickson's Hypnotherapy share similar methods and goals. They felt that the Aikido principles of blending with the opponents Ki and of centering were analogous to the methods of hypnotherapy. Fuller (1988) felt Aikido was applicable as either a self-contained therapeutic method or an adjunct to traditional psychotherapy. Finally, Tart (1987) and Seitz, et al. (1990) felt that the concept of Ki, based on Aikido principles, has value to offer the psychological community: "The martial arts have some important things to say in the area of mental health particularly in terms of [Ki] energy..." (Seitz et al., 1990, p. 463)

Summary Of Literature Review

The intent of this review was to provide a survey of the available literature that would supply the necessary background and context through which the intent of this proposed study could be understood. In the review, the Oriental health model was developed as theoretical framework to provide an understanding of the significance of Ki in Eastern thought. Empirical studies were cited to further expand this understanding through a Western perspective.

The Oriental model of health is based on the concept of living energy. The individual is seen as a garden that must be cultivated and tended. This is in sharp contrast to the Western idea of the body as machine. However, the concept of living energy is not new to the West. The notion of a vital force (vitalism), in the form of a soul, was prevalent in classical Western thought until the seventeenth century. Since that time, vitalism has moved into obscurity and the mechanistic model of life has come to dominate Western science and medicine.

The healing practices in the Orient are based on an energetic system of the body that can be manipulated to direct and enhance the flow of Ki. Both Oriental medicine and martial art practice strive to improve the overall health of individuals through enhancing the flow and balance of Ki energy. Martial art practice complements Oriental medicine through the cultivation of Ki for self-development and health.

These martial practices have become increasingly recognized in the psychological literature for their beneficial effects. Through a few qualitative studies, the practitioners have begun to describe their experiences and the effects that they perceive their martial practices have had on their lives. However, the Ki development aspect of these arts receives little attention and is only mentioned in the vaguest of terms in the literature. Aikido, a contemporary martial art, is practiced for the expressed purpose of maximizing the potential of its practitioners through the active cultivation of Ki. It is highly regarded in the West as a model of effective interpersonal interaction and for its healthful psychological benefits. Even so, there has not

been any direct exploration of how Ki is experienced or described by practitioners of Aikido or other arts.

Problem Statement

In reviewing the Western literature on Ki and on the martial arts, two significant deficits become apparent. First, the concept of Ki remains poorly understood and mostly unexplored in the traditional Western health and medical literature. Leskowitz (1992) believes this to be a significant gap in the Western understanding of health and medicine, and that this lack of comprehension reduces our ability to influence the disease process. In the literature, Ki has mostly been studied and explained theoretically from historical and philosophical perspectives. However, Ki still remains a difficult concept to understand or grasp because of its intangible nature. Second, the focus of research on the martial arts has remained primarily in the arena of psychological health. This leaves a significant gap in the understanding of the total health benefits that these arts and the underlying living energy of Ki have to offer.

To begin closing these gaps, an enhanced understanding of Ki, based on a subjective phenomenological perspective, will be required. The traditional martial art of Aikido, with its emphasis on Ki, provides one avenue for gaining an increased insight into the nature of this life energy. This study is designed to illuminate how some Westerners, who are steeped in the practice of Aikido, perceive and describe their experience of Ki in their lives.

Methods

A Phenomenological Approach

Columbus and Rice (1991) note two contextual problems in performing research on the martial arts and suggest that a phenomenological research approach will overcome these obstacles. First, the martial arts are underpinned by oriental philosophies such as Zen Buddhism and Taoism that make them difficult to grasp within a traditional positivist Western perspective. They argue that, in Western thinking, phenomenology most closely parallels Oriental philosophy. This similarity, they believe, provides a framework through which the Oriental way of thinking can be understood and its subtleties comprehended. Second, the values and meanings traditionally associated with the martial arts as practiced within their Oriental context may change when practiced here in the West. Again, Columbus and Rice believe that phenomenology provides a methodology that clarifies these contextual intricacies of the martial arts and provides a better understanding of them as psychological phenomenon.

Moustakas (1994) feels that the phenomenological research approach provides the tools to illuminate the true meaning and essence of an experience. He states, "Phenomenology, step by step, attempts to eliminate everything that represents a prejudgement, setting aside presuppositions, and reaching a transcendental state of freshness, openness, a readiness to see in an unfettered way, not threatened by customs, beliefs, and prejudices of normal science, by the habits of the natural world or by knowledge based on unreflected everyday experience." (p. 41) This attitude reflects the Zen

philosophy of beginner's mind: to look at everything, especially everyday events and activities, as fresh and new.

Phenomenology

I used the phenomenological method in this study because it provided an effective means of understanding the perceptions and meanings surrounding the concept of Ki. According to Moustakas (1994), the phenomenological method focuses on the appearances of things, to see them as they are, removed from their everyday routines and biases. It is concerned with examining a phenomenon from all angles to create a unified vision and understand the whole of an experience. Subject and object are completely integrated. Phenomenology is committed to developing complete descriptions of the experience; it does not seek explanations. These descriptions endeavor to present, in complete terms, the essence and meaning of the experience as vividly as possible. There are seven steps to the phenomenological research process (Moustakas, 1994):

1. Define a topic and research question that are rooted in the personal meanings and values of the researcher.
2. Conduct a comprehensive review of the professional and research literature.
3. Develop a criteria for co-researcher selection and recruitment.
4. Communicate the nature and purpose of the investigation to the co-researchers and gaining their consent to participate.
5. Develop questions that give direction and focus to the study which will lead to understanding the meaning of the phenomenon.

6. Conduct and record one-on-one interviews with the co-researchers.
7. Organize and analyze the data.

Four Core Processes

Moustakas (1994) outlines four core processes that underlie the phenomenological method and contribute to the emergence of knowledge: epoche, phenomenological reduction, imaginative variation, and synthesis of meaning and essences.

Epoche means to refrain from judgment. The researcher views the phenomenon as fresh and new and puts aside all preconceptions, understandings, and judgments. During phenomenological reduction, the researcher sees each experience separately, in and of itself. A complete description is developed to capture the meanings and essences of each experience. These descriptions include essential constituents, variations of perceptions, thoughts, feelings, sounds, colors, and shapes. At this stage, a textural description of all the distinctive or identifying constituents that comprise the experience is developed. During imaginative variation, the essence of the phenomenon is grasped and a structural description created. This step is accomplished through the recognition of underlying themes, consideration of the universal structures in relation to the phenomenon, and identification of illustrative examples. Finally, a unifying synthesis of the structural and textural essences is derived from the previous two steps.

Co-Researchers

I used the term "co-researcher" purposefully to express the nature of the relationship between myself, the researcher, and those I interviewed in the course of this study. In this phenomenological study, the co-researchers and I were engaged in a process to understand and illuminate the meaning of Ki in their lives. Further, the balanced reciprocal relationship implied in the term, paralleled the philosophy followed in Aikido training.

Moustakas (1994) outlines specific criteria for selecting participants with whom to conduct phenomenological research. The essential components of these criteria are that the co-researchers have experienced the phenomenon in question, are interested in understanding its nature, and are willing to participate in a long interview.

For this study, the foremost criteria I used for selecting co-researchers was that they have extensive life experiences with Ki. This criterion was met by enlisting Aikido instructors as the co-researchers. These individuals were recruited from the instructor base of a large Aikido organization comprised of affiliated training halls located throughout Oregon's Willamette Valley. These instructors met the selection criteria because Ki is at the core of their Aikido practice and they are required to draw on their personal experience with Ki to teach the art. Further, pilot interviews demonstrated that the more advanced Aikidoists did, indeed, express more fully through rich examples their experiences with Ki. On the other hand, novice practitioners were unable to express their experience in concrete examples from their daily experience.

I interviewed a total of 12 Aikido instructors in the course this study. They were all enlisted through a personal invitation from me to participate and

each signed an informed consent form prior to his or her interview (see appendix A). Seven of the co-researchers were women and five were men. These instructors had practiced Aikido from 9 to 24 years with a median duration of 12 years of training. The median age of these individuals was 43, ranging between 30 and 62 years of age. They ranged in rank between first and fifth degree blackbelt (dan) with the mode of second dan. Racially, ten of the co-researchers were white and two were of Asian descent. These were all highly educated individuals; seven had bachelor's degrees, two had master's degrees, and three had doctorates.

Access

As a Westerner, a long term practitioner of Aikido, and instructor of the art, I approached this study as a complete member researcher (CMR). I had an established relationship as a peer with all the co-researchers. This existing relationship provided an established level of trust that allowed me to probe deeply into the experiences related to me during the interview process. Further, my knowledge of the process and language of Aikido training helped me to understand the co-researchers' experiences without letting the jargon of training interfere with the interview's flow.

Challenges For The CMR

Prior to beginning the interview process, the I felt that my established membership role as a peer might become a barrier to gaining complete information from the co-researcher. I felt that the co-researchers, to maintain established appearances, might be reluctant to share information of a

personal, negative, or unflattering nature. This was not the case, the I found the co-researchers to be very open and candid in relating their experiences.

I was also concerned that my extensive knowledge of the language and process of Aikido, although an advantage, might lead me to make assumptions, overlook details, or project my own opinions into the interview process. This issue was observed to be more germane to the co-researchers than to myself. Since the participants had a shared experience with me, they tended to be less detailed in their explanations than they might have been with an outsider. Further, they tended to leave out experiences they thought I already knew about. To compensate for these tendencies, I was constantly challenged to probe for more details and prompt for other experiences to insure that complete descriptions were given.

Research Question & Data Collection

To gather data from the co-researchers, I utilized an unstructured interview approach that followed an informal, interactive process of open-ended questions and comments (Moustakas, 1994; Polkinghorne, 1989). The interview questions I used in this study were based on phenomenological formulations presented in Moustakas (1994), Rahilly (1993), and van Kaam (1966).

The interviews took place in locations that were convenient to the individual needs of the co-researchers. The majority of the interviews took place in the participants' homes. However, four were held at other locations more convenient to the co-researcher: at work, at restaurants, and at a dojo. Two interviews were held over the phone because of the distant locations that

the participants lived. I completed the interviews between August 20 and November 11, 1995.

I asked each co-researcher the following questions:

1. Tell me about your first experience with Ki.
2. How do you experience Ki now?
3. How does your experience of Ki compare between these times?
4. Tell me about your most dramatic experience with Ki.
 - (a) What was it like for you?
 - (b) What did you experience?
 - (c) What was your reaction?
2. Tell me about another significant experience you have had with Ki.
 - (a) What was it like for you?
 - (b) What did you experience?
 - (c) What was your reaction?
3. Tell me about another significant experience with Ki.
 - (a) What was it like for you?
 - (b) What did you experience?
 - (c) What was your reaction?

Additional instructions were required to help the co-researchers focus on relating their personal experience rather than simply describing their situations or the events (Rahilly, 1993; van Kamm; 1969). To accomplish this, I asked them to "Focus on describing your experience rather than the situation or event. Describe your feelings and perceptions just as they were." To encourage the co-researchers to provide complete descriptions, I told them

to "Continue until you have completely described each experience and feel that you have been understood."

During the interview process, I probed for a deeper understanding of the co-researchers' responses and for fuller descriptions of their experiences. To help ensure that I was able to capture their full description of Ki, I asked the co-researchers to relate additional experiences. I continued the interview process until the co-researchers felt that they had completely described the various ways that Ki had manifested itself in their lives.

At the conclusion of the interview, personal information was collected: age, sex, race, educational level, length of Aikido training, belt rank, and occupation. All the interviews were be tape recorded and later transcribed for data analysis.

Data Analysis

The data analysis followed Moustakas' (1994) modification of van Kaam's (1966) method for analyzing phenomenological data. First, I completely analyzed each interview transcript following a seven step process:

1. Listing and preliminary grouping -- To complete this step, I listed and grouped each of the co-researcher's expressions of their experience from the transcript and eliminated my own questions, comments, and any other statements that were not pertinent to the subject of Ki. In this process, every statement that exhibited an element of the experience of Ki was written down regardless of whether I believed it to be worthwhile or not. This step concluded by grouping the statements into categories.

2. Reducing and eliminating -- For this step, I tested each statement listed in step one against two criterion. I checked to see if the expression was, first, necessary and adequate to understand the experience of Ki, and, second, to see if it was possible to extract and label the statement. If the above criteria were not met, based on my own judgment, then I eliminated the statement. Further, all overlapping, repetitive, or vague expressions were either eliminated or combined. This process left a set of independent and non-repetitive statements that expressed the co-researchers complete experience with Ki. Moustakas refers to these expressions as the invariant constituents.

3. Clustering and thematizing the invariant constituents -- During this step, I clustered together the related statements from step two under thematic labels. For each cluster of statements, I identified the core theme and its underlying elements. The combination of all the identified themes expressed the breadth of the co-researcher's experience.

4. Validating the clusters and themes -- To perform the validation, I checked each cluster and theme against the co-researcher's complete transcript. I verified that the themes were expressed explicitly in, or were compatible with the transcript.

5. Developing an individual textural description of the experience -- Textures define the nature and qualities of the experience that distinguish it from other experiences. To determine the textures, I asked the questions posed by Moustakas: "What is the nature of the phenomenon? What are its qualities? What appears at different times and under varying circumstances?" (p. 78) Through answering these questions, I developed a description that detailed the textural aspects of the experience. I included verbatim examples

from the transcript throughout this textural description to support and illustrate the various elements of the experience.

6. Developing an individual structural description -- Structures underlie the textures; Moustakas defines them as the thoughts, feelings, and senses that are associated with an experience and include the precipitating conditions. To complete this step, I reviewed the output from the first five steps and, from these, identified and listed the co-researcher's expressed thoughts, feelings, and senses. Based on the listed expressions, I developed a complete structural description of the co-researchers' experience.

7. Constructing a textural-structural description -- In the preceding steps, I reduced and manipulated the data in several ways to provide three specific expressions of the co-researcher's experience: the underlying themes, and the textural and structural descriptions. To complete this final step, I synthesized these components into a single description that expressed the co-researcher's complete experience: the textural-structural description. This synthesis marked the culmination of the analysis for each individual transcript.

Once all 12 individual transcripts were analyzed, I concluded the analysis by developing a composite textural-structural description of the meanings and essences of Ki. I followed a three step process to create this composite description. First I developed a composite of major themes to understand the breadth of experience of the entire group. Next, using the group's thematic summary as a guide, I synthesized a composite structural-textural description from all the individual descriptions. Finally, I compared the composite

description against the summary of themes to ensure that the breadth of the experience was expressed. This composite description represented both the breadth and depth of the experience of Ki for the whole group.

Trustworthiness

Just as quantitative research must pass the cannons of internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity, so too must all qualitative inquiry, including phenomenology, pass its own set of criteria. Guba and Lincoln (1985) outline four criteria to establish the trustworthiness of qualitative research: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The test of credibility -- the equivalent to internal validity -- seeks to demonstrate that the study is designed in a way that ensures its purpose is accurately identified and described. Transferability is the applicability of the findings to other contexts -- the substitute for external validity. However, in qualitative inquiry, the determining of transferability to other situations resides more with the researcher who would make the transfer than with the original researcher. Dependability -- the alternate for reliability -- is established through the researcher taking into account the factors of instability and the changes caused by the phenomenon or the research design. Finally, confirmability is equivalent to objectivity, however, its focus is on the data rather than on the researcher. It tests the extent to which the data is factual and confirmable. To meet the above criteria, Guba and Lincoln (1985) outline multiple strategies. For this study, I used the techniques of peer debriefing, member checks, dependability audits, and confirmability audits.

Peer debriefing is the process of working with research partners who critically question the researcher's analysis. These took place at several stages in the research process. During the proposal stage, both the study's goals and analytical methodology were reviewed and evaluated by thesis committee members. Later, the results were reviewed by committee members to evaluate the application of the methodology to the data and the clarity of the results.

Member checks were performed both informally and formally throughout the course of the data collection and analysis. During the interview process, I continually restated and summarized the co-researcher's statements to informally check the accuracy of the data collected. A formal member check was performed after the development of the composite description of the meaning and essences of the experience. Each co-researcher received a copy of the composite description for review and comment. They were asked to carefully scrutinize the material and identify which sections best matched their experience, which parts fit it least, and to identify any elements from their own experience that were missing. A follow-up phone call or one-on-one meeting was arranged to discuss the co-researcher's reaction and related feedback.

Both dependability and confirmability audits were performed at each stage of this research project by the thesis committee chairperson. These occurred through the draft reviews of the methods, results, and conclusion sections. The confirmability audits helped insure that the study's findings were grounded in data. These audits were concerned with ensuring that logical and appropriate conclusions were drawn based on the data, that researcher bias

was minimized, and that the researcher made efforts to ensure confirmability. Dependability audits were performed to ensure the appropriateness of research decisions. These audits focused on identifying instances of researcher bias, the extent to which the data were accounted for and explored, and the extent to which research decisions might have been influenced by deadlines. The audits also reviewed sampling decisions and the research design as it evolved in its application. When confirmability or dependability problems were identified through the review process, the committee chairperson and I discussed possible solutions to them and I revised my research process and, or manuscript accordingly. The appropriateness of the changes were verified by the chairperson through the review of the next thesis draft.

Results

Overview

Each co-researcher's transcribed interview was thoroughly analyzed according to the seven steps outlined in the methods section. (The complete seven step process as it was applied to one transcript is illustrated in Appendix B.) The output from this phenomenological analysis was twelve individual textural-structural descriptions of the experience of Ki. The analysis culminated in the development of a composite description of the meanings and essences of the experience of Ki which was derived from both the 12 individual descriptions and a composite of the major themes.

This section completely details the meanings and essences of the co-researchers' experience with Ki through the inclusion of both individual and composite descriptions. Examples of the individual textural-structural descriptions are included to illustrate the distinctive and personal ways that Ki is experienced. These descriptions are also included to help ensure that the individual manner in which Ki is experienced is not lost in the overall group experience. To help preserve the confidentiality of these co-researcher's experiences, pseudonyms are used instead of their actual names.

The entire group's experience is demonstrated through the composite themes and textural-structural description. The composite of the major themes illustrates the breadth of experience reported by the co-researchers while the composite textural-structural description details the depth of the group's experience. Throughout the textural-structural description, direct quotes are used to clearly present and illustrate the co-researchers' experience

through their own words. To help distinguish among the 12 voices of the co-researchers (CR), each quote is followed by a designation of CR #1 to #12.

Individual Textural-Structural Descriptions

The individual textural-structural descriptions vividly illustrate each co-researcher's experience with Ki. Again, these descriptions are the synthesis of the themes, textures, and structures identified through the analysis of the co-researcher's transcript. Three representative descriptions are provided to demonstrate that each person's experience is completely individual and unique.

Example #1 - Jill's (CR #2) Textural-Structural Description.

Jill expresses her experience with Ki through the changes she has seen in her character and her health. For her, Ki has the immediate effects of calmness and mental clarity in stressful situations, power, lightness, connections with others, and improved health. Further, it is a mechanism through which personal change in her life can occur.

Jill has moved from being a complete skeptic to, now, fully embracing Ki as a real force. "That first experience, since I was skeptical, I was just thinking he was manipulating the test. Since then, of course, I know he wasn't... I've overcome my skepticism and I know Ki is a very powerful force and it's real." At first, using Ki was a completely conscious act. Now it has become an integrated part of her normal experience.

Although Ki permeates her life and is integrated into her being, Ki is a subject she finds difficult to express in words. For her, it is an experience she is only able to share with others who have had similar experiences. "It's very hard to

describe that kind of power to people. You've got to experience Ki and it's something that you only talk about amongst ourselves. Other people would not understand it."

Ki manifests itself most dramatically for Jill as calmness and mental clarity during tense interactions and stressful situations. "I was giving a talk... the other [person] was really difficult, just very obnoxious, was grandstanding, just got worked up into an uproar, and the worse he got, the calmer I got and so it was just my Ki training." Prior to studying Ki she would have been upset by this type of interaction. "I would have been a lot more rattled." Through this calmness, she is able to be very clear in her mental processes. "I could see clearly what I needed to do and clearly what he was doing, how he was hurting himself and was able to make decisions that were based on what I knew was right..." It is like time slows down for her, she feels she has plenty of time, and she is able to act without hesitation. Professionally, she has gained increased self-confidence through this ability to stay calm.

She feels connected with others through Ki. During a difficult interaction she was "able to not let his Ki come in... He was acting out and It wasn't coming in, I wasn't reacting, it wasn't effecting me." Further, it has heightened her intuitive sense about the intentions of others. "Instead of pretending there is not trouble, I just acknowledged that I felt uncomfortable with it and just looked them in the face as we passed by..."

At times, Jill experiences Ki as the feeling of power. She sensed this power very strongly from the Aikido Master Tohei Sensei in Japan. It was the experience of being thrown with an Aikido technique with incredible power but without feeling any strength or collision. "You don't feel the throw, you don't see it

coming, it's just boom, and you are gone, and it's so powerful." When directly experiencing Tohei Sensei's Kiatsuho (Ki healing technique) it was overwhelming for her. "When he pressed me it really, really hurt to the point that I had to concentrate very much on keeping my one point... Just the most powerful Ki."

Ki is an important factor in Jill's physical health. It is manifest as reduced tension, increased relaxation, and improved sleep patterns. "It calmed me so I could get a good night's sleep; I could sleep and stay asleep... reduced tension, just the relaxation that you need to go to sleep." It is also a protective factor for upper respiratory problems. "It has helped with upper respiratory problems; allergies, asthma or colds... I'm just as not as sick as I used to be either." Kiatsuho therapy helped her overcome sciatic nerve pain. "I had very bad sciatica, it was very painful and it had bothered me a long time... You know how painful sciatica can be, but it cleared it up."

Example #2 - Jack's (CR #9) Structural/Textural Description

Jack was drawn to the martial art of Aikido for the benefits of athletic conditioning and discipline. However, what he gained was an immediate and "radical" shift in perception; he discovered that by simply "extending Ki" he was able to experience more strength than he thought was possible for himself. "It was light, there wasn't a lot of active work involved with having the arm unbendable. That was a surprise, all I did was practice that feeling of extend Ki."

The feelings Jack associates with Ki are many and varied: lightness, inner calm, expanded awareness, smoothness of life events, natural rhythm in breath and movement, higher comfort level in stressful situations, reduced

intimidation, connection with himself and others, and a positive outlook on life. In crisis situations he further has the feeling of trust and a lack of panic.

Jack's experience with Ki has changed dramatically over time, evolving from a tool that he only applied to accomplishing goals, to a life long training or a way of being. "Extend Ki isn't extending Ki at something or one time, but it's a condition that I put myself in -- looking at my own condition and not looking at external things.... Today it's much more ingrained in everything that I do; I can see the differences at work and at home, when I'm sitting or fishing or just doing anything." He attributes the positive events, important personal changes, and successful outcomes in his life directly to Ki. On the other hand, he sees the negative events and difficult times in his life as the result of the lack of Ki.

Lightness is the feeling that Jack most strongly associates with Ki. He feels this lightness when things that are normally difficult for him become easy and smooth. He experiences lightness when he is not easily upset, interpersonal interactions are smoother, few road blocks manifest themselves, things are easy to accomplish, and he moves with rhythm. "I experience it [Ki] in looking at the lightness of my life. When things are light that's when I know Ki is extended. Conversely, when I find myself getting upset easily or when there are road blocks at every turn then I know I'm not extending Ki."

Jack sees Ki as a direct link to others. It allows him to better understand what people are trying to communicate. "The most important thing I feel I can do is to stay calm, to read their Ki to understand where they are coming from. So I understand what they want or what they need, not necessarily the words that are coming out." Further, he notices that his children, spouse, and

coworkers respond directly to his Ki. "When I'm extending Ki and staying calm I really get a sense that it transfers over to them; that they respond, that they listen better, that we have much better communication and a much closer feeling. When I'm not calm, not extending Ki, I feel like all the words are going out but nothing is connecting at the other end."

Emotionally, Ki has greatly impacted his life. "I can assess situations better and be more calm inside. If I'm not extending Ki and things around me are minus, it's easy to get upset." When he has been involved in vehicle accidents he has been able to remain calm and trust that things will work out for the best. During a particular accident "there wasn't anything to do, there wasn't any thing I had control over other than just relax, keep one point and that was about the best I could do." His ability to stay calm through life's problems and come out of the situations unharmed and relaxed has reinforced his belief in Ki. "It kind of validated, I guess, a lot of what I had been training... So at that moment there was a certain feeling of, 'yea, there's really something there' and I'm sure it had something to do with the outcome."

Jack most directly experiences Ki during his athletic activities. While running he experiences Ki as "relaxing" and "invigorating" energy. "I feel new energy coming in as well as expending it out." For Jack, this energy flow promotes relaxation, muscle coordination, and rhythm in his movements and breathing. "There's not the tension there that used to hold me back, everything is working together, breathing is on the right rhythm, I've got the right pace, and everything is comfortable." Further, he is very aware of his body and his surroundings. He describes it as "calm and focused... a lot of

awareness about my body, my breathing and everything that is going on around."

Jack perceives Ki as an enhancement to his athletics, recreation, work, family and interpersonal relations. He is working to make Ki more integrated and a more natural part of his life. "One of my goals now is looking at ways of applying Ki all around and really looking at Ki applications; not looking at extending Ki while I'm doing this thing or this thing, but filling all those gaps."

Example #3 - Sean's (CR #11) Structural/Textural Description.

Sean experiences and describes Ki through the immediate and long term effects that he perceives it makes in his life. It is much easier for him to express his experiences through the effects of Ki rather than as a direct experience. "I'm not sure I can tell you exactly what I experienced because it was not a thing per se." It's simply a feeling, and "that feeling has stuck with me." Sean experiences Ki predominately as calmness in difficult situations, trust, self-confidence, effortless doing, and as a healing mechanism.

Sean uses Ki as a tool to stay calm and make clear decisions during difficult interactions with others. "I have a lot more courage to engage in those kinds of interactions." This ability to stay calm has enabled him to approach interpersonal conflict with "confidence and authority." Through this calmness he is able to see alternative solutions to problems. He has the "ability to not get so over-focused that there's only one solution [and] still keep a clear mental process that's looking for alternatives in the middle of all this other stuff going on."

The calmness that Sean attributes to Ki has benefited his emotional health. He has much greater self confidence to face and resolve conflict with others. "Before I was afraid of conflict. [Now] I can go forward, say what I want to say, assert myself, and there's nothing for them to have conflict with." Further, his concept of conflict has changed from a win/lose dichotomy to simply finding the best solution to an issue and not worrying about outcomes.

During one moment of Ki meditation Sean experienced "a state of extraordinary calmness." He had the "feeling of being almost like a conductor, and that something powerful was moving through me, and I had the sense that the normal conversation of my mind wasn't there... all other muscular discomfort and all that kind of other stuff was gone." This feeling has become a touchstone that he is able to recall to increase his confidence and calmness. "That feeling has stuck with me and that feeling has given me confidence in dealing with everything." It has given him trust in the Universe, "confidence in something that was external to me that was powerful..."

Sean uses Ki as a mechanism for self healing. "I take responsibility for when stuff is out of whack, for putting it back in whack by doing what I know how to do." He was able to relieve his own suffering from a "horrible" sinus headache through concentrating on moving Ki during meditation. "I started to flush like you sometimes do during meditation... [something] caused the pressure to just go 'whoosh'... it was instantly relieved. I went from this horrible, almost unbearable pain, to being back to normal again." On another occasion, he used the Kiatsuho therapy to overcome a serious ankle sprain. "There was this extraordinary sensation of the circulation changing in my foot... Right there, a lot of the pain, the tenderness was gone, but it was like

there was a dramatic change in the healing process after that." Prior to doing Kiatsuho on the ankle it was not healing quickly, however, after the Ki treatment he recovered very quickly. "From that point, it got a lot better... a lot faster."

Sean is working to integrate Ki more into his life through a process of consciously applying Ki to all aspects of his being. At first applying Ki to his life was difficult. "As an early student I struggled with what the whole idea was." At one point, he discovered that his own process of applying Ki to his life had changed dramatically. "At first it was more mechanical but there was a place where I just looked at most of life completely different... I don't know when that was, it happened when I wasn't looking." He sees the change process as "more incremental and not so dramatic." He is hard on himself for not pursuing the application of Ki more diligently. "The thing I blame myself for is that I didn't pursue it more, [or] continue with the same diligence." However he feels that he has shifted from an external to an internal focus for making personal changes. He now looks "internally rather than externally for stuff to get fixed."

Composite Themes

To assist with the synthesis of the individual textural-structural descriptions into a single composite description, it was helpful to outline the themes represented in all the individual interviews. Seven major themes emerged from the process of analyzing the twelve 12 transcripts.

1. Difficulty expressing the experience of Ki: The co-researchers had difficulty expressing their experience with Ki directly. Many of them turned to

metaphors to more easily describe the feelings they associated with Ki.

However, the most common route used to share their experience was through describing the perceived effects that Ki had produced in their lives. There were two major categories of effects cited by the co-researcher: immediate effects and long term effects.

2. The integration of Ki: The co-researchers found that Ki had become an integrated part of their lives over their years of practicing Aikido. The process of actively training and developing a capacity to experience Ki underlies this integration. For many, this integration began through conscious effort but soon moved to the subconscious use of Ki. They expressed a drive to continually develop their ability to use and apply Ki to all parts of life. Two factors drove the co-researchers to develop this capacity. First, the realization that great improvements were happening in some parts of their lives and their desire to continue that process. Second, they were dissatisfied with some portion of their lives and felt that by learning to applying Ki to it they could improve that area.

3. Ki as calmness and clarity: Ki was expressed by the all co-researchers as calmness and clarity of mind and body. Difficult situations or challenges often evoked these feelings. Within this calmness, other factors emerged: the feeling of lightness, the sense of effortlessness in doing (even seemingly impossible tasks) and great power. There was also an increased awareness of themselves, the environment, and others. Through this heightened awareness the co-researchers' felt a great sense of connection to others and a sensitivity to the intentions, needs, and feelings of people during interactions. In moments of great calmness, some of the co-researchers reported a sense of oneness with all things and the dissolution of the boundaries of self.

4. Ki as a Tool: In many circumstances Ki was used by the co-researchers as a mechanism to improve the quality of their lives and health. There were two ways that they used Ki as a tool. First, it was used to help them achieve their personal goals or accomplish tasks. Second, it was used as a means to promote the healing of injuries and the recovery from illness.

5. Trust: For some of the co-researchers, Ki fostered great trust in the universe. They trusted that there was a greater power than themselves at work and that things in their lives would work out. When they simply trusted, things did indeed work out for them but not necessarily in the ways they were envisioned or desired.

6. Psychological health: Ki was perceived by most of the participants to promote psychological health. Four areas emerged from the data: they were better able to manage the psychological stress in their lives; they gained greater self confidence and assurance; they could manage their anger and aggression more easily; they became more understanding and accepting of themselves and others.

7. Protective mechanism: Many of the co-researchers believe that Ki protects the health and welfare of themselves and those close to them. It is perceived as a force that has kept many of them healthy and free of severe illness, and protected them from misfortune.

The Meaning & Essence of the Experience of Ki (composite)

For all the co-researchers, directly discussing the experience of Ki in their lives was a difficult endeavor. It wasn't that they lacked the experience, but as one co-researcher put it, "All words end up being pale descriptors around the

essence of it." (CR #10) They found it much easier to describe Ki metaphorically or through the effects they perceive it had evoked in their lives.

Most of the co-researchers described their direct experiences with Ki through the use of metaphors. Interestingly, there was very little duplication of metaphors used by the participants. Ki was expressed by one individual as a "door opening" to a different way of being (CR #1), by another as "infinite possibilities where anything" could be accomplished (CR #8), others described Ki as "big surge" (CR #7) or like "riding on the crest of a wave" (CR #4). Other participants expressed Ki through various feelings: the feeling of being "present and alive" in the moment (CR #10), being like a "conductor" of great power (CR #11), or of being wrapped securely in a "kind of cocoon" (CR #12).

Much of the time, Ki was only described through the perceived effects that it had on the lives of the co-researchers. Sometimes, the effects were immediate; these were easiest experiences for the participants to identify and recount. Other times, the perceived effects of Ki were more subtle and manifested themselves over the long term. Thus, Ki was described either in terms of its immediate effects or the long term changes that the co-researchers had seen in their lives.

All the co-researchers described Ki as being an integrated part of their lives. "I believe that I was always using it in one way or another." (CR #5) The participants expressed this integration both as a subconscious habit and as a tool they could consciously choose to utilize. Typically, when the co-researchers first started Aikido training, they made extensive conscious effort to apply Ki to specific parts of their lives. Now, many years into their practice, they perceived Ki permeating many aspects of their being. "It's reached into

everything I do... I've developed better relationships... It's improved my health tremendously." (CR #7) For the individuals who had trained more than 20 years, Ki appeared to be such an integrated a part the lives that they had difficulty expressing their experience with Ki because they couldn't easily sort and separate the Ki aspects out from their everyday experience. As one of them put it, "Everything is a Ki experience." (CR #9)

Many of the co-researchers expressed a strong desire to continue expanding their abilities to apply Ki to more parts of their lives. "I know that I know how to do it [use Ki] and if I work hard enough I can have this. I've been given the tools, it's up to me..." (CR #12) They were motivated by the successes and positive changes they have seen in their lives and the desire to continue that process. "I can't imagine not continuing to study Ki principles and continuing to use them... I never want to go back to having to paw my way through the relative world." (CR #7) Their motivation also came from the dissatisfaction of not being able to fully apply Ki to some specific areas of their lives. "Its not like I'm extending Ki all the time. I don't feel like I do it near enough as much as I should." (CR #3)

Immediate Experience.

Often, the co-researchers reported experiencing the effects of Ki immediately. The co-researchers related the immediate effect of mental calmness and clarity more frequently than any of effect they attributed to Ki. Although many other effects were cited, this was the only effect reported as common to all twelve participants. Quite often, this clarity and calmness manifested itself in response to difficult situations or physical challenges. However, dramatic situations were not necessary nor were they the only times

that calmness occurred. During emergencies or accidents, the co-researchers reported being mentally calm, physically relaxed, and able to respond in appropriate ways. "I noticed that [Ki] made a big difference in my reaction and in my behavior in a code situation... I was able to stay calm through the whole thing... I was never excited or jittery after I got over the situation." (CR #6)

Many of the participants experienced similar feelings of calmness in response to interpersonal conflicts. "I was giving a talk... the other [person] was really difficult, just very obnoxious, was grandstanding, just got worked up into an uproar, and the worse he got, the calmer I got and so it was just my Ki training." (CR #2) Mental clarity, in many cases, was reported to accompany the calmness. This clarity allowed the co-researcher to better understand the situation and to see more options. "I could see clearly what I needed to do and clearly what he was doing, how he was hurting himself and was able to make decisions that were based on what I knew was right..." (CR #2) Several of the co-researchers reported a sense of time slowing down during these types of incidence which allowed them time to respond to the situation. "What I recall is having plenty of time..." (CR #6)

Some of the co-researchers reported the calmness and clarity continuing after the difficult situations had ended which allowed them to return to their normal activities. One co-researcher who was involved in a motorcycle-car accident reported calmness during and after the incident. While sitting on his bike at a stop light, a car turning left from the cross street ran head-on into him, "I jumped off the bike... It knocked the bike clear across the street, we exchanged information, I picked up the bike and went home." (CR #9) In contrast, prior to integrating Ki into their lives, these co-researchers felt that

similar situations would have left them very upset, angry, and/or rattled. After an auto accident one co-researcher felt that without Ki she "would have been a basket case like everyone else." (CR #7)

Many of the co-researcher's reported that Ki increased their sense of awareness and their ability to focus. This increase in awareness was experienced in several different ways. Some of the participants were aware of and could better sense what was going on around them. "I had the right-of-way but I saw a car coming and I knew it was not going to stop... sure enough it didn't stop." (CR #6) A few reported becoming very attuned to the rhythm of their body, their posture, the movement of breathing, and the movement of energy. "I could even pick up the differences in my posture, the inhale and exhale, and the subtle changes in my running posture." (CR #9)

Half of the co-researchers reported that Ki improved their interconnection with other people. These co-researchers felt that through Ki, they were able to communicate more effectively and that they were more aware of the intentions, needs, and feelings of others. "It happens all the time with everyone. You can tell when they're sincere, you can tell when people mean you well. You can tell when there is a secret agenda." (CR #7) They described this phenomenon as reading other people's Ki or reading the Ki of the situation. "The most important thing I feel I can do is stay calm to read their Ki to understand where they are coming from." (CR #5) Also, when these co-researchers were extending Ki themselves, they found that people seem to be more receptive to them. "When I'm extending Ki and staying calm I get the sense that it transfers over to them and that they respond, that they listen better, that we have much better communication and a much closer feeling." (CR #9)

A few of these co-researchers reported a heightened intuition about whether they were being told the truth or a lie. "You can determine if they are telling you the truth or lying." (CR #5)

The calmness of mind and body that Ki evoked in the co-researchers, at times, made physical tasks seem light and effortless. "I noticed that if I extended Ki to wherever it was I was going, then it was pretty easy walking there." (CR #3) To the co-researchers, even difficult physical tasks, like Aikido arts, could become absolutely effortless with Ki. "It was like this huge wind came and picked [her] up and threw her, and my hand went with that wind." (CR #4) Many of the co-researchers report that it is like the task is already accomplished and all that was required is to go through the steps. "It was a done deal... I went whack and it broke and I didn't think I'd done that much..." (CR #12) When the co-researchers experienced this level of effortlessness they were completely focused on the task and there was no sense of doubt about the outcome or need to struggle. "At that moment it was a complete absence of doubt... Even the concept of doubt, it didn't exist, it ceased to exist." (CR #12)

Half the co-researchers reported that at times they had become so deeply calm that they found themselves experiencing a oneness with all things. During these moments all barriers between the self, others, and the environment felt as if they had dissolved. The normal chatter in their minds became silent, and, for a few, even the idea of self seemed to disappear. One person described it as the lack of the normal 'edges' or boundaries to the physical body (CR #4). Another stated it well, "Even the concept of self was absent, not that I lost the fact that I was existing and standing there, but you lose the object of separation." (CR #12) For this co-researcher, there was no

longer the feeling of the self separated from everyone and everything else. These individuals felt that these were perfectly natural experiences; the way one should always be experiencing life. "They seemed natural -- they seemed like this is how I should be..." (CR #8)

For most of the co-researcher, their strongest experiences of calmness, effortlessness, lightness, or oneness became touchstones they carried into their daily affairs as reminders. "That feeling has stuck with me and that feeling has given me confidence in dealing with everything." (CR #11)

Ki as a tool.

Ten of the co-researchers described Ki as a tool that they used at times to achieve their personal goals. They found that by sending Ki towards a goal, they could achieve it more readily. As one co-researcher related, "If there is something I want, then I think about sending Ki to it and it eventually happens." (CR #3) For the participants, this was an active process. "I just extended Ki and thought about what I needed to do... I took the natural steps to get there." (CR #5) The types of goals the co-researchers felt that they were able to achieve through Ki varied from individual to individual. For example, these goals included finding employment, accomplishing work objectives, and learning new skills. Many of the participants felt that it was Ki allowed them to stay focused on their goals until they were accomplished.

Most of the co-researchers experienced Ki, applied through the Ki therapy of Kiatsuho, as a mechanism that enhanced their own healing process. The co-researchers referred to the application of this technique as "pressing". During a Kiatsuho session, the co-researchers, in many cases, reported feeling a great

energy moving that was experienced as heat and/or piercing pain. One participant described the experience this way, "I had a very bad sciatica, it was very painful and it had bothered me a long time and when he pressed me, it really, really hurt... You know how painful sciatica can be, but it cleared it up..." (CR #2) Other co-researchers similarly perceived that the Ki from Kiatsuho therapy helped them overcome their own injuries of carpal tunnel syndrome, lower back pain, and ankle and elbow sprains. These co-researchers felt that the application of Ki was the turning point where their problems began to heal quickly.

Long Term Experience.

Looking back over their years of training, many of the co-researchers felt that Ki was active in their lives in subtle and indirect ways.

Nine of the co-researchers felt that Ki had made a great impact on their psychological health. Most of these individuals felt that the calmness fostered by Ki had reduced their feelings of stress and increased their feelings of self confidence and esteem. Prior to beginning Aikido training, one participant was very stressed, "I was really stressed, really lost, was working very hard..." (CR #1) However, she later discovered, "My work didn't seem so difficult, I wasn't stressed about it, I knew that it was within my capabilities without me killing myself." (CR #1) Several, co-researchers also reported a significant reduction in frustration, anger, and aggression. "I'm less argumentative... I haven't lost my temper in the last three years..." (CR #4) Many also reported becoming more aware of their own feelings and emotions.

Half the co-researchers reported that their repeated and successful experiences with Ki had fostered in them a great trust in the Universe. They trusted that there was a force, greater than themselves, active in their lives. "The feeling I try to call back any more is one of being very light -- the Universe being infinite in all directions -- and I don't have to apply anything extra in order to do anything and have it come out appropriately. It may not be exactly how I envisioned it but it all seems to work out." (CR #8) They felt great confidence that, with Ki, they could handle anything that might come up in their lives. "I trust that what I'm doing is going to be useful and if there is any opposition, when the time comes I'll be able to handle it somehow." (CR #12) This feeling of trust was exemplified by the reaction that one of the co-researchers had to the diagnosis of breast cancer. "I was really amazed at the way I dealt with it. I didn't worry, I didn't get really depressed... It occurred to me that I was able to have peace of mind about what was happening to me... I trusted that it had happened for a reason and it was a reason that was beyond my control." (CR #5)

Eight of the participants felt that Ki protected the health and welfare of themselves and those close to them. Several attributed the lack of major illness and the maintenance of their good health to Ki. One participant retired with, "800 hours sick hours left that I never used, so there's evidence that I've been very healthy. I don't know what to attribute that to other than maybe we are extending more Ki." (CR #6) Three co-researchers reported that Ki protected the welfare of themselves and others.

Member Check

Again, after the initial development of the composite textural-structural description, each co-researcher was sent a copy of it for review and comment. They were asked to carefully scrutinize the material and identify which sections best matched their experience, which parts fit it least, and to identify any elements from their own experience that were missing. Their reaction and related feedback was gathered during either a follow-up phone call or a one-on-one meeting.

Overall, ten of the co-researchers reported that the composite description fit their personal experience greatly and two reported that it somewhat fit their experience. All the co-researchers agreed that breadth of their experiences were expressed within the themes and there was nothing missing. However, during the interview process, none of the co-researchers experiences fit all seven of the identified major themes. When the formal member check of the composite description was completed, only four of the participants found that all seven themes contained within the composite resonated completely with them. All others felt that a sub-set of the composite adequately expressed their experience but remaining themes did not fit with them personally.

Table 1 summarizes the co-researchers' experience in relation to the major themes identified in this study. Both the themes expressed by the participants during the interview process and later during the member check process are shown.

Table 1

Number of Co-researchers Expressing Themes

Major Theme/ (Sub-Theme)	Expressed During	
	Interview	Check
1. Difficulty expressing the exp. of Ki	12	12
Expressed as Metaphor	(9)	(9)
Expressed as Perceived Effects	(12)	(12)
2. The integration of Ki	11	12
3. Ki as calmness and clarity	12	12
Calmness in difficult situation	(12)	(12)
Increased awareness	(6)	(11)
Sense of connection with others	(6)	(11)
Lightness/effortlessness	(8)	(12)
Oneness	(6)	(7)
Touchstone experience	(6)	(12)
4. Ki as a tool	10	12
Achievement of Goals	(6)	(8)
Healing Mechanism	(6)	(12)
5. Trust	9	11
6. Psychological Health	9	11
Stress Management	(8)	(11)
Self confidence/esteem	(7)	(11)
Anger mgmt/conflict resolution	(7)	(11)
7. Protective Mechanism	8	9

Summary, Outcomes, and Implications

Summary

I began the first section of this manuscript with the research question: how do the advanced practitioners of the martial art, Aikido, perceive and describe the experience of Ki in their lives? Through the remainder of the section, I developed the rationale and importance of this study. The term Ki was introduced as a core concept in the Oriental model of medicine and wellness, and Ki's nature was briefly described. Further, the active development of Ki for individual growth, health, and wellness was shown as the underlying purpose of many of the Oriental martial arts, including the art of Aikido. I contrasted these purposes against the typical Western misconception of the martial arts as solely tools for self defense and fighting. Next, I briefly outlined the psychological benefits attributed to the martial arts by Western researchers. The fact that Ki, although foundational to the martial arts, was typically not discussed in these studies was brought forward. In conclusion, I suggested that this failure to address Ki in the literature was a significant gap in the Western understanding of these arts and that my current study would begin to close this gap.

In the literature review section, I reviewed the relevant literature and established a framework for understanding Ki from both Oriental and Western perspectives. First, the Oriental model of medicine and health was illustrated and explained from a historical perspective. Ki was discussed as the a central concept to this model and as a core element that has underpinned Eastern philosophy for thousands of years. The concept of vitalism was introduced as the Western corollary to Ki. Although vitalism is now forgotten, I

demonstrated that this idea of living energy had greatly influenced Western science and medicine. Next, I illustrated that the martial arts were developed as a complement to the Oriental model of medicine and health. The health benefits of the martial arts from both a historical Eastern perspective and a Western scientific point of view were detailed. I closed this section with a detailed description of the martial art of Aikido. This overview provided a framework for comprehending this art and solidified the rationale for selecting Aikido as a vehicle through which to describe and understand Ki.

I explained and detailed the steps of the phenomenological research process in the methods section. First, the rationale for selecting this methodology was developed from the recommendation of Columbus and Rice (1991). Then, I completely outlined Moustakas' (1994) phenomenological method, including the underlying concepts and each of the steps. Within this outline, I detailed the co-researcher selection process, the interview questions, and the steps used to assure the trustworthiness of this study.

The results section presented the findings of this study. I illustrated the culmination of co-researchers' subjective experience through their individual textural/structural descriptions, the aggregate of themes, and the composite description of the meanings and essences. The seven core themes that I found permeating their descriptions were: the difficulty expressing the experience of Ki, the integration of Ki into the lives of the co-researchers, Ki as calmness and clarity, as a tool, as trust, as a mechanism for psychological health, and as a protective mechanism.

In this final section of the manuscript, I summarized the relevance of the findings. First I distinguished the findings of this study from the those found in

the literature review. I then critiqued the advantages and limitations of this study, and outlined possible future studies. Next, I discussed the implications of this study in relation to health promotion practice. Finally, I closed this with a brief review of the personal insights that I had gained from completing this thesis.

Outcomes

In this sub-section, I compared the outcomes found in my data analysis with the information presented within the literature review and commented on any similarities or differences. I've organized this comparison into four sub-sections: Ki in Oriental health, the vital force in Western science and medicine, Ki in the martial arts, and Aikido -- a practice for Ki development.

Ki in Oriental Health.

In this category, the reports of the co-researchers from my study were similar to the information cited in the literature.

Beinfeld and Korngold (1991), Yuasa (1993), and Chin (1995) each defined and explained the traditional Oriental model of medicine and health. They reported that, in the Orient, Ki is believed to drive all life process and is responsible for balancing mind, body and spirit. Within this Oriental model of health, disease was thought to manifest itself in individuals when there was an imbalance or disruption in the flow of Ki. On the other hand, good health was believed to occur as the result of a strong flow of Ki. These researchers further told us that, from an Oriental perspective, Ki was an intangible, that could only be discerned through its effects.

There were many similarities between these outlined concepts of the Oriental model and my co-researchers' reported experiences. Clearly, the co-researchers had embraced this Eastern belief and integrated the concept of Ki deeply into their view of the life processes. Just as the Oriental model expressed Ki as an intangible, my participants were unable to describe Ki directly. Instead, they spoke of the effects that they perceived Ki had made in their lives and their health. The co-researchers, also, believed that illness or other problems in their lives were the result of not enough Ki or their inability to apply Ki to certain aspects of their lives. Further, just as Hamono (1987) and Seitz (1990) expanded the definition of Ki to include the essence of human interaction, interrelationship and interdependency, most of my co-researchers expressed Ki as a direct interconnection between themselves and others.

My study varied from the traditional Oriental description of Ki in some important ways. First, the Oriental model, as described in the literature review, was academically based whereas my study described Ki through the context of the co-researchers' personal experience. Second, my co-researchers experience with Ki went beyond the Oriental definition of Ki. In addition to the traditional definition, the co-researchers experienced Ki both immediately and over the long term, and found Ki to be a tool for achieving goals, and as a means of trust.

The Vital Force in Western Science & Medicine.

This sub-section of the literature review sought to provide a historical perspective on how the concept of living energy, through vitalism, had once held a prominent place in Western science and medicine. However, unlike Ki in

the Orient, the notion of vitalism fell from prominence in the West over 300 years ago. Except where the definitions of Ki and vitalism naturally coincided, I found little similarity between vitalism and the co-researchers' expressions of their experience.

Ki in the Martial Arts.

The literature revealed that, traditionally, the martial arts have been taught and practiced more for their ability to promote health, balance, and self-development than to develop fighting techniques. The empirical studies reviewed (Fuller, 1988; Weiser, et al., 1995) concur that the martial arts can increase self-esteem and confidence, improve emotional management (aggression, hostility, and vulnerability), and decrease sleep disturbances and depression. These findings are consistent with the experiences of the co-researchers as expressed within the theme of psychological health. However, this study differs from these previous empirical studies in both purpose and focus. The purpose of my study was to describe fully the subjective experience of Ki rather than to perform objective measures. Importantly, for the empirical studies cited, the martial art practice itself was the focus of the studies, whereas, the current study began to explore the martial arts' underlying concept of Ki.

The results of my study are also similar to the three qualitative studies cited. Columbus and Rice's (1991) co-researchers described the martial arts as meaningful when they were able to apply the principle's learned in class to their everyday lives; they were able to cope with significant life change and were able to use the arts to enhance personal growth and self-discovery.

Epstein (1986) studied the therapist's experience of being centered in therapy based on Aikido's centering technique. His co-researchers reported attentional shifts, expanded awareness, and a sense of balance and unity. Further aspects were increased self trust, self-acceptance, trust of intuition, and a present-centered orientation. Finally, Hall's (1991) case study of a novice Aikidoist found that after a short term of training, the new martial artist experienced a marked decrease in his anger and aggression. These experiences closely paralleled the experiences my co-researchers reported. However, like the empirical studies, these studies focused on the martial art practice itself, whereas, the focus of my study was the exploration of the underlying idea of Ki. This separation of the experience of Ki from the practice of Aikido was accomplished during the interview process. The co-researchers were directly questioned about their experience of Ki rather than their experience of using Aikido techniques. Their responses to my questions and probes came mostly from their everyday experiences and examples from their dojo practice were minimal.

Aikido -- A practice for Ki development.

The first seven references in this sub-section were written by masters and high ranking practitioners of Aikido; I cited them to provide an understanding of the stated purposes and expected outcomes of the training. These masters defined the purpose of Aikido training as the development of the full potential of the individual practitioner. Further, the practice was held to promote calmness, focus, relaxation, and improve health and relationships. These purported outcomes of Aikido training were consistent with the findings

of my study. As one might expect, the co-researchers provided examples during the interview process that, many times, paralleled the anticipated outcomes of Aikido training. However, the co-researchers did much more than simply restate the axioms of training in academic ways; their personal account provided a great breadth and depth of experiences that painted a vivid description of Ki. Further, each co-researcher's experience with Ki was individual and unique, although there was correspondence in the themes.

Advantages, Limitations and Future Research Directions

Through this study I have, hopefully, expanded the understanding of how the practitioners of one of the martial arts, Aikido, perceive the effects of Ki in their lives. Further, I provided the opportunity for the concept of Ki to be expressed and described from within a Western setting. I accomplished these goals through the application of the phenomenological research method. I used this approach to develop a complete description of the experience of Ki. This study was neither designed nor intended to seek explanations for the mechanisms of Ki. As Moustakas (1994) sums it up, phenomenology "is the science of pure possibilities carried out with systematic correctness and it precedes, and makes possible, the empirical sciences, the sciences of actualities." (p. 28)

I interviewed only the advanced practitioners of the Art of Aikido. As a consequence, the experiences of novice Aikidoists, or practitioners from other Oriental martial or healing arts were not included in the study. Additional phenomenological studies with these other groups of individuals may add to data collected in this study and increase our understanding of Ki. Also, it is well

known in the martial arts that for every student who achieves black belt there are hundreds who drop out of the training. An exploration of the differences between these groups of individuals may yield useful data.

The co-researchers in this study expressed the complete integration of the concept of Ki into their lives. It was from the standpoint of this integration that they thoroughly detailed their perceptions and experiences with Ki. However, the process of adapting Ki into their lives was not surfaced by them during the interview process. An exploration of this process may be beneficial to understanding how the concept of Ki is integrated by Westerners.

If one is to further explore and expand on the perceptions and experience of Ki here in the West, then further studies of other Westerners who are steeped in the experience of Ki need to be completed. The arts that may lend themselves most easily to this type of study include the martial arts of Tai Chi and Qi Kung, and the Ki healing arts of Raiki, Acupuncture, Acupressure, and Kiatsuho.

Discussion and Implications For Health Promotion

Oriental medicine and their complementary martial art practices have become recognized and appreciated here in the West for their health benefits. Yet, this is just the beginning, two significant deficiencies in our understanding of Ki's contribution to health and wellness still persist. First, the concept of Ki, which is central to the Oriental model of health and medicine and at the core of many of the traditional martial arts, remains poorly understood and mostly unexplored in traditional Western health and medical literature. Second, the health focus of martial art research resides primarily in their contribution to

psychological health leaving a significant gap in our understanding of the other health benefits that these arts have to offer.

Throughout the course of developing this manuscript, I strove to provide a framework for understanding Ki and its health benefits through the lived experience of my co-researchers. Although the findings of this study concurred with the literature reviewed in the Oriental model of health sub-section, there were four significant differences reported by the co-researchers that expands upon this description of Ki. First, to the co-researchers, Ki was more than just a theoretical Eastern philosophical concept; they described Ki as a force that they perceived to be influencing their lives in multiple ways. Importantly, this distinction helped move Ki from an abstraction into a lived experience that could be more easily understood. Next, in the literature there was no differentiation made between the immediate and long term effects of Ki. However, these two different ways of experiencing Ki became clear through the co-researchers' reports. Again, calmness and clarity were the most commonly reported immediate experiences by the co-researchers. The long term effects were reported as improvements in psychological health, and perceptions that Ki protected their health and welfare and allowed them to trust in the Universe. Third, the use of Ki as a tool for achieving goals was unique to the co-researchers of this study. They related that they believed Ki helped them to find employment, accomplish work tasks, and learn new skills. Finally, the co-researchers attributed Ki to the development of their feelings of trust in the in the Universe. The co-researchers trusted that there as a force, greater than themselves, active in their lives. Those who expressed this trust, felt that they could handle any circumstance that might arise in their lives with confidence.

The potential health benefits of martial art practice have recently become of great interest to the psychological community. Many studies, both quantitative and qualitative, have been completed to determine the psychological benefits that these martial programs foster in their participants. However, health research on the martial arts has remained almost exclusively in this one area of health. Results of this study both concur with the mental health outcomes reported in the psychological literature and broaden the health outcomes to include Ki's perceived physical and spiritual health benefits. The co-researchers described the mental health benefits of increased self-esteem, self-assurance, calmness, awareness, and improved emotional management. Additionally, they perceived improvements in their physical health including increased resistance to illness, and enhanced recovery from injuries and illnesses. Spiritually they experienced a heightened sense of connection with themselves, others, and the environment. They developed great trust, not only in their own abilities, but through believing there was a higher power at work in their lives.

Several health promotion researchers have found a strong correlation between subjective beliefs, like the ones expressed by the co-researchers in this study, and health status. For example, Peterson and Stunkard (1989) believe personal control -- the degree to which an individual feels they can bring about good events or avoid bad events -- to be a cornerstone in health promotion theory. They point to a large body of research that ties personal control to physical well-being and personal helplessness to increased morbidity and mortality. My study strongly suggests that development of Ki provides an active means of fostering feelings of personal control. The co-researchers

perceived that Ki helped them to gain self confidence and assurance, calmness, heightened awareness, emotional management, and a sense of trust and protection of their health. O'Regan and Carlson (1979) concluded that subjective feelings like contentment, accomplishment and self-actualization, a sense of having a purpose and direction in life, and a sense that life is worthwhile have significant correlation with positive health outcomes. The co-researchers' in my study expressed these types of subjective feelings and perceptions throughout their interviews. The martial arts, at least those emphasizing Ki development, may provide an effective means of helping individuals gain a greater sense of control of their lives and foster positive subjective states that can positively effect their health status.

I believe that the systematic development of Ki through the martial arts provides a well-established model for understanding how Ki can be applied to the practice of health promotion here in the West. Although the forms and methods of traditional martial art practices vary widely, Western psychological studies on the arts have drawn similar conclusions irrespective of the style. Therefore, Ki development may well be the common thread from which the practitioners of the martial arts derive their positive health outcomes. If this is indeed the case, the Ki development aspects may be drawn out of the martial arts and applied to more conventional health promotion settings and programs.

Concluding Comments

I began my MPH graduate program with the goal of integrating my career in adult education with my passion for the practice of Aikido. I wanted to

explore the Oriental concept of Ki and its application to health and wellness here in the West. This thesis represents the culmination of my efforts to achieve those objectives.

Through the assistance of my co-researchers I was able to begin to describe how Ki is experienced from a grounded everyday perspective. Although they all expressed difficulty describing Ki directly, they were able to describe Ki through its perceived immediate and long term effects. They found that through ongoing development and practice, Ki had become an integrated part of the way they experienced life. They believed that Ki helped them to achieve greater calmness and clarity, to accomplish their goals, to enhance healing and psychological health, and to gain trust and a protected feeling.

Admittedly, the martial arts are not practical for most corporate, clinical, or academic situations, neither are they suited to the temperaments, interests, nor the physical abilities of everyone. However, health promotion practice can draw on the Ki development elements of the martial art instructional process. The following elements appear to be significant to Ki development as taught through the art of Aikido. Aikido programs:

- 1) focus on developing the whole person -- mind, body and spirit -- and developing positive relationships with others.
- 2) provide opportunities for continual development over many years of practice and promote a life long learning attitude.
- 3) provide Ki as a mechanism for health and wellness that participants felt they can readily access and apply to their own situations.
- 4) provide constructive ways for expressing and dealing with negative emotions and stress.

5) provide continual opportunities for accomplishment that help build self-esteem and confidence.

6) build a sense of connection between the participants, others, and the environment.

7) build a sense of trust in a higher power.

Health is defined in the Orient as the "ability of the organism to respond appropriately to a wide variety of challenges while maintaining equilibrium, integrity and coherence." (Beinfield & Korngold, 1995, p. 45) From the co-researchers' descriptions, Aikido, with its emphasis on Ki development, appeared to enhance their health in ways that were consistent with this definition of health: they expressed the ability to maintain their mental, physical, and spiritual balance and integrity through the challenges of their lives. They were all enthusiastic believers in practice of Aikido and, through focusing on the ongoing cultivation of Ki, they took an active role in their self-development and health. Most considered Aikido a practice that they would continue for life.

Livine (1984) feels that traditional martial art practices exemplify model liberal arts programs. I believe Ki development, which underlies martial art practice, has much to contribute to the field of health promotion.

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Appendix A

Informed Consent Form

I, _____, agree to participate in a research study on "Understanding Ki in daily the experience."

I understand that the purpose of this study is to learn how Ki, an Oriental concept, is experienced here in the West and that I am participating voluntarily.

I understand that participation in this study requires me to participate in a 1 to 1.5 hour interview and that this interview will be tape-recorded and transcribed.

I may not receive any direct benefit from taking part in this study but the study may help to increase knowledge that may help others in the future.

Steven Address, a graduate student at Portland State University, has offered to answer any questions about this study and what I'm expected to do.

I grant permission to Steven Address to use the information collected from me for the purpose of completing a masters degree, including a thesis, and any other future publications. He has promised to keep my name and all information I give confidential to the extent permitted by law.

I understand that I do not have to take part in this study, and that this will not affect my relationship with Portland State University or any other school or agency.

I have read and understand the above information and agree to take part in this study.

Signature _____

Date _____

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please contact the principle investigator, Steven Address directly at [home phone] , or the Chair of the Human Subjects Research and Review Committee, Research and Sponsored Projects, 105 Neuberger Hall, Portland State University, 503 / 725-3417.

Appendix B

Sample of Phenomenological Analysis

Each co-researchers interview transcript was analyzed following a Moustakas' (1994) modification of van Kaam's (1966) method for the analysis of phenomenological data. Seven steps were applied to analyze each transcript:

1. Listing & preliminary grouping.
2. Reduction & elimination.
3. Cluster & thematize the invariant constituents.
4. Validation of clusters & themes.
5. Complete an individual textural description of the experience.
6. Complete an individual structural description.
7. Construct a textural-structural description.

An example of how the seven step process was applied to one of the transcribed interview follows. However, to protect the confidentiality of the co-researcher several adjustments were required. A pseudonym was used and only subsets of the data gathered in step 1 and step 2 were included. Examples of steps 3, 5, 6, and 7 were included in their entirety. Step 4 was not included because it simply entails checking and verifying the data in step 3 against the transcript and can not be illustrated in the form of text.

1. Listing and Preliminary Grouping (vebatum listing)

Body Awareness

I've noticed it in other things like running or riding bikes where I'm coordinating mind and body - calm and focused - and get a lot of awareness about my body, my breathing and I guess everything that is going on around.

That everything is working together, that there is a natural rhythm to everything so it feels like all the muscles are firing at the right time. Its not the tension there that used to hold me back, everything is working together, breathing is on the right rhythm, I've got the right pace, and everything is comfortable. Getting to that rhythm where you can just go forever. Sometimes you go to easy, you push more you feel like you can't keep it up, especially for the longer endurance type runs.

And I feel relaxed, focused on what I'm doing but, again, without a lot of effort. So its very relaxed and invigorating. You know, I feel new energy coming in as well as expending it out. The way its supposed to be, energy is going in and going out without taking a lot of effort. The concentration is just there.

When I was running I would get into those, that kind of a feeling, I could even pick up the differences in my posture, the inhale and the exhale, and subtle changes in my running posture. And I thought that was kind of interesting. Now when I go out and run I can't, normally I can't feel that. So I keep running until I relax more and more and get into that, kind of into that state where a lot of those little things come out. And that's kind of good because that is what I feel like I can really work on. I'm running and relaxing more and picking up all those little things.

Interpersonal Relations

I think there are 2 different planes. One is how the relationships effect me and my comfort level, the level of intimidation I may feel. Sensing the situation, kind of how I'm reading everything on the outside and how I feel inside.

The other way is how I perceive impact I'm having on people that I'm dealing with. things like at home talking to the kids. When I'm extending Ki and staying calm I really get a sense that it transfers over to them and that they respond, that they listen better, that we have much better communication and a much closer feeling. When I'm not calm, not extending Ki, I feel like all the words are going out but nothing is connecting at the other end. Where that they respond with more tension and aggression or escalating the situation rather than calmly meeting the situation. I think they reflect me either way, I like what I see better when I'm calm. It diffuses situations and I think that it just changes it too.

And with [spouse] as well. If I come home and she has had a rough day and I'm not keeping one-point then things can get real sharp and mad at each other. You know, she complains about her day and I complain about mine and it doesn't get any where. It gets worse sometimes. I find that if I can relax and extend Ki then she can share those trials and tribulations and I can listen and be there for her with out receiving all that. But she can communicate those things, I can remain plus and I can let her get that off her chest and she can get positive again. So the whole evening is a lot lighter instead of colliding or receiving that and becoming more upset or depressed.

At work, the same idea but on a different level... People... Management all the way down to the mechanics and operators, a lot of different situations but ultimately the most important thing I feel I can do is to stay calm, to read their Ki to understand where they are coming from. So I understand what they want or what they need not necessarily the words that are coming out. Sometimes there are situations where, especially where we're trying to work through a problem, it might be an emotional thing attached to it where they are upset or angry, I try to stay calm. And when I'm able to do that then the other side can be feeling that they are understood and it changes their attitude. We usually get into a situation where instead of being confrontational, we work together to solve the problem.

Changing Minus to plus

I can assess the situation better and be more calm inside. Not letting external things have that kind of effect on me. When things are minus around me, I don't become minus. If I'm not extending Ki, if things around me are minus it is easy to get upset. The more relaxed I am the calmer, the more Ki I can extend I feel like I can have an impact around me. So if I come into the house and things are minus then I can change it to plus. At the minimum level it is not becoming minus myself. The more positive I feel I can change the minus to plus.

2. Reduction / Elimination / Grouping

Body Awareness

I've noticed it in other things like running or riding bikes where I'm coordinating mind and body - calm and focused - and get a lot of awareness about my body, my breathing and I guess everything that is going on around.

That everything is working together, that there is a natural rhythm to everything so it feels like all the muscles are firing at the right time. Its not the tension there that used to hold me back, everything is working together, breathing is on the right rhythm, I've got the right pace, and everything is comfortable. Getting to that rhythm where you can just go forever.

When I was running ... I could even pick up the differences in my posture, the inhale and the exhale, and subtle changes in my running posture... I keep running until I relax more and more and get into that, kind of into that state where a lot of those little things come out.

Interconnection with others

The other way is how I perceive impact I'm having on people that I'm dealing with... When I'm extending Ki and staying calm I really get a sense that it transfers over to them [his kids] and that they respond, that they listen better, that we have much better communication and a much closer feeling. When I'm not calm, not extending Ki, I feel like all the words are going out but nothing is connecting at the other end.... they respond with more tension and aggression or escalating the situation rather than calmly meeting the situation. I think they reflect me either way, I like what I see better when I'm calm. It diffuses situations and I think that it just changes it too.

[With] People... Management all the way down to the mechanics and operators... ultimately the most important thing I feel I can do is to stay calm, to read their Ki to understand where they are coming from. So I understand what they want or what they need not necessarily the words that are coming out.... where we're trying to work through a problem, it might be an emotional thing attached to it where they are upset or angry, I try to stay calm. And when I'm able to do that then the other side can be feeling that they are understood and it changes their attitude. We usually get into a situation where instead of being confrontational, we work together to solve the problem.

I can assess the situation better and be more calm inside. Not letting external things have that kind of effect on me. When things are minus around me, I don't become minus. If I'm not extending Ki, if things around me are minus it is easy to get upset. The more relaxed I am the calmer, the more Ki I can extend I feel like I can have an impact around me. So if I come into the house and things are minus then I can change it to plus. At the minimum level it is not becoming minus myself.

And with [spouse] as well. If I come home and she has had a rough day and I'm not keeping one-point then things can get real sharp and mad at each other. You know, she complains about her day and I complain about mine and it doesn't get any where. It gets worse sometimes. I find that if I can relax and extend Ki then she can share those trials and tribulations and I can listen and be there for her without receiving all that. But she can communicate those things, I can remain plus and I can let her get that off her chest and she can get positive again.

3/4. Thematic Summary

Ki as lightness

- Right when life is light/ wrong when life is heavy
- Relaxed, focused and invigorating w/o effort
- The way life is supposed to be

Integrated part of life

- At first was seeking a workout, conditioning & discipline but found finding power through concentration and relaxation

- First experience was special case/ now Integrated into everything
- Sure that outcome is related to Ki
- Trying not to apply to individual things but to fill the gaps in life with Ki
- See difference in how relate to others

Calmness / Awareness

- Balance / calmness / inner focus/ connection in emergency; not panic
- Events validate it being there/ e.g. calmness in accidents
- Awareness of things around him
- Increased body awareness during running
- Rhythm in movement
- Lack of tension: in breath/posture/relaxation;body working together w/o

tension

Trust in universe

- Situations that can't do anything about come out good
- What ever was going to happen was going to happen didn't need to worry
- Nothing more he could do in accident but trust

Ki as a connection with others

- Able to read others
- Aware that people respond/connect with his level of calmness or

agitation

- Diffuses bad situations
- Reaction / intimidation to others is different
- Self knowledge/understanding is increased
- Manages emotion/feelings

Continual growth & development

- Learns/grows through teaching - must be able to perform
- Learns/grows through doing Kiatsuho
- Life long training: Same lessons / words have new meaning as we grow

5. Textural Summary

For Jack, his experience with Ki has evolved dramatically over time. Initially it was a special case phenomenon that allowed him to be stronger physically through concentration and relaxation. Now it is an integrated part of his being. "Today it's much more ingrained in everything that I do; I can see the differences at work and at home, when I'm sitting or fishing or just doing anything." He expresses his experiences with Ki both as immediate and long term effects.

In many areas of Jack's life, Ki manifests itself as lightness. When he is experiencing this lightness he is not easily upset, interpersonal interactions are smoother, few road blocks manifest themselves, things are easy to accomplish, and he moves with rhythm. "I experience it in looking at the lightness of my

life. When things are light that's when I know Ki is extended. Conversely, when I find myself getting upset easily or when there are road blocks at every turn then I know I'm not extending Ki."

Jack sees Ki as a direct link to other people in interpersonal interactions. Ki allows him to better understand what people are trying to communicate to him. "The most important thing I feel I can do is to stay calm, to read their Ki to understand where they are coming from. So, I understand what they want or what they need, not necessarily the words that are coming out." Further, people (his children, spouse, or coworkers) respond directly to his Ki. "When I'm extending Ki and staying calm I really get a sense that it transfers over to them; that they respond, that they listen better, that we have much better communication and a much closer feeling. When I'm not calm, not extending Ki, I feel like all the words are going out but nothing is connecting at the other end."

Emotionally, Ki has had a great impact. "I can assess situations better and be more calm inside. If I'm not extending Ki and things around me are minus, its easy to get upset." In emergency situations he as been able to remain calm and trust that things will work out for the best. During a motorcycle accident "there wasn't anything to do, there wasn't any thing I had control over other than just relax, keep one point and that was about the best I could do." His ability to stay calm and come out of the situation unharmed, relaxed, and in full control, reinforce for him the power of Ki. "It kind of validated, I guess, a lot of what I had been training.... So at that moment there was a certain feeling of, yea there's really something there and I'm sure it had something to do with the outcome."

Jack experiences Ki energetically while running. "Its very relaxed and invigorating. I feel new energy coming in as well as expending it out." For Jack, this energy flow promotes relaxation, muscle coordination, and rhythm in his movements and breathing. "There's not the tension there that used to hold me back, everything is working together, breathing is on the right rhythm, I've got the right pace, and everything is comfortable." Further, his awareness is expanded. He describes it as "calm and focused... a lot of awareness about my body, my breathing and everything that is going on around."

6. Structural Summary

As an athlete, Jack was drawn to Aikido training as a martial art for the benefits of conditioning and discipline. However, what he gained was an immediate and "radical" shift in perception; he discovered that by simply "extending Ki" he was able to become much stronger. "So that was a surprise, 'Holy cow, there's a difference here!' All I did was practice that feeling of extend Ki." It has evolved from something he would apply to specific goals or events to a "life long" training and way of being. "Extend Ki isn't extending Ki at something or one time, but it's a condition that I put myself in.... looking at my own condition and not looking at external things." He sees it as an enhancement to his athletics, recreation, work, family and interpersonal relations. He is working to make Ki more integrated and a more natural part of his life. "One of my goals now is looking at ways of applying Ki all around and really looking at Ki applications; not looking at extending Ki while I'm doing this thing or this thing, but filling all those gaps."

The feelings associated with Ki are: lightness, inner calm, expanded awareness, smoothness of life events, natural rhythm in breath and movement, higher comfort level in stressful situations, reduced intimidation, connection with others, and a positive outlook on life. In crisis situation he further has the feeling of trust, lack of panic. His sense of others and himself are enhanced. He can sense situations, read other's intentions, enhanced awareness of everything around him. These feelings and senses are greatly enhanced through teaching in the dojo. "It is much easier to focus and concentrate... You know when you are teaching, you got to perform." Practicing Kiatsuho has also given him concrete feedback and reinforced the power of Ki for him. "I've looked at the things that have been fixed in class... I learned to concentrate more and to focus more and see the results more quickly."

7. Structural/Textural Summary

Jack was drawn to the martial art of Aikido for the benefits of athletic conditioning and discipline. However, what he gained was an immediate and "radical" shift in perception; he discovered that by simply "extending Ki" he was able to experience more strength than he thought was possible for himself. "It was light, there wasn't a lot of active work involved with having the arm unbendable. That was a surprise... All I did was practice that feeling of extend Ki."

The feelings Jack associates with Ki are many and varied: lightness, inner calm, expanded awareness, smoothness of life events, natural rhythm in breath and movement, higher comfort level in stressful situations, reduced

intimidation, connection with himself and others, and a positive outlook on life. In crisis situations he further has the feeling of trust and lack of panic.

Jack's experience with Ki has changed dramatically over time, evolving from a tool that he only applied to accomplishing goals, to a "life long" training or a way of being. "Extend Ki isn't extending Ki at something or one time, but it's a condition that I put myself in... looking at my own condition and not looking at external things... Today it's much more ingrained in everything that I do; I can see the differences at work and at home, when I'm sitting or fishing or just doing anything." He attributes the positive events, important personal changes, and successful outcomes in his life directly to Ki. On the other hand, he sees the negative events and difficult times in his life as the result of the lack of Ki.

Lightness is the feeling that Jack most strongly associates with Ki. When he is experiencing this lightness he is not easily upset, interpersonal interactions are smoother, few road blocks manifest themselves, things are easy to accomplish, and he moves with rhythm. "I experience it [Ki] in looking at the lightness of my life. When things are light that's when I know Ki is extended. Conversely, when I find myself getting upset easily or when there are road blocks at every turn then I know I'm not extending Ki."

Jack sees Ki as a direct link to others. It allows him to better understand what people are trying to communicate. "The most important thing I feel I can do is to stay calm, to read their Ki to understand where they are coming from. So I understand what they want or what they need, not necessarily the words that are coming out." Further, he notices that his children, spouse, and coworkers respond directly to his Ki. "When I'm extending Ki and staying calm

I really get a sense that it transfers over to them; that they respond, that they listen better, that we have much better communication and a much closer feeling. When I'm not calm, not extending Ki, I feel like all the words are going out but nothing is connecting at the other end."

Emotionally, Ki has greatly impacted his life. "I can assess situations better and be more calm inside. If I'm not extending Ki and things around me are minus, its easy to get upset." When he has been involved in vehicle accidents he as been able to remain calm and trust that things will work out for the best. During a particular accident "there wasn't anything to do, there wasn't any thing I had control over other than just relax, keep one point and that was about the best I could do." His ability to stay calm through life's problems and come out of unharmed and relaxed has reinforced his belief in Ki. "It kind of validated, I guess, a lot of what I had been training... So at that moment there was a certain feeling of, yea there's really something there and I'm sure it had something to do with the outcome."

Jack most directly experiences Ki during his athletic activities. While running he experiences Ki as "relaxing" and "invigorating" energy . "I feel new energy coming in as well as expending it out." For Jack, this energy flow promotes relaxation, muscle coordination, and rhythm in his movements and breathing. "There's not the tension there that used to hold me back, everything is working together, breathing is on the right rhythm, I've got the right pace, and everything is comfortable." Further, he is very aware of his body and his surroundings. He describes it as "calm and focused... a lot of awareness about my body, my breathing and everything that is going on around."

Jack perceives Ki as an enhancement to his athletics, recreation, work, family and interpersonal relations. He is working to make Ki more integrated and a more natural part of his life. "One of my goals now is looking at ways of applying Ki all around and really looking at Ki applications; not looking at extending Ki while I'm doing this thing or this thing, but filling all those gaps."