

The Essence of Original Nature:

A QigongDharma Perspective by Teja Fudo Myoo

Reflection on The True Form of the Ground of Original Nature

By Muso Soseki (1275-1351)

We talk about awakening and often use the classical term "Original Nature"—that profound, fundamental clarity that all beings inherently have. It is already present, complete within you, not far away, not hidden in some distant temple or secret teaching. And yet... when we try to find it as if it were an object or a place, we struggle to grasp it.

Naturally, the question arises:

Where is it? Is it in my mind? Is it in my body?
Is it the union of the two?
Or is it somewhere beyond them entirely?

The wise ones have always pointed out:

It has never moved from where it is. It is inherently clear, quiet, and present.
Seeking it "over there" is a sure way to miss it.

Not Inside, Not Outside

Original Nature is not something contained within the body-mind
like a pearl in a shell.

It's not outside of it either,
as if we could pull it down from heaven or find it on a teacher's bookshelf.

It's not a "thing" at all — not a sentient creature, not a lifeless object, not even the
wisdom of sages, though all wisdom arises from it.

It is the silent wellspring from which everything emerges: body and mind, trees
and mountains, galaxies, and the open space that holds them.

We call it "Essence of Original Nature" only as a convenience. Like calling the
ocean "water" — the word is not the thing.

The Misunderstanding of Attainment

When people first hear of **Original Nature**, they often fall into a subtle trap: They imagine it as something rare to achieve — like mastering a subtle art, needing exceptional talent or intelligence.

Others imagine it as a mystical experience far beyond ordinary living, available only after years of perfect discipline.

But described this way, the mind turns it into a prize: something “out there,” to be earned like a degree or conquered like climbing Mt. Everest.

This is already a step in the wrong direction.
Original Nature is not acquired. It is recognized.

The Dream Metaphor for Today

Let's use a modern example.

It's as if you're wearing a full VR (virtual reality) headset, lost in an immersive simulation. In this VR world, you experience drama, loss, beauty, love, conflict — and it all seems so real. Then a friend taps you gently on the shoulder and says: “None of this is actually happening. You're sitting safely here at home.”

Now... if you take their words seriously, you'll remove the headset and instantly know the truth — the scenery of suffering and delight disappears, and there's only where you actually are.

But if you don't believe them, you'll keep trying to rearrange the VR world for comfort — avoiding danger, chasing pleasure, improving your avatar, seeking status, arguing over who's right. You may even have conversations inside the simulation about “awakening,” unaware that the headset is still on.

In spiritual life, this headset is our karmically conditioned consciousness — the habitual patterns and identifications of mind. **Original Nature** is simply the reality that remains when we take it off. The problem is, most of us keep trying to achieve enlightenment inside the simulation.

Clues in Practice

Even without entirely “removing the headset,” if we can see that every perception, emotion, and thought is part of this dreamlike simulation, we begin to move with freedom. We “see as if blind, hear as if deaf” — which means we’re no longer pulled unconsciously by attraction and aversion.

This is not indifference. This is the opposite of spiritual bypassing. It’s seeing from the clarity of the Whole rather than reacting from the narrowness of “me” and “mine.” This could be the beginning of faith in reality itself.

Pure and Impure, Sacred and Ordinary

From the perspective of **Original Nature**, there is no sacred, no profane, no pure or impure. This is beautifully and poetically expressed in the Buddhist Heart Sutra. All of those categories exist only in the dream, as products of the conditioned mind. Even refined spiritual longing can be just another dream-layer if it’s built on “I am not there yet.”

Many practitioners, even with deep insight, still cling to some idea of self:

— “I am the deluded one who needs enlightenment”

or “I am the awakened one with realization.”

Both are dream identities.

People of High Capacity

Those with great capacity understand that all distinctions between self and other, as well as body and mind, are simply movements of conditioned mind.

They neither reject the cycles of birth and death nor chase after so-called liberation. They embody the reality of No-Barrier.

But even here, it is possible to rest in partial understanding.

True liberation is not in creating the right view,
but in letting go of the one who wants to hold it.

So Where Does This Leave Us?

All of the Buddha's teachings, from ancient sutras to many modern Dharma talks, convey the same message:

This subtle nature is already clear, already here, beyond all labels and forms. It is your constant companion, experienced every moment — breathing your breath, moving your hands, lighting your eyes — yet usually unnoticed.

The Buddhas and ancestors point to it again and again, not because it is missing, but because we tend to overlook it.

Practicing in the QigongDharma Way

In QigongDharma, we embody this realization through movement, stillness, and breath.

We feel **Original Nature** as the source-field in which Qi flows — before inhaling, before exhaling, before a single thought arises. Standing in practice, we are already where we need to be; the act of trying to “get somewhere” distracts from the truth that we're already home.

The practice is to drop the measuring stick:

Where am I in my progress? How far until I arrive? These are dream-questions. Return to the body, the breath, the open awareness in which both body and breath appear, and you're already standing in the **Essence of Original Nature**.

When actions arise from that place, they carry the imprint of compassion and clarity naturally — we know the next right move, not because it's prescribed, but because the heart recognizes it.

A final reminder: You cannot fall out of Original Nature, and you cannot get closer to it. You can only awaken to it — here, now — like removing the VR headset and exhaling into the simplicity of being.

When the light turns inward, we discover what the Buddhas have been saying all along:

You are already home.

Already Home

A QigongDharma Meditation

Breathe in—
this moment is not apart from you.

Breathe out—
all striving dissolves,
like mist in the morning light.

Body rests;
The Earth supports,
The Sky opens above.
Between earth and sky,
you:
standing, sitting, alive—
sunlight in your bones,
breath like a gentle wave.

Let go of names, ideas,
every measure of “how far.”

No past to recover,
no future to attain—
only this pulse of presence,
only this breath,
only this open clarity
where thoughts rise and fall.

Original Nature—nowhere to go,
nothing to add or subtract.

You are already home.
You were never anything else.

Attend inwardly:
Qi flows effortlessly—
rising, falling,
joining heart and mind and marrow.

As you rest in the field of awareness,
discover it is awake—
And so are you.

Breathe in.
Breathe out.

No need to search.
Return to where you've never left.

Let this quiet knowing accompany your movement,
and inform each step,
on and off the cushion—
awake, embodied, and at ease.