

三的意义 (San De Yi Yi): *The Meaning of 3*

I'm honored when my friend Jim Junio—President of MSRED or MultiSport RED (MultiSport Racing, Education & Athlete Development: www.MultiSportRED.org)—had asked if I could create the Chinese characters for the campaign of "What is the meaning of Three?" It has been simplified to: "The Meaning of 3".

The number 3 is significant in all cultures. Even in sports & fitness, 3 is being frequently used; for instance, 3 sets of a certain workout routine. In bowling, 3 strikes in a row are called a "turkey". Counting to 3 is also common in situations where a group of 2 or more people who attempt to synchronize their actions—like "On a count of 3..."

Even where we currently live—earth—is the 3rd planet in the solar system (from the sun). It can be witnessed in different religions as well like bowing 3 times...& in prayers; it's common to include...the Father, the Son, & the Holy Spirit. As for the communication of time, there're 3 great divisions of Past, Present, & Future.

The Chinese character 3 is: 三 [pronounce "San" like the sun]. The Roman numeral uses the same 3 strokes but arranges them vertically in a row: III. According to the Yin & Yang theory, 3 is a Yang number. A more formal character for 3 is 叁 [also pronounce San] which is commonly used in banking to prevent fraud. 三项全能 [San Xiang Quan Neng] are the Chinese characters for triathlon, & 铁人 [Tie Ren] for ironman. Then, there's also 三维 [San Wei]—3-D (3 dimensional), a world we currently live in & the way which we perceive our universe.

An idiom from the Confucian analects 三人行必有我师 [San Ren Xing Bi You Wo Shi: 3 people walking must have my teacher (literal translation)]. When three of us walk together, at least one of the other two is good enough to be my teacher. It reminds us to learn from others & each other. Since this is about fitness & wellness, I'd like to touch on the holistic topic of:

精气神 (*Jing Qi Shen*): *Essence Energy Spirit*

The origin of *Jing Qi Shen* is an ancient Chinese holistic philosophical concept. It indicates the primitive matter for the formation of all things in the universe, including the meaning of element. TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine) considers *Jing Qi Shen* to be the fundamental biological activities in the human body; they're referred to as the 3 holistic energies of TCM.

Jing—Essence—is the foundation of matter that constitute the human body & preserves the human body's biological activities.

Qi—Energy—is the life force of the biological activities.

Shen—Spirit—is the highest commander of the consciousness, willpower, as well as every single biological activity. The relationships among them are their mutual creation & mutual encouragement, which are extremely close.

In ancient China, people who were aesthetic with health preservation referred to *Jing Qi Shen* as their personal “3 Precious Treasures”. As people commonly said, “The heaven has the 3 precious treasures of the Sun, Moon, & Star; the earth has the 3 precious treasures of fire, water, & wind; & a person has the 3 precious treasures of *Jing, Qi & Shen*.”

Therefore, preserving *Jing Qi Shen* is the primary principle for fitness & anti-aging; especially during the gradual change & decline of *Jing Qi Shen* when a person has already entered the elderly stage, one should place even more emphasis on cherishing these “3 precious treasures”. The ancient Chinese have exceptionally valued these factors.

Thank you, Jim for the opportunity to share my *Jing-Qi-Shen*. I hope that each of you reading it would find your personal meaningful precious 3!

By Kin
www.taijiat.com

PRACTICE 練

**The doctor of the future will give no medicine,
but instead will interest his patients in the care of the human frame,
in diet, and in the cause and prevention of disease.**

— Thomas Edison —