

Lesson 18 — The Flow of Life

Energy, recovery, and rejuvenation — the Yin half where the art actually grows. How to recharge the battery after it's been discharged.

Every lesson until now was **Yang**: output, technique, the strike, the body breaking itself down to get better. But here is the secret the whole canon was hiding: **you do not grow during training. You grow during recovery.** Training is the stress; rest is when the body rebuilds — higher than before. Stress + Recovery = Adaptation. Remove the recovery and the stress just **destroys** you: overtraining, injury, burnout. This is the final, deepest, most-skipped half of the art — what happens when you stop.

We named it once already. In Lesson 14 we listed "modern recovery science" as a whole **dimension** Bruce Lee's era never had. This lesson adds that dimension on purpose — and finds, as always, that the oldest internal art got there first in its own tongue.

PART I · ENERGY BALANCE — THE WORD WITH TWO MEANINGS

Food and air become you

The Western reading — Energy Availability

Energy in (food) – energy out (training) = what's left to run your body on.

Chronically underfuel — train hard, eat too little — and you fall into **Low Energy Availability (RED-S)**: the body, short on fuel, starts cannibalising itself — bone, hormones, immunity, and recovery itself all degrade. The first rule of recovery is the dullest: **eat enough**. Fuel the work you actually did.

The Eastern reading — the Two Essences of Qi

Yang Jwing-Ming's Root of Chinese Qigong: your **Qi** 氣 (vital energy) is converted from two sources — the Essence of **food** (食氣, Shi Qi) and the Essence of **air/breath** (空氣, Kong Qi). Cultivate and **balance** the Qi, and you "live better and live longer... and overcome the stress of daily living."

The convergence (and it is exact). → Western metabolism: **substrates (food) + oxygen (air) → ATP**, the energy that fires a muscle. Qigong: **food essence + air essence → Qi**, the energy that moves the body. The newest sports science and the oldest internal art name the same two fuels — what you eat and what you breathe. "Energy balance" is one truth in two tongues.

THE MANUAL'S THESIS, ON ENERGY ITSELF

PART II · THE RECOVERY STACK — THE FOUR R'S

Refill the cup (grounded in the ACSM consensus)

- **Refuel** — hard training drains muscle **glycogen**, the tank. Refill it with carbohydrate: ~1.0–1.2 g/kg per hour in the early hours after a big session. Match the refuel to the work done — empty tank, bigger fill.
- **Repair** — **protein** (~0.25–0.3 g/kg) delivers the amino acids that rebuild the tissue you tore. Carbs and protein together refill and rebuild at once (≈ 0.8 g/kg carb + 0.4 g/kg protein matches higher-carb-alone for glycogen, and repairs too).
- **Rehydrate** — replace the **fluid and electrolytes** lost in sweat. A dehydrated body fatigues faster and every effort feels harder — you fight at a discount.
- **Rest** — **sleep is the master recovery tool**. Hormonal repair, tissue rebuild, and skill consolidation all happen here. No supplement, meal, or ice bath outranks a night of real sleep.

This is the fa-jin cycle on a 24-hour clock. → Accumulate (eat, sleep, store), then discharge (train, fight) — soft to hard to soft. The same flip that powers a punch powers a week: load in the Yin, release in the Yang. Skip the load phase and there is nothing to release.

The tendon's hard lesson

The most common recovery mistake is believing recovery means doing nothing. The tendon-rehab science says otherwise, and bluntly:

Pain goes with rest — and so does your strength

From the rehab source: "Pain will frequently resolve with rest. After a period of rest, however, the tendon will be relatively **weak**. Resumption of your previous level of activity... will likely exceed the load your tendon can safely cope with." Pure rest **deconditions**. The fix is **progressive re-loading**: Phase 1 — **isometric holds** (45–60 s, ~70% effort) for pain relief and early strength; Phase 2 — dynamic concentric/eccentric work. The spring (our Lesson 13 Achilles tendon) regains its stiffness by being loaded smartly, not by being left alone.

So "active recovery" is the real skill: not the couch, but the right lighter thing — deload weeks, mobility, the isometric and static holds, light Tai Chi and the Lesson 10 Yin exercises. You keep feeding the system a small, healing dose of load while the big systems refill. Recovery is a **practice**, not a pause.

PART IV · REJUVENATION — REGULATING THE SELF

Flipping the switch to heal (the Qigong half)

Training drives you into "fight" — the sympathetic, Yang state. You don't rebuild there; you rebuild in "rest-and-digest," the parasympathetic, Yin state. Qigong is, among other things, a **trainable switch** into that state. Yang Jwing-Ming's classical practice is a set of **regulatings** (調, tiáo — to tune):

- **Regulate the Body** 調身 — posture and release (song); let the structure go heavy and soft.
- **Regulate the Breath** 調息 — slow, deep, even breathing; the single fastest lever into the Yin state (and one of the two Essences of Qi).
- **Regulate the Mind** 調心 — quiet the racing mind; lower the stress that keeps the body in "fight."
- **Regulate the Qi** 調氣 & **Spirit** 調神 — circulate the energy, settle the spirit. The felt name for down-regulation and restored drive.

Two tongues, one down-shift. → Sports science: manage **allostatic load**, raise **HRV**, breathe to drop the heart rate, protect sleep. Qigong: regulate breath and mind to circulate Qi and "overcome the stress of daily living." Both are the same move — **deliberately leaving the fight state so the body can repair**. Five to ten minutes of slow breathing, standing qigong, or soft Tai Chi after training or before bed is

recovery training. (You met this breath already in the Rabbit Style's Qigong roots, Lesson 17.)

The Recovery 80/20 (do these, skip the biohacks). ① **Sleep** — the master tool, non-negotiable. ② **Eat enough total energy** — never live in a deficit you didn't plan (no RED-S). ③ **Carbs + protein after hard sessions** — refuel and repair. ④ **Five minutes of breath / qigong** — flip from fight to heal. Ninety percent of recovery is these four; the rest is decoration.

The strike and the meal, the sprint and the sleep, the fa-jin and the breath — one machine, two phases. You do not grow in the Yang of effort; you grow in the Yin of rest. Energy flows out when you fight and must flow back when you rest — that cycle is the flow of life. The master charges the battery as deliberately as he spends it, because a battery left flat has nothing to give. Food and air become Qi; Qi becomes the next strike. The art does not stop when you stop moving — that is exactly when it recharges.

Fei Kune Do 飛拳道 · Lesson 18 — the Yin half, 2026. Grounded in our library: the ACSM/AND/DC Position Stand on Nutrition & Athletic Performance (2016), the Canadian Sport Institute recovery-nutrition resources, Paul Mason on tendon rehabilitation, and Yang Jwing-Ming's The Root of Chinese Qigong. The Yang built the fighter; the Yin keeps him. A living manual — more roads to come.