



The Gift of Life January 2004

Twenty- one years ago this month I received the best gift anyone could possibly ask for – a kidney from my brother-in-law. In 1967 I was diagnosed with a genetic kidney disease, one that ran in the female line of my family- my maternal grandmother, my mother’s sister and my mother. My mother survived with dialysis for more than 18 years. They did home dialysis for most of that time. My parents were quite a team. If it were not for the donated kidney, I would not be able to do what I do with Tai Chi and Qigong. Truly, a gift of life. One that is full and complete.

My donor, my brother-in-law was out of the hospital within 3 days, back to work in 5 days, and to this day, hikes the hills and mountains of southern

California year -round. Donors do very well and it is a safe surgery. The key to success for donors -remaining well hydrated.

If you ever find yourself in a position where donating a kidney feels like the right thing to do, you will be giving that person a wonderful and life alternating gift. There are over 90,000 people on a waiting list for kidneys. Liver transplant lists are about 15, 000 people and heart transplants about 3, 500. Kidney transplant are covered by Medicare for both the donor and the recipient.

In the Tai Chi and Qigong world, the kidneys are of foundational importance to the root energy of our body providing solidity and strength throughout our bones. Kidneys are key to our “essence” and imperative to our life force- qi. Survivalists use the Rule of 3; we can last 3 minutes without air, 3 days without water and 3 weeks without food.

Some of you may have thought about what to do with your body upon your death. Not an easy thing to think about but at the point you do, donating an organ can be a legacy to save the life or improve the life of someone.

I feel eternally grateful to my family who supported me every step along the way, to my brother-in-law and to the various care teams who helped me get this far.

So, Happy Birthday Donated Kidney and many more good days ahead.

Peace and goodwill to all, Linda