

Tan Tien Chi Kung

**Empty Force, Perineum Power
and the Second Brain**



Mantak Chia

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The meditations, practices and techniques described herein are **not** intended to be used as an alternative or substitute for professional medical treatment and care. If any readers are suffering from illnesses based on mental or emotional disorders, an appropriate professional health care practitioner or therapist should be consulted. Such problems should be corrected before you start training. This booklet does not attempt to give any medical diagnosis, treatment, prescription, or remedial recommendation in relation to any human disease, ailment, suffering or physical condition whatsoever.

Introduction

Tan Tien Chi Kung is one of the Taoist Chi Kung practices used to develop Tan Tien and Perineum power.

We need Chi and Chi pressure in the Tan Tien as a foundation for most of our Universal Tao practices, especially for Iron Shirt and Tai Chi Chi Kung, and meditation.

The Lower Tan Tien is the main energy reservoir in the body. It is the place where we store the energy we generate, gather and absorb in Chi Kung and meditation. If the energy is stored in the Tan Tien it can be accessed later, if not the Chi dissipates and cannot be used. The Tan Tien is therefore also called the Ocean of Chi. According to the Chinese medical theory, once the ocean is full it overflows into the eight extraordinary meridians. Once these are full the Chi flows into the twelve ordinary meridians, each of which is associated with a particular organ. The Tan Tien is therefore the foundation of the entire energetic system of the body.



Fig. 1 Expanding the Chi Ball.

We usually refer to the lower abdominal area as the Tan Tien, but we actually have three Tan Tiens: the Lower Tan Tien, the Middle Tan Tien (heart) and Upper Tan Tien (behind the mideyebrow point; the brain). You can read more about the Tan Tien in the booklet, "Opening the three Tan Tiens to the Six Directions". All three Tan Tiens are used in Taoist inner alchemy. Because of their capacity to deal with a large amount of Chi, the Tan Tiens are used as a "laboratory" for Inner Alchemical work. Translated from the Chinese, the word Tan means elixir (literally cinnabar, a mineral used in the Outer Alchemy as a basis for the elixir of immortality, since it was considered to have the perfect balance of Yin and Yang). Tien means field or place. It is the place where all the energies of our body, the earth, the Universe and nature come together to form the pearl, the elixir of immortality, the nourishment for our soul and spirit.

The Lower Tan Tien (hereafter referred to as "the Tan Tien") is located in the abdomen approximately three finger-widths below the navel near the center of the body. The precise location varies from person to person and depends on the body type. In the Tan Tien we store our Original Chi. Original Chi is the Chi derived from the egg and sperm of our parents, from which our entire organism arises.

In Iron Shirt Chi Kung practice we learn to stand effortlessly and relaxed in the "Embrace the Tree" position through our internal body structure and alignment, our rooting, a powerful pelvic floor and the centering in the Tan Tien. In Tai Chi Chi Kung we learn to move this "tree", circulate the energy and strengthen our internal power. All movements in Tai Chi originate from the Tan Tien. This important region is responsible for control and balance, two key ingredients in proper Tai Chi execution. Additionally, the Chi generated through the Iron Shirt and Tai Chi practice is stored in the Tan Tien.

For the development of the internal and rooting power and the centering of the body and the mind, it is necessary that enough energy is stored in the Tan Tien (so that the Tan Tien is filled with Chi pressure) and that our mind is strong and focused in the Tan Tien. This will also makes us more focused, stable and balanced in daily life. It enhances our personal power.

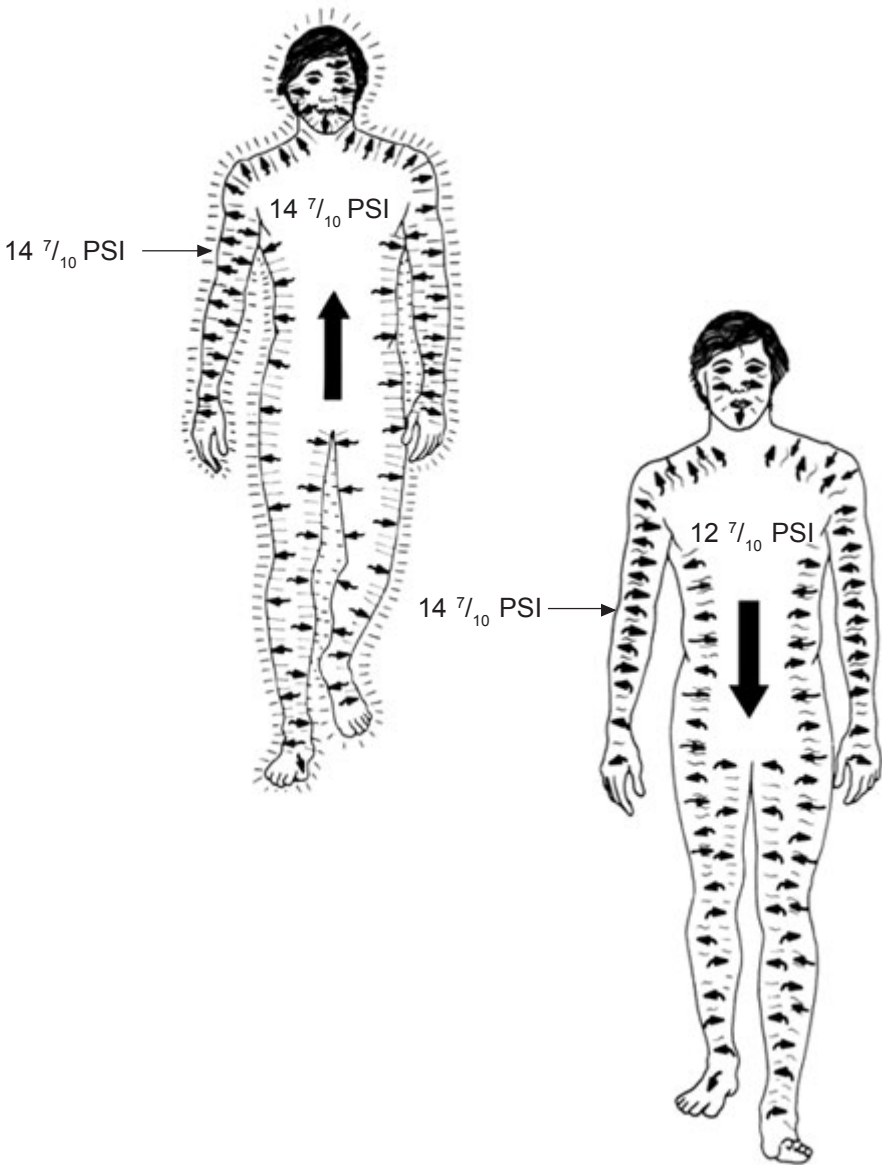


Fig. 2 A healthy body has an internal pressure of fourteen and seven tenths pounds of pressure per square inch (PSI) Any reduction of this pressure increases the chances of illness and overall weakness.

While the Tan Tien is both the source and container of Chi power, the mind acts like a general that issues orders to the Tan Tien for directing power. Through this we can draw energy quickly and effectively from this area and direct it to another area. This is especially important in Tai Chi and Healing Love practices.

We have a constant air pressure in our body. We call this Chi pressure. In Tan Tien Chi Kung we learn to develop this Chi pressure in the Tan Tien and to strengthen our organs and fasciae. Our system relies entirely upon Chi pressure to move the body fluid. We can actually increase our vital energy, strengthen our organs, and promote self-healing by increasing the Chi pressure in our organs and body cavity. The circulatory system, the lymphatic system, the nervous system, and the endocrine glands will all be activated, and blood, spinal fluid and hormones will flow more easily so that the heart will not have to work as hard. Increasing pressure in the abdominal cavity will help increase the Chi pressure used to move the Chi, blood and lymph fluid.

One of our goals is to increase Chi pressure in order to increase organ and abdominal pressures so that the Chi presses outward on the fasciae layers from the inside. We pack the Chi in the Tan Tien and, after it is released, the fasciae expand as do the organs.

When people are sick, the Chi pressure inside decreases and falls below the Chi pressure from outside, which is about 14.7 PSI. So these people cannot tolerate the exterior pressure so well. They will become irritated very quickly, tired from people around them, etc. Life becomes a burden. A lack of Chi pressure also slows down all circulation (Chi, blood, lymph and spinal fluid). It is a downward spiraling movement of the whole life force.

Developing Chi pressure is one of the best practices we can use to reverse the downward spiraling movement into an upward spiraling movement in the quantity and quality of our life force. In other words, the increase of the Chi pressure in our Tan Tien through the Tan Tien Chi Kung will enhance our healing, martial arts (Iron Shirt and Tai Chi), meditation abilities, and the art of daily living and will also nourish our Original Force. It is the Chi pressure in the Tan Tien that roots our body and mind.

It is our electric wire in the earth, our ground wire. When the Chi pressure is low, we will have no rooting. The energy and the mind will be fuzzy, drifting and will quickly rise upward and dissipate, and cause overheating, headache, pain in the heart and a distracted mind.

If you want to become a big strong tree, you need deep roots, which also means a high Chi pressure in the Tan Tien. This is one of the reasons why the Tan Tien Chi Kung is the foundation for Iron Shirt and Tai Chi Chi Kung and it is also important for our meditation practice.

In the long run we will regain our inner peace and stillness through this inner power in the Tan Tien. This will restore our connection with our Origin, the mind of the Tao.



Fig. 3 All forms of energy work require that we remain solidly connected to the ground.

Practice

The practice is divided into two parts. In part one, we will learn to increase the Chi pressure in the Tan Tien, in the organs, especially the kidneys, in the fasciae, in the lumbar area and the Door of Life. This is accomplished through a combination of breathing, contraction (pulling upward) of certain parts of the perineum (anus) toward specific areas of the abdomen and pressing down the abdominal diaphragm. The exercises also nourish our Original Force.

The warm-ups open the kua/sacrum and the hip joints and strengthen the anus (perineum)

In part two, we will learn eleven animal postures. In fact, they have the same results as the exercises from part one. They are, however more powerful and will significantly enhance the Chi pressure/inner power in the Tan Tien, the strength of the perineum and the rooting power. They are actually a very good preparation for Tai Chi.

Warm-up Exercises

We start the practice of Tan Tien Chi Kung with some warm-up exercises: the opening of the sacrum/kua and the strengthening of the anus (in fact the whole perineum, including the sexual organs).

An open sacrum and a strong anus are the necessary conditions for the development of Chi pressure in the Tan Tien (Tan Tien power). These are the requirements for the correct execution of the exercises of Tan Tien Chi Kung.

1. Opening the Sacrum

The sacrum, the groin area, the hip joints and the iliopsoas all form the kua. When the kua is closed, the flow of Chi, blood, lymph fluid down and up the legs is blocked as are the nerves to the legs. In order to enable the sacrum to move freely, the sacrum should be separate from the hip bones. When the sacrum and the pelvis are open, there is space for the energy and we can push this energy far down in the Lower Tan Tien.

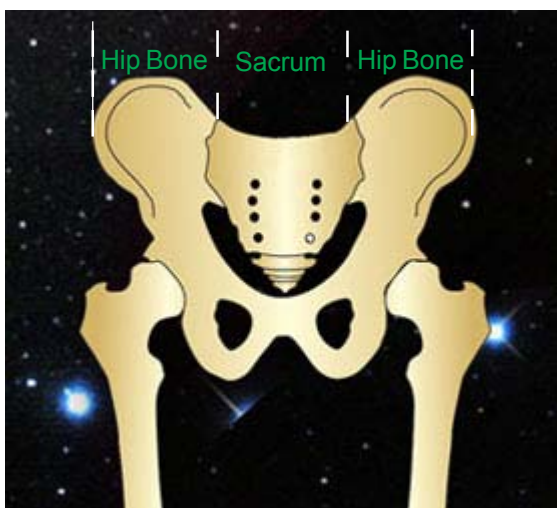


Fig. 4 Sacrum

1. Rub the sacrum warm. Stand shoulder width, feet parallel, ankles and knees slightly spiraled outward and locked together like one piece. The arms are round and the palms are facing the earth. Picture your Lower Tan Tien as an ocean. The waves are moving you back and forth. Sink down in the groin/kua. Inhale, turn the palms and raise them upward, pull the perineum slightly up, the sacrum is closed. Exhale, turn the palms, with the thumbs inward, down and push them firmly toward the earth. This will create a tension in the tendons. At the same time contract the anus and push the heels which are firmly rooted, outward and turn the upper thigh inward. This will help to open the sacrum. Keep the knees and ankles aligned and connected with the earth. When you open the sacrum this way, it feels like you are pushing the hips to the side. Actually, you are also pushing the sacrum to the back, tucking the coccyx in and opening the pelvis.

Activating the hips and the sacrum pump activates the cranial pump, stimulating the flow of cerebrospinal fluid through the spine to the brain. This will nourish the brain and enhance the clarity of our thinking and the activities of the central nervous system.



Fig. 5 Sink down in the kua, round the arms and push down into the earth.

2. Squatting will also help to open the kua, especially the sacrum and the hip joints. Squatting is a powerful and effective way to open the kua and the sacrum. For many people in the world it is still common to sit, talk, eat, empty the bowels, meditate and relax and restore the energy flow in the squatting position.

The squatting position also provides a deep massage and enhances the Chi and blood flow to all organs in the Lower Tan Tien, including the small and large intestines and the fasciae. It releases gases and is very helpful in relieving constipation.

A good exercise for developing the squatting position is to stand with your feet shoulder width (when you improve your squatting ability, place both feet together) close to and facing the wall and then to squat straight down from the kua. The wall will prevent you from leaning forward when you squat. Breathe in the Lower Tan Tien, keep the chest relaxed and feel a force pulling you down and a force pulling you up, as you squat down to the Earth.

To squat you can also use the help of a partner or the edge of a table. Be sure that you go straight down and bend from the kua.

When you work with a partner, stand shoulder width facing each other, arms outstretched, and place the hands on each other's shoulders. From this position, squat straight down together from the kua while supporting one another. Sink as deep as you both can without leaning forward.

3. Other exercises for loosening the sacrum:

- Put your hands on your sacrum and pubic bone and rotate the sacrum in both directions.

- Hold your hands again on the sacrum and move the sacrum back and forth, back and forth.



Fig. 6 Squat

2. Anus/Perineum

The Taoists divide the anus into five parts: the front which is connected to the Hui Yin (the perineum point and the sexual organs); the back of the anus, which is connected to the coccyx and the sacrum; the middle; the left, which is connected to the left side of the body, especially the left kidney; and the right side, which is connected with the right side of the body, especially the right kidney. In Tan Tien Chi Kung we strengthen all these parts (perineum power) by contracting them (pulling up). When your pelvic area is strong, no energy will leak out of these gates, and you can enhance the Chi pressure in your Tan Tien. With a weak perineum and anus, this is not possible.

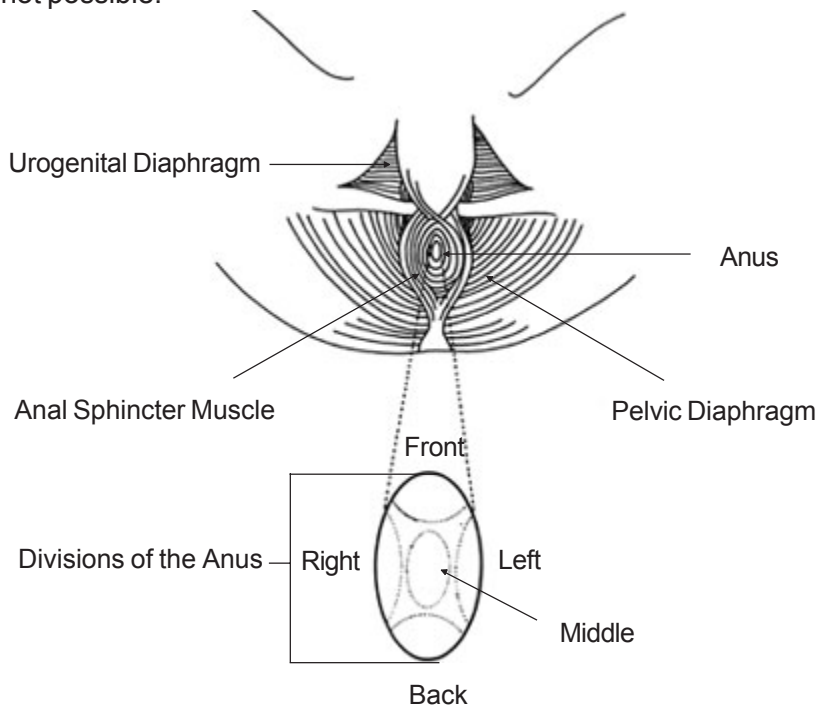


Fig. 7 Anus is divided into five regions.

There are good Taoist exercises to strengthen the anus and the different parts of the anus (perineum/pelvic floor) and to learn to contract them (by pulling up) without tightening the muscles too much. To make them really strong, which means giving the muscles a strong tone, you must do these exercises many times a day. The pleasant thing about them is that you can do these exercises everywhere: good times and places to practice are while waiting at the post office, the bus station, the shop, or when you watch a movie or TV, or work on the computer. When you are creative, you will find many occasions during the day to practice these exercises.

The best way to do these exercises is in the standing position. However, you also can practice them sitting or laying on the ground, in bed or even in the bathtub.

We give you the exercises in the standing position;

1. Stand shoulder width with the feet parallel and all the nine points firmly rooted in the earth. Just be aware of the front part of the anus and the sexual organs, especially the testicles, the vagina and the uterus. Inhale half the breath, flatten down the stomach, hold the breath, inhale without inhaling, inhale more and contract the **front** part of the anus and the sexual organs. Keep your tongue against the palate. Exhale very slowly and pull up even stronger. This will be easier and more effective when you exhale with the kidney sound. When you do this well the coccyx will turn in and the sacrum will push out, rounding the lower back, because the sacrum and the sexual organs are connected.

2. Stand in the same position, be aware of the middle part of the anus, and for men also the prostate gland. Inhale half the breath, flatten down the stomach, hold the breath, inhale without inhaling, inhale more and contract the **middle** part of the anus. Hold the breath and exhale very slowly, pulling up the middle part of the anus even more. You can also exhale with the kidney sound now, if you wish.

3. Stand in the same position; be aware of the **left and right** sides of the anus. Inhale, flatten down the stomach, hold the breath, inhale without inhaling, inhale more and contract the left and the

right sides of the anus toward the kidneys. Hold the breath and exhale slowly, if you wish, with the kidney sound, pulling up the left and right side of the anus even more. Feel the kidneys and the whole part of the back expand, including the Door of Life.

4. Stand in the same position; be aware of the **back** of the anus. Inhale half the breath, flatten down the stomach, hold the breath, inhale without inhaling, inhale more and contract the back part of the anus. Hold the breath and exhale very slowly, with the kidney sound if you wish, contracting the back part of the anus even more. You will feel that the lower back is pushed further outward and has more power.

When you inhale and contract the different parts of the anus, at the same time you can always contract your eyes, suck in your mouth, widen your nostrils like a rabbit and push the tongue against the palate. All the round muscles around the orifices of the body and the diaphragm are working together.

3. Releasing Tension in the Diaphragm

Many people have a stiff diaphragm which sticks to the rib cage. In order to be able to develop the Chi pressure, we should have a diaphragm that is loose and that can easily move up and down. To release the tension in the diaphragm, you can massage the diaphragm:

a. You can massage under, and along the rib cage from top to bottom and, or

b. You put the left hand's middle fingers with the palm facing upward, under the rib cage. Place your right hand on the lower part of the right rib cage and push the rib cage downward with your right hand. Repeat for the left side.

This massage will loosen and stretch the diaphragm and will facilitate and deepen the breath. You will be able to keep and push the diaphragm down on the exhalation, which is necessary for the development of the Chi pressure in the Tan Tien.

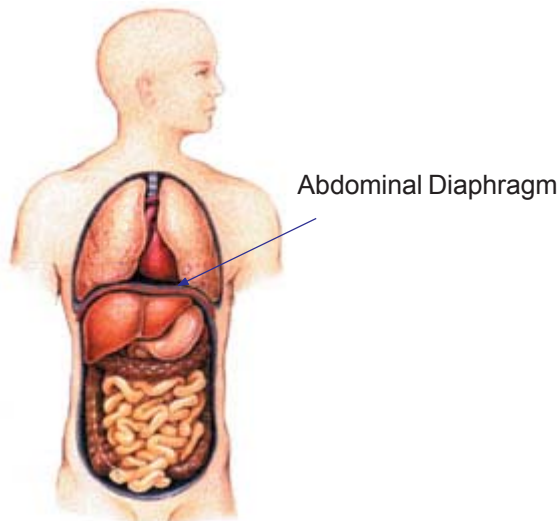


Fig. 8 Release Tension in the Diaphragm

Development of Chi Pressure in the Tan Tien Through Tan Tien Breathing

To feel Chi within you is not easy. When people laugh in the Lower Tan Tien, the Tan Tien Chi starts to develop. You can picture the Tan Tien as a balloon that you can fill with air, creating air pressure in the balloon. The main thing you have to do to fill this balloon is to blow air in it little by little. Blow and hold, blow and hold. With the Tan Tien it is the same. You inhale, blow in the air, hold the breath (air) and exhale very slowly. In this way you can maintain the pressure.

You can verify this with a partner exercise. Take a partner and gently put your fist on his or her Tan Tien (belly) just below the navel.

a. Let him inhale in the abdomen and feel the pressure of the breath (Chi) pushing his abdomen against your fist. Let him then exhale quickly and you will feel that the air (Chi) pressure is gone and that you are pushing into an empty Tan Tien.

b. Let him inhale in the same way and exhale this time very slowly through the mouth. You will feel that the pressure is still there. Just as with the balloon, when you pull up the perineum and push down the diaphragm, the air (Chi) pressure in the Tan Tien will be more condensed and stronger.

As you continue to push, you will feel that the energy remains there and is moving. Let your partner now laugh in the Tan Tien while you are still pushing, and you will feel the Chi pressure becoming stronger and the Chi moving and vibrating. You can change places and let your partner work on you.

1. Breathing exercises to develop Chi Pressure in all Seven Areas and in the Whole Tan Tien

We distinguish seven important areas in the Lower Tan Tien where we would like to develop the Chi pressure:

1. Area below the navel (Chi Hai)
2. Both sides of the front part of the Tan Tien
3. Bladder Area
4. Area near the Solar Plexus
5. Both Sides of the body
6. Both Kidneys
7. Door of Life.

Areas 1 - 4 belong to the front part of the Tan Tien, and 6 and 7 to the back part of the Tan Tien.

Just as with the balloon, you can press some areas of the balloon/Tan Tien to increase the pressure in other parts of the balloon/Tan Tien. The two main areas you always press are the perineum and the diaphragm. This will reduce the space in the Tan Tien and condense the Chi (ball) in the Tan Tien. When you pull to the right, the left, the back or the front, the Chi ball (pressure) will move from one side to the other.

A. Lower Tan Tien: Ocean of Chi or Chi Hai

Put your hands on the Chi Hai in the lower abdomen very gently and very softly. Smile and do a few abdominal breaths. Inhale half the breath, hold the breath, inhale more and pull up the front part of the anus (and the sexual organs) and push at the same time into your lower abdomen; the breath pushes your hands out. Feel a suction. Slowly exhale (hold the Chi pressure in the Chi Hai) and push the Chi down to the lower abdomen part of the Tan Tien. Regulate the breath and maintain equal force between the downward pressure of the Chi and the upward force from the anus (perineum). Always keep the diaphragm down and the chest relaxed. You can make a high pitched sound when you inhale (dragon sound), suck up with the sound and a low pitched (tiger sound) sound when you exhale and push the energy down. Laugh softly inside and feel the vibration in the Chi Hai.



Fig. 9 Put your hands on the Chi Hai in the lower abdomen.

Repeat several times. Feel the pressure becoming stronger with every breath. Especially when you exhale consciously, you hold the Chi. When you inhale and exhale with an absent mind, you lose the Chi. Then it will be true what the Taoists say, that with every breath taken, life is one breath shorter.

B. Both Sides of the Front Part of the Tan Tien

Put your hands gently on both sides of the front part of the Tan Tien. Smile and inhale half the breath. Hold the breath, inhale more and pull up the anus and the left and right sides of the anus and push these points of the Tan Tien outward against your hands. Exhale slowly and press the Chi down to the right and left parts of the front Tan Tien maintaining equal force. Do this several times until you feel a strong Chi pressure. Laugh softly inside and feel a vibration in both sides of the Tan Tien.



Fig. 10 Smile and inhale half the breath.

C. Bladder

Put your hands gently on your bladder. Smile and inhale half the breath. Hold the breath, inhale more and pull up the anus and the front part of the anus and push the bladder outward against both hands. Exhale slowly and consciously and push the Chi down in the bladder. Maintain equal force. Repeat several times until you feel a strong pressure in the bladder region. Laugh softly inside and feel a vibration in the bladder. You can do this exercise when you are urinating to greatly reduce the loss of energy during urination.



Fig. 11 Put your hands gently on your bladder.

D. Upper Abdomen near the Solar Plexus

Put your hands gently on the upper part of your abdomen. Smile and inhale half the breath. Hold the breath, inhale more and pull up the anus and the front part of the anus. Press the upper part of your abdomen out against your hand (with the high pitched dragon sound). Exhale slowly and consciously (with the low pitched tiger sound) and push the Chi in your upper abdomen. Maintain equal force. Repeat several times until you feel a strong Chi pressure in this area. Laugh inside and feel a vibration in the Upper Tan Tien.



Fig. 12 Laugh and Smile in Solar Plexus.

E. Both Sides of the Body

Place your hands gently on both sides of your body. Smile and inhale half the breath. Hold the breath, inhale more and pull up the anus and left and right sides of the anus and push both sides out against your hands. Feel both sides expanding. Exhale slowly and consciously and push the Chi down to the left and right sides. Maintain equal force. Feel both sides of the Tan Tien expanding. Repeat several times until you feel a strong Chi pressure in both sides. Laugh inside and feel both sides of the Tan Tien vibrating.



Fig. 13 Feel both sides of the Tan Tien expanding.

F. Kidneys

Place your hands gently on your kidneys. Smile in the kidneys and inhale half the breath. Hold the breath, inhale more and pull up the anus and the left and right sides of the anus and push the kidneys out against your hands. Feel the kidneys expanding, and the whole lumbar area opening. Inhale more, expand, hold the breath once more and exhale slowly down in the kidneys. Feel the whole kidney area expanding when you exhale and push the energy down. Repeat several times until you feel a strong Chi pressure in both kidneys and a Chi belt around your waist. This exercise will also strengthen the kidneys and increase your Original Force. Smile in the kidneys and feel them vibrating.



Fig. 14 *Feel the kidneys expanding, and the whole lumbar area opening.*

G. Door of Life

Place both hands gently, one over the other, on the Door of Life (about L2/L3 level). Cover the Door of Life. Smile and inhale half the breath. Hold the breath and pull up the anus and the back part of the anus and push the Door of Life out against your hands. Feel the Door of Life expanding and becoming more open. Inhale more, hold the breath, pull up more and expand, inhale more, hold and expand. Exhale slowly and consciously and press the Chi down to the Door of Life. Maintain equal force. Repeat several times until you feel a strong pressure in the Door of Life and you feel it open and breathing. Be aware of the soles of your feet, the coccyx and the sacrum. Inhale and pull up the anus and the back part of the anus, feel the pulsation in the Door of Life sucking up the energy of the Earth and moving it upward through the spine to the brain. Exhale, put both feet together, scoop up the energy and bring it down. Touch the navel and focus on the Door of Life. Repeat several times.

Rest, cover the navel, smile and feel your whole abdomen full of Chi, open and breathing/pulsating.



Fig. 15 Focus on the Door of Life.

H. Tan Tien Breathing

Breathe slowly and smoothly in the Tan Tien until you feel nice and calm. Then combine all the seven breathing exercises together. Smile and gently place both hands on the Lower Tan Tien. Inhale part of the breath. Hold the breath, inhale more and pull up the anus and the front part of the anus and push against the fingers. Exhale slowly and push the energy down, expanding the lower abdomen. Hold the pressure.

Place your hands on both sides of the front Tan Tien. Inhale again part of the breath. Hold the breath, inhale more and pull up the anus and the left and right side of the anus. Push against the fingers. Exhale slowly and push the energy to the left and right side of the front Tan Tien. Feel these parts expanding and hold this pressure. Place your hands on the bladder. Inhale part of the breath. Hold the breath. Inhale more and pull up the anus and the front part of the anus, pushing out the bladder. Exhale slowly and push the energy down in the bladder.

Feel the bladder expanding and hold the pressure. Place your hands on both sides of the body. Inhale part of the breath. Hold the breath and pull up the anus and the left and right sides of the anus. Push both sides of the body out against the hands. Exhale slowly and push the energy down to both sides of the Tan Tien. Feel the sides expanding and hold this pressure.

Place your hands on the kidneys. Inhale part of the breath. Hold the breath, inhale more and pull up the anus and the left and right sides of the anus toward the kidneys. Push the kidneys outward. Exhale slowly and push the Chi down into the kidneys. Feel the kidneys expanding. Hold the pressure.

Place both hands on the Door of Life. Inhale part of the breath. Hold the breath, inhale more and pull up the anus and the back part of the anus. Exhale slowly and push the energy down into the Door of Life. Feel the Door of Life expanding, pushing the lumbar area slightly to the back. Feel the energy rising up the spine to the brain. Your whole Tan Tien is now like a balloon with a very high Chi pressure inside, expanding to all sides.

Hold both hands on the Tan Tien and laugh gently inside it. Feel the vibration and pulsation of the Chi. Turn your senses inward to the Tan Tien. Empty the mind in the Tan Tien. Just rest for a while. Feel nice, calm, relaxed and energetic.



Fig. 16 Laugh gently in the Tan Tien.

2. Exercises to Bring More Chi Pressure and Energy Vibration in the Tan Tien

1. You can just repeat the exercises. The only difference is that this time you use your fingers to give counter pressure against the pressure of the Chi from inside.

For example: Put your fingers on the Chi Hai in the lower abdomen. Smile and do a few abdominal breaths. Inhale half of the breath, hold the breath, inhale more and pull up the front part of the anus and push at the same time against the lower part of the Tan Tien, against the pressure from your fingers. Feel a suction. Slowly exhale (hold the Chi pressure in), increase the pressure of your fingers and push the Chi down in the lower abdomen against your fingers. You will notice that with the counteracting force of the fingers the Chi pressure becomes stronger. Do this a few times. The last time you hold the breath after the exhalation and tap both fists on the Chi Hai until you feel a vibration in this area.

Do this for all the other six areas of the Tan Tien (tapping on the bladder is especially good for women). You then combine them, enhancing in this way the Chi pressure and vibration in the whole Tan Tien. Repeat this until you feel a very deep vibration of the Chi inside the Tan Tien and in your original force.

Have a partner gently push you with his fist in your Tan Tien, so that you have to hold and apply counter pressure. This will help you to develop a stronger Chi pressure and vibration in the Tan Tien.

2. Repeat each exercise again and continue to use the fingers as a counteracting force. At the end of each exercise, inhale and expand for instance the lower abdomen and exhale quickly with the deep tiger sound “haaa”, pushing the energy down and out against your fingers. The sound is made through a quick expansion, for instance from the lower abdomen. The exhalation, the expansion and the sound should be completely synchronized.

Repeat with the whole Tan Tien.

Rest with the palms facing downward. Feel the Tan Tien Chi breathing and pulsating. Inhale and pull up the front, back, left and right parts of the anus together with a light contraction of the eyes and mouth and feel the suction in the Tan Tien, the palms, the soles of the feet, the perineum, the sacrum, the mideyebrow point, the crown. Exhale and condense the energy in the Tan Tien.

Repeat several times.



Fig. 17 Use counter pressures of hands and breath to increase Chi pressure.

Animal Exercises

After each animal exercise: Inhale, put the feet together, scoop up the energy from the universe, palms facing up. Turn the palms downward and pour the energy down over the body, back into the navel, back into the Tan Tien. Focus on the Door of Life. Gently, move the hands from the navel (Lower Tan Tien) to the thighs. Feel the fingers and Chi penetrate the thighbones as Chi is absorbed into the bone marrow. Move the hands down the thighbones. Feel the fingers penetrate the bones, glide past the knees, and across the shinbones. As you glide the hands down, sink the hips and bring the tailbone down to the heels in a squatting position.



Fig. 18 Scoop up energy and pour it onto and into the crown.

Feel yourself sinking down through the Earth and into the infinite space beyond the Earth. Picture the galaxy and feel the spiraling of the force.



Fig. 19 Lift the Tailbone first.

With your hands resting on your feet, lift the tailbone until the legs are straight. Feel the Chi drawn from outer space and the earth spiraling into your body.

Squat down again and gather more Earth energy and more Universal energy. Do this 3 to 9 times.

With your hands resting on your feet, lift the tailbone until the legs are straight. Feel the Chi drawn from outer space and the earth spiraling into your body.

Stand up slowly, gliding the hands over the back of the legs. Feel the fingers touch the bones and the bone marrow and glide up to the coccyx; hold them there for a while. Feel the Chi rising to the spine and the brain. Move the fingers to the sacrum. Feel the Chi pour into the sacrum and the sexual center.

Bring the hands up to the Door of Life and concentrate on the navel.

Feel the Chi energize the kidneys and the Door of Life. Slowly bring the hands to the navel. Smile and collect the energy in the Tan Tien.

Notes: In all the animal exercises the diaphragm is down, the chest relaxed and the anus pulled up. Repeat all the animal exercises several times.

Start the exercises with some Tan Tien breathing, expanding the front, back and sides of the Tan Tien with every breath. Stay relaxed and keep your mind focused.

When doing the animals breathe in with the high pitched, wheezing dragon sound and breathe out with the low pitched, growling tiger sound.

1. Rabbit (Front Tan Tien)

This exercise develops the Chi pressure in the front part of the Tan Tien, navel and pelvic area.

Stand shoulder width, with the feet parallel. Inhale, pull up the anus and the front part of the anus, expand the lower abdomen (with the high pitched dragon sound) and feel the suction in the abdomen, while raising the arms slightly above the head. The wrists should be bent down and the fingers facing the earth.

Exhale quickly and pull up the anus and the front part of the anus even more and, like a rabbit, widen your nostrils. At the same time, sink down a little in the kua, press the palms down and push the energy in the front part of the Tan Tien and the pelvic area. It is very important that you synchronize these three movements. When you do this you will feel the Chi pressure increasing in this part of the Tan Tien and in the palms of your hands. Because there will be a lot of Chi generated in the lower abdomen, the kua and the hip joints will open more.



Fig. 20 Rabbit sinks into the kua.

2. Crane (Both Sides of the Tan Tien)

This exercise develops the Chi pressure in both sides of the Tan Tien.

Stand shoulder width, with the feet parallel. Inhale, pull up the anus and the left and right sides of the anus, expand the left and right sides of the Tan Tien and feel the suction in this part of the Tan Tien. Raise the arms. The fingers should form beaks. Move the arms to the sides of the body at shoulder level. Exhale quickly and pull up the anus (the left and right sides of the anus even more). At the same time, press your palms down to hip level and press the Chi to the left and right sides of the Tan Tien. Feel them expanding and feel the Chi pressure growing in this part and in the palms of your hands. Repeat several times.



Fig. 21 Crane makes beaks.



Fig. 22 Crane expands left and right sides of Tan Tien.

3. Bear (Back Part of the Tan Tien and the Whole Back/Spine)

This animal position corresponds to the back part of the Tan Tien, especially to the sacrum and the whole back: a bear back! We already did part of these exercises in the beginning to open the sacrum and the kua.

Stand shoulder width, feet parallel with the palms facing up. Inhale. Pull up the anus and the back part of the anus, expand the sacrum and the lower back and feel a suction. Feel this suction raises the palms. Now, on exhaling, you must quickly do several things at once. Just as in all the animal exercises, you have to exhale quickly and pull up the anus and the back part of the anus even more. At the same time, you must turn the palms downward and push them down together with the energy and open the sacrum as described in the warm-up exercises, while rounding the shoulders and sinking the chest. You will feel the whole back expanding.



Fig. 23 Bear expands the sacrum.

4. Swallow (Left and Right Tan Tien)

Stand in the Embrace the Tree position. Inhale, pull up the anus and the left and right sides of the anus and let the Lower Tan Tien Chi move you to the left. Your left foot turns 90° and your right foot 45° to the left. Exhale, pull up the anus and the left side of the anus more and press the Chi down in the left Tan Tien, in the left leg, pushing you down into the earth. Feel a force coming up from the earth and a force pushing you down. Inhale again; pull up the anus and the right side of the anus and let the Lower Tan Tien Chi move you to the right. The right foot turns to the front and then 90° to the right, the left foot also turns to the front and then 45° to the right. Exhale quickly, pull up the anus and the right side of the anus more and press the Chi down in the right Tan Tien, in the right leg, pushing you into the earth. Feel again a force coming up from the earth and a force pushing you down.

This exercise is very important for your Tai Chi, especially for the Tan Tien form.



Fig. 24 Swallow moves the tree.

5. Dragon (Left, Right and Middle Tan Tien)

Stand shoulder width, with the feet parallel and the fists at hip level. Inhale, pull up the anus and the left side of the anus and expand the left side of the Tan Tien. Feel a suction. Exhale quickly, pull up the left side of the anus more and, at the same time, press the energy in the left Tan Tien and the right fist to the left leg. Feel the left side of the Tan Tien expanding. Repeat this for the right and the Middle Tan Tien. For the Middle Tan Tien, you push both fists down and pull up the middle part of the anus. This exercise is also very good for your Tai Chi.



Fig. 25 Dragon makes suction.

6. Eagle (Lower Tan Tien)

Stand shoulder width, feet parallel and hold the arms with the elbows bent. Pull up the anus and feel the force in the Tan Tien activated by the force of the fingers and a slight contraction of the eyes. At the same you will feel that the force in the fingers is activated through the force in the Tan Tien. Just stand for a while and feel the forces moving you, enhancing the power in the Tan Tien and in your fingers.



Fig. 26 Eagle activates Lower Tan Tien Chi.

7. Monkey (Lower and Upper Tan Tien)

Stand shoulder width, with your feet parallel and your fists in front of the kua. Inhale, pull up the anus and the middle part of the anus and expand the lower Tan Tien, fists pushing down. Then with a swing coming from the force in the Tan Tien and a contraction of the anus, move your arms up quickly, palms facing downward and let the Chi rise to the Upper Tan Tien. Exhale, pull up the anus more and push the energy down in the Lower Tan Tien. At the same time press the hands down to the earth in a squatting position and then scoop up the earth energy.



Fig. 27 Monkey pushes down to Earth.

Come back to the starting position. Inhale again, pull up the anus and the middle part of the anus, and swing the arms high up in front of you.

When you exhale quickly, pull up the anus more and push down the Chi ball in your Lower Tan Tien with some force and then let your whole weight freely come down with the kua until you are in the squatting position. Let your hands swing backward like open cups beneath the perineum. Inhale, gradually raise up from the knees to the hips and, with your palms, scoop up the earth energy. Gather the energy at the navel. In this exercise, the upper part of your body is loose while the lower part is heavy.



Fig. 28 Monkey scoops up Earth energy.

8. Elephant (Left and Right Kua and Lower Tan Tien)

Stand with your feet parallel and shoulder width. Inhale, pull up the anus and the left side of the anus and swing your arms, like the trunk of an elephant, upward to the front and to the left as you turn your waist to the left. Hold the breath, expand the left Tan Tien and swing the trunk and the waist to the middle again. Exhale, pull up the middle side of the anus and at the same time press the energy and swing the trunk down until you are in a squatting position. End the swing of the trunk between your legs. Inhale, pull up the anus and the right side of the anus, swing the trunk upward to the front and to the right as you swing your waist to the right. Hold the breath, expand the right part of the Tan Tien and swing the trunk and the waist to the front again. Exhale, pull up the middle side of the anus and at the same time press the energy and the trunk down until you are in a squatting position. End the swing of the trunk between the legs. The swing of the trunk should be light and smooth.



Fig. 29 Elephant swings his Trunk.



Fig. 30 Elephant gathers Chi.

9. Rhinoceros (Left and Right Tan Tien)

Stand shoulder width, with your left foot in front and your right foot at a 45° angle behind you. Stretch your left arm straight in front of you, the palm facing downward. Hold the back of your right hand in front of your forehead. Inhale, pull up the anus and the left side of the anus, sink a little bit in the kua and move the waist with the Tan Tien to the left. Your hips and navel should stay pointed straight in front of you. The arms and the upper body move with the Tan Tien to the left. Exhale, pull up the left side of the anus more and, at the same time, press the Chi down in the left Tan Tien, pressing the left leg into the ground.

Repeat to the right side, the right leg in front and the left foot at 45° turned outward behind you. Stretch the right arm straight in front of you and hold the back of the left hand in front of your forehead. Inhale, pull up the anus and the right side of the anus. Sink a little bit in the kua and turn the waist with the Tan Tien to the right. The navel and hips should not move. Exhale, pull up the right side of the anus more and, at the same time, press the Chi down in the right Tan Tien, pressing your right leg in the ground.



Fig. 31 Rhinoceros presses and condenses Chi into Left and Right Tan Tiens.

10. Horse (Upper Tan Tien and Solar Plexus)

Use an expanding sound from the upper Tan Tien/solar plexus. Stand shoulder width, with the feet parallel and the fingertips on the Tan Tien. Inhale, pull up the anus and the front side the anus and expand the upper Tan Tien against your fingertips. The fingertips will provide some counter pressure. Exhale quickly, pull up the front side of the anus more, swing the arms and press them down with the Chi. Sink a little in the kua and at the same time feel the upper part of the Tan Tien expand with the horse sound (“ho”), it is an echoing sound coming from the solar plexus.



Fig. 32 Horse makes “Ho” Chi in Solar Plexus.

11. Bull (Back Tan Tien)

Stand shoulder width, with the feet parallel. Put your left leg to the front and turn your right foot 45° outward. Your arms are in front of you, palms facing outward. Inhale, pull up the anus and the back side of the anus; sink to the back and at the same time turn the palms and scoop up the Chi on the left and right side when you sink to the back. The Tan Tien Chi is pushing you to the back and down into the right leg. Spiral the hands with the spiral of the tendon under the armpits until the palms are facing you. Then exhale, pull up the front side of the anus, spiral the hands more until the palms are facing outward and, at the same time, let the Tan Tien Chi push you to the front and down into the left leg. Feel the energy rising from the earth. Pull up the front and back side of the anus, round the sacrum/lower back (with your chest in, scapulae round and chin pushed back and up). Feel the energy rising in the spine and push the energy out to the fingertips. Repeat with the right leg in front and the left leg back.



Fig. 33 Bull strengthens the Back Tan Tien.

This is a very important exercise for Tai Chi. From this exercise you will learn to sink back in the kua, move from the Tan Tien with the Tan Tien force and direct the force through the spine to the fingertips and from the fingertips back into the earth.

Finishing Tan Tien Chi Kung

After you have finished Tan Tien Chi Kung, sit and relax. Put both palms on your Tan Tien. Smile and feel the Chi vibrating in the Tan Tien and in all the organs, glands and fasciae. Then inhale, move your arms above your head, exhale with the Heart or Triple Warmer Sound and with the palms move all the excess heat (and sick energy) down out of the body, into the earth. Repeat a few times. Let go and empty yourself. Inhale again, raise your arms slowly upwards and scoop up the Universal energy, the violet and ultra red light, into a huge Chi ball. Turn your palms toward your crown and pour the energy over you. Be aware of the soles of your feet and slowly move the energy with the palms down into your body, energizing the body, including your brain, organs, glands, spine. Repeat a few times. Rest. Turn your mind and senses inwards. Empty your mind in the Tan Tien. Feel nice, calm and energetic.

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Tan Tien Chi Kung

Empty Force, Perineum Power and the Second Brain

Mantak Chia

Illustrations by Udon Jandee

Tan Tien Chi Kung

Tan Tien Chi Kung is one of the best Taoist Chi Kung practices used to develop the Tan Tien and Perineum power. We need Chi and Chi pressure in the Tan Tien as a foundation for most of the Universal Tao practices, especially for Iron Shirt Chi Kung, Tai Chi Chi Kung and meditation. The Tan Tien is the energy reservoir in the body; it is the place where we store the energy we generate, gather and absorb in Chi Kung, Tai Chi and meditation.

The Tan Tien is also called the ocean of Chi. According to Chinese medical theory, once the ocean is full it overflows into the eight extraordinary meridians. Once these are full the Chi flows into the twelve ordinary meridians, each of which is associated with a particular organ. The Tan Tien is therefore the foundation of the entire energetic system of the body.

Tan Tien Chi Kung will help you develop Chi pressure which is one of the best practices to reverse the downward spiraling movements into the upward spiraling movement of the quantity and quality of our life force. In other words, the increase of the Chi pressure in our Tan Tien through the Tan Tien Chi Kung will enhance our healing, martial arts (Iron Shirt and Tai Chi), meditation abilities, and the art of daily living and will also nourish our original force. It is the Chi pressure in the Tan Tien that roots our body and mind.

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