

Tan Tien Chi Kung

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



Mantak Chia

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About the Author



Mantak Chia

Master Mantak Chia

Master Mantak Chia is the creator of the Universal Tao System and is the director of the Universal Tao Center and Tao Garden Health Resort and Training Center in the beautiful northern countryside of Thailand. Since childhood he has been studying the Taoist approach to life. His mastery of this ancient knowledge, enhanced by his study of other disciplines, has resulted in the development of the Universal Tao System which is now being taught throughout the world.

About the Author

Mantak Chia was born in Thailand to Chinese parents in 1944. When he was six years old, Buddhist monks taught him how to sit and “still the mind.” While still a grammar school student, he learned traditional Thai boxing. He was then taught Tai Chi Chuan by Master Lu, who soon introduced him to Aikido, Yoga and broader levels of Tai Chi.

Years later, when he was a student in Hong Kong excelling in track and field events, a senior classmate named Cheng Sue-Sue introduced him to his first esoteric teacher and Taoist Master, Master Yi Eng (I Yun). At this point, Master Chia began his studies of the Taoist way of life in earnest. He learned how to circulate energy through the Microcosmic Orbit and, through the practice of Fusion of the Five Elements, how to open the other Six Special Channels. As he studied Inner Alchemy further, he learned the Enlightenment of the Kan and Li, Sealing of the Five Senses, Congress of Heaven and Earth and Reunion of Heaven and Man. It was Master Yi Eng who authorized Master Chia to teach and heal.

When Mantak Chia was in his early twenties he studied with Master Meugi in Singapore, who taught him Kundalini, Taoist Yoga and the Buddha Palm. He was soon able to clear blockages to the flow of energy within his own body. He learned to pass the life force energy through his hands also, so that he could heal Master Meugi’s patients. He then learned Chi Nei Tsang from Dr. Mui Yimwattana in Thailand.

A while later, he studied with Master Cheng Yao-Lun who taught him the Shao-Lin Method of Internal Power. He learned the closely guarded secret of the organs, glands and bone marrow exercise known as Bone Marrow Nei Kung and the exercise known as Strengthening and Renewal of the Tendons. Master Cheng Yao-Lun’s system combined Thai boxing and Kung Fu. Master Chia also studied at this time with Master Pan Yu, whose system combined Taoist, Buddhist and Zen teachings. Master Pan Yu also taught him about the exchange of Yin and Yang power between men and women, and how to develop the Steel Body.

To understand the mechanisms behind healing energy better, Master Chia studied Western anatomy and medical science for two years. While pursuing his studies, he managed the Gestetner Company, a manufacturer of office equipment and became well acquainted with the technology of offset printing and copying machines.

Using his knowledge of Taoism, combined with the other disciplines, Master Chia began teaching the Universal Tao System. He eventually trained other Instructors to communicate this knowledge and he established the Natural Healing Center in Thailand. Five years later, he decided to move to New York, where in 1979, he opened the Universal Tao Center. During his years in America, Master Chia continued his studies in the Wu system of Tai Chi with Edward Yee in New York.

Since then, Master Chia has taught tens of thousands of students throughout the world. He has trained and certified over 1,500 instructors and practitioners from all over the world. Living Tao Centers, Chi Nei Tsang Institutes, Cosmic Healing Forums and Immortal Tao Mountain Sanctuaries have opened in many locations in North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia.

In 1994, Master Chia moved back to Thailand, where he had begun construction of Tao Garden and the Universal Tao Training Center fifteen miles outside of Chiang Mai.

Master Chia is a warm, friendly and helpful man who views himself primarily as a teacher. He presents the Universal Tao System in a straightforward and practical manner, while always expanding his knowledge and approach to teaching. He uses a word processor for writing and is totally at ease with the latest computer technology.

Master Chia estimates that it will take thirty-five books to convey the full Universal Tao System. In June, 1990, at a dinner in San Francisco, Master Chia was honored by the International Congress of Chinese Medicine and Qi Gong (Chi Kung), who named him the Qi gong Master of the Year. He is the first recipient of this annual award.

In December, 2000, the Tao Garden Health Resort and Universal Tao Training Center was completed with two Meditation Halls, two open air Simple Chi Kung Pavilions, indoor Tai Chi, Tao Tao Yin and Chi Nei Tsang Hall, Tai Chi Natural Swimming Pool, Pakua Communications Center with a complete Taoist Library, Internal World Class Weight Lifting Hall and complete 8 Court Recreational Facilities.

In February, 2002, the Immortal Tao practices were held at Tao Garden for the first time using the Dark Room technology creating a complete environment for the higher level Taoist practices.

About the Author

He has previously written and published these twenty-one Universal Tao books:

- Awaken Healing Energy of the Tao*** - 1983
- Taoist Secrets of Love: Cultivating Male Sexual Energy***
co-authored with Michael Winn - 1984.
- Taoist Ways to Transform Stress into Vitality*** -1985
- Chi Self-Massage: the Tao of Rejuvenation*** - 1986
- Iron Shirt Chi Kung I*** - 1986
- Healing Love Through the Tao: Cultivating Female Sexual Energy*** - 1986
- Bone Marrow Nei Kung*** - 1989
- Fusion of the Five Elements I*** - 1990
- Chi Nei Tsang: Internal Organ Chi Massage*** - 1990
- Awaken Healing Light of the Tao*** - 1993
- The Inner Structure of Tai Chi*** co-authored with Juan Li - 1996
- Multi-Orgasmic Man*** co-authored with Douglas Abrams
1996 - published by Harper/Collins
- Tao Yin*** - 1999
- Chi Nei Tsang II*** - 2000
- Multi-Orgasmic Couple*** co-authored with Douglas Abrams
2000 - published by Harper/Collins
- Cosmic Healing I*** - 2001
- Cosmic Healing II*** co-authored with Dirk Oellibrandt - 2001
- Door of all Wonders*** co-authored with Tao Haung - 2001
- Sexual Reflexology*** co-authored with W.U. Wei - 2002
- Elixir Chi Kung*** - 2002
- Tan Tien Chi Kung*** - 2002

Many of the books above are available in the following foreign languages:

Arabic, Bulgarian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Hungarian, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Lithuanian, Malaysian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Slovenian, Spanish, & Turkish editions are available from the Foreign Publishers listed in the Universal Tao Center Overview in the back of this book.

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We offer our eternal gratitude to our parents and teachers for their many gifts to us. Remembering them brings joy and satisfaction to our continued efforts in presenting the Universal Tao System. For their gifts, we offer our eternal gratitude and love. As always, their contribution has been crucial in presenting the concepts and techniques of the Universal Tao.

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Words of Caution

The practices described in this book have been used successfully for thousands of years by Taoists trained by personal instruction. Readers should not undertake these practices without receiving personal transmission and training from a certified instructor of the Universal Tao, since some of these practices, if done improperly, may cause injury or result in health problems. This book is intended to supplement individual training by the Universal Tao and to serve as a reference guide for these practices. Anyone who undertakes these practices on the basis of this book alone, does so entirely at his or her own risk.

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 training begins.

Neither the Universal Tao nor its staff and instructors can be responsible for the consequences of any practice or misuse of the information contained in this book. If the reader undertakes any exercise without strictly following the instructions, notes and warnings, the responsibility must lie solely with the reader.

This book 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

In the Universal Tao Practice, Second Brain Chi Kung (also called Tan Tien Chi Kung) is the art of cultivating and condensing Chi in the Lower Tan Tien and thereby raising the pressure in this area.

The Lower Tan Tien is, in the Taoist energy paradigm, the center of the body. It is both the major generator and storage place for Chi energy in the body and the center of awareness. Taoists train this lower abdominal area as the second brain. In all Taoist practices the student is required first to lower the upper brain down to the lower brain. The student trains to consciously become aware of the second brain, so the upper brain which consumes a lot more energy than the lower brain can rest when it is not really in use.

The Lower Tan Tien is also called the “Medicine Field” as well as “the Elixir Field”, as it gathers and contains the healing power of the Original Chi or Prenatal Energy. Other names for it are the Ocean of Chi, the Sea of Energy, the cauldron and the navel center. The use of the expressions “Ocean” and “Sea” refer to the wavelike quality of Chi. The cauldron and the navel belong to the lower Tan Tien. The expression “cauldron” refers to the function of the lower Tan Tien as the chief laboratory and center of internal alchemy which transforms energy frequencies.

The Lower Tan Tien serves as the source of the life force or vital force which then as Chi becomes the source of Shen Chi or spirit power/energy.

Thus, throughout all Universal Tao practices including the highest ones, the Lower Tan Tien remains the key to opening the body and the mind for a free uninterrupted energy flow.

To keep the practitioners in this process firmly on the ground and rooted so that they do not lose the connection with the earth, Tan Tien Chi Kung provides a safe and effective method of bringing us “down to earth” and receiving the energy of the earth. To the extent that we ground ourselves, Tan Tien Chi Kung is the basis of our stability, physical and mental/spiritual balance. It helps us to live from our own center and be proactive instead of reactive, giving space to others as we are in touch with ourselves and value our own space. Tan Tien Chi Kung proposes that the source of true happiness and joy lies within our very selves and not anywhere else. The negative energies within and around us, which we

Introduction

may experience as obstacles to our happiness, are the “raw material” for energy transformation. Through them we may learn to accept and appreciate ourselves, others and the world around us. It helps us to see our own negative energies as garbage we can recycle into compost which can then serve to compound our positive energies.

In the recycling process, our inner power will grow and the pressures from outside and within ourselves will come into balance. As a result, we will feel at ease and our Lower Tan Tien will be relaxed, which is the most essential technical requirement for keeping up the Chi pressure.

Tan Tien Chi Kung is above all a practice by which the unity of what is above and below is acknowledged and honored. Through its service as reservoir and focus of condensation of Chi, the Lower Tan Tien confirms the unity between earth and heaven in the body.

Tan Tien Chi Kung is a Chi Kung form that Master Mantak Chia has developed to build up the Tan Tien Chi. It is an important basic form for all the basic training, especially Iron Shirt Chi Kung, Tai Chi Chi Kung and Microcosmic Orbit.

The Lower Tan Tien is the place where our original force is stored; it is in the center of the belly just under the navel. This is at the same time the storage place for all the energy which we are absorbing and collecting during the Chi Kung exercises and Taoist Inner Alchemy meditation practice. In Tan Tien Chi Kung we make use of Tan Tien breathing, by which we will train the Tan Tien Chi in eight directions. You also learn to control and move the Chi through the power of the mind and to increase the Chi pressure in the Tan Tien with the Tiger and Dragon breaths. In this way you can send and circulate the Chi in Tai Chi Chi Kung, Iron Shirt Chi Kung and Microcosmic Orbit; you are also able to strengthen your connective tissue. The old Taoists first learned Tan Tien Chi Kung so that subsequently they could move the Chi into Tai Chi Chi Kung and Iron Shirt Chi Kung forms.

Chapter I

Power of the Inner Smile

Second Brain Chi Kung (Tan Tien Chi Kung) and the Power of the Inner Smile

The process of internal transformation in the Universal Tao practice starts with the Inner Smile down to the lower brain located in the lower abdominal area. It is the key practice for keeping Chi pressure in the Lower Tan Tien and the whole body, and it is the most effective practice for keeping all energy path routes in the body open.

Although the Inner Smile at first sight would appear to be an easy practice, it actually represents a great challenge. It holds in all its apparent simplicity a highly concentrated way to change our whole attitude towards life and towards ourselves. Yet, at the same time, it is the key to shifting and transforming our inner disposition and attitude so that we open ourselves to the ability of flowing with the stream of life. Also, it helps us not to “push against the river” and use force on ourselves and others. It trains us to accept ourselves and thereby others so that transformation can come from within and not from above or outside, as we raise our awareness and mindfulness.

The practice of the Inner Smile is not a shrewd trick or an easy device to forget our pain and to repress and do away with it. We need to recognize that pain will always be there, as existential pain, which is there as we live and exist. We will invariably accumulate pain in the ups and downs of life. It is the very practice of the Inner Smile which trains us to look deeply into ourselves and transform the pain into a source of self-transformation and empowerment. We become truly invulnerable, not by ignoring the pain, but by becoming more vulnerable and getting in touch with ourselves. By so doing we can be more sensitive to others and to the world. It is good to shed tears as we detoxify ourselves. In a patriarchal culture like ours, men are not supposed to show their tears, because it shows their weakness. If we learn the Inner Smile, we open ourselves to our deeper self and we learn to process our pain. In this

way we restore the energy flow so that we can laugh again and then smile, as we learn to embrace ourselves, others and the world.

Yet, when we cry we lose energy. However the Inner Smile is a training to sense, feel, see and hear deeply, and learn to accept and embrace what is there so that life is opened up again.

By smiling into the heart of our own being and into our whole body, we affirm the basic intrinsic goodness of existence and our gratitude for being alive. By smiling inwardly we create the ground for self-esteem which in turn is the root of our own sense of dignity, and is essential for self-empowerment.

This may be called the first process of alchemical transformation on which all the others depend; it is the beginning of a new way of being, free from self-destruction.

It is not based on self-confrontation and fighting ourselves, but on learning to accept ourselves as we are, with a unique blend and combination of good and negative energies. We need both of them in order to grow. Without the negative energies there would be no impulse for the transformation process and we could not even raise our energy supply. The energy potential hidden in the negative energies would remain repressed and untapped.



Fig. 1.1 *Smile down to the Lower Brain.*

Smiling and lowering the upper mind down to the lower mind, the Lower Tan Tien, is of particular importance as a way to tune in to our life source and raise our life force. By so doing, we make it possible for the diaphragm to relax and freely move up and down. This also makes the lungs and heart happy.

Laughing and smiling are perhaps the best ways to connect with the Lower Tan Tien, generate Chi pressure and inner power, restore the free flow of energy and increases immunity.

It is good to experiment with and experience different forms of smiling and find out for yourself the results of moving from outward laughing towards inner laughing. It is a process like hitting a drum on its outside and causing vibrations inside; we go from outer laughing towards inner smiling. The more subtle will be the vibrations in the Lower Tan Tien and the more powerful the Chi pressure generated.



Fig. 1.2 Outward Laughing



Fig. 1.3 Inner Laughing

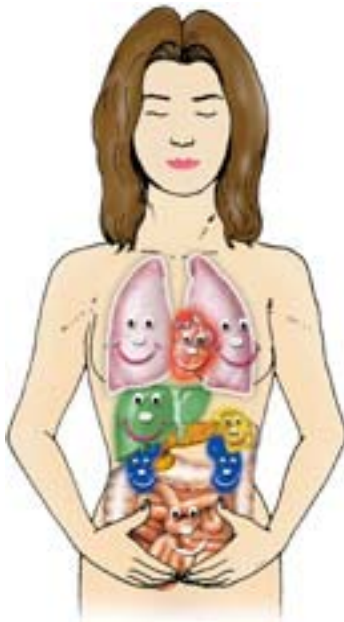


Fig. 1.4 Inner Smile

The more inward the smile is, the less the lungs are used and the more energy is economized and natural (embryonic) breathing is approached.

Smiling and laughing Chi Kung are such a natural form of relaxation that we hardly think of them as a Chi Kung practice. Yet they are one of the most effective ways to restore the Water/Fire balance in the body. By making the sound “Ha”, heat is released and excess fire energy is expelled, and the body is cooled and thereby rebalanced.

The Inner Smile is not only essential to get in touch with ourselves. It is also the key which makes it possible for us to get in touch with, receive and absorb all energies from the Universe, the Earth and the Cosmic particle energy around us, and to open ourselves to the Universe.



Fig. 1.5 Group Laughing

Tan Tien Chi Kung and the Alchemical Process

The sound “Ha” together with the sounds “Ho” and “Hum” constitute a triad of sounds which serve as seed mantras in the hundred syllable mantra in Tibetan Buddhist practice, by which the highest wisdom energies are invoked. Specific sounds raise particular energy frequencies in each organ. Obviously the sound “ha” is the sound which makes the whole body feel good, as it generates Chi and make energies move, so that a state of well being is experienced. Laughing and smiling are natural ways the body uses to rebalance itself and release stress and tension and restore the Chi flow.

The very low sounds which Tibetan monks make, when chanting their mantras, are very similar to those we heard on the sound track of the Nasa recording of the sound of the Earth, Saturn and other planets. Normal people cannot hear, but the adept can hear them. These sounds originate from deep in the belly and thereby create powerful vibrations in the Lower Tan Tien. Such a practice may well be called Tiger and Dragon sounds in the Tan Tien Chi Kung practice, as it raises internal pressure and power to move Chi.

In the Healing Sounds practice, we have learned that the Inner Smile heightens the activity of the thymus gland, the gland of the heart and the seat of loving and love Chi. The heart is capable of producing 37 layers of magnetic fields. The thymus gland produces the T-cells and killer cells which ward off and destroy cancer and other dangerous cells.



Fig. 1.6 Inner Smile spiraling out to the Universe as the heart radiates out power to the Universal magnetic fields.

Smiling down into the body has multiple beneficial effects releasing toxins and restoring the energy flow and the capacity of the body to heal itself.

Simple Practice

1. Sit, stand or lay down in a comfortable position.
2. Use the fingers of both hands especially the middle, index and ring fingers. Touch the navel with the palm.
3. Smile into the mideyebrow and feel it relax. Smile and relax the upper mind down to the neck, down to the chest and gradually down to the Lower Tan Tien.
4. Feel the navel area starting to get warm. Start to spiral the energy in the navel area like the Tai Chi spiral. Feel the Chi getting warmer and warmer starting to raise through the spine to the brain.
5. Keep your mind on the lower abdominal spiral, and lightly feel the brain spiral and the Chi pressure on the crown and the mideyebrow. Gradually feel the Chi pressure push

down into the nose and open the sinuses and feel the nose open and your breathing improved.

6. Moving Chi down into the sinuses will help prevent colds and flu.
7. Slowly let the Chi go down by itself to the navel. Smile down into the navel a while and feel the energy stored.

Second Brain, the Lower Tan Tien Consciousness

Taoist practice is entirely based on the art of sensing and feeling as the primary form of cognition which precedes all other forms. It is the nervous system which enables us to feel and sense our body.

It is our mind which directs and guides the Chi but if we cannot feel and sense our body, the mind cannot give direction and guidance. To be able to feel and sense, our nervous system needs to be in a relaxed state. The moment we are stressed and tense, our ability to feel and sense the processes in our body declines.

When we are pressured or feel ready for action, we are not prepared to turn inwardly, smile to our mind, our nerves and our Chi. We reinforce the disconnective process, and as a result, are confused and upset. We feel the internal fracturing and fragmentation taking place but do not understand (or wish to understand) what is going on.

These are valuable starting points: letting our mind come down and sink in our body to our Lower Tan Tien; giving attention to our breathing and posture becoming aware. They create a way out of disconnection and back into getting in touch with our body. This means that we have to entirely relearn to value and listen to our body and become sensitive to what it wants to tell us. The choice is ours.

In this process of relearning to be open to ourselves and to connect with our own body, Tan Tien Chi Kung is basic. Especially because it brings us back to what in our culture is as a rule treated as the least honourable part of ourselves and thereby elevates us as human beings.

As a result of the orientation of hegemonic culture, human potential, which is intrinsically multidimensional, is increasingly steered

in one direction. Dominant forms of disembodied abstract cognition have ascendance over all other embodied forms of knowledge.

Widespread 'dis-ease' is a result of this sharp decline of a basic sense of cause and effect and a generalized lowering of Chi pressure and feeling of being threatened. This feeling of 'dis-ease' generates negative emotions which are then projected onto people who do not share our views of the world. Such tendencies towards racism and fundamentalism can only be overcome if we are all the same human being, sharing the same body and spirit and learning to truly value ourselves in our whole being.

Precisely because of the desperate conditions this situation engenders and the resistance it creates, there is an awakening to the need for a new, more embodied way of understanding the universe and ourselves.

Lower Tan Tien as the Second Brain

Recent advanced research confirms the ancient Taoist insight, gained over a long period of inner observation, that the lower Tan Tien is a key source of intelligence. It actually supplies the brain with the basic orientations, data and information which it can then process. It turns out to be full of neurotransmitters. This is why I like to compare the brain to the hardware of the computer and the organs to the software. The organs feed the brain with information and it depends on the quality of the organs and what is transmitted to the brain what is processed. So the quality of the organs and the way they are activated by the brain affects the outcome.

For this reason, the Lower Tan Tien is also called the second brain by Taoists. It may well be called the first brain, by the way it processes and balances the emotions which in turn determine the nature and quality of the intellectual process. Growing imbalance and disconnection between body and mind, thinking and feeling and the various forms of cognition and intelligence, appear to be a central feature of the prevailing global culture. It is not surprising that, violence and conflict in all domains of life have become chronic and widespread.

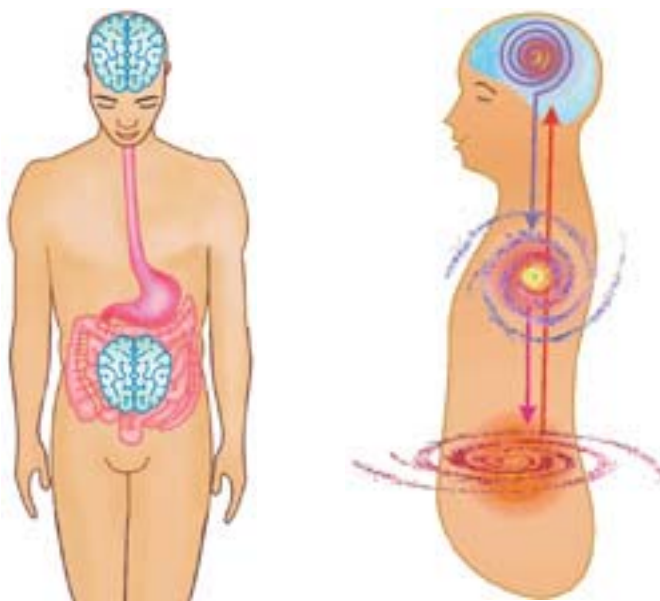


Fig. 1.7 A. Lower Tan Tien and Second Brain
B. Upper, Middle and Lower Tan Tien Connections

Tan Tien Chi Kung and Natural Breathing

The natural form of breathing is Iron Shirt abdominal breathing. This is the principal measure by which to evaluate the body's state of health and capacity for self-healing. To the extent that we practice abdominal breathing, we have retained the ways we used to breathe as a baby and child.

When in the course of life, natural low, deep, long and quiet abdominal breathing is replaced by high short and shallow breathing in the chest, we lose our inner stability. We have lost a major source of vitality and self-healing, as our breathing requires more energy than it generates. Through the loss of internal pressure, we also lose our inner power, as the balance between our inward pressure outwardly and the outward pressure inwardly has been lost.

We can only regain our vitality by recreating this internal power so that the two powers are once again in a dynamic and reciprocal state of interplay. This is the inner meaning of Chi Kung: to restore the inner power by learning to breath naturally again.

The cultivation of this natural form of breathing, which reproduces the process of prenatal embryonic breathing, is essential to Tan Tien Chi Kung. It is through this form of breathing that we recover our original Chi and thereby our internal pressure.

Through this form of breathing, the amount of energy needed for external breathing and the intake of oxygen are reduced. Precisely because of this, the lungs can then take in more oxygen. At the same time, the capacity of the whole body and all its cells as well as the capacity of the lungs to store oxygen is enhanced. Thus with less energy, breathing has improved both qualitatively and quantitatively.

Tan Tien Chi Kung breathing relies less on breathing in Chi from outside, as it basically draws on Original Chi. As a result of this, the abdomen starts to breath by itself and the process of breathing becomes economical, effortless and unintentional. Inner original breath and outer breath have a relationship as the external breath can move the inner breath and vice versa, as Chi pressure from the Lower Tan Tien helps the lungs to breathe. The way the lungs are used also affects the original internal breath in its unfolding. Yet the two forms of breathing are to be clearly distinguished. Genuine inner breathing can only evolve if external breathing gives it space.

At the same time, Chi pressure is kept up and remains high. The more unintentional and natural this process is, the more it enhances the free and full flow of Original Chi throughout the whole body, its reservoirs, pathways, organs, glands, fasciae and all cells.

This kind of breathing may be compared to that in a deep and calm sleep. It is not without reason that when we see children asleep, we are at once struck by the beauty and serenity of their expression and the peaceful energy they radiate. We feel at once the fine and good energies as if the inner quality of the Chi in the child's body becomes transparent. We like to caress and embrace it, not realizing that it mirrors our own potential Chi Kung state which we long for.

In prenatal breathing, a great change takes place in the manner of breathing. It is no more through the nose. The whole body starts to breathe. This is at times called skin breathing, although the whole body is involved. In this natural state of breathing, on the out breath we send the Chi to the tendons, muscles and the skin, while when we breathe in, the Chi flows to the bone marrow and the internal organs.

Chapter I

Skin breathing may be called a high energy form of breathing. It does by itself what we most need to generate and rejuvenate ourselves.

On the in breath, it dislodges the fat accumulated in the bone marrow and it creates and renews in the bone marrow the red and white blood cells; these cells are needed to transport the supply of nutrition, to remove waste and to neutralize germs. Then it replenishes the organs with fresh energy.

On the out breath, it presses out the fat from the fasciae in between the tendons, muscles and the skin and pushes out the waste through the pores of the skin and hair and opens it for fresh Chi to enter.

Thus skin breathing regulates the continuous exchange process between inner and outer energies. Crucial for regulating this exchange is the coordination of the perineum and the anus. It is not surprising, therefore, that this training is at the core of Tan Tien Chi Kung.

In the state of skin breathing, the borders between the inside and outside of the body tend to dissolve and a sense of unity with the universe may arise by itself. One feels at the same time at home within the body and in the universe, which is then experienced as one's own extended body. Skin brushing enhances this natural exchange process.

Natural breathing becomes possible when emotional fixations and entanglements are overcome so that you feel at peace with yourself, relaxed, calm and happy. To induce this process, the practice of the Inner Smile, the Healing Sounds and Fusion are of crucial significance. They help to clear the energy reservoirs and pathways and also enhance the state of receptivity of the organs, glands and cells as well as of the bones, so that the flow of Chi can enter and do its work.

In terms of energy use, Chi Kung as a practice is superior to the external practice of sports and athletics. In a Chi Kung state the body can largely rely on the natural flow of original Chi. This is also more healthy, not only because energy is saved, but also because the body is often tortured or exposed to different forms of rude treatment in sports and athletics and in activities like aerobics and jogging. In a Chi Kung state, the body can do with little oxygen.

This explains why advanced Chi Kung practitioners who have learned to rely on embryonic breathing have acquired a high re-

generative and rejuvenating capacity. They are known for their longevity, as they chemically and spiritually reproduce the exchange mechanisms which make the child grow.

Iron Shirt Chi Kung and Tai Chi Chi Kung

Tan Tien Chi Kung has a particularly close connection with the three basic Iron Shirt Practices which focus on the strengthening of the internal organs and firm rooting, the change and strengthening of the tendons and the cleansing and renewal of the bone marrow. As to the Iron Shirt practices, compression as mentioned above, creates space for new Chi in the muscles, tendons and the bones, as the fat which has been accumulated there is expelled. With the process of aging, fat tends to accumulate, and as a result the bones lose their regenerative function, as fat takes the place of blood cells.

Through bone breathing, the regenerative capacity of the bone marrow is restored, as new red and white blood cells start to regrow after the fat has been expelled.

Maintaining a firm but gentle Chi pressure in the Lower Tan Tien is also at the heart of creating Chi pressure, needed in Tai Chi Chi Kung.

Chapter II

Squatting Chi Kung

One of the most wonderful Tan Tien Chi Kung exercises undoubtedly is squatting. It is so common and well understood in certain regions of the world relatively less affected by modernization. It is hardly noticed; yet now it is considered worthy of elevation to human “exercise”. This position of squatting has been the position for humans to move the bowels throughout the evolution of human beings.



Fig. 2.1 Squatting Position

Since the beginnings of civilization, people have known the highly beneficial effects of squatting. Their bodies told them to do so and in this way they recreated a deep state of relaxation, in which the sacrum and spine open and the warm life current in the body regained its optimal free flow.

It is not incidental that this yoga position (in the original meaning of this Sanskrit word which means unity, connection, relation) is, of all postures, the one that comes closest to that of the child in its embryonic high energy state. Its capacity for energy storage and consumption is optimal while the metabolic rate is low and energy consumption most economical.

It is not by chance that the common people, to rest from their labors in the service of the powerful, squatted and the chairs and stools were reserved for the rulers and aristocrats who then could, at least while sitting, keep their feet on the ground.



Fig. 2.2 Squatting to connect with Mother Earth and Galaxy below.

More than any other posture, squatting opens the lower lumbar and thereby prevents hernia. Also it activates the latent motor force of the pelvis, opens the kua, flexes the hip joints, induces downward pressure and release of waste, gases and toxins for recycling in the ground and reactivates the colon. By the gravity pull it provokes, it stirs the earth Chi current to move and bounce upward to the perineum, to awaken the spinal fluids in the sacrum, open and elongate the spine, rebalance vertebrae and ease the Chi current upward to the crown and the crystal room.

Also the lungs and the heart get a massage, as external breathing changes into internal breathing while the Tan Tien helps the heart by taking over its pumping function for the Lower Tan Tien, facilitating and activating the Chi and blood flow.

It also significantly contributes to lengthening the psoas which shortens with age, through anxiety and as a result of too much susceptibility to cold temperatures. It is the shortening of the psoas which pulls the body over and out of alignment with gravity so that the up and downward pull is lost and hence the flow of energy upward and downward is slowed.

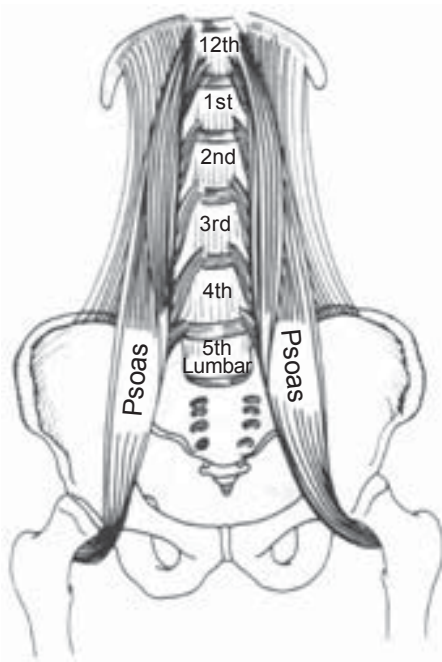


Fig. 2.3 Psoas is a supporting shelf below.

Hence the Tao Yin practice which focuses on restoring the original suppleness of the psoas muscle which is also called the “soul muscle” in Chinese is of vital importance. Obviously the soul, to grow, needs a well aligned body so that when the time for the transference of the soul, upward through the crown comes, it can count on a straight body, in line with the earth and with heaven.

By relaxing the psoas, unity between lower and the upper part of the body is promoted. A relaxed psoas makes it possible for the Chi to freely flow upward, connecting the lower lumbar with the lower part of the kua (groin). When the psoas muscles are relaxed, the earth Chi can freely flow from the legs into the upper body, in particular the spine (via the perineum and sacrum).

When the psoas muscles are relaxed, Chi can freely flow between the kidneys via the veins to the heart and vice versa. The free exchange between fire Chi from the heart to the kidneys (by which the kidneys are warmed up and the heart is cooled) and from the kidneys to the heart (by which the kidneys are warmed and the heart is cooled) is the basis of the balance between Water and Fire energy in the whole body and thereby the balance between Yin and Yang.

Squatting is also closely connected with togetherness. When people in communities not yet affected by modernization relax, they often squat together in a circle. It is also the ideal position in the field when at work, and work is alternated with moments of rest. It is also part of the realm of play and playfulness among children.

There are advantages in turning for a while into a frog or into other animals such as a tiger, lion, crane, turtle, rabbit, swallow, elephant, cobra, locust and so on. Through observation of how animals use their energy, the great masters, in their wisdom, invented these postures.

As the squatting position generates a state of relaxation and stillness, it is also a natural posture for meditative practice. One sees that in many indigenous cultures people assume the squatting position precisely for that reason.

Also, the sleeping posture which curves the body, while lying on the side and pulls the legs in, is close to this position. Obviously the subconscious counsels this position for its regenerating quality.

In many cultures, when people die they are laid in the squatting position as it resembles most closely that of the child before it was

born and thereby is an unconscious expression of reconnecting the body with its original immortal state of being.

Squatting may perhaps be called Tan Tien Chi Kung exercise number one but let's guard against elevating it to the highest rank of exercise in any system. Let's protect its entirely natural character for those who are spontaneous Chi Kung practitioners without knowing it. Their body knows and the wisdom of their bodies, as they inherited it from the ancestral culture, understands the secret. Yet as the deep sense of Taoist practice is to facilitate and accommodate nature, it would still be just to see it as an exercise.

Practice Squatting

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 a wall, facing the wall and then to squat straight down from the kua (like you are sitting down, not bending the knees too much). The wall will prevent you from leaning forward when you squat. Some people tend to bend the head forward first, and also to bend the back and lean forward. Using a wall will make you see whether you are bending too much. Breathe in the Lower Tan Tien. Keep the chest relaxed and feel a force pulling you down and a force pulling you up, when you squat down to the Earth.

To squat down 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 stretched, and firmly grasp each other's wrists. From this position, squat straight down together from the kua while supporting one another. Sink as deep as you both can without leaning forward (See Fig. 2.4).



Fig. 2.4 *Squatting with a Partner.*

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2. Start standing in front of the wall 18 cm or more away. Eventually you can move closer to the wall. Place both hands on the sides, the tips of the fingers touch the thigh bones.



Fig. 2.5 Squatting using a wall.

3. Slowly drop down from the groin, like you are sitting down; drop till you can't go any further, and lightly bend the knees. If you bend too much your knees will hit the wall.

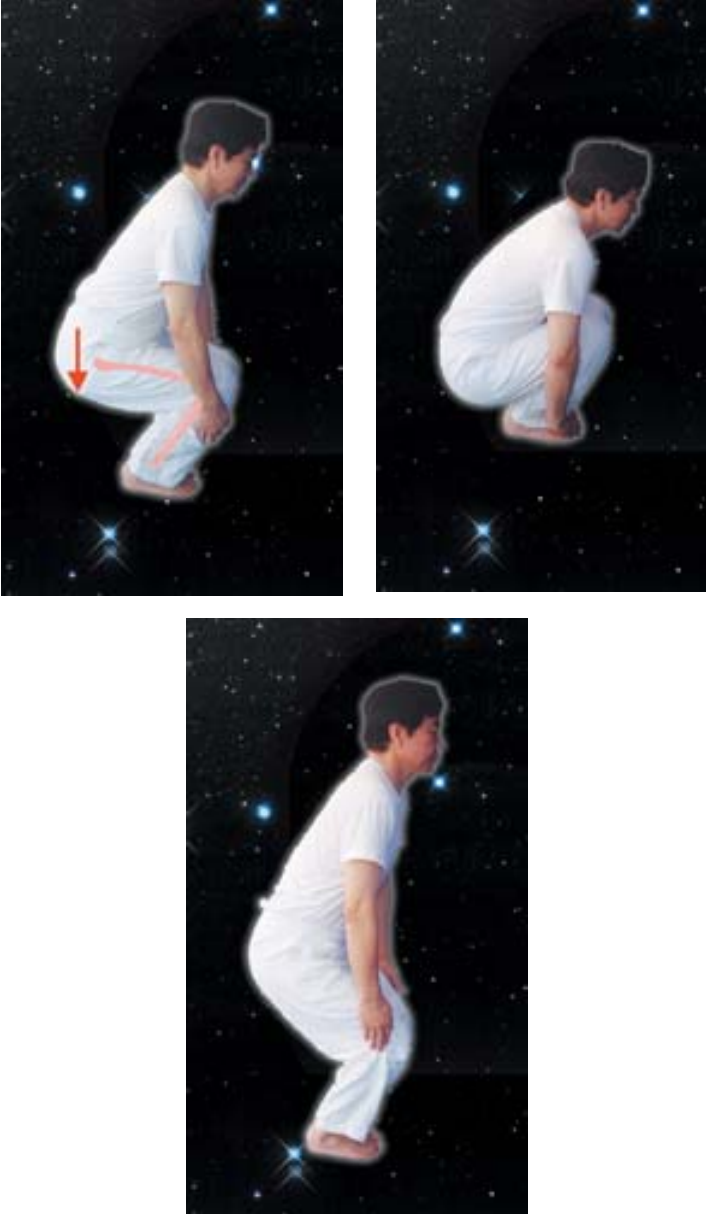


Fig. 2.6 Squatting using the wall in front of you.

Chapter III

Tan Tien Chi Kung

Our Body and the Body of the Universe

In Chi Kung there may be called a “Yin” state or a state in which receptivity is a principal virtue. In a later period the character representing Chi is composed of two parts those for “rice” and “air”, implying that energy was seen as the combined product of the intake of oxygen and food. Is this shift indicative of a change in perception which coincides with the rise of patriarchy and a shift from inner to outer?



As the inner movements of body and mind become more natural, also the Chi flow, generated by the Chi pressure in the Lower Tan Tien, becomes more natural and will ultimately move by itself. The more the Chi Kung state is approached, the easier will be the transition from an external to an internal movement so that ultimately the body moves by itself, carried forward by the invisible powers of the universe. In the state of Wu Wei, it would seem as if nothing is done while in actual fact everything happens. It means that emptiness has generated fullness and nothing has produced everything.

The Lower Tan Tien is also the place where the Chi which we indirectly receive through the intake of air, water and food as well as the energies which we directly receive from the Three Forces (the Universe, the Earth and the Cosmic Particle) can best be stored and where the Original energy can be replenished. Yet for the inner practice, the major focus is relying on the original or prenatal Chi.

The vision and theory which inspires Tan Tien Chi Kung lies at the very root of Chinese medicine, in which health is seen as the natural outcome of self-reliance; the assumption of responsibility for one's own life, attitudes and conduct.

As an inner energy practice, Tan Tien Chi Kung provides a focal point which underlies and serves the whole range of practices of the Universal Tao: to help structure and sustain processes of transformation at different levels and stages.

Chi Kung may be viewed as the practice by which separation and fragmentation, to which we are subject in our daily life, as we become stressed and alienated from our true being, is overcome. We become inwardly united by the Chi flow, as we are structurally properly aligned. In and through the practice, we learn to heal ourselves and become *whole/undivided/holy* again, regaining our original state of being. All three words convey processes towards reconnection and unity and have the same etymological root.

In the Taoist perspective, the recreation of unity within ourselves and the process of overcoming inner dispersion and fragmentation are crucial. This process is dependent on reestablishing within ourselves, through the practice, a sense of inner unity in which polarities are harmonized and one begins to feel at peace with oneself and the universe.

It is essential to this process that stagnations in the free flow of energy are overcome and the natural spontaneity of the movement of energy within the body and the mind are restored. The practice serves to facilitate, enhance and accommodate natural processes. The use of force ("pushing the river") has a contrary effect, as it tends to block the energy flow by creating tension in the body.

Tan Tien Chi Kung has a key role in setting in motion and sustaining these processes, not only in terms of physical health and self-healing, but also for the purpose of mental balance and spiritual growth.

In the Taoist vision, there are three kinds of bodies, the physical body, the energy body and the spiritual or light body. The immaterial spiritual (high) body has its genesis in the transformation of the material physical (low) body. These two bodies are mutually dependent on each other and are connected with each other through the energy (soul) body.

In Taoist tradition and in Chinese medicine, the physical body and its activities are viewed as Yang while the energy body or Chi body is considered Yin, and the spiritual body is the unity and marriage of the two. This also explains the unique emphasis in Chi Kung on Chi and the subtle inner structure of the energetic process in human development.

It is the Chi which provides the link and serves as the bridge between the physical and the spiritual bodies and activates and moves them in their processes of mutual support and transformation.

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For this reason, Chi has been likened to the fuel which feeds the engines of a boat. If there is little fuel and it is of poor quality, the ship is not likely to carry the passengers very far and the journey will end before they reach the other shore.

The process of transformation of the physical body into an energy body is generated by the mind, which guides and leads the Chi. The Chi will go where the mind leads it. As a consequence, the process of transformation is decisively dependent on the quality of mindfulness and awareness.

The process of awakening the body and its potential for self-transformation depends on the commitment to self-transformation. This takes form in the discipline one develops and the resulting focus and attention to the process. This discipline is not primarily an outer discipline and does not depend on any outer authority; it is an inner discipline, nourished by the effectiveness and truthfulness of experience from within as the basis of practice. These then serve to awaken and remind one of one's inner commitment.

The physical body cannot be seen as independent from the body of the universe, as if one could breathe and live without it or in spite of it. Intrinsic in the Taoist vision is the perception of one's own individual body as an expression of the loving body of the universe by which it was given birth, as is stated in the Tao Te Ching. By transcending the separation between oneself and the universe and honoring one's intrinsic unity with it, the universe becomes one's own body.

With the growth of the awareness of this relationship, a sense of responsibility for it and qualities such as love and compassion with the universe and the world can grow. The universe and the earth will then no more be experienced as objects to be conquered and manipulated but as one's own father (heaven) and mother (earth).

This experience of an inclusive and compassionate sense of life, rooted in the cultivation of love and compassion, is summarized in the ancient saying, "Embrace the universe as a mother her newborn child". It is in the very practice of Chi Kung and Tan Tien Chi Kung, as we become grounded and connected and begin to feel at ease and relaxed in our body, that this sense of unity is cultivated and reinforced.

It is in the practice of Cosmic Chi Kung and its integration in all Chi Kung practices that we enhance our receptivity and sensitivity to our intrinsic relational nature of being. Our body is nourished and replenished by the Chi from the Universe (Heaven), Earth and by the Cosmic particles of which nature (including ourselves) is composed.

Getting in touch with the Universe

The Chi of the Universe can only be absorbed to the extent that we open our heart to the Universe and extend our consciousness and Chi to it as a token of our love. Only then will it respond. To be effective, mind and Chi need each other, as in the rise of internal pressure. We will only receive the love energy of the Universe to the extent that we acknowledge and honour our love relationship to the Universe.

This first of all implies that we acknowledge that the Universe is alive and that we are its children. Unless we awaken to this and bring it into our lives, it will be difficult to realize that we are part of it and we will tend to feel superior to it and see ourselves the center of the world which we will wish to use as a tool for our own interest. The Universe may then become a profitable fetish which we use, because we believe we can get something out of it like a bank account.

This attitude of seeing ourselves as a small cosmos which is only there because it is nourished in every breath by the great cosmos, so typical of the Taoist tradition, is shared by many ancient cultures. It was thus, part of a common human pattern beneath all the diversity and multiple originalities, before the process of homogenization was enforced with the advent of modern times.

When we relate to the Universe, it will respond and we will begin to feel it in the changes in energy in our body. This is the law of reciprocity underlying our relationship with the Universe. It requires an attitude which is radically different from the one in which the Universe has been reduced to a useful object which needs proper management.

In the course of Chi Kung of which Tan Tien Chi Kung is a particular form, a sudden sense of wonder may arise in a flash of awareness: although one is responsible for one's own life and for

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one's own breath and Chi, one realizes that one's breathing is only there, because one breathes. This awareness then grows with the realization that one is part of the great whole and its rhythms; our awareness processes the life giving energy.

Such a sense of wonder may arise in between the out and in breath and the in and out breath in that moment of emptiness when life is for a fraction in suspense. Then one is filled again with new life force and the Lower Tan Tien, enjoying the bio-electromagnetic current, in which the essence of food and air is converted, enters into waves of fine vibrations which ripple in all directions. It is like a drum whose skin has the right tension and internal pressure to produce a powerful sound. The same is true with string instruments. If the strings are too tight, they snap. If they are too loose, you cannot play. Only when they have the right tension does music become possible.

The Universe cannot resonate with us, if our musical instrument is out of order and we cannot tune it.

Yet, in order to truly get in touch with the Universe and with the world, there is a clear insistence in the Taoist view, that we need to be first in touch and connected with ourselves. It is difficult to be in touch with the Universe, if we are not first in touch with and love ourselves. As the Chi Kung Master Jesus, the son of a Palestinian carpenter, said, "Love your neighbor as you love yourself." In order to receive love, we need to give it so that a balance of reciprocity is maintained and enhanced on the basis of mutual exchange. To be able to give, one must first gather abundant good energies to share.

Sensitivity and a loving attitude towards oneself is thus a condition for getting in touch with others and of the energies of the Universe. As I have more than once suggested, the relationship with the Universe may be compared with that between two lovers. In order to attract the attention of the person whom one has fallen in love with, one needs to first share one's good intentions and qualities, to stir openness and love on the other side. A true relationship is only possible, if there is dialogue and partnership and a process of mutual exchange in an interplay of give and take.

At the heart of Taoist practice stands the process of the alchemical conversion of energy: matter turns into energy and energy into matter of another kind and in another form. I have often observed that what is material immaterializes and what has immaterialized once again materializes into another form and state. Thus, the potential of the physical body to become a spiritual body is actualized.

As a rule, because of the materialist perspective in present day dominant culture and the immediate utility of Chi Kung for enhancing health, some may tend to use it as another outer fitness practice. Those who make use of it its original intention, develop inner power.

There is a growing group of people who long for a new perspective on health and self-healing which has its roots not in any dictates and truths from outside, imposed by any institutions, but in one which can be verified through one's own life experience.

Chi Kung: Unconsciousness-Wonderment

The view which limits Chi Kung practice to strictly personal affairs tends to ignore the role of Chi Kung as a way of life and a state of being, nourished by an inner practice to cultivate virtues and attitudes towards the Universe and the community at large. The cultivation of these attitudes brings about in oneself a particular quality of being which may be called a Chi Kung state of being.

It is this Chi Kung state of being which nourishes and sustains harmonious forms of conduct in relations with the universe, nature, oneself, partners, family, neighbors and people at large. In a higher Chi Kung state, the healing process goes by itself, as the emission and transmission of vibration frequencies naturally takes place, just as a baby generates tenderness and openness in those who see it.

It is not surprising that great Chi Kung Masters like Jesus of Nazareth and Taoist and Buddhist Masters love to have children around. They remind them of the playful, joyous, spontaneous loving nature of the Universe and of their own true nature. They realize also that children help them to activate their own native energies, especially their heart energy. What actually happens is that children awaken the higher energy centers.

As a functional practice, the focus in Chi Kung is on its immediate effects like in the Healing Love practice in which life energy is saved, health is enhanced and the organs are regenerated. Chi Kung is at the same time, however, a practice by which Chi is transformed into spirit and low energy substance is transformed into high energy substance. At every stage the energies take on a more refined and subtle form, as the process towards unity with the Tao comes closer.

It is not true that in Healing Love practice a sacred body is created out of a profane body. The body was always sacred. Through the practice, awareness is cultivated through which experience undergoes a revolution: the indivisibility of the material and the material as one and the same indivisible energy is realized and thereby experienced in a new way.

Then energy may reach forms which are wholly beyond the imagination of the conventional mind, as it is moulded in cultural conditioning which severely restricts the human potential, both in terms of the transformation of the body and of the mind. Reading the stories of the Immortals gives us an inkling of these processes of self-transformation and the powers they generate.

In the *Tao Te Ching* Lao Tzu speaks of the wonders the higher cultivation of spirit energy may generate: from subtle wonders to mysterious wonders to incredible wonders. These are not to be understood as romantic metaphors but actual processes of Chi transformation by Chi Kung Masters. In the real world they are moved by and move high energy frequencies, inexplicable in the canons of orthodox materialist science.

One can still sense this potential (for such a state) in and around oneself as, underneath conventional awareness, there is another wholly different form of awareness. In this state what is conceived as impossible is precisely that which inspires us in our Chi Kung practice.

It is this state of generating wonder which throughout history has been the key characteristic of all Taoist Immortals as well as of great Buddhist, Indian and other Masters. They defied the rules as well as the perceptions of the society in which they lived (by their inner sense of freedom). This state was sometimes called one of "crazy fellowship" as it was so uncommon and often broke with the standards of submission and docility to authority. It was often characterized by a high degree of spontaneity, humour and joyfulness.

We may see our “old state of being” as the outcome of a process of self-domestication which we often use to excuse ourselves for not daring to perceive our own virtues as potentialities. It’s as if these were only the privilege of highly endowed people unlike ourselves or merely belong to the past of “Once upon a time.....”

Yet at the same time, it is these virtual states of being which move our innermost being, the “unconscious” state deep down within ourselves. These states may well, like our ancestral Chi, be nourished by our prenatal memory. We get in touch with the hidden liberative potential within ourselves, beneath the crust of our active functional consciousness and come to sense the energy of the invisible and virtual creative energy which awaits our invitation to be actualized.

In modern Western culture, as a result of a long historical process of disconnection, the unconscious or subconscious was seen interfering with the need for rationality, control and management of and over life. This expressed itself in a progressive disconnection between body and mind and the inferiorization, subordination and repression of body, feeling, emotions, instinct and nature.

Women were seen as the carriers of all these negative properties. Consciousness was reduced to what was in accordance with the demands for rationality, self control, outer discipline and other requirements of modern industrial society.

The unconscious and subconsciousness were relegated to the position of states which interfered with these values. Chi Nei Tsang, the practice of Internal Organ Massage, plays an important role in helping people to rebalance their emotions; CNT helps to connect with the subconsciousness in the belly as a source of self-esteem, power and peace.

In Taoist practice, relaxation, inner peace or stillness is seen as a condition through which form of consciousness is suspended. We can then get in touch and feel what deep down in our “unconscious” or subconscious state our body tells us; what signals it expresses and wants to transmit. We may call this sensitivity to the consciousness in our organs, glands, energy path routes and flows, blood, lymph, bones, joints, heart and all the other organs and parts of our body, the Chi Kung state. We cannot always live in it but once we have access to it and know how it feels to be connected with the source of our primordial life experience, we can easily return to it.

It is this state in which we get in touch with the reservoirs in ourselves of latent inner power and energies which can help us to

transform our Ching Chi into Chi and life force Chi into Shen (Spirit) Chi. New states cannot arrive without old states departing; the new grows out of the old. The old one is a condition for the transition to the new one. Relaxation in this context does not necessarily require outer forms of peace and tranquillity. Surely with the high levels of interference in present day society, the body also needs outer stillness to get in touch with its original consciousness and high energy frequencies.

Historically, withdrawal has always been associated with meditative practice, as a mean of getting in touch. Yet meditation can also serve to make one better able to live in the world, in a state of Chi Kung. One is in touch with one's true self, from one's Lower Tan Tien and center and grounded, so that one is not too much affected by the storms of life; one is able to move into one's center where stillness reigns. Tan Tien Chi Kung is a precious practice to create a state of energetic self-reliance and to get in touch with one's hidden reservoir of high frequencies and energies.

In this context Dr. Van Xin, a present high Taoist Master, points out that Lao Tzu speaks of the Chi Kung state as a state which is neither conscious nor "unconscious" but a state which one experiences as "fuzzy and distant or distant and fuzzy". It is in such a state that genuine Chi runs in the body which then improves its physiological functions by itself as a variety of spontaneous adjustments take place.

Such a state is essentially one of relaxation which Dr. Xin says that should even be in our bones and joints. We know that our joints become flexible again, once they have learned to relax, after we have brought Chi into the them.

Dancing and Bone Chi Kung

The Chi acts as a softening cushion in between the bones so that they can smoothly turn and do not grind against each other, as happens when they have dried out and lost their softness. As they regenerate with the bone marrow practice, Chi fluids are brought into them and between them. Chi may be viewed as oil which greases a lock or a motor to make it work smoothly again.

It should be remembered that the sockets of the hipbones carry the whole body and its weight and that it is often due to overweight (too much fat accumulated in the Lower Tan Tien and in and be-

tween the fasciae of the whole body) that problems start. Another cause of the absence of Chi fluids between the bones is emotional imbalance and the predominance of negative emotions like depression and anger. These play a critical role. The smooth rotation of the hips as a process over time is directly connected to our emotional state, especially as we grow older.

The smooth functioning of the hip joints is crucial in the whole Chi transmission process. The Chi which comes from below has to travel upward. Breathing into the hip joints and the sockets and sending love into the bones and bringing the inward smile into them helps this process. The hip joints play a critical role as conveyors of the upward Chi flow from the earth, and if our body is well aligned, it can then further travel upwards.

That is why dancing and shaking, (apart from being a blessing for the lymph system), like in many ancient forms of dance, is so good for our joints. As we experience joy and firmly touch the earth she then responds by sending her Chi upward into our bodies. We let the bones dance. The more "inward" we dance, as a form of energy meditation, the deeper will be the effect. There is evidence that Chi Kung in its earliest stages was a slow dance which was done as its healing qualities were realized.

Therefore, dancing is a way to rebalance ourselves and regenerate our joyfulness and good humor as filling the joints and the spaces in between with Chi is an excellent Chi Kung practice. The Taoist dance form, as it evolves with its slow rhythmic gentle and graceful movements, would seem to integrate these advantages. The dance becomes the expression of the inner movement of the life force, like Tai Chi Chi Kung. Such a form of dancing has great healing powers.

The highest form of dancing would be one in which we inwardly balance out the dynamic relations between the elements and phases in our body with our surroundings and fire, water, metal, earth and wood. We then enter into a state of equilibrium and so merge with the Tao.

The joints can again produce abundant saliva, the elixir of life, which is replete with hormones and which contains a variety of precious substances essential for our vitality. Afflictions like arthritis and rheumatism may be overcome by the loving use of consciousness and Chi breathing instead of by any medicine or worse, surgical operations to replace the brittle joints with steel ones.

It is not without reason that in many indigenous cultures, bones are especially sacred and are, even long after a person has died, preserved with great care as they contain the spirits of the ancestors and the person. It would seem as if people intuitively knew that the bones are the generators of the substance of life and need therefore a special attitude of reverence.

Bone Marrow Nei Kung (“Nei Kung” means awareness or meditative practice), until quite recently a highly guarded secret practice, has always been seen as a vital key to grounding and embodying the life of the spirit in the body. To create and enhance the body’s receptivity for the electromagnetic forces of the sun, moon, planets, stars and the earth, the bones are first washed and cleansed. After this, pressure is brought on them so that the fat inside, which accumulates through stress, a degenerative life style and age, is burnt. The Chi in and around the bones can be significantly raised or even doubled. To do this the presence of the original Chi pressure is needed first in the Lower Tan Tien. Without prior Chi, no Chi can be moved.

It has been discovered that the bones in the body which form its central axis have a crystal structure which facilitates the body’s receptivity to the electromagnetic power entering from the electromagnetic fields of the Universe. The body generates and enhances itself as an electromagnetic field. In the body, the brain, the heart and the nervous system are such electromagnetic fields which resonate with the crystalline bone structures that draw the powers of the Universe and the Earth pulling us in opposite directions.

The more our bones and joints are alive and filled with the bio-electromagnetic Chi flow and the more its vibrations increase, the more we feel alive and naturally bounce between heaven and earth. Like our organs and glands, our bones are centers of consciousness, connecting us with Earth and Heaven.

This is at once visible in the way Tai Chi Masters move like tigers. This may have an “electrifying” effect on the surroundings and those who see and feel with them, as Chi is emitted and the Chi in the empathetic onlooker starts to resonate. Although the tiger is fully grounded at each step and movement, they move very lightly. They are totally relaxed and calm, yet highly awake and alert. One feels highly concentrated power, which can be mobilized at any moment into every direction. One feels stillness in the movement and movement in the stillness. One senses and sees the power of the mind and Chi combine in the power of the movement.

That is also the reason why dance, as a practice to “unite heaven and earth within yourself” has a transformational effect on the dancer as well as on those who see them and join in the dance.

True dancing only arises if and when the movement starts from the center, the Lower Tan Tien. For this reason Tan Tien Chi Kung is an essential practice for all dancers or all those who wish to experience and practice life as a dance.

The Nei Kung practice of the Bone Marrow Nei Kung, by gentle Chi pressure and infusing the bones with Chi, serves to regenerate them by renewing the blood. It requires a form of deep sensing meditation which can only be realized in a state of deep relaxation. Then even the hardest elements in our body yield to the force of the gentle, and what was dying comes to life again, as the stone yields to the water.

To move the bones from within and from without is very good. The reason why Taoist meditation always seeks a balance between stillness and motion in which the movement is the Yang element and the stillness Yin, with awareness, like in Tai Chi Chi Kung is because they are a unity of opposites. Yang can only come about because of Yin, and Yin can only arise thanks to Yang. Actually Yin is contained in Yang and Yang in Yin.

Is this not the secret of the power and elegance of natural movement in animals and in that part within ourselves where we have retained natural inner connection? The more bones dance from within and in unison with the Universe, the more it becomes a healing practice. Chi from all directions flows in and out and harmonizes, each time creating the inner power and pressure needed to infuse Chi power and gentleness in the next movement.

In many indigenous cultures the emphasis lies on the community as a whole and its relation with the Universe. This is why the dance is the most sacred form of expression. It opens a space to experience the divine directly within the vibrations it generates and in the unity of Yin and Yang it enhances. In such a form of dance, people are not only involved as individuals separate from each other, but they also experience their unity and connections with others as a community and with the Universe. In this way a regenerative process is set in motion and the unity of the community with the Universe is reaffirmed.

It is the dance which can generate that state of dynamic balance in which we feel connected with ourselves and with the whole.

Chapter III

In the dance we bring the center of gravity down in the Lower Tan Tien so that we enhance the ability to move from the center and let the pressure which builds up there move the body, filled with Chi moving in natural waves.

Dances have an intrinsic erotic and ecstatic quality, as they serve to transform the Ching Chi or sexual energy/life force energy into Chi, and stimulate the hormone flow. They may therefore be considered a particular form of Healing Love practice.

It is not by coincidence that dances of many ancient cultures continue until today. Dancing is connected with marriage celebrations, and is also common to great mystical traditions, in which it becomes the ecstatic expression of unity with the divine, like in the Sufi tradition. Also in the Christian tradition, there have been mystics (like the great Spanish woman mystic Santa Teresa in the 17th century) who danced to express their longing to experience unity with the divine.

A particular form of Healing Love practice (single cultivation) is belly dancing, of ancient origin in cultures of the Middle East. This dance had been closely connected with rituals of fertility and invoking the powers of the Universe and the Goddess. Belly dancing enhanced life giving powers before it was incorporated into patriarchal cultures in which women were subordinated and it came to serve as a means for men to raise their desire and passion.

By pressing the ground and swinging the hips, the kua opens and as the Chi from the earth runs up, the sexual organ and the whole pelvic floor are stimulated and the life force starts to fill the belly. It then begins to tremble and vibrate and the Chi moves to the sacrum, up the spine and around and through the whole body, filling the reservoirs, path routes, organs and glands.

This form of sacred dance was originally done by women among themselves, as men were not allowed into the life giving circle. Such a dance regenerates the life current and thereby grants a heightened sense of inner power, joyful vitality and self-esteem. It is therefore not surprising that this dance has come back in circles of women who seek to raise their autonomy and self-esteem as well as their joyfulness in life.

Thus, dancing in which the mind, Chi and the body are properly aligned with heaven and earth may be seen as a particular form of Chi Kung. People do Chi Kung as it helps them to generate, regain and balance out their life force and thereby enter into a "Chi Kung

state". They get more in touch with the energies of the Universe and their own energy and inner power.

If we lead the flow of the Chi with our Yi, the dance may turn into a kind of single cultivation practice, as we unite Yin and Yang within ourselves. Or, as men and women dance together they let mind, body and breath mutually adjust in the dance. For these reasons more recently these dances have been called "sacred dances". The transformational process regarding the life force is little understood, but quite well intuited.

As we have emphasized, the growth of pornographic culture in our time is closely related to the continued repression of the life force in present day hegemonic culture. There is intense pressure disrespecting the needs of the body and what is associated with it. Universal Tao practices in which the Lower Tan Tien is radically reappraised, as in the practices of the Microcosmic Orbit and that of Healing Love can play a major role in creating a new, more balanced culture.

These Chi Kung states are, in Taoism, intimately related to the birth and growth of the immortal child; the process by which we reconnect with our origins and in which our true being is born. The birth of the immortal child is intimately connected to this ability to access, see, feel, hear, taste and sense subtle wonders. Our higher energies open up and we can sense what we did not sense before in our body and around us.

In a Chi Kung state, there is a high quality of natural energy pressure both in the body and in the mind, through the practice of love, compassion and other qualities of being, and alignment with the forces of the Universe. A whole new range of physical and spiritual transformations in our mind and body become possible.

Chapter IV

Empty Force

Tan Tien Chi Kung is one of the Taoist Chi Kung practices used to develop the Tan Tien (Second Brain) 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 and 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 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 will overflow 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.

We usually refer to the lower abdominal area as the Tan Tien, but we actually have three Tan Tiens: the Lower Tan Tien (Second Brain), the Middle Tan Tien (Heart, seat of the consciousness) and Upper Tan Tien (behind the mideyebrow point, the seat of the Shen, the spirit). You can read more about the Tan Tien in the booklet on the Chi Kung meditation called *“Opening the Three Tan Tiens in 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 (from now on called “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 using our internal body structure and alignment or rooting. We develop 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. Practicing Tan Tien Chi Kung is 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 make us more focused, stable and balanced in daily life. It enhances our personal power. 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 the Chi pressure in order to increase the organ and the abdominal pressure 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 (pounds per square inch). Sick people cannot take so much pressure from outside any more; they will become irritated very quickly and tired by 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 the Chi pressure is one of the best practices we can use to reverse the downward spiraling movements 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 Tan Tien Chi Kung will enhance our healing, martial arts (Iron Shirt and Tai Chi), meditation abilities and the art of daily living. It 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. When the Chi pressure is low, we will have no rooting. The energy and the mind will be unfocused and will quickly rise upward and dissipate, and cause overheating, headache, pain in the heart and a distracted mind.

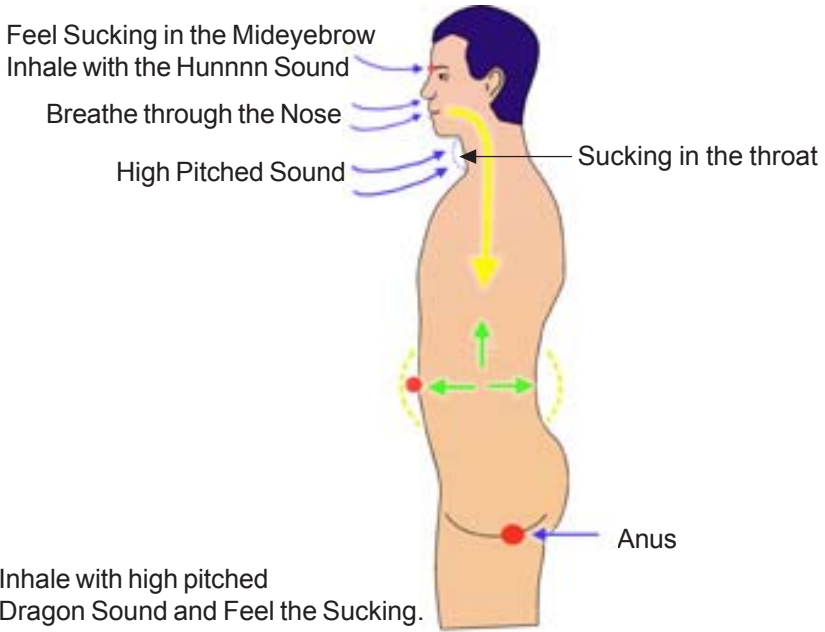
When you want to become a big tree, you need deep roots, which also means a high Chi pressure in the Tan Tien. This is one of the reasons why Tan Tien Chi Kung is the foundation for Iron Shirt and Tai Chi Chi Kung and it is also important for our meditation practice.

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.

Dragon and Tiger Breath

1. Dragon Breath

a. Inhale with a high pitched (**Hunnnn**) sound and feel the suction in the Upper Tan Tien. Raise the arms up above the head and feel the throat center like a vacuum. Feel the Chi pressure in the Lower Tan Tien and the throat.



Lightly Contract/Release/
Tighten the Anus

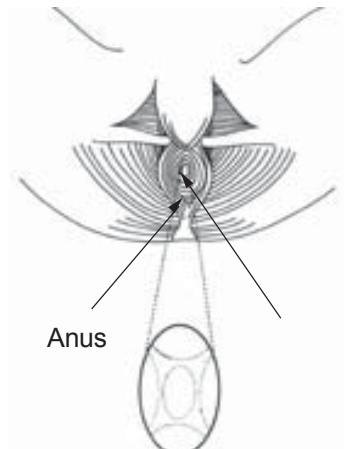


Fig.4.1 Dragon Breath

2. Tiger Breath

b. Exhale with the Tiger Sound (***Hummmm***) like a tiger growling. Press the arms down and feel the Chi pressure down to the lower abdominal area. Lightly pull up the anus.

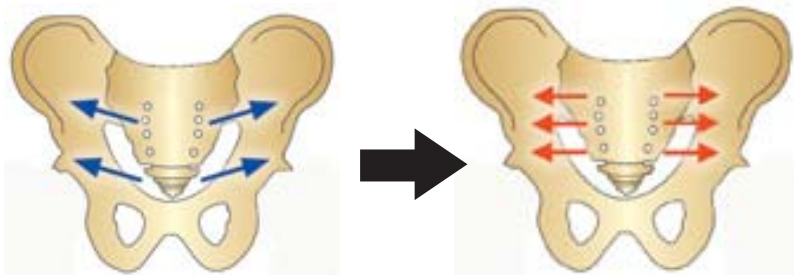
c. Do this 6 to 9 times. Then do 3 more sets.

d. These breathing practices will be used in all the exercises.



**Exhale with
*Hummmmm***

Tiger Sound
and press the
pressure down to
the Lower Tan Tien.



Feel pressure push the sacrum and separate the hips with a twist of the leg bones.

Fig. 4.2 Tiger Breath

Perineum Power

A critical role in Tan Tien Chi Kung breathing and the creation of the right pressure in the Lower Tan Tien lies in the tightening and sealing of the sexual organ, the perineum and the anus. The ability to contract the pelvic floor and the coordination of holding up and tightening the sexual organ, perineum and the anus is essential. This ability prevents leakage of essence energy and preserves it so that it may be transformed into vital life force energy and spirit energy.

This practice is called the closing of the Three Gates. The perineum, not without reason, is called the Gate of Life and Death, as it plays such a crucial role both in preventing degeneration and in activating all the organs and glands and other body functions.

Massaging the perineum is an excellent practice to vitalize the sexual organs and strengthen the pelvic floor. It also contributes to activating the pineal gland to which it has a direct connection through the Thrusting Channel. This is one of the finest meditations to do, as it helps one to become aware of the unity of high and low in one's body. It acknowledges the most honourable function of what are often called "the lower organs".

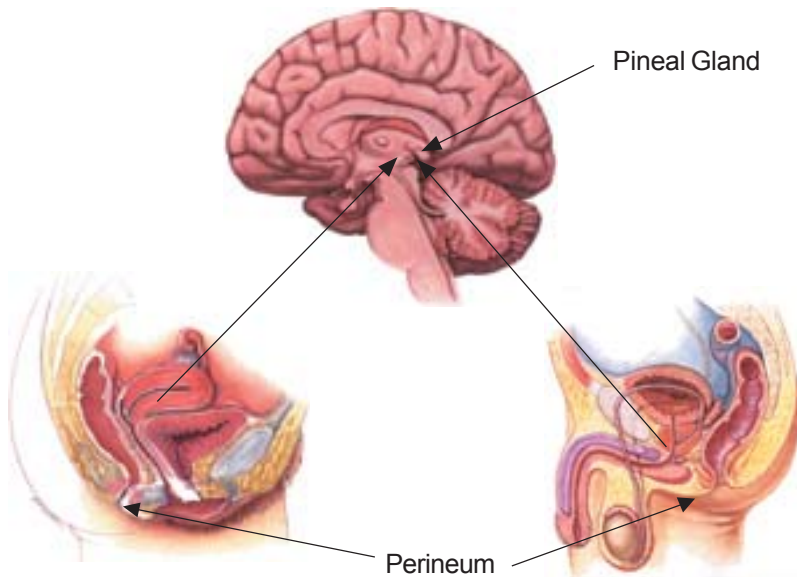


Fig. 4.3 Perineum and pineal gland are connected.

Tightening the perineum and the anus strengthens the pelvic and urogenital diaphragm and holds up and reactivates the organs in the Lower Tan Tien, thereby revitalizing them. If coordinated with the downward pressure of the diaphragm, it helps to provide the space in which the process of Chi compression can be realized.

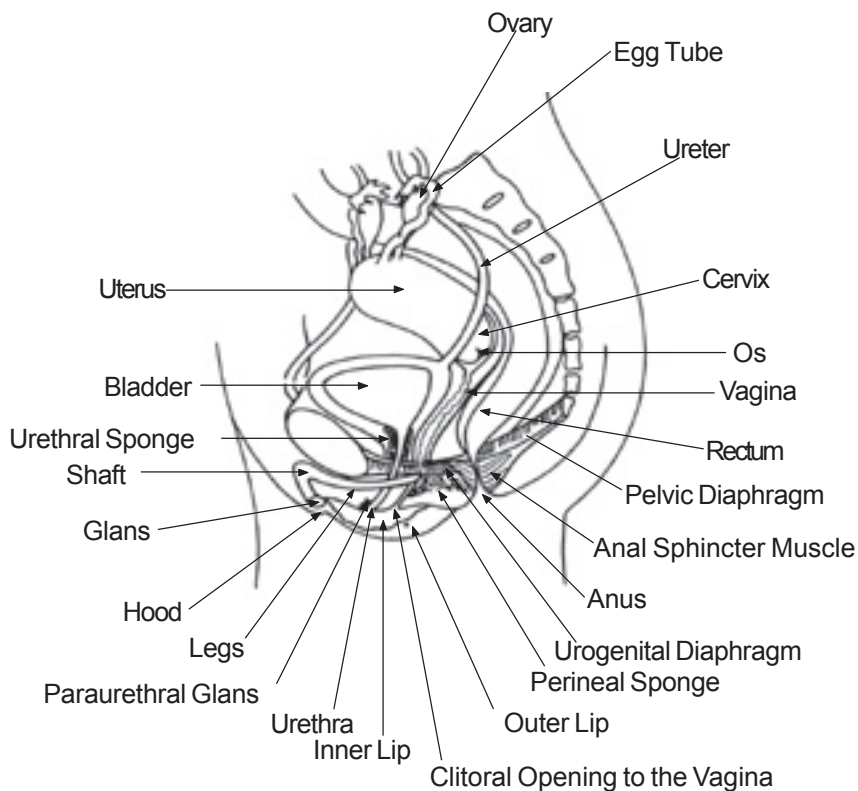


Fig. 4.4 Urogenital Area in Women

The exercises to activate the front, back and sides of the abdomen are one of the keys of Tan Tien Chi Kung. This is achieved by the anus exercises. The walls of the abdomen are strengthened, tightened and sealed to prevent leakage of energy. Smiling into the anus is a very important practice as, through the contraction of the anus, all organs in the body are vitalized. So the spiritual energy hidden in the smile helps the organs and glands to raise the quality of their energy and our consciousness which is condensed in them.

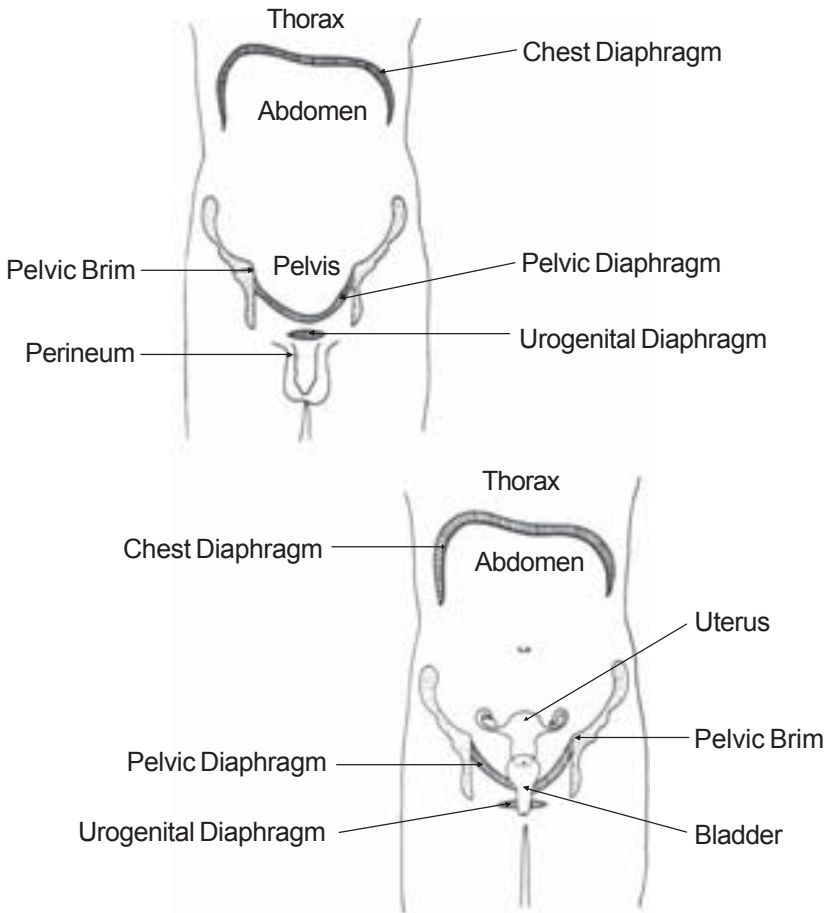


Fig. 4.5 Pelvic and urogenital diaphragms are the major lower seals which prevent vital energy from leaking out the lower openings.

As the Chi is pressed inward from all sides, Chi pressure in the Lower Tan Tien rises. The more the Chi is concentrated, the higher its expansive potential becomes. This practice has been called the creation of a “Chi Ball”. The creation of the Chi Ball is a wonderful metaphor which at once evokes the playful and relaxed attitude needed to create it as well as the nature of the compression and condensation process needed. Scattered Chi is concentrated and the Lower Tan Tien raises the inner power needed to activate the whole body and all its flows and networks.

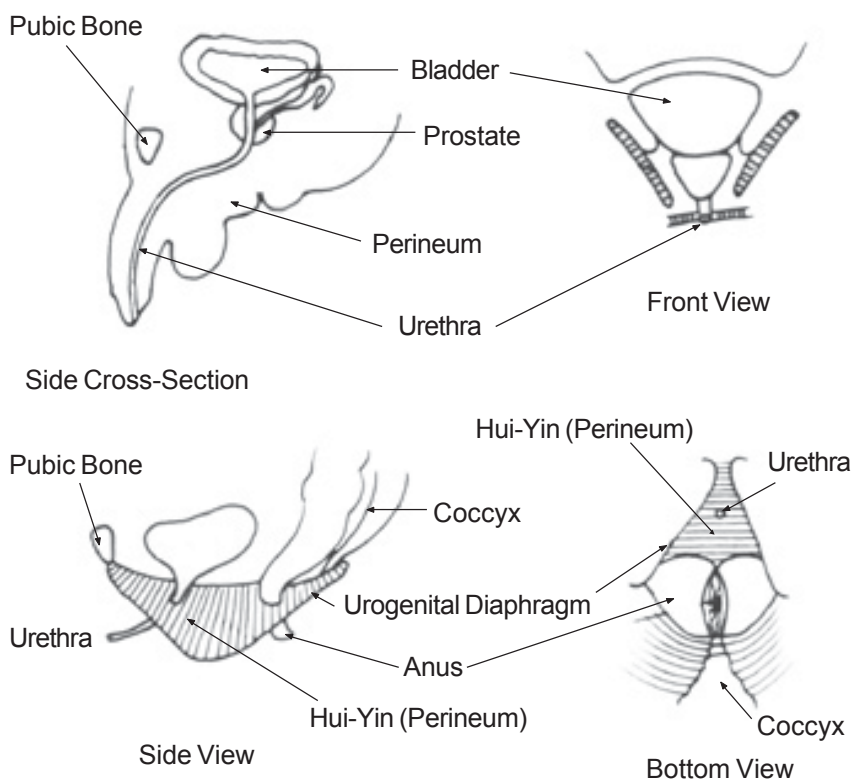


Fig. 4.6 A closer view of the urogenital diaphragm in the male.

The ability to do so depends on what is called Perineum Power, the ability to achieve control over the three gates.

This ability of closing the gates and leading the energy backward and upward, rather than allowing it to go outward and downward, is the basis for the practice of the Microcosmic Orbit and Healing Love. The dense form of Chi (Ching Chi) produced in the sexual organ is brought into the loop of the Governor and the Conception Channels and thence upward into the brain.

On its upward journey, the Chi has undergone several transformations (at the Sacrum, the Ming Men Point and the Jade Pillow Pumps) and has nourished and activated all the organs through the spine, the mother channel of all energies, before it finally brings fresh energy and hormones to the brain.

The quality of the brain cells and their functioning is critically dependent on the supply of hormones and the pressure which can be exerted to bring circulation of the blood and the Chi upward.

Development of Chi Pressure in the Tan Tien through Laughing Chi Kung

To feel Chi within you is not easy and training it is difficult. When people laugh in the Lower Tan Tien, the Tan Tien Chi Kung starts to develop.

a. First Laughter: Start either standing or sitting with both palms covering the navel. Start to laugh loud and feel the abdominal vibration. Laugh for 5 minutes. Rest, cover the navel with the palms and feel it become warm. Spiral in both directions (Clockwise and counterclockwise).

b. Second Laughter: Start with inner laughing like tickling in the throat, feel navel and spiral to keep the Chi in this area.

c. Third Laughter: Silent inner vibration, like hitting a drum and feeling a vibration inside. Keep the vibration inside for 5 minutes. Rest and cover the navel then spiral to keep the energy there.

Laughing helps create the second heart and second lungs, activating and improving the lymphatic system.



Fig. 4.7 Laughing Chi Kung

Anus and Perineum

Practice for the Chi Pressure to the Tan Tien

The Taoists divide the anus into five parts: 1. Middle 2. Front 3. Back 4. Left 5. Right

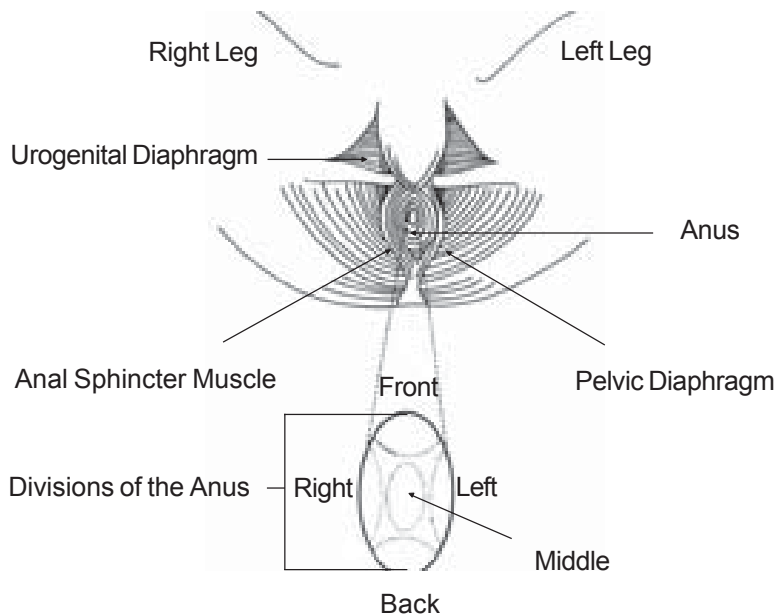


Fig. 4.8 Anus is divided into five regions.

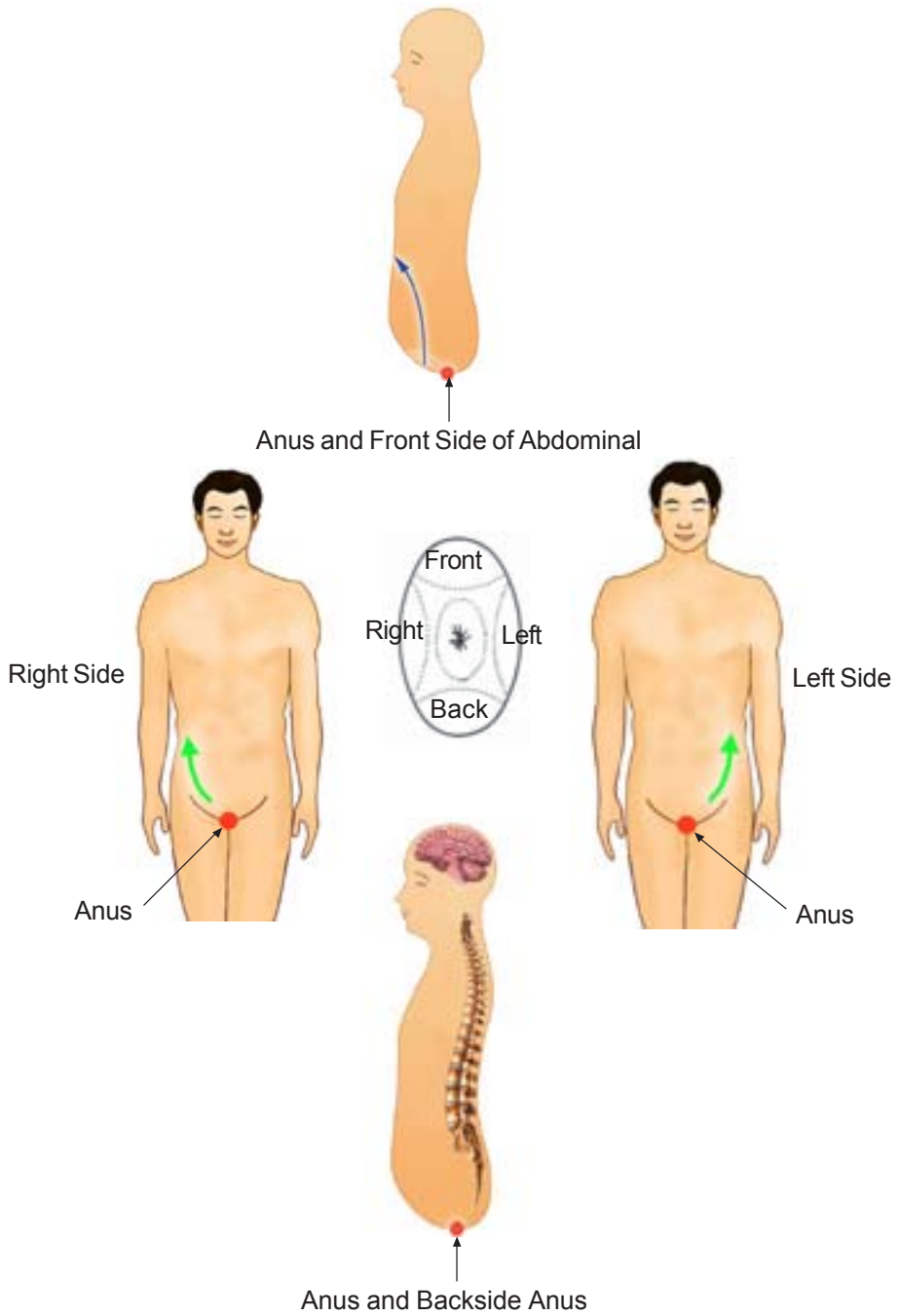


Fig. 4.9 Anus and Perineum

a. The middle part connects to the organs in front part of the abdominal area. For women the vagina-uterus, for men the prostate gland. It also connects to the aorta and vena cava, stomach, heart, thyroid and parathyroid, pituitary gland, pineal gland and the top of the head, the center channel.

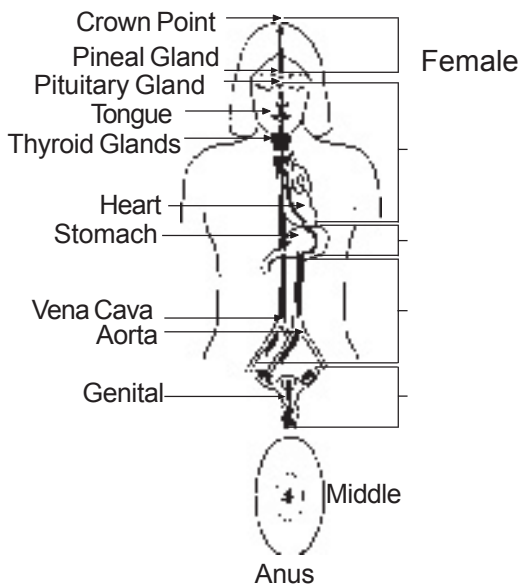
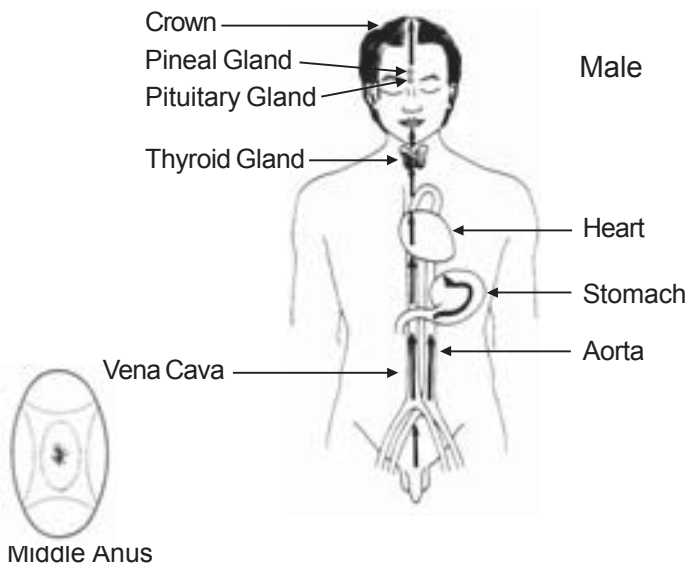


Fig. 4.10 Connections of the Middle Anus

b. The front of the anus, which is connected to the Hui Yin in women, the lower part of the vagina (the perineum point and the sexual organs) and the front part of the abdomen, front Tan Tien.

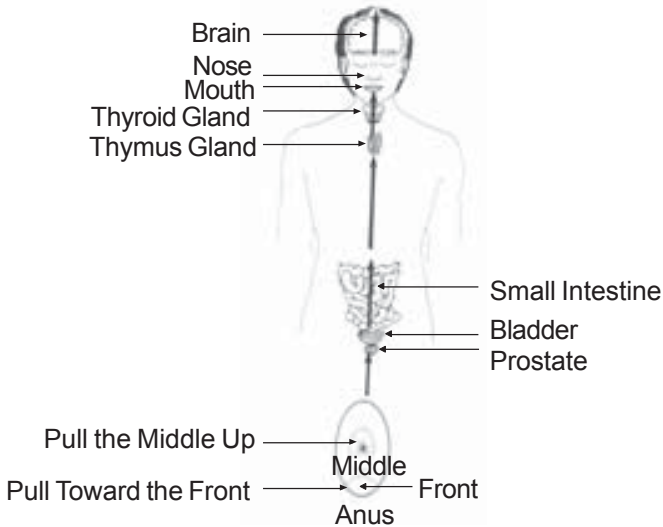


Fig. 4.11 Connections of the Front Anus

c. The back of the anus, which is connected to the back of the lower lumbar, the coccyx, the sacrum, the spine and the small brain (cerebellum).

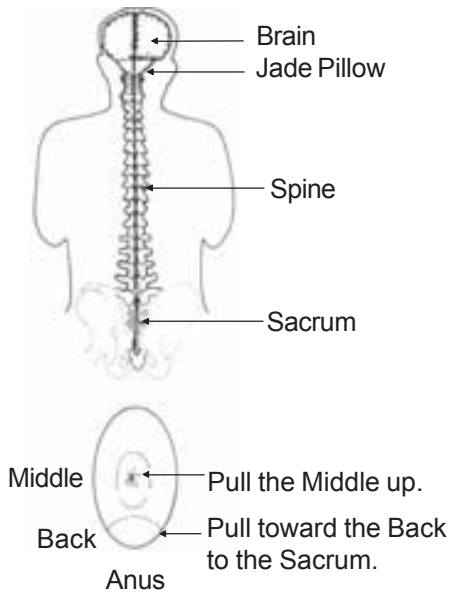


Fig. 4.12 Connections of the Back Anus

d. The right side, which is connected with the right side of the abdomen. The right ovary or right testicle, ascending colon, right kidney, adrenal gland, liver, gall bladder, right lung and right hemisphere of the brain.

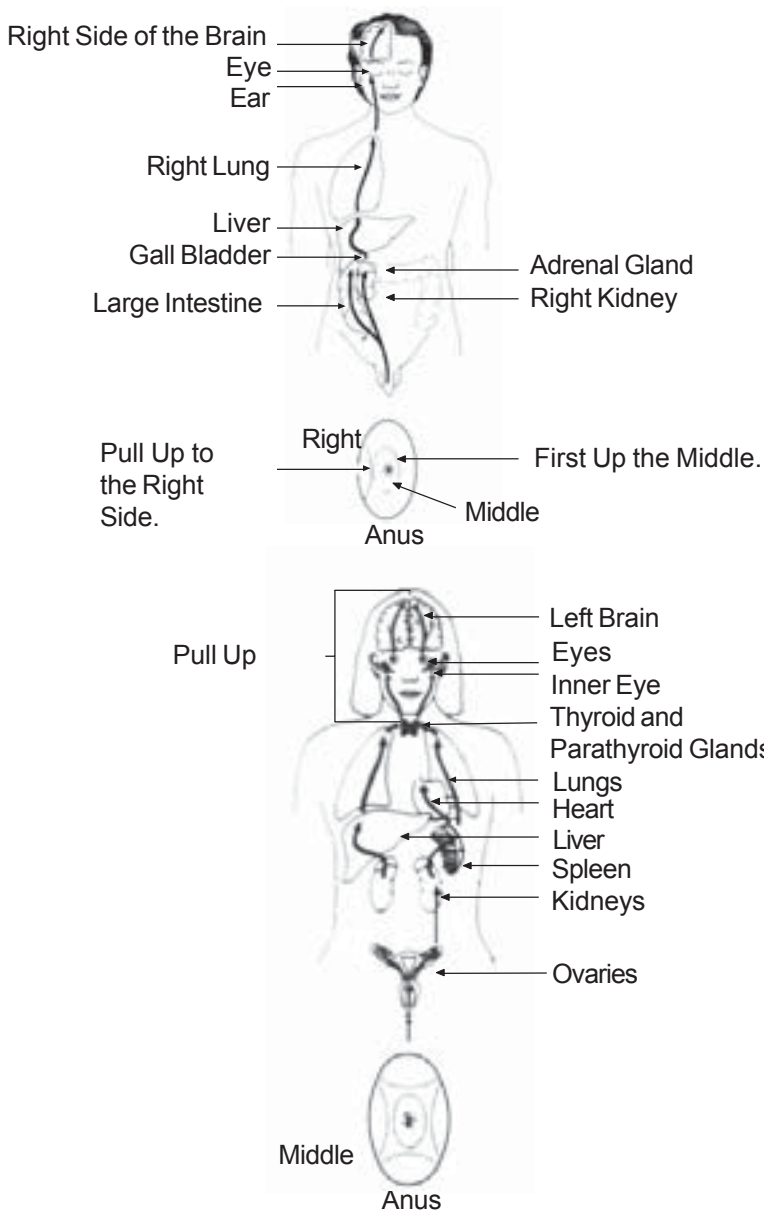


Fig. 4.13 Connections of the Right and Left Anus

e. The left side of the anus, which is connected with the left side of the abdominal (Left Tan Tien). The left ovary or left testicle, descending colon, left kidney, adrenal gland, spleen, stomach, left lung and left hemisphere of the brain.

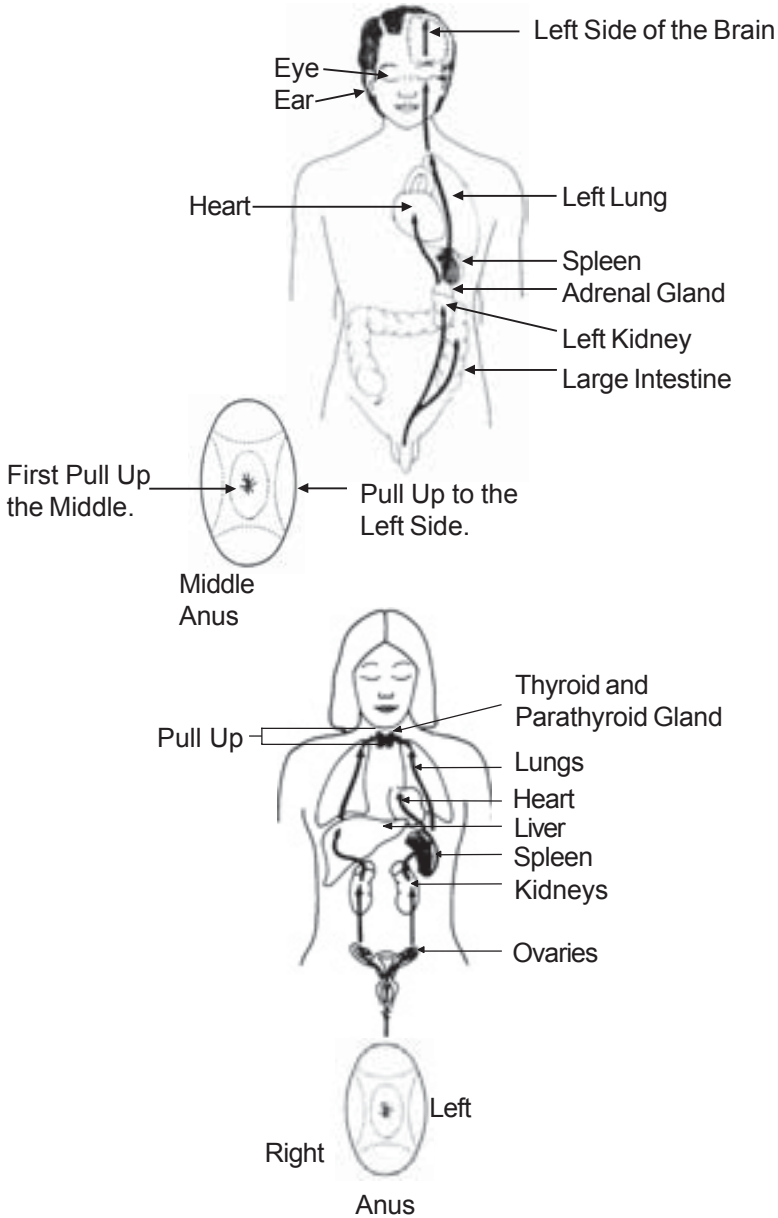


Fig. 4.14 Connections of the Left and Right Anus

In Tan Tien Chi Kung we strengthen all these parts (perineum power) by contracting them (by pulling up). When your pelvic area is strong, no energy will leak out of this gate, and you can enhance the Chi pressure in your Tan Tien. With a weak perineum and anus, this is not possible.

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 very strong, which means giving the muscles a strong tonicity, 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.

Practice of Anus and Perineum Power

Breathing exercises to develop the Chi pressure in all the following 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:

- A. Below the navel: Chi Hai (Ocean of Chi).
- B. Lowest Abdominal: Bladder area.
- C. Above the navel: Area of the Solar Plexus.
- D. Both left and right sides of the front part of the Tan Tien.
- E. Both left and right sides of the body.
- F. Both kidneys.
- G. Door of Life.

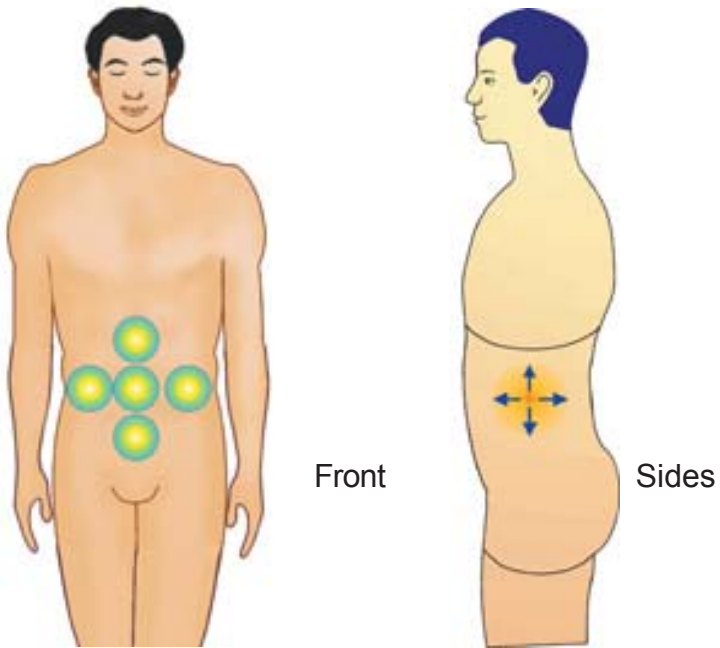
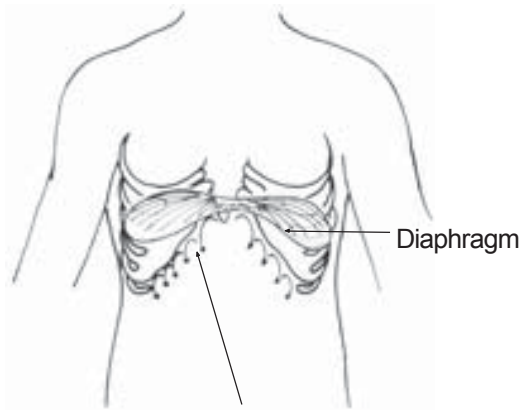


Fig. 4.15 Areas for the development of Chi Pressure



Press in and down all along the edge of the rib cage.

Fig.4.16 Releasing Tension in the Diaphragm

Diaphragm, abdominal wall and perineum press into the abdomen.

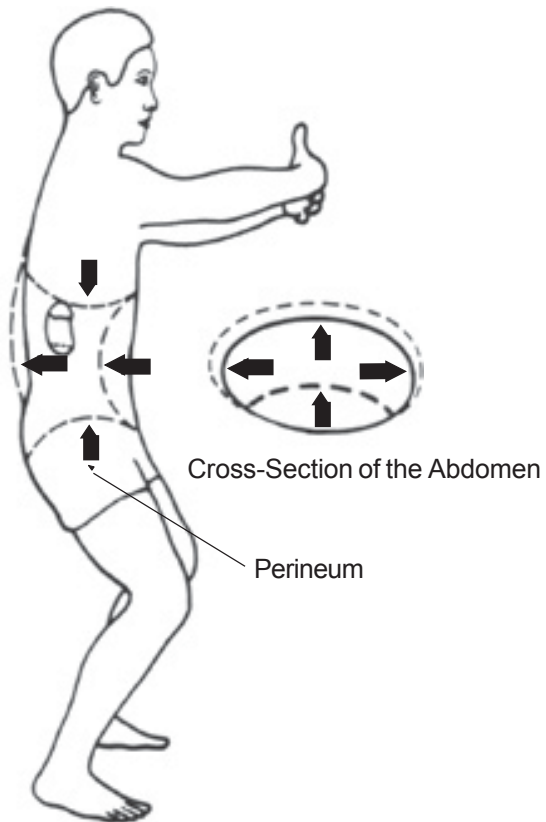


Fig. 4.17 Perineum Power

Areas A -D belong to the front part of the Tan Tien, and E and F to the back part of the Tan Tien. Just as with a balloon you can press some areas, to increase the pressure in other parts of the balloon,so you can increase pressure in the Tan Tien.

There are two main areas you always use. Pull up the perineum and press down the diaphragm. This will reduce the space in the Tan Tien and condense the Chi 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.

There are two major breaths, one is the short breath to expand the abdominal, and the second is: exhale, hold the breath and do the inhale with out inhaling, meaning hold the breath and expand.

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

The Anus and the Front part of the Anus, and below the Navel Area. In this part we inhale and expand, dividing the breath into two small breaths.

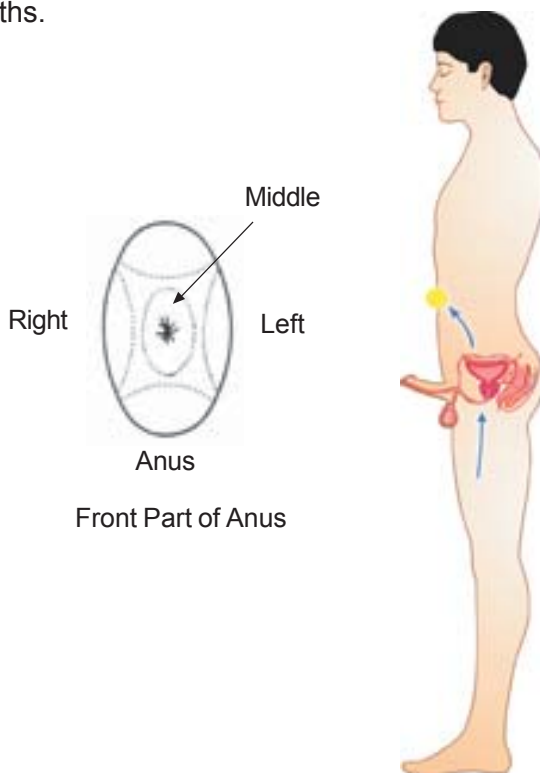


Fig. 4.18 Front of Anus

Chapter IV

a. Stand with the feet parallel and shoulder width apart. All the nine points should be firmly rooted in the earth.

b. Just be aware of the anus, the front part of the anus and the sexual organs; especially the testicles, vagina and uterus.

c. Put your hands on the Chi Hai below the navel on the lower abdomen very gently and very softly. Smile and do a few abdominal breaths.

d. Exhale and flatten down the abdominal area. Use the fingers of both hands.

e. Inhale with a half breath, using the dragon sound. **The dragon sound is a high pitched Hunnnnnn.** Feel the abdominal area and the throat like a vacuum cleaner sucking in Chi pressure. Lightly pull up the anus, the front part of the anus and the sexual organs. At the same time, push against your lower abdomen and, pushing your fingers out, hold the breath and Chi pressure in the Chi Hai. Always keep the diaphragm down and the chest relaxed.

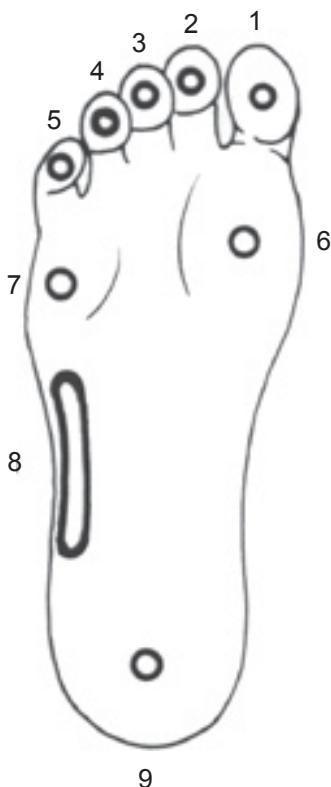


Fig. 4.19 Nine Points of the Foot rooted in the ground.



Fig. 4.20 Hands placed on the lower abdomen below the navel.

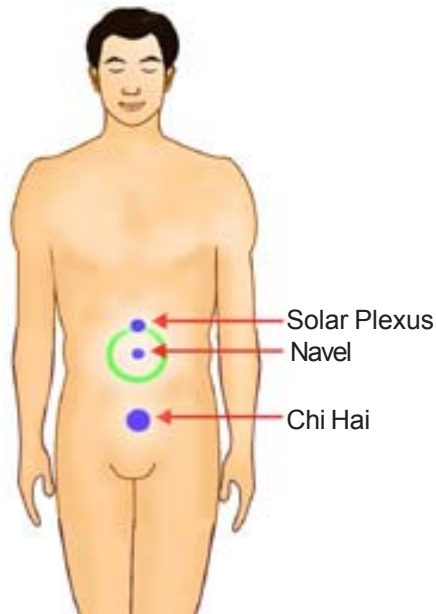


Fig. 4.21 Solar Plexus, Navel and Chi Hai Areas



Fig. 4.22 Position of Chi Hai in Men and Women

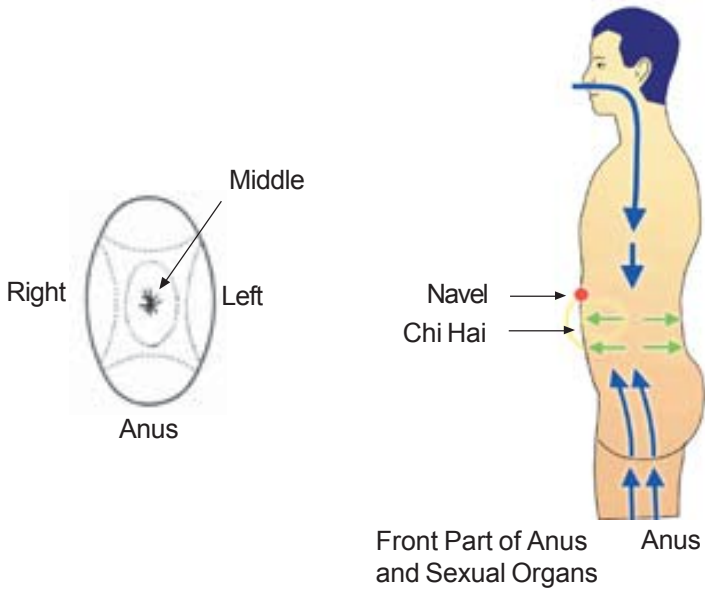


Fig. 4.23 Inhale, pull up and hold the pressure in the Chi Hai.

f. Exhale with the tiger sound ***Hummmmm*** and push the energy pressure down to the lower abdominal area. ***The tiger sound is a low pitched, growling Hummmmm sound.*** Hold the breath and laugh softly inside. Feel the vibration in the Chi Hai. Hold until you feel comfortable then inhale and slowly regulate the breath.

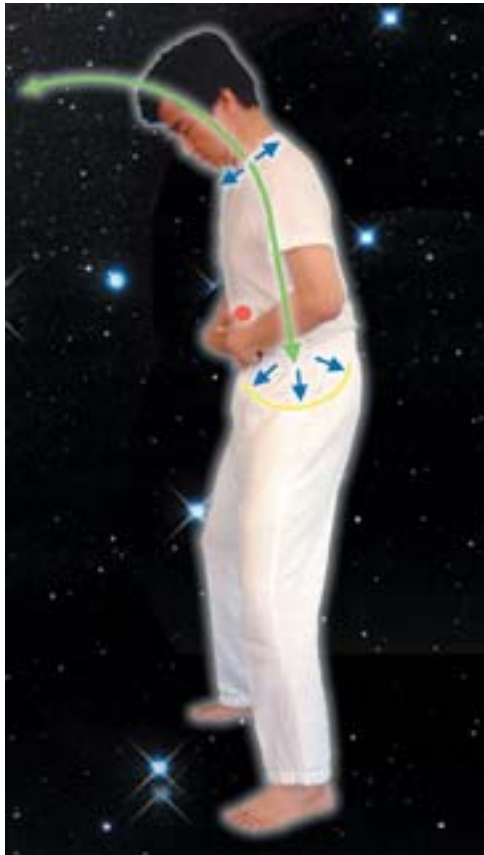


Fig. 4.24 Exhale with Tiger Sound.

g. Repeat 3 to 6 times. Feel the pressure becoming stronger with every breath. When you exhale consciously, you hold the Chi. When you inhale and exhale unconsciously, you lose the Chi.

B. Pelvic Area — Bladder - Uterus Area

Anus: Front and Back part of the Anus, and the lower part of the Navel, the Bladder and the Uterus.

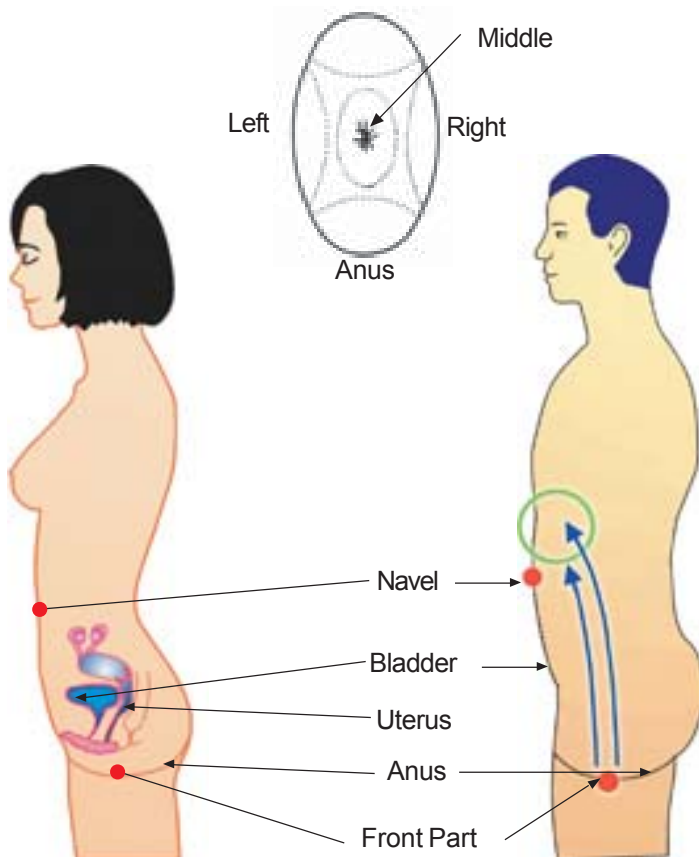


Fig. 4.25 Anus, Bladder, Uterus

In this part we inhale and expand and divide the breath into three small breaths.

a. Stand in the same position, be aware of the middle part of the anus, the front part, back part and for men the prostate gland; women the uterus.

b. Use the fingers to press in on the lower abdomen near the pelvic bones. Exhale, flatten down the stomach, and hold the breath for a short while. Lightly suck up the abdomen and feel the suction inside.

c. Inhale one third of the breath with the high pitched sound, the dragon sound. Feel the abdomen and the throat like a vacuum, sucking in Chi pressure. At the same time contract and pull up the anus.

d. Inhale the second third of the breath, contract, pulling up the front part of the anus and the sexual organs toward the bladder/uterus, lowest part of the abdomen and expand.

Push out Middle Tan Tien with Chi Pressure.



Fig. 4.26 Anus and Perineum Power

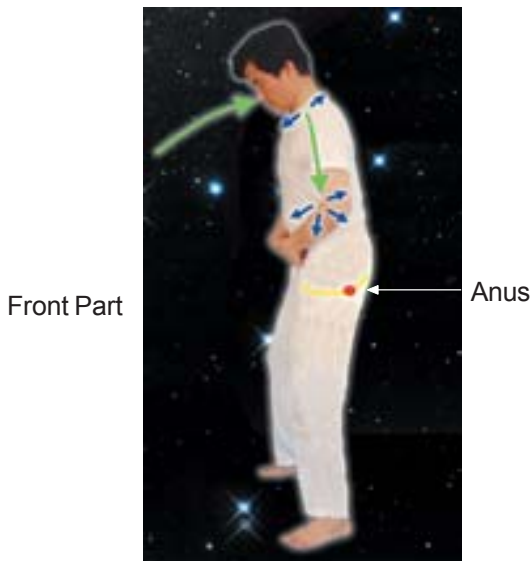


Fig. 4.27 Front Anus and Perineum Power

e. Inhale the last third of the breath; at the same time contract and pull up more of the front part of the anus toward the bladder and uterus. At the same time push the lowest abdominal area out against the fingers.

f. Keep your tongue against the palate. Hold as long as you feel comfortable.

Tongue against the Palate

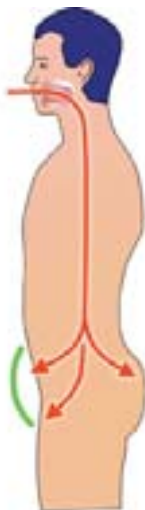
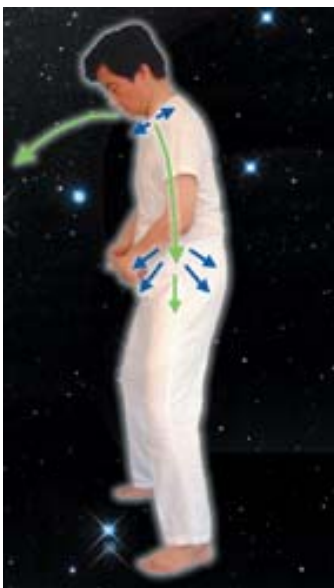


Fig. 4.28 Tongue to Palate and Perineum Power

Tiger Sound



Expand and push out with Chi Pressure.

Fig. 4.29 Tiger Sound

g. Exhale with the kidney sound **Choooooo**. When you do this well the coccyx will lightly turn in and the sacrum will push out, rounding the lower back, because the sacrum and the sexual organs are connected. Do 3 to 6 times. Relax and let go and smile to this area; feel Chi and blood flow into the area.

C. Solar Plexus — Above the Navel

Anus and Front Part of the Anus, and above the Navel (Solar Plexus)

In this part we inhale and expand and divide the breath into three small breaths.

1. Stand in the same position, be aware of the middle part of the anus, and the front part and for men also the bladder and prostate gland; women the uterus.

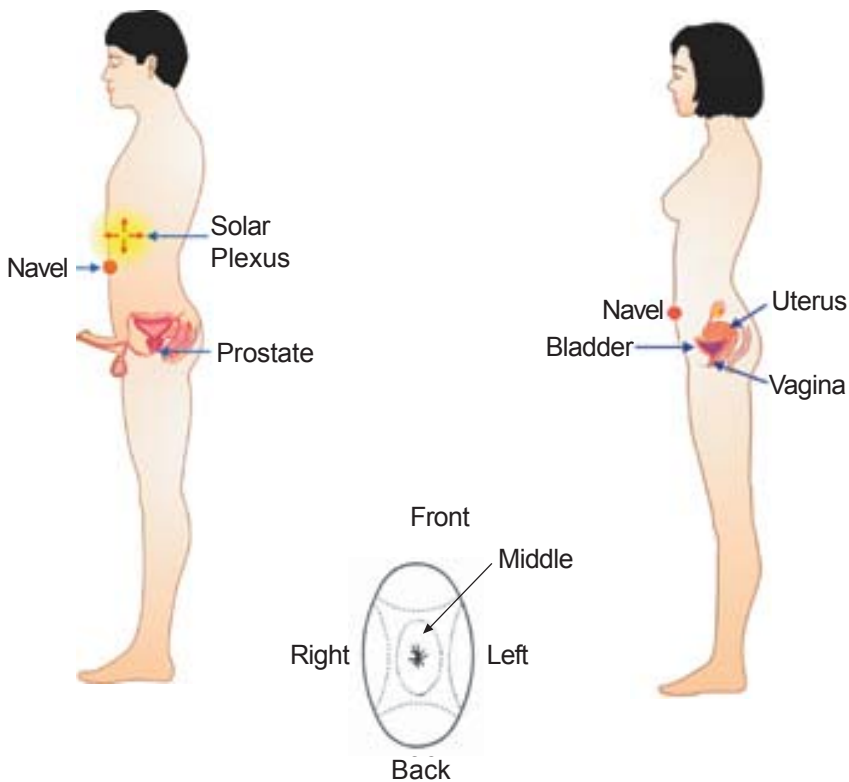


Fig. 4.30 Solar Plexus Perineum Power

2. Use the fingers to press in on the solar plexus above the navel. Exhale, flatten down the stomach, and hold the breath for a short while. Lightly suck up the abdomen and feel the suction inside.



Fig. 4.31 Push out Chi for Anus and Perineum Power.

h. Inhale with one third of the breath, contract and pull up of the anus (the middle).

i. Inhale with small sip another one third of the breath, contract, pull up the front part of the anus and the sexual organs toward the navel. At the same time push the lower part of the navel area out.

j. Inhale the last third of the breath and at the same time contract and pull up more of the front part of the anus toward the solar plexus. At the same time push the solar plexus area out to press against the fingers.

k. Keep your tongue against the palate. Hold as long as you feel comfortable.

l. Exhale, with the kidney sound **Chooooo**. When you do this well the coccyx will lightly turn in and the sacrum will push out, rounding the lower back, because the sacrum and the sexual organs are connected.

m. Do 3 to 6 times. Relax, let go and smile to these areas. Feel Chi and blood flow into the area.

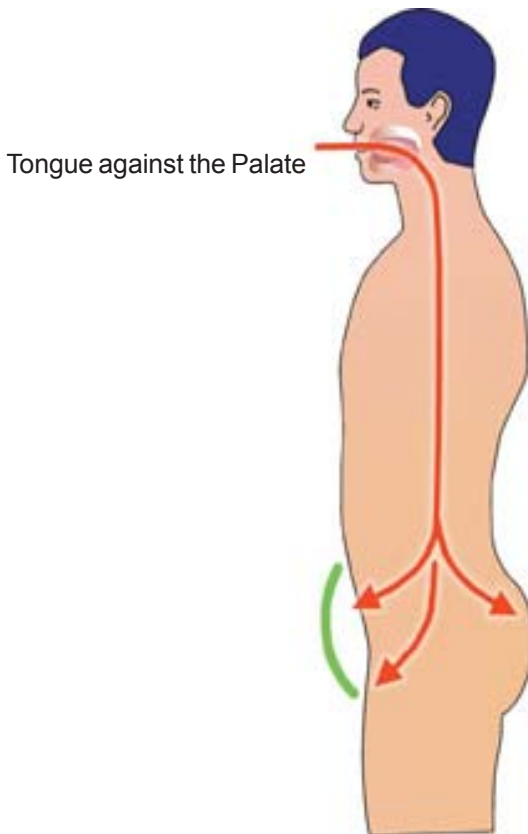


Fig. 4.32 Anus and Perineum Power with the Breath



Fig. 4.33 Exhale with Anus and Perineum Power

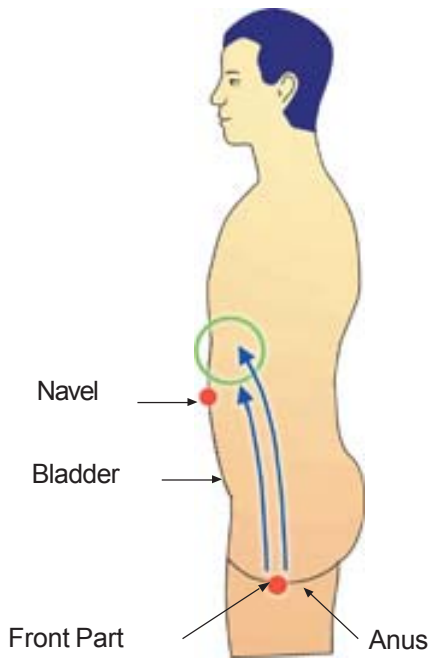


Fig. 4.34 Front Part of Anus and Perineum Power

In this part we inhale and expand doing all the above practice in one breath.

Anus, Front and Back Part of the Anus, Below the Navel (Chi Hai), Below the Navel (Bladder, Uterus), and Above the Navel (Solar Plexus)

1. Stand in the same position, be aware of the anus, the front part, back part; and for men the prostate gland; women the uterus.

2. Use the fingers to press in below the navel (Chi Hai). Exhale, flatten down the stomach, and hold the breath for a short while. Lightly suck up the abdomen and feel the suction inside.

3. Inhale with one slow breath at the same time contract the anus, front part of the anus and expand below the navel and pelvic area (bladder-uterus area) above the navel. Hold the breath for a while, exhale and rest.

4. Do 3 to 6 breaths.



Fig. 4.35 *Push out the Middle Tan Tien with Chi Pressure.*

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

a. Put your fingers on both left and right sides of the front part of the Tan Tien. Smile and do a few abdominal breaths.

b. Exhale flattening the abdomen. Press your fingers in on both sides of the front abdominal.

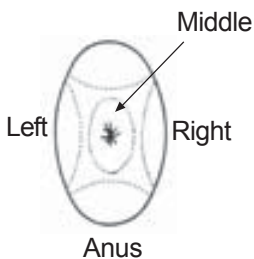


Fig. 4.36 Exhale and use the Fingers to press in.

c. Inhale with the high pitched sound, the Dragon Sound. Feel the abdomen and the throat like a vacuum sucking in Chi pressure with half the breath. Lightly pull up the anus.



Inhale Push out

Left and Right Sides
of Tan Tien

Anus

Fig. 4.37 Make Dragon Sound and pull up right and left sides of anus.

Exhale with Chi Pressure
Push Out Inhale



Fig. 4.38 Push Chi to both sides of Tan Tien while laughing softly.

Chapter IV

d. Inhale the other half, suck in more and contract the left and right sides of the anus and push the points of the left and right Tan Tien outward against your fingers; hold the breath and Chi pressure. Always keep the diaphragm down and the chest relaxed.

e. Exhale with the Tiger Sound **Hummmmm** and push the energy pressure to both sides. Laugh softly inside and feel a vibration in the Chi Hai. Hold as long as you feel comfortable.

f. Inhale slowly and regulate the breath. 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.

g. Do 3 to 6 sets of the practice.



Fig. 4.39 Make the Tiger Sound and make pressure on both sides of the Tan Tien.

E. Left and Right Sides of the Body

Repeat the same procedure as above.

- a. Place your hands gently on both left and right sides of your body.
- b. Smile and inhale half the breath with the dragon breath, contract and pull up the anus; hold the breath for a while.



Fig. 4.40 Do the Dragon Breath and pull up anus.



Fig. 4.41 Do the Dragon Sound while inhaling with half of the Breath.

b. Inhale the other half breath and contract; pull the left and right sides of the anus toward both left and right sides of the body out against your hands. Feel both sides expanding.

c. Exhale with the Tiger Sound, slowly and consciously and push the Chi down to the left and right side. Maintain equal force. Feel both sides of the Tan Tien expanding.

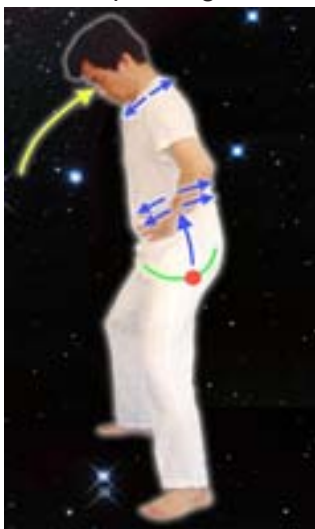


Fig. 4.42 Complete the Dragon Breath by inhaling and exhaling out both sides of the body.



Fig. 4.43 Exhale with the Tiger Sound and continue expanding to the right and left.

d. Repeat several times until you feel a strong Chi pressure in both sides. Hold the breath and laugh inside and feel both sides of the Tan Tien vibrating.

F. Left and Right Sides of Kidneys

a. Place your hands gently on your left and right kidneys. Your spine lightly arches back.

b. Smile in the kidneys and inhale with the Dragon Breath with half of the breath and pull up the anus; hold the breath for a while.

c. Inhale the other half of the breath and contract and pull up the left and right sides of the anus to the kidneys and lightly round the back and press out against your hands.

d. Feel the kidneys expanding, and the whole lumbar area opening. Inhale more, expand, hold the breath for a while.

Exhale and feel it flatten down and lightly bend the back.



Fig. 4.44 Use the Hands to cover the Kidneys.

e. Exhale with Tiger Sound and slowly press Chi pressure down to both sides of the kidneys and the lower abdomen. Feel the whole kidney area expanding when you exhale and push the energy down.



Fig. 4.45 Inhale-Exhale the Chi to the Back.

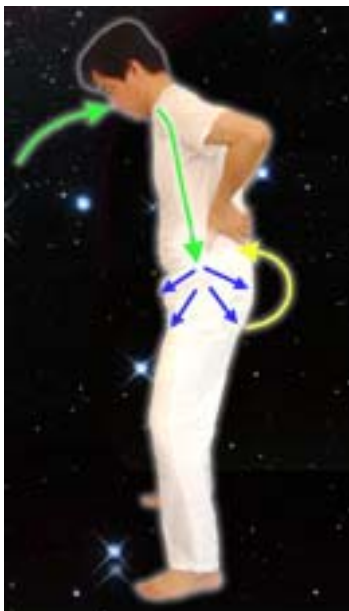


Fig. 4.46 Use Dragon Breath to inhale with Chi expanding the Kidney area growing Chi Belt.

f. Repeat 3 to 6 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.

G. Door of Life

a. Place both hands gently with the fingers touching the Door of Life (between lumbar 3, and 4), palms cover the kidneys; the back is lightly arched to the front.

b. Smile and inhale half the breath. Hold the breath and pull up the back part of the anus and push the Door of Life and the lumbar region out against your hands.

c. 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.

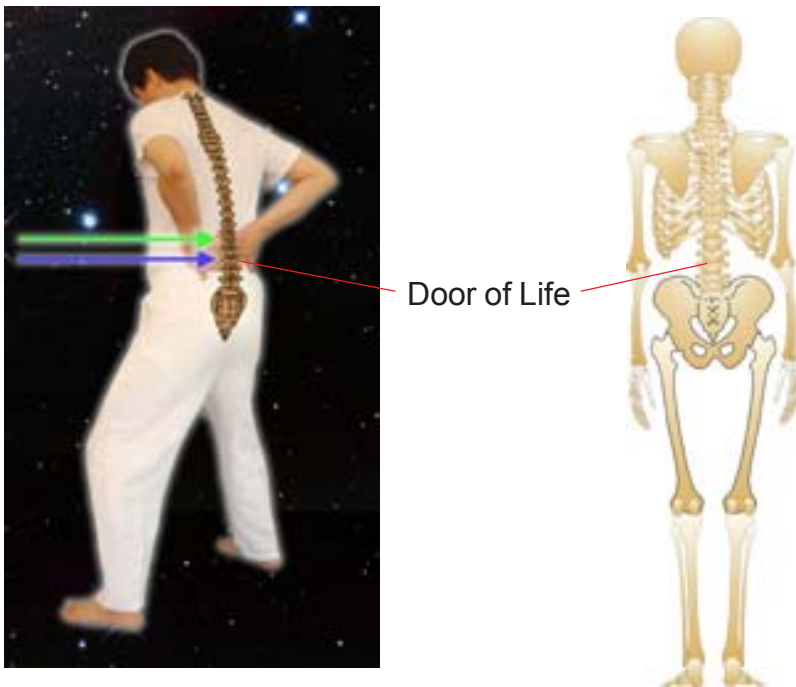


Fig. 4.47 Opening the Door of Life

d. Exhale slowly and consciously 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.

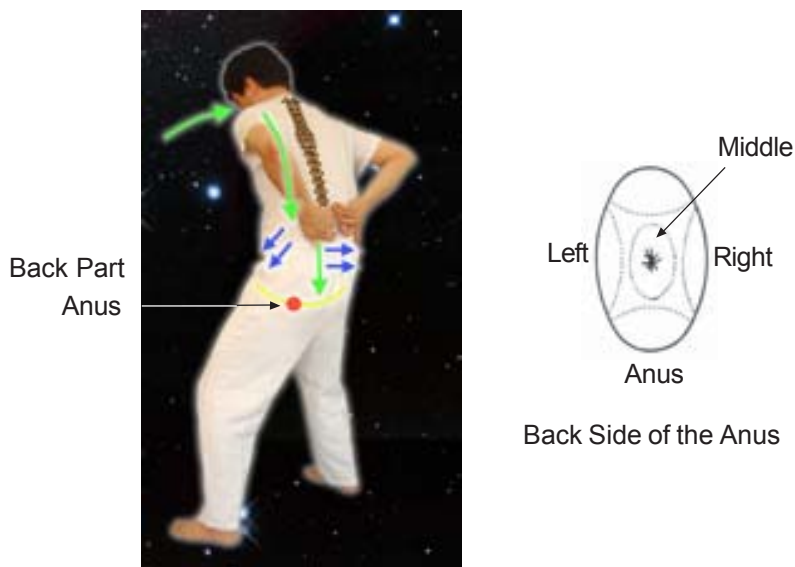


Fig. 4.48 Dragon Sound Breath expanding the Door of Life.



Fig. 4.49 Tiger Sound Breath expanding the Door of Life.

e. Be aware of the soles of your feet, the coccyx and the sacrum. Inhale and pull up 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.

f. 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 and feel it pulsating.

H. Chest

a. Place both hands gently on both side of the chest under the armpit.

b. Exhale flattening the chest down.

c. Smile, inhale with the Dragon Sound and with half the breath. At the same time pull up the front part of the anus and expand the whole Front Tan Tien.

d. Inhale the other half of the breath and contract and pull up the left and right sides of the anus toward the left and right rib cage; let the Chi expand and round the upper back.

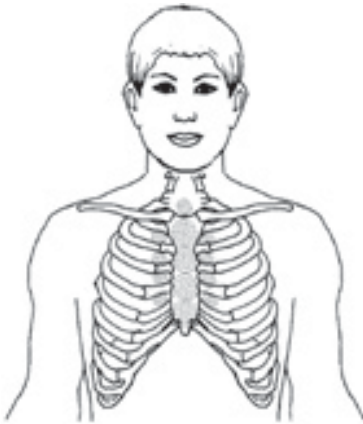


Fig. 4.50 Exhale and flatten the chest.

e. Exhale with the Tiger Sound; slowly press Chi pressure down to the lower abdomen and let the pressure from the lower abdomen expand up to the upper chest. Feel the whole kidney area expanding when you exhale and push the energy down.

f. Repeat 3 to 6 times; rest, regulating the breath.

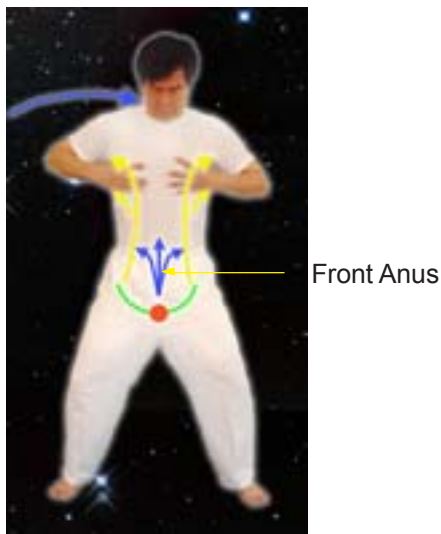


Fig. 4.51 Inhale with the Dragon Sound, pull up the anus and expand the Tan Tien.



Fig. 4.52 Exhale with Tiger Sound, expand Chi down to abdomen.

I. Total Tan Tien Breathing with Inhale

a. Breathe slowly and smoothly in the Tan Tien until you feel nice and calm. Then combine all the seven breathing exercises together.

b. Smile and gently place both hands on the Lower Tan Tien.

c. Inhale part of the breath and at the same time pull up the anus, the front part, left and right side of the anus toward the front and left and right side of the abdomen. Expand and push out the lower part of the navel and the upper left and right sides of the abdomen. You can move your fingers along the part that you expand.

d. Inhale another part of the breath and at the same time pull up the left and right sides and the back part of the anus toward the left and right sides of the kidneys, and the Door of Life.

e. Exhale, relax ,and regulate the breath.

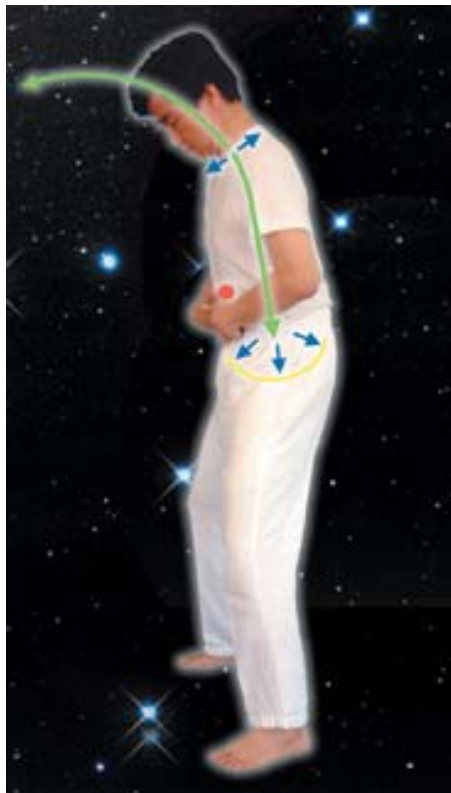


Fig. 4.53 Expand the Tan Tien with smooth inhalation.

J. Total Tan Tien Breathing with Exhale

a. Inhale fully and exhale; press the Chi pressure down and hold the breath.

b. Inhale without inhaling. Hold the breath and suck in; feel the suction and at the same time contract the anus, front, left, right and back.

c. Continue holding the breath and inhale without inhaling and expand the front, left and right, and the whole back. Continue to expand to the chest.

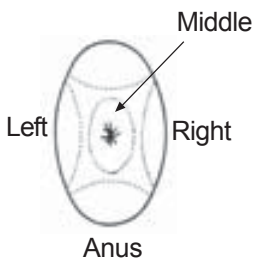


Fig. 4.54 Expand the Tan Tien with an exhale.

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.

a. Put your fingers on the Chi Hai in the lower abdomen. Smile and do a few abdominal breaths.

b. 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 and feel a suction. Slowly exhale (hold the Chi pressure in this point), increase the pressure of your fingers and push the Chi down in the lower abdomen against your fingers.

c. 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.



Fig. 4.55 Tap with Fists.



Fig. 4.56 Tap with edge of hands.

d. Do this for all the other six areas of the Tan Tien (tapping on the uterus and bladder is especially good for women). You then combine them as part of enhancing the Chi pressure and vibration in the whole Tan Tien.

e. 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 (See Fig. 4.60).

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

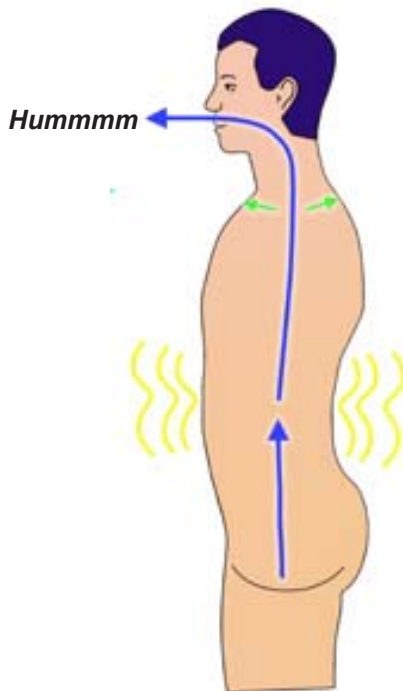


Fig. 4.57 Exhale quickly with “Hummmmmm” Sound.

g. 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, and the crown. Exhale and condense the energy in the Tan Tien. Repeat several times.

Releasing the 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.

b. You put the middle fingers from the left hand 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 the mouth of your right hand. Repeat for the left side.

c. 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.

You can picture the Tan Tien as a balloon that you can fill with air creating pressure in the balloon. The main thing you have to do is to fill this balloon and 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.



Fig. 4.58 Another way of releasing tension in the diaphragm.

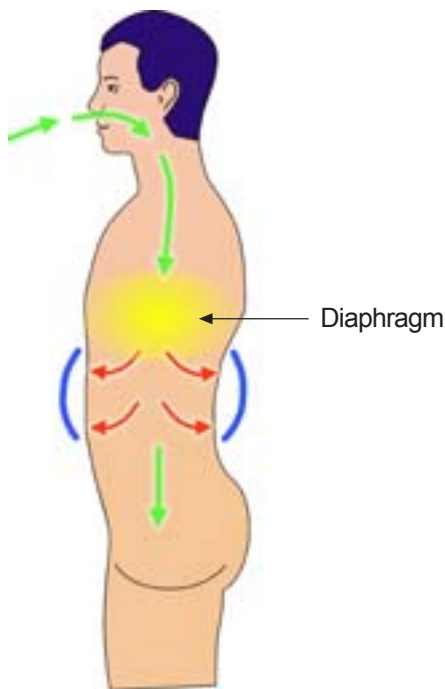


Fig. 4.59 Increase Chi pressure with every breath.

- a. Take a partner and gently put your fist on their Tan Tien (belly).
- b. 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 in an empty Tan Tien.
- c. Let him inhale in the same way and exhale through the mouth but still push the pressure down and out. 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 Chi pressure in the Tan Tan will be more condensed and stronger.
- d. As you continue to push, you will feel that the energy remains in the Lower Tan Tien and can be moved around.
- e. 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.



Fig. 4.60 *Using your partner's fist to build more Chi pressure.*

Chapter V

Tan Tien Chi Kung Postures

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 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 diaphragm. The exercises also nourish our original force.

The introductory exercises open the sacrum/kua and the hip joints and strengthen the anus and 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 of the Tan Tien, the strength of the perineum and the rooting power. They are actually a very good preparation for Tai Chi.

Opening of Sacrum/Kua

We start the practice of the Tan Tien Chi Kung with some introductory 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 the Chi pressure in the Tan Tien (Tan Tien power). These are the requirements for the correct execution of the exercises of the Tan Tien Chi Kung.

Tan Tien Chi Kung Warm Up

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.

Opening the Sacrum

1. Rub the sacrum warm. Stand with the legs shoulder width apart, feet parallel, both big toes lightly turned inward. Place the nine points of the feet firmly on the ground.

2. Start with lightly twisting and spiraling the ankles and knees counterclockwise. This will make the feet, the leg and the thigh bones become one piece. Press the feet with force and twist the heel inward, and the big toes outward. The feet are still firmly placed on the ground creating a balance and find the feeling of “in but not in- out but not out”. In this position the sacrum is closed.

3. Exhale, press the heels firm and turn the heels outward, with the big toes inward, press the whole legs down and press them firmly to the earth.

4. This will create a tension in the tendons and so the feet and legs become one piece which attach to the hip bones. This will help pull open the hips lightly separate from the sacrum. When you open the sacrum in this way, it feels like you are pulling the hips to the sides. Actually, you are also pushing the sacrum to the back, tucking the coccyx in and opening the pelvis. This will make the base bigger. Some people might feel pain in the sacrum.

5. Keep the knees and ankles aligned all the time and connected with the earth.

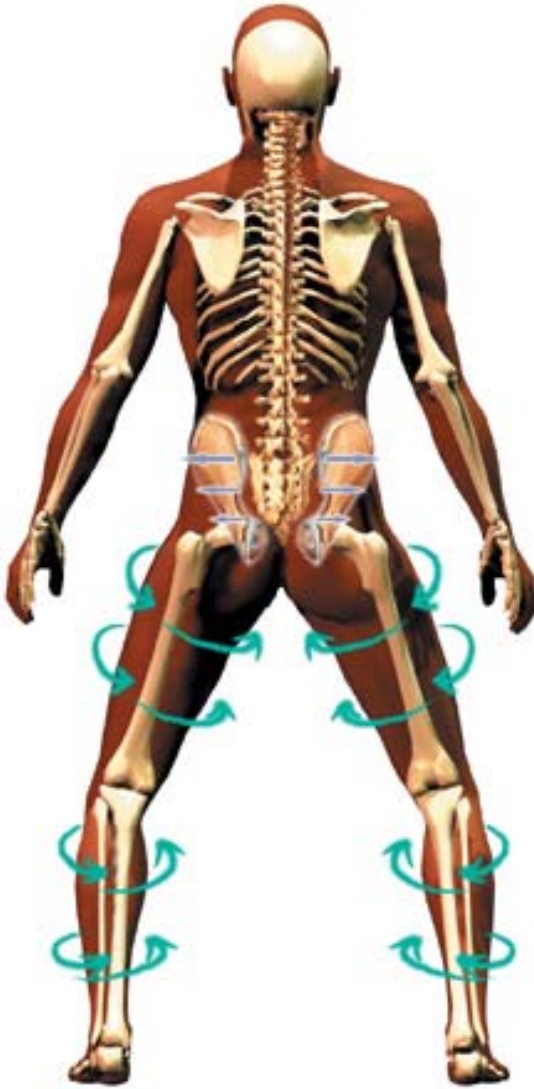


Fig. 5.1 Opening the Sacrum

6. Activate the Pumps to connect the Hips to the Spine
 - a. Activating the hips and the sacrum (pump) by pushing back and align with the spine.
 - b. Activate the T-11 pump by pressing the point lightly back and align with the spine.
 - c. Activate the cranial pump by pushing the chin back and raising the back of the crown high. This will help stimulate the flow of the spinal cerebral 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.

7. 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 their bowels, giving birth, meditate relax and restore the energy flow in this squatting position.

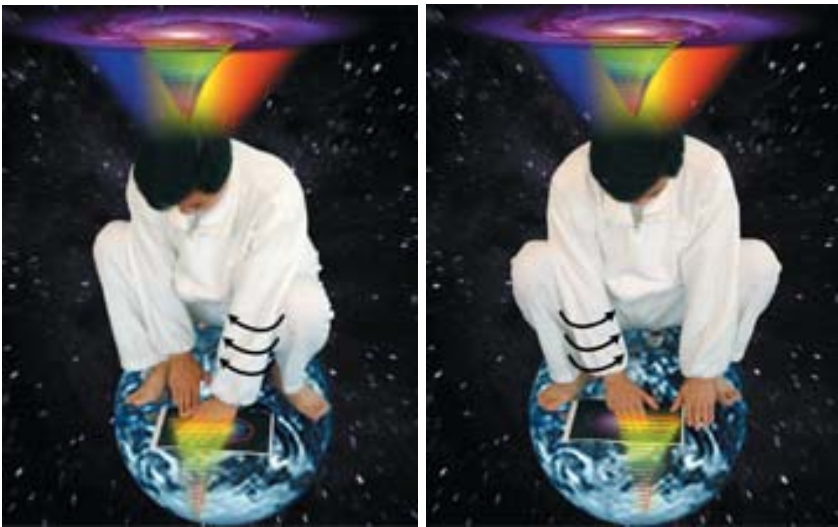


Fig. 5.2 Squatting while gathering the Earth Force.

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8. 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. (See the book, *Elixir Chi Kung* by Mantak Chia).

9. Other exercises for loosening the sacrum like we do in the Chi Kung warm ups;

- Put your hands on your sacrum and pubic bone and rotate the sacrum in both directions not moving the hips.

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



Fig. 5.3 Spiral the Sacrum.

Ending Exercise for All Eleven Animal Postures

After each animal exercise:

- a. Inhale, put the feet together, scoop up the energy from the universe, palms facing up.
- b. Turn the palms downward and pour the energy down over the body, back into the navel, back into the Tan Tien.



Fig. 5.4 Palms Opened Upwards



Fig. 5.5 Pour the Chi Down

c. 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.



Fig. 5.6 *Touch the Thighbones.*

d. 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. 5.7 *Feel the fingers move down the legs.*



Fig. 5.8 *Squat Down.*

e. 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.

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



Fig. 5.9 *Lift the Tailbone.*

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

h. Move your fingers to the back of the legs. Feel the fingers touch the heel bones and the bone marrow and glide the fingers up the leg bones to the coccyx and hold them there for a while. Feel the Chi rising to the spine and the brain.

i. Move the fingers to the sacrum. Feel the Chi pour into the sacrum and the sexual center.



Fig. 5.10 Squat down again.



Fig. 5.11 Move fingers to hips.

j. Bring the hands up to the Door of Life and concentrate on the navel. Feel the Chi energizes the kidneys and the Door of Life. Slowly bring the hands to the navel. Smile and collect the energy in the Tan Tien.



Fig. 5.12 Move up and touch the Coccyx and Sacrum.



Fig. 5.14 Pour the Chi down the Spine to the Sacrum.

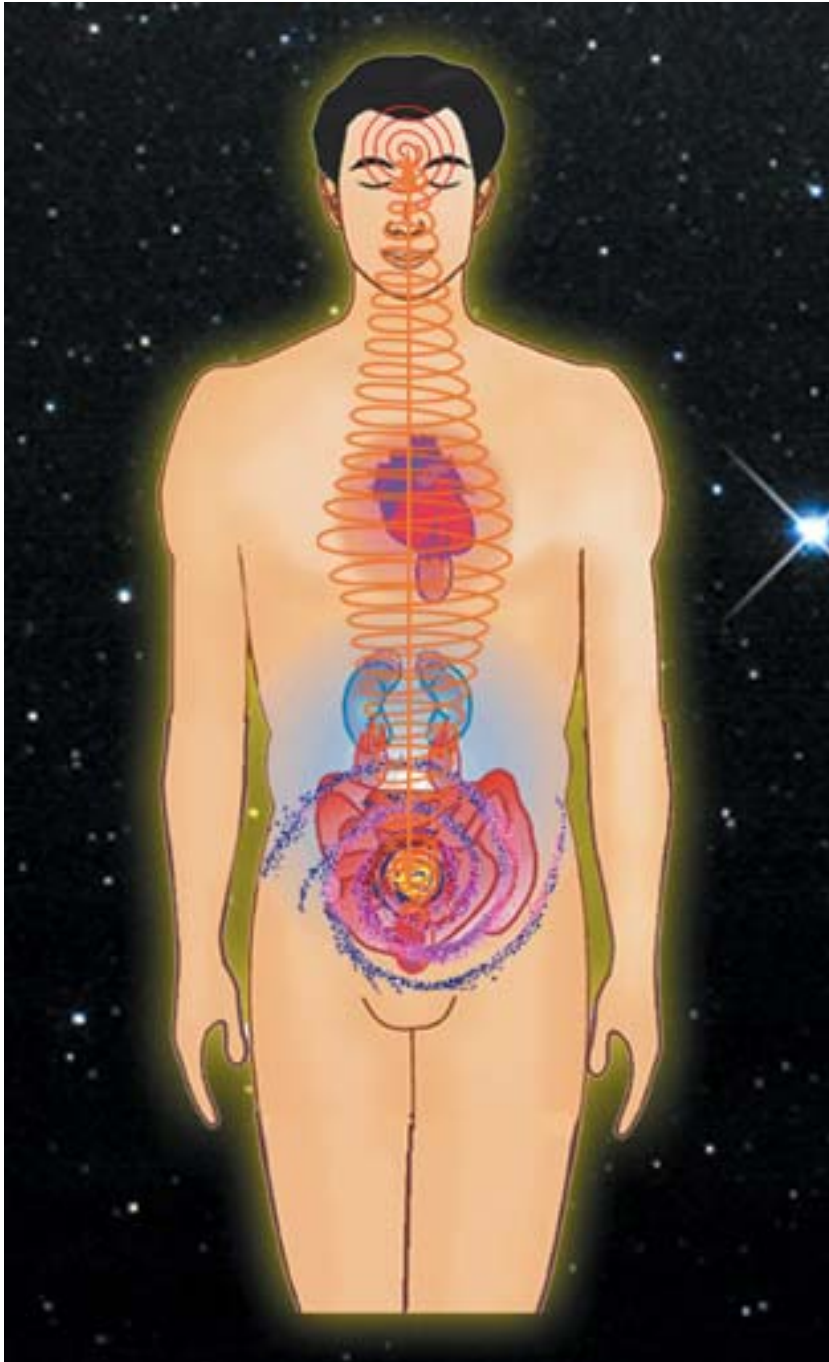


Fig. 5.15 Spiral and collect the Chi in the navel.

Tan Tien Chi Kung Postures

All eleven postures start from the normal standing posture.



Fig. 5.16 *Standing Normal.*

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

Rabbit (Front Tan Tien)

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

- a. Stand shoulder width, with the feet parallel.
- b. Inhale; pull up the anus and the front part of the anus, and simultaneously make the Dragon Sound (with a high pitched sound Hunnnnn). At the same time feel the lower abdomen and the throat like a vacuum sucking Chi to expand the lower abdomen and the throat, while raising the arms slightly above the head.



Fig. 5.17 Begin the Rabbit Posture with the Dragon Sound.

c. Exhale with the Tiger Sound (hummmm sound) quickly and pull up the anus and front part of the anus even more and widen your nostrils. At the same time, sink down a little in the kua, press the palms down and push the Chi pressure down in the front part of the Tan Tien and the pelvic area with the sound.



Hummm
Tiger Sound



Fig. 5.18 Rabbit exhaling with Tiger Sound.

d. It is very important that you synchronize these three movements. When you do this you will feel the Chi pressure increasing and generated in the lower abdomen, in this part of the Tan Tien and in the palms of your hands. The kua and the hip joints will open more due to this Chi pressure.

e. Do the ending practice (See page 93).

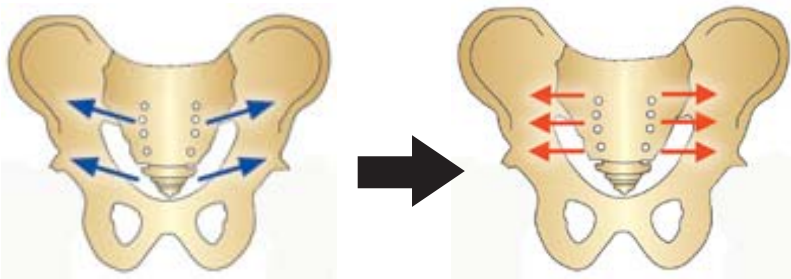


Fig. 5.19 Rabbit Posture opens the kua and hip joints.

Crane (Both Sides of the Tan Tien)

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

a. Stand shoulder width, with the feet parallel. Inhale with the Dragon Sound; pull up the anus and the left and right sides of the anus.

b. While raising the arms slightly above the head the fingers form the breaks.



Fig. 5.20 Crane raises its Breaks.

c. Exhale with the Tiger Sound (hummmm sound) and at the same time, press your palms down to hip level and press the Chi to the left and right sides; pull up the anus and the left and right side of the anus and expand the left and right side of the Tan Tien. Feel them expanding and feel the Chi pressure growing in these parts and in the palms of your hands.

d. Sink down a little in the kua, press the palms down and push the Chi pressure down to both sides of the Tan Tien and the pelvic area.

e. It is very important that you synchronize these three movements. The kua and the hip joints will open more due to this Chi pressure.



Fig. 5.21 Crane expanding Chi to both sides.

- f. Repeat 3 to 6 times.
- g. Do the ending practice (See page 93).



Fig. 5.22 Cranesinking into the Kua.

Bear (Back Part of the Tan Tien and 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.

- a. Stand shoulder width, feet parallel with the palms facing up.
- b. Inhale, with the Dragon Sound and raise up your palms to face the heavens and scoop up the Chi and pour it down.
- c. "In but not in; out but not out". Now exhale with the Tiger Sound and push down to the Lower Tan Tien. Lower the hands near the hips. Lock the wrists by screwing and twisting. Screw and twist ulna and radius but lock the elbows. Feel the two bones are crossing each other. Feel the whole arm and the scapula become one piece. The whole arm turns so the fingers point together; this will pull the scapulae out and make the upper back round.



Fig. 5.23 Bear Posuture begins.

Bear inhales with Dragon Sound. Bear exhales with Tiger Sound.



Fig. 5.24 Bear Posture: Inhale and Exhale.



Strengthen the
Arms

Fig. 5.25 Bear presses the hands down.

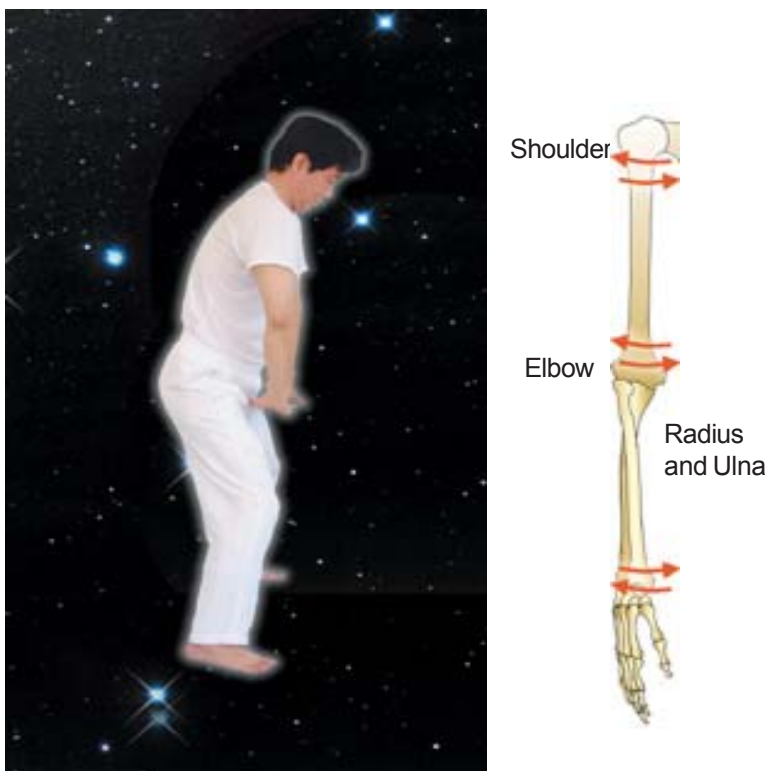


Fig. 5.26 Bear turns arms so fingers point at each other.

d. At the same time twist the ankles and the knees so the two bones cross each other. This will make whole leg to be one piece.

e. Twist the heels lightly out and the toes lightly in. (The formula of “In but not in; out but not out” will create a force of balance; no force will overcome this.) Feel the hips and sacrum open and the chest sink and the scapulae round and the Chi will fill the whole back. While rounding the shoulders you will feel the whole back expanding like a bear.

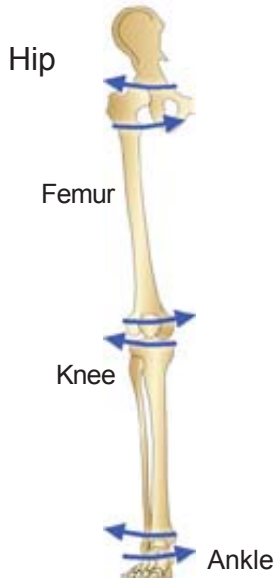


Fig. 5.27 Bear screws and twists.



Fig.5.28 Bear rounds and expands the back.

f. Inhale without inhaling. Inhale and exhale with the Dragon and Tiger Breath till the Chi fills up. Inhale once more with the dragon breath and hold the breath. Lock the neck and the anus so it feels like a vacuum pack without leaking. Suck in and suck out without breathing the air in and feel the pressure increase in the whole torso. This will increase blood circulation, the Chi, the lymphatic system and massage all the organs. Exhale and relax for a while.

g. Inhale; turn the palms out and up and raise up your palms facing the heavens and scoop up the Chi and pour it down. Lower the hands down to the navel, cover the navel for a while, feel warm and nice.

h. Do the ending practice (See page 93).



Fig.5.29 Bear Posture: Legs screwed in; kua open; arms one piece with scapulae and spine; back expanded.

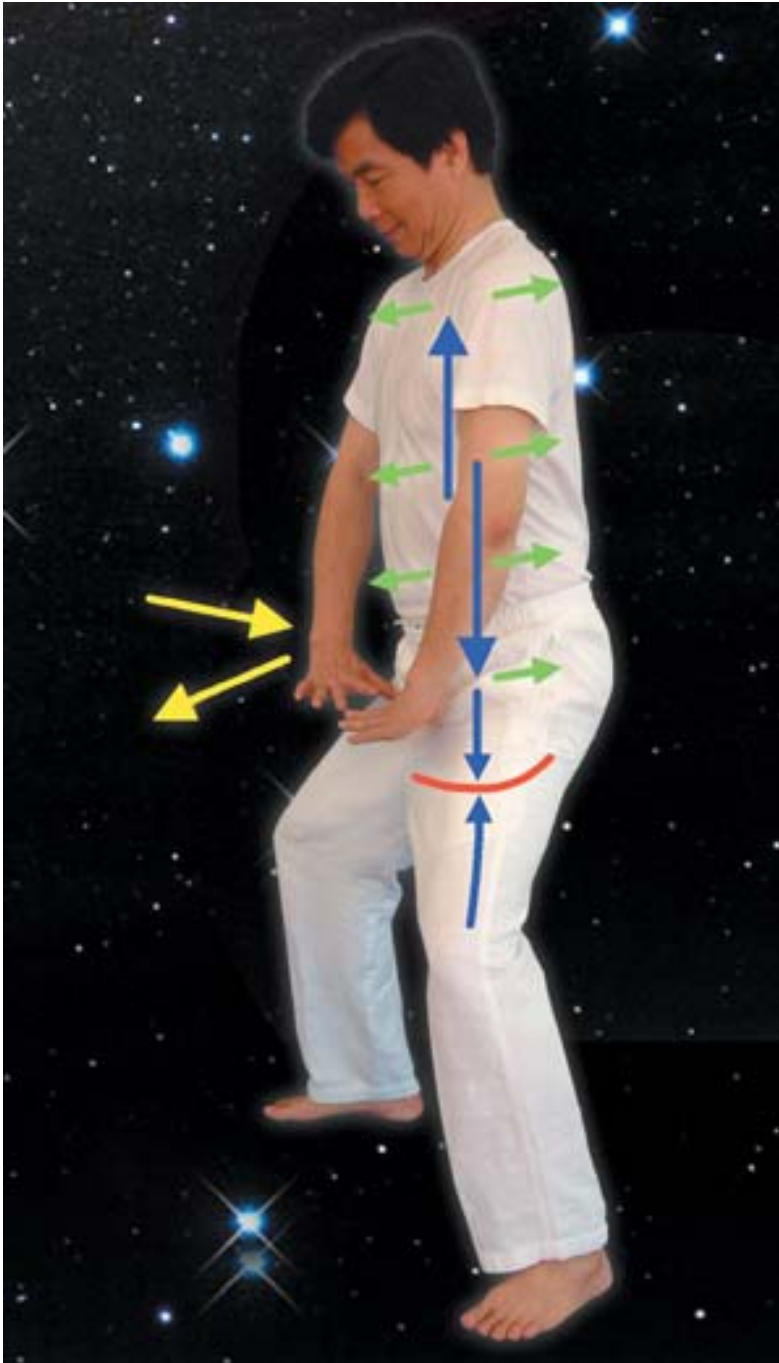


Fig. 5.30 Bear Posture expanding the back.

Swallow (Left and Right Tan Tien)

a. Stand in the Embrace the Tree position; arms rounded; chest sunk.

b. Inhale, with the Dragon Sound; lightly pull up the anus and the left and right sides of the anus; feel the suction in the Tan Tien.

c. Left side: Let the Lower Tan Tien Chi move you to the left from the lower lumbar. Do the inhale without inhaling; feel the Chi pressure; hold this position for a while.



Fig. 5.31 Swallow Embraces the Tree.

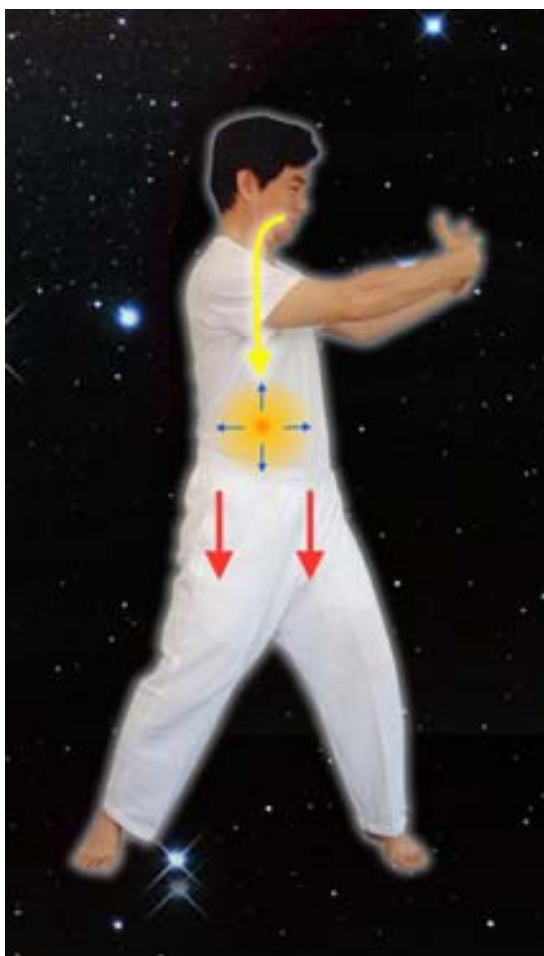


Fig. 5.32 Swallow moves to left side.

Exhale with the Tiger Sound, push the Chi down to the left side and keep the anus lightly contracted. Sink from the groin and feel your left leg pushing down into the earth. Feel a force coming up from the earth and a force pushing you down. Keep on doing the Dragon and Tiger Sounds and expand the pressure in the Tan Tien. Do the inhale without inhaling, feel the Chi pressure; hold this position for a while.

d. Middle: Turn the Embracing the Tree arms to the middle. Do the same as the left side. Inhale and lightly pull up the middle part of anus with the Dragon Sound and feel suction in the throat and the lower abdomen.

e. Exhale with the Tiger Sound, push the Chi down the middle and keep the anus lightly contracted. Sink from the groin and feel your legs pushing you down into the earth. Feel a force coming up from the earth and a force pushing you down. Keep on doing the Dragon and Tiger Sound 6 to 9 times and feel the pressure in the Tan Tien expand and contract. Do the inhale without inhaling, feel the Chi pressure; hold this position for a while.

f. Right Side: Turn the Embracing the Tree with the arms to the right. Your right foot turns 90 degrees and your left foot 45 degrees to the right.



Fig. 5.33 Swallow expands the Chi pressure in the Middle Tan Tien.



Sink Kua Down

Fig. 5.34 Swallow pushes Right Leg into earth and Tan Tien expands.

g. Inhale, with the Dragon Sound, lightly pull up the anus and the right side of the anus; feel the suction in the Tan Tien.

h. Exhale quickly, pull up the anus and the right side of the anus and press the Chi down in the right Tan Tien; the right leg pushing in the earth. Feel again a force coming up from the earth and a force pushing you down.

Keep on doing the Dragon and Tiger Sounds 6 to 9 times and feel the pressure in the Tan Tien expand and contract. Do the inhale without inhaling, feel the Chi pressure; hold this position for a while.

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

i. Do the ending practice (See page 93).

Dragon (Left and Right and Middle Tan Tien)

a. Stand shoulder width, with the feet parallel and the fists at hip level.



Fig. 5.35 Dragon inhales.

b. Left Side: Inhale with the Dragon Sound and feel suction in the lower abdominal and the throat. Move yourself to the left side from the lower lumbar. Hold this position for a while.



Fig. 5.36 Dragon moves to the left.

- c. Exhale with the Tiger Sound quickly, lightly pulling up the left side of the anus. At the same time thrust the right fist down along the left leg toward the ground.
- d. Feel the left side of the Tan Tien expanding.
- e. Repeat this for the right side and the Middle Tan Tien.



Fig. 5.37 Dragon exhales with the Tiger Sound and thrusting the fist down to the earth.

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f. For the Middle Tan Tien, you push both fists down and pull up the middle part of the anus.

g. Do the ending practice (See page 93).

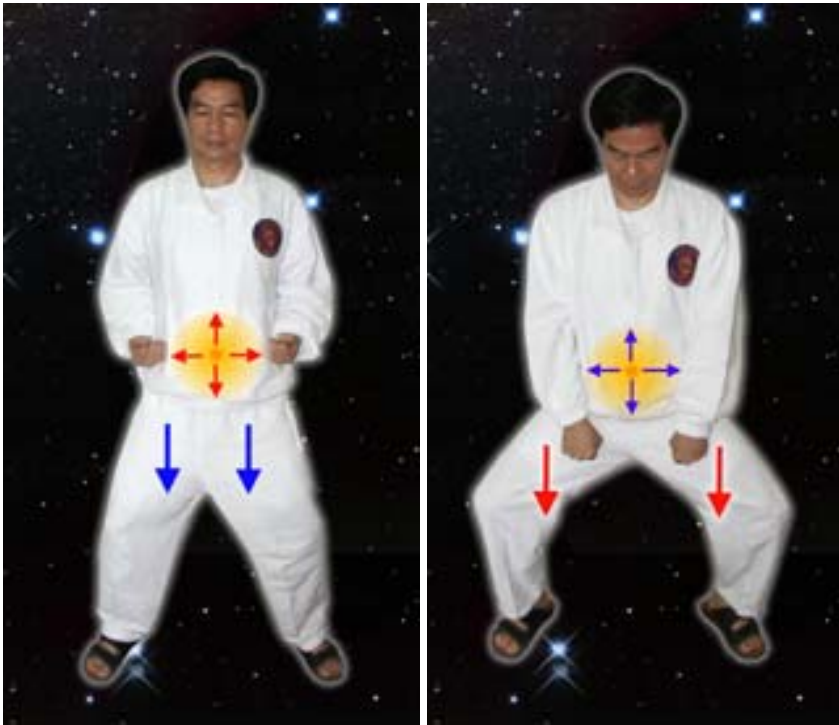


Fig. 5.38 Dragon expands the Chi pressure in the Middle Tan Tien.

Eagle (Lower Tan Tien)

- a. Stand shoulder width, feet parallel, lightly pull up the anus with the elbows bent and the fingers spread out above the head.



Fig. 5.39 Eagle flies.

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b. Inhale with the Dragon Sound and lightly pull up the anus and feel the suction. Roll your eyes up and fix them on the crown.

c. Exhale with the Tiger Sound and press down to the Lower Tan Tien.

d. Just stand in this position and do the Dragon and Tiger Sounds and feel the forces moving you, Do 3 to 6 times. This exercise will enhance the power in the Tan Tien and in your fingers.

e. Do the ending practice (See page 93).

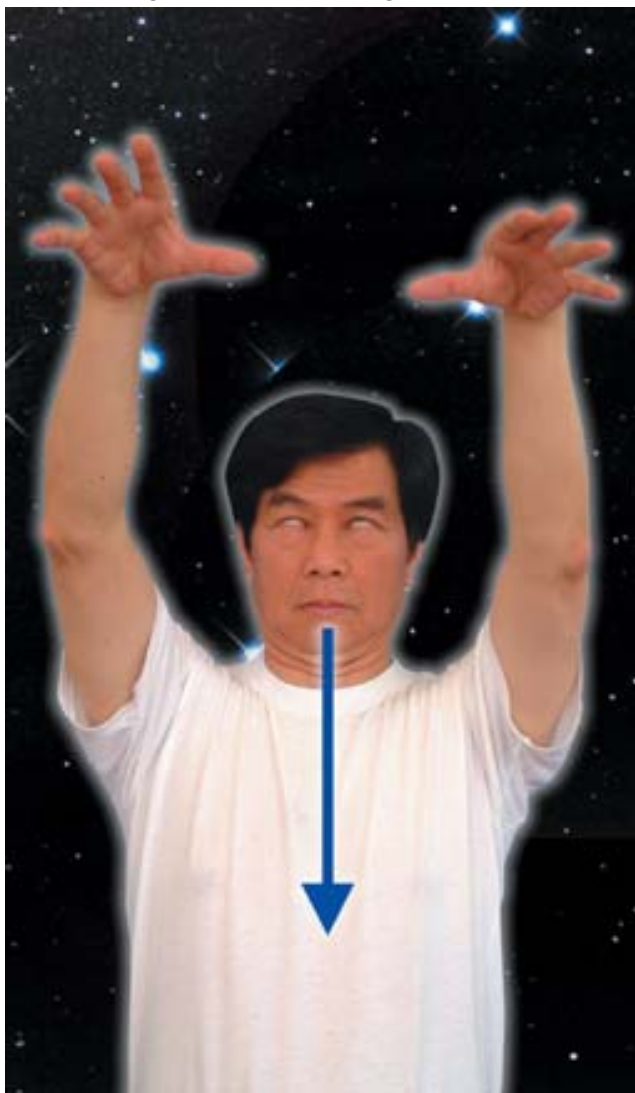


Fig. 5.40 Eagle rolls the eyes to the crown.

Monkey (Lower and Upper Tan Tien)

a. Stand shoulder width, with your feet parallel and your palms in front of the kua.

b. Inhale with the Dragon Sound and lightly pull up the anus and the middle part of the anus and expand the Lower Tan Tien. Raise the arms up above the head palms open.



Fig. 5.41 Monkey makes the Dragon Sound.

c. Squat down from the kua and exhale with the Tiger Sound, press the Chi pressure down in to the Lower Tan Tien and swing both arms down to the ground.

d. Continue swinging both arms back and forth while in the squatting position like a Monkey and feel the kua (groin) open more. While swinging gather the earth Chi into the palms and the bones.



Fig. 5.42 Monkey squats.



Fig. 5.43 Monkey gathers the Earth Energy.



Fig. 5.44 Monkey swinging the arms.

e. Inhale with the Tiger Sound, gradually rise up from the hips to the knees and the palms scoop up the earth energy. Come back up to the starting position.



Fig. 5.45 Monkey rises up bringing Earth Energy to the Lower and Upper Tan Tiens.

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- f. Open your palms to absorb the heavenly force.
- g. Repeat the same exercise 3 to 6 times.
- h. Do the ending exercise (See page 93).

In this exercise, the upper part of your body is light while the lower part is heavy.



Fig. 5.46 Monkey absorbs Heavenly Chi.

Elephant (Left and Right Kua and the Lower Tan Tien)

- a. Stand with your feet parallel and shoulder width.
- b. Inhale with the Tiger Sound and feel the suction. Hook the thumbs together and raise them up above the crown. Turn the hip to the left side



Fig. 5.47 Elephant raises his trunk above the crown.

c. Exhale with the Tiger Sound and press the Chi down to the Tan Tien. Pull up the anus and the left side of the anus. Turn your hips to center and swing your arms, like the trunk of an elephant down to the ground. Swing the arms like a trunk back and forth to gather the earth Chi.



Fig. 5.48 Elephant swings his trunk, gathering Earth Energy.

d. Inhale with Dragon Sound as you gradually raise up from the knees to the hips and with palms. The palms scoop up the earth energy. Come back up to the starting position: Arms raised above the crown. Turn the hips to the right side.



Fig. 5.49 Elephant raises his trunk up from the Earth to the Heavens.

e. Exhale with the Tiger Sound and press the Chi down to the Tan Tien. Pull up the anus and the left side of the anus. Turn your hips to the center and swing your arms, like the trunk of an elephant down to the ground. Swing the arms like the trunk back and forth to gather the earth Chi. Do three sets.

f. Rest and do the ending exercise (See page 93).

Rhinoceros (Left and Right Tan Tien)

a. Stand shoulder width, with your left foot in front and your right foot at a 45 degree angle behind you.

b. 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.



Fig. 5.50 Rhinoceros begins.



Fig. 5.51 *Rhinoceros moves to the left side.*

c. Inhale with the Dragon Sound. 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.

d. Exhale with the Tiger Sound, 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.

e. Hold this position and do the Tiger and the Dragon Sounds with the “inhale without inhaling” to build up the inner abdominal pressure. When out of breath, exhale and inhale. Regulate the breath; rest.

f. Repeat to the right side, the right leg in front and the left leg at a 45 degree angle aimed 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.



Fig. 5.52 Rhinoceros moves to the right.

g. Inhale with the Dragon Sound. 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.

h. Exhale with the Dragon Sound. 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.

i. Hold this position and do the Tiger and the Dragon Sounds with the “inhale without inhaling”. Build up the inner abdominal pressure. When out of breath, exhale and inhale. Regulate the breath; rest.

j. Do the ending exercise (See page 93).

Horse (Upper Tan Tien and the Solar Plexus)

An expanding sound from the Upper Tan Tien/Solar Plexus.

a. Stand shoulder width, with the feet parallel. Raise the arms above the head.

b. Inhale with the Dragon Sound and suck in the upper abdomen toward the back (Upper Tan Tien). Flatten the navel area so that the navel touches the spine.



Fig. 5.53 Horse Posture begins.

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c. Sink a little in the kua and at the same time exhale quickly with force and press the arms down with force especially the wrists. Push the abdomen out with the horse sound (Hoooooo) from the Lower Tan Tien. It is an echo sound coming from the Upper Tan Tien and solar plexus.

d. Do the horse sound three to six times. Rest.

e. Do the ending exercise (See page 93).



Fig. 5.54 Horse exhales "Hooooooo" sound pressing down with the arms and wrists.

Bull (Back Tan Tien)

- a. Stand shoulder width, with the feet parallel. Put your right leg to the front and turn your left foot 45 degrees outward.
- b. Your arms are in front of you, palms facing outward.
- c. Inhale with the Dragon Sound and feel the suction expand the upper abdomen. Pull up the anus and both sides 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 sides. The Tan Tien Chi is pushing you to the back and down into the right leg.



Fig. 5.55 Bull Posture begins.

d. Spiral the hands with the tendons under the armpits until the palms are facing you. “In the curve find the straight” means that when you twist the wrist and the elbow, hold the twist and try to straighten the arms and creating a force in the arms.



Fig. 5.56 Bull scoops up the Chi.



Fig. 5.57 Bull finding the Curve in the Straight.

e. Then exhale with the Tiger Sound and press the Chi down to the lower abdomen. At the same time very lightly 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 right leg.

f. 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). Feel the energy rising in the spine and push the energy out to the fingertips.

g. Do this exercise 3 to 6 times, rest.

h. Repeat with the left leg in front and the right leg back.

This is a very important introduction exercise for the 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.

i. Do the ending exercise (See page 93).



Fig. 5.58 Bull makes the Tiger Sound pushing out to the front.

Finishing Tan Tien Chi Kung

After you have finished the Tan Tien Chi Kung, sit down 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.

Chapter VI

Chi and the Tao

Tan Tien Chi Kung and the Universal Tao Practices

It is in the Lower Tan Tien that the condensation process started from which our life began. This is where all the energies of heaven and earth in the lovemaking of our parents and ancestors and their essences came together and created the embryo and our Original Chi.

In the Cosmic Healing Sounds practice, sound combined with movement serves to soften and cool down overheated organs which have tended to contract and harden as a result of stress. The body temperature is rebalanced and the free energy flow is regenerated.



Fig. 6.1 Cosmic Healing Sounds

It is here that the birth of the very Universe from Nothingness towards Fullness is reflected in the unity of Yin and Yang at the beginning of our life Journey. By smiling and relaxing into the belly, we ease the metabolism in the whole body, facilitating the digestion of food and creating favorable conditions for the greater digestive happening: the processing and blending of Universal, Earth and Cosmic Particle energies to support the growth of the embryo.

It is by focusing our loving attention on the Lower Tan Tien that we create the primary conditions for regeneration and rejuvenation. When we grow older, we also can grow younger, as we remember our original prenatal state, cultivate our inner power and keep Chi pressure.

It is in the Cosmic Inner Smile that the heart of Tan Tien Chi Kung as an active energy meditation practice lies. It prepares the ground for all other Universal Tao exercises. The presence of inner peace determines to what extent exercises will be effective.



Fig. 6.2 Cosmic Inner Smile

Also, it is relaxation which determines to what extent the body will be able to absorb the high energy substances. These substances are the focus of Chi Kung and determine its effectiveness in the process of transformation.

In the Fusion Practices we learn to balance our negative energies with our positive energies and condense our positive energies into a jewel of compassion. And then it is circulated through the Microcosmic Orbit to heal and transform our whole body and all its organs, glands, networks and channels. The pakuas are energy webs into which the emotional energies are brought together, blended and purified; they are located just behind the navel.

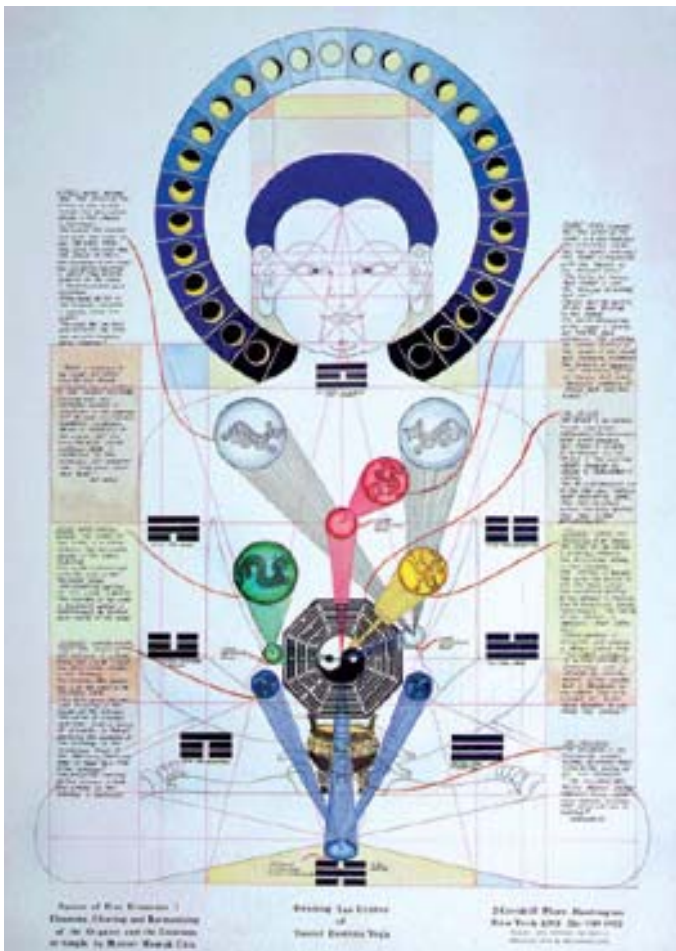


Fig. 6.3 Cosmic Fusion

The Belt Channel also starts at the navel. It is the psychic channel for self-defense of the body against negative energies from outside. It moves in a circle in and around the body from the center to the crown and down to the ankles and up again, to protect all the vital energy centers. The Chi which moves it comes from the power generator of the body.



Fig. 6.4 Belt Channels

The Lower Tan Tien processes and balances the emotional energies which have their seat in the organs and then returns the virtuous energy to them. Subsequently it nourishes the whole body with the blended and refined energies; it is concentrated in the pearl which is then circulated through the Microcosmic Orbit and from there into all the other energy pathways.

While the Cosmic Inner Smile, the Healing Sounds and the Fusion practices generate new fresh energy, they also need to be nurtured by fresh energy which can only come from good Chi pressure.

In the higher alchemical Kan and Li practices, it is once again the Lower Tan Tien which serves as the first station for alchemical transformation. Here the Water energy is steamed by the Fire energy so that the whole body is cleansed and detoxified and the transformation processes at the higher centers of the heart and the brain are prepared.

For all these alchemical transformations, a high accumulation of concentrated Chi is needed. To supply this Chi, Tan Tien Chi Kung plays a key role. This explains why Taoist Masters and practitioners in their meditations always center on the Lower Tan Tien. It is here that the whole bio-electromagnetic process is set in motion which nourishes and sustains successive waves of electromagnetic activation.



Fig. 6.5 Lesser Kan and Li

Self Healing and Wholeness

In the Taoist tradition, the lower body and its organs and functions are associated with earth, the higher body and its organs with heaven. Yet the spiritual body cannot be born and grow without being nourished by an unceasing supply of fresh Chi, generated in the lower body by the practice of Tan Tien Chi Kung.

Tan Tien Chi Kung, as one of the basic practices of the Taoist approach to health and self-healing, has its roots in a particular world view at the very heart and root of Chinese civilizations and science. In this view, human beings, like all other creatures, are seen as part of nature.



Fig. 6.6 Tan Tien Chi Kung

They are not above and on top of nature but need to serve and honor it. Nature is not to be conquered and subjected but to be treated with reverence and respect. People have to live in harmony with the universe and with nature as its manifestation. If not, the universe will turn against them and destroy the very foundations of their life.

In this ancient Taoist vision, at the heart of Chi Kung and Tan Tien Chi Kung, the universe and the earth are seen and experienced as sacred. Also, the human body is seen as a sacred vessel and a microcosmos in which the macrocosmos is mirrored and reproduced.

In the same vein, all that exists is holy and life is seen as a process of return to the original state of holiness/wholeness in which the primordial unity with the universe is regained. Healing, wholeness and holiness have the same etymological root.

Heaven and Earth, dark and light, the sacred and the profane, the material and the spiritual, body and mind, the physical and the metaphysical, thinking and feeling, what is above and what is below, are not seen as irreconcilable or inimical opposites but as natural polarities and partners between Yin and Yang. This manifests the relations between Heaven/Fire and Earth/Water, at the root of the energetic processes of imbalance and balance within the body.

The Tan Tien is not a physical phenomenon but an energy field of the subtle body. It has therefore not a precise physical location but varies with each person, depending on sex, age and life history. It functions in the area just between the navel, the Door of Life and the sexual center, just above the pelvic area.

In view of the above, Tan Tien Chi Kung may be defined as an energy meditation or inner fitness practice, designed to enhance a Chi Kung state of being in ourselves by awakening, activating and sustaining processes, rhythms, flows and transformations of energy in the body.

The Tan Tien is the center of activation and balancing of the primal life force energies (Chi) of the body by which the practices (Kung) of Chi Kung are generated. Tan Tien Chi Kung may also be called a strategy for self-empowerment and self-healing.

Tan Tien Chi Kung, like other forms of Chi Kung, is not only a source of self-healing but may also serve as a source of healing others. However, its effectiveness depends on the energy of the

healer. To practice healing others by way of Chi Kung, the healer needs first to raise their own energy, so that they can share their abundance.



Fig. 6.7 Cosmic Healing

A high energy field is created which may then serve to activate energy fields of those who seek to be healed. If the person who seeks healing were to have a higher energy field, it may well be that the healer would drain that person. Thus for any healer the first responsibility lies in healing themselves so that their work will be a blessing.

For this reason, energy meditations are the first responsibility of the Taoist practitioner who intends to be a healer. To raise energies, Chi pressure is indispensable. While an abundant Chi supply is essential for health, inversely, good health is also a condition for an abundant Chi supply.

Thus, to ensure both physical health and spiritual growth, an abundant supply of Chi (bio-electromagnetic energy) is needed. This accumulation of Chi is indispensable for creating the right kind of pressure to sustain and enhance the free and optimal flow of energy throughout the whole body. Chi is needed to activate the blood and lymph flows, the flow of the cerebrospinal fluids, the nerves, the endocrine glands and hormones, the fasciae and the tendons, bones, muscles and all the cells of the body.

As an electromagnetic force, Chi is the source of all movement and power in the Universe. It is also the source of life and empowerment of the whole body and all its functions. It can only be properly used and serve body and spirit if it is activated, guided and directed by the mind.

Chi Kung and the Balance of Water and Fire

Tan Tien Chi Kung involves the simultaneous training of body and mind by way of activating mind power. The combined and integrated activity of the mind, the heart and the eye power are the major sources of activation of the subtle energy and the transformations it requires and enhances.

The more the mind is awakened, the more the heart is opened and the more the eye is trained to look inward, the easier it becomes for the mind to lead and guide the movement of Chi through the body.

Thus the process of transformation is determined by the progressive refinement and combination of mind, heart and eye into one undivided subtle power. The emphasis in Taoist practice on the inner structure of this transformational power is suggested by the expression used for it. It is called “**Yi**” which means Water or Wisdom Mind.

This Yin mind is receptive, inward oriented, serene, steady and cool and represents the moon energy. It is the opposite of the Yang or Fire mind. The Fire Mind is so called as it represents the heat of the Sun, the emotional, active, outward going and volatile mind. These two minds, representing the unity of opposite Yin and Yang energies in the Universe, need to always return to balance, so as to create harmony and the right temperature in body and mind.

While the Lower Tan Tien serves as the source and the vessel

or container of Chi, it is the Wisdom mind which leads its movement, distribution and circulation. The more the mind is cultivated and transformed into a Wisdom mind, the more skilful it will be in sensing where Chi is needed and guide it.

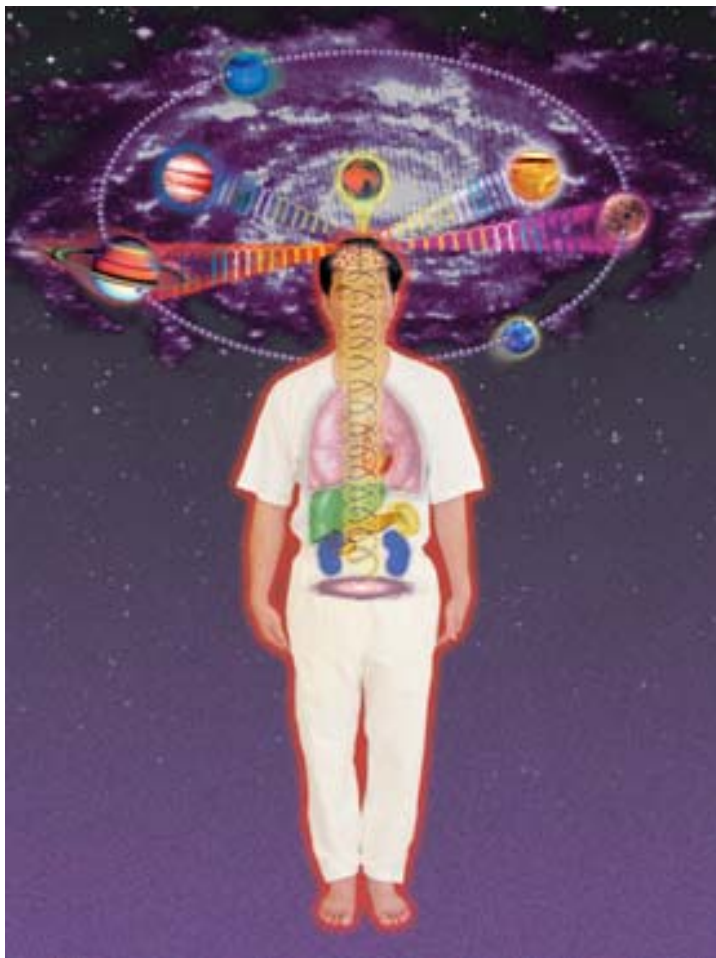


Fig. 6.8 *Wisdom Chi Kung*

In traditional Chinese terms Chi is considered the soldiers and Yi the Commander in chief. These martial terms make clear that Chi was of vital importance in the martial arts and in warfare, as it represented the major source of internal power before gun powder was introduced.

In Iron Shirt Chi Kung there was always, at least at the surface, a strong emphasis on its Yang dimension, although the real power was hidden in the Yin energy.

It is not surprising that the ways of access to these powers were kept secret to guard the monopoly and also to avoid abuse. The emphasis on energy as a meditative practice, so characteristic of the Taoist approach, becomes understandable if we know that monks played a crucial role in its creation.

With the decline of Chi Kung and especially of Iron Shirt Chi Kung as a principal weapon in warfare, its Yin dimension, not directly discernible to an uninitiated outsider, could be more fully appreciated. Chi Kung and Iron Shirt Chi Kung came to play a vital role in using Chi for health, self-healing and spiritual growth. The meaning of Yi as Wisdom or Water mind suggests that Taoist practice relied on the enhancement of the power of intuition and the art of sensing; these powers were considered as belonging to the essence of feminine power. Throughout history and the evolution of culture women have been closer to the earth and to their hearts than men. It is not surprising that the Taoist tradition has been called the female undercurrent of Chinese (patriarchal) culture.

With its emphasis on the integration of action with contemplation Taoist practice has had a pervasive influence on the flowering of Chinese civilization in all fields, in particular in those of science, medicine and the arts.

With the growth of subtle energy through Taoist meditative practice, there is less need to rely on the conduction through Chi on external practice and power. The movements increasingly originate from within as both the mind and the body become more sensitive to each other; the body becomes the seat of finer and more powerful subtle energies.

The overall energy balance in the body always remains the direct outcome of the level of Chi pressure. When Chi pressure declines, all fluids in the body are deactivated and health is in decline. When the natural energy balance between Fire and Water in the body is lost both body and mind suffer, but especially the brain and the heart.

As the Water element in the body weakens with the decline of the Earth connection, the Fire energy is more out of balance and runs wild.

Given the prevailing trends, there is an implicit contempt for wis-

Chapter VI

dom at the expense of knowledge; wisdom relies on listening to and feeling into the consciousness of the mind and the whole body and its organs. Knowledge is seen as a mere instrument of utility and as a product of the brain. The body and its emotions are seen as a source of disturbance rather than the “Temple of the Spirit”. This situation may be inverted when there is more space for Water energy and a better connection with the Earth energy. It is the Lower Tan Tien which is the seat of both Water and Earth elements.

Tan Tien Chi Kung, Iron Shirt Chi Kung and Tai Chi Chi Kung, as well as all other Universal Tao practices are helping practitioners around the world to become rooted and centered.



Fig. 6.9 Iron Shirt Chi Kung



Fig. 6.10 Tai Chi Chi Kung

Consciousness and Relaxation

In recent fundamental brain research, it has been found that the average person uses only four to five percent of their brain cells. This small portion of active brain cells lies at the surface of the cerebrum. It means that the vast numbers of brain cells in the deeper layers of the cerebrum are asleep.

There is evidence that it is difficult for these cells to be activated if one is too active and over conscious. Our target-oriented, linear-rationalist culture makes stress and tension an essential condition for “keeping up”. Such stress makes it difficult to nourish and keep up Chi pressure.

Chi Kung serves to create a state of relaxation which enables the practitioner to return to their “natural state”. Then the deeper layers of the brain can be opened up and the creative powers of the unconsciousness mind, where all originality and creativity lie hidden, become available.

Relaxation is not static. Rather, it is an expression of the dynamic balance which comes about when one is aligned with the force of gravity. We experience the pulls of the opposite forces within oneself: the force which pulls up and the force which pulls down and the forces from the different directions of the Universe that are electrical and magnetic fields. Chi Kung is the art of being and entering in balance though the process of mutual adjustment of body, mind and breathing. Our posture is an expression of this balance and so internal pressure and power are generated.

Chi Kung practice can serve to significantly activate dormant electromagnetic currents in the deep brain and thereby bring about a major change in the nature of awareness. There is likely to be a close relationship between the high under-utilization of the brain's potential and the prevailing economic patterns of production, distribution and consumption. They impose the patterns of socialization and education that seem to be aggravated by the new forms of mass information and communication.

Another important finding is that adult and old people's encephalograms dramatically changed after they had practiced Chi Kung and showed characteristics of childrens' encephalograms.

As a result of the high pressures of modern life and the build up of tension and stress, the heart is overheated and “cooked”. Its pumping function is severely jeopardized and the blood stream is deactivated.

The balance between Water and Fire energies is seriously disturbed and heart weakness becomes epidemic. Pressure on the heart can significantly be lowered by the Iron Shirt practice of activating the Lower Tan Tien. Such exercises as the Tree, the Turtle, the Golden Urn and the Phoenix Washing Its Feathers make the work of the heart lighter. The Lower Tan Tien requires two thirds of the body's total blood supply for its four major organs: liver, kidneys, spleen and stomach. This is why Taoists have also called the Lower Tan Tien “the second heart”.

The heart is also assisted by the Cosmic Healing Sounds for the heart and triple warmer. The Tao Yin practice of leading excess

heat from the heart to the kidneys and the meditation technique of pulsing, through which the pulse can be amplified at the crown and the perineum help relieve the heart.

The ability of the Lower Tan Tien to activate Chi significantly depends on the degree to which the diaphragm regains its flexibility and becomes relaxed so that it can freely move up and down. The diaphragm has a pumping function that can exert pressure on the Lower Tan Tien by way of the Iron Shirt breathing practice of packing and releasing. Chi pressure is raised and is condensed through the packing process.

Through the practice of packing and releasing, the whole Lower Tan Tien receives a massage. This activates the four organs and expels toxins and sediments from the organs in the abdomen, so that blood and Chi flow are restored.

Also the small and large intestines share in the benefits of this packing process, as they are massaged and the natural peristaltic movement is reactivated. It is well known that many chronic diseases originate in the bowels. The Tan Tien Chi Kung exercises designed to open the kua work on pressing the bowel into movement.

Chi Kung as Self-Actualization

The ordinary, functioning mind and consciousness cannot maintain a high concentration of Chi. It behooves us to learn and practice so as to align our true nature with energies of the Universe (Te).



Fig. 6.11 Chinese Character "Te"

This is the original meaning of the Chinese character "Te": human alignment with the Whole, the Universe. Thus it may also be translated as "actualization of the Universe or Cosmos within oneself" or self-realization.

It has also been translated as “integrity” (in its original sense of being whole/undivided) which is expressed in “power”, “quality” and “strength”. The more one grows towards realizing within oneself this unity with the Universe, the higher is one’s quality of selfhood, as a microcosmic manifestation of the Macrocosmos.

In its original meaning “Te” is defined as a process of alignment “from within” and it presupposes independence and self-reliance; one’s own mind and body is a field of energy and consciousness and the source of entering into alignment with the Tao. This explains the great sense of independence by Taoist practitioners and communities over the centuries and their reliance on inner rather than outer authority, knowledge and power. This is obvious from the striking tales and legends about the lives of the Immortals.



Fig. 6.12 Chaun Chung-Li, One of the Eight Immortals

Reactivation and Regeneration

The activation of the abdomen plays a major role in the creation of a state of ease to prevent “dis-ease”. If the abdomen is at ease, the whole body comes to rest. If not, the whole body suffers, as the basic metabolism is affected. In the process of aging and as a result of an agitated externalized life style the abdominal organs tend to sag and thereby lose their vitality. These organs, thanks to the rise in Chi pressure in the Lower Tan Tien, are uplifted and brought back in their original position, so that once again the Chi flows.

After giving birth, the uterus may sag and cause the prolapsus of the transverse colon, and constipation. If undue pressure is exercised on the fallopian tubes and the ovaries, it may become a cause of sterility, as proper blood and Chi flow is prevented and toxins cannot be moved out. This in turn may lead to serious diseases. Thus, women can receive particular benefit from Tan Tien Chi Kung.

The diaphragm can move down if the Lower Tan Tien is freed from mental and emotional stress and tension. This is a principal cause of constipation and degeneration of the digestive and eliminative system. Constipation can also be relieved by the Tao Yin practice of lengthening the psoas muscle, combined with the conversion of fear into gentleness by the Cosmic Healing Sounds and the Fusion practices.

By “bringing peace” and generating Chi in the Lower Tan Tien, the Wisdom mind, Yi, dissolves tensions in the body, as it brings down the Fire energy, which always rises up and tends to overheat the brain, the heart and the lungs. This cools the body, reestablishing the natural balance between Fire and Water energies.

By concentrating attention on the Lower Tan Tien, Yi also brings down the point of gravity in the body so that stability increases and the earth connection is enhanced. As we become more rooted, a sense of coming home may arise. This has a further cooling and refreshing effect on the body.

With the downward movement of the diaphragm, the lungs also get new space. They have suffered from the stress and tension which has caused breathing to become short and shallow. When the Lower Tan Tien enters a state of rest and the diaphragm is able to relax and returns to its natural rhythmic up and down movement, the lungs can ease into their natural function.

Then one can start again to breath deeply and slowly and gently. This regenerates the whole body, as its cells, organs, glands and bones become tonified and energized as a consequence of the fresh Chi pressure. Nose breathing becomes less necessary and can gradually give way to breathing from within.

As a result of this process towards inner relaxation and balance, the body can start to function in a qualitatively new way; it needs to rely less on external air intake and more on the Chi from within, the original or prenatal Chi. Breathing becomes again a natural rhythmic process which goes by itself and which creates the right pressure needed for the body to function optimally.

New consciousness does not come about by itself; it requires continuous exercise and practice that is light and playful, as if it were a child’s game.

Iron Shirt Chi Kung plays a critical role in this training process by which the Tan Tien releases tensions and relaxes mind and body, so that Chi can be generated from and towards the Tan Tien. One learns to let mind and body, and the glands and organs have a dialogue with each other with the Tan Tien leading the way.

The Microcosmic Orbit meditation is the best way to maintain the original Chi, as it fills our energy reservoirs and keeps our meridians open. We also enhance our ability to take in, process and store the Chi we receive from the Three Forces: the Universal, Earth and Cosmic Particle energies. Our Chi reservoir is raised

and enriched. The preservation and enhancement of Original Chi is essential for the acquisition of external energies; in the Universal Tao System called, "acquired Chi".

The Cosmic Orbit meditation is also essential for Sexual Kung Fu which is the practice of transforming sexual energy into life force energy and life force energy into spiritual energy. The higher the spiritual energy or Wisdom energy we create, the easier will be the process of successive transformations.

The ability to move Chi and hormones upward and renew our central body functions is ultimately determined by the quantity and quality of Chi in the Lower Tan Tien. The availability of Chi depends in turn on the quality of the breathing.

Iron Shirt Chi Kung and Tai Chi Chi Kung

Tan Tien Chi Kung has a particularly close connection with the three basic Iron Shirt Practices which focus on the strengthening of the internal organs and firm rooting, the changing and strengthening of the tendons and the cleansing and renewal of the bone marrow. In the Iron Shirt practices, compression creates space for new Chi in the muscles, tendons and the bones, as the fat which has been accumulated there is expelled. With the process of aging, fat tends to accumulate, so that the bones in particular lose their regenerative function, as fat takes the place of the blood cells.

Through bone breathing the regenerative capacity of the bone marrow is restored. New red and white blood cells start to regrow after the fat has been expelled.

Maintaining a firm but gentle Chi pressure in the Lower Tan Tien is also at the heart of creating Chi pressure needed in Tai Chi Chi Kung.

In no other Taoist practice are consciousness, posture and energy circulation so intimately interwoven as in Tai Chi Chi Kung. This is beautifully illustrated by the book on the *Inner Structure of Tai Chi* by Mantak Chia and Juan Li.

It is not accidental that Tai Chi has become widely popular as a way to preserve and enhance health and self-healing, although most practitioners may not be very aware of its inner structure. They may see it as a pleasant form of higher gymnastics and not have an inkling of its inner energy structure. Somehow, in the initial stage,

it may be the intuition of their body which leads them to Tai Chi. Tai Chi Chi Kung provides a synthesis of all learning processes on the use of Chi from other Universal Tao practices.

In Tai Chi Chi Kung, the Lower Tan Tien, as the locus of the center of gravity in the body, plays a key role. The whole training in Tai Chi Chi Kung is directed towards bringing and keeping the center of gravity downward in the Lower Tan Tien. One may call it the practice of learning to come “down to earth”.

Tai Chi's movement is exactly counter to that of today's global culture with its upward movement which disconnects people from the earth, so they lose their structural alignment with gravity and their Chi pressure. As a result they lose their inner power, physically, mentally and spiritually. When the center of gravity comes down, also the sense of weight of the body goes down. One starts to feel lighter; it is as if one is less affected by the law of gravity and feels more free and spacious as well as more grounded. This opens the way for the transfer of consciousness into higher bodies which are free of gravity. This is only safe and wise, in the Taoist view, if and when the body remains grounded and centered. The higher you want to go, the more you have to ground. Precisely for this grounding, Chi pressure in the Lower Tan Tien needs to grow. One can exercise Chi pressure downward into the ground, so that the Earth force will resonate and bounce up. If one is not grounded and centered and there is no good Chi pressure in the Lower Tan Tien, it is unavoidable that fear accumulates, and it is even more difficult to center and touch ground; it blocks Chi by creating tension in the body especially in the kidneys.

The connection with the earth declines and a sense of being at ease and at home in one's own body is weakened. Life is increasingly experienced in terms of outside pressure. This leads to an inner state in which the body feels compelled to experience life as a threat coming from outside against which the body has to defend itself and organize itself.

In this process the body's energies, rather than serving the growth of inner balance, are turned against “the others” and the world as the actual or potential enemy. The very basis of existence becomes one which is marked by and legitimizes aggression. Competition and the creation of a win/lose situation becomes a compulsion.

In this situation, Tan Tien Chi Kung, Tai Chi Chi Kung and other

Taoist practices are a blessing, as they help the student to rediscover and regain the inner way of reconnecting with their own center and ground. They also create awareness of the inner structure of the body and of the glorious unity between high and low, heaven and earth and the mutual relationships between the sexual organs, the perineum, the anus, the belly, the mind and the spirit.

When grounded and rooted, one can come to feel at home and at ease and peace with oneself. Then one becomes less vulnerable and swayed by the external circumstances, no matter what happens around one.

The Tan Tien Chi Kung training of smiling to one's pelvic floor and embracing one's body in all its functions enables one, both physically and psychologically to remain centered and rooted. The more you are centered and rooted, the less others can push you.

Training in centering, grounding and rooting and moving from your center, coordinating the contraction of anus and perineum so as to gather internal pressure, has major implications for one's relationship to the world. If one feels safe and at ease with oneself, there is no need to project one's own negative energies on others. As a result, others are less likely to see you as their opponent or enemy. Also, as one exudes inner power, there is reason for others to be respectful.

If they still want to attack you, they cannot push you over, as you have learned to lead the energy of the opponent into the ground. So in actual fact they do not push you but the air with which you are connected, in view of your alignment. Who can push over the Earth and the Universe?

The more intimate you become with the energies of the universe in your inner structure, the less vulnerable you become until you have become invulnerable. That means that you are one with the Tao and all imbalances in the pressure from inside and outside have been dissolved.

Tai Chi Chi Kung is also a powerful antidote against aging, which is greatly accelerated by a movement upward of the center of gravity, with the consequent loss of power and stability. This movement can be reversed by bringing the focus of attention down to the Lower Tan Tien which is the purpose of Tan Tien Chi Kung.

For this, the mind has to undo itself from that which prevents it from inner relaxation, as true attention and mindfulness can only

grow if the mind is freed from negative emotions and mental states and learns to practice emptiness. Then it can create the conditions for new fullness and one can see that life consists of cycles: fullness and emptiness, living and dying, beginnings and ends, old and new, seasons and phases, days and nights, mornings and evenings, and dark and light.

This is precisely what Tai Chi Chi Kung practice focuses on: the continuous flow between Yin and Yang positions whereby each move towards fullness becomes a condition for emptiness, and fullness can only arise out of emptiness.

With the center in the Lower Tan Tien, the body can move in perfect alignment with gravity. It can only do so if the breath is kept low and the diaphragm finds itself in a relaxed state, as it responds to the relaxation in the Lower Tan Tien.

Such a process towards relaxation is the very aim and art as a play of movements; to become a child again, finding joy and delight in the practice for its own sake.

In the process of rhythmic movement, breathing may gradually become rhythmic, deep, smooth and slow. The Wind Force can then quiet the Fire Force, as the Chi of the overheated heart is led to the lungs so that heartburn can be prevented.

Thus deep breathing has a cooling and calming effect and balances the Fire when it gets too excited. The Water element is activated when excess heat of the heart is brought down through the spine to warm up the kidneys. The Water energy of the kidneys can be guided upward to cool the heart.

It is the process of rhythmic movement and relaxation from the Lower Tan Tien and in line with gravity, which makes the Earth energy bounce up. Water and Fire can gradually enter into balance. In this connection, it is interesting to know that the original Chinese character for Chi was written as “no fire” and the Chi Kung practitioner in those times was aiming at achieving a state of “no fire”.



Fig. 6.13 Chinese Character “No Fire”

Chapter VII

Awakening to Subtle Wonders

Essential to the creation and preservation of internal pressure and inner power in the Lower Tan Tien is that we turn inward and begin to listen to our body and natural wisdom and what it wishes to tell us. We need to learn to understand and interpret its signs and processes.

As a rule, these have accumulated in our bodies and their organs and glands as the sediment of early traumas which we have not been able or willing to give up. We may even have cherished them, as they give us reason to continue living in a state of separation and depression, so that we can justify our state of “dis-ease” and negative emotions.

Subtle wonders may arise at any time under any circumstance as moments of awakening to our virtual powers and potentials. Disease may be a more forceful sign calling upon us to awaken. Dis-ease can be an invitation to turn inward.

Subtle wonders lie in the small spaces of awareness every new day. In these we may be awakened to our virtual Chi Kung state. What makes us truly feel at ease and what are the situations, places, postures and patterns in ourselves? Which make us sensitive to subtle wonders in ourselves and others? Subtle wonders arise from the deep down longing for infinity from which a sense of curiosity arises. This then cultivates awareness and mindfulness from which open-mindedness arises in which we suddenly begin to see reality from a new angle. Our energy is changing and we begin to feel and see ourselves and the world in a new way.

Chi Kung and especially Tan Tien Chi Kung can help in reconnecting with ourselves and reconnect us with the earth and the Universe through all the exercises of grounding and centering. From these, a sense of belonging arises in our body.

The great Chi Kung Master the Buddha said: “You are me and me is you”. This goes back to the ancient Hindu view on the identity of “this” and “that”, to the root of the epistemology of the unity and interconnectedness of all phenomena which we also find in the

Taoist view of the Universe. Recent insights in quantum physics and relativity theory also support this view.

Humility is a state of being truthful and sensitive to this insight and is a condition for healers to set in motion a process of self-healing and to transmit healing Chi. The person who seeks healing is willing to entrust themselves to the healer who acknowledges a common humanity.

To the extent that we will be able to forgive and accept ourselves, others and the world, we create an ability in ourselves to return to our pre-natal breathing pattern and not only create peace within ourselves but also around us.

Such an attitude will also help us to view problems around us, not as obstacles outside ourselves, but as opportunities for learning and solving them “from within”. It is significant in this context that the Chinese word for “crisis” has at the same time a negative as well as a positive connotation. What is “a problem”, a “negative” occurrence, is at the same time an “opportunity” to learn.

This is precisely the deep sense of the Yin and Yang symbol in which there is a light spot in the dark and a dark spot in the light. How truthful and wise is this insight which honors the inherent reality of a unity of opposites in everything in the universe, including ourselves. How liberating is this Taoist view of the unity of positive and negative energies, used in the first Fusion practice.

Prenatal breathing and the natural pressure which goes with it are indispensable for the growth and recuperation of inner power. They can only be regained and sustained by an abundant supply of Chi. For the higher body we need a solid foundation and Chi supply in the body in which we now live. Therein lies the relevance of Tan Tien Chi Kung.



Fig. 7.1 Yin and Yang Symbol

Originality of Chi Kung as Active Energy Meditation

It is precisely for this reason that, at a very early stage, Chinese Taoist practice took distance from the “spiritualist” path. Meditation by the mind at the expense of the body and in disconnection from the body is seen as the only legitimate form of meditation in some schools.

The Taoist position emerged, as it was observed that this kind of “passive meditation” was inspired by and led to a serious contempt for the body, thereby undermining balance, ease and well being.

It is this focus on the integration of mind with Chi and of the cultivation and transformation of Chi as an internal active meditation practice which constitutes the originality of the Chi Kung practice. In this it is different from all other approaches to meditation in all religious traditions. Undoubtedly this Chinese originality is deeply connected with a pragmatic sense of life which is so characteristic of Chinese culture.

At the same time the originality of the Chinese Taoist active meditation tradition has its roots in a positive approach to the entire body and in particular to sexuality. Sexuality is, in most religious traditions and “high” cultures (in contradistinction to indigenous and folk cultures), treated with contempt and fear as it is associated with the “lower” part of the body. It is seen as the locus of (animal) instincts and therefore an obstacle to “higher” pursuits and the spiritual path.

The Universal Tao practices of Healing Love instead acknowledge and respect the creative force. Healing Love truly emphasizes health, love and sex as the essential ingredients for spiritual growth.

Unlike in the Western approach to health and medicine, Chi Kung does not focus on particular parts of the body when sickness or pain is experienced. It looks at the totality of the processes taking place in the relations between the Five Elements and Phases, so that imbalances are treated and mutual adjustment enhanced.

Chi Kung is based on premises which are qualitatively different from those inspiring modern Western conceptions of medicine. It is a process and method of practicing breathing to increase Chi pressure to enhance health, self-healing and energy transformation.

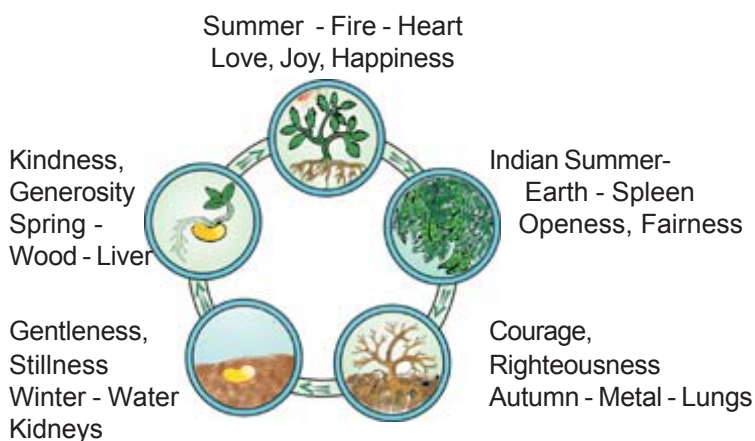


Fig. 7.2 Creation Cycle in Nature

Chi Kung and the Rise of a New Perspective

The rise in interest in Chi Kung as a practice which enables people to take care of themselves and make use of their own innate potential to cultivate their health and heal themselves is not surprising. In the process of Chi Kung practice, new forms of consciousness/spirit may arise which are able to direct, steer and guide the Chi in new directions.

All genuine transformations have invariably started as small awakenings, subtle wonders that were hardly perceptible.

One of the subtle wonders which may happen is that you decide to start with the practice of Tan Tien Chi Kung and train in learning to differentiate the activation of different points of the anus. You coordinate the contraction of the anus and the perineum so as to seal the pelvic floor. This creates the internal pressure through the creation of the Chi ball needed for our health to open the way for self-reliance, self-healing and self-realization.

Another subtle wonder could be that we decide to do some squatting every day to open our kua and enjoy numerous benefits from it, as it heightens the quality of our practice of the Microcosmic Orbit, Healing Love and makes us more grounded and lighter at the same time.

Another subtle wonder might be that we discover that when we have opened our kua, we can walk again in a new way and see the world with new eyes. We walk straight and tall, and one day realize that there is so much to learn and to appreciate in this world full of mysteries and beauty.

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