



Dragon Dao-Yins

The Dragon Dao-Yin Exercises



Damo Mitchell

Lotus Nei Gong Publishing

www.lotusneigong.com

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Published by Lotus Nei Gong

(www.lotusneigong.com)

ISBN: 978-1-4467-6254-7

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Introduction

In this book I outline the various movements of the Dragon Dao Yin exercises which I teach within my school of internal arts.

Dao Yin exercises are truly one of the treasures of traditional Chinese medicine and the Daoist tradition. Qi Gong exercises are another treasure which are widely practiced but Dao Yin are not so popular and generally not so well understood. This is a terrible shame since even armed with only a little information on Dao Yins, great benefit can be drawn from daily practices of these simple exercises. In a time when many people are suffering from terrible illnesses and our public health systems are far from adequate, Dao Yin exercises could bring relief and comfort to a great many people.

I began studying the martial arts at a young age and then Chinese health arts in my teens. I was exposed to Dao Yin training at this time and so have been practicing them now for over 15 years. As a form of preventative health-care they have been excellent and as a way to repair any injuries sustained during martial arts training they have been invaluable.

When teaching the internal arts to my students I have seen that it is Dao Yin exercises which bring the greatest benefit. The combination of low impact physical exercise and Nei Gong training brings improvement to a person's health, fitness and psychological well-being. Perhaps even more so than Qi Gong exercises which do not pull the body open in the same way.

Another benefit to Dao Yin training is their use in teaching younger people. Children often do not have the patience or interest for

studying Taiji or Qi Gong as the movements are too slow and subtle. Dao Yin exercises tend to be a lot larger and can be performed comparatively quickly, they also tend to be more interesting movements for a child or teenager and have exciting themes such as Dragons upon which they are based. It is also, in my opinion, unhealthy for a child or teenager to spend too much time looking inwards which is the case with the majority of internal practices. They are at a stage in their life where their emotional selves are developing very quickly and ‘inner gazing’ can cause these emotional changes to amplify and so run the risk of causing harm. Dao Yin exercises are based around the principle of leading stagnant Qi out of the body and consequently your attention is often out of the body and far into the distance; a far healthier practice for younger people.

Dao Yin exercises have been used for centuries to help people repair and maintain their health, they are every bit as relevant today as they were in ancient times and I hope through this book many people can experience the rejuvenating effects of the Daoist health arts.

Chapter 1: What are Dao Yin Exercises?

Dao Yins are an ancient form of Chinese exercise which were developed within the Daoist school of philosophy. Much older than Qi Gong, they were practiced high in the Daoist mountains as a form of health-care and personal cultivation.

導

The character Dao which means 'to guide'

引

The character Yin which means 'to pull'

Dao Yin exercises incorporate traditional Chinese medicine and Daoist bodywork into one system. Sometimes compared to Indian

Yoga, Dao Yin exercises work by gently pulling open the joints and stimulating a healthy flow of Qi throughout the body.

A key factor within Dao Yin exercises is the combination of breath, posture and mind. The body is put into such a position that the meridians and energy gates are fully opened. Your breathing stimulates Qi flow within the energy body and then your intention leads stagnant energy out of you. This is the meaning of the character Dao: to guide. In Chinese medicine they call this process ‘purging’ the body of negative Qi.

Stagnant Qi sits largely within the body’s joints. Within each of our joints there are numerous energetic pathways which the Daoists called ‘energy gates’. The meridian system runs throughout our entire body ensuring a healthy flow of Qi to all of our organs and tissues. The flow of Qi within the meridian system is dependent on several factors including a healthy lower Dan Tien, a good posture and a high level of ‘potential difference’ which will assist Qi with flowing from an area of high resistance to an area of low resistance. As our body’s move and we naturally stretch and compress the pathways of the meridian system, potential difference alternates and so Qi flows steadily around our body. The ‘energy gates’ are the points which divide the body into areas of high and low resistance.

If a person maintains a healthy degree of movement and a good posture throughout their life than the chances are their ‘energy gates’ will remain open and Qi will flow freely. The majority of people in modern times do not fall into this category and so do not have a healthy amount of exercise and a good posture. This means that the

degree of ‘potential difference’ is low and the energy gates become compressed by misalignment of the bones. Qi will now collect in the joints and stagnation occurs. Over time, stagnation leads to major blockages, tightness and finally sickness.

Dao Yin exercises are designed to gently pull open the joints and realign the bones so as to prevent illness from taking hold. This is the meaning of the character Yin: to pull.



Figure 1: Ancient Dao Yin instructions

Figure 1 shows various Dao Yin movements and exercises. It was discovered in a tomb dating back to the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE). The exercises were accompanied by text explaining some of the principles behind them and what ailments they would help a person with. Many of them were based upon the movements of animals and scholars believe that all Dao Yin and perhaps even all internal practices were learnt by copying the movements of wild creatures. Consequently there are many Dao Yin sets which are named after animals such as the Wu Qin Xi (five animal frolics).

Learn from the animals

If we watch the animals around us we can see their Dao Yin exercises easily. When a dog wakes up it stretches out its spine to increase blood and Qi flow along the length of its body. A frog will sit and practice its breathing exercises for hours on end. A cat will enter a meditative state and sit for hours in personal cultivation; you can see the vibration of internal force hitting the end of its tail as it sits in deep contemplation. These creatures which surround us understand instinctively how to maintain their health and well-being according to the principles of Dao Yin and Nei Gong. This is because all Daoist practices follow the way of nature (Ziran) and human-beings have only forgotten how to live properly as we have 'lost our way'. Learning Dao Yin exercises is one way to rediscover the path to health and well-being.

Some Dao Yin exercises are designed to activate the various elements of the internal energy system so that you may begin to work directly with the three treasures of Jing, Qi and Shen. These exercises incorporate various elements of Daoist Nei Gong and so work with more than just your physical health. The Dragon Dao Yin are exercises which fall into this category.

Where are the main energy gates?

It is important within our training that we keep in mind the location of each of the energy gates within our body and maintain a gentle pull on them when we practice. This pull should be just enough that it feels as though our body is gently being 'teased' open in this area

rather than being subjected to a forceful stretch. Figure 2 shows the location of the most important energy gates which are being opened when we practice Dao Yin exercises.

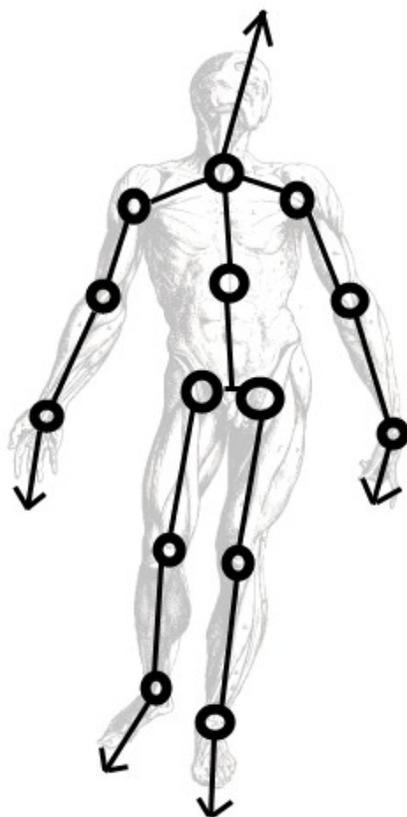


Figure 2: Major Energy Gates

The lines on figure 2 show the major pathways of internal Qi flow within the body between the energy gates. We can see from this that if the energy gates are closed then Qi will be restricted in its flow through and out of the body.

Qi is brought into the body as we inhale and then expelled as we exhale. Some of this Qi enters and exits our body through the lungs

and respiratory system whilst more is drawn directly into and out of the body through various meridian points on the body. The most important points for bringing Qi into and out of the body are on the palms (PC8), the base of the feet (K1) and on the top of the head (GV20). The Qi that is brought into the body flows through the various meridians and nourishes the organs. As we exhale, the energy system pushes stagnant Qi out of these same points; in this way our physical breathing and our energetic breathing directly reflect each other.

Minor energy gates also exist within the body and sit within every space between our bones from the joints of our fingers and toes to the plates which make up our skull. The first stage in Dao Yin training with regards to the energy gates is the opening of the major gates. The next stage is systematically working through each of the minor gates. If we can achieve this then we are bringing a healthy flow of Qi into and out of the body as we breathe, our body will become an energetic conduit for the Qi of the environment and so we can be said to have achieved 'energetic emptiness' according to the ancient Daoists.

Chapter 2: The Daoist View of Health

The Daoist view of health is a very holistic concept compared to the Western view which dictates our health-care systems. According to this ancient school of thought we have to maintain the health of our physical body, energy body and consciousness in order to avoid illness. To achieve this we must learn to live with and harness the energy of our environment. This is the traditional way to achieve union with the great creative force and so attain spiritual liberation. To the Daoists, health and spirituality are one.

Our physical body must be kept healthy as this is the vehicle through which we experience existence. Yang Shen Fa (life nourishing techniques) was the study of the health of the physical body. Traditionally Yang Shen Fa included teachings on maintaining a correct and healthy diet, breathing exercises, physical exercises such as Dao Yin and Chinese medicine such as the study of herbs and self massage. It also incorporated some aspects of maintaining the health of your energy body in the form of Qi theory and Feng Shui (wind and water) which is the science of harmonizing your life and surroundings with the energy of the environment.

Figure 3 shows how the physical body provides a solid foundation for the other two main elements of health according to Daoist thought.

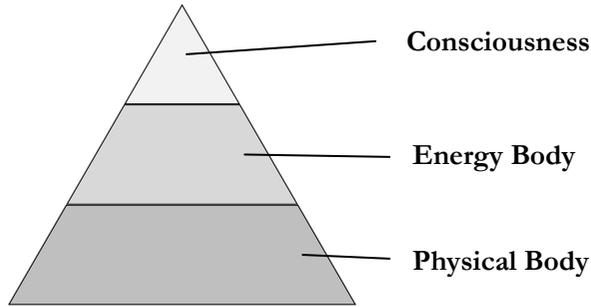


Figure 3: The Three Elements of Health

If we do not maintain the health of our physical body then we will have a poor foundation upon which to further improve our well-being and our efforts will amount to very little.

The Daoist view of physical health is quite different from the traditional view of physical health according to Western thought. Here we often view the healthy male body as being immensely strong with a broad muscular chest and large biceps. The image we often see on 'health' orientated adverts and commercials is of your typical weight lifter who spends most of his time in the gym 'pumping iron'. The Daoist view is that this sort of figure is damaging to your health as all of your muscles and tendons have been shortened and tightened. The body is therefore tense with a highly restricted flow of Qi through the energy gates. This results in what is known as 'Qi dispersion' within the internal arts which in turn leads to sickness.

Daoists instead focus on the core muscles of the body. Your body should be fairly lean with open joints, correct bone alignments and relaxed muscles which are lengthened and soft. A physically healthy person should be flexible and move with poise and balance. This type

of figure provides the basis for achieving longevity, a key ideal behind the majority of Daoist arts.

Dao Yin exercises are one way of attaining this kind of physical health along with the traditional martial arts which arguably take maintenance of your physical health to the highest level if practiced sincerely.

An excess of body weight is not healthy according to Daoist thought. There is an idea within many contemporary Daoist schools that being overweight and having a large belly is a sign of internal development. This is quite simply not true; the concept of the 'Qi belly' is a myth. It is true that prolonged abdominal breathing will cause your abdominal muscles to relax and leave you with a slight 'pot belly' but not with a huge stomach. Qi is not stored within the belly but rather allowed to pass through you according to Daoist teachings. If you get the chance to visit any of the Daoist monasteries which are still active within China or Taiwan you will see that the long time Daoist practitioners are fairly slim people.

If you are able to open out the joints and align the body through your practice then you will begin to directly affect the energy body through your training. As the joints are opened and the energy gates expand, Qi will flow in time with your breathing and movements. Your meridian system will lead Qi to the various organs and tissues of the body and so in this way the health of your physical and energy body will improve in a circular fashion.

Positive and Negative Qi

The Qi that flows within your meridian system can have either a healthy or an unhealthy influence on you depending on whether it is positive or negative. Quite simply we want to increase the amount of positive Qi which flows through us and expel any negative Qi which usually leads to stagnation and illness.

Qi takes the form of a vibrational wave which can be felt moving within the body once you have trained for a sufficient time. The Qi vibration carries information through your body in a similar way to binary code providing the information for computer systems. It is comprised of peaks and troughs or Yin and Yang as the ancient Daoists called it. The various combinations of Yin and Yang waves create different bundles of information which in turn lead to various energetic movements. The Daoists mapped out these energetic movements within a text known as the Yi Jing (classic of changes); they represented them diagrammatically as shown in figure 4.

These groups of information are known in English as 'hexagrams'. A person trained in the use of the Yi Jing can use it to determine the likelihood and nature of change within the environment or as a diagnostic tool which can help to understand illness within the complex network of the human energy body.

As this negative Qi builds up within us then it sits within our energy system, particularly within the energy gates. The information it contains is passed onto healthy Qi which flows past it and so negativity is passed on. The negative Qi is attracted to its own kind and in this way blockages build up within our meridian system.

In order to maintain our health we need to expel this Qi from our body. Dao Yin practice is one way to do this.

The Health of Our Consciousness

Human consciousness is a complex subject which both the Daoists and Buddhists have strived to understand for centuries. It is a very large subject which I have written about in other texts and teach about extensively in my classes and on courses. It is easier to have a teacher lead you through exercises to experientially understand the nature of consciousness rather than trying to understand it intellectually.

The important thing to keep in mind is the relation between the energy system and the consciousness during Dao Yin training. Negativity within the mind and our emotions leads to this information being passed down into the energy system. In this way a condition such as depression can lead to physical sickness and vice versa. The connection is absolute.

If we are able to expel negative Qi from our body then the positive information will be passed onto our minds and so our mental state improves. It is as simple as that. After practicing Dao Yin exercises many people find that they feel much lighter and happier in their mind, it is easier to smile and the world seems a much friendlier place.

Despite this, Dao Yin exercises should not be used as form of psycho-therapy. This is because negative energy from the mind can also be passed down into the body and so training whilst in an extremely low state can have damaging effects on the body. It is all about balance and common sense. If you feel a little low then Dao Yin exercises will help you greatly but if you are in an extreme pit of depression or experiencing a state of pure rage then it will only damage you.

It is because of the link between the health of the three bodies' of man that Daoist health exercises are as one with the meditative exercises which lead a practitioner to spiritual liberation. If our consciousness is not healthy then how can we lead our mind to higher states? Negative emotions only hold us back in our search for the way.

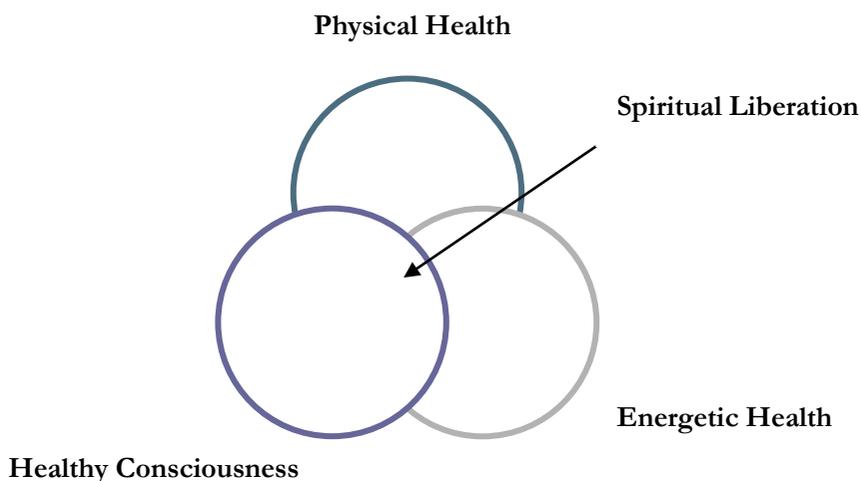


Figure 5: Health, the Path to Spiritual Liberation

The highest levels of spiritual attainment can only be reached if health is maintained holistically as shown in figure 5.

Understanding this and putting it into practice will only serve to improve your quality of life on every level.

Chapter 3: The Spine

The health of our spine is essential on many levels. Physically it gives us support, structure and mobility. It is connected to the organs via the nervous system and so an unhealthy spine will in time lead to sickness developing within the rest of your body.

The human spine is comprised of 24 main vertebrae as well as the sacral vertebrae which are fused into one unit. Each of the main 24 vertebrae are interspaced with discs which act as springs within our back.



Figure 6: The Human Spine

Figure 6 shows a healthy curved alignment throughout the spine. In this position each of the discs can effectively act as ‘shock absorbers’

for any force or jolt which is taken into our back and the alignments of the various bones are held in place as we move and carry out physical exercises.

Unfortunately the majority of us do not have a spine with this healthy curvature as tension within our body causes the vertebrae to become compressed. The muscles and tendons pull the spine shorter and the discs which sit between the vertebrae are under constant pressure. If we take a spring and compress it over a long period of time, it's elastic qualities will be negated and so even when the compression is finally released it will in effect no longer act as a spring. If this happens then the spine will remain closed and this will begin to cause discomfort, reduce mobility and lead to sickness.

Constant compression of the spine has a major effect on the energy body. Between each of the vertebrae is an energy gate which enables a healthy flow of Qi to move through the spine. If the disc is compressed and the spine misaligned then Qi flow is compromised and so again we will be heading towards illness.

The Dragon Dao Yin exercises are designed to prevent this from happening and are particularly effective at correcting spinal problems. The twisting and pulling motions of the movements cause the vertebrae to open and realign as you practice. At first you will be fighting against your own muscles memory and so after finishing the exercises your spine will return back to its usual state but with prolonged practice you will re-programme your body's muscle memory and so return your spine to good health.

The discs which may have been compressed will take time to repair and this will lead to a feeling similar to a deep bruise after finishing your practice of the Dragon Dao Yin exercises but this is nothing to worry about, it is all part of the rejuvenating practice. As the spine begins to open, energy flow is increased in this area of your body and so positively charged Qi is able to move through the spaces between the vertebrae. The information contained within the Qi vibration has a healing effect on the compressed discs and over time they begin to return to their original state of acting like an organic shock absorber. This also has the added bonus of increasing your height by sometimes as much as an inch or two. Many students who have practiced the Dragon Dao Yin exercises are even happier at growing an inch than they are at fixing the health of their spine!

The Small Water Wheel of Qi

One of the most important circulations of Qi within the human body takes place within the governing and conception meridians which flow up the back and down the front of the body. Figure 7 shows the governing meridian.

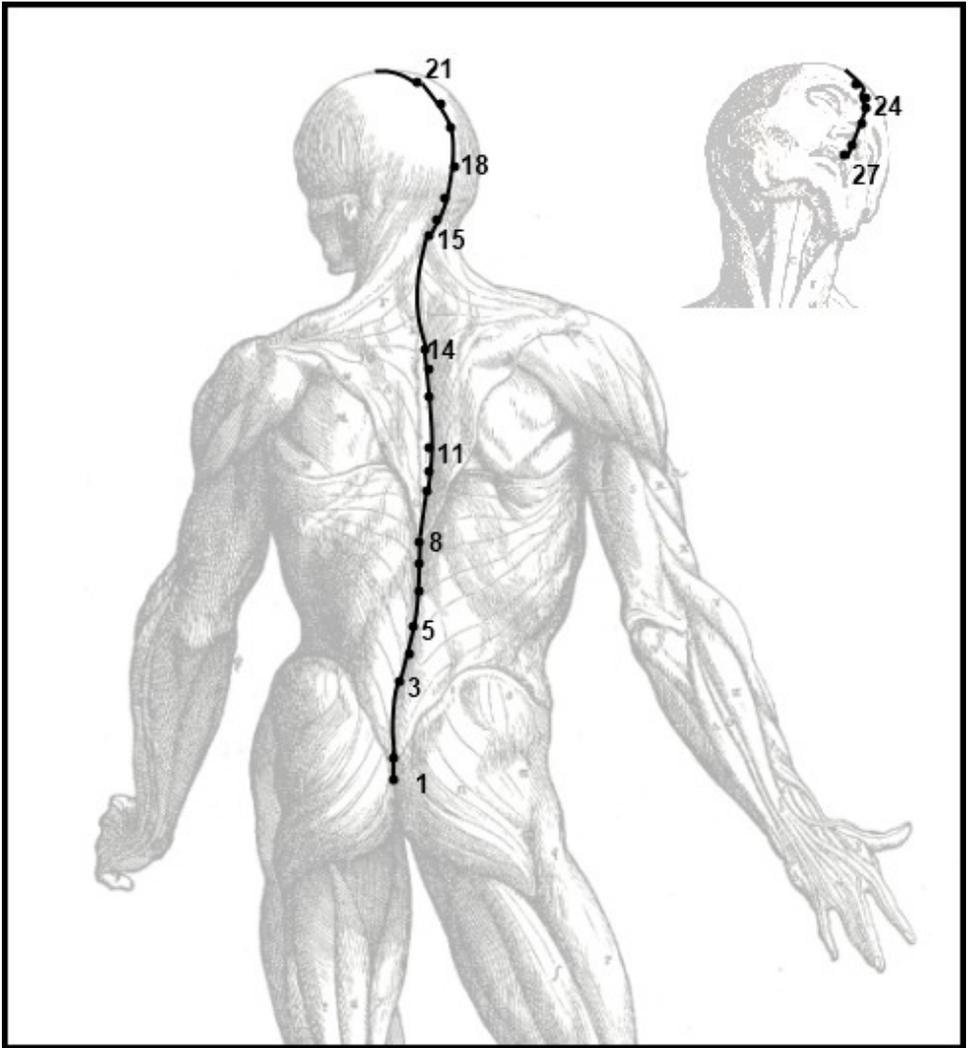


Figure 7: The Governing Meridian

This energetic pathway is directly linked in to the health of the spine. If the energy gates of your back are closed, Qi flow is greatly reduced in the governing meridian.

This circulation of Qi is known as the ‘small water wheel of Qi’ within Daoism and is fundamental to restoring and maintaining your health. It is the path by which each of the organ meridians is fed healthy

energy and blockages here will literally ‘starve’ the organ meridians of nutrients which will in turn lead to illness.

In order for the small water wheel of Qi to flow efficiently you need three main ingredients:

- A healthy and open spine with a good degree of mobility
- An awakened lower Dan Tien which drives the Qi
- A relaxed body and mind

Dao Yin training is one way to achieve these three goals.

Dao Yin Exercises for Weight Loss

In China it is well known within Chinese medicine that practicing Dao Yin exercises are a good way to lose weight, especially exercises that twist and turn the spine and torso.

Every morning in China, parks are filled with the local people carrying out all manner of exercises and social activities. Dao Yin classes are often filled with slightly overweight people trying to shed a few pounds for health or cosmetic reasons.

The Dragon Dao Yin exercises help to reduce your weight in several ways. Firstly the movements of the torso all involve twisting and gently compressing and expanding the torso. This serves to provide an internal massage to the organs and in particular the digestive system. In modern times the majority of our food is full of chemicals and we do not know how to eat healthily. We eat food in bad combinations which reduces our body’s ability to digest the food and so it sits in our bowels. As our ability to digest food is compromised, we cannot absorb nutrients effectively and we experience an increase

in weight. By improving the quality of our digestive system and bowels through internal massage provided by the Dragon Dao Yin exercises we improve our body's ability to digest our food and so the weight begins to come off of us.

Our spine is also the main passageway of various fluids through our body. These fluids help to maintain our internal body temperature and so compression of the spine leads our usual body temperature to drop. We find it difficult to get warm and our extremities are always cold. The body is very clever and so in order to keep us warm it naturally increases its fat cells. This extra layer of fat is designed to protect us from the elements when in fact our poor body temperature comes from problems within. As the spine opens up, our body temperature increases and so there is no need for the extra weight, thus our body sheds the extra fat cells.

Fix Your Back and Fix Your Health

The American Chiropractic Association predicts that at any one time roughly 31 million Americans are suffering from lower back pain. Many of these people take pain killers, visit therapists or suffer in silence. How many of these people could be helped by practicing Dao Yin exercises every day? Our spine is like the supporting pillar on a building. If it is moved out of line or damaged than the structure runs the risk of collapsing. Quite simply, maintaining the health of our spine is the key to maintaining our physical health.

Chapter 4: Ming-Men and the lower Dan Tien

Two parts of the internal energy system which are highly important to our Dao Yin practice are the Ming-Men acupuncture point (GV4) and the lower Dan Tien. Almost all internal arts practitioners profess to work with these two elements but there is a great deal of confusion and misinformation on the subject.

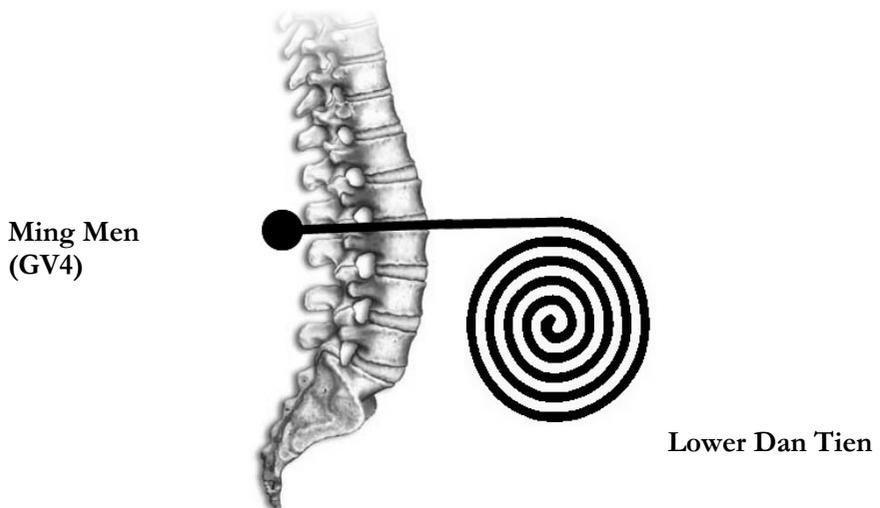


Figure 8: Ming Men and the Lower Dan Tien

Figure 8 shows the location of the Ming Men acupuncture point and the lower Dan Tien in relation to the spine (drawing not to scale).

The Ming Men area of the body is the point from which the Yin and Yang Kidney essence is drawn. This essence goes on to formulate your Jing. Jing is one of the three treasures of Daoism along with Qi and Shen. The exact nature of these three energetic substances is a matter of constant debate but for Dao Yin practice it is enough to

know that your Jing is closely linked in to your immune system, your vitality and your sex drive. If your Jing production is low then you will be left feeling drained, depressed and you will age quickly. From Ming Men, this essence is drawn through an energetic pathway which passes through the lower spine into the lower Dan Tien region where some of it is converted into the purest form of positive Qi which can flow within you. This Qi is often called ‘water Qi’ within Daoist texts.

The Qi that is built up in the lower Dan Tien is then driven through the energy system by the movement of the lower Dan Tien which is constantly rotating. The health of your energy body will dictate the speed and efficiency of the rotation of your lower Dan Tien and so how effectively your Qi moves around the meridian system.

We can see from this above explanation, although heavily simplified, how the Ming men acupuncture point and the lower Dan Tien directly affect the health of both your physical body and energy system.

If the lower part of the spine is compressed closed then the Ming Men acupuncture point is prevented from functioning effectively and so your health is greatly reduced.

Awakening the Lower Dan Tien

Prolonged training of the Dragon Dao Yin exercises has the added benefit of compressing and expanding the area of your body which surrounds the lower Dan Tien. All of this movement combined with an increased flow of Qi in the meridians around the lower abdomen help to ‘awaken’ the lower Dan Tien.

The lower Dan Tien is a sphere of energy which sits below your naval. It is a ball of pure information created from your Shen (spirit) whilst you were developing in the womb. In most people it slowly turns over a 24 hour period and this pushes Qi through the body. It is for this reason that a skilled acupuncturist may well want to treat you at a certain time of day, your Qi is stronger within different meridians at different times of the day. Over 24 hours each meridian receives a fresh supply of Qi.

To maximize the flow of Qi within the energy body this process may be sped up considerably by training the lower Dan Tien to rotate in time with your movement and breathing. This is known as awakening the lower Dan Tien and is considered a high level skill within Daoist Nei Gong training.

The increased turn of the lower Dan Tien gives you greater control over internal energy flow as well as a stronger supply of Qi to each energetic pathway of the meridian system. There are also countless other benefits which I write about in more detail in my texts on Daoist Nei Gong practices.

When the lower Dan Tien is awakened, it is accompanied by an increased surge of Qi through the governing meridian which can clearly be felt and seen. A wave of heat and vibration will move through your back and your spine will actually begin to move of its own accord. Each of the vertebrae will open up as the Qi flows through them and you will find that your body is beginning to make movements you have no control over, these spontaneous energetic movements are a healthy sign of progress and will only last for a short

period of time. Do not be afraid if this happens, just let them happen of their own accord and do not let your mind interfere in any way. Enjoy them; it is a sign that you have reached a milestone in your practice.

It is important to remember that in Daoist Qi Gong we are not aiming to store Qi within the lower Dan Tien by ‘packing’ it in. Our body breathes and circulates Qi in the same way that it breathes and circulates oxygen. Storing Qi to improve your health is as logical as storing oxygen to improve your health. The Dan Tien should be trained to awaken and turn rather than as a store for energy; it is far healthier for you and more likely to lead you to higher levels of attainment.

Chapter 5: The Dragon Dao Yin

The Dragon Dao Yin exercises are split into four forms which are as follows:

- **The Waking Dragon**
- **The Swimming Dragon**
- **The Soaring Dragon**
- **The Drunken Dragon**

These four forms consist of various exercises which work with and manipulate the subtle energies which flow mainly through our spine and major joints.

The first form is fairly simple whilst the last is quite complex. It makes sense to learn them in the above order although it is not important what order they are practiced in when you begin to incorporate them into your daily training regime.

The Dragon Dao Yin exercises were originally the basic body training for an internal Gong Fu style called Baguazhang (Eight Symbol Palm). These exercises help to stretch, pull and twist the body so that it could get into the difficult postures required for the martial art. They also strengthened the spine and core muscles as well as increasing Qi and blood flow throughout the body which in turn improved the practitioner's health. These exercises were studied alongside circle walking which is the main Nei Gong component of Baguazhang.

The four forms were put together from the exercises so that students would have a way to remember each of the different movements and also to give them a compact way of practicing the whole set when they had limited time. It does not matter whether or not you keep the exercises within the forms only or break them down into individual practices which you repeat numerous times. Either way will bring you the related health benefits.

In the next section I will introduce the individual exercises which make up the forms one at a time. In the section after this we will look at how to piece them together into the four Dragon Dao Yin forms.

The Dragon Dao Yin Exercises are as follows:

- 1) *Daoist Standing Meditation*
- 2) *Circulate the Qi*
- 3) *Sinking and Gathering the Qi*
- 4) *Greeting the Dawn*
- 5) *Piercing Palm*
- 6) *Stretching Dragon*
- 7) *Pushing the Tide*
- 8) *Swimming Dragon*
- 9) *Presenting Palm to Heaven*
- 10) *Diving Dragon*

- 11) Preparing the Chest*
- 12) Preparing the Lower Body*
- 13) High Flying Dragon*
- 14) Low Flying Dragon*
- 15) Balance Training*
- 16) Swaying Dragon*
- 17) Drunkard Walking*
- 18) Spinal Wave*
- 19) Taiyi*
- 20) Shaking Dragon*

These exercises can be used as a simple daily health regimen on their own or as part of one of the internal martial arts. They are particularly useful warm-up exercises for the martial systems of Baguazhang (which they came from) or Xingyiquan.

I hope you enjoy learning these exercises. Just follow the photos and the instructions that go alongside them; be patient and progress slowly. If you try and learn too fast, you will not build up a strong root in each of the exercises and your practice will amount to little.



Daoist Standing Meditation

Preparing....

The most important part of any Dao Yin practice is the preparation. Our mind must be settled and calm, we should be completely involved with what we are about to do and try to put all other concerns out of our mind.

If we cannot calm the mind then we cannot guide our Qi effectively during performance of the four Dragon Dao Yin sequences. The Qi will instead be scattered and so the healing power of the exercises will be lessened.

Before we practice any of the four sequences we should stand in the position shown in figure 1.



Figure 1: Daoist Standing Meditation

Ensure that you are stood up straight with your head suspended and your pelvis hanging from the base of your spine. Your knees should not be locked straight and your tongue should gently be touching the roof of your mouth.

Rest the hands over the lower Dan Tien area as shown in figure 2.



Figure 2: Daoist Taiji Mudra

The thumb of the left hand is lightly clasped in the right. This is one of the many hand positions used within Daoism and it represents the Taiji symbol (figure 3).



Figure 3: Taiji Symbol

The hand position is designed to cover the PC8 points which are in the centre of the palms.

Covering these points means that less heat is lost from the body during our practice. This heat is a useful energy for the conversion of Jing to Qi and so we need to generate and store as much as possible during our standing meditation.

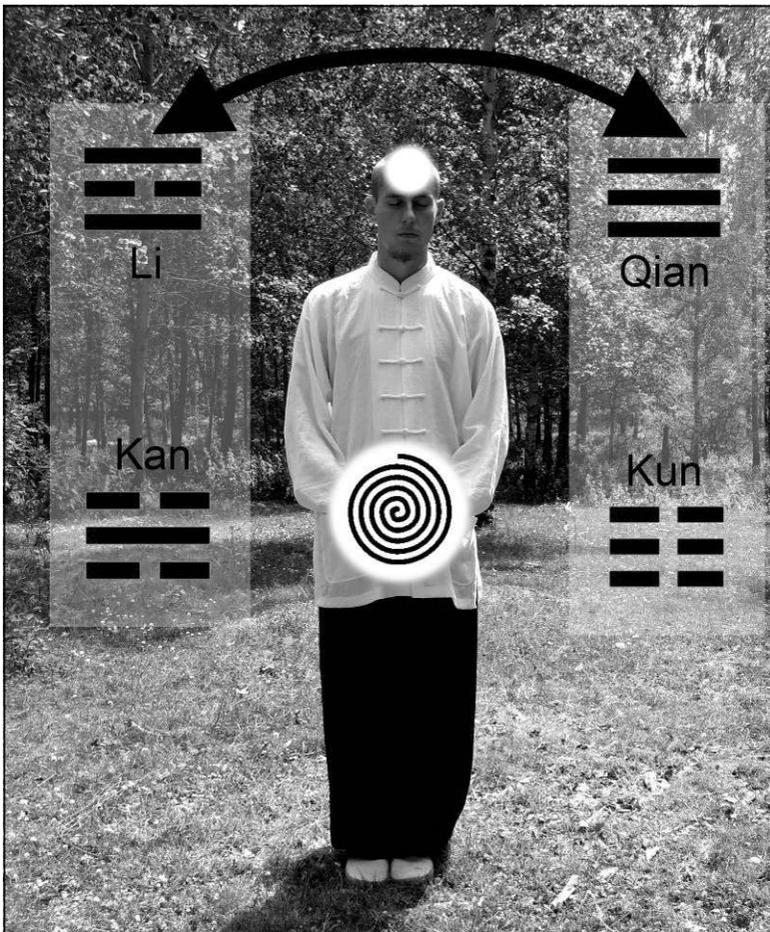


Figure 4: Alchemy of the Consciousness

Figure 4 shows the process of stilling the mind through the practice of standing meditation according to Daoist thought. Your awareness

sits within the upper Dan Tien, an energy centre situated behind the ‘third-eye’ area of your forehead. This awareness must be dropped down into the lower Dan Tien which is a larger energy centre sat within your lower abdomen, a short distance below your navel.

The Daoists explained the changes of matter (Jing), energy (Qi) and consciousness (Shen) through a fairly complex mathematical system known as the Yi Jing (Classic of Changes). The text was mainly concerned with 8 arrangements of solid and broken lines known as the Gua (Trigrams). These showed different formations of Yin and Yang information which could be combined to create different shifts and patterns of change within both the cosmos and the human mind.

Yi Jing theory is long and complex, it is not necessary to understand the Gua arrangements in great depth to practice the Dragon Dao Yin exercises but a little information is always useful.

The two arrangements on the left of figure 4 are called Li (Fire) and Kan (Water).

The Li Gua is made up of two solid lines (Yang) and one broken line (Yin). The solid lines represent human consciousness in its purest form; the broken line is a representation of mundane concerns invading the mind.

The Kan Gua is made up one solid line (Yang) surrounded by broken lines (Yin) above and below. The solid line is innate human wisdom which has become buried beneath conditioned thinking and mental biases.

In order to still the mind we must get rid of our mundane concerns and conditioned thinking. The method is much simpler than the

theory which is often the case within Daoism. We drop our awareness down into the lower Dan Tien area which provides the catalyst for an important internal change.

Yi Jing theory states that the centre lines of the Kan and Li Gua are switched with each other so that the two Gua on the right are created. These two arrangements of Yin and Yang are known as Qian (Heaven) and Kun (Earth). The process of switching the centre lines is known as ‘reversing fire and water’. Given time, the mind will naturally begin to still and the lower Dan Tien will begin to wake up.

As the lower Dan Tien begins to wake up a rotational movement is generated within the lower abdomen. This is the catalyst of internal change known as Taiji within Daoist cosmology (see chapter 4).

This is the original method of meditation laid out by the great sage Laozi in the Dao De Jing which was written some 2,500 years ago and the basis for all forms of Daoist internal alchemy.

For more information on the above process please refer to my book on Nei Gong.

Within life, stillness gives birth to movement and then movement declines and returns to stillness. This is the cycle of progress and development which applies to all Daoist arts and the Dragon Dao Yin exercises are no exception. For this reason we begin our training with a few minutes of the standing meditation and we also finish each sequence with the same practice. Over time you will likely find that the time you practice this standing meditation increases until you are sometimes standing for up to an hour or more.

Circulate the Qi

Dynamic Dragon Qi Gong

This exercise forms the first part of each of the four Dragon Dao Yin sequences but it can also be practiced as a stand-alone exercise.

This exercise is designed to circulate Qi throughout the main surface meridians of your body as well as stimulate movement through the main small ‘water wheel’ of Qi. It also helps to link the breathing to the movement of your internal energy which is an important part of the Dragon exercises.

Begin by standing with your feet a shoulders width apart from each other. Relax your body and ensure that the spine is open and not collapsed. It is important to remember that it is your flesh that relaxes, your skeletal structure remains aligned and upright throughout the exercise.

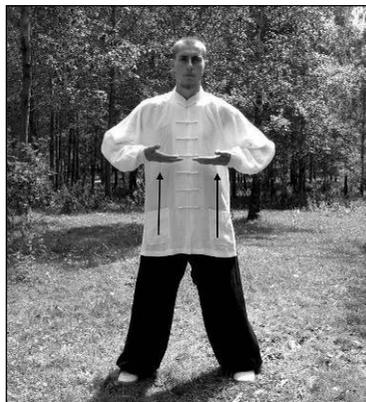


Figure 5: Raising the Qi

Move your palms up in front of the body as shown in figure 5. Ensure that your arms remain relaxed and that you do not lift your shoulders as this will shut off Qi flow within the left and right branches of the thrusting meridians as well as create un-necessary tension.

The palms move up to the height of your heart before moving outwards as shown in figure 6.



Figure 6: Expanding the Qi

The palms remain facing the body move outwards into the position commonly known as ‘standing post’ within most Qi Gong schools.

The elbows are relaxed and heavy but at the same time not collapsed in. Within the middle of your arms should be a large arc as if you are hugging a beach-ball.

Without halting the movement, turn your palms over to face the floor and press downwards as shown in figure 7.



Figure 7: Sinking the Qi

The palms press down with a strong intention as though there is some resistance which is preventing you from moving your hands downwards. It is important that you do not engage any un-necessary muscles and so tense up with prevents Qi flow. The downwards ‘force’ is all with your mind.

Move the hands downwards until they reach your hips as shown in figure 8.

Continue this movement for as many circulations as you wish. Try to get the feeling of leading your Qi up the body, out into the arms and then down your front in time with the movements. Breathe in as you lift your hands and then exhale slowly as your hands move away from you and down towards the floor.

In the sequences of the Dragon Dao Yin, you begin each short form with three repetitions of this exercise but the number is not important.



Figure 8: End of the Exercise

If you wish, you can change this exercise into another standing posture. When you reach the position shown in figure 6 you may choose to remain still at this point. This is a common exercise within many Qi Gong and Taijiquan schools which helps to regulate the body's Qi, develop root and correct alignments.

The Dragon exercises are not a fixed sequence as such; they were designed to serve a purpose. The purpose is the desired result, not the sequences themselves which are just a tool. If you wish to alter the number of repetitions or add stationary moments in your practice such as this one then feel free. A skilled practitioner makes the exercise work for them.

When you have finished practicing this exercise, return to the standing meditation exercise and calm the mind.

Note that so far we have not actually practiced any Dao Yin exercises. These have only been Qi Gong as the Qi has not been led out of the body but rather circulated inside. We use Qi Gong to ensure that there are no blockages or imbalances prior to purging negative Qi through Dao Yin exercises.

Sinking and Gathering the Qi

Rebalancing Qi Gong

This exercise forms the last part of each of the four Dragon Dao Yin sequences but it can also be practiced as a standalone sequence.



Figure 9: Beginning the Exercise

Begin from the normal Qi Gong position with your feet a shoulders width apart. Ensure that you are relaxed but that you have not allowed your structure to collapse.

Turn the palms towards the sky and breathe in as you begin to lift the arms as shown in figure 9. It is important that your arms move from the shoulder blades rather than your shoulder which is the usual

tendency for beginners. Your arms do not begin at the shoulders; they begin at the shoulder blades.

Keep inhaling as your arms move up and over to above your head as shown in figure 10.

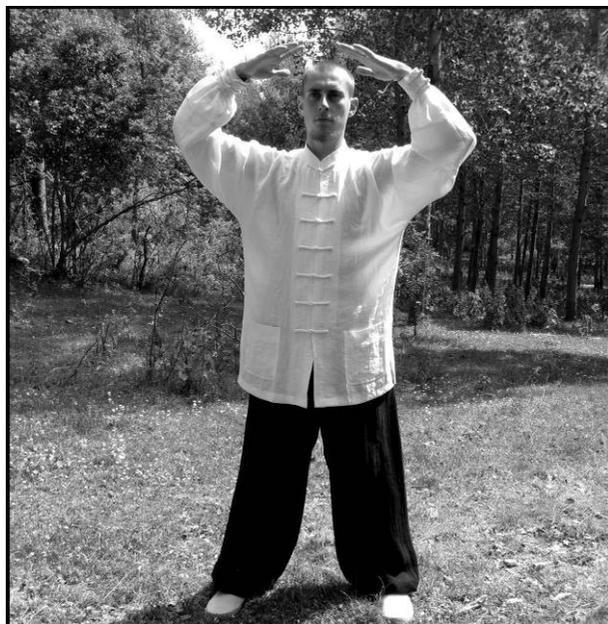


Figure 10: Collecting the Qi

Ensure that you have not lifted your shoulders and that you remain as relaxed as possible. Let your intention hover around the area beneath the palms and have a feeling as though have gathered energy from the air around you.

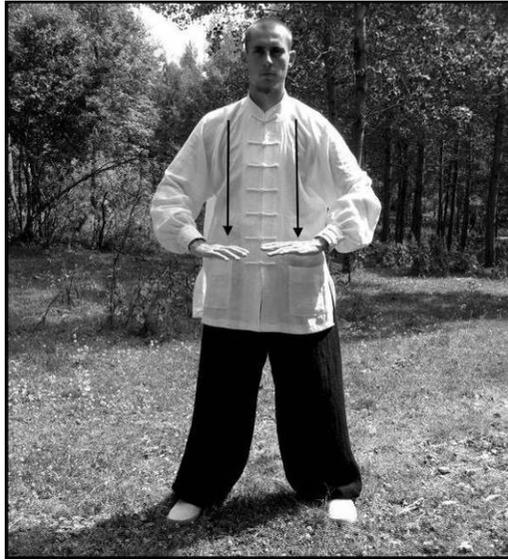


Figure 11: Sink the Qi

Push the palms down in front of your body as shown in figure 11. The palms should be facing the floor. Exhale as you carry out this movement and let your intention follow the level of your palms as it passes your body.

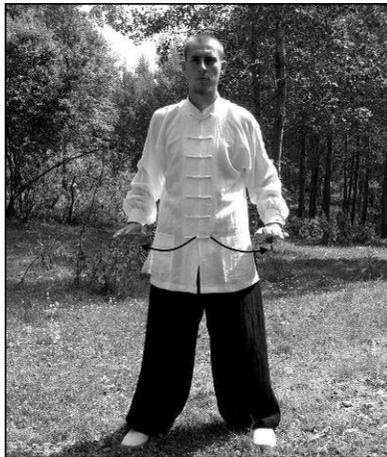


Figure 12: Tracing the Girdling Meridian

Once your hands reach the height of your girdling meridian they should run around the body to the position shown in figure 12. The fingers should face forwards and the elbows should be gently pushed behind you.

The girdling meridian runs around the lower abdomen as shown in figure 13.

The flow of Qi around the girdling meridian controls the efficiency of the rotation of the lower Dan Tien as well as connecting the lower and upper parts of the energy body. Having a smooth flow of Qi here will ensure that the muscles around your abdomen and waist remain soft and pliable which is essential for the Dragon Dao Yin exercises.

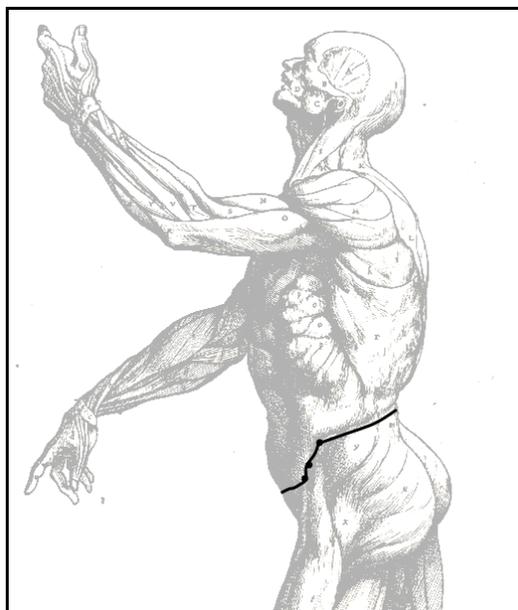


Figure 13: Girdling Meridian

From this position repeat the exercise as many times as you wish. It will help to circulate the Qi around the body and then help to sink

energy down through the legs into the floor. This is an important part of any energy work; your connection to the planet through the legs can be seen as the ‘earthing’ wire on an electrical circuit.

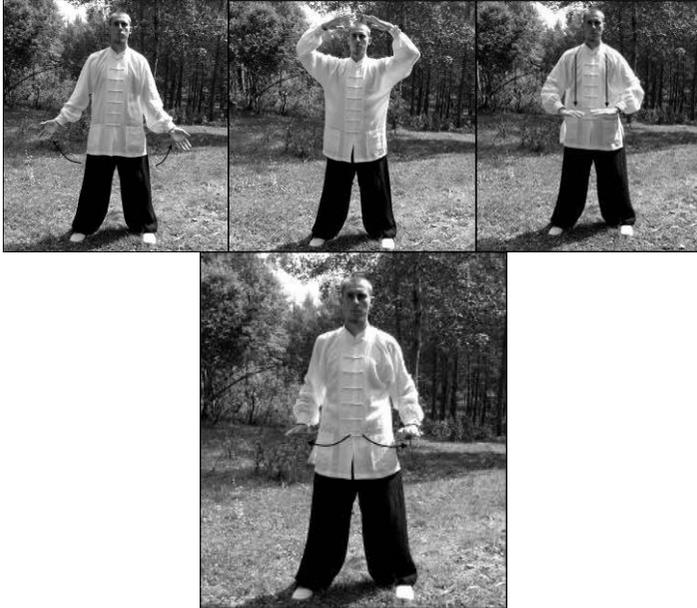


Figure 14: Gathering the Qi

The final movements of the exercise are slightly different since the Dragon Dao Yins combine stationary and dynamic energy exercises. On the final repetition of ‘gathering the Qi’ you should hesitate at the position shown in figure 15.

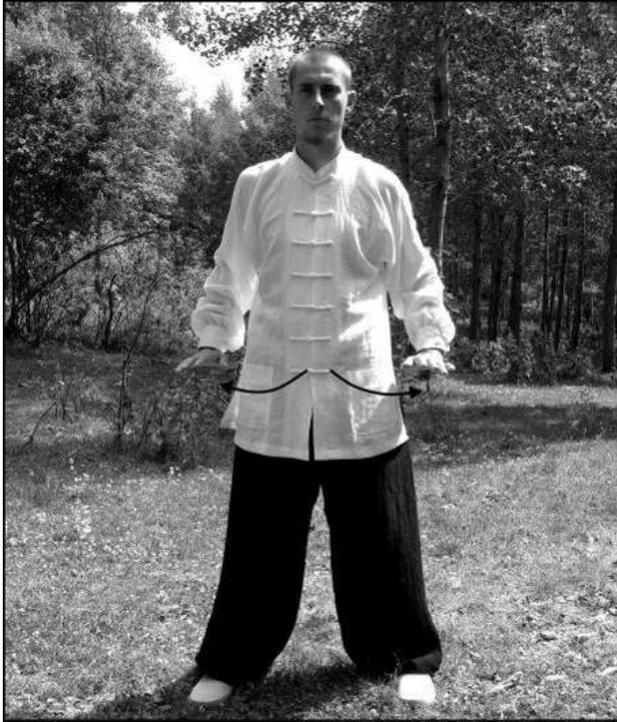


Figure 15: Stationary Posture

Remain in this position for several minutes and let your mind rest in the space below your palms. Your intention should spread out to encompass the entire lower half of your body. Relax and stay here whilst the Qi settles down into your legs and, after a few minutes, the ground.

After any form of Qi Gong practice you must close down and lead the Qi back into the body. This exercise is no exception and so you should close in the following way:



Figure 16: Closing Down

Firstly bring the feet together and open the chest as shown in figure 16. Look up to the sky and turn the palms to the position shown. This should feel as if you are being stretched gently across the chest. If it creates tension and discomfort then you are stretching too far for your body. Ease off a little on the pull until your body is soft enough to open up more.

Then bring the hands up as shown in figure 17.



Figure 17: Closing Down

The arms should be outstretched as you perform this movement and the palms pulled back as shown. Breathe in as you carry out this movement. The stretching out of the arms like this ensures that your spine is opened up prior to finishing your practice.

Bring the hands down as shown in figure 18.

Breathe out as you bring the palms back towards the lower Dan Tien area of your body.



Figure 18: Closing Down

Use your mind to push down rather than your muscles. It must always be your intention that leads your Qi downwards so that you may remain relaxed during the exercises.



Figure 19: Finishing

The final position for the exercise should be a return to your standing meditation as shown in figure 19.

You should drop your mind into the lower Dan Tien and remain here for a few minutes. Please see previous section for details on standing meditation.

The two exercises explained so far cover the ‘opening’ and ‘closing’ movements from the Dragon Dao Yin exercises. You will see when we look at the complete sequences how each of the four forms begins and ends in this way.

For those only looking for a simple way to circulate their energy and relax their mind, these two exercises are adequate on their own. The rest of the Dragon Dao Yin exercises are more complex and designed to improve your health to a higher degree.

Dragon Dao Yin Exercise 1

Greeting the Dawn

‘Greeting the dawn’ is taken from the ‘Waking Dragon’ sequence. It is designed to twist and stretch the spine as well as wake up the kidneys. It can be practiced as part of the ‘Waking Dragon’ sequence or as an exercise on its own.

Bring your feet together as shown in figure 20.



Figure 20: Starting to Greet the Dawn

Twist your body to the left and open your chest as shown in figure 21.

Your spine should remain upright and your head should twist to look over your left shoulder.

Figure 22 shows this position from another angle.



Figure 21: Twisting to the Left



Figure 22: Second Angle

This position will develop a certain amount of tension as your trunk muscles are twisted. From here allow the muscles to relax and your body to twist back towards the front as shown in figure 23.

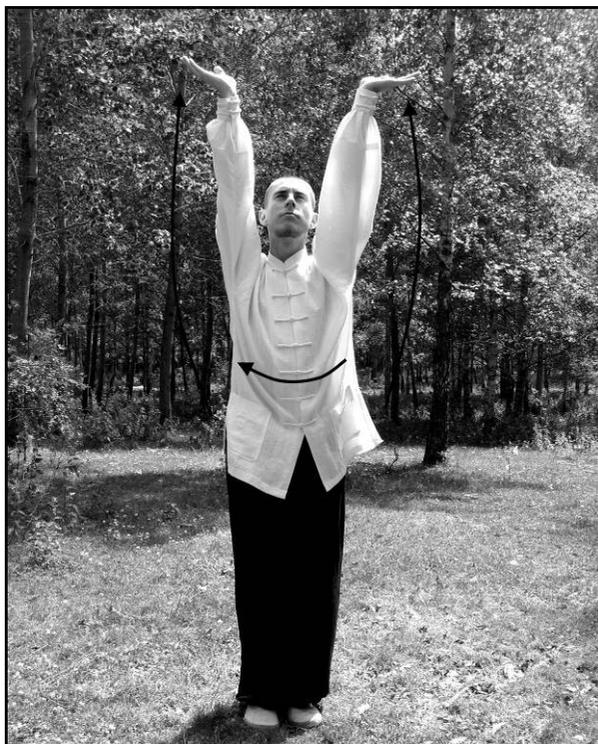


Figure 23: Back to the Front

Lift your arms towards the sky as you carry out his movement as shown in the picture.

From here, allow the twist to carry on until you are facing your right as shown in figure 24.

The idea is to complete the entire ‘twisting’ section in one continuous movement with no breaks. Your arms should also move in one smooth arc as shown until they reach the position shown in figure 24.

You should breathe in as you carry out the whole of this movement. Inhaling naturally leads Qi up the spine which will travel through the twist you have put on your back and help to dislodge stagnation from this area.



Figure 24: Twist to the right

From here continue the movement of your arms into the position shown in figure 25 as you step out with your left foot and turn to face this direction.



Figure 25: Completing Greeting the Dawn

Breathe out as you turn into the last posture. Settle the right hand onto the lower abdomen whilst the thumb of the left hand extends forward.

Your intention should extend out of the thumb far into the distance.

The ball of the left foot should gently press into the floor in order to stimulate a meridian point known as the ‘bubbling spring’ point. This will help to awaken the kidney energy which is tonified throughout this exercise.

Dragon Dao Yin Exercise 2

Piercing Palm

This next exercise is carried out whilst walking forward. It carries on from the final posture in the ‘Greeting the Dawn’ exercise although it would not take much imagination to start from a neutral position.

The walking exercises are very important within the Dragon Dao Yin exercises as they ensure that you are working with your entire body and working the joints of the legs and hips.

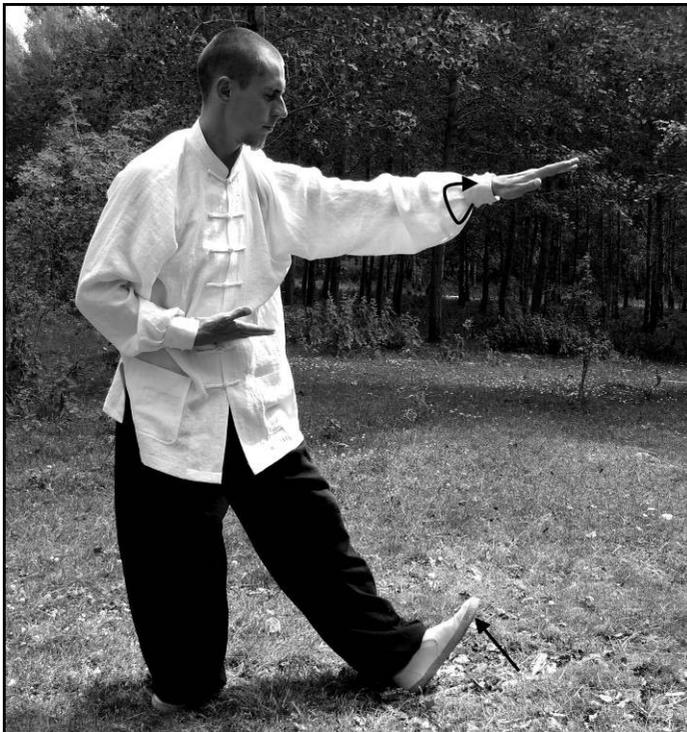


Figure 26: Starting the Piercing Palm

Begin by placing the heel down and turning the palm over as shown in figure 26.

Try to initiate the turning of the palm by rotating the hips and pressing a little into the floor with the heel of the left foot. If you manage to achieve this it should feel like a rotating wave of force which moves from your centre to your palm.



Figure 27: Starting the Walk

Twist on the heel of the left foot and the ball of the right foot as your hips rotate around as shown in figure 27.

The hands cross at the wrists as shown in figure 28.



Figure 28: Position of the Palms

The lower hand is the hand that extends forward in the next posture. There is a very similar position within the martial style of Baguazhang with the same name. The intention here is different since we are not training for combat. We are looking for an internal extension which can help us to lead stagnant Qi out of our body.



Figure 29: Piercing Palm

Twist your body around to the left and extend your right as shown in figure 29. Exhale as you move into this posture and send your intention far out of the end of the fingers.

Try to feel the twist in your body moving from the rear foot, up through the chest into the ends of your fingers. This will help to open out the chest and muscles of the upper back. The intention will help to lead stagnant Qi out of the spaces between the vertebrae of the upper spine and joints of the arms.

Figure 30 shows this posture from another angle so you may see the twist across the body more easily.

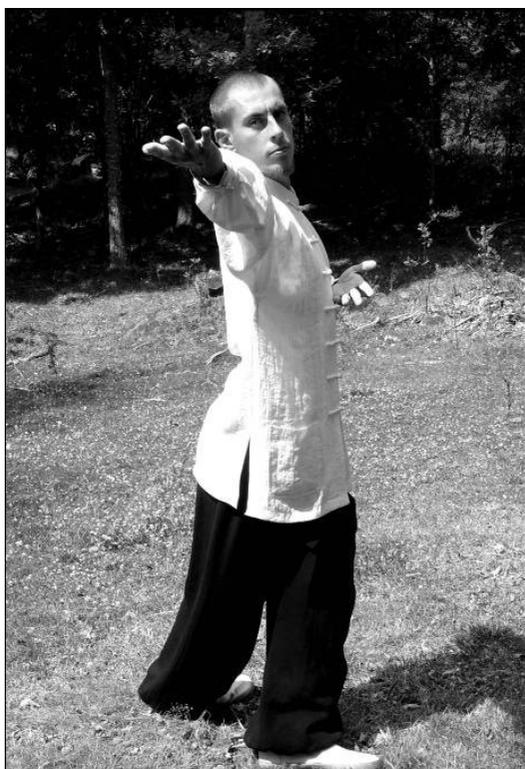


Figure 30: The Piercing Palm Twist

From this position, step through with the rear foot and repeat the movement so that you are in the same posture on the other side of the body as shown in figure 31.



Figure 31: Piercing Palm on Second Side

Once you are comfortable with this exercise you can repeat the stepping for as many times as you wish. Within the first of the Dragon Dao Yin sequences you repeat this exercise four times before you move onto the next exercise.



Step 1: Place heel down and turn palm



Step 2: Twist body and cross hands



Step 3: Extend the lower palm



Step 4: Step through and repeat on other side

Figure 32: The Entire Piercing Palm Exercise

Dragon Dao Yin Exercise 3

Stretching Dragon

The ‘Stretching Dragon’ exercise continues from the ‘Piercing Palm’ sequence. It can also be practiced on its own if you start from the regular Qi Gong ‘shoulder width’ stance.

This exercise is very similar to ‘Greeting the Dawn’ but differs a little so that it may be used as a turn within the ‘Waking Dragon’ sequence.

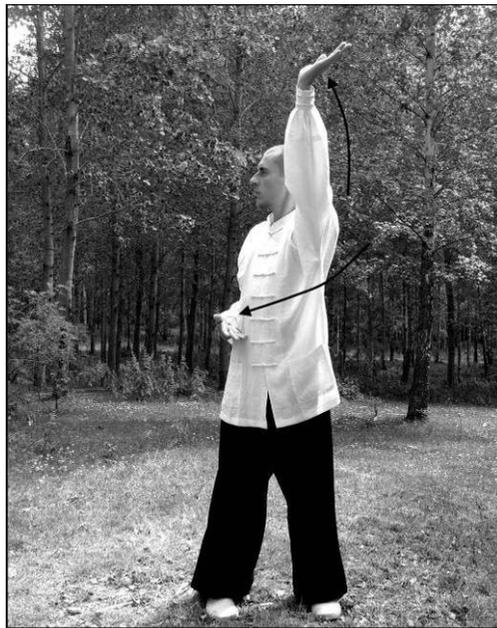


Figure 33: Beginning to Stretch the Dragon

Begin from the position in figure 31 if you are running through the entire ‘Waking Dragon’ form.

Bring your rear foot around so that you are stood a shoulders width, facing the front as shown in figure 33.

Extend your left arm up into the air with your palm facing the sky. Bring your right arm down to your side. Turn your body around to your right so that the trunk muscles and spine are twisted.

Breathe in as you carry out this movement. The inhalation here carries on for the whole ‘twisting’ sequence.



Figure 34: Changing the Palms

Keeping your body facing to the right, change your hands over as shown in figure 34.

The right palm should push up towards the sky whilst the left palm faces the floor.

Ensure that your arms are extended and your joints remain open throughout this movement so that the sinews either side of the upper spine are gently pulled open.



Figure 35: Turning Back

Keeping this stretch on, turn your body back in the other direction as shown in figure 35.

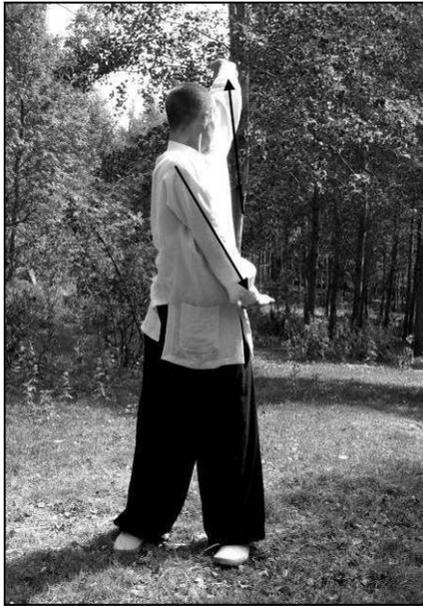


Figure 36: Changing the Palms

As before, keeping the joints open and stretched, switch the position of the arms. The left arm pushes up to the sky behind you whilst the right arm presses down towards the floor.



Figure 37: Ending the Exercise

Exhale strongly as you allow the twist to relax and turn you once more to the right as shown in figure 37.

The right arm swings down in an arc to face in front of you. The thumb of this hand is extended out and your intention should move out into the distance.

The left hand moves onto the abdomen. This position is exactly the same as the ending posture for 'Greeting the Dawn'.

Try to carry out this entire sequence in a smooth manner with no breaks in the movement. Your arms should move in two continuous arcs. This may be difficult at first but with practice it will become a very pleasant feeling movement.

These are all of the individual exercises which make up the 'Waking Dragon' sequence. Later we will look at how to put them together.

Dragon Dao Yin Exercise 4

Pushing the Tide

'Pushing the Tide' is part of the 'Swimming Dragon' sequence. It is practiced once after completing the opening exercise. As with all of the other exercises in this book, it can be practiced as a stand-alone exercise by repeating it as many times as you wish.

This exercise is designed to help open up the Ming Men point on your lower back and help drop your centre of gravity down into the kidney points on the base of your feet. The pushing action helps to direct the Qi and lead it in a circuit through your spine.



Figure 38: Lifting the Qi

Stand with your feet a shoulders width apart and your knees relaxed. Breathe in as you raise your hands in front of you as shown in figure 38. The palms should face the sky and your intention should lead your Qi up the inside of your body level with the hands.



Figure 39: Twisting the Palms

Your elbows should stop level with the base of your ribs whilst your hands continue to move upwards to your sides as shown in figure 39. Twist the palms so that your little finger on each hand moves towards you and the thumbs move away from you. If you are relaxed enough and your elbows sufficiently hanging, this movement will pull then muscles down your spine and most importantly around the Ming Men.



Figure 40: Pushing the Tides

Figure 40 shows the final position for this exercise.

As you breathe out, push your palms away from you and squat deep into your stance. Your pelvis should feel as though it is dropping down into the floor and your lower back should gently push backwards although not so much that it creates un-necessary tension. This will help to open the Ming Men point.

The dotted line shows where your centre line moves to. A line can be drawn from the top of the head down through the body and then finally to the floor between your feet. This brings your centre of gravity slightly further forward so that it rests directly between the ‘bubbling spring’ points on the base of your feet.

Your intention should be very strong and extend far in front of you out of your palms. This will help to stir the Qi within your body and lead it up through your legs and spine.

Dragon Dao Yin Exercise 5

Swimming Dragon

The ‘Swimming Dragon’ walking Dao Yin exercise is the most important part of the second Dragon sequence. It is designed to rotate the hips and lower Dan Tien; it pulls the spine open and stretches along the Ming Men area of the lower back. This has a tonifying effect on the kidneys and loosens up the entire body.



Figure 41: Transition Movement

Figure 41 shows the transitional movement between the ‘Pushing the Tide’ exercise and the ‘Swimming Dragon’ walk.

The body is rotated 90 degrees to your right as your left foot turns and your palms face slightly upwards as if they are ‘scooping’ the energy around you.

Then step out with the left foot and twist the right so that they are facing the same direction as shown in figure 42.



Figure 42: Completing the Transition

Your hands move into the position shown and you should take a second to settle your weight and relax into this position. You should now be facing to the right of your starting direction.



Figure 43: Starting the Swimming Dragon

The ‘Swimming Dragon’ exercise is initially quite difficult and the majority of people struggle with the co-ordination for this sequence. It is actually quite simple provided that you start slowly and are patient with yourself.

Begin from the previous position by stretching out your right arm and bringing back the left arm as shown in figure 44. The movement should be generated by the turning of your waist. Do not be afraid to stretch out your arms and open the spine as you perform the movement.



Figure 44: Turning the Ball

The next movement is the key to getting the exercise correct. Keeping your right arm extended and your left arm back as shown in figure 43; turn the hands over as shown in figure 44.

The rotation should be from the upper body and in particular the shoulder blades. When performing the ‘Swimming Dragon’ it is important that the higher arm moves forward whilst the lower arm moves backwards. If you get this the wrong way around then your dragon is swimming backwards!



Figure 45: Swimming Forward

Now extend the left arm which will be on top whilst the right arm moves back towards you. The movement of both arms should be coordinated together and be generated by the turning of your waist as before. The resulting movement is much like the breast stroke.

You should end up in the position shown in figure 45.



Figure 46: The Hand Position

Figure 46 shows how the palms are aligned during this exercise. They are held near your centre and only move forward and backwards along this line. You should always have the feeling of reaching forwards rather than allowing your arms to move out to your sides.

If one movement forward of the upper arm counts as one repetition of the exercise, you should perform three repetitions before changing sides.

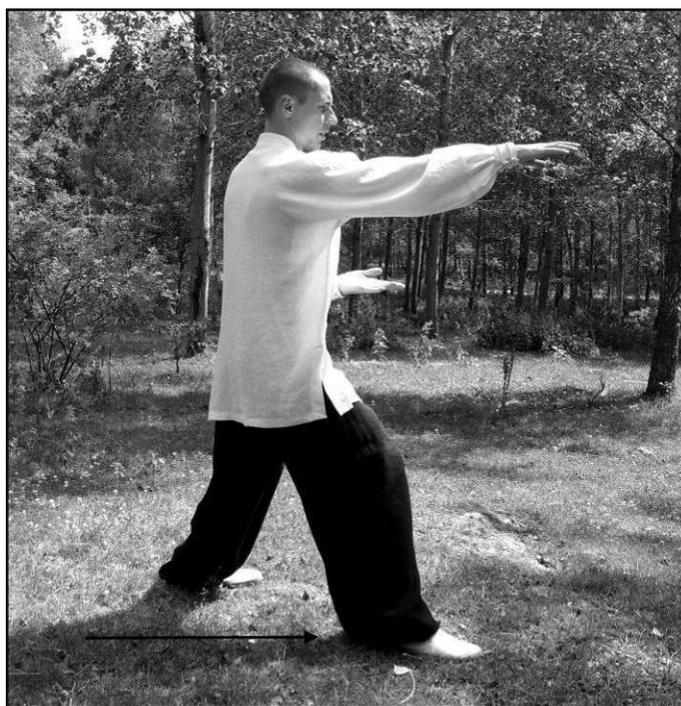


Figure 47: Stepping Forward

If you carried out three repetitions correctly, you will have finished with your right arm forward and your left foot in front. It is from here that you step through with the rear foot as shown in figure 47.

From here you repeat the exercise three more times. In this way there are three 'reaching forward' actions for each step.

Remember to fully extend the arms and try and stretch open the whole spine as you turn your waist and walk forward.



Three 'Swims' on the left side



Step through to three 'Swims' on the right side



Step through to three 'Swims' on the left side



Step through to three ‘Swims’ on the right side

Figure 48: the entire Swimming Dragon Exercise

The arm movements of the ‘Swimming Dragon’ can also be performed without the walking, from a neutral Qi Gong stance as shown in figure 49.

In this way the exercise does not pull on the Ming Men point to the same degree but rather serves as a loosening exercise for the upper spine. It is particularly useful for those who have tight shoulders.

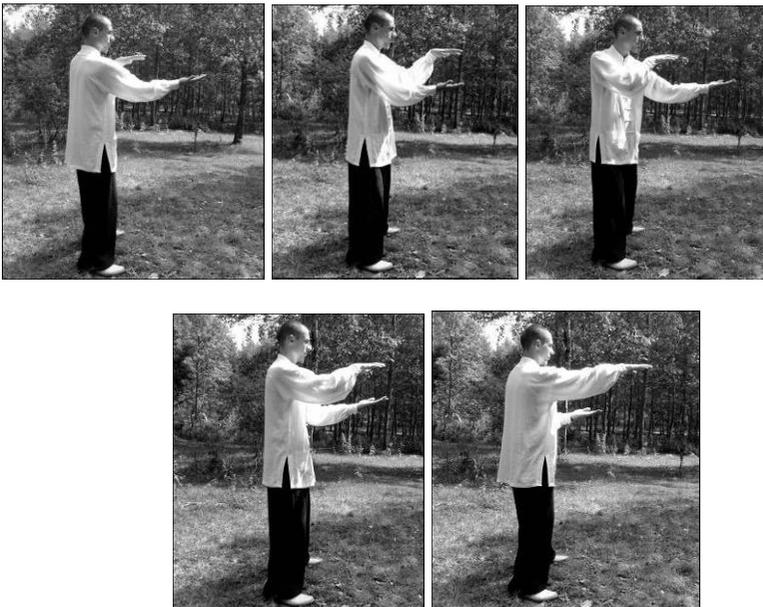


Figure 49: Stationary Swimming Dragon

When practicing in this way you should ensure that you exhale as the higher arm is extended and inhale as you rotate the two arms around to switch their heights. Your intention should extend far into the distance to help lead the Qi through your spine and arms. This will help to draw stagnant Qi away from the kidney area of your back.

Dragon Dao Yin Exercise 6

Presenting Palm to Heaven

The 'Presenting Palm to Heaven' exercise is difficult to practice as an exercise in its own right. It is mainly used as a turning sequence within the 'Swimming Dragon' form. It includes elements of the martial style of Baguazhang and helps to rebalance the Qi throughout the upper body.



Figure 50: Rolling Back

From your last 'Swimming Dragon' posture; take your weight back into the rear foot as shown in figure 50.

Draw your arms back in an arc; a movement which should be very familiar to anybody who has ever practiced Taiji. Breathe in as you carry out this movement.

From here take your weight into the front leg as shown in figure 51. Your right finger tips should rest on the elbow of the left hand.



Figure 51: Take the weight forward

Extend the fingers of the left hand forward as you begin to extend your mind out in front of you. The elbow of the left hand should be tucked in close to the body.



Figure 52: Presenting the Palm

Figure 52 shows the position for ‘Presenting Palm to Heaven’.

You must lift your left foot high and bring the knee close to your body as you exhale strongly and visualize stagnant Qi leaving the body through your lead hand.



Figure 53: Place down the Heel

Now bring your heel down to the floor as shown in figure 53. Try not to move the rest of your body and keep your focus ahead of you.

To turn around, bring the left hand in an arc over your head as you spin to the right and transfer your weight into the lead leg as shown in figure 54.



Figure 54: Turning the Body

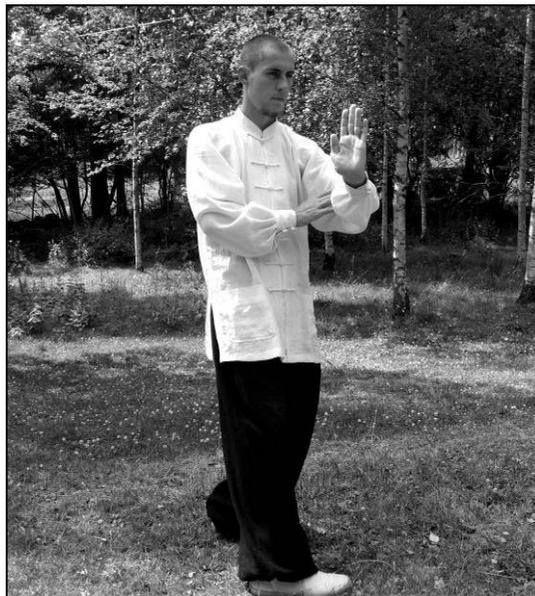


Figure 55: Second Angle

Figure 55 shows this position from another angle so that you may see the placement of the right hand.

From here it is a simple matter of stepping slightly with your right foot into the position shown in figure 56. This will take you back to the beginning of the ‘Swimming Dragon’ sequence which can now be performed going back in the direction you came from.



Figure 56: Going Back

Dragon Dao Yin Exercise 7

Diving Dragon

This last exercise is performed after you have completed the ‘Presenting Palm to Heaven’ sequence for the second time in the ‘Swimming Dragon’ form although it can be practiced on its own as a useful spine stretch and physical massage for the kidneys.



Figure 57: Preparing to Dive

Bring the feet around to the front as shown in figure 57. Arc the arms around until they hang loosely above your shoulders.

Now bend your body forwards towards the ground and place your palms on the ground as shown in figure 58. Try to bend from the

base of your spine and the hips so that the entire of your back opens up and stretches.

You should breathe out as you bend forward. Extend your intention down through your palms deep into the floor.



Figure 58: Diving Dragon

If you can successfully lead your Qi into the planet, an equal and opposite force will move back into you nourishing your spine with Qi from the Earth.



Figure 59: Stretching up

To conclude the exercise, stretch straight upwards and raise your hands high into the air as you inhale deeply. If you are performing the entire ‘Swimming Dragon’ sequence you will now move into the closing exercises.

If you are practicing this movement on its own then keep repeating and trying to strengthen your downwards intention. When you feel the connection with the planet, stay here for some time and allow the Earth Qi to nourish the spine. This is a pleasant feeling that will leave you feeling refreshed but it can take some time. It is also worth noting that you need a certain degree of flexibility and softness in the joints for this exercise so progress steadily to avoid injury.

This is the last new exercise within the ‘Swimming Dragon’ sequence. We will now begin to look at the various elements contained within the ‘Soaring Dragon’ sequence.

Dragon Dao Yin Exercise 8

Preparing the Chest

The next few Dragon Dao Yin exercises are part of the ‘Soaring Dragon’ sequence. They can be quite complicated at first and so it is recommended that you first spend some time practicing these preparatory exercises based on the movements from the form.

The first exercise helps you to soften the chest whilst the second helps to strengthen the lower body and loosen up the hips.

To begin the first exercise stand with your feet a shoulders width apart and hold your hands as shown in figure 60.

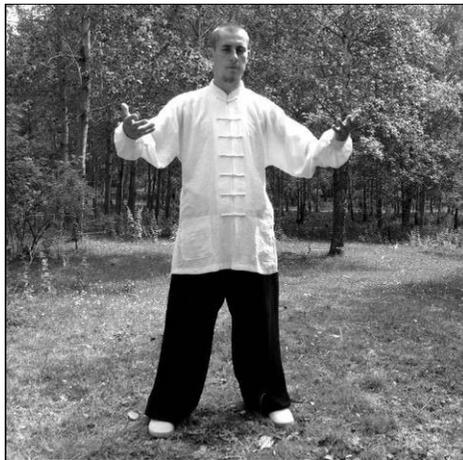


Figure 60: Preparing to Open the Chest

For this exercise it is important to remember that the hands move in two continuous arcs either side of your body with the palms facing the sky. If you break the circular motion at any point then you have

performed the exercise incorrectly and so will not be getting the maximum benefit for your upper body.



Figure 61: Palms under the Armpits

Begin to move the palms under your armpits and behind you as shown in figure 62.

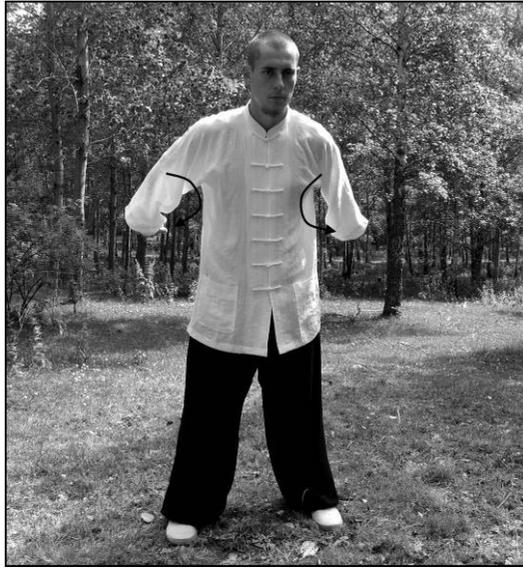


Figure 62: Continuing the Circle

The palms then push behind you as shown in figure 62. Still ensure that you do not break the circular movement of your arms.



Figure 63: Arcing the Arms Up

Bring the palms up from behind you in an arc to the position shown in figure 63.



Figure 64: Arms above the Head

Continuing the circle, bring your palms up above your head to the position shown in figure 64.



Figure 65: Finishing the Arc

Continue moving the palms around in front of you until they reach the position shown in figure 65. You have now finished one circle of the arms. This motion can be carried out as many times as you wish. Be aware that at first this exercise will cause you a great deal of discomfort if you have much tension in the chest and shoulders. Be sensible with your practice and do not harm yourself but at the same time do not be lazy!

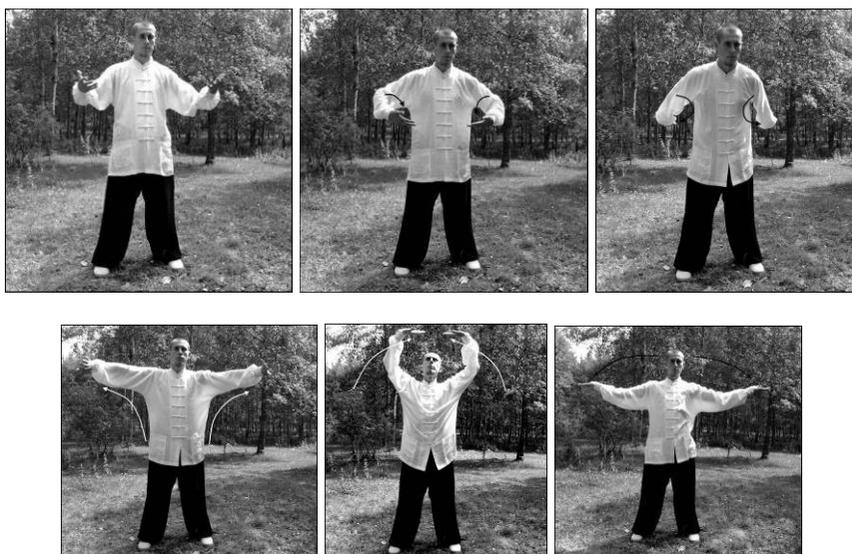


Figure 66: The Entire Exercise

Dragon Dao Yin Exercise 9

Preparing the Lower Body

Please note that this exercise requires a certain degree of leg strength and flexibility. Do not try this if you have any sort of injury to the lower body. Proceed steadily and carefully.



Figure 67: Starting Position

Start from the neutral position shown in figure 67 with your hands placed lightly on your hips. It is important when practicing this exercise that you keep your body upright and do not lean as this will cause you to fall over.



Figure 68: Turning to Your Left

Begin to turn to your left by rotating on the heel of the left foot and the ball of the right. Turn and ‘screw’ down into the planet as shown in figure 69.



Figure 69: Lowering to the Floor

Keep turning in this way until you drop right to the floor as shown in figure 70.



Figure 70: Drop to the Floor

This low position is known as ‘Resting Stance’. Your weight should be over the ball of the right foot and your knees folded up and crossed. Figure 71 shows this position from another angle.



Figure 71: Second Angle

From here it is simply a matter of returning in the direction you came from so that you get back to your starting position as shown in figure 72.



Figure 72: Back to the Start

This takes a fair amount of strength. It is important to try and get the feeling of unfolding the body rather than pushing from the legs to get up from the ground.

Now repeat to the other side of your body and then carry out this exercise as many times as you wish.

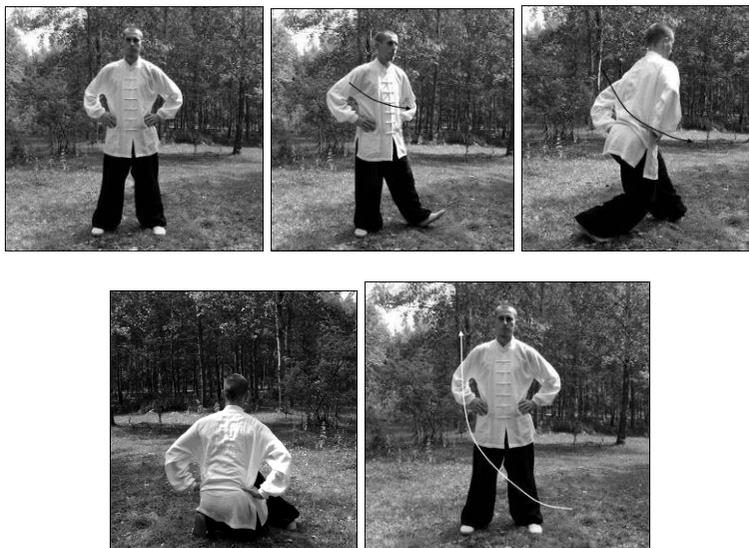


Figure 73: Entire Exercise to the Left

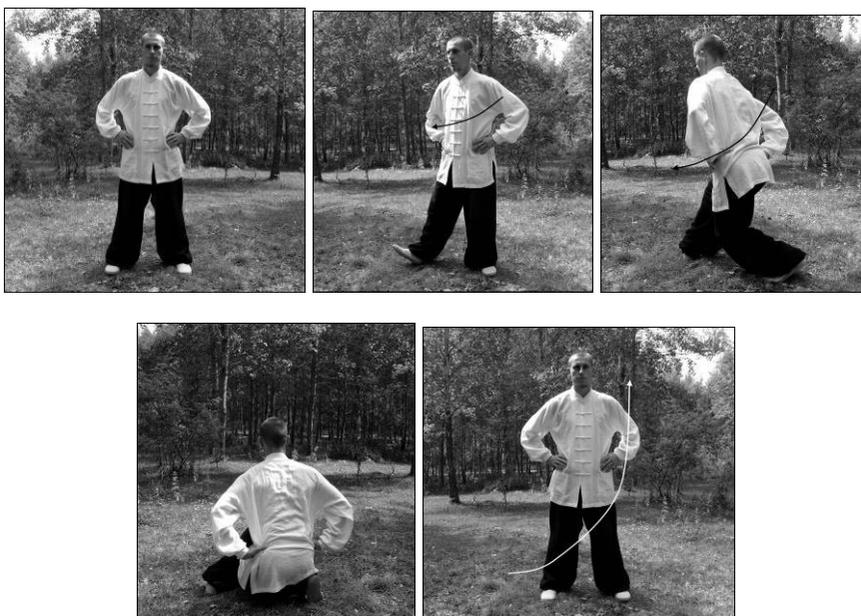


Figure 74: Entire Exercise to the Right

The squatting posture from this exercise is used within the 'Low Flying Dragon' exercise which forms the second half of the 'Soaring Dragon' form.

Dragon Dao Yin Exercise 10

High Flying Dragon

The 'High Flying Dragon' exercise is designed to loosen and open up the chest and upper back. This has an invigorating effect on the heart and lungs as well as helping to relax the entire body.

It continues from the opening sequence which is part of all four Dragon Dao Yin forms.

It can be practiced on its own as a type of walking exercise, in which case it does not matter how many steps you take before you change direction.



Figure 75: Starting Position

From the normal starting position lift your arms up to the position shown in figure 75. Ensure that your arms are relaxed and you use as little muscular force to lift them as possible.

From here begin to draw the arms back under armpits as shown in figure 76. You should already be familiar with this movement if you spent time practicing the preparatory exercises for this form.



Figure 76: Bringing the palms back



Figure 77: Turning to the Left

From here, begin to twist your body around to your left as your palms continue to pass under your armpits towards your rear. You should twist the entire body starting from your neck and working down your spine. The feeling should be much like somebody is wringing out your body like a wet cloth. Turn on the heel of your left foot as shown in figure 77. Figure 78 shows this posture from another angle.

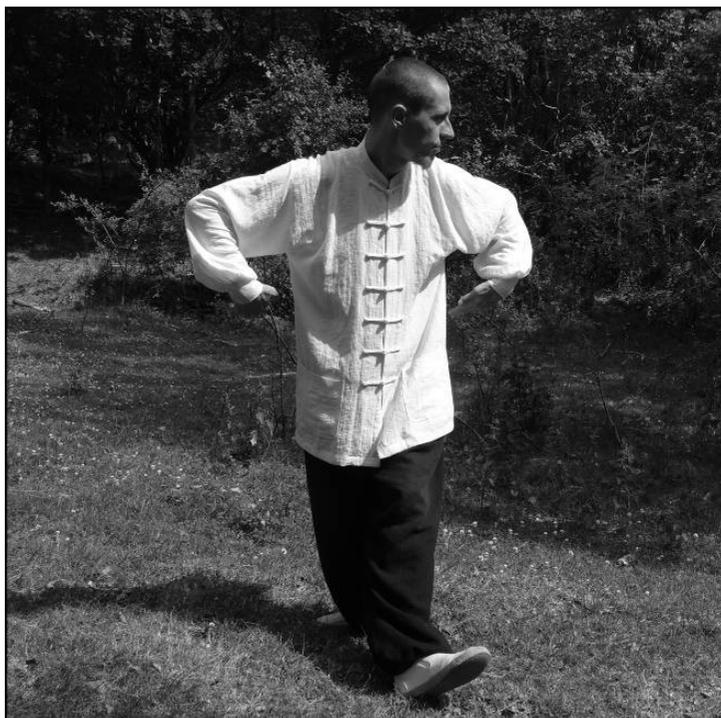


Figure 78: Second Angle

Twist further around to your right as you shift your weight into the front foot as shown in figure 79.

You should press down into the ground with the ball of your rear foot to help draw Qi from the earth up into the lower spine.

Your palms push strongly back behind you as you exhale and extend your intention out into the distance through your fingertips.

Your body should be as twisted to the left as possible so that your chest is fully opened and your entire spine is being stretched. This should all be done in a relaxed manner as tension will ‘work against’ your stretch.



Figure 79: Final Stretch of High Flying Dragon

This position will store a little force in much the same way as coiling a spring prior to letting it go. This force is now allowed to escape and so your body should twist back to the front as shown in figure 80.



Figure 80: Taking the Weight Back

The arms should continue on their arc and so end up above your head as shown. Take your weight back as you ‘untwist’ so that you are ready to step through with the rear foot and so repeat the exercise on the other side of your body. Figure 81 shows this posture from another angle.

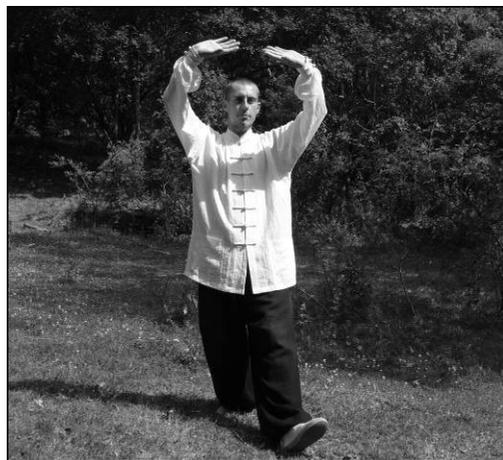


Figure 81: Second Angle

Step through with the rear foot and begin to repeat the sequence on the other side of your body by turning to your right and bringing the arms down under the armpits again.



Figure 82: Second Side of the Body



Figure 83: Stretch to the Right

This is the entire of the 'High Flying Dragon' exercise. It may appear complicated at first but it is in fact quite simple as long as you have become proficient at the preparatory exercises which precede this exercise. The arms make the same arcs to your sides as before; the only difference is that you are moving forwards and stretching the spine to either side as you walk forwards.

Try and use the chest muscles to make this exercise work. At first you will need to move your arms in a conventional manner but after a while you will be able to totally relax them and allow the power of your upper body to direct their movements. At this stage they will move around you in a soft manner much like two 'lasso's'.

If you are practicing the entire 'Soaring Dragon' form then you should complete this exercise four times which should put you in the final position as shown in figure 83. Your right leg should be forward and your arms pushed behind you as you twist to the right.

From here simply relax the arms to your sides and rotate around on the heels until you face the opposite direction you began from as shown in figure 84.



Figure 84: The Finishing Position

From here you can choose to close down as already talked about or change direction and complete the next part of the exercise which is known as the ‘Low Flying Dragon’ exercise. This is combination of all the parts from Dragon Dao Yin exercises 8 to 10.

Dragon Dao Yin Exercise 11

Low Flying Dragon

The 'Low Flying Dragon' exercise is almost the same as the 'High Flying Dragon'. It has only one major difference which is the height at which it is performed. This exercise is quite athletic requiring some degree of flexibility and lower body strength.



Figure 85: Bring the Arms Around

Begin from the position shown in figure 84. Bring the arms down a little and around as if you are going to give a large person a hug. This should put you in the position shown in figure 85.

From here you are going to turn first to the left and practice the ‘arm arcs’ which you learnt in the Chest Preparatory Exercise’ and practiced in the ‘High Flying Dragon’.

If you managed to successfully complete the last exercise then the coordination for this one should be fairly simple.



Figure 86: Twisting as Before

Turn to your left by rotating on the left heel and passing the palms under your armpits as before.



Figure 87: Low Flying Dragon

The 'Low Flying Dragon' posture, which is shown in figure 87, is completed by continuing the twist to your left at the same time as dropping low to the floor and pushing your arms backwards with the palms facing the sky.

Try to put your chest down onto your knee and look back over your left shoulder as you do this.

This exercise will help to condition the upper body as well as strengthen and stretch the hips and legs.



Figure 88: Returning to your Feet

From here we must now get back on our feet. Twist back the way you already came by unfolding the legs as you turn to your right. Arc the arms around to above your head as shown in figure 88.

Remember to inhale as you stand and stretch out the chest and upper back.

When raising from the floor, try not to push from the feet as this puts strain on the knees and ankles; instead try to unfold from the hips and entire length of your legs so that your weight is distributed evenly across your lower body.



Figure 89: Stepping Through

Step through with your right foot as shown in figure 89. Your arms should continue in an arc back to the armpits ready to push backwards again.



Figure 90: Low Flying Dragon to Right

As you exhale and twist to your right on the heel, drop down as before into the position shown in figure 90. You should now be in the 'Low Flying Dragon' posture on the right hand side of your body. To complete the exercise as part of the 'Soaring Dragon' form, complete four repetitions of this movement before finishing as shown in figure 91.



Figure 91: Closing the Low Flying Dragon

Close by bringing the rear foot (which will be your left) out from underneath you. This should be done from the position in figure 90.

Swing this foot around and spin on your right heel to the position in figure 91 as the arms carry on over your head. From here you can begin the closing down exercise.

This is the last new exercise for the 'Soaring Dragon' form. The next exercises are taken from the slightly more difficult 'Drunken Dragon' form.

Dragon Dao Yin Exercises 12

Balance Training

The exercises from the ‘Drunken Dragon’ form work with the general core strength and flexibility of the entire body. It is more difficult than the previous three forms and requires that you have developed a certain degree of softness in your joints.

The last part of the ‘Drunken Dragon’ form involves being on one leg and so this means that you will have to have a good sense of balance prior to learning that exercise. In order to prepare for this, please practice the following movement.

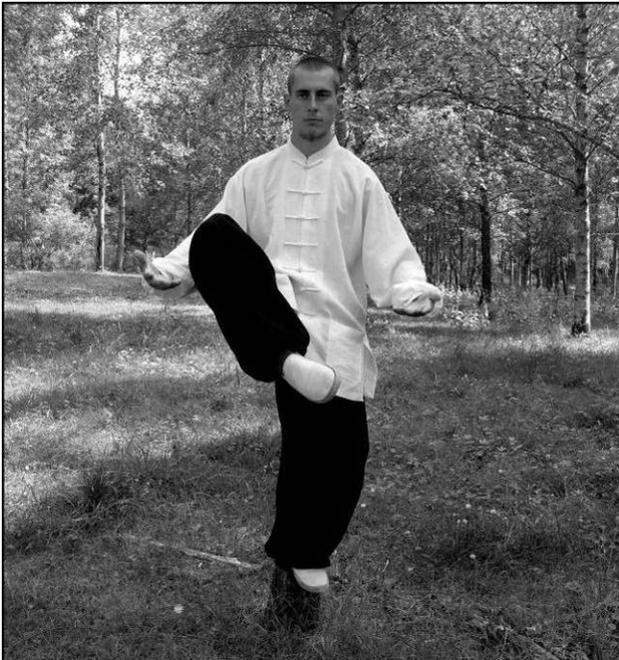


Figure 92: Balance Training

Stand on one leg as shown in figure 92. In the photo, the author is stood on a small tree stump. It is not advised that you begin in this way as you may fall and damage your ankle. Begin by practicing on flat ground and only when you feel confident should you progress to balancing on small objects such as tree stumps or bricks which will help you sink your root further into the floor.



Figure 93: Taiji Balancing

From here rotate around the hip joint of your supporting leg. Lean your head down towards the floor carefully as you extend your rear leg and point the sole of your foot towards the sky. Your arms should extend behind you so as to stretch open the chest. It is important that you move into and out of this position in slow motion so that all of the core muscles are used.

From here, return to the position shown in figure 92 to finish.

When balancing, it is important to keep your supporting leg slightly bent and your entire body relaxed. Breathe smoothly and naturally and keep your mind still.

Having a good sense of balance is an important part of any of the Daoist arts and this is a skill which should not be ignored. Balance within the body translates into a healthy balance within the mind.

Dragon Dao Yin Exercise 13

Swaying Dragon

The 'Swaying Dragon' exercise helps to condition the hips and also to circulate Qi throughout the Girdling meridian which will in turn start to awaken the lower Dan Tien; an important part of the Daoist arts.

It is worth practicing this movement as an exercise in its own right rather than only as part of the 'Drunken Dragon' form. Practicing it on its own will help you to awaken the lower Dan Tien through an increased number of repetitions.



Figure 94: Starting Position

Begin by standing in a neutral Qi Gong position as shown in figure 94. Lift your hands up to the level of your Girdling meridian and ensure that the palms are facing the floor. Remain here for a few minutes and breathe in a deep and relaxed manner to ensure that Qi is circulating through the hands.

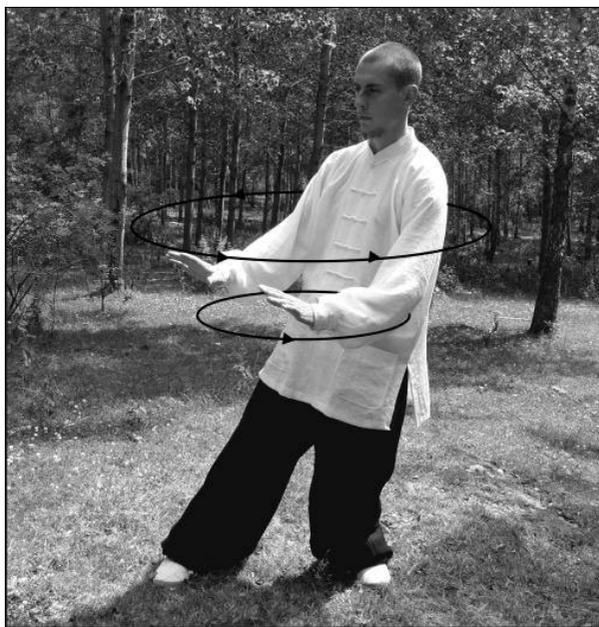


Figure 95: Swaying Dragon

Begin to move your body in a large circle as shown in figure 95. The direction of the circle is not so important as long as it is smooth and continuous.

You should sway and circle from your hips joints. Try and keep the pelvis in the centre whilst you torso leans and circles in a large arc above it. As you lean back, circle the hands forward to help keep your balance and lead Qi out from Girdling meridian.



Figure 96: Swaying Dragon

If you are practicing this exercise as part of the 'Drunken Dragon' form then you will complete four circles before returning to your neutral position.

If you are practicing this as an exercise on its own then complete as many circles in one direction as you like and then reverse and go the opposite direction. Breathe naturally throughout and keep your mind on the lower Dan Tien area of your body.

Those who are advanced in their Nei Gong practice will feel the Dan Tien begin to rotate after a short while and this will send an increased flow of Qi through the Girdling meridian and arms.

Dragon Dao Yin Exercise 14

Drunkard Walking

‘Drunkard Walking’ is designed to open up the chest and spine as well as work further with the circulation of Qi within the girdling meridian as we sway around our centre. It is the last of the walking Dragon Dao Yin exercises and forms the main part of the ‘Drunken Dragon’ form.

It is practiced either from a neutral Qi Gong stance if on its own or from the end of the last exercise if part of the ‘Drunken Dragon’ form.



Figure 97: Starting the Drunkard Walk

Begin turning 135 degrees to your left and shifting your left foot around as shown in figure 97. Let your arms gently swing back in a loose manner. The idea throughout this walk is that you use a controlled ‘sway’ as if you have had too much to drink.



Figure 98: Swing the Arms Forward

Now swing your arms forward in an arc as shown in figure 98. They should be very loose as if they are made out of rope. If the whole body is relaxed, this will gently pull open the entire spine. Figure 99 shows this movement from a second angle.

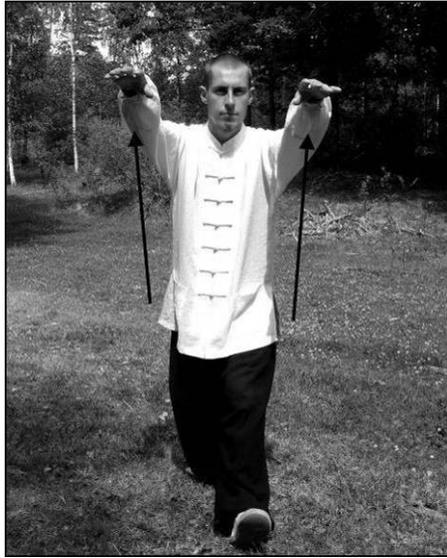


Figure 99: Second Angle



Figure 100: Moving Forwards

Shift your weight forwards into the front foot as your elbows are drawn backwards. Slightly duck your head as the hands pass them and then rise again once they are pulled back as shown in figure 100. This

helps to work open the vertebrae in the neck and so increase blood and Qi flow to the head.



Figure 101: The Drunkard Stretch

To complete the stretch, push backwards with your arms and stretch out the palms behind you as shown in figure 101. Come up on the ball of the rear foot and push downwards with the ‘Bubbling Spring’ point as your head extends upwards and you open out the entire spine as shown.

This is the main stretch in the ‘Drunkard Walking’. It should be carried out on an exhalation with a strong intention of pushing backwards with the palms into the distance. This will help to clear stagnant Qi from the entire spine and chest.



Figure 102: Turning Around

Now we need to turn to face 45 degrees to our right. In order to do this we first shift our weight back into the rear foot as we come up on the front heel. Turn the entire body around to the right by swiveling on the right foot. Let your arms naturally hang back down by your sides as shown in figure 102.

Remember to try to emulate the movements of a drunk as you turn the body. The more loose and relaxed you can make your body, the more you will help to circulate Qi and blood through the body.



Figure 103: Repeat to the Right

Now step through with the rear foot and repeat the entire sequence on the right hand side of your body as shown in figure 103 and 104.

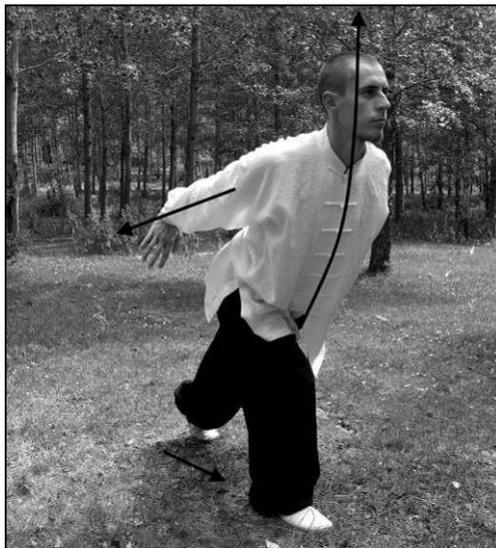


Figure 104: Complete the Stretch to your Right

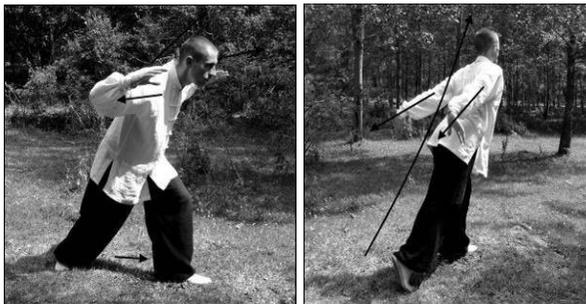
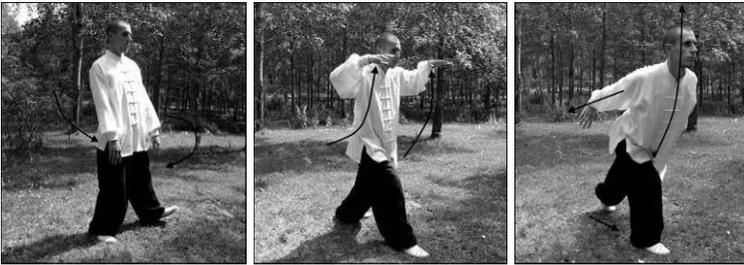


Figure 105: The Entire Drunkard Walking

If you are practicing the entire 'Drunk Dragon' form, you should run through this exercise three times as shown in figure 105. This will mean that you walk in a 'zigzag' pattern to the right of your starting position. You will finish facing 135 degrees behind you to your right as shown in figure 101. This will set you up for the next movement in the form.

More advanced practitioners of Nei Gong will after a while be able to feel the rotation of their lower Dan Tien when they are practicing this exercise. It will begin to spin in the lower abdomen and help you to flow through this sequence.

Dragon Dao Yin Exercise 15

Spinal Wave

The ‘Spinal Wave’ exercise is arguably the most effective spine stretching and softening exercise you will ever learn. Numerous students have used it to repair damage they have sustained to their back over the years. Just remember that an exercise is supposed to be good for your health, not damaging to your body. Progress slowly and gently, only building up to the size of ‘Spinal Wave’ shown in the photos after you have sufficiently strengthened and relaxed your spine.



Figure 106: Hanging the Arms

If you have just finished the last of the ‘Drunkard Walking’ exercises from the ‘Drunken Dragon’ form; turn to the right as before but this time step into the position shown in figure 106. Like a puppet with its strings cut, you should arch the spine and let the arms hang loosely by your sides. The relaxed weight of the arms should help to pull open the spaces between your vertebrae.



Figure 107: Drawing up the Body

Starting at the base of your spine, draw a physical wave up your back all the way to your neck. Much like the wave that travels through a whip, this should pass through each of the vertebrae in turn. This should be done smoothly and slowly so that you do not jar your neck. The arms stay very soft and travel up the front of your body as shown in figure 107.

This exercise is part of the ‘Drunken Dragon’ form as it represents the dragon vomiting! If you keep that rather unpleasant analogy in mind as you practice the movement, you will get a feeling for how the wave passes up the body ready to be ‘thrown up’ in the next stage.

Keep passing this wave up the spine until it reaches the top of your neck, the arms now continue upwards as shown in figure 108 without breaking the circle they are drawing in the air.



Figure 108: Lifting the Arms High

From here allow the force built up from the wave to escape and your arms arc back down to hanging in front of you as shown in figure 109.

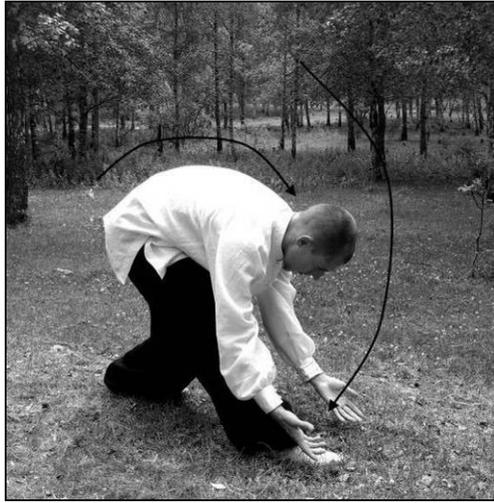


Figure 109: Vomiting!

Your spine should return to its original hanging position and your palms should face up towards the sky. From here it is simply a matter of repeating the exercise without letting the circular arc of the arms end.

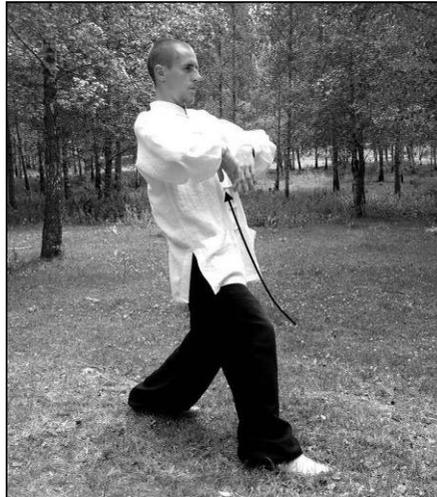


Figure 110: Starting Again

This exercise should feel very pleasant after a while but at first it will be very difficult as you will not be able to get a smooth wave through your back. It is likely that your vertebrae will move in small ‘clumps’ that are stuck together with tension. Be patient and allow the tension to ease away over time. This is the probably the best thing you will ever do for your back.

If this is being done as part of the ‘Drunken Dragon’ form then you should complete this movement three times. This will then get you ready for the next exercise which is called ‘Taiyi’.

Dragon Dao Yin Exercise 16

Taiyi

You will already have practiced this exercise if you practiced the balancing movements in exercise 12. The ‘Drunken Dragon’ form finishes with a one legged position which works on your core strength and stability as well as allowing you to release tension from the hip joints once you are practiced enough at it.

Begin from the last exercise by taking your weight into the front leg and bringing your arms around as shown in figure 111.



Figure 111: Preparing for Taiyi

Ensure that the front knee is bent and that your whole body is relaxed. Tension in the legs at this point could cause damage to your

front knee. Those who are not confident with their balance should only lift the rear foot a small distance from the floor rather than moving into the full position which is shown in figure 112.



Figure 112: Taiji Dragon Posture

Lean the body forward by rotating around the hip joint of the supporting leg and tipping the head towards the floor. The rear foot pushes up towards the sky with the base of your foot pointing upwards. The arms push backwards as your intention extends away from you through your palms.

Breathe out as you move into this posture.

To finish this exercise, rotate the body back the way you already came so that you are vertical again.

Lift the rear knee high up in front of you without touching the floor. Your arms move straight up in front of you and rotate up into the sky.

You must stretch the arms high above you and extend your focus out of the finger tips. Twist the arms so that your little fingers move towards you and the thumbs move away from you. This should put you in the position from figure 113.



Figure 113: Ending Taiyi

Now bring your foot slowly down to the ground whilst your palms press downwards as shown in figure 114.

Extend your intention down through the palms into the ground and hesitate here for a moment to allow any Qi which has risen to the head to sink back down in your body.

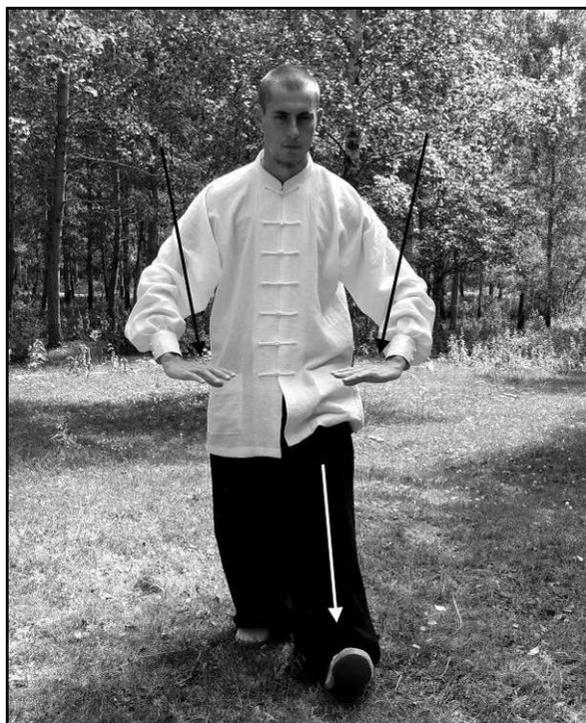


Figure 114: Returning to Earth

If you are only practicing the “Taiyi” then step through with the rear foot and carry out the same movements on the other leg. Do these as many times as you wish.

If you are practicing the entire ‘Drunken Dragon’ form then you should twist around your front heel as shown in figure 115.

Take your weight forward and then rotate around whilst stepping with the right foot as indicated by the white arrow on the ground.

Bring your body around by 135 degrees and swing your relaxed arms upwards in front of you.

You are now ready to carry out the ‘Drunkard Walking’ exercise three more times, zigzagging back to where you started the form.



Figure 115: Turning Around

The instructions for the ‘Taiyi’ exercise on the other side of the body are identical except for the fact that your right and left sides are reversed of course.

Dragon Dao Yin Exercise 17

Shaking Dragon

The final new exercise from the ‘Drunken Dragon’ form is the ‘Shaking Dragon’ which is a strong bending movement which invigorates the kidneys and ensures that no tension has been left in the spine or back of the legs from the previous exercises.

Begin from the end of the second ‘Taiyi’ exercise if you are completing the entire ‘Drunken Dragon’ form.



Figure 116: Getting Ready to Bend

Place your foot down to the floor which brings you back to a neutral Qi Gong position with your feet a shoulder's width apart. Lift your arms above your head as shown in figure 116 and hesitate here for a moment whilst you breathe deep into the abdomen and allow your intention to drop out of your palms into the ground.

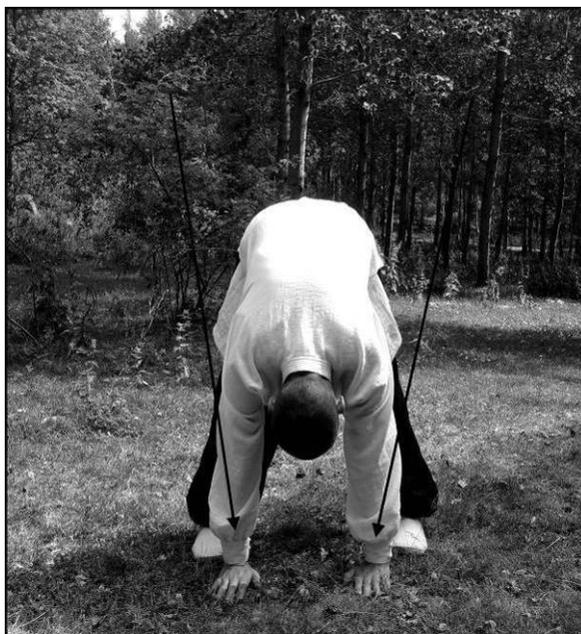


Figure 117: Bending to the Floor

Bend forwards and place your palms down on the ground as shown in figure 117. Open out your spine and stretch open the kidney area as you bend. Let your intention push out of your palms as deep into the planet as you can. Stay here for some time. Advanced practitioners of Nei Gong will after a while begin to feel the Qi from the earth vibrating back up their arms as they push down with their intention. Allow this energy to move into the body and nourish your kidneys.

Now we twist the spine to stretch the kidney area of the back. Note that this is quite a strong stretch which should only be attempted by those confident that they have a suitably soft and flexible spine.

Turn your head to look behind you to the right whilst arcing your back so that your behind also travels to the right. You can see this clearly in figure 118.



Figure 118: Shaking the Spine

Now do the same to the other side as shown in figure 119.



Figure 119: The Other Side

Once you are comfortable with this position, you can speed up the twists until you are shaking the spine rather than bending it. Continue in this way for a short while. The exact number is not important.



Figure 120: Finishing

To finish this exercise, unfold the entire spine and raise the hands upwards as shown in figure 120. Breathe in as you stand and try to open out the whole back as though it is being stretched from deep inside your body.

From here you can now move into the closing down exercises to finish the 'Drunken Dragon' form.

Chapter 6: Constructing the Sequences

We have already looked at the individual exercises which make up the Dragon Dao-Yin. As has already been stated, these can be practiced as stand-alone Dao-Yin exercises or they can be put together into the four sequences which are listed in this chapter. Practicing the movements in sequences like this makes them easier to remember and more artistic as well as having the benefit of circulating the body's Qi effectively as you move from exercise to exercise.

The four sequences are as follows:

- **The Waking Dragon**
- **The Swimming Dragon**
- **The Soaring Dragon**
- **The Drunken Dragon**

For each sequence there is now a list of the various exercises from this book from which it is made. Use the instructions from the previous chapter to piece together each of the four sequences.

The Waking Dragon

- **Circulate the Qi**
- **Greeting the Dawn**
- **Piercing Palm**
- **Stretching Dragon**
- **Piecing Palm (Back to the starting position)**

- Stretching Dragon
- Sinking and Gathering the Qi

The Swimming Dragon

- Circulate the Qi
- Pushing the Tide
- Swimming Dragon
- Presenting Palm to Heaven
- Swimming Dragon (Back to starting position)
- Presenting Palm to Heaven
- Diving Dragon
- Sinking and Gathering the Qi

The Soaring Dragon

- Circulate the Qi
- High Flying Dragon
- Low Flying Dragon (Back to starting position)
- Sinking and Gathering the Qi

The Drunken Dragon

- Circulate the Qi
- Swaying Dragon

- **Drunkard Walking**
- **Spinal Wave**
- **Taiyi**
- **Drunkard Walking (Back to starting position)**
- **Spinal Wave**
- **Taiyi**
- **Shaking Dragon**
- **Sinking and Gathering the Qi**

For each sequence you should perform the opening movements, walk to the left for three or four steps, turn around and then walk back to the starting position. From here you sink and gather the Qi before closing down.

Practicing these four short sequences every day will quickly increase your flexibility and core strength. Martial artists seeking to enhance their Baguazhang or Xingyiquan should spend longer on these exercises and perhaps run through each of the sequences several times daily until they feel positive changes starting to take place within their body.

Conclusion

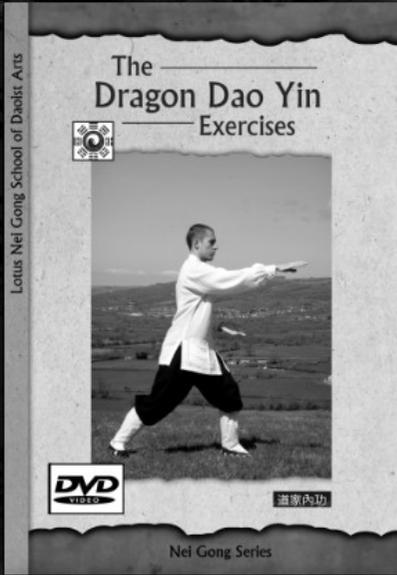
It is my hope that the instructions in this book will enable practitioners of the Dragon Dao-Yin exercises to gain more from their practice. I personally use these exercises regularly and can attest to the tremendous health benefits that they bring. I am also aware of the increase in internal force which came from repeating the twisting and coiling movements present within each of the four sequences.

I integrated the Dragon Dao-Yins into my own schools syllabus and they quickly became some of the most popular exercises amongst my students. We have also had students from outside schools coming along to our courses just to learn these particular forms.

Dao-Yin exercises are an important part of the internal arts family and it is a shame that they are not more widely practiced. Many people in the West would benefit from the purging nature of the Dragon Dao-Yins.

I am constantly seeking to update my knowledge and as such am a perpetual student. After 26 years of training (at the time of writing) I can safely say that I am still a beginner in the Eastern arts. That being said, I hope that my humble realizations can help others on their way. I am very easy to contact through my website which can be found at: **www.lotusneigong.com**. If any readers have further questions on these exercises or are seeking further guidance, please feel free to contact me through this site. I am happy to help as much as I can although an answer may not be that swift in coming depending upon whether I am travelling or not at that time.

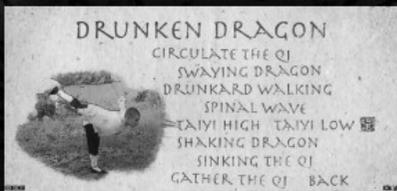
Dragon Dao-Yin Exercises DVD



Improve your Dragon Dao-Yins.

This instructional DVD was filmed in Thailand and the UK in 2009. It shows and explains the four sequences of the Dragon Dao-Yin exercise set which is taught as part of Lotus Nei Gong's syllabus.

The exercises are shown in their entirety and then broken down into individual sections by Damo Mitchell, technical director of Lotus Nei Gong.



Also included are several preliminary exercises to help prepare the body for Dao-Yin training...



Actual Screenshots

Available Spring 2011

Available from our Website: www.lotusneigong.com
Produced by Metal Dragon Media: www.metaldragonmedia.co.uk

Who is Damo Mitchell?

Damo Mitchell was born in the UK into a family of martial artists. He began his studies of the Eastern arts at the age of four under his parents and their teachers. These early studies were in the Japanese martial arts, Yoga and Zen Buddhism. From here his studies continued into his teens where he began to look at the Chinese systems and in particular the internal martial arts.

Damo's studies have continued throughout his life and have included various styles of Taijiquan, Xingyiquan, Baguazhang, Gong Fu, Nei Gong, various forms of Meditation as well as several forms of Chinese medicine. His studies have taken him across the planet in search of authentic masters of these arts and when he is not travelling in the East he teaches within his school: Lotus Nei Gong School of Daoist Arts which is based within the UK.

He is the author of the title: Daoist Nei Gong-Philosophical Art of Change which is published by Singing Dragon Books and available from mid 2011.

For more information on Damo please refer to his website:

www.lotusneigong.com

