THE EIGHTEEN RULES OF PROPER DAO YIN POSTURE

The most basic and important techniques of Medical Qigong Postural training can be addressed through eighteen rules of proper form and structure. The main goal of Postural Dao Yin training is to relax and seek quiescence while holding the various postures. Tension in any area of the body restricts the structural system as a whole, since the body is constantly balancing its structure naturally by shifting its energy and weight. In addition to controlling the skeletal structure, the muscles of the body also have the function of guiding the flow of energy through the channels.

The following is a list of the Eighteen Rules used for proper Medical Qigong standing postures. However, it should be noted that most of these rules also apply to lying, sitting, and walking energy cultivation as well:

1. Stand with the feet flat
2. Bend the knees
3. Relax the hips
4. Round the perineal area
5. Close the anal sphincter
6. Pull in the Stomach
7. Relax the waist
8. Tuck the chest in
9. Stretch the back
10. Relax the shoulders
11. Sink the elbows
12. Hollow the armpits
13. Relax the wrists
14. Suspend the head
15. Tuck the chin
16. Close the eyes for inner vision
17. Close the mouth, Open the Nose, Stop the Ears
18. Touch the tongue to the upper palate

Each of these eighteen rules is described in detail as follows:

RULE 1: STAND WITH THE FEET FLAT

Stand with the feet flat, parallel to the outside of the shoulders (slightly wider than shoulder width apart), and facing directly in front of you. You should feel the majority of your weight in your heels. By placing your weight in your heels, you will generate a free flow of energy moving from your heels, up the legs and up the spine.

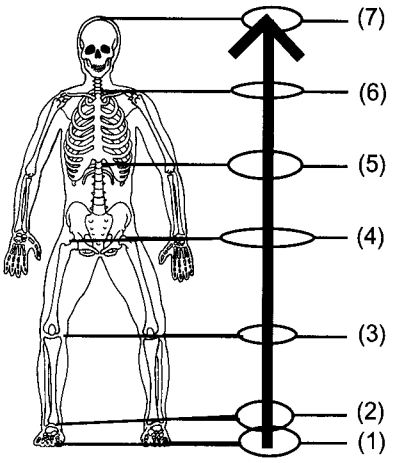

Figure 16.6. Stack the bones on top of each other from the bottoms of the feet to the skull.

As the center of your body sinks, begin to allow your body's weight to press into the center of your feet. The weight of the spine should press into the heels, and the weight of the pubic bone should press into the balls of the feet. If this is done properly, most of the weight and pressure will be felt in the center part of the feet. This flow of energy becomes important later on in training when you begin to tap into the energy of the Earth.

Weight should be distributed evenly on both feet about an inch and a half forward (anterior) from the heels, and perpendicular to the tibia. When shifting the body, focus on dropping the weight down behind the legs, not down the front of the legs. This action takes the pressure away from the knees and keeps it in the centers of the feet (Figure 16.6).

Stretch the feet and let the toes softly grasp the ground to keep the body firmly rooted as you tuck the sacrum under. Relaxation is essential. Rigid or contracted feet disrupt the flow of energy from the Earth into the body.

The Kidney (Water) energy flowing within the Bones and Sea of Marrow can be accessed by shifting the weight onto the heels. The Heart (Fire) energy flowing within the circulatory system and Sea of Blood can be accessed by shifting the weight onto the balls of the feet, and it naturally flows

into the center of the palms once the Mingmen is pressed backwards. The weight in the center of the feet accesses the Taiji Pole and the energy of the Three Dantians (Figure 16.7 and 16.8).

While training, the feet may vibrate or feel hot, as if on fire. This is a normal reaction to correct postural training, and it is beneficial because it dissolves the calcium deposits stored within the extremities of the feet. If, however, the Fire in the feet is too intense (due to Excess Liver Fire), hit the heels on the ground and rub the lumbar spine, using the mind's intention to send more of the Kidney Yin (Water) down to the feet to cool the Fire.

RULE 2: BEND THE KNEES

The knees should be slightly bent (as if you were sitting on a stool with your feet in the ground) and facing the same direction as the feet. The knee caps should be directly aligned and should extend no further than the tips of the middle toes. Do not allow the knees to twist inward.

To secure the structure, imagine holding a large beach ball between the knees. Many patients develop knee problems because they extend their knees too far forward or allow their knees to twist to the side, rather than aligning them with the toes. If pressure is felt on the sides or front of the knees, check the positioning. Knees that are unable to point in the direction of the toes are most often the result of tight hip joints (Figure 16.9). If the energy in the legs is tightly constricted around the knee area, Qi flow will be severely limited. A relaxed knee joint, on the other hand, will increase the Qi and Blood flowing through the legs, making it easier to relax the hips and to round the perineal area.

Relaxing the knees also permits the free flow of energy through the three descending Yang channels on the outside of the leg and the three ascending Yin channels on the inside of the leg (Figure 16.10). The techniques for relaxing the knees will vary according to the emotional and structural patterns of each individual, as emotions such as fear have a tendency to gather and pool behind the knees.

The Kidney Qi generally pools at the knees. Restricting and tensing the tissue surrounding the knees creates stagnation. Therefore, the Kidney

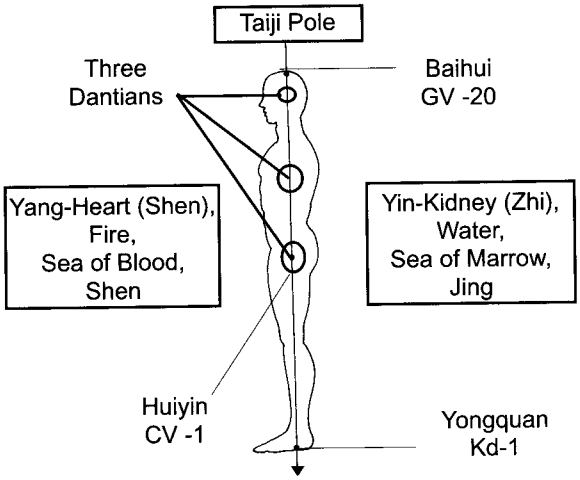

Figure 16.7. In proper standing posture, the three points (Baihui, Huiyin, and Yongquan) are aligned along a vertical axis.

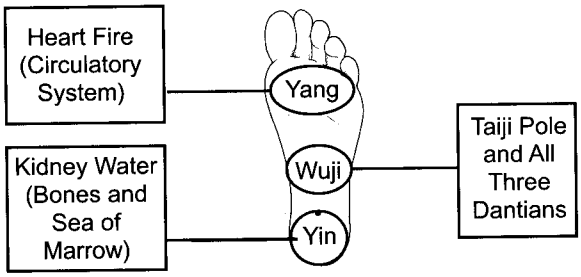

Figure 16.8. The Bottom of the Foot

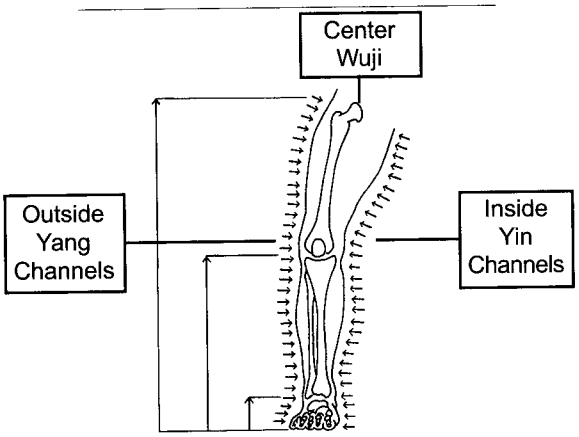

Figure 16.9. Keep the center of the body's weight aligned to the center of the knees to relax the connective tissue surrounding the knees.

energy can be stimulated by relaxing the tissue area surrounding knees, allowing the increased flow of Qi to move through the legs and fill the Kidneys. Because the Kidneys adversely respond to the emotions of fear, panic, and fright, when an individual experiences fear or fright, the knees are immediately drained and tend to buckle.

RULE 3: RELAX THE HIPS

Drop the buttocks slightly and relax the hips while sinking the Qi from the upper torso into the Lower Dantian. Keep the hips facing forward. The buttocks should be gently tucked under the body to straighten the spine and to facilitate the storage of Qi in the Lower Dantian.

Imagine the Qi in the Lower Dantian becoming like a weight of a thousand pounds. Imagine that this weight sinks into the Earth, suspended from the coccyx (Figure 16.11). As the weight pulls down, tilt the sacrum under the body. When the hip joints are relaxed, the lower limbs will be able to move freely. By allowing all movements to originate from the imagined thousand pound weight (suspended under the ground), your root is energetically enhanced.

RULE 4: ROUND THE PERINEAL AREA

There are three stages to rounding the perineal area. First, set the knees apart, slightly turning them both outward. This allows the groin and hips to shift to an anterior tilt. Second, bring the knees back together and turn them inward, while also relaxing the hips. This allows the groin and hips to shift to a posterior tilt. Third, suspend the perineal area to lift the perineum and the anus slightly. This allows the groin and hips to come to a center balance and to sink. Rounding the perineal area keeps the perineum free from pressure, yet sealed. This ensures the proper functioning of the Qi, and allows the "lower door" (the anus) to remain closed to avoid leakage of vital energy.

RULE 5: CLOSE THE ANAL SPHINCTER

The anus is called the "Lower Bridge" and it is where the Yang and Yin channels meet and combine. The anus is also considered the Door of the

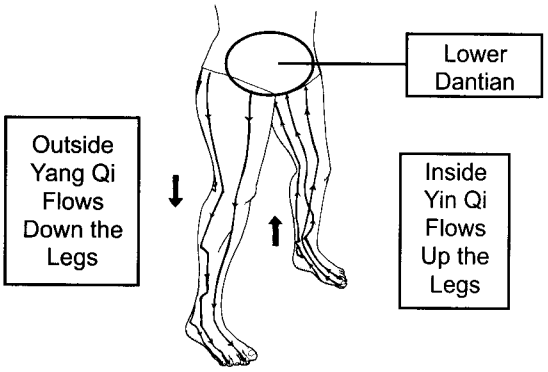

Figure 16.10. Relaxing the knees also permits the free flow of energy through the ascending Yin channels and the descending Yang channels of the legs.

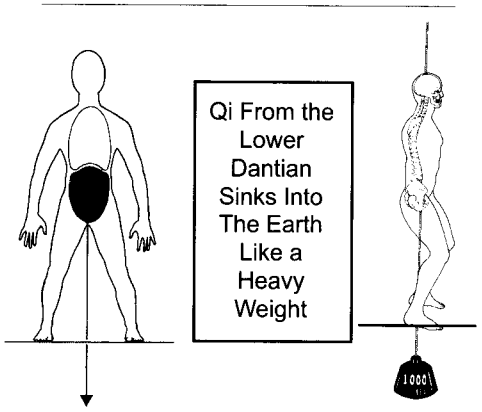

Figure 16.11. Imagine a 1,000 pound weight hanging from the coccyx, and a heavenly cord suspending the head.

Po. Although the anal sphincter is held closed, it is important that the perineum remain relaxed.

A well-guarded secret in ancient Daoist alchemy is that the contraction of the anal sphincter and the stimulation of the lower perineum area are also correlated to the respiratory patterns of the individual's breath. This relationship is influenced by the Po. Therefore, the peristaltic rhythms of the Lungs and Large Intestines can be initially influenced and controlled by manipulating the body's respiratory patterns, as well as through controlling the amount of directed pressure placed on contracting the anal sphincter.

There are four main stages used in learning how to control the anal sphincter in order to lead and direct the flow of Qi and Shen throughout

the body. These four stages are: Gathering Qi from the front and back gates of the Lower Dantian, Gathering Qi from the Seas of Yin and Yang, Gathering Qi from the Eight Directions, and Gathering Qi from Heaven and Earth. All four methods can be practiced using either Natural Breathing or Reverse Breathing, and are described as follows:

1. **Gathering Qi From the Front and Back Gates of the Lower Dantian:** In the first stage, the anus is contracted with slight muscle control (along the Huiyin CV-1 point), and the energy is directed into different energy centers along the Lower Dantian (Figure 16.12). When first beginning, inhale and expand the abdomen while imagining that the anus is connected to the navel (CV-8 point) and is being pulled up towards it. On the exhalation, contract the abdomen and draw the energy from the navel back down towards the anus. Next, inhale and create a connection between the anus (Huiyin area) and the Mingmen (GV-4 area). On the exhalation, draw the energy from the Mingmen back down towards the anus. It is important to synchronize the drawing of the anus towards the navel and Mingmen area with the expansion and contraction of inhalation and exhalation. This will tonify the Sea of Marrow, initiate a rippling of the spine, and facilitate the sacral-cranial rhythm resonating throughout the body. Continue this meditation for several minutes.

   End the meditation exercise by drawing the Qi from the anus (Huiyin area) into the Lower Dantian, then perform the "Pulling Down the Heavens" exercise.
2. **Gathering Qi From the Seas of Yin and Yang:** In the next stage of training, the constriction of the anus is used to lead the Qi along the Governing and Conception Vessels in order to facilitate a regulatory balance between the body's Sea of Yin and Sea of Yang (Figure 16.13). Upon inhalation, draw the mind's intention from the anus through the tip of the spine (the coccyx), allowing the Qi to flow up the spinal column towards the Mingmen, past the Shendao to the Dazhui (GV-14) Big Hammer point located above the shoulders, at the base of the back of the neck. This area is where the Yang Qi gathers and pours into the Sea of Yang Qi flowing within the Governing Vessel. Upon exhalation, use the intention to lead the Qi back down the spine towards the anus. Next, when inhaling, lead the Qi up the Conception Vessel to the Tiantu (CV-22) point at the base of the throat. This area is where the Yin Qi gathers and pours into the Sea of Yin Qi flowing within the Conception Vessel. Then, exhale and lead the Qi down the Conception Vessel and back down to the anus. Continue this meditation for several minutes.

   End the meditation exercise by drawing the Qi from the anus (Huiyin area) into the Lower

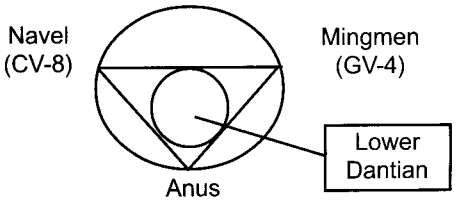

Figure 16.12. Connect the anus with the navel and the Mingmen.

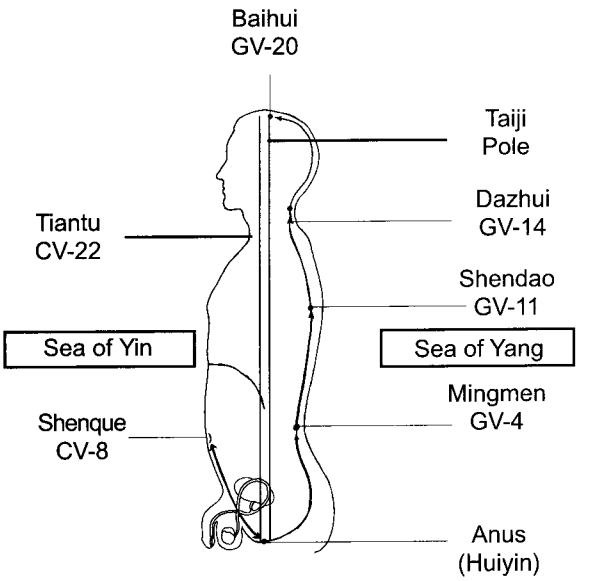

Figure 16.13. The anus is used to draw the Qi from the navel into the Lower Dantian and then up the Governing Vessel to the Fengfu point at the base of the skull.

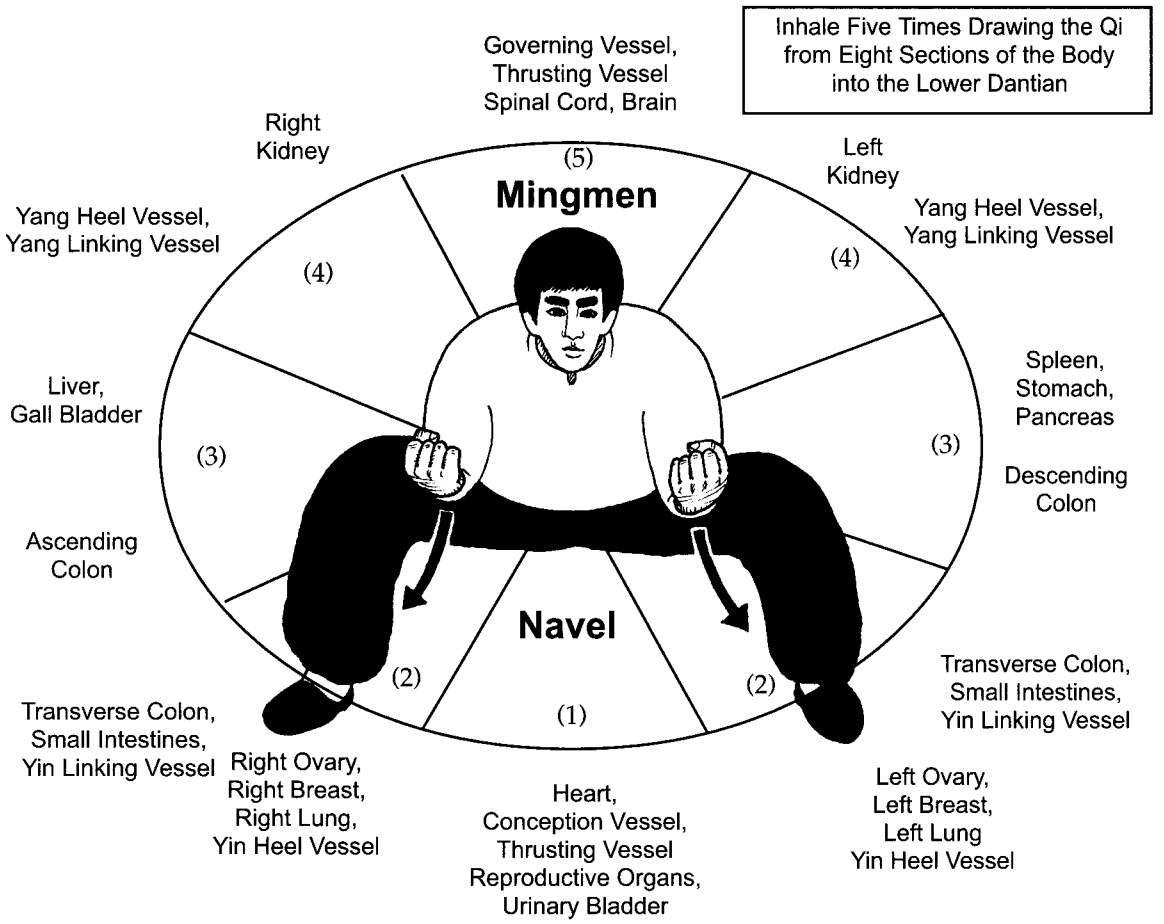

Figure 16.14. Squatting to complete the form of the Turtle Breathing Posture.

Dantian, then perform the "Pulling Down the Heavens" exercise.

3. **Gathering Qi From the Eight Directions:** Also known as Turtle Breathing, in the next stage of training, the Lower Dantian is divided into eight sections (Figure 16.14). Each section is numbered, beginning with the front of the Lower Dantian at the navel area "1," increasing in number as one continues from the left to the right sides of the waist and ending at the Mingmen area "5."

   Think of the anal sphincter as a great funnel, attached in eight different segments (like canals) which progress up the torso. As you focus your mind on each section (begin with the navel at section 1), inhale, gather, and feel the energy of each section. Imagine that the energy is flowing downwards from that particular section, to be gathered into the Lower Dantian. With your imagination, direct the breath and Qi from your torso to flow into each of the eight areas.

   While inhaling, use the Reverse Breathing method and guide the Qi into the Lower Dantian via the anal sphincter area for an even eight counts. The anal sphincter acts as the hub of a wheel. By pulling upwards on the anal sphincter and perineum, an energetic vacuum is created within the pelvic diaphragm and urogenital diaphragm. This energetic vacuum is used to gather both the body internal organ Qi and external environmental energy.

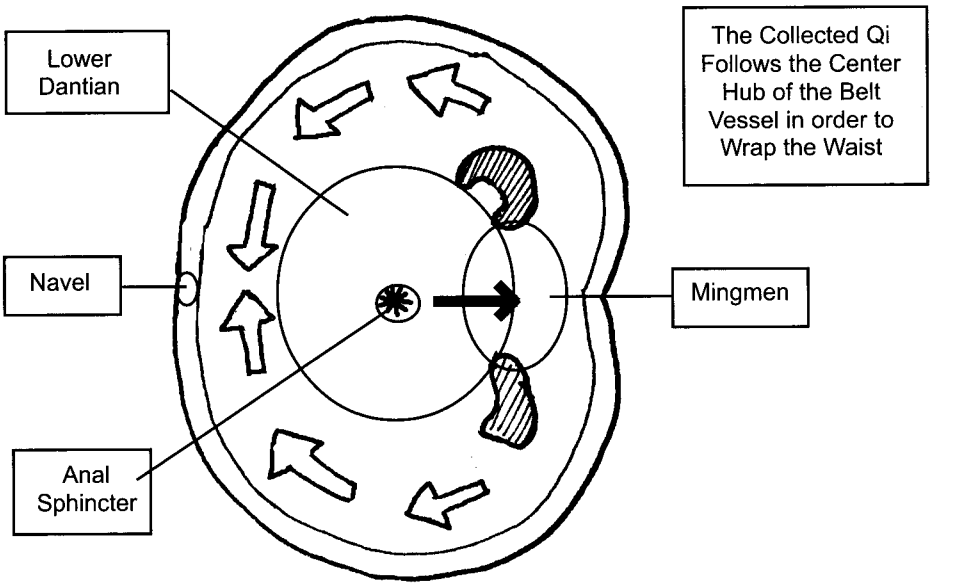

Figure 16.15. Upon exhalation, the collected Qi from the lower perineum flows into the Mingmen. It then wraps the waist via the center routes of the Belt Vessel twice before rooting itself into the Lower Dantian.

Begin with collecting Qi from the front of the body to the navel via the anal sphincter. Hold the Qi in the Lower Dantian area then proceed to the next areas at the sides of the body absorbing the Qi into the Lower Dantian via the anal sphincter. Next, proceed to the sides of the body, continuing in progression until you reach the Mingmen area (5).

Then as you exhale and release the breath, imagine that the Qi is rushing into the Kidneys and Mingmen area. From the Mingmen area, the Qi flows towards the navel, then divides into two rivers that simultaneously circle wrap the waist two times before ending in the Lower Dantian. Make sure that you direct your anal sphincter towards the area of the body from which you are absorbing Qi (Figure 16.15).

After perfecting the Turtle Breathing exercise, a practitioner can create an energetic vacuum and initiate the absorption of excess Qi into the Lower Dantian by moving his or her intention from the anal sphincter through the Lower Dantian and torso at an extremely fast speed. Continue this meditation for several minutes.

End the meditation exercise by drawing the Qi into the Lower Dantian, then perform the "Pulling Down the Heavens" exercise.

4. **Gathering Qi From Heaven and Earth:** At the fourth stage, imagine twisting the energy of the anal sphincter, spiraling the Qi from the Huiyin, up the center of the body, to connect with the Baihui area at the top of the head. Close the anal muscle gently, inhale, and imagine the energy vibrating and spiraling in a counterclockwise direction up the body's Taiji Pole. This connects the Lower, Middle, and Upper Dantians through the Taiji Pole. Upon exhalation, lead the vibrating Qi down the Taiji Pole in a clockwise spiral ending within the Lower Dantian area. Continue this meditation until the entire body pulses with the rhythm of the Taiji Pole. End the meditation exercise by drawing the Qi into the Lower Dantian, then perform the "Pulling Down the Heavens" exercise.

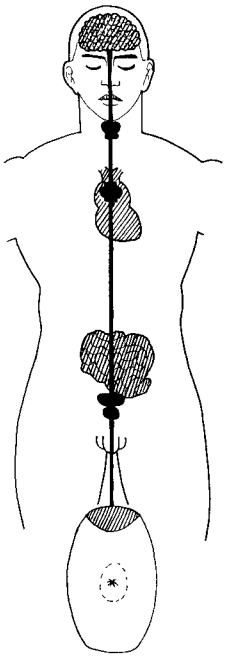

Figure 16.16. The Front of the Anus

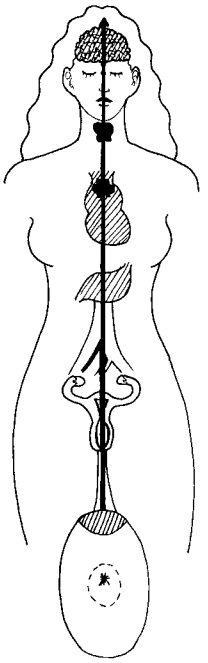

Figure 16.17. The Front of the Anus

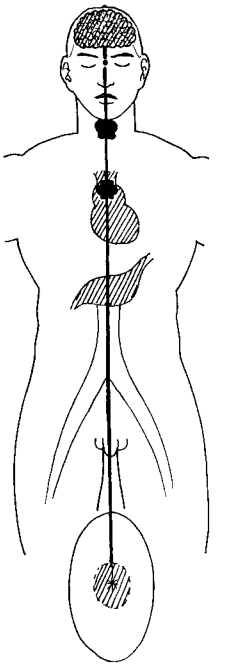

Figure 16.18. The Middle of the Anus

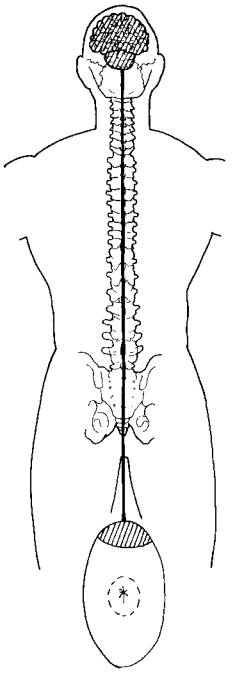

Figure 16.19. The Back of the Anus

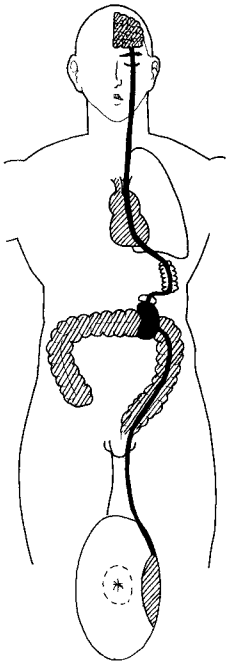

Figure 16.20. The Left Side of the Anus

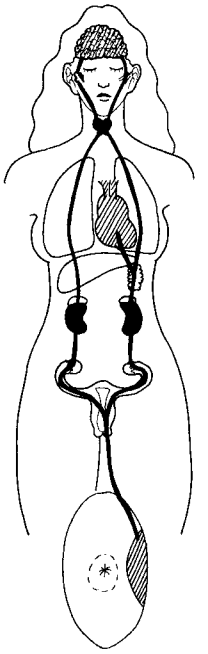

Figure 16.21. The Left Side of the Anus

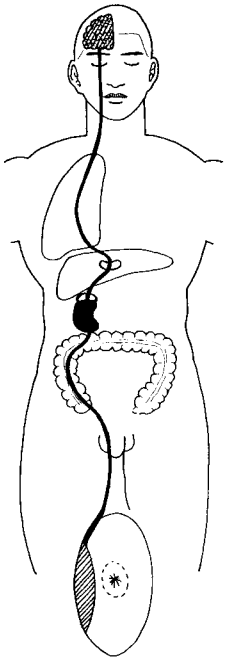

Figure 16.22. The Right Side of the Anus

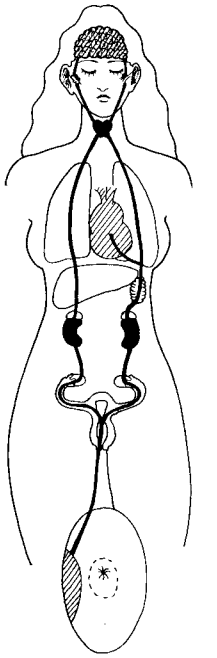

Figure 16.23. The Right Side of the Anus

THE FIVE REGIONS OF THE ANUS

The anus is divided into five regions: Front, Middle, Back, Left, and Right. By contracting the anus in different areas, you can bring more Qi to the various organs and glands. The five regions of the anus are described as follows:

1. The contraction of the front region of the anus opens the gate to the sexual organs, as well as to the Conception Vessel.
   - For men, this will affect the prostate gland, Urinary Bladder, Small Intestine, thymus gland, thyroid gland, parathyroid gland, mouth, nose, and front part of the brain (Figure 16.16).
   - For women, this will affect the vagina, uterus, vena cava, aorta, Stomach, thymus gland, thyroid gland, parathyroid gland, mouth, nose, pituitary gland, and front part of the brain (Figure 16.17).
2. By contracting and pulling the middle region of the anus, more Qi is drawn into the Thrusting Vessel and Taiji Pole, as well as to the genitals, aorta, vena cava, Stomach, Heart, thyroid gland, parathyroid gland, tongue, pituitary gland, pineal gland, and Baihui area (Figure 16.18).
3. By contracting the back region of the anus the Qi is connected to the Governing Vessel, as well as the sacrum, lumbar, thoracic and cervical vertebrae, and cerebellum (Figure 16.19).
4. By contracting the left side of the anus the Qi connects to the left side of the body.
   - For men, this affects the left testicle, Large Intestine, left Kidney, left adrenal gland, Spleen, the left side of the Heart, left Lung, left ear, left eye, and left hemisphere of the brain (Figure 16.20).
   - For women, this affects both ovaries, both Kidneys, both adrenal glands, the Spleen, Liver, Heart, both Lungs, the thyroid gland, parathyroid gland, and both hemispheres of the brain (Figure 16.21).
5. By contracting the right side of the anus, the Qi connects to the right side of the body.
   - For men, this affects the right testicle, Large Intestine, right Kidney, right adrenal gland, Liver, Gall Bladder, right side of the Heart, right Lung, right ear, right eye, and the right hemisphere of the brain (Figure 16.22).
   - For women, this affects both ovaries, both Kidneys, both adrenal glands, the Spleen, Liver, Heart, both Lungs, the thyroid gland, parathyroid gland, and both hemispheres of the brain (Figure 16.23).

RULE 6: PULL IN THE STOMACH

Pull the stomach in above the pubic bone and avoid tensing the abdominal muscles. This helps to restrain the Yuan Qi, thereby increasing the internal pressure and promoting the flow of internal Qi throughout the whole body.

The action of tucking and pulling the Stomach and navel inward naturally causes the Mingmen and lower back to press outward. In ancient Chinese Daoist traditions, the soles of the feet are believed to be governed by the Kidney Water, and the soles of the palms are governed by Heart Fire. Together, these four points are called the "Four Gates," and they can be accessed when the individual presses his or her Mingmen backwards, increasing the circulation of Qi emanating from the Lower Dantian.

RULE 7: RELAX THE WAIST

If the waist is not relaxed, the Qi cannot sink back to the Lower Dantian. Relax the waist by relaxing the hips and bending the knees. When the waist is relaxed, the spine will stand upright, yet remain relaxed.

The waist and the abdomen are two especially important areas in training and guiding Qi. The abdomen is considered to be the furnace for refining Qi. The waist is the residence of the Kidneys and the Mingmen Fire, and is an important junction for Qi and Blood circulation.

The waist is considered the master of the body and must be kept sunken and relaxed (Figure 16.24). As the buttocks tuck under and the waist sinks, small pockets should form on the inner thighs where the pelvic bones meet the femur bones of the legs. Most people usually keep the pelvic area tight and immobile, as it is associated with shock, fear, and sexual trauma. When this area becomes loosened, such emotions are often released.

The specific actions to relax the waist are as follows: lift both shoulders in order to stretch the back, then release them downward immediately as you exhale, relaxing the waist. To achieve genuine waist relaxation, you must also relax and tuck the sacrum; this action opens the sacrum. When the sacrum is opened, the Lower Dantian will expand and the storehouse of Yuan Qi will be enlarged. Be sure that the waist and hips face forward in the same direction as the knees and feet.

RULE 8: TUCK THE CHEST IN

The chest should relax inward so that air flows freely and the Qi sinks down into the Lower Dantian. Fill the abdomen with air while relaxing the chest inward. The back should be open and expanded. Relax the scapulae and allow them to sink to their lowest point. This will help the shoulders to sink. Rounding the scapulae (pushing to the sides and forward) will help open and expand the back.

Do not thrust the shoulders inward or intentionally close the thoracic cavity. The intentional tucking in of the vertebral area requires the outward opening of the ribs and expansion of the intercostal muscles. The action of opening the chest outward, then tucking the chest inward, helps to relax the thoracic cavity and avoids tension in the thoracic muscles.

RULE 9: STRETCH THE BACK

The key to stretching the back is to hang the shoulders and "open the scapulae." When the two shoulders drop evenly, the lumbar vertebrae straighten out. The spine suspends from the connective tissue, allowing each vertebrae the potential of resonating and transferring energetic vibrations within the vertebral column.

The function of tucking the chest and stretching the back also calms the Heart and Lungs. The Heart controls mental and emotional activities and also directs Blood circulation. When the thoracic cavity is spacious and the back is upright, the Heart and mind will be calm, and the Lungs will be clear and free from Heat. Tucking the chest and stretching the back allows the chest and back to relax, permitting the Conception and Governing Vessels to communicate with each other and im-

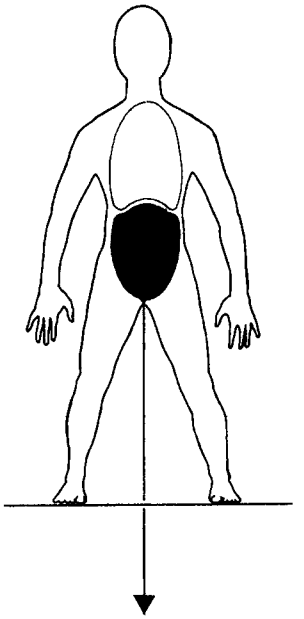

Figure 16.24. Relax and sink the waist, allowing the hips to drop.

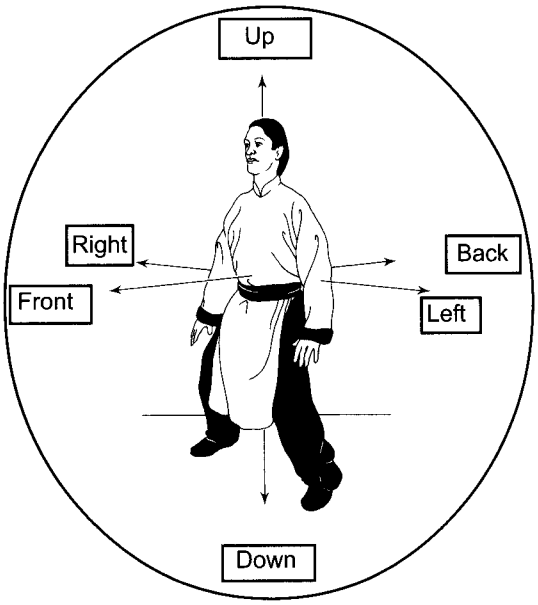

Figure 16.25. By imagining that there is a rope pulling on the top of the head, as well as a rope pulling and on the base of the coccyx, the spine is allowed to naturally stretch, expanding the body's Qi into the six directions of space.

prove the movement of energy within the body.

Imagine a weight hanging from the coccyx and a rope pulling up the crown point of the head. Feel the elongation of the spine with each inhalation and each exhalation. Remain relaxed (Figure 16.25); do not hold yourself unnaturally erect or contract the abdomen to straighten the lower back. The abdomen must remain relaxed. When sinking the body's weight, try to feel the spine press into the heels of the feet.

RULE 10: RELAX THE SHOULDERS

If you relax the shoulder joints and let them hang naturally, then the entire shoulder and neck area will relax. If you elevate your shoulders when you are standing or sitting, the energy will not sink; you will begin to feel tired, the shoulders will be stressed, and the flow of Blood and Qi will become blocked.

As the center of your body sinks, begin to allow your body's weight to compress into the center of your suspended arms (Figure 16.26). When the shoulders are encouraged to relax and are allowed to drop and roll forward, this facilitates the hollowing of the chest and the expanding and opening of the back, allowing the energy to flow into the arms. Try to feel your arms link up with the scapulae as the clavicles press downward. Your shoulders should remain very loose and free.

RULE 11: SINK THE ELBOWS

When practicing the Immortal Post posture (Figure 16.27) with the hands positioned by the Heart, it is important to bend the elbows slightly, holding them lower than the hands. The arms must also curve inward as if embracing a large ball or barrel. Do not push the elbows out so far that you lose the curve in your arm; this is of extreme importance. Your arms should not bend inward more than 45 degrees. The energy flowing in your arms is like water running through a hose. If you bend them too sharply, much of the supply of Qi will be cut off.

While in a Wuji posture, imagine that a weight is hanging from the elbows; otherwise a sensation of compression will be felt at the shoulder and elbow joints. The elbows should be slightly

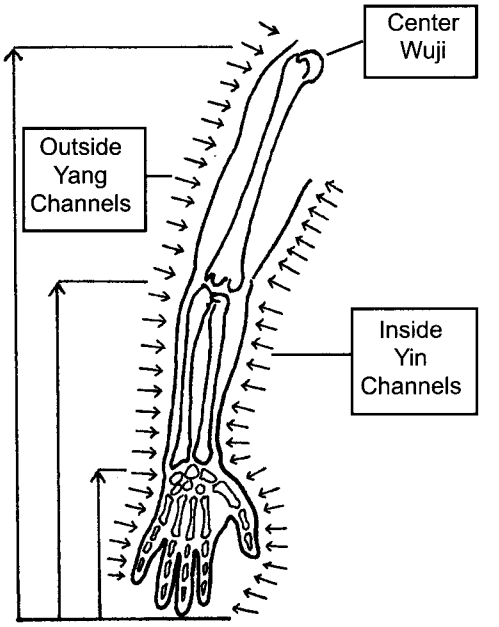

Figure 16.26. Allow the bones in the arms to feel heavy, naturally stretching the tissues and increasing Qi flow to the extremities.

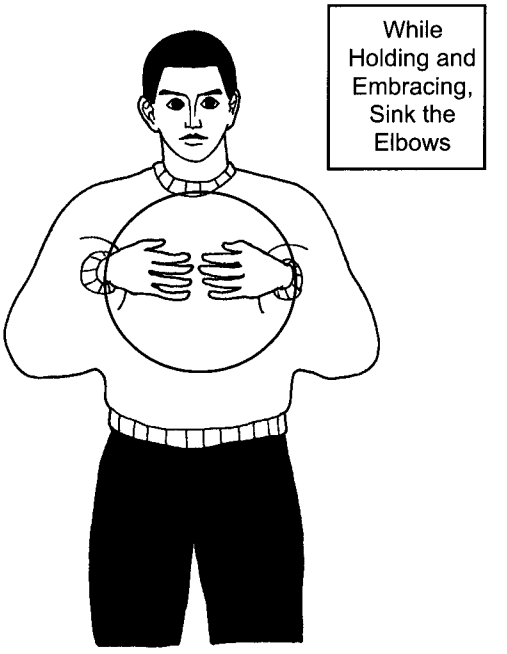

Figure 16.27. The Immortal Post Posture

bent and relaxed, remaining structurally correct and not weak. This will help to roll the shoulders forward and open the back. If the elbows are not bent, there will be decreased energy flow.

RULE 12: HOLLOW THE ARMPITS

Hollow the armpits as if each one is holding an egg. This allows the Qi and Blood to flow freely in the upper limbs and increases the arm's energetic potential (Figure 16.28). To relax the shoulders, move the tips of the elbows down and outward towards the back sides of the torso. Avoid sloping or squaring the shoulders.

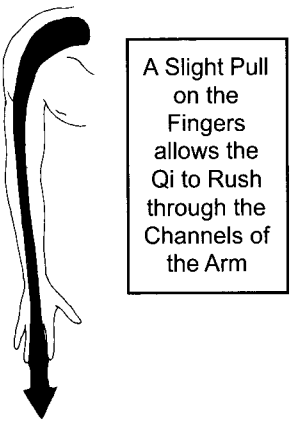

Figure 16.28. When the shoulder relaxes, the Qi flow into the arm increases.

RULE 13: RELAX THE WRISTS

This includes hollowing the palm and the comfortable curling of the fingers. Relaxation of the wrist allows the Shu-Stream points in the wrist to communicate with the fingers. Hollowing the palm and curling the fingers allows for the natural stretching and curving of the hand which prevents the Qi from diffusing. It is important to avoid being rigid and purposefully bending the fingers, as all hand postures affect the brain and also the body's Qi flow.

The wrist must form a line with the shoulders. Do not bend the wrists, but hold them straight so that the middle finger forms a line with the forearm allowing the hands and fingers to hang relaxed but not limp. Relaxing the wrists helps to regulate the three Yang and three Yin channels of the hands so that Qi and Blood can flow freely.

RULE 14: SUSPEND THE HEAD

The classics say that "the head is held aloft not by force, but as if it were placed there by a ruling power." Hold the head as if it were suspended, keeping the Baihui area pointed to Heaven (Figure 16.29). This produces space in the body by elongating the spine, allowing the intercostal muscles (between the ribs) to elongate. This elongation of the spine also increases Qi flow within the Thrusting Vessels, allowing for increased vibrational resonance within the body.

When suspended, the head must be kept upright and positioned in the middle of the chest and shoulders. This helps to set the whole body

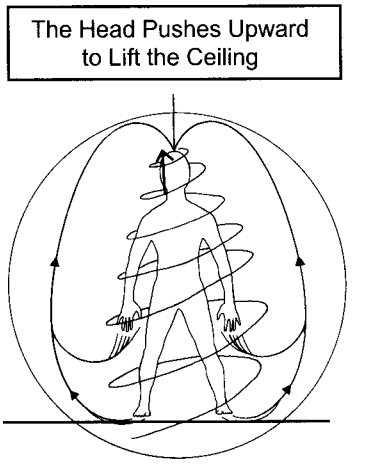

Figure 16.29. Suspending the head allows the body to become sensitive to the surrounding environment and to external fields of Qi.

in the upright position and also directs the Qi and Blood to flow upward to nourish the Brain and the Mind. In this position, the Shen will be reinforced (it is the Shen which controls all the physical and mental activities), while the Jing and the Qi will be invigorated. An effective visualization is to imagine your head lifting high into space, your waist positioned in the clouds, and your feet sunk deep into the Earth.

RULE 15: TUCK THE CHIN

The head cannot be properly suspended if the chin is not tucked in. Only then can the Baihui

point on the top of the head be correctly positioned and the nasal respiration kept free.

Tuck the chin and slightly lean forward to stretch and lengthen the spine. You should feel the stretch all the way down into the coccyx. Next, slowly shift the weight backwards, stacking each vertebra on top of the one beneath it, starting from the bottom of the coccyx and sacrum and moving upwards.

RULE 16: CLOSE THE EYES FOR INNER VISION

The Chinese have a saying: "close the curtain." This refers to dropping the eyelids to facilitate inner-vision, and focusing on the specific area where the Qi is being trained or circulated. The eyes are of great importance in Medical Qigong exercises. It is said that the functional activities of Qi are determined by the eyes; the eyes are the messengers of the Mind; and the Mind is the residence of the Shen.

Of all the viscera, the Liver has the greatest energetic influence on the vision, because the veins that supply the eyes are also collateral branches of the Liver Channel. Thus closing the eyes also produces a soothing effect on the Liver, and helps access the Hun.

INDUCING A QUIESCENT (YIN) STATE

Completely closed eyes will induce an absolute Yin state which is generally used in meditations for quieting the patient's Qi. However, when used excessively (with all Yin and no Yang energy), the patient's Qi can become too inactive and sedate. Completely closed eyes can also be used in Medical Qigong prescriptions for Tonifying Deficient conditions when combined with Color Therapy.

INDUCING AN ACTIVE (YANG) STATE

Completely open eyes will induce an absolute Yang state. This is generally used in meditations for stimulating the patient's Qi. However, if overused, this type of meditation can make the patient too restless and active. Completely open eyes can also be used in Medical Qigong prescriptions for dispersing Excess conditions when combined with Sound Therapy.

INDUCING A BALANCED (REGULATED) STATE

When the goal is to Regulate the body's energy, the eyes should be slightly open in order to leave a small thread of light inside the eyes. This will keep the Yang (light) within the Yin (dark), so that the Qi will be more balanced. Because energy leaves the body through the eyes, after performing Medical Qigong exercises or prescriptions it is important to allow your eyes to close halfway in order to continue the cultivation of life-force energy.

USING THE EYES TO CALM THE SHEN

Closing the eyelids gently when practicing Medical Qigong exercises or meditations will restrain the vision and help calm the Shen. Shutting the eyes too tightly, however, can cause tension in the upper and lower eyelids as well as the eyes themselves.

An ancient Daoist meditation "secret," is to use the eyes for observing and directing the internal flow of Qi while performing the Microcosmic Orbit. This is practiced by imagining the flow of breath and Qi as a stream of bright light or fresh water. The practitioner will follow the circulating breath with semi-closed eyes, moving the eyeballs first downward to follow the Qi movement through the Conception Vessel, then upward, following the Qi movement through the Governing Vessel.

After practicing meditation, gather the excess Qi of the eyes towards the back side of the orbital surface of the eyeballs, sending the energy downward into the Lower Dantian via the Taiji Pole. This will prevent the eyes from overheating and drying out and will help to calm the Shen.

Additionally, while practicing a meditation that involves staring into the distant horizon, the eyes should not be allowed to focus onto any specific item, but should instead be encouraged to stare softly into infinity. This relaxed visualization technique is also known as the "One Thousand Yard Stare," and helps in regulating the venous pressure in the cranial cavity.

In ancient China, the Daoist monks would practice slowly bringing the distant scenery into their body through the light of their Shen via the Yintang point (Third Eye area) after exercising or meditating. Next, they would allow the distant image to penetrate further into their mind, and

into the upper chambers of their Upper Dantian. Then, the monks would use the gathered light of their Shen to quickly project the absorbed image back into the horizon. After repeating this absorption - projection technique several times, the monks would then allow the light of their Shen to reflect the image internally within the confines of the Upper Dantian. This technique was used to develop the "Eyes of Heaven," and allowed the monks the ability to project and receive thought forms, light, and spirit.

RAPID EYE MOVEMENT

Certain Qigong masters believe that the resonating flux created in sleep during REM (Rapid Eye Movement) allows the subconscious mind the ability to "download" the individual's daily experiences. Any twitching, shaking, and REM eye movements experienced during the Medical Qigong treatment is observed as the body's energetic and nervous systems realigning themselves to the newly initiated patterns. The twitching, shaking, and REM eye movements also allow the patient's Shen and Hun the ability to further reprocess the healing "message" projected into the patient's body from the doctor, initiated by chaotic resonant patterns.

THE ENERGETIC FUNCTION OF THE EYES

The dark pupil in the center of the eye always maintains its exact same size, and it is considered the physical lens of the eye. However, the surrounding aperture known as the "iris" expands and contracts around the pupil according to various energetic stimulations (Figure 16.30). Thoughts, emotions, light, and darkness all affect the individual's Jing, Qi, and Shen, causing the iris to either expand or contract. During deep meditation, the iris expands to allow the pupil to "open." This degree of opening corresponds to the degree of the individual's internal spiritual light; hence the saying, "the eyes are the windows to the soul."

According to ancient Chinese Daoist teachings, the expansion of the iris also provides the individual with an energetic entry portal into the Wuji. If, for example, both eyes look upwards towards the Crystal Chamber of the Upper Dantian, the body's Qi will merge with the Shen and draw up into the infinite space of the Wuji, fusing with

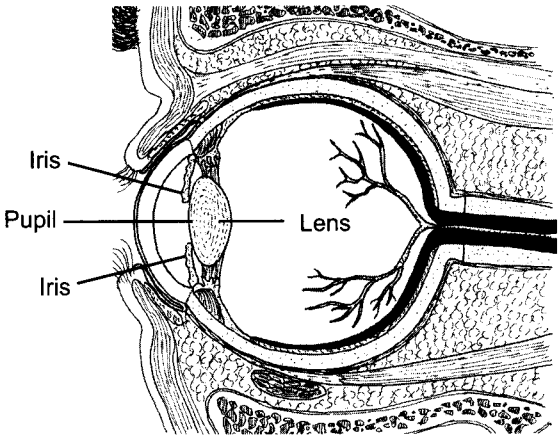

Figure 16.30. The "iris" expands and contracts around the pupil according to various energetic stimulations. (Inspired from the original artwork of Wynn Kapit).

the energy of the divine (located within the Taiji Pole). The energetic function of looking upward towards the center of the Brain causes the eyes to cross, resulting in the union of the Wood Element (left eye) and Metal Element (right eye) energies. In ancient Chinese alchemic transitions, the combining of these two elements is required for increasing the development of psychic energy. This increase in psychic development is due to the energetic union of the Hun (Wood Element: Ethereal Soul) and Po (Metal Element: Corporeal Soul) within the body, and is said to connect the meditator with his or her Yuan Shen (Original Spirit).

Each eye has its own specific responsibility and energetic function, described as follows:

- **The right eye** is generally used to project Qi and Shen out of the body (projecting thoughts, images, intentions, desires, and emotions). According to ancient Chinese alchemy, the right eye also relates to the Kidney Water, Yin, Qi, Earth, Metal Element, the Moon, and the Po (Corporeal Soul).
- **The left eye** is generally used to receive Qi and Shen into the body (drawing in thoughts, images, intentions, desires, and emotions). According to ancient Chinese alchemy, the left eye also relates to Heart Fire, Yang, Shen, Heaven, Wood Element, the Sun, and the Hun (Ethereal Soul).

RULE 17: CLOSE THE MOUTH, OPEN THE NOSE, STOP THE EARS

When closing the mouth, the doctor is encouraged to soften the face into a half-smile. The half-smile is used to relax the muscles of the jaw, and facilitates increased Qi flow into the head area.

In order to enhance the gathering of the Yang during Medical Qigong exercises and meditations, close the lips while gently touching the teeth together. By closing the lips, the doctor will prevent the gathered internal Qi from flowing out of his or her body. Avoid clenching the teeth, as this increased tension will block the internal flow of Kidney Qi.

OPEN THE NOSE

In most Medical Qigong exercises and meditations, both inhalation and exhalation take place through the nose (Figure 16.31). In ancient China, the nose was considered to be the "male organ" during the process of energetic refinement. The ancient Daoists referred to the nose as the "Mystery of Heaven," which nourishes Man with five breaths that enter and flow into the Lungs and Heart. It is also believed that the nose was responsible for the bellows action that supplies the wind and breath used to "fan the fire" within the lower abdominal furnace.

The mouth, which remains closed, is considered the "female organ," and was often referred to as the "Mystery of Earth," which nourishes Man with five flavors that enter and flow into the Stomach and Intestines. The mouth is responsible for supplying the saliva (developed from the colored vapors of the Five Yin Organs) for the lower abdominal furnace.

Once stored, the five breaths unite with the five flavors and generate both saliva and secretions. As the breath and the secretions react upon each other the Shen is spontaneously born. By reacting on each other, both the breaths and flavors also form the energetic foundation of the five viscera (Liver, Heart, Spleen, Lungs and Kidneys).

In ancient China, nose breathing was additionally used to activate the upper soft palate of the mouth (considered the "brain diaphragm"), creating better Qi and Blood flow into the Brain. Modern Scientific research has shown that many

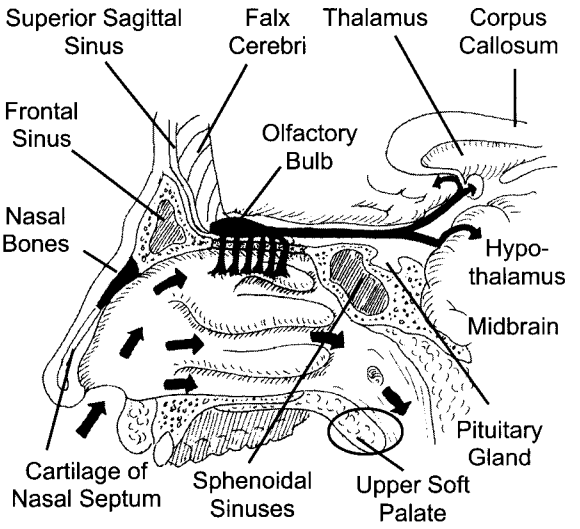

Figure 16.31. As the air flows quickly in and out of the nostrils it causes vibrational resonances to occur within the nasal passages, which in turn cause the nasal bones to vibrate, stimulating the pituitary gland and falx cerebri of the Brain. (Inspired from the original artwork of Wynn Kapit).

autonomic and voluntary functions are related to the breath and specific nerve components situated at the base of the nose; and that the nasal mucosa is connected to the visceral, excretory and reproductive organs. Therefore, improper breathing (irregularity of nostril breath) can initiate disturbances in any of these organ systems and vice versa (e.g., obstruction of the nasal passage can slow the Heart rate and Blood circulation, preventing proper tissue oxygenation).

The ancient Chinese believed that each breath contained an underlying significance and a particular coded message. Therefore the breath was divided into three different aspects: the physical breath, energetic breath, and spiritual breath (see Chapter 17).

The Three Types of Nostril Breathing

The breath, and manner in which the air flows in and out through the nostrils during respiration, can be divided into three types of nostril breathing: Dominant Right Side Nostril Respiration, Dominant Left Side Nostril Respiration, and Balanced (both sides) Nostril Respiration.

The dominant nostril, through which the ma-

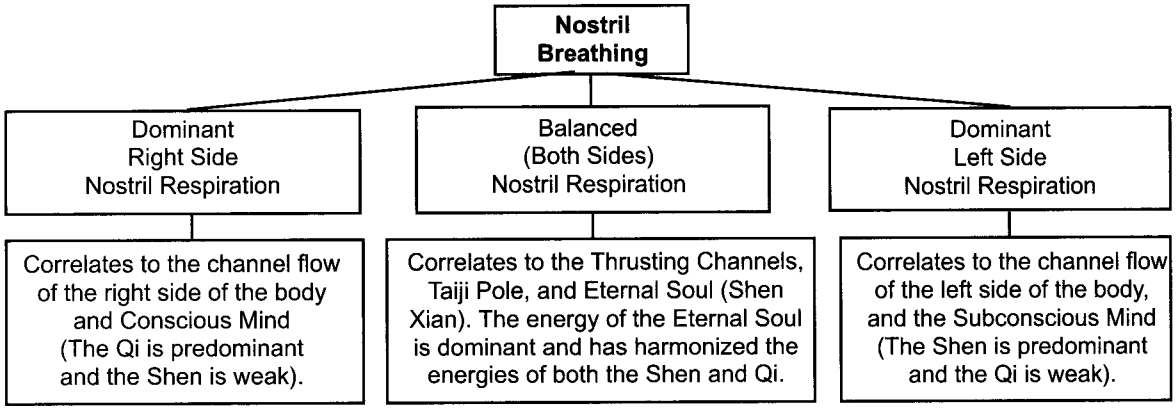

Figure 16.32. The Three Types of Nostril Breathing

jority of breath and energy flows, alternates at regular intervals (every sixty to eighty minutes). This alternation corresponds to the process of continually balancing complimentary Yin and Yang aspects of the nervous system, and also relates to specific regulations of the right and left quadrants of the Brain. This alternating cycle of nostril breath is based on the prenatal and postnatal biorhythms of the body as it relates to the two hemispheres of the Brain. The three types of nostril breathing are described as follows (Figure 16.32):

- **Dominant Right Side Nostril Respiration:** When the right nostril dominates, this is correlated with the channel flow of the right side of the body, as well as the energetic properties of the Conscious Mind. It indicates that the Qi is predominant and that the Shen is weak.
- **Dominant Left Side Nostril Respiration:** When the left nostril dominates, this is correlated with the channel flow of the left side of the body, as well as the energetic properties of the Subconscious Mind. It indicates that the Shen is predominant and that the Qi is weak.
- **Balanced (both sides) Nostril Respiration:** When both the right and left sides of the nostrils are balanced, this is correlated to the Thrusting Channels and Taiji Pole, as well as the Eternal Soul (Shen Xian). It indicates that the energy of the Eternal Soul is dominant and has harmonized the energies of both the Shen and Qi.

The energetic flow created by the left and right nostril breath acts like alternating positive (right) and negative (left) electrical circuits. During meditation, if the right nostril is dominant, the individual will experience physical difficulties and the body will be restless; if the left nostril is dominant, the individual's Mind will wander into dream or sleep; however, if both nostrils are open, the individual's Mind can be easily focused, and he or she will experience stronger results because the body's mental and physical energetic patterns become harmonized and rhythmic, and the Shen becomes calm.

STOPPING THE EARS

To the ancient Daoists, all body parts that come in pairs (i.e., brain, ears, eyes, nose, breast nipples, hands, testicles/ovaries, and feet) are correlated with the celestial influences of the Sun and Moon. The ancient Chinese use the expression "Stopping the ears," to portray the Daoist adepts' focus on hearing inward, so as to be free from outside interference. The ancient Daoists believed that "Stopping the ears" allowed the celestial influences of the Sun and Moon to internalize and manifest inside the adept's physical body (Figure 16.33).

In ancient times, when meditating, Daoist students were also taught to "close the nine major gates of illumination" so that their eyes did not see (and the Hun remains in the Liver), their ears did not hear (and the Jing remains in the genitals), their nose did not smell (and the Po remains in the Lungs), and their four limbs did not move (so that the Yi remains in the Spleen).

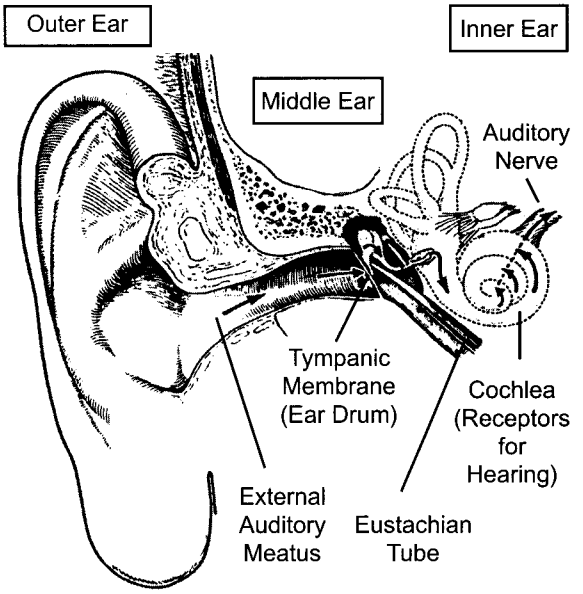

Figure 16.33. The ear is divided into three parts: the Outer Ear (responsible for collecting and channeling sound); the Middle Ear (responsible for converting sound energy into mechanical energy); and the Inner Ear (responsible for both auditory and vestibular stimulation).
(Inspired from the original artwork of Wynn Kapit)

In ancient China, the skill of "Stopping the Ears" was divided into either Yin or Yang methods, described as follows:

- **Yin Method:** In this technique, the doctor completely withdraws his or her Mind from the sense of hearing, shutting off all sounds, and no longer engages in any audible distractions.
- **Yang Method:** In this technique, the doctor focuses his or her attention on eliminating one sound at a time, registering, acknowledging, releasing and shutting off the audible distractions. The doctor continues this process one sound at a time until he or she has completely shut off all sounds, and no longer engages in any audible distractions.

RULE 18: TOUCH THE TONGUE TO THE UPPER PALATE

Traditionally, a half smile is used to relax the muscles of the face and jaw, and then the tongue position is engaged. When the tongue touches the upper palate, it forms what is called the "Bird's Bridge." The connection of the tongue links the external Qi flows of both the Governing Vessel (which ends at the nose and upper palate) and the Conception Vessel (which ends in the mouth). As the tongue touches the upper palate, the body's Qi flow increases, and the three fields of Wei Qi expand. This can help to eliminate diseases and prolong life. The belief is that when someone has a disease, the Governing and Conception Vessels are to some extent disconnected.

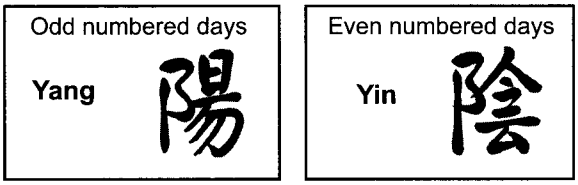

Figure 16.34. The Three Types of Nostril Breathing

Some Qigong doctors test their patients' progress by having them meditate with their tongue suspended in their mouth. Upon command, they connect the tongue to the upper palate. The suddenly increased expansion and strength of the patients' Wei Qi is easily observed by the doctor and indicates the degree of their progress.

ANCIENT DAOIST TONGUE TECHNIQUES

In ancient China, when a Daoist shaman began to gather energy in the evening time, he or she would focus on the tip of the tongue as a brush. On a Yang day (an odd numbered day), the masters would draw the character for Yang on the hard palate of the roof of his or her mouth (Figure 16.34). Once the character was completed, the master exhaled through his or her mouth, so that the breath or "Yang Vapor" could mix with the light of the Pole Star and be reabsorbed into the master's body via the nose.

On a Yin day (an even numbered day), the ancient masters would draw the character for Yin on the hard palate on the roof of his or her mouth.

When called upon, a Daoist shaman could create and release specific spells and energy using his or her tongue to draw magic words on the upper palate, and then breathing out and releasing the spirit energy.

GATHERING THE SALIVA

To the ancient Daoists, saliva was seen as a precious internal nectar, and was given various names, such as the "juice of jade," "divine juice," "golden liqueur" and "mysterious source." The ancient Chinese treated saliva as the water-of-life, which was capable of making one hundred joints supple, as well as moistening and harmonizing the internal viscera. Ancient Daoist texts on Respiratory Dao Yin compare swallowing saliva to the beneficial effects of rain soaking the Earth and "swallowing up dryness." Another ancient Daoist text states, "whereas breath makes the clouds, the act of swallowing saliva spreads the rain and brings life to the hundred thousand spirits."

Saliva accomplishes two complementary functions:

- First, it rinses the mouth and has a purifying function
- Second, it is the nourishment of immortality during the course of meditation

The "Chapter on the Yellow Center," from the *Dao Shu* (Daoist Pivot), states "the two internal streams of the Urinary Bladder and Kidneys channels unite to form the saliva, while the circulation of energy in the Sea of Qi is their important route of travel." Since ancient times, the Kidneys have been used as one of the primary places to store Qi. Both of the body's Kidney Channels run along the sides of the base of the tongue. The ancient Chinese Daoists considered the saliva under the tongue to be the "upper source" of the Kidney fluid, and therefore thought to protect and cultivate this Kidney fluid by creating the "Immortal Pill."

The ancient Daoist technique called the "Method of Absorbing the Mists," utilizes the body's internal "mists" of the Yin organs as the five original "Yin Sprouting Clouds of Heaven." It is these five original mists that gather to form saliva, which is considered to be the Yin Element of the upper part of the body. These five clouds are the sprouting vapors of the Original Five Breaths which stem from the Five Yin Organs, and are responsible for nourishing and strengthening the five viscera.

SWALLOWING THE SALIVA

According to the ancient Daoist text, *The Yellow Court Canon*, "The clear water of the Jade Lake pours down to the Magical Root. Be careful to nourish it and you will live long. Calamities will not invade him who rinses and swallows this magical fluid."

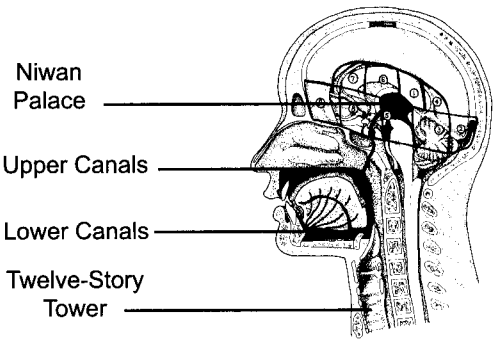

Figure 16.35. The passage of saliva from the Jade Lake

The center of the mouth is called the "Jade Lake." The tongue, which is considered the "Magical Root," is used to stir up and activate the formation of saliva within the Jade Lake. It is the tongue that accumulates, gathers, and directs the saliva to flow down the throat.

The ancient Daoists believed that before being swallowed, the passage of saliva from the Jade Lake originally flowed into the mouth through four canals: Two Upper Canals, and Two Lower Canals, described as follows (Figure 16.35):

- **The Upper Canals:** The two upper canals flow from the Niwan point located in the Upper Dantian, and pass through the two orifices of the upper gums which terminate at the teeth in the region of the upper jaw.
- **The Lower Canals:** The two lower canals flow from behind the sinciput (located in the anterior aspect of the head, just above the forehead), and descend into the two Kidney Channels underneath the tongue, terminating behind the teeth in the region of the lower jaw.

When swallowing saliva, the throat is essentially seen as a twelve-story tower, constructed and sequentially arranged in twelve rings which correspond to the Chinese twelve two-hour time periods. The ancient Daoist viewed the throat as the "road of the spirit" where saliva divides itself into liquid pearls. The phrase, "To String Pearls" is the name given to the act of repeatedly swallowing saliva.

Only when the saliva takes on an oily or thick appearance it is ready to be rinsed through the mouth and swallowed. The transformation of saliva is called, "the Method of Creating the Jade Liquor and Golden Beverage," and consists of six specific juices (Liu Ye) of the body: Jing, tears (two different types), saliva, sweat and urine. Together the six juices are combined with the body's Yuan Qi in order to create the Jade Liquor and Golden Beverage.

According to the ancient Daoist text, *The Scripture on the Nourishment of the Vital Principle and the Prolongation of Life*, there are several names given to the various states and functions of saliva, for example:

- "Jade Beverage" is the name given to saliva when it is collected within the mouth
- "Sweet Source" is the name given to saliva that is used to rinse the mouth
- "Flowery Lake" is the name given to the saliva when it is flowing
- "Sweet Dew" is the name given to the saliva when it descends
- "Source of Essence" is the name given to the saliva when it disperses or dissolves

CREATING THE IMMORTAL PILL

There is an exchange of Yin and Yang energy within the saliva, as Heaven Qi and Earth Qi are gathered within Man's Body Fluid Essence in order to create the "Immortal Pill."

The technique called "Gathering the Saliva" begins when the tongue touches the upper palate, and increases the secretion of saliva. Saliva contains many enzymes, which not only aid digestion but also benefit the patient's physiology. In ancient China, the practice of gathering the saliva was also called "Gathering the Immortal's Water," and was practiced in order to create the "Immortal Pill."

Creating the Immortal Pill involves combining the energized saliva, the inhaled air, and the absorbed energy of the Five Elements (gathered from the universal and environmental energetic fields) into the mouth during Qi cultivation exercises and meditations.

Swallowing the Immortal Pill is performed with three consecutive gulps, and uses the breath as a cork to enclose the saliva. When swallowing the Immortal Pill, it is important to tilt the head slightly backwards (after exhaling).

After swallowing the Immortal Pill, the energized saliva mixture is directed to flow down the Conception Vessel to bathe the Five Yin Organs, and is then gathered into the Lower Dantian, causing energetic "steam" to rise. Next, the energetic "steam" is directed to flow up the Governing Vessel into the Brain to replenish and nurture the Upper Dantian and Sea of Marrow.

Grinding the Teeth and Clicking the Teeth

Before and after Qigong exercises and meditations, the student is always directed to "grind their teeth" thirty-six times to "summon the divine spirits," prior to gathering saliva. There are several ways to grind the teeth. From an ancient Daoist perspective, grinding the teeth to the left is said to make the "heavenly bell" respond, while grinding the teeth to the right is said to make the "celestial music stone" sound. Both of these practices are meant to drive away evil influences.

Clicking the teeth creates the sound of the "heavenly drum" and serves to call forth divine spirits. This teeth clicking practice is performed both at the beginning and end of meditation practice (generally 32 or 56 times), and is also accompanied by the swallowing of saliva.

Twisting the Head

The ancient Daoists recommended turning the neck and making one complete circular movement with the head "like a turtle" before swallowing the saliva.

Ancient Daoist Bagua Saliva Gathering

In ancient China, when a Daoist shaman began to gather energy, he or she would focus on gathering the energy of the Bagua (Eight Directions) of Heaven, Man, and Earth into his or her saliva before swallowing. This would allow the master to completely gather the twenty-four cosmological divisions of the world (three times eight directions), with all their "realized spirits" while meditating.

Before the Daoist master would swallow his or her saliva during meditation, the master would first grind the teeth on the left side of the jaw (Yang), tilt the head backwards, then swallow the saliva and

Figure 16.36. For the Wood position, which is related to the Liver, the tongue is placed on the middle of the upper palate at the center of the roof of the mouth.

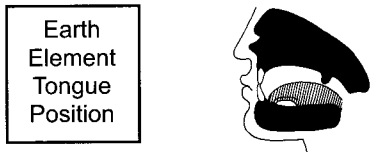

Figure 16.38. For the Earth position, which is related to the Spleen, the tongue is placed on the bottom of the jaw at the base of the lower palate, beneath the teeth and gum line.

envision gathering and absorbing the spirits of the Eight Directions within the Heavens.

Next, the master would grind the four front upper and four front lower teeth, tilt the head backwards, swallow the saliva and envision gathering and absorbing the spirits within the central region of his or her chest, in each of the Eight Directions.

Finally, the master would grind the teeth on the right side of the jaw (Yin), tilt the head backwards, swallow the saliva, and envision gathering and absorbing the spirits of the lower regions of Earth, stretching out in Eight Directions.

With these practices, the saliva transformed from an ordinary Body Fluid into a mixture of colored vapors and energies, containing the primary energetic principles of life. This transformed saliva acted as fuel for the alchemical process occurring within the Daoist's Lower Dantian. Ancient Daoists believed that when swallowing the saliva, "above it repairs the Ni Wan Palace of the Upper Dantian, below it moistens the five Yin organs."

ANCIENT DAOIST FIVE TONGUE POSITIONS

There are five - Five Element Tongue Positions. Each tongue position is related to one of the Five Yin Organs and can be used to direct the Qi to that particular organ. Sometimes, if too much Heat is created while practicing Medical Qigong prescriptions, the patient will be instructed to "change the tongue position" as well as the meditation. The Five

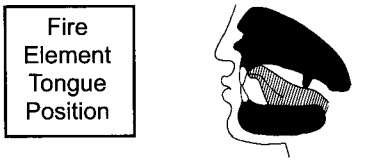

Figure 16.37. For the Fire position, which is related to the Heart, the tongue is placed on the front of the upper palate, behind the teeth and gum line.

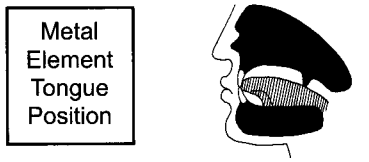

Figure 16.39. For the Metal position, which is related to the Lungs, the tongue is placed between the maxilla and mandible bones, suspended, behind the teeth.

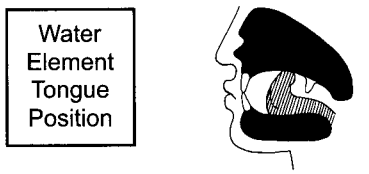

Figure 16.40. For the Water position, which is related to the Kidneys, the tongue is placed on the soft palate at the back of the upper palate.

Element Tongue Positions are described as follows.

1. **The Wood (Liver) position** requires that the tongue be placed on the hard palate, at the middle of the upper palate at the center of the roof of the mouth (Figure 16.36).
2. **The Fire (Heart) position** requires that the tongue be placed on the hard palate at the front of the upper palate behind the teeth and gum line (Figure 16.37).
3. **The Earth (Spleen) position** requires that the tongue be placed on the bottom of the jaw at the base of the lower palate, beneath the teeth and gum line (Figure 16.38).
4. **The Metal (Lungs) position** requires that the tongue be placed between the maxilla and mandible bones, suspended behind the teeth (Figure 16.39).
5. **The Water (Kidneys) position** requires that the tongue be placed on the soft palate at the back of the upper palate (Figure 16.40).