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**In this volume :**

- **Tao And The Universe Part 2**
- **Fusion Of The five Elements The Path Of Water**
- **Five Element Nutrition**
- **Standing Meditation : Iron Shirt**
- **Internal Orgasm Power And Healing Love**
- **The Tao Mind Of Meditation In daily Life**
- **Searching For The Essence Of Tai Chi**
- **Two Case Histories From The Healing Tao**
- **Clear Yourself Of Negative Emotions And Connect with the Universal Mind to Recharge Your Life-force**

## Tao And The Universe Part 2

This article is a continuation of "Tao and the Universe".

### 5. The Five Elements' Forces of the Universe, Earth, and Humans

Taoists classify all things in the universe making up Universal, Cosmic Particle, and Earthly Forces as correspondences of the "five elements'," "five phases'," or "five interacting" forces of nature. Each force is composed of and controlled by the Five Elements of earth, metal, fire, wood, and water.

#### a. The Origins of the Five Elements of Nature

The five main elemental forces derive from five huge stars (or Five Grand Forces) which came from three larger stars (Three Pure Ones) derived from the original source of all matter and substance known as the Wu Chi (Nothingness). These five stars gave birth to the entire universe of galaxies, stars, and planets, including the North Star from which were created five major constellations and a multitude of smaller stars, such as our sun, which split to produce the earth and other planets. The five constellations have a direct relationship with five specific planets, five seasons of the earth, five directions of the earth, and five major organs of the human body. The Taoists consider the Five Elements' Forces to be Grand Forces, and sometimes refer to them in this way.

1. The Grand Force of Water created the Northern Constellation and the planet Mercury. It controls the northern direction of the Earth's Force and the Winter season, corresponding to the human water force of the kidneys and bladder. Its energy has an inwardly gathering quality.

2. The Grand Force of Fire created the Southern Constellation and the planet Mars. It controls the southern direction of the Earth's Force and the Summer season, corresponding to the human fire force of the heart and small intestine. Its energy has an expanding, developing quality.

3. The Grand Force of Wood created the Eastern Constellation and the planet Jupiter. It controls the eastern direction of the Earth's Force and the Spring season, corresponding to the human wood force of the liver and gall bladder. Its energy has a generating quality.

4. The Grand Force of Metal created the Western Constellation and the planet Venus. It controls the western direction of the Earth's Force and the Fall season, corresponding to the human metal force of the lungs and large intestine. Its energy has a contracting quality.

5. The Grand Force of Earth created the Central Constellation and the planet Saturn. It controls the central direction of the Earth's Force and the Indian Summer season, corresponding to the human earthly force of the spleen, stomach, and pancreas. Its energy has a stabilizing quality.

### 6. The Microcosmic Orbit and the Fusion of Five Elements Practices.

To make connections between and to gain control of the inner and outer universes, the Taoists developed the Micro-cosmic Orbit and the Fusion of Five Elements practices. Both exercises begin with understanding the dynamics of the universe, the earth, and the human body with respect to their relationships to the Five Elements.

The Microcosmic Orbit and Fusion practices mark the beginning of the Taoist discipline of Internal Alchemy. They focus on the interaction and fusion of all five elements and their correspondences, and their transformation into a harmonious whole of high quality energy. During this process the essence of life force energy found in the organs, glands, and senses is transformed, purified, condensed, and combined with the Universal Force. The new form of energy that emerges through this process can effect positive changes in the human body.

To effect positive changes in the human body, the Taoists first focus on the negative aspects or weaknesses to transform them into strengths. The weaknesses are uncovered by focusing on what is known as the counteracting or controlling forces of the Five Elements. This means studying the affects of the five elements upon each other.

In studying the liver, for example, it was discovered that its energy can be counteracted or controlled by the energy of the lungs. The liver's energy is associated with the planet Jupiter and the wood element; the lungs' energy is associated with the planet Venus and the metal element. This is one of the relationships that constitute the Control Cycle in which the metal element controls the wood element, and the lungs control

the liver. Similarly, the energy of the kidneys, associated with the planet Mercury and the water element, can be

counteracted by the energy of the heart, associated with the planet Mars and the element of fire. This means the water element controls the fire element, and the kidneys control the heart. All five elements have a counteracting force.

The interaction of the two elements of water and fire is an easy one to comprehend. The heat of fire can evaporate water, thereby controlling it. If this is true, then the reverse is also true - fire can be counteracted or controlled by the water element. Water can extinguish a fire. The Taoists consider the interactions of the five elements as two distinct cycles existing in nature - the Creative Cycle and the Controlling Cycle (or Counteracting Cycle). Both are equally important in sustaining life, but need to be balanced and in control if things are to be kept running smoothly. Both cycles help determine which of your organs are weak and which are strong. They are studied in depth in the Fusion practice, beginning with the Control Cycle and your negative emotions in Fusion 1.

To utilize the two cycles effectively, it is important to determine your strengths and weaknesses. The planetary associations can play a major role in your conceptualization because there are months or years in which certain stars and/or planets can come very close to earth and can greatly influence your behavior. For example, if you have a weak liver, when the planet Venus (the star emanating the energy of metal,

which is associated with the lungs) comes close to earth, your liver energy can be depleted. This can cause emotional outbursts of anger and indecisiveness, which are the negative emotions of the liver. If you do not know that you need to strengthen the liver's energy, or that you must establish internal balance, you will be affected by such planetary events. This will affect all phases of your life. When the liver is very depleted by the intervention of the stars, planets, earth, and other forces, it becomes difficult for it to recharge itself with energy because of its weakened state. Then, when a stellar charge of energy does come, the liver will not be able to fully utilize it. If the cycle continues, and the counteracting forces of the stars, planets, earth and other sources approach again, the liver will be further depleted, now retaining little or no energy. This can cause tremendous problems in all aspects of your life.

Using the Microcosmic Orbit and Fusion I meditations helps you to open a pathway for energy to flow through the body and to create internal balance before you confront the star or planet influencing you. The formulas of Fusion I will provide a degree of creative, counteracting balances. You will discover how wood and metal (liver and lungs) counteract each other, and will feel how they can be balanced automatically by the Earth's Force. The weaker one will be strengthened. The overly strong one will be toned down by its opposing force. With neither one too weak nor too strong, they will become harmonious. In Fusion II you will confront your influencing stars and planets and use the cycles to promote greater strength.

The negative emotions associated with each organ, and therefore each element, are drawn out of the organs during the Fusion practice to be transformed into a neutralized energy, thereby "balancing the weather" of the bodies total energies. This neutralized energy can be blended with positive energies, also residing in the organs, and transformed into pure life-force energy. The Taoists have a saying: "Refined red sand turns into silver." This means if you fuse all the different kinds of emotional energy together, they will adhere into a harmonious whole. However, unrefined, "un-fused" energy will have the quality of sand, scattered about and unable to stick together.

## **7. The Pearl - the Essence of the Human Body and the Energy Body**

The pure life-force energy derived from the organs and fused together during the Fusion practice is crystallized into an energy ball. This energy ball can be perceived as a crystal or diamond, but is perceived most commonly as a radiant pearl. Forming the pearl is the first step toward transferring consciousness to a new realm.

Not all people perceive the pearl in the same way. Some might not see a pearl, but might recognize it as an acute feeling of awareness or as an intensified ability to concentrate. Some may feel a concentration of heat. All are experiencing the pearl as the essence of life-force energy.

This pearl is then circulated in the Microcosmic Orbit. During circulation the pearl activates and absorbs the Universal and Earthly Forces. It also uses them to strengthen and purify the physical body, particularly the organs, glands, and senses. Later, the pearl plays a central role in developing and nourishing the soul body or energy body. It is developed further in the higher level Kan and Li Meditations.

Balanced energy not only is very desirable for the health of the organs, glands, and senses, but also is basic to the formation of a pearl. Thus, balanced energy is a very important element of Fusion. Also of great importance to the

Fusion practice is the function of the pearl in opening, cleansing, purifying, and protecting specific channels that run through the body. These channels are called the Thrusting Channels (cleansing and protecting channels), the Belt Channel (protecting channel), and the Great Regulator and Great Bridge Channels (binding together and regulating, respectively, energy flow through all the body's acupuncture meridians.)

## **8. The Universal and Earthly Forces Nourish All Life-forms**

The Taoists noted that one major difference between human and animal forms is the erect position assumed by humans, which directs the head toward the heavens and the tailbone toward the earth, thereby creating a direct channel i

for the Universal and Earthly Forces. In man's erect stature, the coccyx directs the Universal Force downward, the head's position directs the Earthly Force upward, and the brain is nourished by both forces. Taoists acknowledge this channel as the source of our mental development, which has surpassed that of the known animal kingdom because these forces naturally enhance the powers of the mind. Animals, particularly quadrupeds, tend to raise their tails up to the heavens to channel the Universal Force downward while drawing the Earthly Force up through the four feet. This type of channeling enhances the body before the energy reaches the brain (although both forces do circulate to the head), thereby giving the animals increased physical strength instead of the superior mental capacity that humans receive.

The Universal Force flows downward in a clockwise spiral to the crown, where it penetrates and nourishes all the glands within the head, then continues down through the palate. The Earthly Force ascends through the soles of the feet and up through the genitals, perineum, and coccyx, passing the heart center, until it reaches the salivary glands of the tongue. Taoists regard saliva as a mixture of the Heavenly and Earthly Forces that nourish the body. Another path draws the earth's energy up the spine and into the brain. In this way humans have the ability to channel the essences of the Universal and Earthly Forces to balance and strengthen the body, mind, and spirit.

## **9. The North Star and Big Dipper**

Taoists regard the three largest known stars - Polaris (the North Star), Thuban, and Vega - as the collective center of our galaxy. The earth's axis shifts toward a different one of these stars every 2,150 years as a result of the gravitational pull from the sun and moon. The axis currently tilts toward the North Star, which is therefore referred to as the Pole Star. In other words, if one were to observe the sky from the North Pole, the entire galaxy would appear to be moving around the North Star. As the earth's axis is influenced by its mass, the North Star controls the earth's energy fields, thereby affecting our health and emotional states. The three stars are also known as the Violet Stars because they emanate violet rays throughout the galaxy which affect every living cell of nature on our planet. Taoists believe that a human's heart tilts 45 degrees toward the North Star, just as the earth tilts 23.5 degrees toward it to receive its energy. They also believe that every planet in the galaxy tilts toward these Violet Stars in the same way, and that the North Star is presently controlling them as well.

The Big Dipper revolves around the North Star, as do other constellations, reflecting the earth's seasonal changes. The importance of this constellation to Taoism is in its radiant energy, which can often be seen as an emanation of red light. This emanation, combined with the violet rays of the Violet Stars (especially Polaris), has a positive, nurturing

effect upon the bodies and minds of those who know how to access it. The group of Violet Stars, the Southern Cross constellation, and other constellations are believed by Taoists to form the "Gates of Heaven." All living things must pass through these gates to return to their source of origin, the Wu Chi, which is the state of oneness with the Tao.

## **10. Steps to Return to the Wu Chi**

Taoists believe that the soul and spirit come from the stars and ultimately must return to them to find their origins. To do this, one must first gather and refine the energies of soul and spirit until they are as pure as the stars, and eventually

as pure as the Original Force. This is the way to achieve oneness with the Tao. The first step is to refine the force internally while practicing detachment from worldly things. This helps to break the bonds that hold us to this world. The second step is to draw in the forces of the planets to enhance our own internal force. This

gives us spiritual power in the form of energy to use as fuel for travel to the planets, the constellations (especially the Big Dipper), and finally to the North Star, which points to Heaven. Taoists refer to this process of absorbing, transforming, and combining our soul and spiritual energies as "marrying the force," which means that we purify our energies to merge with the stellar forces.

## Fusion Of The five Elements The Path Of Water

Nine years ago, I was one of those people who had the idea that meditation was something that happens exclusively in the spine and "third eye" area of the brain. I had learned in Kundalini Yoga that this was the secret and quick path to enlightenment. It was somewhat of a shock to me when I heard the instructions for Fusion I meditation focused primarily on connecting my outer sense organs (eyes, ears, etc.) to my inner vital organs and collecting my feelings into a "pearl" at the center of a geometrically shaped "pakua" perceived at the navel.

My mind protested. What in these fleshy liver and kidney tissues could possibly be spiritual? After all, I had been meditating for years and had never noticed anything special about these "lower" areas of my animal nature, which I was busy trying to transcend. There were other problems - I couldn't visualize the eight-sided pakua, I couldn't see any colored balls or pearls at the Five Element collection points, and I also felt the Chinese were being very arbitrary in associating a single emotion with each vital organ.

Later I realized it was I who was trying to "force" my mind during meditation, a habit born of our aggressive society and the excessive use of the fire element in my Kundalini Yoga training. Any "fire path" teaching that relies heavily on heavy breathing and crown/ Third Eye focusing can produce quick spiritual vision. But this heightened state is difficult to sustain or to integrate into the ordinary flow of daily life, with its "watery" realm of human emotions and shifting relationships. That is why "fire yogis" often end up as ascetics, or isolate themselves in ashrams. They cannot resolve the duality and the wild swings in polar tension between their inner spiritual life and the flow of life and desire that powers human society.

Taoist Internal Alchemy is a path of

mixing water and fire elements. With it you can live in the world while you cultivate yourself to a very high level. It took me a long time to fully understand that the Fusion of the Five Elements practice is successful only when you put yourself into a predominantly water mode - a focused state of receptivity - within the guiding framework of the Fusion formula.

The water element is the Yin or receptive state of mind. In the physical realm it is the water/womb that nurtures life on planet Earth and stops the Sun and its Yang rays from burning all of us to a crisp. The Fusion meditation is centered in the navel, but the pearl is formed slightly to the back between the kidneys, where the Taoist sacred texts say our "Original Chi" bubbles forth. This is now a forgotten place within us, hidden amongst our dark and watery organs (bladder, kidneys, ovaries), where much of our unconscious emotional life settles, like silt on the bottom of the sea.

So it was a simple, yet very exciting and profound moment in my spiritual life when, after a few days of doing the Fusion I practice of "creating the perfect inner weather," I felt "something happen" in the dark, watery zone of my lower body. I felt a coldness in my perineum/water collection point, and was amazed I could actually mix it with the heat from my heart/fire collection point. I had trouble feeling the lung/metal collection dryness, but eventually something definitely happened when I mixed it with the moist, expanding energy I felt in my liver/wood collection point.

The collection points, I realized excitedly, were like the invisible vital organs of my subtle body that regulated the five phases of Chi flow in my physical body. The dense, "animal, lower" parts of my physical body were meditating or resonating with a spiritual dimension of my soul that I never knew existed!

A very mild, yet powerful wave of bliss came over my body. I felt deeply grounded in my whole body and emotionally peaceful in a way I had never been, even when my Third Eye was throbbing with energy from doing Kundalini Yoga. I realized I had been ignoring my everyday, bodily feeling self and that a lot of emotional blocks - cellular memories stored within the vital organs themselves - had been simply bypassed by shooting up the spine. I could temporarily escape or suppress angry feelings by focusing in my Third Eye or crown. But it took me four years to discover that chanting mantras and fast deep breathing, as wonderful as they were, could not permanently balance and purify my old buried feelings, i.e. the Big Five "nasties" identified by the Chinese as fear, anger, worry, hatred/ cruelty, and grief.

It was only when I allowed myself to experience my five elemental energies as they functioned through my vital organs that I realized the accusation of Wilhelm Reich was true: many yogis and mystics have "armored" their body and opened their head center only. To experience a full body awakening, and the

orgasm that occurs as the "subtle organs" and physical organs are consciously united, the energies generated at the crown and crystal palace (at the junction of pituitary and pineal glands) must be integrated with the so-called "lower" body functions chakras.

The path of Taoist Internal Alchemy faces this challenge by activating the light of the pearl, which is a lunar or reflective type of spiritual light that is easier to absorb than raw solar light. With this "inner moonlight" we can look into the most dense, unconscious centers of body matter, just as the full moon illuminates the black night sky. By opening these channels early on in the Fusion I meditation, and learning to control the watery elements in life, the groundwork for deeper alchemical work is laid for the Kan and Li meditations. In the Kan and Li the water energy stored in the pearl is cooked and released as steam power.

Fusion of the Five Elements I and II are keys that open doors in unconscious realms and harmonize the buried instinct, emotion, and desire. The Chinese texts sometimes refer to this as "Shin" our heart or emotional mind. This emotional mind can change quickly, like the weather, depending on what it wants. Spiritual growth requires stability with change, not erratic outbreaks of desire and emotion.

That is why the model of balance of the Five Elements is the regular change of the four seasons with the planet Earth as the fifth mediating element. The seasons change, but nature doesn't get depleted. When your self-nature - your emotions and desires - are regulated (not denied or suppressed), your personal "Earth," your body, becomes serene and calm. You go through your life changes without draining yourself, knowing that whatever feelings (season) you are in, it will be followed by a new phase, a rebirth. Then your higher mind, or consciousness can govern the body and your life with great clarity and wisdom.

Your Shen, when properly cultivated, can see beyond the changing seasons, the stormy crises of life, and this cycle or incarnation of time. It can make the journey to the home of the primordial Chi, the Wu Chi, which might translate as the Godhead. To the Taoists, the Wu Chi is the empty center at the heart of the universal spirit from which the Stars, Sun, Moon, Earth, and your own personal reality spontaneously arise each moment. But to make this journey through the multidimensions of time, space, and consciousness, your Shensoul needs plenty of nourishment, or energy.

Perhaps the greatest danger to your Shensoul completing the journey is that your Hsin your emotional mind, will squander all your life-force on petty squabbles, desires, emotions, and other distractions before your Shen-soul has half a chance to begin its journey. It takes a deep commitment to help your Shen successfully master your Hsin-mind, with its negative desires and emotions. In our ignorance, we often let our emotional mind run wild in our life. Would you keep a wild animal inside your house as a "pet" and watch it regularly destroy your furniture and peace of mind? Then don't make your "pet" destructive emotions into a kind of internal guru. Would you follow a guru if you knew his true name was Ms. Grief or Mr. Anger? Acting out these negative emotional impulses can become your life journey, and it unfortunately makes for a short and bumpy ride.

After many years of practicing Taoist alchemical meditation, I see clearly how it takes a strong personal commitment to become aware of and transform these buried negative feelings, to dissolve them so the bound up energy can be channeled to more constructive spiritual use through meditation or love. The human ability to have personal feelings is said to be unique, something even angels cannot do; it can give us ecstasy, or it can create intense pain.

Until our old, crusty, habitual patterns of emotion are purified or cleaned out, and the trapped emotional energy returned to its source (the "cauldron") and stored in a refined form (the "pearl") just behind our kidneys in our lower Tan Tien, the doorway to experiencing our deeper, more cosmic levels of self will remain closed, or will swing open only temporarily, only to slam shut at the next emotional outburst.

I have observed that many students that drop from the path of Taoist selfcultivation did so because they failed to establish a strong foundation in the Fusion I practice. This is not to blame anyone. Doing the Microcosmic Orbit daily is not sufficient to satisfy all our

desires and emotional imbalances. We need to work deeper with ourselves. Our emotional problems are like an elephant - if you stand close to it, it's very difficult to see the whole thing, to see how massive our unconscious feelings are.

A common mistake of new students in the Healing Tao is to confuse mere mental or rote learning of a meditation formula as opposed to being open to receiving the experience in the body. Taking a course doesn't mean you've "got" it. You must dive into the pool of your feelings and gather their pearl-essence. Sitting by the pool's edge and watching the reflection of your feelings is illusory spiritual practice. You have to go home and spend a lot of time practicing in private, and observe your emotions in your daily relations with family, friends, and at work. Some deepseated emotional imbalances need to be acted out, and this can be beneficial if done in a conscious way. Fusion meditation is not a magic pill or panacea. It is a process that requires skill and commitment.

Many are eager to rush on to learn the Kan and Li meditation, but they can't really practice it. Their emotional energy is too restless and scattered, their pool is muddied, and their feelings are murky. They are too "mental" - the alchemical formulas are only fascinating words stored in their brain. When they meditate at home, they visualize the practice in their mind, but their mind does not yet include their subtle body five vital organs. So they cannot give birth to a new reality inside themselves, because their old reality is still cluttering their brain and emotions.

### **Practical Tips to Improve Your Fusion Practice**

The best cure for this stuck-in-the-head and don't-feel-anything-in-meditation syndrome is to: (1) start with simple warmup exercises to get your Chi circulating throughout your whole body; (2) do some Bone Breathing down through your legs into the Earth to cool down the brain. Gently inhale Earth Chi up your legs to your Chi Ball at the navel, and stimulate your water energy at the Ming-Men point on the spine opposite the navel. Once you have lowered your center of gravity from your brain to your navel, then either standing or sitting, (3) do the simplest bareboned Fusion I practice of "creating the perfect internal weather."

Do it until you actually feel the qualities of the five elements within your body. Just stick with observing a cold, feeling in the kidneys and at their water collection point in the perineum, and a hot expanded feeling in heart/fire point. Work with those two until you feel them; then add in feeling moist, growing energy in the liver/wood point and dry, contracting energy at the lungs/ metal point. Use gentle breath or spirals to draw the quality of the energy out of the collection point to your naval center. (Don't worry if you can't visualize the pakua - it took me two years to see one.) Keep doing this everyday for weeks, until you get results.

The key word here is feeling. Fusion is not a process of mind over matter, of pushing images and colors around, with matter snapping to a salute. Fusion is feeling the process of mind within the matter of your body. This is not seeing or hearing; it is feeling. Your body is powerful and intelligent, and will release its untapped power and information to you when you resonate your mind with feeling the body's elemental processes.

For example, if you feel tired, and you can feel your liver/eyes/wood element is depleted, then you can know to nourish it or correct your lifestyle so that you don't look so often (at movies) or get angry or argue with your spouse, or overwork your planning and creative thinking abilities. All of these are wood functions.

### **The Five Elements are Phases of Energy**

Many people are confused by the very term "Five Elements." If this is too abstract for you, substitute "Five Phases of Human Energy" and instead of water, wood, fire, earth, and metal, think of them as "gathering within, growing, expanding, centering, and contracting phases of human energy." None of these energy phases exists independently the concept is one melody with five separate notes forming a harmonious whole. When we limit our feelings to replaying old emotional responses we learned as children, it is like getting stuck on one note out of the five. Would you allow a broken record to keep skipping in the same scratched groove?

The major breakthrough of the Fusion I formula is learning how to balance the process of emotional transformation using the five phases of human energy, the pakua symbol, and the pearl as your tools. Our emotions are as powerful as an elephant. Yet how do we capture the elephant's strength, and store it in something the size of a pea? Instead of wrestling directly with the giant elephant of our emotions, you use the pakua to strain out with its spiderweb net any extreme or unproductive emotions, and to capture the essence or heart of each emotional energy. These are then crystallized and stored in the pearl.

The pearl at the center of the pakua is nothing other than a neutral space within yourself, a sacred altar inside your body immune to the changing storms of emotions or the outside energy changes of weather

shifting from rain to shine. The pearl symbolizes an inner space where the essence of your psyche-soul is always pure and centered. It is round shaped and radiant like a pearl because that shape gives the most freedom to respond to every direction of life with equal awareness.

A physical pearl accrues its luster over time, drawing its radiant essence from its crude oyster shell and from the mineral rich sea around it. Likewise, we can draw our own essence from everything we experience in life, the rich sea of life's tide, with its constant ups and downs and tricky currents. Whatever happens to you - big, small, good, bad, or ugly - there is an essence to that experience that you can purify and store in your sacred inner pearl.

The luminous, watery surface of the pearl is like the moon, which reflects the deeper light of the sun. Likewise, your inner pearl will function as a soft inner effulgence that will inexorably draw your personality deeper within its soul-essence. Your soul-essence, once cultivated, will merge into the cosmic pearl, and ultimately dissolve to the Wu Chi, the center point of all universes, where your immortal self sits on its throne of emptiness. This is a journey inward, and it begins with simple mastery of your own five phases of Chi in the Fusion practice.

## Five Element Nutrition

The ancient Taoists observed that the cycle of life of man directly relates to the cycle of the Earth's seasons. As Winter fades into Spring, Spring into Summer, Summer into Fall, and Fall into Winter, the cycle of birth, growth, nurturing, and withering repeats itself. Man's cycle of life was observed through the interrelationship of his five most important or vital organs.

The Taoists further viewed the seasons and the vital organs of man as correspondences of the Five Elements of Nature, and, subsequently, with the Creation and Destruction (or Control) Cycles of Nature. Therefore, as each of the Five Elements has its specific characteristics, each corresponding Season and each corresponding vital organ of man share these characteristics. Similarly, each functions within the Creation and Destruction Cycles over the course of a year.

Considering this interrelationship, the Taoists recognized that in addition to having its own specific kind of energy, each element, season, and organ also has a time of year in which one energy dominates the others. Understanding the weak or strong times of the year of each type of energy enabled the Taoists to be more specific about man's dietary requirements. They learned which foods were needed for an organ to operate properly during its cycle. They discovered which foods would strengthen organs without ill effect, and how to maintain a balanced nutrition for the entire body throughout the year. The theory of Five Element Nutrition enables an individual to be in harmony with the cycles of nature while observing and listening to his or her own personal body requirements.

The Creation and Destruction Cycles became the major factors influencing the organs, and they were observed using the Five Element Theory.

### The Creation Cycle

The Creation Cycle flows in a clockwise direction; i.e., wood, fire, earth and metal to water. This cycle is Yang, productive, generative, and creative. It is utilized for producing positive results. The Creative Cycle can be simply explained by means of the Five Elements. In the Creation Cycle wood produces fire. Fire generates earth; when the fire burns, it produces ash, which then is returned to the ground where it becomes earth. The ash contains materials that are nutritious for the earth. Earth generates metal; out of the earth, formed by pressurized stone, is metal. Metal generates the quality of water. The metal becomes liquefied when heated. (Symbolically, liquefied here means water.) Water generates wood, simply because water permits plants to grow, and the cycle is complete. Each element of the cycle nourishes or increases the next in the cycle.

### The Destruction (or Control) Cycle

The Destruction Cycle flows in a counterclockwise direction; i.e., water, fire, metal and wood to earth. This cycle is Yin and is sometimes referred to as the Control Cycle. Each element in this cycle decreases or sedates the energy of the element located two positions in front of it on the Destruction Cycle diagram (see illustration). Fire destroys or controls metal, since fire can melt the metal. Metal destroys wood, since metal is associated with tools, such as an ax. Wood destroys earth, since wood can break up the earth. Earth destroys water by absorbing the rain. Water destroys or extinguishes fire. Each element also has the ability to return and destroy that which tried to control it. If it rains too much in a short period of time, the water will erode the earth.

The concept of the Creation and Destruction Cycles is an important concept to grasp as you begin to understand the interaction of the Five Elements with regard to the internal organs. You must remember, however, that because the Destruction Cycle is labeled "destruction," it is not bad. The Destruction Cycle is necessary for balance. If there was only the Creation Cycle (Yang), then everything would grow and grow. The energy will be very strong, but this is an unhealthy situation.

### The Five Element Food Groups

In Five Element Nutrition, the Taoists outlined a specific food group for each element as having the qualities most beneficial for that element's corresponding season and organ. Note that the taste of each food can be used as a general guideline. Examples of the foods and taste of each group are as follows:

Water Element - shellfish, crab, agar, raw vegetables, and very salty tasting foods.

Fire Element - wheat, millet, red bell pepper, pumpkin, carrot, lamb, hot and spicy foods, and bitter tasting foods.

Metal Element - ginger, onions, pears, garlic, and pungent tasting foods.

Spleen/Pancreas - beans, rice, nuts, potatoes, and sweet tasting foods.

Wood Element - alfalfa, cooked vegetables, and sour tasting foods.

These are only a few examples of the foods in each group. The upcoming Healing Tao book on Five Element Nutrition will include a more comprehensive list.

### **The Winter Season and the Organs Winter and the Kidneys**

In the Fall, the metal element gave birth to and began to nurture the water element. By the Winter season, the water element (Yin) grows to be very strong. Water destroys fire. It is good in winter to nourish the body with the fire element (Yang). At this time the heart needs fire energy. The body can withstand it since it is experiencing the strong water element.

Winter, then, is a time to take a little more food in the group of the fire element, but much less in the group of the water element.

### **Growing Period of Water Element (Baby/Young Water)**

The growing period of the water element begins in late fall and continues to early winter.

Each organ is affected as follows:

Kidneys: The water element (kidneys' energy) begins to increase. It is a time to reduce your intake of some food in the group of the water element.

Heart: The fire element (heart's energy) is at its lowest level. This is the time to slightly increase your intake of food in the fire element group so that the water's (kidneys') energy will not drown the fire's (heart's) energy. This increased fire food intake will assist the presently very low fire element (heart's energy).

Lungs: The metal element (lungs' energy) is now waning. It stops giving birth to and nurturing the water (kidneys). To help the energy of the lungs, slightly increase the growth of the water's (kidneys') energy. This will also help the growth of the water's (kidneys') energy.

Spleen/Pancreas: At this time the energy of the earth's (spleen/pancreas') energy is hibernating. It is beneficial to eat some earth element's food for balance.

Liver: The wood element (liver's energy) also stops giving birth (to fire). Just take some wood element's food for balancing.

### **Adult Period of Water Element (Young/Adult Water)**

Mid-winter is the strongest period of the water element. In this period, the two organs to be most aware of are the kidneys and heart.

Kidneys: The water element (kidneys' energy) is dominant. As this is the strongest period of the water element, do not eat too much of the water element's food or you will overstimulate and hurt the kidneys. Too much of the water element's food also can hurt the heart at this time (Destruction Cycle concept). At this time the strong water element gives birth to the wood element.

Heart: The fire element (heart's energy) is now at its lowest level. Eat more fire element's food to strengthen the heart, protecting it from control by the very strong kidneys.

Lungs, Spleen/Pancreas and Liver: The metal element (lungs' energy) now gains back the energy it gave to the kidneys in the Fall.

The earth element (spleen/pancreas' energy) counteracts the water element (kidneys' energy), but the water's (kidneys') energy is so strong now that the earth's (spleen/pancreas') energy is saturated.

During the Fall, the season of the metal element, wood energy was very low since metal controls wood. By midwinter the wood's (liver's) energy is starting to recover from its energy weakness in the Fall. Simply maintain the balance of energy by eating some of the metal, earth, and wood element's food.

### **Old Period of Water Element (Adult/Old Water)**

The old period of the water element starts in late winter and continues through early spring.

Kidney: The water element (kidneys' energy), after giving birth to the wood's (liver's) energy during the adult period of the Winter season, now approaches its old age. To maintain the mother (water/kidneys') energy's health and balance, eat some water element's food.

Heart: The fire element (heart's energy) has been controlled by the dominant water element. In the meantime the fire's (heart's) energy has been hibernating. Now the water element starts to decrease. Continue to increase the fire element's food in your diet.

Lung: The metal element (lungs' energy) can counteract the wood's (liver's) energy (Destruction Cycle concept). Since the wood's (liver's) element is at its tender birth stage, do not overstimulate the metal's (lungs') energy. Decrease your intake of the metal element's food.

Earth: The spleen/pancreas is low in energy. Eat more of the earth element's food to help maintain the earth's energy.

Liver: The wood element (lungs' energy) is at its growing period. Include a small portion of wood element's food to maintain its growth.

The next issue of "The Healing Tao Journal" will include the Spring season cycle

## Standing Meditation : Iron Shirt

In this meditation you fortify your energies by exchanging them with the Earth's energies. Exhale and send your energy down the backs of the legs, through the soles of the feet into the ground. Then bring up the Earth's healing energy through the front of both legs, up to the perineum, and then up the spine into the higher centers of the body. Hold it at each center so it can be transformed.

NOTE: While standing in the "Embracing the Tree" posture, you can also do Testicle or Ovarian Breathing, the Power Lock/Orgasmic Draw, and the Microcosmic Orbit immediately after the Iron Shirt exercises.

This process takes about 20-25 minutes.

### Iron Shirt Breathing Practice

1. Begin with Spinal Cord Breathing.

2. Stand with the spine straight, pelvis open, chin pulled back, arms rounded, and the chest sunk and relaxed.

NOTE: Always be sure that the chest is relaxed so that energy does not congest around the heart area. If the chest feels uncomfortable, practice the Heart and Lung Sounds.

3. Practice Bellows Breathing (Energizer Breathing), Reverse Abdominal Breathing (inhaling as you pull the abdomen in; exhaling as you push it out), or normal breathing from nine to 36 times.

4. Inhale about ten percent of your lung capacity for each part of the body you are moving the energy to. During practice you can exhale briefly and sip in air again if you experience discomfort during the exercise. When you exhale, use the Heart Sound Hwwwww.

5. Exhale two or three times. Flatten the abdomen, and keep it that way.

6. Packing the Kidneys with Chi: Inhale, and pull up the left side of the anus to the left kidney. Then inhale again, and pull up the right side of the anus to the right kidney. Squeeze, pack, and expand the kidneys, and spiral the energy into and around them.

7. Inhale (always in small sips), and pull up the perineum.

8. Creating a "Chi Ball": Inhale, and push the lower abdomen down toward the perineum. Focus your attention on the lower abdomen to draw energy there, and use your mind and senses to create a Chi Ball as this energy condenses. The physical sensation is a fullness in the lower abdominal area.

9. Inhale, pull up the perineum again, and spiral at the navel.

10. Connecting with the Earth's Force: Be aware of your soles resting flat on the ground, and extend your energies into the ground. Exhale down the backs of the legs, through the soles, and into the Earth. People who have sick energies should concentrate more on this process.

11. When you feel empty, you can absorb more of the earth's blue energy, which has healing qualities related to kindness and gentleness.

12. Absorbing the Cosmic Force: Practice Bone Breathing. Absorb energy through the skin of the whole body, concentrating particularly on the soles of the feet and the palms. Feel your entire body as a sponge drawing in cosmic energies from all around.

13. If you need to activate more energy, do Bellows Breathing two to six more times. Otherwise, you may continue without it.

14. Exhale.

15. Drawing the Earth's Energy Upward: Inhale (always in small sips), and pull up the left side of the anus to the left kidney. Then inhale again, and pull up the right side of the anus to the right kidney. Squeeze, and pack the kidneys and spiral the energy into and around them.

16. Inhale, and push the lower abdomen downward.

17. Inhale, pull up the perineum, and simultaneously draw up the Earth Energy. Hold the energy in your soles. Spiral nine times in each direction at the soles.

18. Inhale the energy up to your knees, turning them outward as you "screw" your feet into the ground more firmly.

19. Inhale, pull up the perineum, draw the energy up to it, and spiral at the perineum nine times in each direction. Hold the energy at this point.

20. Practice Bone Breathing, emphasizing the palms and soles. Then use your mind to condense the energy into your whole body, directing it into your bones through the skin.

21. Practice Bellows Breathing three to six times.

22. Exhale, and flatten the abdomen.

23. Exhale again, and flatten the abdomen while packing the kidneys as you create a Chi Ball.

(Follow the aforementioned procedures.)

24. Draw the energy up to the head.

25. Inhale, pull up the perineum, anus, back part of the anus, and tilt the sacrum. Draw the energy up to the following points, and spiral the energy nine times at each. Assist the movement by using circular eye movements. Draw up to the sacrum, T 11 (expand the Chi Belt), C-7, base of skull, and crown.

26. At the crown, spiral nine times in each direction, using circular eye movements. Hold the energy in the head, and feel it expand. Be aware of the North Star and the Little Dipper. Exhale a little, and practice Embryonic Breathing.

27. Exhale. Push your tongue against the palate, and let the energy flow down to the throat, heart, and solar plexus. Spiral nine times at the solar plexus, then return the energy to the navel.

28. Exhale, and practice Bone Breathing, emphasizing the palms and soles. Breathe in the purple and red light from the crown, the gold light from the mid-eyebrow, and the blue light from the soles.

29. Collect the energies at the navel.

30. At this point, you may begin practicing Testicle Breathing or Ovarian Breathing from the "Embracing the Tree" posture, then continue with the Power Lock (for men), or the Orgasmic Draw (for Women).

31. From the same posture, activate the Microcosmic process, circulating energy through the Microcosmic Orbit as you would in the Sitting Meditation. Then practice the Six Healing Sounds at least once each, still maintaining the standing posture.

32. Put your legs together, cover the navel, and collect the energy.

33. REST: The resting period is one of the most important steps in your practice because it is the time you absorb the most energy. All you need to do is stand and relax. Standing while resting after the completion of these exercises will have the same effect as hours of normal standing. In other words, many hours of energy absorption can be condensed into 15 to 30 minutes.

#### **Notes On External Energy**

1. Earthly energy continues to enter through the soles after practice.
2. The Universal Energy of the North Star, Little Dipper, and the planets spirals down from right to left as it is absorbed.

sorbed. The spirals get smaller as they come closer to you, entering the crown.

3. The Cosmic Energy spirals in the form of golden particles, entering through the mideyebrow point.
4. The Earth's Force spirals from the ground to the heavens, beginning in small circles, then getting larger with each new spiral from left to right.

#### **Notes On Practices**

1. The Six Healing Sounds: 1. Lungs Sound - Ssssss; 2. Kidneys Sound Whooooo; 3. Liver Sound - Shhhhh; 4. Heart Sound - Hawwww; 5. Spleen Sound - Whooooo guttural in the throat); 6. Triple Warmer Sound Heeeee.

2. For men, Testicle Breathing generates cold energy while the Power Lock generates hot energy. Hot energy must be stored in the navel.

3. For women, Ovarian Breathing generates hot energy while the Orgasmic Draw generates cold energy. Hot energy must be stored in the navel.

4. Sexual energy is just right when it is activated, if it is not too aroused or under stimulated. In other words, do not overcook or undercook with sexual arousal. When it feels right, sexual energy can be drawn upward to produce a warm, pleasant feeling in the body. If it is too hot, the organs overheat and cause discomfort. The emotions within the organs can also flare up and enter into your daily interactions. If sexual energy is too cold, it cannot rise and be transformed. In Taoism it is said that when you melt gold, the temperature has to be just right.

5. Practice Embryonic Breathing. Push the navel in and out without inhaling or exhaling. The action is similar to an infant breathing within its mother's womb.

6. Carefully read Chi Self-Massage: The Taoist Way of Rejuvenation to be well versed in its techniques. This is very important.

7. Exercise the lower abdomen. Compress air firmly into the abdomen so that you can pound your fists against it. (Do not hit hard when the bladder is full.) By this action, men activate the prostate, sex organ, and large intestine. Women activate the cervix, ovaries, and large intestine.

## Internal Orgasm Power And Healing Love

How lucky we are to have inherited the sexual formulas of the Healing Tao! They open a road to high adventure and stunning spiritual achievement. Using them will allow us and millions of others direct and awesome experience of the Divine. Imagine millions of Western mystics! The formulas are some of the tools we use to personal bridge the gap from atom to galaxy - all in the privacy of our own bedrooms! We can gauge our good fortune when we review the burden others have been forced to bear.

A Taoist surveying the history of the world's cultures would see that the closest attention of men and women has been attracted by two beautiful gardens, Sexual Ecstasy and Spiritual Ecstasy. This has been especially true of youth, whose pure, virgin, fervent early-teen energy remains sexually and spiritually balanced. Unfortunately, their elders lacking the wisdom and the way, did not allow such earnest ardor to grow and flower into a single harmonious garden of sexual and spiritual delight.

Lack of vision and knowledge led to a development of enormous historical consequence, especially for women. As a woman turned, at first tentatively and then more decisively, toward one garden, the strain and stress of splitting what was meant to be a whole personality into a choice between body or spirit caused a painful longing for the abandoned garden.

Most men and women who have chosen a life of common sexual expression live noble lives and find enrichment and direction through strong bonds of love. They are able to experience elusive and momentary union with the splendor and force of the Universal Energy during orgasms that spark of "Divine Jazz." Such is the attraction of sex. Taoists, who can call up orgasm at will and in great measure, would say that most people are unconscious of their grand potential and are living their lives at less than half speed. Taoists cannot justify common sexual practices because they ruin health and shorten life spans tremendously. They feel that men and women should be living past one hundred years with powerful constitutions, youthful skin, and bright sparkling minds.

Often people in great spiritual pain or full of negative energy will try to balance their energy by indulging in an avalanche of orgasm energy. They become addicted to sex, disgrace themselves, lose the respect of people who love them, and further damage their health. Practicing the techniques of the Healing Tao can balance them and set them straight again.]

A problem has been caused by those who turned toward the spiritual garden. As the young and innocent enter religious orders in every land, the first lesson they are taught is that they are to conserve energy by living lives of sexual celibacy. Some survive and do good work. Many men, though, become haunted by sex. A vow of celibacy is taken by one part of the mind/ body, but this can neither be complete nor continuous because of the immense natural force of the sexual energy. This strain causes antagonism towards sexuality.

Since most religions have been founded and are led by men, the burden in every land has fallen upon women. Women are viewed as the incarnation of the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Church fathers, Christians, Jews, Hindus, Moslems, and others have blamed women for the inability of men to reach a state of transcendence. This concept "poisoned the well." Once men were able to label women as spiritually inferior, they were then able to construct the social and political structures that shut them out. Spiritual power and oppression are the bases of all oppression. The sad history of religion and civilization is now being recorded by feminists everywhere.

There have been exceptions and breakthroughs. Each religion has offered the most fervent and demanding of their followers, "those spiritual athletes eager to test their strength,- 2 a life in monasteries and convents. There, sealed from sensual temptations and public exposure, they were initiated into a discipline of meditation, prayer, fasting, chanting, and physical labor. Each hoped to grab that jeweled ring of supreme spiritual ecstasy, story nirvana, God's close embrace, a union with the transcendental unconscious, etc. Since upon entrance they had agreed voluntarily to a life of severe and complete sexual abstinence, each expected a passage to the most elevated spiritual peaks - a great reward in return for a great sacrifice.

Crippled by misogyny, these people squandered their lives since they could never develop enough spiritual juice to advance. Those who made mystical breakthroughs became spiritual celebrities, brought creativity to their religions, and their lives served as an inspiration for others who followed. The most accomplished celestial voyagers, men such as Meister Eckhardt, were usually expelled from their churches. Some churches, having visions of a worldwide religious dynasty, couldn't afford to suffer those who asserted that it was entirely possible to establish a private relationship with the heavenly powers.

Some religious women were guarded very closely for centuries by male overlords who were fearful of and challenged by their successes. Their writings were sealed or heavily edited, and they were denied visits by family and friends. Many who developed a speaking relationship with their God were burned as witches. The writings of some, such as Theresa of Alvaro Hildergard of Bingen, and Teresa of Lesion, survived, and their beautiful and moving mystical experiences parallel those of many Taoists.

These men and women learned that chastity was a way to freedom, a means of returning to Paradise. Celibacy meant mastering themselves and their destiny. The Taoist understanding of the sexual/spiritual physiology of celibacy is that when enough sexual or reproductive energy has accumulated in the navel, and when the body/mind is clean, healthy, completely relaxed, and full of virtuous energy, the sexual energy can, at any moment, rush to the crown through the spinal channel. Once it reaches the crown it has the power to attract and call down the Universal or God Energy. There is little evidence in the religious writings of other groups that exactly what was occurring was ever understood. Such ignorance may be the root of their problems.

The friends and families of those entering cloistered shelters may have openly admired such spiritual devotion, but perhaps lamented a life they felt was not fully lived. Others have openly criticized and mocked what seemed to be a life of physical negation and deprivation, pathological introversion, and spiritual masochism. Unfortunately, such critics have been unable to offer any alternative route to full spiritual freedom and achievement.

The Taoists knew of another way. They affirmed the truth, recognized by the religions, of the necessity of conserving and treasuring sexual energy if one expected to come face to face with God, but they never divided body and spirit. Unlike the mainstream religions, including the Buddhists, the Taoists never despised the body. They believed sexual intercourse could lead to spiritual deliverance. In their isolation from the religious movements of the Near and Middle East, the Taoists developed a spiritual super-system that allowed a full life of sweet sexual ecstasy, and, at the same time, recognized that sexual energy was spiritual fuel. Moreover, they felt that orgasm energy, when mixed with the compassion energy of the heart, was identical to the basic energy of the Universe and could attract that energy. This is recognized today in the popular phrase, "God is love."

The Taoists discovered an alternative approach that offered full knowledge of, and participation in, the deepest secrets of matter and the Universe. This approach encouraged a full sexual and family life, and normal participation in the affairs of the world. This is "handson" mysticism.

The great genius of the Taoists lay in their ability to conserve, transform, and master energy. They were concerned with common sexual practice because it destroyed an energy resource that spiritually is inexhaustible. One unit of sexual energy can be multiplied endlessly, and cultivating and harvesting this energy was the way to wisdom and unerring intuition. Their gift to the people of the Earth was devising a way to store and convert sexual energy while, at the same time, immensely enhancing the pleasure of the sexual act.

The Taoists saw that in the poetry of creating a new child all the forces of the parents were called upon. The mother's most precious energies of her organs, glands, brain, personality, and passion are drawn into the egg she fashions. This is her gift and heritage for the new child. Similarly, the best parts of the father's essences and strength are transferred in his sperm. Thus, the parents willingly give the best of themselves in a moment of exquisite pleasure.

Equally important for the Taoists was the participation of the Heavens, Planets, and Earth that joined, celebrated, and honored the sacred effort of creation by anointing the union with an infusion of their own energy. This accounts for a great part of the pleasure. Poets and astrologers of many lands have agreed with this observation of the Taoist sages.

What troubled and alarmed the Taoists was the everyday waste of sexual energy which was dissipated and scattered to the wind during those times (almost all the time) when a child was not wanted but ecstatic pleasure was. The Taoists knew that if the sexual energy were saved, it could be the source of enormous spiritual and trans for mative power. Not only could it extend a life in vibrant good health, but also could move them into harmony with the Tao.

Perhaps the most distinguished feature of this ancient system is the clear equality extended to women. This would be expected in a system hallmarked by balance and professing to show "The Way". However, when compared with the mainstream religions, Taoism is refreshing and unique. It is apparent from the grace and ease with which modern women, enlightened and alert, slip into the timeworn, hand medown meditations and formulas of the Healing Tao that many Immortal Sisters lent a guiding hand in fashioning much of their magic. Two of the Taoist male luminaries, Lao-tzu (Tao-to Ching) and the Yellow Emperor (The Classic of Internal Medicine), were taught by women.

Unlike the man who loses his sexual energy through ejaculation, a woman spends hers in ovulation and menstruation. Taoist women have found that by practicing the Microcosmic Orbit and Ovarian Breathing, they can safely halt this vital loss. By "Slaying the Red Dragon" they have quickly reduced the incidence of menstruation to once or twice a year, and then completely, along with all PMS problems. Doctors have a saying, "Help a woman with her period and you'll have a patient for life." Taoist women know how to help themselves.

Taoists regard the outward or common orgasm as a momentary and unsophisticated pleasure while their own Valley Orgasms can go on for hours. These orgasms provide total body pleasure, and, at the

same time, flood the spiritual fuel banks with energy capable of carrying us on journeys into the farthest corners of the Galaxy. Anyone wasting such a precious elixir - the sexual energy - is ignorantly squandering the most valued birthright.

The Orgasmic Big Draw and the Power Lock techniques of the Healing Tao are ways for men and women to draw orgasmic energy to the crown and combine orgasms of the brain, senses, glands and organs, soul and spirit, into the total body orgasm. When all orgasms have surged to the crown, five forces are combined. They are spirit, vitality, essence, sense, and will. The combining of these forces is one of the aims of internal spiritual-sexual alchemy. Combined, their force has the power to draw the Universal or Heavenly Force down and the Earth Force up. This is the height of bliss. It is called the reunion of Heaven, Earth, Man, and Woman.

The Healing Tao, taught by Master Mantas and Maneewan Chia, invites access to a vast unexplained sexual and spiritual wilderness. It is not a religion, nor is it in competition with any religion. It is a modern spiritual science with ancient roots. It is grounded in anatomy, biology, physiology, biochemistry, endocrinology, and other natural sciences, as well as astrology. It offers an orientation to life and deep reenity and peace. It is playful, full of continuous surprise, magic, and incred ible delight. It offers, without embar rassment or fear of contradiction, life's fullest cup.

- 1.This is not the same as being addicted to alcohol and drugs. These substances are poisons to the body. Their "highs" are caused by the defenses of the body mobilizing to attack an intruder. This frightens the soul and spirit which then exit the body, until the crisis has passed. What the addict is seeking is a near-death experience.
- 2.Thanks, Joseph Campbell.
- 3.See Ecstatic Confessions, collected and introduced by Martin Dauber, 1909, republished in 1985 by Harper and Row, San Francisco. This is a collection of writings by people from many lands and ages who have reached a state of spiritual ecstasy. The stories are lovely and highly recommended.
- 4.Allowing the sexual energy to rush to the brain is dangerous, it can "fry the brain." The Microcosmic Orbit, developed by the Taoists, is a safe way of circulating the energy.
- 5.It should be said, that as powerful as the sexual formulas are, they are only part of the formulations of the Healing Tao.
- 6.The Healing Tao also offers women techniques that, if practiced, will allow them to avoid breast and ovarian cancer, as well as the deterioration of the bone marrow that afflicts women after menopause. Stopping ovulation is also an effective means of birth control.

## **The Tao Mind Of Meditation In daily Life**

The Tao is the way of nature. Taoists have studied the laws of nature and the cycles of Yin and Yang. They have seen that nature can last forever because nature knows how to rest and how to move into action with full power. You can learn how to align with nature and achieve oneness with the Universe. You can connect with its force to achieve harmony while preserving your internal energy.

The way to connect with the Universal Force is through the power and awareness of the mind. This is called oneness with the Universal Force, or oneness with the Tao. Oneness with the Tao does not mean you have to remove yourself from society by sitting and meditating all the time. It is a fact of life that this is impossible since we all live in this world and this world is our reality. Oneness with the Tao means that at any free moment, you can use your mind to concentrate on the source of all power. It is a way to control your mind rather than permitting your thoughts to wander and drain you of life-force. Instead, you conserve and recharge your energy as you connect to the power source.

### **A Rechargeable, Wireless Telephone**

Your center of awareness on which to concentrate is in the area of the navel, at a place between your navel and kidneys. It can be thought of as a special remote, wireless "silver telephone" available to you 24 hours a day. This silver phone is the direct line between your human mind and the Earth, Cosmic, and Universal Forces, but you must use this silver phone daily.

You can "pick up your silver phone" during your spare moments each day to recharge with greater energies, a clear mind, and clear perspectives. As you tune in to your center more frequently, you will find your intuitive mind growing sharper and clearer, more creative ideas will pop up in your work, and your capacity to love others will increase dramatically.

Forgetting to center your awareness for a long time is equivalent to leaving a remote phone off its base. Its rechargeable batteries will grow weak. Then, if you suddenly need to connect to the Universal Force because you are ill or depleted by stress, your energy connection will be weak or filled with static. It takes time to recharge your battery before it works well. Until you do, you will be less efficient in your work and suffer from wasting your life-force. It is much wiser to keep a steady contact with the Universal Force.

### **The Navel is Where the Principle Force is Stored**

Regarded by Taoists as the source of power, the area of the navel is the place the Principle or Original Force came to you as a baby and became the storage place of that Force. The Original Force was given to you by your parents, reaching you through the umbilical cord.

The Taoists believe every person is born with a force worth a million dollars. Like money, this force can be multiplied, if the person knows how to use it. He can slowly spend the interest, while not touching the principal. Some people keep on spending the principal, running through thousands of dollars or tens of thousands of dollars just to keep their fires burning. How long can this continue before their principals are used up and their fires are burned out.

### **Inner Happiness vs. the Drain of Temporary Excitement**

Today people who cannot find inner bliss and inner happiness continue to look for very shallow, temporary excitement and happiness. This kind of happiness does not last, but rather drains them of very beneficial energy. They become filled with a lot of fantasies spawned by their sources of entertainment, and these dreams have a power over them. In their fantasies, daydreams, and nightmares, their minds are busy creating and expending energy, making the mind and body unhook with the source of their Original Force.

Many hardworking people find their lives exhaust them. They are drained of energy and bored, and this drives them to seek temporary, external excitement. They find some entertainment, perhaps television or popular novels, to fill in the gaps. These do not really take the bore dom away for long, while they do deplete energy without anyone ever realizing it. And so, these people continue to seek the same excitements and stimulations.

### **Temporary, External Stimulants**

Drinking coffee, smoking cigarettes or marijuana, or taking drugs are pastimes for refreshment and stimulation, but the chemicals in these substances cause a detrimental physical reaction. The body regards the caffeine of coffee and the nicotine of cigarettes as minor poisons. The adrenal glands are alerted and stimulated to produce adrenaline. Although the temporary feeling is of an energy boost, it is an energy loss at great cost to the body. The adrenal glands are used by the body as a reserve for response to

emergencies. When the adrenal glands are stimulated, the whole body is activated to fight for its life. If you were asleep and someone called "Fire," you would become fully awake from the very sleepy state with the tremendous energy to run away as fast as possible. This reaction is the adrenal glands working. Coffee, cigarettes, and marijuana have the same effect, but the energy generated is wasted. Oneness with the Tao does not drain but increases the power of the adrenal glands.

#### **Five Minutes to Reach the Force**

Whenever you have up to five minutes free, with both eyes opened or closed, look at and concentrate on your nose. Then turn your awareness down to the place with a three-inch diameter just behind the navel and in front of the kidneys. Picture a warm sun there, and picture a cool moon in your mid-eyebrow. The sun starts to spiral and condense and becomes smaller and more brilliant, while the moon in the mid-eyebrow continues to feel cool. This coolness at the mid-eyebrow tends to cool down your brain, which overheats from so much use.

As your navel begins to feel warm, and you turn your mind inwardly, the busy mind stops its draining activity for a while. At that moment you start to become aware of yourself. This will lead you to oneness with the Universal Force. As you turn yourself inwardly, you can feel the Universal Force enter your crown and the Earth Force enter your feet as though a silver pipeline running through your body were connecting the two sources of energy. It takes only a few minutes of turning inwardly to attain oneness with your own inner Universe and to contact the outer Universal Force. The feeling is of being recharged, energized, and refreshed, and it is the best refreshment you can give yourself.

## Searching For The Essence Of Tai Chi

Americans appreciate logical consistency. Western logic supposes that everything in the world is - or should be consistent. If two teachers try to explain something and they contradict one another, both cannot be right. One of them, maybe both, is wrong. Truth must be logical, and contradictions are not logical. When I first tried to understand Tai Chi Chuan, I heard many contradictions. The contradictions disturbed my Western logic and nearly drove me crazy.

### Contradictory Approaches to Teaching

My first Tai Chi instructor was a Western adept in body work. He used much of the class time speaking about feelings, not doing Tai Chi movement. He was mostly talk. He urged everyone to "tap into it." he urged us to "connect with your energy." he often insisted that we answer one-by-one his question, "How's your Tai Chi?" Class sessions were a mixture of exercise with encounter-group therapy.

My second Tai Chi teacher was the opposite. He was master Kai-Ying Tung in Los Angeles. His family handed down the Yang style. The traditional Yang approach to teaching is simply, "No talk, just do." The first lesson was a shock: two hours of silent movement, no one talked. We watched, imitated, and practiced. My habit of verbalizing didn't go away. I wanted to comment on everything going on inside, to explore feelings - even if nothing in particular was going on inside. At my second lesson I tried to get things going by asking a question. I asked, "What is Chi?" Master Tung had the wisdom to see a lengthy discussion coming up. He headed me off with, "Chi is an individual thing different for different people." Well, no distractions there. Back to the practice!

Several months later, I was talking with one of the Master's most advanced studentteachers, an American. I mentioned how shocked I was by the "thosewho-talk-don't know" approach. He chuckled and confided, "There are people who spend twenty years in lessons without ever developing the internal aspect of Tai Chi." The silent approach eliminates mental distractions but leaves many people without guidance. Even this advanced student could not explain much about the internal aspects of Tai Chi. How can you find the essence of Tai Chi when no one will point to it.

### Differing Views on the Essence of Tai Chi

The essence of Tai Chi? What is that? When I looked to what teachers wrote in books, I found more contradictions. They do not even agree on the origin of their art. Consider, for example, two statements in the June 1989 issue of Tai Chi, the leading international magazine of Tai Chi Chuan (published by Wayfarer Publications in Los Angeles). In one article, the great Master Ni Hua Ching speaks about the essence of Tai Chi Chuan. A scholar, now in his 80's, he is heir to 74 generations of Taoist masters in China. He says: "You can consider Tai Chi as a more complicated Qigong (Chi Kung) developed as daoyin, simple movement with breathing. Then, later, to create external demand, it was changed into a martial art to make it easier to promote. Now people have more understanding, so it is developing once again into more of a Qigong type of movement, "A complicated Qi Gong." What is that? Qigong or Chi Kung are exercises to cultivate Chi flow. So Ni's statement means that the aim of Tai Chi is to make internal Chi flow. On the other hand, Yang Zhenduo is the son of the famous Yang Cheng-Fu, and he hands down the teachings of Yang LuChan, founder of the Yang style. In the same issue of the magazine he states: "Tai Chi belongs to Wushu [boxing]. Like most contemporary forms of Wushu it originated as a fighting skill, as barehanded boxing," (page 13). We hear that Tai Chi is all about the form and outer structure of martial arts' movements. Finally, in the same issue, the last surviving disciple of Yang Cheng-Fu, Fu Zhongwen, tells us: "Tai Chi is an art based on the innate laws of physics, not on mysterious internal energies,". Talk about contradictions! Confusion spins my Western head.

The contradictions lessen when you turn to intelligent books that clarify what Chi is. Books about Chi can teach you some interesting things. For instance, Chi A Neo Taoist Approach to Life by Ralph Siu makes many connections between ancient Chinese thought, contemporary science, and Siu's own philosophical observations. But this is all theory without practice. Other books by medical doctors in clinics are a bit less theoretical. Encounters with Qi by David Eisenberg, M.D., is a wonderful account, complete with photos, of a medical doctor's travels in China in the 1980's. He was searching for the Qi (Chi) of ancient Chinese medicine and compares it with Western healing techniques. Yet neither of these fascinating books helps you experience the inner side of Tai Chi movements. They do not get to the essence of Tai Chi. They leave you standing on the outside looking in. No contradictions, but no closer to the essence.

### Mantak Chia's Approach Proves Most Helpful

The most helpful combination of verbal and practical teaching I found in Iron Shirt Chi Kung and Tai Chi Chi Kung as described and taught by Mantak Chia. I first learned the Microcosmic Orbit in a workshop and read the instruction books. Gradually I felt my upper body opening up to a tingling awareness. My daily

Tai Chi movement went on as usual. But something new was happening. Over several weeks, my back and arms began to feel an energy flow, the hands warming at the finger tips. Then I read about Iron Shirt and tried orbiting internal energy in the Embracing the Tree stance. Here were logical step by step verbal instructions that apply to physical practice. My lower body started to feel more alive and soon I found energy circulating through my legs and feet. Still, the daily Tai Chi movements when on as usual.

I watched a healing Tao tape about Tai Chi Chi Kung (the "Qigong" of Tai Chi). The video showed some important points about back posture and foot rooting. The movements were not much different from the Yang style I had been doing for two years. Still, my own movement practice failed to connect the Microcosmic Orbit and the Chi motions. But in my mind I began to sense there was a connection. I knew I was getting closer to the essence of Tai Chi.

Then I took classes in Iron Shirt Chi Kung and Tai Chi Chi Kung. In two sessions the teacher adjusted my Tai Chi arm and knee positions. The adjustments were slight but made a big difference. They connected the Iron Shirt stances with Tai Chi movement. The corrections made all the difference in the world. Things began to happen. The energy began moving from the ground up the legs, around the spinal channel, and back down the front meridian. Energy moved with the shift in weight distribution and position, following the in hale-exhale of the breath. Gradually the awareness of moving energy began to direct the limbs into the movements. It was almost as if the energy were making a puppet out of the skeletal bones and muscles. Finally, the essence began to emerge - not just on paper but in the felt movements of Tai Chi.

My Western mind finds satisfaction in the Healing Tao's consistent logical steps. The bodily feelings reinforce my mental conclusion: Tai Chi Chuan is a subset of Chi Kung (Qi Gong). Chi Kung is the origin, being the broader cultivation of inner energy.

Still, logic is not everything. The mentalverbal answer does not end my understanding but sends me off to uncover more. My mind notices further challenges: Fusion I, II, and 111, Greater and Lesser Kan and Li. My body whis pers that there are deeper and deeper levels of energy ahead and that there is no final conclusion. There is only the active practice itself.

## Two Case Histories From The Healing Tao

Anyone involved with the Healing Tao knows that the Microcosmic Orbit is a powerful tool for self-healing. Nonetheless, it is always inspiring to hear stories of other people's positive experiences with the work.

This is the story of two people who came to me in my capacity as a Certified Healing Tao Instructor.

### Case History I

The first person was referred to me through a Christian-run, psychiatric, half-way house. I received a phone call one day from a man named Bob, who was a minister and a director of the house. Bob wanted to know whether we taught martial arts, and whether the meditative and self-discipline side of the martial arts might be helpful for a bright young man who had recently been discharged from a psychiatric hospital.

I replied that it was hard to say unless I met the young man, but in some instances the practices that I taught were of great benefit to people, and that both meditation and exercise were recognized tools for stress management and relaxation. I said that it would also depend on whether or not the person in question was interested in meditation and the martial arts.

Bob said that the young man was very interested in meditation and yoga, so we set up an appointment to meet.

When I met the young man, whom I will call Dan, I liked him immediately, although I sensed an uneasiness and a certain sense of distraction in him. I asked Bob to let us meet privately so that Dan might feel more at ease.

I learned that Dan had been released from the hospital about three weeks earlier, and was still on medication. He was meeting with his psychiatrist twice a week still. He told me that he had been very interested in meditation, and had read a book that had advocated meditating on the "third-eye" point. After he practiced this, he had felt a surge of energy to the head which just would not go away. He grew increasingly paranoid and experienced obsessive thinking of negative thoughts that he was unable to control. He had finally checked into a hospital, which had brought him to his present condition.

I observed that Dan was extremely sensitive to energy and to the emotions and thoughts of people around him. I also noticed his tendency for energy to get stuck in his head. He was very proud of his intellect, and held his head cocked back in a way that would tend to cause congestion of energy. I agreed to work with him, and he agreed to work under my guidance. He was also pleased that I did not try to typecast him as a "psychiatric patient," but instead simply saw him as a person who could use some grounding and needed to learn how to better direct his energy.

The long and the short of our work together was that I met with him daily for three weeks. During this time I taught him the Microcosmic Orbit, the Inner Smile, and the Six Healing Sounds. I also worked with his breathing and posture, teaching him some of the most basic Tai Chi principles and movements with the idea of helping him to be grounded and to eliminate any energy blockages that might be caused by poor posture, particularly the way in which he held his head back.

Dan's progress was rapid. Within two weeks, he had reduced his medication down to zero with no ill effects. Within three weeks, he reported that he had told his psychiatrist at their last meeting, "You know, there's really no reason for us to keep meeting. I feel fine, and don't really have anything to talk about!" Within four weeks he began to look for an apartment of his own, and started to think about getting off welfare and finding a job. Within three months he was in his new apartment and had found quite a good job in his previous field of interest.

His girlfriend was overjoyed with the changed, and within one year from the time he first came to me, he had married her and legally adopted her child from a former marriage. What a happy ending!

### Case History II

The second person, whom I will call Bert, called up my studio and said he was interested in learning Tai Chi to help himself become grounded. We set up an appointment to meet. When we got together, he told me his story.

Bert had been a highly-paid executive living in a large city in the Southwestern United States. One year prior to our meeting, he had taken a drug called "Ecstasy." During the experience, he had felt a lot of energy shooting up his spine to his head. Shortly thereafter, he began to experience anxiety, loss of sleep, body pain, and recurring mood swings, accompanied by a severely lowered sense of self-esteem.

A month before I met him, Bert's mental discomfort had become so severe that he could no longer function at his job. He left the city suddenly, leaving his job and a pile of unpaid bills to return to Rochester, his childhood home. He moved in with his sister and her boyfriend, a move they accepted somewhat

begudgingly. He was trying to make a living as a house painter, but he was so easily intimidated due to low self-esteem that he was chronically underbidding each job and losing money on everything that he did.

My sense of Bert was that he seemed very ungrounded, with a fragile sense of self-esteem, but had strong social skills and was basically a very sensitive, intelligent, and likable person. As in the previous case, his symptoms seemed like problems of congested energy. I suggested we work with the Microcosmic Orbit as well as with Tai Chi on a one-on-one basis. He agreed to this.

We met for three weeks, five days a week for an hour a day. During this time I taught him the Microcosmic Orbit, the Six Healing Sounds, and the Inner Smile. In addition, I taught him some Tai Chi and some other basic Chi Kung techniques.

Our meetings took place early in the morning, and we often went to breakfast together afterward during which time I counseled him. To help with his obsessive thinking and worrying, I introduced him to some cognitive stress-management techniques such as thought-stopping and basic assertiveness training concepts. These he found very helpful as an adjunct to his energy work.

At the end of three weeks, Bert was able to bring the energy down from his head on his own consistently. He felt grounded, much more self-confident, and capable of handling the energy to which he had gained great sensitivity. He returned to the Southwest and shortly found another highly-paid professional position. We have stayed in touch over the years, and he is doing fine.

## **Conclusion**

I think that there was one other factor in the healing modality that I used that was helpful in dealing with both of these people: I accepted their unusual experiences as normal, not as crazy delusions of sick people. Psychiatrists are not trained to recognize the energetic basis of certain mental states, and can offer very little to help other than medication or a sympathetic ear. It was extremely encouraging for these two men to be heard at face value, to have their perceptions respected and affirmed as valid, and to know that there are ways of working with their energies positively and skillfully. They did not have to suffer for the rest of their lives and be labeled as simply "mentally ill."

Working with Dan and Bert gave me a great appreciation for the wonderful tools available to us through the Healing Tao. I was so happy to have the knowledge and technology to help these people in areas where conventional methods had failed. Master Chia has presented us with a rare and precious gift. How we each honor that gift is certainly very personal, and so far, for me at least, has been a joy to discover.

## **Clear Yourself Of Negative Emotions And Connect with the Universal Mind to Recharge Your Life-force**

The Universal Force is the Original Force from which all things are born. The Universal Mind stores all information concerning the laws of the Universe and of nature that are considered by Taoists to be the laws of the Tao. To connect with the Universal Mind is to connect to the laws of the Tao.

Because of the similarity of wave lengths, during sleep you connect with the Universal Mind (and, so, the Universal Force) when you are in the stage of deep sleep called the Delta State or Delta Sleep Wave. This connection can serve you in several ways. You can have very informative dreams in this state. You can remove your problems from your mind and place them up into the Universe so that you can sleep peacefully. You can use the powerful energy transmitted to you during this state to "recharge" your mind. However, most people only get about one hour of Delta sleep in a night. Because their minds are scattered during the day, in sleep they wander through the more active Beta and Alpha dream waves. Usually they do not awaken feeling very refreshed.

If you are able to clear your mind before going to sleep, you will be able to experience the Delta State for a longer amount of time. This means you are recharging longer.

We live in a world filled with ongoing negativity, and the negative emotions such as negativity encourages. Pollution and toxic substances, stimulants, improper eating habits, and anxiety-producing entertainment (such as horror movies) all contribute to unsound sleep and possible nightmares. The Six Healing Sounds comprise the simplest and easiest method to clear your mind of negative emotions. When practiced before sleep at night, you can sleep free of the emotions that negatively affect your waking state. By ridding yourself of your negative emotions, they will not have a hold on you.

Anger and hatred are two particularly difficult emotions to deal with because, during your quieter times, they can so easily multiply. Jesus teaches us in the Bible not to get angry until sunset, probably because that is also the time that anger and other negative emotions can be willfully controlled. He also tells us how to control these negative emotions when he tells us to forgive seven times seven times. To practice true forgiveness is to learn to transform negativity into positivity. Learn to transform anger into kindness, hatred into love, fear into gentleness, sadness into courage, worry into openness. These transformations are the most powerful acts of forgive-ness, and they can be accomplished by the practice of the Six Healing Sounds.

After you practice all the Healing Sounds, erase the events of your day by recounting them. Start from the time you first lay down to sleep. Recount one hour at a time, all the way back to when you arose in the morning. Observe everything you did during the day, but make no judgment on and do not get caught up in the events of the day. If, for example, at 3:00 p.m. someone made you angry, review the scene as if you were watching a movie. As you do so, let your emotions go. If you dwell on them, they will multiply.

Continue to practice this process of observing your day until you reach the time you arose. At this moment you should feel clear of negative emotions because of your practice of the Six Healing Sounds, and free of the burdens of the day through recounting the day without judgment. It is possible to release your burdens even more by reach- inside to see if there are any unresolved problems lurking there. Some problems may be at the root of a particular illness you may be experiencing. Let all problems or sickness go by sending them up to the Universal Force. The Universal Mind will help you to find a solution and experience healing. Trust that you are in good hands, and let this feeling overtake you. Feel free of negative emotions, feel empty from the release of your burdens, and let the Universal Mind fill you with life-force.

When you awaken in the morning, don't jump up immediately. Smile internally and reach inside of yourself to see if any solutions to your problems are present. Usually the first thought that comes into your mind is the answer.

This is what you can call a good morning. You should feel refreshed, energetic, and probably will require less sleep to achieve this state again.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The following are questions asked of Master Mantak Chia by students.

### **Microcosmic Orbit in Action**

**Q:** What are the three major external forces of energy?

The Universal, Cosmic Particle, and Earthly Forces.

**Q:** What is the sequence of events in the twenty-minute sitting meditation for home practice. Start with spinal cord breathing, spinal cord loosening exercises, the Inner Smile, Testicle and Ovarian Breathing, Power Lock and Orgasmic Draw. Then activate the Microcosmic Process through the breath-holding technique, circulate energy through the Microcosmic Orbit, and connect with the external forces. Practice Embryonic Breathing, Chi Self-Massage, and Six Healing Sounds.

**Q:** What are the three different techniques of opening the Microcosmic Orbit?

a. The mind and the eyes are used to spiral Chi at each energy center, and connections are mentally established between them. Both hands are used to help guide the energy. (The right hand gives energy and the left hand receives energy.) The right hand is held on the navel while the left hand and one's mental concentration are moved to each successive point along the Functional and Governor Channels. The breath is not held in this technique.

b. The mind and the eyes are used to spiral Chi at each energy center, drawing the energy to each successive point along the Functional and Governor Channels.

c. The mind and the eyes are used to spiral Chi as short breaths of air are sipped in through the nose to help draw the energy to each successive center. Each breath is sipped in succession without exhalation until release becomes necessary (before any discomfort occurs).

**Q:** What is the importance of the navel?

It is the where the original Jing energy is stored, which is actually located behind the navel and in front of the kidneys, where we transform all forms of energy.

**Q:** How do you activate the Earth's Force?

Contract the perineum, anus, and back of the anus in succession, then tilt the sacrum, and exhale down to the ground.

**Q:** What does the Earth's Force feel like?

The Earth's Force can feel like a nice, cool, blue, gentle energy that is associated with the virtue of kindness.

**Q:** How do you activate the Cosmic Force?

You can use smiling energy. Rub the mid-eyebrow, spiral, and slowly breathe the Cosmic Force in through the mid-eyebrow and the nose. Hold each breath for a while.

**Q:** What does the Cosmic Force feel like?

It can feel like a strong, determined force in the mid-eyebrow. You can also feel a heaviness or numbness or see a golden color.

**Q:** How do you activate the Universal Force?

Be aware of the crown, and mentally create a tube or pipe that extends from the crown out into space. Maintain this image until you see light coming to you. At this level of practice, the North Star and Big Dipper supply the Universal Force. Picture the North Star and the Big Dipper pattern emanating violet and red light respectively which you will absorb through the crown. Breathe their light into the crown and the pineal gland, and feel it enter the nose and the body.

**Q:** What does the Universal Force feel like?

It can be warm, violet and red in color, and loving. You can feel a heaviness on the top of the head, a numbness or tingling, and sometimes a pain in the crown.

**Q:** How do we help connect the Microcosmic Orbit?

By pressing and relaxing the tongue against the palate without disconnecting it. Do this for nine, eighteen, or 36 times. Then rest, and feel the energy flow down.

**Q:** What does it feel like when you complete the Microcosmic Orbit?

Some may feel a tingling, a flow of electricity, or a numbness. Some may experience cold, a sense of release, or a sensation like an electric shock. Some see color, perhaps blue, flowing down the Functional Channel. Some hear a frequency that they can bring to the tongue and then circulate in the Microcosmic Orbit.

**Q:** What is the importance of saliva to the Taoist practices?

Saliva is considered to be the interaction of the Heavenly and Earthly Forces.

**Q:** What is the importance of the coccyx?

The coccyx connects the spine through which flows the body's internal energies with the Earth's Force.

**Q:** How are animals and humans different energetically?

Animals channel the Heavenly Force through the tail. Humans channel two forces at one time: The first is the Heavenly Force, which is drawn through the crown; the second is the Earthly Force, which is drawn through the perineum.

**Q:** What is the Taoist belief about why humans were created in the beginning?

The Taoists believe that humans were created to take in the Universal, Cosmic Particle, and Earthly Forces and to consume these in the form of light with 80-90% efficiency. When humans began to lose sperm and menstruate, their efficiency deteriorated to a 10-15% ability to consume these forces directly.

**Q:** What is the Taoist belief about the uniqueness of the combination of the Earth and the Moon?

The Taoists believe that the Earth and Moon have a very strong density and magnetism. This unique combination is rare and only occurs one time in a billion. With this combination, the Earth draws the essences of all the stars and planets in our galaxy along with the cosmic particles.

**Q:** What do the Taoists believe that humans consist of?

The Taoists believe that humans consist of the essences of all the star energies that create the soul and spirit. The Cosmic Particle Force builds and sustains the flesh and organs, and the Earth Force maintains the electromagnetic flow in the cells.

**Q:** What do the Taoists use the North Star and the Big Dipper for?

The Taoists believe that the North Star is the head of this galaxy and that all the stars in this galaxy are affected by it, as are humans and other living things. The North Star is the gate of Heaven and the protector of our higher selves. The Big Dipper controls the seasons that are the major source of energy for living things and humans to grow. The Taoists believe that we must pass through the North Star to get to Heaven.

**Q:** What is the color of the rays of the North Star and the Big Dipper?

The North Star emanates a violet light of a high frequency that activates all our bodily cells. The Big Dipper ray emanates a red light of a lower frequency that helps to harmonize the effect of the violet rays upon the body.

**Q:** To which star does the Earth tilt, and how is the Earth's orbit maintained?

The Earth's axis tilts 23.5 degrees toward the North Star. Its orbit is maintained by the Sun and North Star pulling the Earth from opposite directions: the Sun pulls the Earth inward, and the North Star pulls it outward. The Earth spins under its own influence.

**Q:** Where does the heart of the human and all living things tilt to?

Taoists believe the human heart is tilted 45 degrees toward the North Star.

## IN THE HEAT OF THE NIGHT

Does anyone have another name for "hot flash?" The phrase doesn't begin to describe the experience. I first experienced hot flashes when I was in my forties, but didn't recognize them right away. It was only afterwards that I could hear my mother's voice describing them to me saying, "You just want to tear your clothes off." That's when I realized I'd had hot flashes.

Hot flashes began ruining my sleep. Each day I experienced more until it seemed as though I was feeling about ten an hour. I admit, this may be a bit of an exaggeration. But in those moments I completely understood why women took estrogen replacement therapy. By the time I called Maneewan in January, I was a desperate woman.

"Maneewan, what do you have for hot flashes?"

"Ovarian Breathing," she replied.

"Maneewan, come on, there must be a pill or a potion." Even as I spoke, I couldn't believe I was saying it.

"There's no other way," she said firmly.

I had been doing Ovarian Breathing for six years on what I called a "maintenance" schedule: my periods were short and trouble-free. This was enough for me.

Now I started an intensive daily practice, which amounted to five to ten minutes a day before meditation, and then whenever else I thought about it throughout the day. There was a noticeable difference right away. By the third day I was having maybe two hot flashes a day and none at night.

Over the next four months I noticed an occasional flurry of hot flashes around the time I would have had a period, but nothing very disturbing. My periods have resumed on a somewhat irregular schedule, but the hot flashes are gone.

### **The Pituitary Gland is the Culprit**

In Barbara Seaman's book, *Women and the Crisis in Sex Hormones*, the problems of menopause are described as a breakdown of communication between the ovary and the pituitary gland. The pituitary issues a command to the ovary in the form of hormones. Mature an egg! When the ovaries don't answer, the pituitary sends out the message again. So these powerful hormones are in the system and the results are many of the troublesome symptoms of menopause: hot flashes, anxiety, sleeplessness, depression, among others.

By doing Ovarian Breathing we bring ovarian energy and the energy of the pituitary hormones up to the pituitary, reassuring the pituitary that the ovary is aware and alert (if not active). All of this is, of course, a theoretical explanation, but it at least places the responsibility where it belongs: on the pituitary hormones and not on the quiescence of the ovaries. Ovarian Breathing is worth a try for a woman experiencing any menopausal symptoms.

Please let me know the results; your input is very important. Master Chia wants to compile a book of women's experiences explaining how women can control their menstrual cycles from menarche through menopause by practicing single cultivation.

