



AWAKEN HEALING ENERGY THROUGH THE TAO By Mantak Chia

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CHAPTER 1 AWAKEN THE "CHI" LIFE ENERGY

Meditation, properly speaking, is the stilling of the mind. Most of the meditation techniques taught today still the mind using one of two basic approaches. The first is the Zen approach of "silent sitting", facing a blank wall until the mind becomes blank. You sit until the moment of pure awareness arrives, even if it takes twenty years. The second is the Mantra approach, in which the mind is rhythmically lulled to sleep with sounds or images. After thousands of repetitions the body begins to vibrate at a higher frequency, and the meditator becomes aware of the higher energies operating beyond the sensory process functions of our daily mind.

The Esoteric Taoist approach is different. It does not depend on total absence of the flux of thought. Instead, this system stresses the circulation of energy called "chi" along certain pathways inside the body. These pathways help direct the "chi" — also known as prana, sperm or ovarian power, the warm current, or kundalini power — to successively higher power centers (chakras) of the body. The secret of circulating this "chi" has

been transmitted for thousands of years in China, where it brought extraordinary improvements in health and life.

But what is this "chi", and where does it come from? The chi is the primordial life force itself. It begins in human life with the piercing of an egg by a sperm cell. From this original fusion an enormously complex new human being develops. "Chi" is the continuous flow of energy linking the various tissues, organs and brain functions into a unified whole — a person. Chi also links this person to his environment.

The main channels of "chi" energy flow in the body were discovered by sages meditating upon the human fetus inside the womb. They observed the baby grows up around its mother's navel point, and that through the navel the fetus absorbs nutrients and expels waste. The fetus literally "breathes" through the umbilical cord from the mother into its own navel down to the perineum and up to the head and down from the tongue to the navel again. The navel point is thus said by Taoists to be the starting point for the flow of the primordial life energy, or "chi", and remains the point of strongest energy storage and circulation in the adult.

"Awaken Healing Energy Through The Tao" is a method for an adult to return to that state of dynamic energy circulation which existed inside the womb. In this sense this esoteric Taoist meditation is a rebirth process, a return to one's original, primordial self. What happened after birth that caused us to lose that original, perfect equilibrium that was so nurturing and permitted such healthy growth?

After a baby enters the world, his/her energy slowly "settles out" into hot and cold parts of the body. In the fetus this "yin" and "yang" energy was perfectly balanced in a kind of "lukewarm" mixture. But by the time a baby has grown to adulthood the hot or "yang" energy has gradually risen to the upper part of the body containing the vital organs such as the heart, liver, lungs and brain. The cold or "yin" energy has tended to settle in the legs, genitals, kidneys and lower abdomen.

As we age, the energy routes which bring vital power to our internal organs and enable them to function become progressively more blocked by physical and mental tension. The result is general fatigue, weakness, and poor health. A young person usually has sufficient energy to keep the routes less obstructed so that the power still flows. The organs are thus nourished, and there is little sickness. But if we do not live healthily and practice to keep the energy routes open, they will gradually close and cause emotional imbalances, premature sickness and old age.

The perfect energy circulation we enjoyed as babies was not yet impaired by the daily stress of living. Simply by reestablishing that same strong flow of "lukewarm" chi — mixed yin and yang energy — our vital organs will begin to glow with radiant health. When this healing power of the Tao — the life energy in its original, pure, undivided form — flows through our bodies, we regain the exuberant energy and rosy glow we once had as babies. Our true task is only to "reawaken" this undivided healing power that was once an accepted fact in our being.



DIAGRAM 1
***Energy enters the human fetus at the navel
 and circulates in the Microcosmic orbit,
 harmonizing yin and yang energy.***

THE PRIMARY ENERGY CHANNELS

The nervous system in human beings is very complex and is capable of directing energy wherever it is needed. But the ancient Taoist masters discovered there are two primary energy channels that carry an especially strong current.

One channel they called the "Functional". It begins at the base of the trunk, midway between the testicles and the anus at a point called the perineum. It flows upward into the body past the penis, stomach organs, heart, and throat. The second channel, called the "Governor", starts in the same place. It flows from the perineum upwards into the tailbone and then up through the spine into the brain, and back down to the roof of the mouth.

The tongue is like a switch that connects these two currents, for when it is touched to the roof of the mouth just behind the front teeth, the energy flows in a circle up the spine and back down

the front of the body. The two channels form a single circuit that the energy loops around in circles. When this energy flows in a loop around the body through these two channels, the Chinese masters said the "small heavenly cycle" or "microcosmic orbit" had been completed. Henceforth in this book we shall refer to this major energy loop as "the microcosmic

orbit". Its vital current circulates past the major organs and nervous system of the body, giving cells the juice they need to grow, heal, and function.

PROPER WIRING OF THE ETHERIC BODY

The two main energy channels of the body can be compared to the main wiring of a house. Imagine a trunk line which brings power from outside into the building's service panel. This panel contains the circuit breakers that protect the inside wiring from short circuits and overloads. It also has the switches that control the current to all the rooms inside the house. This inside wiring is like the "six special power routes" in the body used in higher levels of Taoist meditation that branch off from the Microcosmic Orbit. In higher levels there are additional "wires" for especially heavy loads of energy that might surge into the system — the "thrusting route" in the middle of the body is one such wire.

Once your house, like your body, is properly wired and all the safety precautions have been made: it is ready to connect to the main utility company trunk line for power. You are ready to receive the power that comes from above and from beneath you without harm.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO "OPEN THE ROUTES"?

"Opening the routes" means clearing all obstructions that impede the flow of chi energy in their natural paths. Most obstructions take the form of physical, mental, or emotional tension. It helps to understand that these energy routes in the body are grounded in the larger balancing forces of nature which are exerting powerful influence over us at every moment. The healing power of natural forces can be tapped to help the body in clearing itself of the obstruction to its natural energy flow.

The route running down the front of the body (it may flow in an upward direction before the Microcosmic Orbit is linked together) the Functional Channel, has a yin, or cold nature. The route running up the back, the Governor Channel, is yang, or hot, in nature. The feet are said to be the ground or the "earth wire" and absorb negatively charged energy from the earth. The top of the head, or crown, is the "heavenly wire", or positive wire and absorbs the yang power from above, especially from the sun.

When these two routes are joined and cleared of obstruction the power will flow in a circuit between these two poles, positive and negative, linking the vital organs of the body to the main loop of the microcosmic orbit around the trunk and head of the body. So by simply opening the two main routes, Functional and Governor, a larger supply of warm "chi" current flows into every bodily organ. The process of mixing yin and yang, hot and cold, heaven and earth, takes place automatically, balancing your physical, mental and emotional selves.

LESSEN SIDE EFFECTS BY CAREFUL PREPARATION

Some meditation methods have the practitioner start by receiving power from above immediately. Only a few people those born with the proper channels already open and ready to use, and who have done nothing to cause them to be blocked are capable of doing this immediately. Many people, including well known yogis, have damaged their organs with excessive heat or have released uncontrollable hallucinations by progressing before their bodies were prepared to handle high doses of raw energy.

The Taoist approach is more gradual. The practitioner makes use of higher energies by first clearing the routes and raising their level of "chi" production. When the two principal thoroughfares of the microcosmic orbit are opened, only then are the six additional special power routes opened, and more after that. This allows the body to absorb the natural forces flowing about us constantly like a sponge, and enables one to swiftly circulate the added vitality throughout the body. With all these routes open, every organ receives its full complement of energy and remains in harmony with the rest of the body system.

The warm current of "chi" helps wash away any blockage that might be present, massages the internal organs, and restores health to damaged and abused tissues. Many deadly diseases are prevented and the effects of stress and nervous tension are effectively flushed out of the system. Many practitioners open all the routes within a few months and learn to reduce leakage of their bodily energy to the point where an EEG records little or no energy waves.

ACUPUNCTURE AND THE MICROCOSMIC ORBIT

The Chinese sages studied the flow of energy from these two main channels, the Functional and Governor that connect to form the microcosmic orbit, and discovered other energy flow routes. It was along these energy meridians that the points used in acupuncture healing were also discovered. But before the art of acupuncture developed, using needles to impede or enhance energy flow along the various routes in an effort to restore normal function, the Chinese healers relied on circulating their energy internally in the microcosmic orbit to insure good health and long life. These masters of long life were much sought after, even besieged to teach the secret of living a long and harmonious life.

When acupuncture was first introduced it was considered an inferior form of medicine and was used mostly in extreme cases of sickness. The best doctors in China were the doctors who kept their patients from getting sick in the first place. The highest form of medicine was preventive. Today, while we are beginning to accept acupuncture as a reliable medical practice, we have yet to recognize our innate ability to prevent illness and heal ourselves using the energy flowing naturally through our bodies.

SUMMARY

In the Taoist system one begins by opening and completing two main channels, up the spine in back and down the front of the body. When

linked together by the tongue on the roof of the mouth, these two routes form the Microcosmic Orbit and serve as a circulatory system for the body with built-in cooling safety valves.

Human energy tends to flow upward during meditation and may cause immense heat to accumulate in the brain coupled with bodily sensation, visual and auditory hallucinations, emotional outbursts, and various delusions. By completing up to a total of thirty-two routes (these smaller routes are not covered in this volume) the energy is well circulated, greatly reducing the overheating side effects of concentrated meditation and inducing relaxation.

Once all the energy channels are open, one can begin the practice of mixing and transforming the powers present in the various energy centers or chakras, a process known to the Taoists as "inner alchemy". Many formula are needed to bring about the proper effects and to harmonize the various energy systems of the body with the energy system of nature. As more power becomes available, the importance of opening the various routes becomes evident.

Without many clear and commodious channels to transport a considerable increase in energy, damage can result from an overload. These side effects range from the physical to the psychological and can be quite disturbing, even debilitating. If any side effects should ever occur, see the chapter on Safety Precautions and if necessary ask for advice immediately from a teacher of Taoist yoga. "Awaken Healing Energy Through The Tao" is a method evolved over many millennium to offer the practitioner the safest and most assured path to good health. If you proceed one step at a time up the ladder, you will be guaranteed success in reaching the top.

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