

MICROCOSMIC ORBIT
43rd Annual Cloud Hands Tai Chi 2023
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The tai chi classics remind us, “The mind moves and the Chi will follow.” When you focus your attention toward a specific place in your body, you automatically activate the Chi there. You are consciously linking your brain to the local sensory receptors near that place in your body. The nervous system creates local changes in capillary circulation, muscle activity, and lymphatic flow.

The Microcosmic Orbit meditation awakens, circulates and directs your chi, your life force, through what-is-called in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) the “Governing Vessel” which ascends from the base of your spine to the crown of your head down the “Conception Vessel” which descends the front of your body’s midline through the various chakras. Circulating chi along the Microcosmic Orbit has many benefits for your health and for you practice of tai chi and qigong.

The torsal Microcosmic Orbit includes your torso only. The so-called Macrocosmic Orbit includes your torso and appendages (arms and legs, hands and feet). We will play with these concepts and meditations both standing and sitting.

Try to match the circulation of the orbit with your breath. You can circulate chi through the Microcosmic and Macrocosmic Orbits as often as you want, as slowly or as quickly as you choose. You can increase the number of orbits as you practice. Eventually you will feel your energy moving effortlessly. This is a good sign, don’t try to restrain it, just like tai chi, let it flow through you, charging your chi battery, at your own pace.

Microcosmic Orbit As you inhale, initiate the chi from the bowl of your pelvis (pelvic floor or perineum) if bringing the warm energy (chi) up your spine to the coccyx, sacrum, to the Door of Life (kidney point) thru the thoracic vertebrae at the center of your back, up between the wingbuds (scapula) to the cervical spine, to the Jade Pillow (occipital) to the crown of your head known as the “soft spot” or Crystal Room. Then bring the energy over your forehead to the Third Eye chakra.

Connect the two vessels by bringing your attention to the tip of your tongue. Touch the tip of your tongue to the top of your mouth just behind your front teeth. Press and release your tongue gently against your palate, then keep your tongue there. The palate activation connects the two channels and gently guides your energy down the front of your body through the throat, heart, solar plexus, tan tien, genitalia chakras. Then begin again.

Macrocosmic Orbit Same as above but will circulate the chi through the arms and legs.

When you bring the energy up to the scapula (wing buds), split and direct your chi toward the lymph nodes under your armpits, down the soft side of your forearms, underside of wrist, palms of hands to fingertips then over the top of fingertips, up the outside of your forearm, upper arm to shoulder, coming together at the cervical spine up over your head, like putting on a hoodie, to your Third Eye, ascending down the Conception Vessel to tan tien. Then split again and direct chi down the outside of your legs (hips, thigh, knees, calves) down to the ankles to the Bubbling Well at the bottoms of your feet, then (on the inhale) draw the energy from the earth beneath you up the inside of the legs to the pelvic floor and begin the circulation of chi once again.