

The Microcosmic Orbit

“The Microcosmic Orbit meditation uses the power of the mind to help activate the sacral and cranial pumps.

It is much easier to cultivate your energy if you first understand the major paths of energy circulation in the body. The human nervous system is highly complex; it is capable of directing energy wherever energy is needed. The ancient Taoist masters discovered that, while there are many channels of energy flow in the body, there are two energy channels that carry an especially strong current. One of those channels is called the Functional Channel or the Yin Channel. The Functional Channel begins at the perineum, the point located at the base of the trunk midway between the testicles/vagina and the anus. It goes up the front of the body, past the sex organs, abdominal organs, heart, and throat, and ends at the tip of the tongue. The second channel, called the Governor Channel or the Yang Channel, also starts at the perineum but it goes up the back of the body. It flows from the perineum upward into the tailbone and the sacral pump, and then progresses up through the spine into the brain and the cranial pump, finally flowing back down to the roof of the mouth.

These two channels form a single circuit, with the tongue acting as a switch that connects the two (fig. 2.15). When the tongue is touched to the roof of the mouth just behind the front teeth, the energy can flow in a circle up the spine and down the front of the body. This vital current of energy circulates in a loop within the central nervous system and past the major organs, spreading vitality throughout the body and delivering to the cells the juice that is created from organ energy and Inner Smile practices, the juice that is necessary to grow, heal, and function.

The pathway for this circulating energy is the Microcosmic Orbit, the same pathway that forms the basis of acupuncture. Western medical research acknowledges acupuncture to be clinically effective, although scientists admit that they cannot explain why the system works. Taoists, on the other hand, have been studying the subtle energy points in the body for thousands of years and have verified in detail the importance of each channel.

If this circuit is blocked by tension, then learning to initiate the circulation of energy through the Microcosmic Orbit is an important step to opening these blocks. When blocks are present intense pressure builds in the head, taking such forms as headaches, hallucinations, and insomnia. Much of the life-force energy escapes through the eyes, ears, nose, and mouth and is lost. By opening up this Microcosmic Orbit and keeping it clear of physical and mental blockages, it is possible to pump life-force energy up the spine. Circulating energy throughout the Microcosmic Orbit revitalizes all parts of the mind and body.

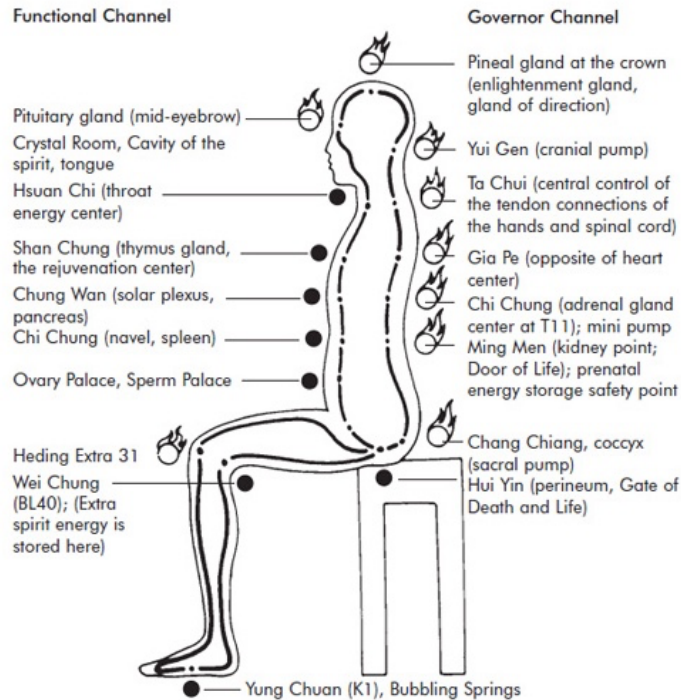


Fig. 2.15. Learn to circulate your chi through the Microcosmic Orbit. The tongue touches the middle of the upper palate to join the Governor and Functional channels.

“The Microcosmic Orbit is opened by sitting in meditation for a few minutes each morning as you practice the Inner Smile. An essential Taoist technique described in detail in *Taoist Ways to Transform Stress into Vitality*, the Inner Smile is a means of connecting visual relaxation with concentration. Begin in the eyes and allow your mind to circulate with the energy as it travels down the front of your body through your tongue, throat, chest, and navel and then up the tailbone and spine to the head. Feel the energy circulate through the Microcosmic Orbit by letting your mind flow along with it.

At first when you practice circulating chi through the Microcosmic Orbit it may feel as though nothing is happening, but eventually the current will begin to feel warm in some places as it loops from front to back to front again. The key is simply to relax and try to bring your mind directly into the process, focusing point by point on the part of the loop that the chi is moving through. This is different from visualizing an image inside your head of what that part of the body looks like or is feeling. Do not use your mind as if it were a television picture. Instead, experience the actual chi flow. Relax and let your mind flow with the chi in the physical body along this natural circuit.”

Study of the Microcosmic Orbit is recommended to all students who truly seek to master the techniques of Iron Shirt. It is very difficult to progress to higher levels in transforming chi and your creative energy to spiritual energy without first learning to circulate energy through the Microcosmic Orbit. The benefits of Microcosmic Orbit energy circulation extend beyond

facilitating the flow of life-force energy and include prevention of aging and the healing of many illnesses, ranging from high blood pressure, insomnia, and headaches to arthritis.”

Excerpt From
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