



Practice 1.

SMILE AT YOURSELF

Quiescent Qigong

The Purpose:

Smile at yourself - to relax internally and prepare for further practice. This simple process is a way of sending your own warm, gentle, loving energy to yourself. It releases tension and stress, and generates deep relaxation. It calms your emotions, refreshes your sense organs, and stimulates the tissues. It also makes you feel good.

Overview and Explanation:

In the following practice you are going to smile at yourself, inside, at your yin organs - heart, lungs, liver, kidneys and spleen - and then gather your energy at your navel. Each organ is accompanied with a list of its basic corresponding characteristics:

- Color
- Temperature
- Season
- Emotion
- Sound
- Coupled yang organ

Using your mind, think of and activate these correspondences when you smile at each organ.

In each organ you can hold the healing energy of your smile for as long as you wish, or for the count of a certain number of breaths, or until you feel it overflow. This is indicated by the instruction "Hold your Qi there."

Preparation:

Sit on the front edge of a chair with both feet flat on the floor, knees parallel and shoulder-width apart. Relax. Clasp your hands in front of you in your lap, left palm facing upwards and right palm facing downwards on top of it, to seal-in your Qi. This is a remarkably stable sitting position, and can be maintained for extended periods of time.

This exercise can also be performed lying down, in which case clasp your hands, as above, and let them rest on your abdomen.

THE PRACTICE:

Close your eyes and clear your mind. If unrelated thoughts occur, gently let them go, like letting go of a balloon, and then bring your attention back inside yourself. Pay attention to how you feel.

- Using your mind, activate a memory, thought, image, or picture which causes you to smile - one of those soft, warm, friendly smiles that gently softens the corners of your mouth.
- The corners of the mouth are very special energy points. They are the Meeting Points of the two major channels which run up the midline of the body on the front and back, and separate us into left and right halves.

Running up the midline of the front is The Conception Vessel/ Ren Mo which ends in the center of the lower lip. Running up the midline of the back and over the top of the head is The Governing Vessel/Du Mo which ends in the center of the top lip. The corners of the mouth are energy points - numbered in Acupuncture as Stomach 4 and called Earth Granary - which are meeting points for these two major channels. The warmth that you might feel there when you smile is the Qi/Energy gathering and accumulating.

- Let the warm, soft, gentle energy of this smile increase.

Your mind leads your energy, so, using your mind, bring this smiling energy to the point in the middle of your forehead between your eyebrows. This point is called The Original Cavity of the Spirit/Yin Tang. Allow your Qi/Energy to gather and accumulate there like warm water slowly filling a deep bowl, by breathing in to this point.

The Tip Of Your Tongue

Place the tip of your tongue in-between your two top front teeth, then run it upwards until it meets the roof of your mouth. Find the point there which tingles or feels 'right'.

Placing the tip of your tongue in this location lets your energy flow through the internal energy pathways to your yin organs.

HEART

Smile at your Heart.

Let your Qi/Energy overflow from your brow point. As you breathe in, draw this warm energy down from your brow through your tongue and throat to your Heart.

Your heart is the size of a clenched fist. It is inside your chest, slightly to the left.

All day long and every day your heart is working for you, to send blood and oxygen to every cell. This is an opportunity to thank your heart and to give it your love and care.

Directing your energy with your mind, send your smiling, loving, energy to your heart.

Think of and activate the following correspondences of your heart.

The Element is	FIRE
The color is	RED
The temperature is	HOT
The season is	SUMMER
The emotion is	JOY
The sound is	LAUGHING
The coupled organ is	SMALL INTESTINES

Breathe in and out 3, 6, 9, or more times.

As you slowly breathe in and out, hold your smiling energy in your heart and send it your love. Hold your mind there.

Let your heart fill with smiling energy until it overflows.

LUNGS

Smile at your Lungs

When your Qi/Energy overflows from your heart, send it to your lungs.

Your two lungs are within your chest, surrounded by your rib cage, either side of your heart.

All day long and every day your lungs are working for you, to bring the fresh clean energy of Heaven in to you, and to send out the old stale energy you have used. This is an opportunity to thank your lungs and to give them your love and care.

Directing your energy with your mind, send the smiling, loving, energy to your lungs.

Think of and activate the following correspondences of your lungs.

The Element is	METAL
The color is	WHITE
The temperature is	COOL
The season is	AUTUMN/FALL
The emotion is	LETTING GO
The sound is	WEEPING
The coupled organ is	LARGE INTESTINE/COLON

As you slowly breathe in and out, hold your smiling energy in your lungs and send them your love. Let your lungs fill with your energy. Hold your mind there.

Breathe in and out 3, 6, 9, or more times.

Let your lungs fill with smiling energy until they overflow.

LIVER

Smile at your Liver

When your Qi/Energy overflows from your lungs, send it to your liver.

Your liver is your largest organ and has multiple functions. It is situated below your ribs, on the right side.

All day long and every day your liver is working for you, purifying your blood and planning what to do next. This is an opportunity to thank your liver for everything it does and give it your love and care.

Directing your energy with your mind, send the smiling, loving, energy to your liver.

Think of and activate the following correspondences of your liver.

The Element is	WOOD
The color is	GREEN
The temperature is	WARM
The season is	SPRING
The emotion is	POWER
The sound is	SHOUTING
The coupled organ is	GALL BLADDER

Breathe in and out 3, 6, 9, or more times.

As you slowly breathe in and out, hold your smiling energy in your liver and send it your love. Let your liver fill with your energy. Hold your mind there.

Let your liver fill with smiling energy until it overflows.

KIDNEYS

Smile at your Kidneys

When your Qi/Energy overflows from your liver, send it to your kidneys.

Your two kidneys are about the size of clenched fists, located half-way between the bottom of your rib cage and the top of your pelvis on your back, either side of the spine, and about one-third inside your body.

All day long and every day your kidneys are working for you, filtering and cleansing the fluids in your body. This is an opportunity to thank your kidneys and to give them your love and care.

Directing your energy with your mind, send the smiling, loving, energy to your kidneys.

Think of and activate the following correspondences of your kidneys.

The Element is	WATER
The color is	BLUE/BLACK
The temperature is	COLD
The season is	WINTER
The emotion is	AWE
The sound is	GROANING
The coupled organ is	BLADDER

Breathe in and out 3, 6, 9, or more times.

As you slowly breathe in and out, hold your smiling energy in your kidneys and send them your love. Hold your mind there.

Let your kidneys fill with smiling energy until they overflow.

SPLEEN

Smile at your Spleen

When your Qi/Energy overflows from your kidneys, send it to your Spleen (and its associated organ, the Pancreas - referred to sometimes together as Spleen-Pancreas).

They are located just below your rib cage on the left, opposite the liver.

All day long and every day your spleen and pancreas work for you - to gather the energy from food and send it around your body, to cleanse your blood, and to produce the enzymes for digestion. This is an opportunity to thank your spleen-pancreas and to give it your love and care.

Directing your energy with your mind, send the smiling, loving, energy to your spleen.

Think of and activate the following correspondences of your spleen.

The Element is	EARTH
The color is	YELLOW
The temperature is	MILD
The season is	LATE-SUMMER
The emotion is	SYMPATHY
The sound is	SINGING
The coupled organ is	STOMACH

Breathe in and out 3, 6, 9, or more times.

As you slowly breathe in and out, hold your smiling energy in your spleen-pancreas and send them your love. Let them fill with your energy. Hold your mind there.

Let your spleen-pancreas fill with smiling energy until they overflow.

Gathering At Your Navel

Finally, bring your energy from your Spleen-Pancreas to your Navel and hold it there.

Now, slowly 'wind' your energy in to your navel, as if you were winding in a kite on a reel. Return back to the beginning with the corners of your mouth and relax there so that your mouth becomes neutral. Then continue through the brow point and tongue, and when you have emptied your tongue disconnect it from the roof of your mouth. Then, continue to draw in from, and empty, your heart, lungs, liver, kidneys, and spleen-pancreas - clearing each organ as you go, until your energy is finally all gathered in your navel.

Place the center of your open palm over your navel - left hand first for men, right hand first for women - then cover the back of that hand with the palm of the other hand. Concentrate your attention, mind, and will-power at your navel, and seal the energy in there. Stay in this position, and feel the warm energy in your navel. This is your Qi. It is now in your center.

Pay attention to how you feel. Find a word(s), phrase, image, or symbol that describes how you now feel, and remember it.

Slowly open your eyes, one eyelash at a time, and return your attention back to the outside world.

If you wish, write down whatever you came up with for future reference, and to remind yourself how you felt after doing this simple, enjoyable practice. Remember this, it is your personal internal "key" to your Qi.

You have just completed an internal practice of the primary classical Chinese system of 'The 5 Elements'. You have smiled at your main internal yin organs. Learn this exercise and you can use it whenever you wish.

Smile, please!

To Continue:

Proceed to Focus At Your Center.