

Movement 4 - Opening and Closing the Three Dantian

I. The Movement

The movement, Opening and Closing the Three Dantian, has three parts: Opening and Closing the Upper Dantian, Opening and Closing the Middle Dantian, and Opening and Closing the Lower Dantian.

1) *Opening and Closing the Upper Dantian*

- A. Both Hands Close Above
 - i. Start in Wuji stance.
 - ii. Mindfully move your hands upward and together in front of your face.
 - iii. Pause in this position to be mindful on your *lǎogōng* (Pericardium 8, the center of the palms). (Figure 4-1)

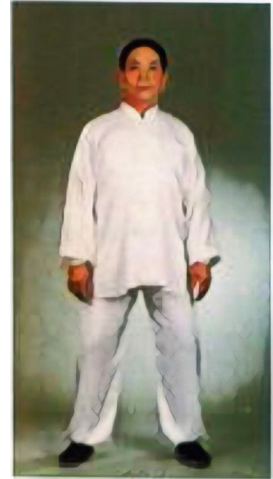


Figure 4-1

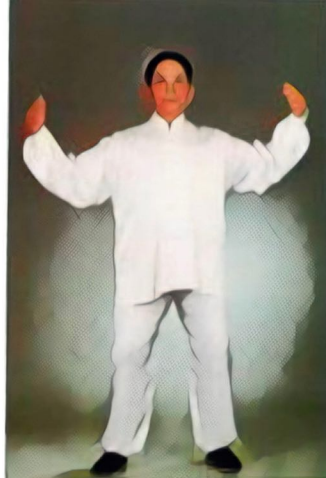


Figure 4-2

- B. Both Hands Spread Apart
 - i. Mindfully move your hands apart while keeping them on the level of the upper dantian. (Figure 4-2)

C. Both Hands Move toward the Center

- i. Without pausing, move your hands back towards your center line. (Figure 4-1)
- ii. Continue opening and closing in this way 18 times before moving onto the next movement.

2) Opening and Closing the Middle Dantian

A. Position Both Hands in Front of the Middle Dantian

- i. Continue from the previous movement. Mindfully move your hands together to meet in front of your abdomen (middle dantian). Focus your attention on your láogōng. (Figure 4-3)

B. Opening the Hands

- i. Mindfully open your hands on the level of the middle dantian. (Figure 4-3)

C. Closing the Hands

- i. Mindfully bring your hands together in front of the middle dantian. (Figure 4-4)

Repeat opening and closing like this for 18 repetitions.



Figure 4-3



Figure 4-4

3) *Opening and Closing the Lower Dantian*

- A. Both Hands Close Together in Front of the Lower Dantian
 - i. Continue from the previous movement. Bring your hands together in front of your pubic bone. Be mindful of the *lǎogōng*. (Figure 4-5)
- B. Open Both Hands
 - i. Mindfully separate your hands at the level of your lower dantian. (Figure 4-6)
- C. Bring the Hands Back Together
 - Mindfully draw your hands together in front of the lower dantian. (Figure 4-5)

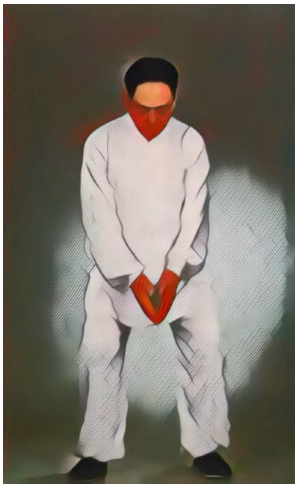


Figure 4-5

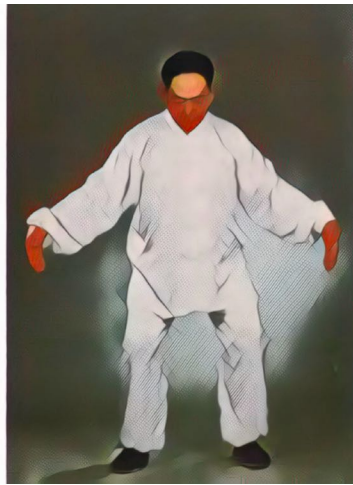


Figure 4-6

Repeat this sequence 18 times. Return your qi to your middle dantian, then be mindful of this qi for a short period.

II. Essential Points for Cultivation

1. It is helpful to wait to start these movements till you are able to sense a qi field with your *lǎogōng*.
2. The balance of motion and quiescence during this training is dependent upon your use of shen (heart/mind/spirit). Your shen

(heart / mind) coordinates the opening and closing. And this opening and closing penetrates your heart and mind. When the heart/mind (心 - xīn) would like to open, then mind (意 - yì) opens and the hands open. Practice to harmonize the heart and mind, practice to harmonize the mind and qi. This harmonizes the qi and the hands. As your intent flows, your qi should flow, and the form should move.

3. Imagine your hands are connected to one another by a rubber band. This will give resistance as the hands move apart. It will give a sense of attractions between the hands as if they are being pulled together. Allow your movements to be relaxed and smooth, gentle and continuous. Extend and contract freely and easily, full of elasticity.
4. Open and close with your inner and outer aspects united as one. Train so that your entire body moves as a single unit. When opening, open completely, When closing, close completely. By opening and closing fully, the yin and yang organs are renewed, the channels and vessels are dredged and flushed. The inner hunyuan qi becomes balanced with the opening and closing of the upper, middle, and lower dantians. The organs of the chest and belly are massaged as the buttocks, abdomen, and lower abdomen open and close.
5. After training this movement for a period of time, opening and closing will become centered on the dantian. Opening the dantian is like a balloon inflating. Closing the dantian is like the balloon contracting. This is a process of concentrating qi within the dantian.
6. In a spiritual framework, you can enter a state of completeness and unity. Your mind, qi, shen, and form can be merged as one. The three treasures of Heaven, Earth, and Humanity can be unified. When practicing opening, focus on the greatness of primal qi, and that there is nothing outside of it. When practicing closing, focus on the emptiness of the void, and there is nothing within it. 'Empty yet numinous, numinous yet empty. Empty yet

ethereal.' Feel like you are swimming in the air. Imagine that your pores and hair follicles are opening and closing with each movement of your hands. This is like the Tu Na of your respiration. As your respiration draws in fresh air and expels stale air; your body draws in primal qi through your pores and hair follicles during the opening and expels stale, stagnant qi during the closing.

III. Effects and Functions

1. Practicing the Opening and Closing movements harmonizes yin and yang. It dredges and clears the three arm yin channels and three arm yang channels. It helps regulate the Triple Warmer (san jiāo), and helps balance the six yang organs (gall bladder, stomach, small intestine, large intestine, bladder and triple warmer) and five yin organs (Heart, Lung, Spleen, Liver, and Kidney).
2. Opening and Closing helps to dredge and clear the extraordinary vessels. 'With one opening, all hundred vessels open. With one closing, all hundred vessels close.'
3. Opening and Closing trains and develops the Three Treasures (Heaven, Earth, Human). Opening and Closing the Upper Dantian primarily trains the shen. Opening and Closing the Middle Dantian primarily trains the qi, and Opening and Closing the Lower Dantian primarily trains the jing.
4. This movement helps the development of internal power (jin). When training this movement, open from the dantian to the hands, close from the hands to the dantian. Practicing this movement will train the internal qi and generate internal power (jin).
5. This movement blends firmness and softness. While opening, qi fills the skin. While closing, qi is collected into the bones. While opening, think of tightening. When closing, relax. Filling and collecting, tightening and relaxing, both in alternation. Firmness and softness are blended; this develops spring-like power (jin).

6. Practicing opening and closing helps you enter into quiescence. While your attention is focused on opening and closing, your heart does not become scattered or chaotic. Distractions do not arise, shen does not depart. In this way it becomes easier to enter into quiescence and connect to the numinous void.

