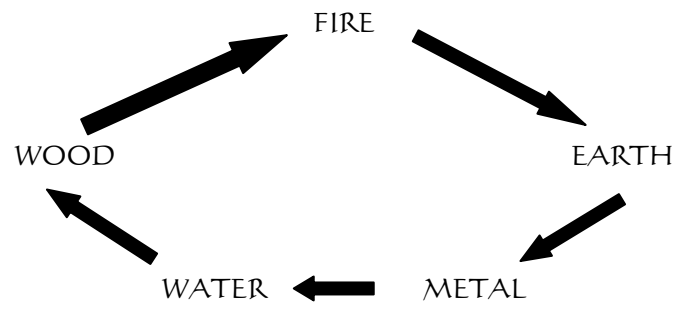


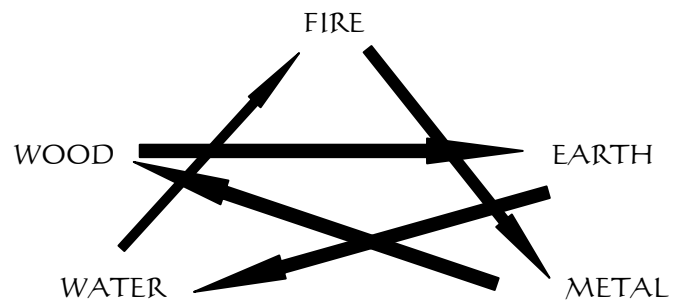
The Five Animal Exercises and The Five Element Theory



The Cycle of Generation



The Cycle of Destruction



Indications

For one who is healthy these exercises will maintain a balanced physical and emotional state.

If a problem exists, then one would choose the exercise related to the affected organ.

The use of imagination plays an important part in these practices. Unifying the image of a particular animal with that of one's body strengthens a person psychologically and physically.

The Dragon



The Dragon represents supreme wisdom, power, control, and social effectiveness. Stand still and take a few deep breaths while imagining that you are a dragon with glowing eyes, open mouth with fangs, glistening emerald scales, curling tail, and paws splayed showing long claws. Then, raising one foot, assume the pose and character of a dragon. Hold one arm up with claws down and hold the other arm down with claws up. Hold the pose as long as you can hold the image without straining.

This exercise affects the mind by helping to overcome feelings of depression, anger, hostility, and the anxieties brought on by being overwhelmed by adverse circumstances, for the dragon, flying through the heavens, is above all mundane concerns.

As the dragon represents the fire element, the physical effect of its exercise is to bring equilibrium to the heart, blood vessels, and absorption in the Small intestines.

The Tiger



The tiger symbolizes ambition, knowledge, power and physical effectiveness. It demonstrates its power in its ability to capture something by leaping over it and grabbing it. Begin by standing still. Take a few deep breaths while imagining yourself a tiger. When the visualization is complete, bend your knees slightly and rise up on your toes while reaching up and out until your arms are straight. Keep the claws down, as if you have reached over and out to grab something. Maintain this position as long as you can hold the image without straining the body.

The Tiger Exercise is useful in overcoming the adverse mental states of anxiety or hostility, ineffectualness, and lack of ambition. These adverse mental attitudes are believed to result from metabolic imbalances caused by liver dysfunction.

The tiger corresponds to the wood element, so the Tiger Exercise affects the liver and nerves. This exercise is recommended for healing and detoxifying the liver, to sooth inflamed nerves, to balance gallbladder functions, and to detoxify the brain and body cells.

The Bear



The Bear is a very powerful animal, but one of leisure. They eat well, sleep well, wander about slowly and are rather lazy and unaggressive. Bears are left alone and are not teased because they have the strength, courage, and prowess to deal with any potential adversary.

Begin the exercise by standing still. Take a few deep breaths while visualizing yourself a bear. Then with stiff legs, stomach pushed out, arms sloping out in front, walk slowly forward. As you do this, you will feel the movement of your abdomen and the stimulation of the area of the spleen-pancreas.

The Bear Exercise is recommended to aid the thought processes, to aid conceptualization, and to instill decisiveness into decision making. The bear is associated with the earth element, and so this exercise affects the enzyme production of the spleen-pancreas and the functioning of the stomach muscle. This exercise is therefore recommended for bad digestion, hyper- and hypoglycemia, and diabetes.

The Monkey



The monkey is associated with the water element, so the Monkey Exercise stimulates the functions of the kidneys and bladder. This exercise is recommended for those feeling confined or restricted by circumstances in which there is lack of freedom. To the Taoist will power resides in the kidneys. The Monkey Exercise is also recommended for any problems involving the kidneys, bladder, and urinary tract.

The monkey epitomizes boundless activity, curiosity, and free will. As the embodiment of free will, the monkey inspires an exercise that is free-style in the broadest sense. This exercise is best done in private as the presence of others might be inhibiting. Begin by standing or sitting. Take a few deep breaths while imagining yourself as a monkey. It is best to throw off your clothes at this time. Begin acting like a monkey. Sit on the floor, crouch in a chair, leap about, bounce up and down, hang upside down or by one arm, whatever is possible to do without strain or exertion. Rub and scratch as well, especially in the area of the kidneys.

The Eagle



The Eagle represents the spirit because of its god like qualities - silence, serenity, and invisibility. An accomplished hunter, its eyes are alert to all details of the landscape below. It manifests the attributes of intelligence, alertness, and ease when it hunts. Begin the Eagle Exercise by standing still. Take a few deep breaths while imagining yourself an eagle. When the visualization is complete, begin to walk slowly with your arms held out to the side at a slant, or with your hands clasped behind you. As you walk, imaging yourself effortlessly floating through the sky, untouched, divine. Your body is relaxed but your mind and eyes should be alert, noticing everything without focusing on anyone thing in particular.

This exercise is useful in overcoming melancholy, forlornness, and depression, which can result from lung problems. This exercise is recommended for the treatment of emphysema, asthma, as well as skin problems. The eagle is associated with the metal element, so the Eagle Exercise stimulates the lungs, skin, and the large intestine.

The Five Element Theory

The Taoists devised a theory to explain the balance of complementary and antagonistic units which explained the workings of the universe. In this theory, the life in all its myriad manifestations comes into and goes out of existence through the interplay of five elements. They are fire, earth, metal, water, and wood. There are two cycles that illustrate the interaction between these elements.

The First Cycle

The Cycle of Generation

In the first cycle - the cycle of generation - each element generates or produces the succeeding element:

Wood produces fire,
Fire produces earth,
Earth produces metal,
Metal produces water,
Water produces wood
- the cycle begins again.

The Second Cycle

The Cycle of Destruction

In the second cycle - the cycle of destruction - each element destroys or absorbs the succeeding element:

Fire destroys metal,
Metal destroys wood,
Wood absorbs earth,
Earth absorbs water
Water destroys fire,

- the cycle begins again.

Identifying each of the organs with its respective element in the first cycle results in: the heart (fire) supporting the spleen-pancreas (earth), the spleen-pancreas (earth) supporting the lungs (metal), the lungs (metal) supporting the kidneys (water), the kidneys (water) supporting the liver (wood), and the liver (wood) supporting the heart (fire). The bowels also follow the same cycle: the small intestine (fire) supports the stomach (earth), the stomach (earth) supports the large intestine (metal),

The large intestine (metal) supports the bladder (water), and the bladder (water) supports the gallbladder (wood). If the energy within an organ is not balanced, that organ, rather than being able to effectively support the organ succeeding it on the meridian circuit, will adversely affect, or will be adversely affected by, another organ. The pattern has been depicted in the second cycle of interaction between the elements in which each element destroys or absorbs the other.

Thus, when the energy within the heart (fire) is imbalanced, it (heart, fire) will adversely affect the lungs (metal); the lungs (metal) will adversely affect the liver (wood); the liver (wood), the spleen-pancreas (earth); the spleen-pancreas (earth), the kidneys (water); and the heart (fire).

This pattern also applies to the bowels:

imbalanced energy within the small intestine (fire) will cause it to adversely affect the large intestine (metal);...

...the large intestine (metal), the gall bladder (wood);

the gall bladder (wood), the stomach (earth);

the stomach (earth), the bladder (water);

and the bladder (water), the small intestine (fire).

The Mother and Child Law, as it applies to the human body, is based upon the interaction between the five elements. Each element is the "mother" of the succeeding element and, at the same time, the "child" of the element that precedes it in the cycle depicting the flow of energy throughout the elements. For instance, earth is the mother of metal and also the child of fire.

As energy circulates throughout the body, it passes through each organ and bowel in a well-defined cycle. Each organ or bowel is the "mother" of the organ or bowel succeeding it on the circuit. For example, the lungs support the kidneys and therefore the lungs are said to be the "mother" of the kidneys. If the energy within the kidneys (child) is deficient, stimulating the energy within the lungs (mother) with the Eagle Exercise results in an automatic increase of energy in the kidneys, according to the Mother and Child Law. Here, one is treating two organs with one exercise.

By consulting the diagram of influences, an exercise or a group of exercises can be selected to suit any need.

Source: Chi Kung Class Notes

Dr Steven Cheng

SF, circa 1980

Long life and good health.



Bodhidharma

28th Indian Patriarch, First Chinese Patriarch

Chan Pil by Il Bung,
Dr Seo, Kyung Bo
76th Buddhist Patriarch

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