

THE EIGHT GOLDEN TREASURES or THE EIGHT BROCADE

1. THE HEAVENLY LIFT

Begin by standing with feet about shoulder width apart. Relax and clear your mind. Place the hands palm up just below the navel, with the fingertips pointing to each other, 1 – 2 inches apart. As you inhale, slowly raise the hands up along the centre line. At the neck, start to rotate the palms outward, so that by the time they arrive above your head, they are pushing up. Push into the floor with the feet while bending the knees. Lift the head slightly and look at the backs of the hands. Hold this position for a few seconds, then, as you exhale, slowly lower the arms, and rotate the hands to palms down, at face level, and let them slowly descend in the centre line back to the starting position, turning palms up. Repeat the exercise a total of 8 times

BENEFITS: Improves overall elasticity of the whole body. Lengthens ligaments, stretches rib cage upwards and strengthens the abdominal muscles. Massages joints in the arms, loosens shoulders, relieves bursitis. Stimulates the Triple Warmer Meridian which helps regulate the internal organs. It relieves fatigue, increases inhalation, helps correct poor posture in the upper back and shoulders. It strengthens the digestive system.

2. THE DAOIST ARCHE

Begin by standing in a horse stance. Keep the body straight. Start with your hands at the sides, and join the thumbs, 4th, and 5th fingers of each hand together at the tips, with the index and middle fingers joined at the sides and pointing out. Slowly raise the arms up in a big circle, up to the upper chest in front of the collar bones. (Inhale). As the arms come up, the pointing fingertips face each other 1-2 inches apart. Slowly turn your head to the right and extend your right arm out to that side. (Exhale). The elbow remains slightly bent, and the pointing fingers point up, with a slight stretch. Gaze softly at these fingers. The left hand is pulled directly to the left shoulder with the fingers curled like pulling the string of a bow, and the fingers rest just above the end of the collar bone. Hold the position for a few seconds, then return the arms to the position in front of the upper chest, (Inhale) and let the arms float down to the sides. (Exhale). Repeat on the other side. Do 8 repetitions, i.e., 4 to each side.

BENEFITS: Externally, improves elasticity and muscle tone of arms and shoulders. Internally, increases lung capacity, and massages heart, liver, lungs and intestines. Blood circulation is stimulated, and oxygen intake increased. Stimulates large intestine and peri-cardium meridians (fingers 2 and 3). Exercises eyes. Places

emphasis on the thorax, which contains the heart and lungs.

3. **WHITE CRANE SPREADS WINGS**

Begin standing with feet about shoulder width apart. Hold the left palm above the right in front of the Dantien, like you are holding a small ball. As you breathe in, the right arm starts to ascend in a slight diagonal from centerline. As it does, the right hand slowly rotates, so that when the arm is extended, the right palm will be facing up, its final position will be directly above the right shoulder.

At the same time, the left-hand pushes diagonally down to the left side with palm facing down and the fingers pointing straight ahead. At the end of the movement, exhale slowly and bring the hands back to their central starting point, holding the ball, but with the left hand now below the right. As you inhale again, repeat on the left side. Repeat the exercise 4 times each side, for a total of 8. Remember to maintain your posture, breathe slowly and be aware.

BENEFITS: Strengthens and stretches the ligaments of the arms and shoulders. Exercises spleen and stomach, enhancing the digestive system. The eyes are exercised as they follow the upward movement. The lungs benefit from stretching the ribcage. Reduces stress.

4. **THE SPINAL TWIST**

Begin with feet wider than shoulder width apart, with your arms hanging loosely at your sides. Bring the right hand slowly up in front of your chest as you inhale. The palm now faces to the left. Slowly, as you exhale, turn to the left and follow the right hand as it pushes toward the back. As you turn, keep the feet pointing straight ahead. The left hand also turns with the body so that the palm ends up facing the tailbone, several inches away. Only turn as far as comfortable and feel the gentle stretch. Next, inhale as you turn to the front, this time bringing the left hand forward, up to chest height where the two palms face each other. Repeat the same movements to the right side. Do a total of 8 mindful repetitions, 4 in each direction.

BENEFITS: Stretches front and back muscles. Increases overall energy flow through massaging effect on the nervous system. Strengthens lungs. Improves tone of neck, chest, shoulders, and abdominal muscles, and helps reduce waistline. Stimulates Qi Pump at the tailbone with palm of down hand. Massages spine, liver, spleen, stomach, and pancreas.

5. **THE ROTARY WAIST**

Begin in a fairly wide stance, with your hands on the hips. First, turn slightly to the right, bend forward over the right leg, and rotate over to the left side, sweep over the left leg, then back up to straight position. Inhale at the upright position and exhale when bending forward and circling. You can do 4 rotations one way, then 4 the other way, or alternatively, alternate positions each rotation. If you do this then each time you come up, tip slightly to that direction before changing, and look upward.

BENEFITS: Reduces waistline, strengthens abdominal and thigh muscles, and develops spine flexibility. Internally improves digestive and circulatory systems. Stimulates energy flow and relieves emotional energy blockage. Lowering the head below the hips is believed to remove excess heat from the heart. Tension is reduced in the sympathetic nervous system. Tipping the head back gives a mild stretch to the front of the neck and stimulates the thyroid.

6. **KIDNEY AND SPINAL BEND**

Stand up straight with the feet together. Inhale as you bring the hands up slowly and place the backs on the lower back (kidneys). Keep inhaling as you bend backward slightly. Now start bending forward gently and allow the hands to fall away from the back and stretch down to the toes. As you are bending forward imagine you are moving down one vertebra at a time. Exhale all the way down. Then, inhale and come up the same way, slowly, and bring the hands to the lower back again, and repeat the cycle, 8 times.

Note: make sure you keep the knees bent a bit, and only go as far as your body is comfortable. This is important so that you don't over stretch the back muscles.

BENEFITS: Increases elasticity and tone of abdominal muscles and flexibility of the spine. Internally, stimulates the kidneys to improve toxic waste expulsion. Movement of the waist brings all abdominal tissues and organs into play. Also, stimulates the adrenal glands and the arteries, veins and nerves associated with them. Kidneys also play a vital role regulating the water metabolism of the entire body.

7. **FIERY FISTS**

Begin by standing in a wide stance. Bring each fist to the corresponding side of the waist, with palms up (this is called *chambering* the fists). Punch out first with the right fist, slowly, rotating it to palm down as it moves out. Exhale strongly as you punch and imagine that you feel resistance. Make a very intense look with your eyes

as well. Then, at the end of the exhale, pull the fist back slowly, again rotating it to palm up and chamber it back on the waist. Inhale as you are pulling back. Do the same movements on the left side. Do a total of 8 repetitions, 4 on each side, then let your hands return down to your sides. The punches can also be done more quickly, just as a variation

BENEFITS: Increases the vital energy by tightening the fists and gazing sternly or intently, which enhances blood circulation and refreshes body cells. Improves eyesight, shoulders, arms, and legs. Strengthens the liver (since Chinese medicine believes anger is stored in the liver, the exercise releases anger, frustration and liver toxins). Develops a flow of Qi from your feet through your whole body. It excites the cerebral cortex and related nerves and increases the circulation of oxygenated blood.

8. **SPINAL JOLT**

Begin standing with feet together. With hands and arms relaxed at the sides. Slowly come up on your toes, as you inhale, and bring the hands up, palms facing the Dantien. After a full inhale, release and come down lightly on the heels, with the sound *HUNG*...said with a forceful exhale, in a guttural way. The hands push down forcefully at the sides. Repeat a total of 8 times and when finished relax and feel.

BENEFITS: Stimulates central nervous system, benefiting all organs. Helps move fluids. Increases balance. Strengthens calf muscles.

HOW TO PRACTICE THE EIGHT GOLDEN TREASURES

- 1) The body should be loose and relaxed so that the Qi may circulate freely throughout.
- 2) The feet must be firmly rooted to the ground and the spine kept erect in the central position.
- 3) Breathing should be natural and co-ordinated with the stretching and bending movements, as much as is possible.
- 4) Breathe only through the nose and direct the breath deep down into the lower Dantien with abdominal breathing.
- 5) The tongue should be placed gently against the palate.
- 6) Either exercise before eating or one hour after eating.
- 7) Try to exercise outside, when possible, but not in bad weather.
- 8) Do not exercise when you are feeling emotionally depressed.
- 9) Relax and do all the exercises with a light heart and a positive mind.

BENEFITS: These exercises develop a deeper breathing ability and increased physical health. There is a benefit to the cerebral cortex and sympathetic nervous system due to the relaxing effect and the harmonious balancing of Yin / Yang energies.

The main goal of Qigong is to regulate the body, the mind, and the breathing.