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By email: info@healingdao.com

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**Inner Alchemy Series
Chi Kung Fundamentals 1**

Way of the Inner Smile
Self Acceptance – Tao Path to Inner Peace

By Michael Winn



Cambodian Goddess with beatific Inner Smile
Contemporary teak, Dao Mountain Retreat Center

Note: This short book is one segment of my Tao Home Study audio course ***Chi Kung Fundamentals #1***, but expanded. The rest of audio course #1 covers ***Tao Five Elements*** theory and practice: ***Five Animals Play*** China's oldest shamanic chi kung (qigong) form, as well as the ***Six Healing Sounds***.

Modern Chinese pinyin spelling is used (Daoism vs. Taoism), except for a few key words now part of English (Tao, Chi Kung instead of qigong, chi instead of qi. Tao is pronounced "dao". Chi is pronounced "chee").

Acknowledgements

Special deep gratitude to Mantak Chia, who inspired me to explore the path of Tao. I especially thank him for sharing a transmission of Daoist Hermit One Cloud's simple smiling presence. Thanks to many other spiritual teachers in this lifetime, especially my Mother and Father, whose inner smile at my moment of birth was so precious.

Thanks to my many other Tao masters, and the countless generations of Tao adepts before them. To the chi kung and inner alchemy masters going back thousands of years into pre-history, for sharing their smiling "aha" – their discovery on how to best cultivate chi while staying grounded in the body.

Eternal gratitude to my partner Joyce Gayheart for being such a beautiful heartfelt smiling presence in my life. Thanks to all my Healing Tao and Universal Tao colleagues and students who have devoted themselves to spreading their smiling presence in the human community.

Deep appreciation to the Tao Immortals, the Earth, Sun, Moon, Planet and Star beings for their gentle smiling guidance on my journey into the Great Within and the Great Beyond.

I offer Supreme Ultimate thanks to the Tao, for making the Inner Smile the true response to getting the Cosmic Joke.

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Who is Michael Winn?

The short resume of official "Grand Poobah" accomplishments, in case that's important



Michael Winn "embraces" the Temple of Heaven, used by the Chinese Emperor for sacred Taoist ceremonies since the 14th century. The chi from those ceremonies is still vibrating, for those able to tune in.



Winn captures his Monkey Mind, takes it to China for further training. On his T-shirt: character for "Tao", the Way. Base of Mt. Qingcheng, sacred to Taoists.

- 30 years experience in teaching subtle energy methods internationally, from kundalini yoga in 70's to tai chi, qigong, and inner alchemy meditation today. Studied with the top spiritual teachers of this generation.
- President of the National Qigong (Chi Kung) Association for two terms. This is an umbrella organization for all the different qigong and tai chi schools, teachers, healers, & practitioners in the U.S.
- Founder and Director of Healing Tao University summer retreat program (now at Heavenly Mountain in North Carolina's Blue Ridge Mtns, near Asheville). The largest Tao arts program in the west.
- Writer/editor of Mantak Chia's first seven books (that helped establish his fame). Best known as co-author of the revolutionary Taoist Secrets of Love: Cultivating Male Sexual Energy. Author of many other qigong articles & book chapters (see "long bio" below).
- Chairman of Healing Tao Instructors Association of the Americas for 9 years. It set standards for certification & ethics. One of the original Senior Instructors that launched the Healing Tao, which globally has certified over 1000 instructors and brought Tao teachings to hundreds of thousands of people. (Abroad Healing Tao is known as Universal Tao).
- Author of ten Tao home study DVD-CD courses that integrate high level medical-spiritual qigong and inner alchemy as a progressive training.
- Pioneered taking Western Taoists into caves on Flower Mountain (Huashan) in China to meditate. Has led ten+ China Dream Trips to develop relations between Western and Chinese Taoists in their sacred mountains and temples.

The deeper, more personal answer:

Here are my own internal rules, honored in all the Homestudy courses:

* **TEACH ONLY WHAT IS SIMPLE AND TRUE.** In the books I wrote with/for Mantak Chia, some of the practices seem mentally complicated. I wanted to simplify them at the time, but did not always have final editorial control. In the many years since I wrote those books, my own practice has evolved towards the simple. The current Home Study courses were retaped many times, each time refining the practices to their simplest essence. I rigorously avoid the excess mental complexity present in some of the books, which seemed necessary to reach western minds at the time.

* **NO SECRETS.** Give students whatever they are ready to digest. The time for secrets is past. Many excellent Chinese teachers have unfortunately not yet realized this! The people I want to reach don't have the time or inclination to play this game of follow the leader, begging for secrets drops of wisdom. I pour them on you, hoping you can absorb any part of them, and become your own leader.

* **NO GURU OR MASTER TRIPS.** Hierarchies of Ego Authority bore me and stifle creative chi flow. Spiritual Transmission can occur without developing co-dependent teacher/student relationships. I'm not interested in followers clinging to my shirt tail. The Life Force itself is the True Teacher, I am just a guide to help you develop your own relationship with the Life Force. We are all brothers and sisters on the continuous two-way journey between Source and Creation.

* **TEACH ONLY FROM PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.** Means no bullshit about level of personal attainment. I test every method thoroughly to make sure it works and is safe.

* **HAVE FUN!!!** Playing with the chi field is meant to be fun. While refining the elixir, laughter is the best medicine. If you don't get the Cosmic Joke, it may get you.

* **Product Warning:** Consumers of Chi Kung Home Study Courses may likely become a "Chi-aholic" and may be exposed to the epidemic "Mad Dao Disease" that has widely infected many students.

For the last 25 years I've explored many esoteric systems (also called Mystery Schools) to find the most effective methods of improving health and refining spiritual awareness. Principle schools (besides various Taoist lineages) include: White Tantra (kundalini yoga), kriya yoga, dzogchen (Bon), Christian mysticism, Tibetan Buddhist vajrayana practices, and Atlantean alchemy (Original, pre-Egyptian Kabbalah).

I took many teachings with the Dalai Lama, including his Kalachakra initiation. I worked closely with Paramhansa Hariharananda for years to edit his Bhagavad Gita in the Light of Kriya Yoga, and received private initiations into the higher kriyas. I have a book on Atlantean alchemy nearly ready for publication. Its working title is Shape Power: Ask the Life Force to Create a Reality You Truly Need. All these schools shaped my spiritual development. But I always return to my roots in the Tao because of its natural simplicity and practicality.

I have tested -- always on myself -- some 60 different qigong (chi kung) and Taoist (Daoist) meditation systems. I have sought out dozens of different Daoist masters, often only to get one superb movement or tiny but valuable insight they had. Master T.K. Shih

lived in my NYC apartment for two years. I edited BK Frantis' Opening the Energy Gates of the Body and studied his excellent neigong and pa kua chang forms. I studied wu style tai chi with Grand Master Ed Yu in China town (also Mantak Chia's tai chi teacher), and Northern Wu Tai chi style with David Dolbear, National Gold Medalist champion. This particular tai chi style was infused with alchemical energetics by a Taoist master.

I went to Egypt nine times, and discovered that one of my "home" spots on the planet was the capstone of the Great Pyramid. I will reveal the mystery of what happened to the missing capstone in my Shape Power book...:). I spent a night alone inside the Great Pyramid, half in the lower pit and half in the King's chamber. Later I spent six years training in the Western internal alchemy methods taught by an Atlantean scientist-priest, and went through a powerful series of initiations in the Great Pyramid of Egypt, Pan's cave in Delphi (Greece), and a pyramid-of-ice island north of the Arctic Circle (close to North Pole), assisted by Saami shamans.

My mission this lifetime is to integrate Taoist internal alchemy (neidangong), qigong, shengong, shamanism, depth psychology, and Western alchemical paths. I've fused their essence and methods so their transformational power become accessible to all who are ready to travel on the highest and quickest path of energetic healing. This is the Way of cultivating both the personal and holy body of Nature, the Divine Feminine, whose cycle is currently ascendant on planet Earth. It is equally accessible to both men and women.



Michael Winn on capstone of Great Pyramid, sunrise Spring Equinox.

I travelled to China many times, to be in the presence of its holy mountains and sacred places, and to study medical qigong in top Beijing hospitals with the World Academic Medical Qigong Society. Each year I invite top masters to teach at Healing Tao University, now in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina, partly in order to trade secrets with them. I've been on the organizing committee for the National Qigong Annual Conference since its inception in 1997, giving me exposure to the top qigong teachers in

the U.S. and a chance to absorb their favorite methods.

Cultivating one's chi (qi) is a life long process. But there is no need for everyone to repeat my long journey. Better to start off equipped with the valuable tools offered in my courses, distilled from decades of testing. I only teach what I myself practice. I hope you will use those tools to go to a new, higher, and unknown level that is perfect for you alone.

Winn's forthcoming books-in-progress:

- * Way of the Inner Smile: Tao Path to Inner Peace (updated print version of ebook)
- * Taoist Microcosmic Orbit: Alchemical Methods of Circulating the Golden Elixir
- * Tao Inner Alchemy: Sexually Couple Male Water and Female Fire to Complete Your Destiny & Cultivate Immortality
- * Shape Power - Ask the Life Force to Create a Reality You Truly Need:
- * A Short History of Atlantis' Spiritual Technology

[What's the Difference Between Michael Winn's and Mantak Chia's teaching?](#)



Michael Winn's favorite meditation spot on Mt. Hua. Only fools and immortals dare walk the "high wire" - an ancient pine trunk growing out sideways 30-feet, off a cliff with 3000 ft sheer drop off.

The Long Story

Note: this is an edited version of bio that first appeared in the Empty Vessel, Journal of Contemporary Taoism.

In 1980 Winn was one of Mantak Chia's first western students in Chinatown, New York.

He played a key role in founding The Healing Tao in 1982 and directly wrote or heavily edited many of Mantak Chia's books on nei gong and qigong as General Editor of Healing Tao Books. His titles included *Awaken Healing Energy Through the Tao*, the first book in English on the microcosmic orbit; *Taoist Secrets of Love: Cultivating Male Sexual Energy*; *Healing Love: Cultivating Female Sexual Energy*; *Iron Shirt Chi Kung*; *Bone Marrow Nei Kung*; *Fusion of the Five Elements: Meditations for Transforming Negative Emotion*; and *Awaken Healing Light of the Tao.*, an advanced study of the microcosmic orbit. Winn also edited a newsletter for Healing Tao instructors entitled *From the Mouth of the Immortal Child*.

The noted qigong master T.K. Shih lived in Winn's New York city apartment for two years in the early 80's: "I taught him English, and T.K. taught me how to move like a cat" is how Winn described their relationship. Winn studied with many other Taoist teachers, and edited B.K. Frantzis' *Opening the Energy Gates of the Body*. He studied qigong and ba gua with Frantzis, and the northern wu style tai chi as taught by David Dolbear, a Wu style gold medalist and lineage holder. "I waited ten years before choosing a long form. David got a transmission in Beijing that teaches tai chi as a form of alchemy, emphasizing the changes between jing, qi, and shen." He went on to study in Beijing with David teacher, Master Liu Jiang Chang.

Winn sees his life "as an alchemical journey flowing between outer adventures and inner adventures, a process of cultivating "my worldly life" and "my inner essence".

Winn's father was a heart surgeon who helped Dr. DeBakey pioneer open heart surgery (see DeanWinn.net). Michael was the 3rd of seven children. He travelled to 30 countries before the age of 17 and ran 40 whitewater rafting expeditions as a guide down the Grand Canyon. In high school he competed against 100,000 teams and won the California State Debate championship. He graduated with top honors from Dartmouth College as a Senior Fellow with a degree in Russian/comparative literature. After a successful meteoric three year career in New York book publishing, he got fired "for being too creative".

He became a free lance war correspondent and adventure travel photographer that took him on 30 trips to another 50 countries in Africa, the mideast , and Asia. His writings and photos appeared in the *New York Times*, *Time*, *Smithsonian*, *Outside*, *Village Voice*, *Harpers*, *Connoisseur*, *People*, *Adventure Travel*, *National Jewish Monthly*, and many others. National Geographic financed his rafting expedition in North Yemen.

Included in his wanderlust period was a four month journey across China tracing Marco Polo's footsteps. Winn, who is not Jewish, ran an underground railroad smuggling white American Jews into Ethiopia and black Jews out of Ethiopia into Israel. In New York's Soho district, Winn opened *Abyssinia*, the first Ethiopian restaurant in America, and operated it successfully as a side business for 20 years.

While in Africa, Winn accidentally self-induced his first kundalini awakening, which led him to begin studying and teaching kundalini (hindu tantric) yoga. In Ethiopia, a visitation in broad daylight by a Taoist immortal inspired him to pursue Taoist alchemy. "In college I studied comparative literature", Winn says, "and in real life I found myself

training in and comparing the esoteric alchemical methods from different cultures."

He studied kriya yoga with Swami Hariharananda, successor in India to Paramhansa Yogananda, and kept a close friendship with this yogi renowned for mastering the breathless state of nirvikalpa samadhi. He died recently at age 97. Winn edited his *The Bhagavad Gita in the Light of Kriya Yoga*. Winn notes that kriya yoga, the essence of all yogas, has many parallels to Taoist alchemy but "it's finally a pure fire path. The Taoist preference is to mix the fire and water, which is more accepting of the body."



Winn at Lao Tzu's Ascension site, Louguantai. One of China's amazing power spots, visited on China Dream Trips.

Winn also studied Dzogchen and tantric Buddhist teachings from the Dalai Lama and other rinpoches. "Tibetan and Hindu Tantra is philosophically very similar to yin-yang theory, but in practice uses more mantra, mudra, and deity worship. Dzogchen is the closest brother to the Tao with its emphasis on cutting through quickly to the clear or original light. But I like the refining process in Taoist alchemy, the many practical connections they developed with Original Chi (yuan qi). Taoist alchemy is a shortcut, it focuses on direct relationship with the life force. When you combine alchemy with qigong, the effect is a super-charged Energy Body."

Winn also studied the Celtic approach to earth based spirituality with R.J. Stewart. "All the mystery schools are great", Winn commented. "The ancient Celts used a mirror approach to Taoist alchemy, they first connect to the outer five elements/directions and then work their way inside the body. This is the opposite of the Eastern way. I love all the ancient meditation systems, but finally you've got to focus your practice on one approach. Ultimately, I find Taoist alchemy to be the simplest, the most practical (body-centered) and the most complete."

He reached this conclusion after 25 years of studying and testing many different systems of qigong (chi kung), with dozens of teachers in the USA and China, both famous and unknown. He uses the Tao Formulas for Immortality offered by the Taoist Hermit One Cloud (Mantak Chia's teacher) as the superstructure for holding the immense knowledge and skill he has acquired. (More Info).

His quest for deeper knowledge of the Tao has taken him to visit the sacred mountains of China fifteen times, where he has cultivated many friendships with Taoist adepts. He was the first to offer trips to China for western Taoists that included staying in caves on Huashan (Flower Mountain) used by Tao adepts for millennia. His China Dream Trips have become famous and will be the subject of a forthcoming book by two Taoist scholars who studied his attempts to bridge ancient Chinese and modern Western Taoist cultures. (More info)



*Michael Winn and Renfarong,
President of China Taoist
Association. Ludongbin Temple,
Louguantai. Lao-tzu transmitted the
Tao Te Ching nearby.*

"The Chinese have a genius for boiling down everything to its core essence", Winn notes. " I have done the same with everything I've learned from all my teachers — I just keep cooking it down, refining it to its essence, and clarifying its practical application. It's just my small part in the great collective process of the Tao. Somebody will take my refinements and improve on them. That is the experimental, evolving nature of Tao spiritual science. In fact, I hope they do it soon — I'd like to enjoy those improvements myself!"

Winn, who lives in a log home in the mountains outside of Asheville, North Carolina, maintains a private practice in qigong therapy and Taoist sexology. Winn is currently

finishing a book on the energy science of how people can shape the life force to manifest what they truly need. The book is inspired by contact with a spiritual being who claims to have ascended with his body - at the age of 2,300 years old - into the "Stellar Mind", i.e. a full celestial heaven immortal.

He is also working on a book on Taoist internal alchemy, but claims he is "in no rush to finish it. I don't want to put out books based on half-baked insights to make a quick buck. I'm happy to write just one high level, fully-baked book. A book based on genuine experience and that can actually be useful to others. It takes a few decades to really road-test inner alchemy and its potential interactions with qigong." His next book scheduled for publication is titled: Tai Chi - A Path of Self-Love: Sacred Movement as Inner Alchemy.

In 2008 Joyce Gayheart, Michael's wife, passed into Flower Heaven. It was an amazing alchemical experience of the Taoist process of shijie, or "liberation from the corpse". Instead of re-incarnating, she infused her heart-essence drop into Michael's heart, creating an androgynous (male-female balanced) soul and totally changing Michael's destiny. The story of this process can be found at HealingTaoUSA.com/JoyceGayheart



Illustration 1: Beardless version of the new "androgynous" Michael Winn.

Every summer Winn organizes what has become the largest Tao energy healing, qigong and neigong (meditation) program in America, at Heavenly Mountain, in the Blue Ridge Mountains near Asheville, North Carolina. It offers about 30 low cost, week long retreats on all aspects of Taoist meditation, qigong, oriental body work, Taoist dream practice, feng shui, sexology, Taoist astrology, qi healing, tai chi, tao yin (Taoist yoga), ba gua zhang, weight loss and medical qigong and more. He teaches a number of courses in the

core Taoist internal alchemy & qigong curriculum.

More info on [Summer Retreats](#) and [Michael Winn's Teaching Schedule in Asheville & Internationally](#).



Michael Winn "cooking" in a cauldron, China's symbol of alchemical transformation. Temple of Heaven, Beijing. Note: this is actual photo, not photoshop!

Inner Smile: Root of the Root

By Mantak Chia

The Tao science of *chi* cultivation is so huge. It is easy to get lost in it. Taoists spent thousands of years developing so many different way to refine human *chi* using *chi kung* and meditation. They took the science of healing and medicine to new depth, had hundreds of martial arts systems, found the best way to build houses with good feng shui, and figured out how to bury the dead so the ancestral *chi* is most beneficial. They developed high systems of Tao philosophy, ethics, sexology, herbology, divination and many other things.

But some things are more important than others. So I am very glad that Michael Winn chose to write more deeply about the Inner Smile, because it is so close to the root of the root. By this I mean the Inner Smile is so close to the root of inner alchemy, and inner alchemy is the root of all the other Tao systems, even the *I Ching*.

Lao Tzu says that the man of knowledge acquires something new everyday, and the man of Tao lets go of something new every day. The man who practices the Inner Smile is a man of Tao. I feel Michael Winn is both a man of knowledge and a man of Tao. His writing will help people to understand why the Inner Smile is so important, and how it simplifies so many other good and useful practices.

I have known Michael Winn for more than twenty years, so I know how deeply committed he is to Tao. I consider him one of the best writers on Tao in the West. I am grateful to him for his skillful writing to help explain to Westerners the practical science of Tao subtle energy. People used to think Tao was just an interesting intellectual philosophy. Now they begin to realize it is a very deep spiritual science.

***The Way of the Inner Smile* takes the theory and the practice to a higher level of understanding. It has many new insights, and reveals how his own teaching skill has matured. He has taught many Westerners and figured out how their minds and bodies can most easily absorb Tao methods. He is able to explain the connection between biology, Tao psychology of body-spirits, and inner alchemical transformation of the human soul.**

His focus on unconditional self-acceptance is a modern way of expressing traditional Tao practice of utter openness to life. It is an openness that must begin with the body.

Please enjoy this journey deep into the land of Inner Smiles!

Mantak Chia

Tao Garden, Thailand

May 2003

Introduction

What is the Inner Smile?

Man without smiling face should not open a shop.

- Chinese Proverb

The Inner Smile is a simple, effortless Daoist (Taoist) meditation on how to live with an open heart. You can practice it sitting quietly, or while engaged in everyday activities. The Inner Smile challenges us, in a series of “smiling baby steps”, to unconditionally accept every aspect of our body, mind, and spirit.

The Inner Smile connects our biological self, our psychological self, and our spiritual self in a practical way. It ingeniously captures the power hidden in our natural impulse to smile. It doesn't try to fix anything or ask any part of us or others to change. It relies on the power of non-verbal communication coupled with a clear mind intent to “creatively find” the harmony hidden within everything.

To paraphrase Lao Tzu, the Inner Smile “does nothing, yet leaves nothing undone”. The Inner Smile cultivates the spontaneous nature of our inner heart to accept all experiences in life at their most profound level. This may sound a bit abstract. Our western minds demand more detailed guidance. What makes the Inner Smile practical?

What makes it practical is the Inner Smile's power to cultivate our “*chi*” – the subtle breath infused by Nature in our body-mind-soul. This internal effect of the Inner Smile is greatly amplified by various kinds of *chi kung* (*qigong*). What is *chi kung*? Literally it means “skill with subtle breath”. It is the ancient process of allowing (*yin*) and encouraging (*yang*) subtle energy to flow harmoniously in our life.

Chi Kung was originally known in ancient China as *yang sheng*, or

“nourishing life”. Its methods embraced both the stillness of meditation and the movement of life. Its art became most famous for its simple, gentle healing body movements.

The ancient principles of *chi kung* are the grandparents of the well known martial art, *tai chi chuan*. In China *tai chi chuan* (*taijiquan*) is quite young, only about 800 years old! The huge time spans involved here give us pause to reflect on the superficiality of modern knowledge about human nature.

What could be easier than simply smiling? Can we really learn to practice it as a skill? Many people who practice the Inner Smile experience immediate calmness. For others it opens up inner vistas of spiritual joy. Some practitioners experience spontaneous “miraculous” healing from psychological problems or diseases.

Although it is simple, inner smiling is a skill that improves over time and ultimately leads to deep spiritual realization. Some people get stuck in a chronic “Inner Frown” state, the opposite of the Inner Smile. They may need special help, which is offered in this book. It is important to note there is a big difference between the Inner Smile and the ordinary “outer smile”. I will give more details on that later.

Where does a smile come from? Should we ask Leonardo Da Vinci, who painted the Mona Lisa? Some scholars think it is his self-portrait, disguised as a woman to amplify the mystery of her smile. Our impulse to smile is certainly, at core, a mystery. But the key to engaging this mysterious smile can be found by the most ordinary person, not just great artists.



Mona Lisa's Inner Smile

We should note at the outset that smiling is energetically very different from laughing. “Laughter is the best medicine” the saying goes, and laughing certainly releases tension and is good for the body in a number of different ways. According to Chinese medicine, if someone laughs too frequently or too loudly they may have excess heart *chi* and are unconsciously trying to release it. Laughter is more of belly centered emotional release than smiling.

Smiling is more subtle than laughter, a more inward and more sustainable experience. Someone who smiles continuously is not considered in excess, assuming it is not a “phony” outer smile. Smiling is less about emotions, which are our response to outer life events, and more about subtle feeling. Inner Smiling cultivates this feeling to a high level, focusing on the spiritual joy that arises from our inner soul and radiates out as subtle presence.

The Smiling Inner Heart of our Energy Body

Thanks to ancient Tao masters passing down their tradition for

thousands of years, we now know the secret of the Inner Smile is hidden within our inner heart. The inner heart is not the physical heart, and it is not the emotional or feeling heart. There is a “third heart”, just as there is a “third eye”. This inner heart is a portal to direct experience of what is called “soul”, a concept in the West that has successfully eluded all definition.

The ancient enlightened masters gave us a very specific map of the Inner Smile’s pathway within our body. It arises like a wave from the inner ocean of our unknown and unborn self. Before it gently splashes onto the beach of the outer world, it passes through many subtle layers of body-mind consciousness that they mapped out in great detail.

This mapped out network of energy meridians and spheres of psycho-spiritual essences hidden within our physical body is known to Tao adepts as the Energy Body. The Inner Smile is a way of awakening and harmonizing our Energy Body. As the smiling wave arises within it can be guided to effortlessly “float loose” our deep sexual, emotional, and mental patterns, which are basically frozen energy.



The ability of this smiling infant to swim underwater totally free of all fear of drowning is akin our innate ability to smile and float in the sea of our Original Energy (yuan chi).

Smiling can melt energy patterns that we might feel are stuck or frozen inside us. It can reach and dissolve patterns that have frustrated other forms of therapy, if done with proper focus.

The Inner Smile is a gentle tool, but so profoundly subtle it can probe powerfully into the depths of our unconscious, where few can reach. It can dissolve patterns without struggle, as it does not encourage divisive attitudes (me vs. them) or attempt to “kill” the sick

energy. If you attack your problems, they resist even harder.

The Inner Smile operates by embracing the aspects of our pain or dysfunction from within. It awakens our core sense of unity, and activates the inner will of our heart. Inner Smiling causes the sick energy to spontaneously shape shift. By smiling, we are really just liberating the inner will of our stuck energy to become functional and free.

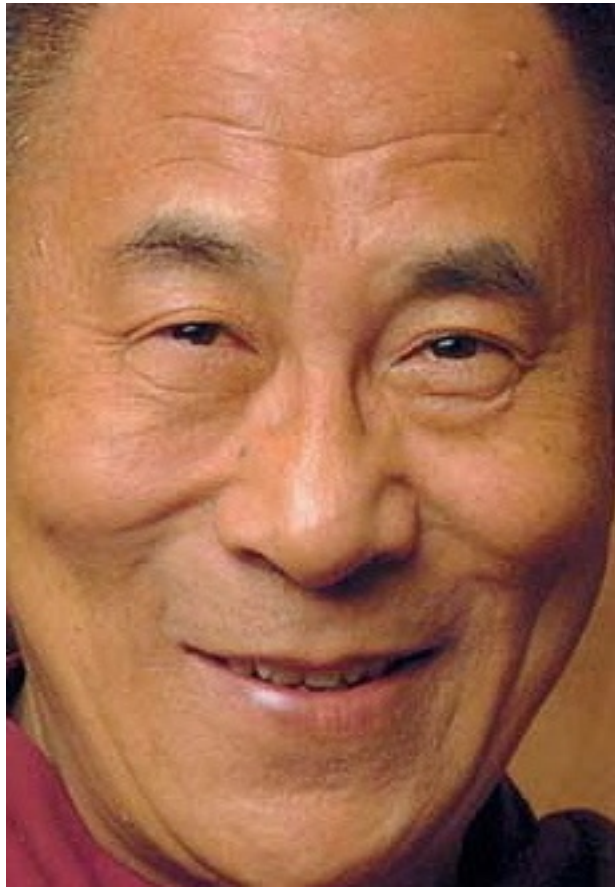
The Inner Smile is just the first step on an amazing journey to the experience of your true self and to the core of the “multi-verse”– the multiple dimensions of Nature’s grand unity.

I hope you will join the growing global community of seekers of the Natural Truth. Tao offers a practical way gain the freedom needed to experience all levels of your reality. I hope that you grow to love and trust the Inner Smile as much as I do.

**Michael Winn
Asheville, North Carolina
Spring Equinox 2003**

Chapter One

Inner Smile: The Sages Way to Unfold Tao



The Dalai Lama gave a teaching recently. The final question asked of him was, "What can we give to you?" He beamed at the audience. "That is easy," he said. "Just give me your smiles. It makes me feel good when I see people smile at me. And if you smile at each other that would also be very good. So please give me your smiles."

What is Tao? Tao means "natural way". It is really undefinable, because it includes everything that exists in Nature, plus everything that doesn't yet exist! When Tao is applied to humans, it implies the virtue, or "de", of natural self-unfoldment. Historically, the Inner Smile was a foundation practice of Daoist *neidan gong*, or "inner elixir skill". Today, we translate *neidan* simply as "inner alchemy", meaning the science of changing oneself in accordance with natural law, but more quickly.

Inner alchemy simply means that what normally might happen in ten months of outer life events can now happen in 10 minutes of inner smiling practice. This seems like magic, but alchemy is actually a

scientific process in the sense of being systematic and repeatable. But it is made possible only when we grasp the hidden essence of life. Once we become aware of *chi* flow in our body, we can shape it. The Inner Smile was the first step in seven highly secret Tao inner alchemy “formulas” for speeding up the stages of human spiritual development.

But the Inner Smile also has a key function in formulas Two through Seven as well. It is amazing to consider that the Inner Smile is at once the easiest beginner method and the most advanced level of realization! (For a full description of the Daoist hermit One Cloud’s *Seven Formulas for Immortality*, see “ Tao Secrets of Immortality” article on my homepage, or find it at: www.healingdao.com/tao_alchemy_formulas.html)

The Inner Smile creates a central, positive, open inner mind space in which “self-cultivation” can occur. This state of smiling openness should not be confused with other Asian concepts of “empty mind”, which are very difficult for westerners to grasp or retain for very long. Part of this is a language problem. If we replace the notion of “emptiness” with that of “openness” or “complete acceptance” it will clarify the profundity of the Inner Smile practice.

From this Daoist point of view, striving after the goal of an empty mind will lead to unnecessary frustration. Nature will quickly refill whatever you empty, including your mind. This is the dynamic between stillness and movement that is known as “*tai chi*” (or taiji), meaning the Supreme Ultimate. *Tai Chi* is not to be confused with the martial art of *tai chi chuan*, which is just one application in which one “boxes” with these invisible forces in order to defeat an opponent.

Tai Chi is rather a cosmic principle underlying all life. The secret of *tai chi* in human life lies in getting a smooth and harmonious flow of *chi* through the body-mind space. In this context, the constant “emptying” and “filling” of the mind with thoughts, feelings, and sensations cannot occur harmoniously unless there is an underlying “openness” or feeling of acceptance. In this acceptance is true freedom to change oneself.

As both a unique form of religion and as a philosophy, Tao encourages a radical openness to all life without judgment. Most of us have already learned the hard way that we cannot change the outer world or other people against their will. It is pointless to go against others own natural path of unfoldment. But if we change ourselves, the world and all the people in it are automatically changed without any outer struggle.

This happens for two reasons. One, “the world” is really just a set of perceptions we carry around inside our own mind. Two, our personal chi field (our mind) is part of the cosmic chi field (or universal mind). If our personal energy field changes, the larger chi field has to also change. Nature is just the playground (chi field) where we can go through our life changes. Harmony means we can play freely in the chi field of our personal-cosmos or the world-cosmos.

All that is needed is openness to our innate smiling impulse to access the chi field. Once we claim our peaceful, smiling inner body-mind space, a series of transformative energetic shifts is naturally activated. If we stay relaxed, our inner smiling will continue its natural process until we feel we are back in a state of harmony. If we get uptight, we can simply remind ourselves by inner smiling again.

Mapping Our Body-Mind’s Energetic Patterns

It helps to have a map of our “insides” before we begin the Inner Smile practice. It also helps to get acquainted with some common Chinese terms used by Daoists to describe spiritual development. The problem in English is that we often don’t have the words to describe clearly what is going on inside us at a subtle level.

“Subtle energy” is not an ordinary part of western culture, and the language around “energy”, “soul”, “spirit” all tends to get blurred into one fuzzy concept. The Daoists had very specific technical terms so that a practitioner could focus their intention with greater refinement and thus intensify the effect.

Our personal sexual essence or body substance (*jing*), is said to hold all the imprints of our energy patterns. It is sexual because it is how you reproduce your body cells. This subtle substance – perhaps best described as the substance from which our DNA and RNA are made – instantly feels nourished by inner smiling. Think of your body and its sexuality as your earth.

When you smile, it is like the Sun coming out from behind dark clouds, and lighting up your earth. Only this happens deep inside you when your inner heart comes out of hiding and smiles at your sexual substance. Your body feels warm, loved, and accepted, as if it had been lovingly hugged from within. It instantly starts making healthy new baby cells! Can you imagine this “mini love story” happening to all 80 trillion cells in the human body? This is how the Inner Smile can quickly become a very tangible and powerful experience.

When our body substance feels accepted, we can then spontaneously and naturally grow into a strong healthy presence or spirit (*shen*). Spirit needs a body in order to experience itself. Our spirit is constantly dissolving the old “body pictures” and creating fresh new identity at the cellular level. This deep natural intelligence is called Original Spirit by the ancient Daoists. This innate intelligence should not be confused with brilliance of intellect or IQ.

According to the Daoists, our natural intelligence will give us the guidance we need to fulfill our human destiny in each moment. No one has a better or worse destiny than anyone else, and somehow all six billion of our human destinies on this planet are harmoniously linked together, even though we often cannot see how that level of our collective intelligence functions. The Inner Smile is the human interface between our personal Earth and our personal Heaven. Ultimately it will put us into contact with the center of collective human consciousness.

Our Inner Family of Biological Intelligences

Our personal biological intelligences (*jingshen*) are linked to our vital organ functions like the heart, kidney, liver spleen, and lungs.

These organs and their energy meridians are controlled by different kinds of intelligence. In this Daoist theory, tested over thousands of years of practice, the whole body thinks, feels, senses, and knows – not just the head brain.

Our whole-body brain includes many different kinds of intelligence. Think of it as your inner soul team or family. Each kind of intelligence has a different job to do. Some times these intelligences work together, sometimes they fight. Our body-sexual intelligence asks, who is a good partner for me or my children? What does my body need to heal? Our social intelligence asks, how do I make friends and function in groups?

Our creative intelligence is looking for new ways to exercise its imagination, in everything from deciding what clothes to wear to creative projects. Our spiritual intelligence has the ability to perceive ordinary reality from the soul level, which gives it a very different information than what our senses offer.

The goal of Daoist meditation is to live in dynamic balance. This requires getting our entire family of inner biological intelligences to smile to each other. The goal is not to sit in emptiness, but to cultivate our Authentic or True Self (*zhen ren*), which always seeks harmony.

Inner Smile is Deepened by other Tao Practices



Painting of two female Tao immortals. Deer is symbol of gentleness and the crane of long life. Behind the ³inscrutable² Oriental inner smile is concealed a vast wisdom of internal energy arts and the adept's contentment with their inner soul cultivation.

There are many other Daoist practices developed over the millennia that take the Inner Smile process to a more refined level of physical and mental self-healing and soul development. They all help create and stabilize a joyful and calm inner space that smoothes the flow of our life journey. These include the rest of the *Chi Kung* Fundamentals 1 training in the [Five Animal Frolics](#) and [Six Healing Sounds](#), which teach us how to communicate more deeply with each aspect of our

normally unconscious five major biological intelligences (*wu jingshen*).

Then in *Chi Kung* Fundamentals levels 2, 3, and 4 we learn basic energy pathways in the body of the [Microcosmic Orbit](#), and [Internal Chi Breathing and Rooting](#). Once you have this basic grounding, [Fusion of the Five Elements](#) helps you balance your emotions and activate hidden psychic power channels. [Healing Love](#) (sexology for health and bliss), [Dream Practice](#), and [Water & Fire Alchemy](#) (*kan & li*) are all optional higher stages that allow you to have truly marvelous experiences most people have never even dreamed of.

But without Inner Smile, these practices would not be as deep or as effective. At each level there is a *chi kung* movement practice as well as a sitting meditation practice that balance each other. When people ask me, “what is the best way to prepare for higher levels of practice”, I usually tell them to practice the Inner Smile more deeply. A state of total openness is the best way to learn something new. Smile to your rigid boundaries, open to a new level of flowing *chi* harmony.

These Daoist practices, refined over thousands of years of testing, help us to gather the essences of the outer macro-cosmos (Nature) into our personal micro-cosmos (body). This is a fancy way of saying that they help us grasp the relation between our physical, tangible self and our intangible, cosmic self.

It is truly wonderful to do the Inner Smile in combination with dynamic *chi kung* or sublime alchemy meditations. Yet the Inner Smile is also a simple, fun, and easy “stand alone” practice. It can be even more than that. The Inner Smile can be a complete path unto itself, if you choose to make your only practice.

***Sexual Tension of Personal Becoming
versus
Tai Chi Harmony of Cosmic Being***

Energetically, the Inner Smile asks us to accept that our personal

inner Being is part of the Original Spirit (*yuan shen*) of the Tao (Dao). According to ancient Chinese thinking, Original Spirit exhaled the Original Breath as the pure, non-polar breath of the Cosmos. This breath follows the cosmic law of the *Tai Chi* principle of harmony. Its invisible guidance deep inside our body is why we constantly seek harmony in our everyday life.

Think of Tao as the Source of Nature. *Tao* breathes out its spiritual qualities or “*de*”. The *de* shines out as our personal inner will power to manifest the various spiritual qualities in our life, one of which is our physical body itself as a vessel for cosmic energies. Thus the title of Lao Tzu’s classic of 500 b.c. was titled the *Tao te Ching (Dao de jing)*, the Book of the Way and its Power.



Smiling Lao Tzu (Laozi) rides on an Ox. Ox is the symbol of worldly burden, the earth element, and of the human soul riding atop its

physical body. The Tao sages in China are usually depicted as smiling. This is an Inner Smile, suggesting that no matter how bad the worldly burden becomes, the Tao within their inner heart will remain an eternal source of smiling joy.

There is a classic painting of Confucius, Buddha, and Lao Tzu sitting around a vat of vinegar. Each one is taking a sip of the vinegar. Confucius has a sour look on his face. Buddha has a bitter look. Lao Tzu has a big smile on his face. Life's outer vinegar is alchemically transmuted to inner wine in the Tao adept's inner cauldron.

As our Tao-Being “breathes” our de-Becoming into the physical plane, our non-dual Original Breath polarizes into *yin* and *yang* breaths. The harmonious flow of this trinity – the two *yin-yang* breaths and the one Original Breath – is called *Tai Chi*. This polarizing of energy into *yin-yang* creates all the forces of Nature such as hot and cold, night and day – and female and male bodies.

This polarization of our original cosmic energy injects a dynamic tension into our physical Becoming that is essentially experienced as a sexual-creative tension in our personal body-mind. Everyone is unique, so everyone experiences this sexual-creative tension differently.

Some of this tension gets acted out in our sexual relations. But mostly it is directed at sexual reproduction at the cellular level, the constant task of birthing a new physical body. In Daoist alchemy, the psycho-sexual tension is re-directed to birthing our physical lead-like heaviness into a “golden light body” that is not subject to death. That is the “gold” substance that internal alchemy seeks to cultivate.

This sexual-creative tension is what makes worldly life exciting, as in the beautiful interplay between loving men and women. But it can also make life miserable, as in the ugly battle between the sexes or the struggle between mind and body that results in illness. Underneath, this outer tension originates as the tension between our neutral inner Being and our sexually polarized process of Becoming.

We could call this Being-Becoming tension an *apparent* split between “mind and body” or “spirit and matter”. But the ancient

Daoists didn't see this as a split. They experienced these polarities as a smooth continuum. Even though humans find themselves in a male or female body, each of us internally has a continuum of masculine and feminine qualities.

The ultimate purpose of the Inner Smile is to bring this underlying tension into consciousness, embrace it, and harmonize it. Smiling is a method to smooth out this tension that is incredibly simple, powerful, profound, peaceful, effortless – and FUN!

Using the Inner Smile to cultivate our Original Breath (*yuan chi*) is a key secret to resolving this deep tension in our body-mind. This *yin-yang* sexual-creative tension is so deep that many of us don't even know it exists. *Yuan chi* is inherently neutral and balanced. The topic of sexuality is too vast to be covered here. If you are interested in exploring it more deeply, you may find the [Daoist secrets of sexology](#) and [inner sexual alchemy](#) quite interesting. (Both available as [Tao Home Study courses](#), but recommended only after proceeding through the [Chi Kung Fundamentals](#) and [Fusion of the Five Elements](#)).

Experience of *yuan chi* inspires us to live in a simple, continuous, heart-centered *chi* flow. It grows our inner feeling of peace and deep presence, even while life and other people struggle around us. Our *yuan chi*, or Original Breath, is what allows us to embody the notion of *wu wei*, or “effortless action”.

When one's inner being smiles, all doubts – accumulated for years – disperse instantly, like shadows fleeing sunlight. People think, “I don't have time to meditate”. This is really just a way of saying they choose to put their priority elsewhere, or that their outer life is so stressful they can't take care of their inner life. Welcome to the Inner Smile, where that excuse doesn't work.

It doesn't take any extra time to smile. You can practice the Inner Smile even while you do everything else in your busy life. We don't sacrifice anything when we inner smile. We are only *adding* more heartfelt presence to whatever else we are doing. The only thing we lose by smiling inwardly is the unconscious “inner frown” many

people are carrying around.

This inner frown is a form of self-inflicted chronic stress. Over time, it begins to weigh on us, as if we were wearing our resistance to life like a big heavy chain around our neck. Unfortunately, we often inflict this inner frown on those around us. If you look into the mirror of your life, you can see if this is the case for you. We each need to ask ourselves, I am ready to get serious about throwing off this heavy yoke, and begin living more lightly, guided by our inner smiling self?

Have people used the inner smile to change real life situations?

I have heard many, many stories from people about their outer success with the inner smile. One person told me they got a big salary raise. A woman did the Inner Smile to her very mean boss who was very tight with money.

She started smiling at the guy for a couple of days, just connecting her inner heart to his inner heart, careful not to project anything about money. Then she just walked in one day into his office and said, "I really need a raise". The mean boss looked up, just kind of smiled, and said OK.

That is what I call effortless change. Mean, stingy people don't *want* to be that way, they are just afraid to be something different, to be someone that is loveable. So when you in effect love someone silently, in a safe, neutral way, their being can then shift the structure of the outer personality. And voila!

Chapter Two

Key to the Inner Smile: Self-Acceptance



Lixiao, smiling guide on my trips to China, in monastery on Mt. Huashan, famous Tao sacred mountain.

Openness is the image of Heaven.

Calm is the image of Earth.

When open, one accepts all.

When calm, one perceives all.

When open, one can accept people.

When calm, one can deal with events.

*When openness and calm are practiced for a long time,
Our heart is clear.*

*Open acceptance and calm is how Sages achieved
the Tao of Heaven and Earth.*

-The Book of Balance and Harmony, Li Tao-ch'un, 12th cen.

Our feelings naturally fluctuate over the course of our life. It is useless to try to have only the good feelings and not the bad ones. Likewise, the Inner Smile is different from just having a positive attitude. Don't confuse the Inner Smile with trying to be externally cheerful even when inwardly you feel things are going badly. This "polyanna" approach is using positive emotions to control one's state. The "power of positive thinking" is the mental equivalent of this.

Positive thinking that is artificially forced on the psyche is only a temporarily successful strategy, because it rests on suppressing negative thoughts and feelings. Eventually that suppressed negativity, pushed down into the unconscious, festers and comes back to haunt you either internally as some disease or externally as some calamity. If you force yourself to remain positive the entire time, your negativity will unconsciously act out.

Negative consciousness cannot be "killed". That is because all consciousness is a part of the universal *chi* field, and you can't kill any part of the field without killing the whole field. You can only change its shape. This is the whole purpose of *chi kung* science – to learn the practical methods of changing the shape of your personal *chi* field.

The negativity is left buried in your body rather than transformed. It is literally buried alive, festering deep inside some organ or stored inside your bones or joints. It will wait for a moment of weakness, and internal "*chi* pressure" of the negativity will ooze into the cracks in your life, wherever it is you have a weakness. You will wonder why you have arthritis or a stroke. The Dark Force strikes back.

Positive Ego, Negative Ego, Neutral Ego

The Inner Smile is about activating a level of inner self that is deeper than either our outer positive ego or outer negative ego. The Inner Smile begins by systematically having us unconditionally accept

everything *inside* our self. We begin with the surface layers of our solid body, and work our way down into our deep layers of psyche and soul. We smile to the negative, we smile to the positive, and in the space between them we smile into the neutral. The neutral is the key space in the alchemy of self-transformation.

The most important “thing” inside us that we need to accept is the *chi* field itself. It is a super-intelligent energy field inside us that is connecting the superficial and deep layers of our self. It supplies the energy that we shape into our biological, psychological, and soul structure. The *chi* field is the energy field of all possibility. If you are scientific you can call it “bio-energy”, and think of it as part of the quantum field. If you are religious you can call it the Holy Spirit and believe it is the divine field of God.

The Daoists simply call it the Original Breath of Nature. The label is not important. What matters is grasping that this *chi* field is alive, it is intelligent, and it is breathing. This breath is detectable in the pulsation of your atoms, your cells, your heartbeat, whatever you notice as “aliveness”. Its subtle breath becomes the tangible breath of our lungs.

That means our physical breath, our heart beat, our blood flow, our every sensation of pleasure and pain, all our positive and negative feelings and thoughts, our every moment of soul-suffering as well as soul-bliss – all these arise from a unified field of intelligent, basically neutral energy at the core of our being.

All the events in our life, including internal feeling and external actions, arise as pulsations from this core neutral space. The deep structures underlying our emotions and thoughts are changing from moment to moment because of pulsations and cycles in the *chi* field. These fluctuations make it hard to grasp the true essence of our core identity patterns.

One minute we’re an infant, next we are a child, then a teenager, then an adult – each with a different identity. The biological patterns are the most stable during these cycles of transition, and so the Inner Smile begins by connecting our biological self to the *chi* field inside us. This

is known in modern Daoist terminology as linking the physical body with the Energy Body.

The Inner Smile is a method of progressive self-acceptance, It should not be confused with a method sometimes advocated by spiritual teachers of accepting everything outside you, everything that happens to you. That approach is focused on the outer world. The difference is crucial.

If you go around thinking you are accepting everything outside of yourself as an act of unconditional love, but haven't yet accepted unconditionally everything happening inside yourself, then your outer acceptance of things is not truly unconditional. It is an outward projection, an illusion of some still conditioned layer of your personality that aspires to be unconditional. The ego believes it can find its unconditional nature in the outer world, which it cannot.

St. Francis of Assisi: Punishing the Un-holy Body

Perhaps the most famous example of this was the Italian monk, St. Francis of Assisi. He was a wonderful, humble soul that inspired many to accept and love others. He claimed to have a special love for the creatures of the natural world. Although he was incredibly kind to others, he was brutally cruel to his own body. He could accept other's bodily needs, but rejected his own.

He often referred to his body as "Brother jackass", and subjected it to extreme hardship. He subsequently died quite early, at the age of 42. If he had accepted deeply the spiritual nature of his own body, I am certain St. Francis would have lived to a ripe old age and achieved far more profound spiritual states. Let me share an interesting story with you in this regard.

When I visited Assisi in Italy a few years ago, I meditated for hours beside his tomb. There was very strong energy there, but I felt it wasn't his. I used the Inner Smile process and some other alchemical dissolving meditations to peel off the centuries of emotional-devotional

religious projection that had been layered onto him.

I sought to connect to his spirit through direct contact with the vibrational essence remaining in his bones. After many hours of going deeper and deeper inside his bones lying in his tomb, I felt I finally achieved a direct and unadulterated connection with Francis. More accurately, I contacted his spirit body, which had merged with a larger collective consciousness that was responsible for the holding the “St. Francis” frequency.

The clear message I received was that upon his death, Francis’ soul realized the error of rejecting his body and mistreating it. Francis then vowed to remain as a presence supporting the acceptance of the animal body as essential to the spiritual development of all beings on earth.

Hence his popularity as the patron saint of animal lovers, among other things. But meanwhile, other people are unfortunately reading his thoughts written when he was in a less developed state, thoughts that are very body-negative. St. Francis was guilty only of believing the anti-body prejudice common to Christians of his time.

History is filled with other ascetics who failed to integrate their bodily reality with their soul reality. They achieved elevated mystical states by loving others more than themselves, but could not ground this spiritual field within their own physical body. Some died of terrible diseases. Why couldn’t their great spiritual awareness transform that disease?

I believe it was because their spirit was not properly linked to their body. These mystics may attain a One Mind state, but may not achieve the One Body or “*yang* body” consciousness sought by Daoist adepts. They achieved a certain high level of mind enlightenment, but did not achieve whole body enlightenment, known in China as immortality.

At the opposite end from these out-of-body mystics are narcissistic, selfish types who love *only* their body appearance. These people have

no regard for their deeper spiritual self, which is what allows us to see beyond our ego self and include others as part of the same field of collective human consciousness.

Outer Acceptance vs. Inner Acceptance, Outer Smile vs. Inner Smile

I don't mean to imply the outer acceptance or outer smile method is not useful. To love others truly you must first accept them for who they are. Otherwise, you are only loving your projection of yourself as savior to them. Outer acceptance certainly can be an extremely beneficial process to most people, and might ultimately lead them to inward acceptance of themselves.

We are talking about two doorways here, the inner and the outer doorways of our psyche. Both doors need to eventually be opened, but the inner doorway is the most critical. The danger here comes from the illusion of opening the outer door only, and believing that is sufficient. Unconditional acceptance of people and events around you should not become blind acceptance.

This kind of open acceptance of the outer surface of people and events can sometimes lead to dangerous suppression of needed inner powers of discrimination. Outer acceptance doesn't really deal with the massive layers of unconscious body-centered issues that await completion.

I'm simply pointing out that the Inner Smile process of unconditional self-acceptance unmasks the problem of self-rejection and body-rejection at its core. It is the most direct and most effective method I have found for getting to one's inner truth and to the experience of inner peace.

What is the key difference between the Inner Smile and the ordinary outer smile? The ordinary outer smile has an "object" someone or something you are smiling at. The Inner Smile is ultimately

“objectless”. You might temporarily start by smiling to some aspect of your biology, but you quickly go past that to the energy or the spirit behind the physical object. Once you contact your center of spiritual gravity, the inner smile radiates back out through the layers of your energy body and your biology and eventually out into the world.

So you end up smiling like a glowing lamp, shining out from the open space within yourself, at the insides (i.e. the “subject”) of all objects in the world. So you end up smiling from your inside to the insides of everything else. Wrap your mind about that one. When you get to the guided meditation you will understand better.



Michael Winn practicing Outer Smile. Both his monkey (yes, it's alive) and his mind are smiling sincerely, but it's a smile produced on demand. Photo taken at "Azure Truth" Tao sacred mountain in Sichuan, China. Calligraphy on T-shirt: "Tao".

Receptive Yin Smile, Projective Yang Smile

In the Inner Smile process, one first must accept the inner layers of oneself. This is the *yin* phase of practice, meaning you approach yourself softly, with an open, receptive and nurturing attitude. This phase requires accepting one's major biological structures, one's energy channels, and one's guiding intelligences or body spirits (*jing shen*). Once these begin to integrate, one's inner heart opens, and the *yang* phase of practice may begin. One smiles out from the space of inner self-acceptance, and expands that space out into the outer world.

The focus in the *yang* phase is again not on accepting the transitory outer appearance of reality, but on accepting its inner essence. We practice smiling to the soul of matter, which includes the soul of "other" people and things. During both the *yin* and *yang* phases we are working with the core energy of the soul. Both *yin* and *yang* phases of the Inner Smile evoke a smiling wave of *yuan chi*, or Original Energy. *Yuan chi* is the subtle energy, literally the subtle breath of our *yuan shen*, or Original Spirit.

Let me clarify *yin-yang* theory. The idea is that there are an infinite number of polarities around a single central neutral pole. This central axis is simply called the Origin. In the human body it is called the "chong mai" or core channel. Around our personal core channel are a huge number of physical, sexual, emotional, mental, environmental, ancestral, astrological, and soul layers of tension. You could label these polarities anyway you want, call it body vs. mind, etc.

The Inner smile gently gathers your personal polarities to the inner heart in the core channel where the positive and negative flows of *chi* neutralize each other. Just to be realistic, it will take a while to get to the true core. But all that matters is that your smile is taking you deeper towards the center of your being. From that center, you can spontaneously balance and harmonize the polar forces that expand out from the core of your Being into successive layers of your Becoming – your body, your personality, your thoughts, feelings, spiritual insights,

your worldly desires.

The Original Spirit & Breath Reborn as our Inner Child

That center is your unconditioned “being” self. All the layers around this core are your subtle bodies and the layers of your physical body. These layers, both subtle and physical, are your conditioned “becoming” self. Once you get all the polar conditioned aspects dancing and smiling around the “mayday” pole in the center, your life will flow effortlessly. Some of the patterns of conditioning will disappear; others will remain, but will find themselves in balance with something else.

A primary goal of Daoist inner alchemy is to cultivate our *yuan chi*, our Original Breath. Original breath manifests as the presence of our unconditioned inner self. We nurture our Original Breath to help us literally rebirth our “immortal child”, or Original Spirit, while still alive in our body.

The best example of this Original Spirit (*yuan shen*) is seen in the innocent smiling faces of young babies, who have not yet acquired a personality here or unfolded difficult ancestral qualities. In babies, the ego has not yet developed so the Original Spirit is far more intact, and shines through the eyes and smiling faces of young babies.





Look at these photos and feel the purity of the Original Spirit smiling through each child. Your own inner heart spirit will smile, remembering the directness of these infant's perception and heart presence before ego took over.

Studies have confirmed that babies have an innate ability to smile. Smiling is not acquired or learned after birth from the parents; rather it spontaneously shines through. Every child begins life as its authentic or original self, and must learn to guard its Original Chi while living in the midst of challenging worldly influences. The Inner Smile is a way to recover our natural smiling ability, and relearn to "speak" this silent language of the soul.

When we look at adults smiling, we don't get the same feeling of purity, even if the smile is authentic. It's because adults have acquired many layers of personality and physical tension, which either depletes or suppresses their Original Breath (yuan chi).

I searched through hundreds of smiling adult photos on the internet trying to find a purity similar to a child's smile. The closest I found were some very old people, who had apparently dropped their old ego patterns, allowing their inner child to begin smiling once again.

All photos from publicly posted “baby pics” on the internet.



Smiling Chinese “Long Life” figure, with third eye swollen from deep meditation on the Tao. Why is he always shown smiling? He is holding his inner or “immortal child” in his arms, suggesting that the Sage has successfully cultivated his Original Breath (chi), thereby inspiring his Original Spirit (shen) to rebirth its Original Substance (jing). The wisdom of the smiling Sage and the vitality of the smiling baby are thus merged into one. The term Lao Tzu (Laozi) can be translated as “Ancient Child”.

Contemporary ceramic, Winn collection at Dao Mountain.

The ego, which I define as the fragmented body spirits struggling with each other and the world for power, gradually disperse or suppress their source of power, the Original Spirit as we grow up. When the Original Spirit feels it can no longer function in the physical world, it leaves, and our bodies “die”. Death means the team of body spirits (heart, liver, spleen, lungs, and kidneys) can no longer function without the Original Spirit breathing *chi* into them.

The Inner Smile is based on the Daoist premise that our smiling inner consciousness generates all outer world perceptions, not the other way around. This is the major difference with western materialistic science, which posits that consciousness arises from body/matter. This view leaves science stuck on a superficial physical level, manipulating surface matter without awareness of its affect on the subtle energy patterns that hold matter in place.

The Daoist view is that the inner *chi* field of consciousness is pre-existing, and generates all material and bodily forms as well as our psychic structure. If you are a self-convinced materialist, then practicing the Inner Smile is a great way to explore the *chi* field and challenge or test those limiting beliefs.

The two views are not completely contradictory, since the Chinese consider *chi* is also material, although a far more subtle form of matter-energy than scientific machines can measure. Science has measured the *effects* of *chi* in numerous studies, but effects are not the *chi* itself. If these theory or labels get in the way for you, then skip them and go straight to practice. What counts is results, not whether you agree with the theory or not.

Chi Dissolving Process Purifies Mind & Emotions

This process of accepting all the inner layers of oneself is sometimes referred to as *dissolving*. Dissolving is an alchemical term. The laboratory alchemist first dissolves the impurities in a substance in order to extract its original pure essence. The inner alchemist, here

the adept practicing the Inner Smile, energetically dissolves the impurities and layers of resistance within their own body-mind so their true soul essence can emerge.

This dissolving process is an energetic *neigong* (meditation) skill that dissolves the boundaries within our body. We include it as part of *Chi Kung* Fundamentals 1 (also known as “Tao Basics”) because it is the best method for quickly experiencing how *chi* relates to both ends of the body-mind continuum, the solid fleshy feeling part and the airy thinking part.

The Inner Smile combines energetic *chi*-dissolving skill with the psychological skill of self-acceptance. The self-acceptance works on the spiritual level of awareness that controls the flow of *chi*. It dissolves the old patterns of intelligence that shape our body’s internal *chi* field, but which can become fixed and thus dysfunctional.

Normally subconscious aspects of the ego are controlling our *chi* field, and may cause us great suffering or feelings of struggle in life. That’s because these body spirits (*shen*) or “bio-psychological intelligences”, to use a more modern term, don’t allow our *chi* to flow spontaneously. If you pursue *chi kung* training without developing skill in the psychological side, as many martial artists are wont to do, then your experience of the *chi* field will be limited to physical power. For example, you could train your *chi* to a high level physically, but still be very immature emotionally and spiritually.

Chi may be seen as only a source of physical power or control. This occurs when someone only has external *chi kung* training, known as *wai dan*, meaning “outer elixir”, usually part of a martial arts program focused on fighting applications. The internal training equivalent is *nei dan*, meaning “inner elixir” or “inner medicine”. I know of martial arts teachers who have warned their students to stay away from internal *chi* development skills as dangerous in that they unleash the hidden powers of the mind. They think it is safer to direct *chi* with a punch than with the mind.

I believe the opposite is true – that it is far more dangerous to

develop external (wai dan) *chi kung* skills without the accompanying psychological and spiritual skills of internal alchemy (nei dan). Why put an unconscious powerful loose cannon on the deck? Better to find out who is really controlling that punch from below the deck.

A fighter who doesn't know himself psychologically and spiritually is dangerous, not only to others but to himself as well. The Inner Smile is a safe and proven method for keeping the *chi* dissolving and mind-liberating process heart-centered.

Chapter Three

Smile Softly to Overcome the Hard

The teeth are hard and fall out; the tongue is soft and remains.
- Chinese proverb



An infant's natural inner smile is one reminder to adults of what they have lost and are spiritually seeking to restore.

Photo: Sonja Busic celebrates her 1st birthday with an ecstatic Inner Smile. Her mother Emilee says "Sonja's spirit first came to me in vision at a group Daoist meditation a few days before I conceived. I did Inner Smile with her all through pregnancy. Since she was born, I feel her Inner Smile beaming back to me in each moment!"

The Inner Smile is considered primarily a water or *yin* method of Daoist inner alchemy. It is a soft method, and Daoism has always emphasized that softness overcomes hardness, that water can erode the hardest stone. Because the original *chi* field of the Tao/Dao flows like a great subtle ocean of energy, from which everything is born, Daoism itself is often called the watercourse way.

The Daoist cosmology is thus considered overall to be much more feminine than the western religions with their emphasis on a patriarchal Father god with a long white beard. Daoism employs numerous watery images and cosmologically focuses on the maternal function of Nature in birthing “the ten thousand things”. It has many methods that focus on the *yin* principle of being receptive to Nature’s *chi* flow. Since water is the physical world’s most abundant dissolving agent,

But one should not confuse or elevate this use of *yin* principle or “soft” methods such as the Inner Smile as an argument that *yin* methods are superior to *yang* or fire methods. Both water and fire methods are equally honored in the Daoist tradition of inner alchemy. The Dao is ultimately about how to restore balance and harmony between water and fire, so that neither force dominates the other.

This is especially clear in One Cloud’s Seven Alchemy Formulas for Immortality, which has three kan & li (Water & Fire) formulas for the intermediate stages known as Lesser, Greater, and Greatest Enlightenment. The Water is listed first, but the Fire has to balance it. In the final three formulas the adept moves beyond this polarity.

As a training sequence, Daoists will usually cultivate the *yin* or water side of the body first, to act as a grounding for the *yang* or fire that is next introduced into the body/watery ground. This is the case with the Inner Smile as well, and why it is taught in the first formula. But ultimately both *yin chi* and *yang chi* are cultivated back into their original form as *yuan chi*. This is the Daoist approach to all high level *chi kung* and meditation.

The Inner Smile is a definite method for activating a particular frequency of *shen* (spirit, or intelligence) within your internal *chi* field. This spirit is so profound that it is easy at first to miss its subtle power, to skip over it for something more tangible and more superficial. It took me over a decade of exploring One Cloud’s Seven Alchemy Formulas for Immortality to realize the Inner Smile was the key practice linking all the formulas.

Smile links Inner Heart to Original Spirit

I discovered the Inner Smile links the physical body to every level of subtle body in the cosmos. It achieves this by cultivating the Original Spirit. My original experience of the Inner Smile wasn't really as inner as I first believed it was. In order to discover this, I had to work my way through the seven formulas to map out my deep inner terrain. This allowed me to experience the Daoist subtle energy cosmology – underlying the formulas – as my own inner reality.

At one point, I went back to Mantak Chia and asked him about his relationship with One Cloud, the Daoist hermit who taught him the alchemy formulas. I asked Chia what he remembered most strongly about him. Chia answered without hesitating, “One Cloud had the most incredible smile. He was always relaxed and smiling, it made me feel like the sun was shining on me when I was around him. His smile made me feel wonderful. I always wanted to be around him.”

This confirmed my own observation, that the Inner Smile is both the work of the beginning practice and the flowering of the advanced practice. It's the alpha and the omega of Daoist internal alchemy. You plant the right seed by smiling to your Original Spirit (*yuan shen*), nourish it with water (*yin*) and fire (*yang*), and the inner essence of that seed will flower (*yuan shen* smiles back out from your core).

The “seed” being planted with the Inner Smile is really a spiritual quality arising from the deepest level of the human heart. The Daoist notion of ordinary heart, the “heart-mind” (*xin*, pronounced “shin”) is the source of the outer smile. This heart-mind governs the personality. The Inner Smile arises comes from a deeper “heart”, from within the Original Spirit (*yuan shen*), which could be described as the guiding intelligence behind our soul.

Neutral Smile of Acceptance vs. Acts of Love

To describe the spiritual quality of the Inner Smile using the western concept of “love” or even a Buddhist sense of “compassion” is insufficient, as these are colored by the association of the personal self expressing some quality or taking some outer action. This introduces an ego-centric notion, which usually involves the loving or compassionate person projecting their spiritual quality *onto* someone who doesn’t feel loved or is suffering.

I saw this “virtuous projection” happen very graphically when I worked as a war correspondent in Africa. Many starving people needed the food aid that was donated to them. But they resented the wealthy Western donors because they felt looked down upon. Showering love and compassion on others doesn’t necessarily increase their sense of spiritual dignity. If one’s virtue is not accompanied by genuine humility, it can be tainted by an unconscious feeling of “I’m up here above, and you are down there below”.

The essence of the Inner Smile is more neutral. The Inner Smile is probably something closer to the experience of unconditional acceptance. The seed quality of unconditional acceptance is smiled through the outer biological layers of the self in towards the core of one’s being, and this generates a counter-wave of smiling energy that emanates back out from the core and flows in the *chi* channels of the body.

This *chi* in turn radiates the quality of unconditional acceptance to the nucleus of the cells and all the subtle bodies. These subtle bodies are the layers of the *chi* field that hold the shape of our personal physical, sexual, emotional, mental, soul, and immortal selves.

You don’t project acceptance *onto* someone else using the Inner Smile. You don’t invade others with a sense of coming from a spiritually superior place, from a more loving or more compassionate place than their wounded or suffering soul. You are more neutral, but you are beaming that neutrality as acceptance.

We are really practicing self-acceptance of our own core self, and that inner self-acceptance resonates spontaneously with the deep

neutral space of being within other people and within the living world of Nature around us. Once we accept that trees and mountains and planets are conscious our own power of intelligence vastly expands to include their forms of intelligence.

A total stranger, in the presence of someone practicing the Inner Smile, might subconsciously receive a message and interpret it as something like, “This guy accepts his inner self, with all his problems and sufferings, and can still smile. As miserable as I am, I’d probably feel better if I accepted myself on that deep level, and also smiled”.

In short, the stranger doesn’t feel projected onto, but rather feels inspired to smile within himself. That causes the Inner Smile to spread like an infectious virus, because there is virtually no resistance to this pure level of self-acceptance. It bypasses the outer layers of ego resistance, doesn’t struggle with them, but uproots them from within. It is a brilliant strategy, but skill must be cultivated to execute it.

Smiling is Non-Dualism Made Simple

The Inner Smile is very simple in itself, but it affects many complex layers of our biology, psychology, and our higher subtle bodies – our spirituality. The Inner Smile is about getting this inner ocean of *chi* to radiate out through the layers of our internal energy bodies, and through all the dense physical layers of the body.

With practice, the Inner Smile ultimately penetrates out past the skin to radiate pure coherence into the outer *chi* field of the natural world. Remarkably, it does this without using concept! That is because the Inner Smile arises from the heart, which doesn’t think in images and concepts. It perceives by direct resonance and sharing at deep levels of feeling.

The *outer* smile, by way of contrast, is the head brain responding to something in the environment. The outer smiles says something like, “hi, I’m OK, you’re OK, please don’t bite me”. Or “please like me, because I like you”. There is a subtle duality here, ego vs. the world as something separate from the ego. The Inner Smile is a very simple and

grounded non-dual practice, but without the heady theory and transcendental mystification or deification that has occurred around non-dualism in Tibet and India.

The Inner Smile is coming from inside the whole body, you can say it's a whole body-mind smile. That means a whole three-brain smile. According to the ancients, we've really got three brains, the belly brain, the heart brain, and the head brain. This concept is gradually being confirmed by modern science research. But the true Inner Smile comes from the innermost level of yourself, a deeper space than these three brains. It's a deeper wave feeling emanating from what we could call our soul or core being, not a brain at all.

Our inner being is sometimes called the no mind state. You'd think it would be simple to get into no mind, literally a "no brainer". But getting into the no brain state is not easy. You've first got to release the psychic and energetic knots tying up your three brains. The outer smile can be a positive step in that direction. It is better than living with the outer frown.

But the outer smile is too quick, you pop it on your face, it's there, you go "hi, got it?", thanks, and it's gone. The outer smile is only skin deep. It is often a manipulation. The real Inner Smile is a skill that needs cultivating to really penetrate into all the levels of the self controlled by those three brains.

But when you get your vital organ intelligences, and you get your blood, and you get your bones, and you get your three brains and all your cells smiling, that smile packs a long lasting triple whammy. It keeps going, even if there is no apparent smile on your face. It's like a locomotive or a train - you get the thing moving and it has its own weight, a flywheel that keeps spinning long after you first got it moving.

It generates a combined frequency of *jing*, *chi*, and *shen* – daoist terms for substance, breath, and spirit - into a single smiling wave that lasts longer and penetrates deeper than any outer smile. That's what scientists are discovering now with their brain wave research on the

Daoist practices.

Not that we need machines to verify this because we can verify it directly. Our body-mind is our own private laboratory, we don't need scientists to tell us that *chi kung* works and makes us feel good. This need for measured feedback is an addiction of the head brain. Our head-mind needs to suck constantly on information, as if it were a pacifier for our mental body. So we pay scientists top dollar to test us and tell us we feel good. But wouldn't it be better if some of the scientists actually practiced the things they are testing, and experienced it for themselves?

What does "presence" mean in smiling practice?

Smiling is really just about presence. I wonder if the root of the word "presence" comes from "pre-sensing". The part of you that knows before your senses have confirmed the knowing. At core smiling is just a spiritual practice about trusting the Life Force, the *chi* field, which is omni-present. It is much faster than us, so it is already present in any situation, doing its job of maintaining cosmic balance and harmony.

By smiling, we are asking the *chi* field to show us the balance point between all the energy shapes that we are sensing in that moment. You can learn many methods of moving *chi* and you can open up and communicate with the *chi* field, but ultimately it's the spiritual quality of our *chi* that is the presence.

That part of the *chi* field the Daoists called *shen*. Giving reality and trust to your *shen* is really what the Inner Smile is about. It's nurturing what it practically means to be present. No matter what shape, color, taste, direction, configuration, emotion, or situation the *chi* field has taken in any given moment, you can be present with it.

Learning to accept that energetic shape – even if it is the shape of pain or failure -- that's what the Inner Smile is about. Once you've accepted the shape neutrally, you are in resonance with it. Resonance

means that you are communicating with it, Once communication is opened, the possibility or even the likelihood of change is present.

People forget that human “presence” requires a body, that presence is not something separate from having a body. Even for a disembodied spirit to have presence, it must have a subtle body with some substance. Even if that body is finer than flesh, it must have some *jing* to give it a personal vibration that is identifiably different than the rest of creation. So ultimately, presence is about the degree to which spirit can embody itself and still hold the purity of its core vibrational signature.

Seekers of transcendentalism tend to overlook this aspect of spiritual development. They often want to escape their body, to get off planet earth, and essentially annihilate themselves into an abstract idea of the Absolute in which their personal history – and the wisdom of the earth – is also erased. This is often an unconscious value held by Father-God or predominantly male deity paternalistic religions. This is not the way of the Tao.

The Tao is never transcendent without being simultaneously immanent (present in matter and body). Tao is about opening to the entire continuum, and supporting the ongoing unfolding of creation to origin and back to creation again. This is not a linear time progression, as hindu-buddhist reincarnation believers might hold, but a simultaneous process.

In short, all lives are happening at once, not in linear sequence. This is why the Inner Smile embraces deeply and unconditionally accepts the human body process as a microcosm of the universal body (Nature) process. The entirety of cosmic evolution is happening inside our body NOW.

The idea that the body is the potential height of spiritual evolution is radically different from the fire-breathing paternalistic religions in which the Male Deity often has judgments about the evil lurking in matter and body and earth. These are basically semi-formless male sky and fire gods who have not yet matured into a harmonious relationship

with their goddess–earth-water partner that holds form/body.

Daoism embraces both of these types of divinities as natural forces spiraling in and out of an androgynous Original Substance-Breath-Spirit. This is why Daoists traditionally accept all the other religions as valid expressions of the Tao, and their deities and practices as part of the universal process. To the extent all entities can embody their source, their Original Breath, they gain eternal presence, known as immortality.

To the extent they remain caught in their polar identity as male-fire or female –water deities, they are able to embody only a temporary or cyclical presence. These gods can enjoy only a kind of temporary enlightenment and temporary cultural-religious presence on earth. Natural deities – sun, moon, planets, stars -- are also temporary, but they are far more long lived than human cultural gods. Thus there are many different levels of Tao immortals – human, earthly, heavenly, and celestial. The Inner Smile helps to stabilize your presence at these different depths of being.

Chapter Four

Overview of Inner Smile Practice



Joyce Gayheart, calming down an overly emotional panda bear in China.

A former student of an overly stern zen Buddhist teacher came to learn the Tao Inner Smile. Several years ago her group of very strict zen sitters received a visit from Thich Nat Hanh, the famous Vietnamese Buddhist. Noticing the serious looks on their faces, he told them: "When you sit, smile." This infuriated them. But it made her laugh and she promptly quit the

group.

The best way I've found to learn the Inner Smile is start with the outer smile. Go with what you already know, it's easier. You are forced to start with the outer smile anyway, because most people don't actually have access to the inner level of their heart spirit. It is still unconscious. So in the beginning fake it, later you'll make it!

Sometimes the tension around our mouth prevents us from easily smiling. By simply taking your fingers and lightly stroking from the corner of your mouth outwards along the "smile line" of your face you can trigger the smiling reflex. Mothers can use this technique to calm fussy babies who perpetually cry. When their mouth-to-cheek smile line is stroked, it triggers a smile reflex and they stop crying.

Our personality is usually fragmented - that's what we call the ordinary ego mind. The ego is only partially aware, partially conscious, layered around our core being in all kinds of strange and twisted shapes. The ego self, according to Daoist depth psychology, is like a bag of different "wills" or intelligences (*shen*) that fight each other to take over our identity. One wants to do this, another wants to eat, a third wants to make love, or get money, or acquire power.

At different stages in your personal relationships, at different times of the day, or at different times of your life, you have all these different voices competing with each other. The Daoists call these inner voices the body spirits, the *jing shen*. The best strategy for harmonizing them is to start off with the outer smile and start working our way in, making contact and gathering the different fragments of ourselves together, until we get to our true center. Then we can smile our way back out again through all the many colorful layers of our self.

First Guided Smile "Warmup"

Everybody, please just fake a smile right now, put a big outer smile on your face. We are going to take the outer smile and focus it inside us. This morning we did belly laughing. The smile is a totally different energy than the laugh. Smiling doesn't activate your belly, the smile is more coming from your heart and face. Even if you fake an outer smile, turning the corners of your mouth up activates a whole complex of muscles and glands.

If it's coming just from your face, there's a feeling of "oh I really must smile, it's socially correct, it's the PC thing to do". You're like a politician, vote for me, like me, donate some funds to my cause. The outer smile is often a manipulation.

Please shift down from your face, and start tuning into your heart. I don't mean the physical heart. In Chinese medicine they sometimes say we have five hearts. Each one of the body spirits, these inner vital organ intelligences - sometimes called internal gods because they are so powerful - if you get all five of these smiling, you begin to touch the inner heart, the Original Spirit. It is what is smiling through each one of five vital organ gods.

But Original Spirit is buried quite deep in most of us, it is what we call the Inner Observer. It never talks, so we don't know it. It is just an abstraction. So we start by invoking the more accessible spirit of the heart. Original Spirit and Heart Spirit are different, but quite intimate with each other. Invoke the purity of your own inner child.

Request internally that your heart spirit recall itself as a physical infant, when it was free from worldly burdens. It may be buried very deep, but the vibrational pattern is still present in your *chi* field, along with all your other life experiences. This is one way to access the pure inner smiling feeling that you once lived as your moment to moment experience.



Invoke your heart spirit's inner smile as a small baby. If you feel you cannot summon this, arrange to play with someone's young baby to regain contact with the feeling of original chi and spirit. This is why babies are so irresistible; they are holding the memory of our "lost" (i.e. suppressed) Original Spirit for us. Photo: Sonja Bozic

The ancient Chinese considered the spirit of the physical heart to be the emperor of this worldly bodily domain, because "he" gives life and blood and fiery *yang* energy to the other organ gods that were considered his ministers. The watery domain of the kidney spirit was his empress.

Let that warm feeling of your heart spirit spread inside your body, all the way down into your kidneys. Imagine the heart-husband giving the wife a warm embrace. *Two minutes of silent practice.*

Now let's shift to a frown. A big heavy frown, make it a deep frown, turn the corners of your mouth down, activate the *inner* frown. You immediately feel contracted, and your face is tense. The heart fire turns chilly, maybe even cold. After intensely frowning for a while, you begin

to feel so ridiculous, for consciously causing all that self-tension, that you've got to smile to release it. So let's now release that frown.



***The Inner Frown
Gargoyle on Notre Dame in Paris.***

Sometimes people tell me “I can’t smile”, they are just too uptight. So I say “Do the inner frown, take it as deep as you can go with it. They invariably get tired of frowning and start smiling. That’s the *yin yang* effect - you go to one extreme, it flips it and comes the other way. Love becomes hate, hate becomes love.

The Tao, the Way, the Natural Way, is to always find harmony, and the inner smile is pure harmony because it doesn’t really impose itself on anything. It occupies the space in between the extremes, so both *yin* and *yang* feel supported by its presence.

A genuine smile doesn’t impose itself on anybody. It’s just a statement, it says “I accept, I open my heart, I accept what you are and everything that is”. It doesn’t demand that anybody do anything. With the genuine Inner Smile, you’re just smiling whether “they” – the world inside your body, or the world outside – smile back or not.

With the outer smile you might feel compulsive or guilty because someone smiled at you, and you feel obligated to smile back. With the Inner Smile, there is no hint of “I’m not going to like you if you don’t smile back”. So notice now if you are feeling a pure neutral smile, or one touched with effort or guilt or any other emotion.

It is a very high spiritual practice to use the Inner Smile to connect all your inner biological intelligences with all your subtle energy body levels. These subtle bodies connect you to your larger collective spirit, which is shared by everyone as the spirit of humanity. This opening of the higher subtle bodies is what happens as you train in the seven formulas of inner alchemy.

But first we have to lay down a foundation in our physical body. We are starting with the basic inner smile. Relax from our smiling warm-up for a moment. Let me give you a brief overview of how we will practically approach this.

The Five Major Body Pathways for Smiling

To make sure our entire physical self is included in the smiling process, we are going to go through the body systematically. I will preview the main body pathways in which we will smile. I originally was taught only three, the head & organs, the spine, and the digestive tract. I found, over decades of practice, it was more complete to work with it as five main body pathways:

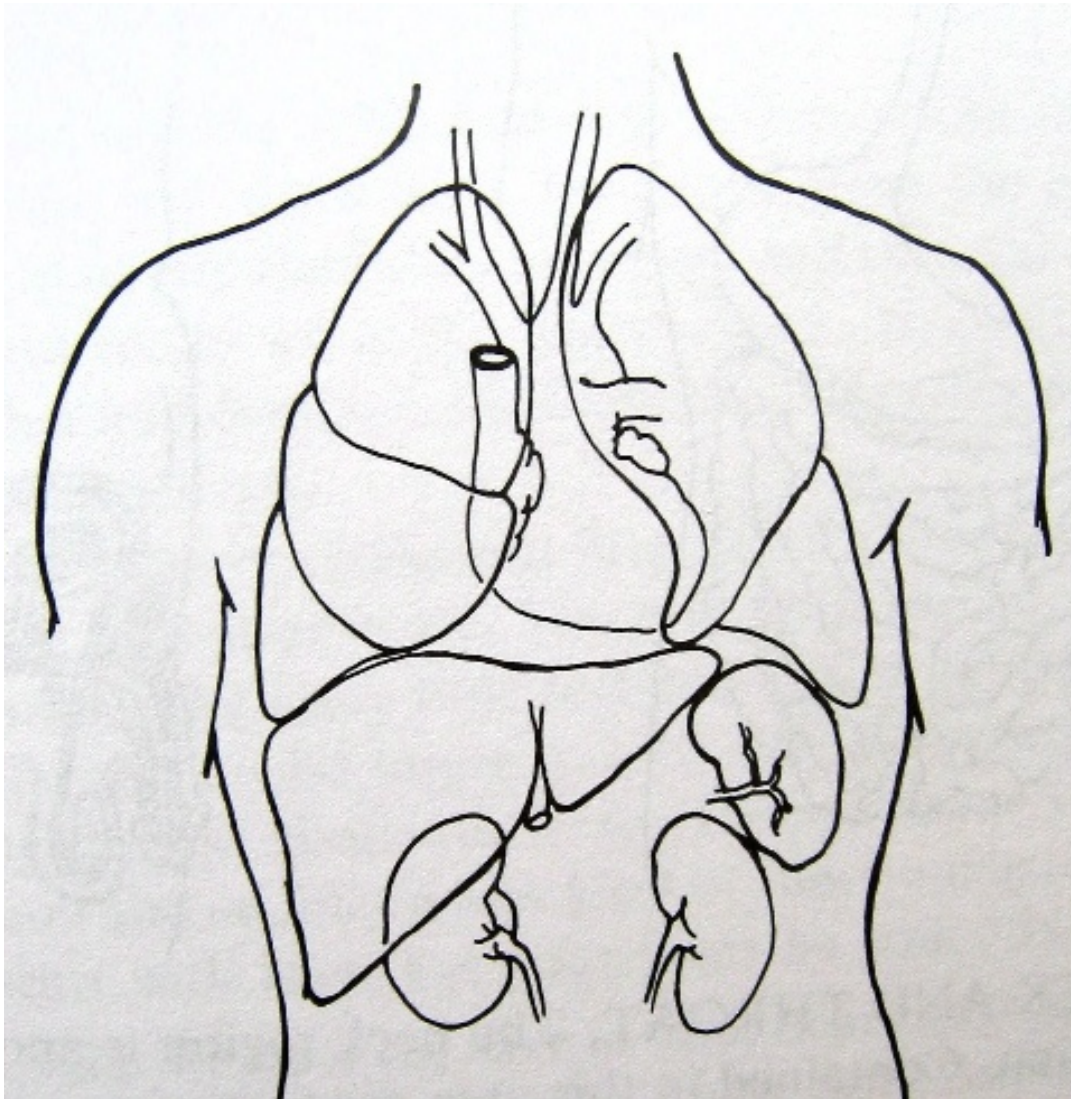
Every Human has Three Brains

- 1. We align and open the three brains - upper brain, heart brain, and belly brain. We are going to smile down through each one of those. They are really all one, but they have different functions. These three brains – a low brain, a mid brain, and an upper brain – can be described as our sexual-survival brain, our limbic or feeling brain,**

and our cerebral thinking brain. These three brains are recapitulated in our head brain as the low brain stem, the mid brain complex of glands (pituitary, pineal, hypothalamus), and an upper forebrain. We want all three brains smiling together, as well as the three parts within the head brain. We begin in the head brain, using the eyes to activate the smiling process.

The Five Vital Organ Spirits

We smile into the five vital organs, and their intelligences or spirits. Different sequences can work, but simplest to start with the “creation cycle” of the five phases/elements used in the Five Animals and Six Healing Sounds. In this case, I begin with the heart to gather its *yang chi*, then the spleen, lungs, kidneys and liver.



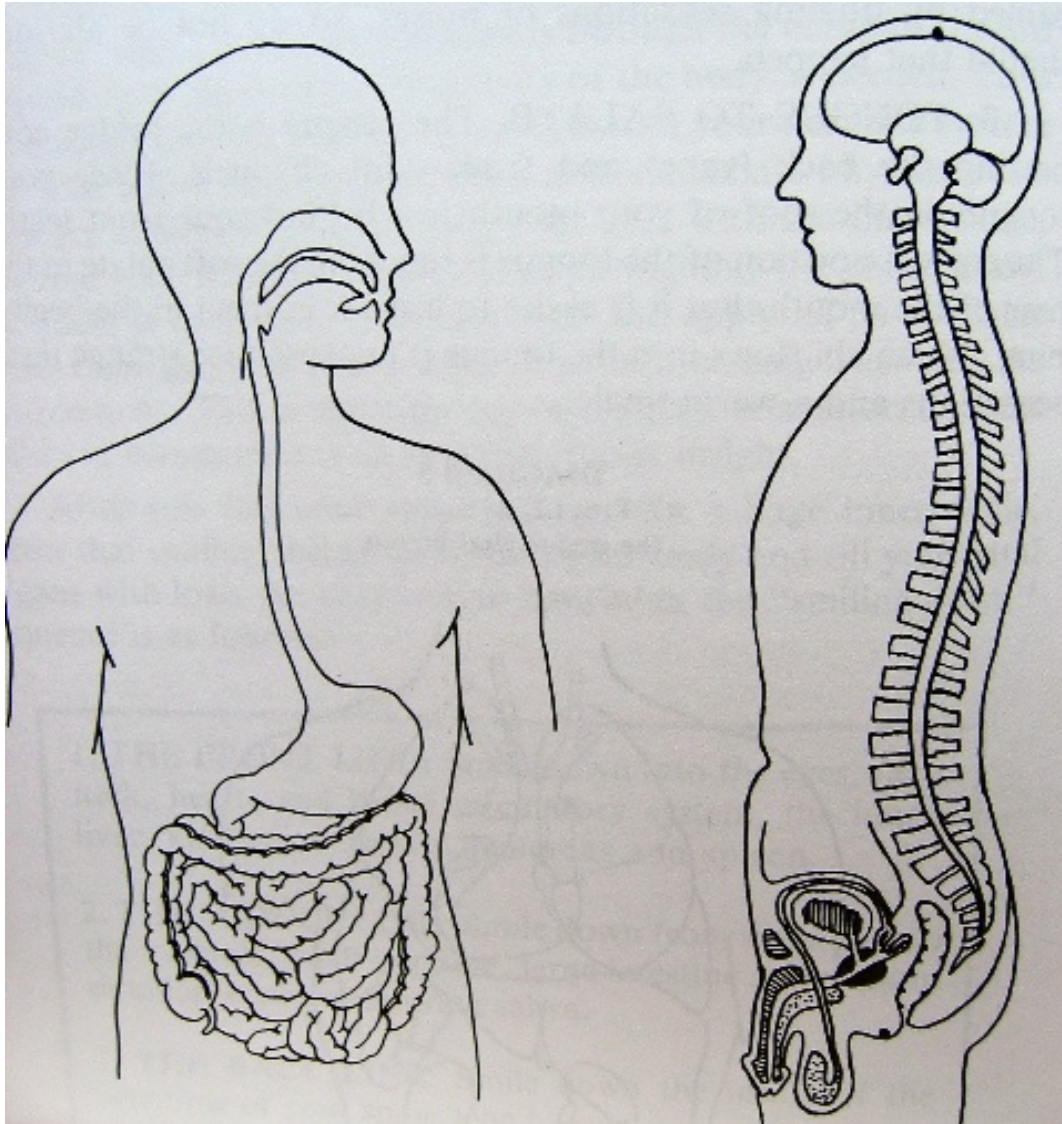
The five vital organs are only the physical “house” where the vital organ spirits live. Energetically, all five types of chi flow function throughout the body’s unified chi field and its meridians. They are not limited to the physical organ, which should be smiled into as a kind of focal point or portal to access the larger presence of the five body-intelligences.

The Spine & Nervous System

- 2. We smile to the nervous system, by smiling into the spine. The spine radiates like a golden highway with many side roads linking the body’s nervous system.**

The Six Bowels & Sexual Organs

3. We smile into the six bowels, which include the digestive tract (stomach, small and large intestines, anus), and the sexual organs (bladder, penis & testicles, womb & ovaries, breast glands). These are like dark dungeons in our body where no one ever smiles. The sexual organs can also be accessed through the spinal pathway, once the sacrum is opened up energetically.



The esophagus-stomach-intestine-anus pathway of smiling (left). The mid-brain-spinal cord & spinal fluid-sacrum-sexual organs path of inner smiling (right). All three diagrams are the original method of Inner Smile, from: Awaken Healing Energy of the Tao, by Mantak Chia. Aurora Press, 1983.

The Cells, Connective Tissue, Skin & Bones

4. We smile to all the connective tissues (fascia), the bones, blood, cell nuclei, skin, and everything else.

After these five steps, we can either dissolve our sense of physical body and remain present in that space, or dissolve boundaries beyond the body, and begin working with collective subtle energy fields. This process expands the adept's energy body out beyond the physical body into our community, the planet, and into the cosmos.

There is an infinite range of alchemical practice possible from the subtle body perspective. These are organized as a progressive training that integrates the Inner Smile with other methods, using the Seven Alchemy Formulas to guide the adept through the oceans of possibility.

This basic process of smiling into all five major biological levels ensures that a conscious *chi* flow is established in every part of your physical system. The message of the smile is the same everywhere: "I accept you, body-mind, whatever state you are in, even if you feel lousy or dysfunctional".

You are *not* trying to change anything, or *make* yourself feel better. You are just making your inner self more *present*, and that inner presence is naturally friendly and accepting. Your smile is a kind of internal embrace, but non-discriminating in what it embraces.

Consider the alternative approach that is employed, consciously or not, by many seeking relief. They may have cancer, arthritis, low back pain, maybe emotionally or mentally stressed, or suffer one of a zillion other conditions. They may find themselves saying internally to their problem, "there is something wrong with you, I need to get rid of you, kill you with drugs or cut you out with surgery, because you are sick or weak and dragging down my healthy good parts".

Do you think you the sick “parts” of the body or psyche are going to get better by telling them, “get well or get out”? No, we are not taking that approach, which is using fear to get them to change. Fear works, and you can get change; but somebody suffers for absorbing that fear.

Instead we are smiling and embracing our weak and strong points equally, from the inside. The body and psyche are treated as one complete whole. The Inner Smile can induce the part of us that is feeling stressed or in ill health to begin to relax and dissolve the wall, physical or psychic, that has isolated it from the whole. It can then receive the healing *chi* flow that will arise spontaneously from the healthy aspects of the whole.

Inner Smile is Its Own Reward

Have you ever noticed that you like to be around other people who smile a lot naturally? You feel comfortable, you feel accepted, it’s just human nature. It’s the same thing inside you. We don’t realize how many judgments and inner frowns we’re projecting all the time onto some part of our body. This creates a split between the body and the psyche, that doesn’t actually exist. An effective way to correct this bad habit of judging and hating ourselves is to neutrally smile to them.

The smile should radiate an almost neutral acceptance, with a nice quality of implied warmth to it. The implied quality suggests, it hints with subtle energy, that if the body “part” or body intelligence would meet your smile, just choose to receive it, it will be meeting a friendly and loving presence that has absolutely no judgments and no expectations. No hidden catch, no price tag.

The Inner Smile is different than religious teachings that say you *should* be compassionate, you *have* to be good, because God ordains it or because you will not get into heaven if you are not good. There is a subtle judgment imbedded in this goodness. The message is, “be good, but if you are not good in the way I decree it, you are bad, and

punishment will follow”.

The people receiving the goodness or the compassion coming from such a religious person may unconsciously feel judged by the giver. There is an unstated expectation that the receiver will express love back to the giver, or applaud their compassion, and if they don't, they are somehow inferior or possibly even damned. The giver is not truly being good for the inherent sake of goodness. There is an unconscious hope projected, that the receiver will join or at least accept the religious belief system that inspired the act of goodness or compassion.

The Inner Smile is its own reward, regardless of whether it is accepted or not, or responded to or not. In Daoist thinking, the inner smile has true *de*, or virtue. Virtue does not imply moral superiority, it implies authenticity and innate power. Our innate power arises from within our authentic (original) self and expresses itself functionally.

Taoist Flower Essences for the Emotions

Before we go deeper into the smile, I am going to give you all a drop of an alchemical flower essence. It's actually 72 flower essences rolled into one elixir made by my wife, Joyce Gayheart. She calls it [Divine Love Elixir](#). Flowers work on the subtle energy level, particularly in the emotional body, causing it to relax. One drop of this puts a vibration into your emotional nervous system.

Take it under your tongue – it has some alcohol in it, it uses brandy as the preservative, but I don't think you'll get high on it. Or we can drop on the crown of your head. You all look like little baby birds with your tongue sticking out! If we put a drop of this flower essence under your tongue, it is absorbed more quickly into your system.

Now just sit and let its vibration shine through your emotional nervous system. You can imagine all those flowers blossoming inside you. Yummm, feel those petals tickling your insides? Now that I have

you addicted to her elixir, I will slip in a commercial and tell you can order some Elixir for yourself from the HealingTaoUSA website.

Truth is, it is so labor intensive to put 72 flower essences into this one formula, that it is really just her labor of love for those willing to receive this gift. She has also developed eight special flower essence Tao Elixirs just for the Inner Smile and other Tao practices like the orbit, sexual practices, letting go with the Six Healing Sounds, etc. I use them in all my classes because I've found that people shift much more quickly into their energy body with them.

These images of flowers opening within as the petals of our psyche, are images from nature, which have traditionally been used by Daoists in their meditations. They appreciate nature because their whole cosmology is about resonating with the quality of *chi* flow inside nature, inside trees, inside mountains, inside rivers, oceans, planets and stars. And so we will begin our journey into the Inner Smile by creating a lovely natural space within ourselves as fragrant flowers in bloom.

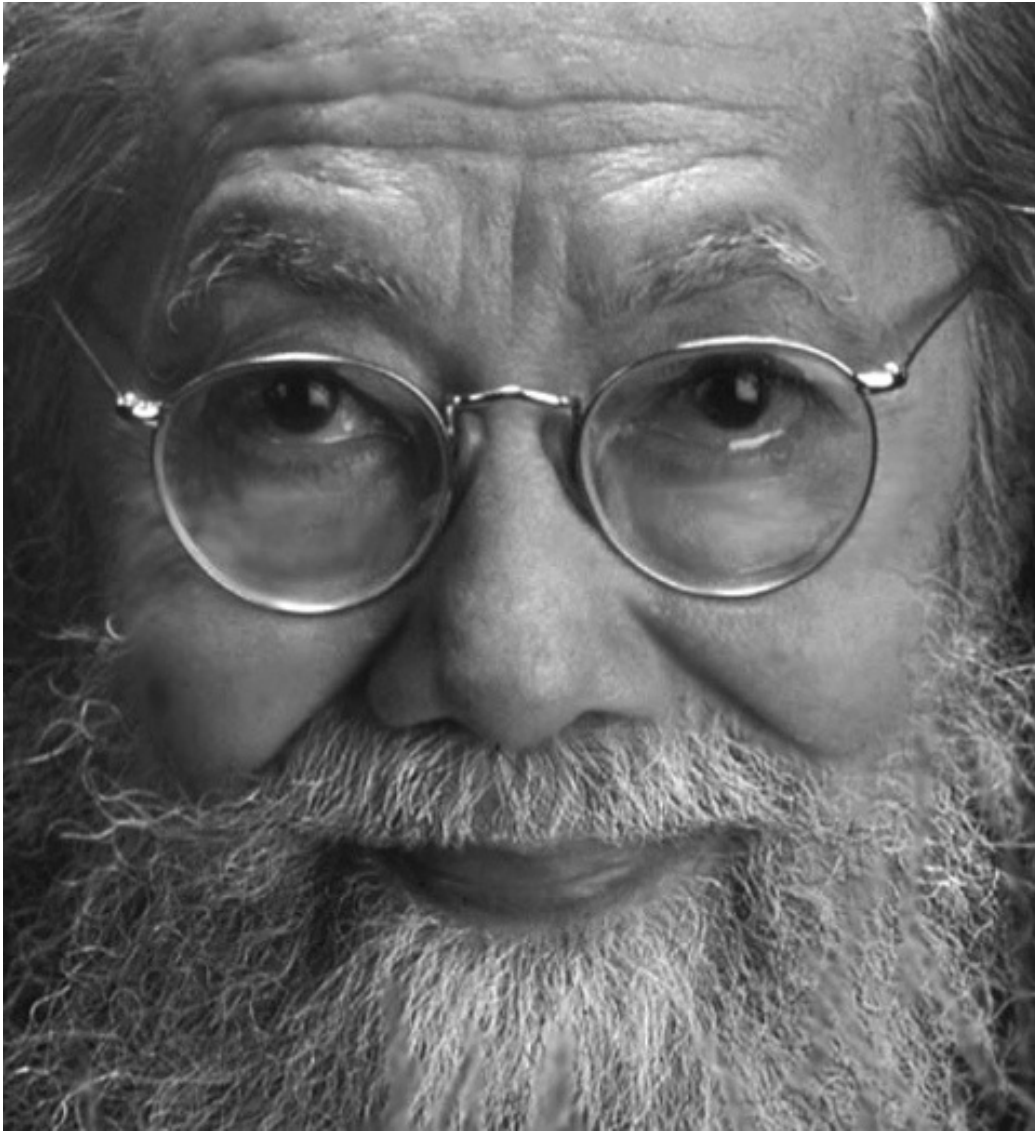
Note: many people learn the pacing and feeling of the Inner Smile more easily from listening to audio tape than by reading it. Please know that a guided Inner Smile tape is available for you at the end of chapter 7.

[Click for audio tape offer](#)

Chapter Five

Guided Inner Smile Meditation

*"What sunshine is to flowers, smiles are to humanity."
--Joseph Addison*



Deep meditation allows the heart's inner soul to radiate an inner smile as an expression of self-realization. My kriya yoga teacher was allegedly in nirvakalpa samadhi for 45 years at time this photo was taken. Swami Hariharananda's powerful inner smile gave him the aura of a "spiritual Santa Claus". He recently shifted dimensions at age 96.

Preparation: Actualize a receptive natural space

Note: I use the term “actualize’ rather than “visualize’, because we are going beyond simple image. We are adding smell, feeling-touch, sound, perhaps even taste if appropriate. Visualization tends to be more mental, limited to the head and eyes. Actualization activates your five body intelligences (shen) fully. It requires that you “presence” your entire body into a natural scene.

There are many ways one could create a space of receptivity within oneself. I will share with you what I have found to be the most powerful method. I invite each of you to think of a natural scene that you feel really comfortable with. Choose one that makes you feel peaceful, and inspired somehow.

Please have abundant Water element in it, either a waterfall, pond, or ocean, or river. Listen to the sound of this water, drink in its sound deeply. If it is still water like a lake, drink in the sound of silence. Feel the water’s quality of flow and temperature – feel yourself putting your hands, feet or entire body into the water, swim in it if you like and feel safe doing so.

Smile at the soothing presence of the Wood element – anything that is growing organically. Flowers, forests, grassy meadows; it could be tiny lichen tenaciously growing on a rock.

Also, why not put some sun, the Fire element into it? Fire is light, it illuminates our power of vision and balances it with the perfect amount of warmth you want to feel in this inner space. You might add a campfire or volcano if your scene is not daylight.

The Earth element is probably there already in your natural scene. Earth element would be the rocks, the ground, the sand beach, the mountains around you. If you are out on the open sea, it is simply the power of your body to touch and be touched by everything, including the salty water.

The Metal/Gold element is often buried inside the earth as minerals, but it is also connected with air, with the lungs, with the quality of the wind. Breath deep through your nose, and smell the purity of the *chi* you breathe in from nature.

Just feel the harmony between all those elements and your sensory experience of them. Feel as if nature itself was doing the Inner Smile into your five senses, awakening your five body spirits to a state of vibrant aliveness. Feel the subtle force behind Nature radiating into this peaceful scene of nature you are feeling inside yourself.

Now see yourself in this natural scene. You are sitting there in the meadow, or on the beach, or mountain top, beside a waterfall or wherever. Feel that your body belongs in Nature, is completely accepted by all the elemental powers of Nature.

Feel the purity and the calmness of these elements flowing and existing together, the sun shining on you, the spray of water, the play of light on water, trees gently waving. Feel the completeness of this experience, as nature is complete in itself, it doesn't have identity crisis about being Nature.

Optional actualization: feel yourself within this natural scene as an innocent young child, filled with Original Spirit and Original Breath, totally healthy, smiling and trusting in life, your body, and in the Life Force. Feel your young body supported by and totally comfortable with the primordial forces of Nature. That you could live in Nature and not only survive but be nourished by its richness of life and overflowing abundance of *chi*.

2. Use Positive Memory: Supercharge your Mind Space

Now add to this natural scene of calm and peace in nature the memory of the most high, beautiful experience you have had in your life. Take a moment of peak experience, bliss, enlightenment, just a wonderful feeling of any point. And if you can't think of one, you can

just invent one, or you can imagine the highest experience possible that you desire for yourself.

Perhaps you are feeling totally enlightened, or deeply connected to the mystical ocean of pure being. You may find it helps to hold the memory of yourself as an infant, when your own Original Spirit was strongly present in natural innocence, as a seed or core element of later experiences of bliss. Perhaps your peak experience is a feeling of sexual orgasm and deep completion. Whatever it is for you, let the vibration and quality of that feeling be infused into the nature scene within you, and into your body in that scene. *Silent practice, two minutes.*

Now imagine that there is an energetic golden egg above your head, like a glowing full moon pearl. Gather the physical scene from nature, with all its peaceful feelings of harmony and your highest experience of bliss, and absorb them into the golden egg or pearl atop your crown. Feel all the images of natural elements, the rivers, mountains, streams, forests are dissolved into light essences contained inside the egg. The image of your self and your most blissful moment, your truest self, even if imagined, dissolve into light essence and are also concentrated inside this egg. Feel it begin to shine down into your transparent body below.

Silent practice, two minutes.

Step 1: Smile into the Three Brains

Smile into the essence of all that natural peace and personal bliss on top of your head, melted into a golden egg made of warm, glowing, liquid light. Let this warm liquid golden light begin to dissolve and flow down through your brain, to your third eye. If it spontaneously changes color, allow that new color to remain.

As an alternative, you may prefer a more dynamic form of internal imagination. You may try a vortex of spinning golden light entering

your third eye between the eyebrows. This spinning creates a suction that helps some people feel a movement of *chi*.

If neither of these methods works for you, you can also imagine that you are smiling into a mirror, into your own smiling eyes. Then you shift into your mirror-image eyes, and smile back into your physical eyes and third eye. This mirror self represents your energy body, and like the other practices, feel the smiling eyes beaming golden light into your brain.

We will begin to wash this golden light from the upper brain down through the heart brain, into the belly brain. We will do this repeatedly, creating an energetic pathway of light, a feeling of lightness from our crown down the center of our body to our belly. The liquid quality gives the feeling of texture, of bliss, and warmth washing through us. It first dissolves the contents of your head brain. The entire inside of your head melts into this golden light. When the head is completely melted, it pours down your throat, into the center of your chest.

The melted light of your head-thinking brain dissolves into and merges with your heart-feeling brain. You feel them both glowing together, and then they slowly begin to pour down into your solar plexus and wash down into your belly. The combined melted light of the head and heart dissolve into the belly-sensing brain. All three are merged into one, and begin to glow warmer and brighter inside your lower abdomen. And you are smiling, accepting all this.

If you feel like it, repeat this process, smiling to the upper brain, smiling to heart brain, smiling to the belly brain, feeling them melt and pour down the core channel to your center of gravity at the navel, in the very center of your body. The head and heart are left feeling cool and open, the belly warm, full, and glowing.

The egg of golden light flows down and washes away your physical tension as well. Put a physical smile on your face, it makes you more receptive. Feel your inner heart beginning to open to match this feeling of the warm golden light flowing through you down into the belly. *Two to five minutes silent practice.*

Advanced Smile: left brain – right brain - center brain

Normally you are smiling and you feel your eyes smiling outward, feeling this light and things radiating, Imagine that your eyes turn inward and you smile backward into your head brain. As the golden light floods in, we smile it into the left side of the brain, and concentrate all this smiling energy in the left hemisphere of the brain. Smile to all those billions of brain cells on the left side, feel them all lighting up like little stars inside the inner sky inside our head.

Feel the billions of little neurons firing with joy at being smiled at. Allow yourself to feel those billions of neurons are actually smiling back. This left brain is supposed to store your verbal and mathematical-music patterns. You inner scientist, your inner writer and inner musician live here. Smile, then feel and listen for the response. It may include beautiful music, or the celestial music of the spheres. *One minute silent practice.*

Now shift awareness and smile to the right half of the brain. Notice that it is different than the left half. It may be cooler and darker at first. This right brain is supposed to control your spatial and geometric skills. It's also the inner artist, the inner dancer, where you paint and birth new movement patterns. Smile, then feel for the response. It may include a feeling of your energy body dancing beautifully with total freedom. *One minute silent practice.*

Now invite the left and right half of the brain to smile into each other in the center of your brain. The left and right brain hemispheres smile at each other and find some common ground, some beautiful meeting space where they flow together. Biologically, this meeting place is the corpus callosum, the crossing point for the two hemispheres in the cerebral cortex, the upper brain. Energetically, it is the meeting space of *yin* and *yang* in your head, neutralizing each other, fusing into the center of the “self-awareness” center of the head. Smile from this center, and feel for the response One minute silent practice.

From this stage you normally progress to Step Two, the heart and vital organ smile, described below. As an alternative to explore, you could apply the left brain-right brain technique to the heart and belly brains. The energetic field (dantian) underlying each of our three brains is polarized into a right, left, and central core channel. We are most familiar with the head being divided into right and left brains, but you can smile into the left and right channels of the heart and belly brains as well.

This deep “core channel smiling” can activate love-hate polarities in the heart-feeling brain, and pleasure-pain polarities in the belly-sensing brain. By shifting to an inner smile of unconditional acceptance in the center of each brain/dantian, deep divisions within our psyche can be healed. This practice lays an excellent foundation for Fusion of the Five Elements Level 2 practice, where the Eight Extraordinary Channels are mapped in detail and opened more thoroughly.

Step 2: Smile to the throat, heart and vital organ spirits

Use the Inner Smile to direct the fusion of the left and right brain and central corpus callosum to flow down through the mid brain and low brain stem, smiling down into the throat, dissolving any blockages in the thyroid and parathyroid glands. These control your body metabolism. *30 seconds silent practice.*

Continue smiling down to the thymus gland at the base of the throat, known to Daoists as “the little heart” that nourishes the immortal child within. Smile inside it, feel it open like a flower, the way it was when you were a child. It can revitalize your immune system, as the source of your most important T-cells. Smile, and feel for the smiling response. *30 seconds silent practice.*

Smile down into the physical heart, and smile into the still point in between your heart beats. Smile, feel gratitude and love for your heart spirit, its hard work to keep us feeling alive and passionate. Allow this to spread the heart spirit to open up in the center of the chest.. Feel the

Heart Spirit smiling to all the other vital organ “body-gods”, all the other spirits, the intelligences of spleen, pancreas, lungs, kidneys, the liver. *30 seconds silent practice*

The heart spirit radiates its Inner Smile like an inner sun, shining its acceptance, its feeling of peace and bliss and total acceptance to all the other body gods, the inner family members. Feel all the other vital organ spirits smiling back to the heart. Everyone feels alive, they feel the same heart joy collectively. Smile again, feel for the response. *One minute silent practice.*

Step 3: Smile to the spine & nervous system

Bring your awareness back up to the golden egg of liquid light atop your head. Feel that it is now vibrating with all the smiling *chi* from the head and heart and vital organ spirits. Allow it to flow down into your eyes, and smiling and washing them out. Let the vital organ spirits keep smiling to each other, having a friendly little party going on down below.

Smile from the eyes through the optic nerve, in the back of the head, into the occiput, the indentation in the back of the head called the *jade pillow*. Breathe and smile the golden liquid light back and forth a few times between the eyes and jade pillow. Your eyes have 70% of the nerve cells in your entire body.

Daoists say the eyes are the most *yang* organ in the body. That means there is a very high concentration of *chi* that needs to flow to them, to nourish that eye function of being a major gateway between our inner and outer worlds. But the eye-nourishing *chi* doesn't come from the head, it comes from the kidneys and lower dantian, so we need to connect this line down below.

Connect your eyes to the low brain, the brain stem, and then smile down the spine. Begin smiling down the spinal cord, the tube that runs down the center of your vertebra. Smile into the spinal fluid that fills it.

It may feel like a Christmas tree lighting up millions of little nerve endings fed from the spine, all of them lighting up as you smile inside them. Feel them beaming back as clusters of little lights, little bursts of joy followed by feelings of calmness and inner peace.

Merge with your cerebral spinal fluid, bathe all your nerve endings, which might be a little frayed, a little stressed, until the whole spine is filled with this golden light bathing it, flowing down through it, all the way down to the tailbone. You may begin feeling a deeper level of calmness than you have experienced for quite a while. *Silent practice, one minute.*

Spinal fluid is very sensitive and very potent. Spinal fluid is just your blood serum, with the red blood cells filtered out in the brain. You could say it is the blood of your nervous system. We are in effect washing the spine with the Inner Smile, one way to practice what was called “bone marrow washing” by the Daoists. The blood in your body circulates to the brain, is filtered into the spine as purified fluid and charged by its spiritual fire, and then recirculates back into the body.

This is a very alchemical process that is totally missed by western medicine and psychology. But it is one of the keys to balancing the *yin* (blood) and *yang* (*chi*) systems of the body. Blood becomes *chi* flowing into the meridians through the spinal pathway, *chi* becomes blood by the reverse process. We will go deeper into this mystery with the microcosmic orbit.

Be aware of the golden egg atop your crown. Feel the continuous flow from above of golden liquid light, as if from heaven, flowing down your spine and filling each vertebrae, one at a time. Sometimes you will find one vertebrae or a couple of them are numb, you can't even feel them. It's OK, just fill them with the smiling golden light, smile from within the numb area, and let it be, put it on automatic dissolve.

We're not impatient with any part of ourself, we just allow those resistant, wounded, numb or unfeeling aspects to just “be” if it doesn't want to communicate with us. You smile to those dark aspects of yourself, holding the space of total acceptance for them to dissolve

into, then you move on.

Let the Christmas tree, the golden lights strung along our spine, radiate a smile out from our spine to our whole body. Feel the smiling golden light flowing to the nerve cells everywhere in our body. There are major nerve plexuses one the inner side of the spine, i.e. between the spine and the front of the body.

These nerve bundles radiate to billions of nerve cells in every little inch of skin, inside our organs, and embedded in our bones. Bones have nerves in them also, they are alive and can feel. Just smile inner peace and calmness to all the nerve cells everywhere. Feel your nerve endings smiling back to you from every part of your body. *Silent practice, two minutes.*

Step 4: Smile, swallow to bowels & sexual organs

Allow your nervous system inner smile to continue glowing and radiating peace and calmness. Come back up to your eyes. This time let's gather some saliva in order to very consciously swallow it down the digestive tract. Saliva is a very precious fluid that can be super-charged with the Inner Smile. It is precious because it is a fluid imbued with the spiritual vibrations of the upper dantian, the doorway to the heavenly *chi* field.

We need to gather a pool of saliva first. Move your tongue around your mouth – that will activate the salivary glands to secrete, snake-like, from two little holes beneath your tongue. Move your tongue around your mouth as though you were washing it out, massaging your gums with your tongue. Gather a large pool of saliva without swallowing it.

The movement of the tongue imitates eating, and activates a digestive reflex to product the saliva needed for swallowing. Saliva is considered to be the “water” of the third eye or crystal palace. This water, also called the Jade Elixir or Golden Elixir, is swallowed to

vibrationally connect it to the middle and lower dantian. To further spiritually charge the saliva, you smile the liquid golden light from the egg above your crown (representing the crystallized *chi* of heaven) into the big pool of saliva gathered in your mouth.

Now tighten your neck muscles as much as you comfortably can, and then swallow the saliva down in a single gulp. The physical compression of the throat allows you to grasp the *chi* in the saliva and further condense its essence. By tightening the neck muscles you draw more blood into the neck, and the *chi* in the saliva and the blood mix together.

Feel the warm energy of this super charged mixture of the essences of your blood, *chi*, and saliva as it flows down your esophagus, past your heart, small intestine, stomach, the large intestine, all the bowels, down into the lower dantian cauldron.

It may take repeated swallowing to feel warmth down in your abdomen. When you feel this warmth, you have successfully created the spiritual equivalent of what modern scientists call a “fluid magnetic condenser”. You have used the magnetic properties of saliva fluid as a medium for condensing the energetic and spiritual qualities of your inner smile. By swallowing it, you transport the essence of the head brain – your creative imagination - and merge it with the essence of your belly brain, your instinctual-primordial self. *Silent practice, one minute.*

The mouth, esophagus and digestive tract is like a long tube. This tube connects the upper brain at one end, down past the middle heart and lower belly brain. It radiates from the lower dantian into all your sexual organs and finally out the other end of the tube, into your rectum and anus.

Physically, this is a series of ring muscles, from lips to esophagus to stomach to anus. These ring muscles pulsate in waves of expansion and contraction, expressing the cosmic *yin-yang* pulsation. This chain of ring muscles allows our primitive physical self to squeeze and grasp in order to extract the pure essence of something and discard what is

not useful.

But we are different from primitive amoebas who have the same swallow reflex. As the substance – the golden elixir saliva fluid -- is pulsing through the body's ring muscle tube, it is refined alchemically in each energy cauldron, the three dantian, the three energetic brains of the body-mind.

By smiling into your bowels and sex organs, you internally embrace the “dirty parts” of yourself. You are lighting up your internal dungeon with a burst of fresh air and warm sunlight. You smile into the darkness and neutrally accept the piles of emotional-psychic garbage and physical toxins that most are afraid to look at, much less smile and embrace with an open smiling heart.

Men also smile into the penis, testicles, prostate gland and bladder. Women smile into the ovaries, vagina, uterus, bladder and breast glands. Embrace and accept whatever state you find your sexual energy and reproductive functions.

Just shock them, say to them “hey, I'm here to smile and accept you and thank you for just being part of me”. There are probably parts of you down there that nobody's ever talked to. They are not used to communicating with what your head brain arrogantly calls the “conscious self”. There is a conscious self below as well, it just does not care about naming itself with concepts, and so the head brain ignores and judges it. *Silent practice, one minute.*

Your bowels and sex organs may be a little too shy to smile back right away. There will be much shock and disbelief, as they try to figure out if you are for real or not. So don't demand any response, just smile sincerely and listen with an open heart. It may help if you let them know you have dropped all past judgments about this part of the body being “dirty” or “lower”. You are smiling and embracing everything that you've buried in your deepest closets, in the darkest basement of your psyche.

The truth is, you've buried a lot of your power in the darkness and

your fear of the darkness. It is like treasure half-buried in the mud of old emotions and sexual impulses that you were unable to digest previously. You fumble around at first until you find the light switch.

With each smile, you learn how to let the liquid light from the golden egg atop of your head flow down the central tube into your psychic dungeons below. With repeated swallowing, this liquid light flows down and fills up all of your bowels, sex organs and the entire lower half of your torso.

You turn your psychic dungeon into an internal sun-bathing room where you polish up the buried treasure with a beautiful smile on your face. Allow yourself to feel how incredibly lucky you are to have recovered these lost fragments of your self.

Silent practice, five minutes.

Step 5: Smile to bones, blood, flesh, & cells

Let's smile into everything else in our body that hasn't felt our smile of unconditional acceptance. Smile the golden liquid light down through the bones, filling your entire skeleton with pulsing light. Feel the big arm and leg bones expand into large tubes filled with liquid light. Let that feeling expand into the pelvis, spine and ribs, the skull. They may feel lighter, less dense, as you smile into them.

Smile into the bone marrow inside the bones, beam a deep smile of unconditional acceptance into the marrow. The bone marrow is where you manufacture your blood, and your blood carries the *chi* of your ancestors. So you are sending a signal to your bloodline, that you accept who they were and still are deep inside your bones. *Silent practice, one minute.*

From the bone marrow, expand your smile into the blood and all other fluids inside the body. Accept this inner ocean, the medium in which all our solid parts float and are nourished. Smile from the heart

pumping the blood out through the arteries, and back in through the veins.

Smile into the spleen regulating the lymphatic fluids of your immune system. Then smile to the connective tissue that sheathes your entire skeleton, and holds the muscles and organs in place. It stops us from looking like a limp bag of bones.

The fascia or connective tissue is your flesh, a major part of your earth element. Feel the smile dissolving tension hiding in your fascia and muscles. Your whole body feels lighter and more relaxed, supported from within by this golden smiling energy. This fleshy, whole body sense will make it easy to expand out to your largest organ, your skin.

Smile to your skin, appreciate its ability to breathe through its thousands of pores, and still hold a boundary for your entire body. Smile to all the little hairs all over your body, and to the thicker hair on your head. Let them light up, like smiling antennae.

Smile into your bones, blood, flesh and hair simultaneously. It may feel like your whole body is filled with smiling waves of light and deep acceptance of your animal body and how marvelously intelligent it is, just as it is.

Now shift from the surface antennae of the hairs on the outside of your body, to the cells as antennae inside of your body. Smile to the nucleus of each cell, and feel all 80 trillion of them lighting up and smiling back. Their collective smile creates an exquisitely subtle but powerful feeling of bliss evenly spread throughout your body. *Silent practice, one minute.*

Step 6a: Smile, dissolve your entire physical body

Note: When first training, step 6a. (*yin* practice) normally precedes step 6b. (*yang* practice). Later, one could choose to do either. It is not necessary to do both each time one practices. But since the “insides”

of things are more unconscious for us than the “outsides”, it’s good to first get a strong foundation in *yin* inner body practice.

Allow yourself to feel your whole body smiling together. You are smiling simultaneously into the intelligences operating all your biological systems: the three brains, the organs, the spine, all the bowels and sex organs, the bones, blood, and flesh. Some deep inner observer you call “you” is smiling into the body’s many outer “faces”, and they are responding by smiling back. *Silent practice, one minute.*

Now we will ask the body intelligences to shift with us into the dimension closest to the physical. We will shift from deep acceptance of our physical body to deep acceptance of the pure energy body hidden within us. This energy body sustains and holds the physical patterns of our physical body in place.

Be aware of the golden egg atop your crown. Expand it into a golden egg of light that envelops your aura and body. Feel your physical body sitting inside this egg, smiling to it. Breathe feelings of deep acceptance into it, as if it were your new skin. The golden energy egg smiles back into you. *Silent practice, thirty seconds.*

Now we will begin to reverse the sequence of the smiling process we used. Smile, and feel the skin, the hair, the muscles and flesh of your physical body start to dissolve and evaporate into pure feelings of energy, light, or sound. Feel that your smile radiating from within is spiritually so strong, like an inner sun, that the vibrational frequency of your body tissue speeds up, causing it to shift into light energy. As your body’s surface begins dissolving, its light flows into the golden egg surrounding you. You feel yourself getting progressively lighter. *Silent practice, two minutes.*

Smile, and progressively feel your bones, the inner ocean of blood and fluids, your bowels and sex organs, your spine, and your five vital organs begin to dissolve, one layer at a time. Continue this deep smiling process until each layer of your physical body has disappeared. It may help at the end to smile into all of your 80 trillion cells, and feel them shift into points of light that merge into your

Energy Body's egg.

At your option, if it attracts you, you may choose to dissolve the golden energy egg itself into a dark black ocean of formless *chi* , and sit in that neutral darkness, smiling and listening for any high pitched inner sound frequencies *Silent practice, two minutes.*

You have now shifted your perceptual focus to the energy egg, the container for your energy body's many meridians, or to the dark open space of the next dimension from which the energy body arises. You still have a physical body, but it is in another dimension, and only vaguely perceivable from your current vibrational state.

Your mind is the egg itself, holding the potential to become any shape, any experience of physicality. It has temporarily dissolved its attachment to the dense solidity of its body, but this is an ongoing process. We constantly pulse back and forth between the physical and the energetic bodies. There may be aspects of your self that are resistant to dissolving into energy, that are stuck in identifying with their physical nature.

If this applies to you, focus on the part of your body that is giving you the most difficulty. Feel that you are inside that dark, numb, or resistant area, possibly an area of pain. From the deep, neutral inner space within that resistant area, smile to the insides of that physical area, bathing it with your unconditional acceptance. Invite it to dissolve with you as you expand out, to join you as you shift into the golden light of your energy body and beyond.

If there is any part of you that still doesn't want to join your energy body, you can then accept that it may wish to be separate and be released from your field of consciousness. Offer it that option. Allow it to release into the form in which it wishes to be released.

Offer to dissolve it into the earth, or into the sky, or into one of the five elements. It may be sick or toxic *chi* that you are unable to convert into useful energy, and so it is better for all if it is released back into nature, which will gladly recycle it. *Silent practice, two minutes.*

Slowly shift back from your energy body into your physical body. This is easy, just smile into your sense of solidity. As your sense of a defined body re-emerges, feel the *chi* from your energy body crystallize into a golden pearl at your navel center. Notice how your physical body feels.

You may be feeling a little lighter, a little more peaceful, more accepting of a new center deep within that integrates all your body intelligences and tissues. Open your eyes slowly, allowing this smiling, peaceful feeling to remain deep inside you, even as your sensory perceptions of the room and the colors and people begin to fill your mind with new images and feelings.

Allow that deep smiling feeling to radiate out your eyes. Look around the room and smile at some of the other folks around you. Let your Inner Smile connect with your outer smile, allow them to merge by doing both at the same time.

Step 6b: Smile, dissolve beyond the body

Our strategy is to start with the outer smile. We first project it internally into the body, and thereby encounter the reality that everything inside our body is alive, i.e. it is also our psyche. That the body-spirits can smile back from every part of our physical tissue. This phase of Inner Smile training is a *yin* practice, we are dissolving inward and remaining very receptive to whatever arises, without projecting or expanding our energy body out. This is smiling movement into the core of our heart spirit and within that, our Original Spirit.

But once you begin dissolving the illusory body-mind boundaries inside your body structure, it frees up a lot of *chi* whose natural instinct is to flow and connect beyond the human body, and into our larger cosmic energy body. The *yin* practice of smiling deeper and deeper within our body-mind invariably creates at some point a wave of *chi* that wants to expand out equally far, beyond our skin.

This initiates a *yang* phase of Inner Smile practice. Skill in managing this phase of the Inner Smile is known as *yang* practice. It assumes we've at least partially integrated with our original nature from doing *yin* practice. Otherwise our smiling back outward would be identical to anyone practicing the superficial outer smile.

Once we master both the *yin* and *yang* phases, we are ready to master the third kind of skill, known as wu-wei practice. This usually occurs only after we have truly integrated the *yin* and *yang* phases of the inner smile and merged them into our Original Spirit. With wu-wei, or effortless practice, our Original Spirit is simultaneously smiling and embracing all of the *yin* and *yang* activities of our body-mind both inside the skin and outside the skin.

But *wu wei* is mostly pure abstraction, pretty words, until we actually use the *yin* and *yang* Inner Smile practices to experience our original self as concrete reality. That is the point of the higher alchemical formulas, in which the Original Spirit gradually becomes more and more substantial. But it is useful to have a map of the practices even when you are just a beginner.

Smile into your Aura

Let's begin the *yang* practice by taking whatever smiling *chi* we have awakened within our body, and smile it out into the energy field immediately around our body, into a golden egg. To stabilize it, it usually helps to do skin breathing along with the smiling quality, exhaling *chi* through your skin pores out into the egg, and inhaling the *chi* in the golden egg back inside you. The skin breathing keeps it grounded, so it's not just an image in your head. *Silent practice, one minute.*

Smile into the Room

Now let's amplify that same breathing, smiling pulsation, and feel it expand out beyond our immediate body aura to gradually fill the room surrounding us. *Silent practice, one minute.*

We can direct our inner smile anywhere outside of our skin boundary that we choose to. This is possible because *chi* is the medium carrying our inner smile. All local *chi* flow, meaning our personal energy body, is fed by the universal *chi* field pulsing into us each moment. We can consciously reverse this *chi* flow into our physical body, by simply directing our local smiling *chi* wave to flow back outside us. As it flows back, we can focus it anywhere in time and space.

Do not confuse this inner smiling process with simply thinking about someplace outside our body. The Inner Smile has captured our body's intelligence and substance and fused them, and that is what we are riding back out into the universal *chi* field. Thought is a form of *chi*, but it lacks the substance, or *jing*, which the body's intelligence has.

Smile to a Friend

So let's expand the smiling pulsation beyond our aura, beyond the room. Smile to your entire house or home. If you are in your home, pick in a different room a favorite chair you like to sit in, or your bed, any object with a lot of your *chi* invested in it. Let your smile be a way of thanking the furniture for supporting you, and be open to feeling the *chi* in it smiling back to you. *Silent practice, thirty seconds.*

Smile to a family member or good friend, no matter how far away they are at the moment. Pick someone you really love, that you feel close to or really comfortable with. When you smile to someone else at a distance it's just sending a message to them subconsciously, that you accept them, accept them as they are without judgment, just as you smiled inside your body and accepted all the parts of you without any judgment. We could even focus our smile on their heart spirit, or other internal spirits, and they may smile back at us. *Silent practice,*

one minute.

Smile to a Difficult Relationship

Now let's take someone you have some difficulty with. It could even be the person you consider your worst enemy. This means your subconscious body spirits and theirs, your underlying personalities, are not getting along. We smile and ask our inner spirits could contact this difficult person at the same inner level. Just smile, as if saying, "Even though we disagree about something, at core I accept you totally".

Keep smiling to them at this deeper level. It could be a co-worker, a boss, or somebody in your family. Smile to them, radiate this feeling of peace and acceptance to their inner intelligence. We can use the inner smile to help smooth over difficult relationships.

This kind of inner smile is not a manipulation. You are really sincere, your inner heart is saying I accept you, I'd like to have a smooth flowing peaceful relationship. Their personality may not be able to hear that, because of their conflict with you.

But energetically they can hear it, so subconsciously it may translate into a shift in their personality. Just take the most difficult relationship you have and ask what part of that person or what spirit or what vital organ might be really in conflict with you, and smile to it.

There is some deep part of even your worst enemy that is not in conflict with you. It may even join you in smiling to the vital organ spirit within themselves that is struggling with you. Everyone subconsciously wants peace and harmony. Holding deep tension shortens our life and eats away at the quality of our life. Smile to your enemy, and be open to discovering they are also you're your inner friend. They may smile back. *Silent practice, two minutes.*

Smile to your Local Community

Now let's expand our focus. We could smile to our entire home town, smile to our local community. We could smile to our country, our national community. These have a collective, living consciousness that we can contact with the inner smile, and feel them smile back.

Silent practice, one minute.

Smile to any Global Community

Next, let's try smiling to the global human community, which can help resolve racial and political tensions. In this sense the Inner Smile is a kind of focused prayer, but a very neutral prayer, one that prays for mutual unconditional acceptance between all beings. Once that level of inner respect is established, anything can be worked out.

We could smile to any collective global community, be it the community of animals, the community of trees, the community of dolphins, or butterflies, whatever community you feel attracted to, smile into its collective heart. Be open to it smiling back to you. ***Silent practice, one minute.***



If you smile to Nature, you may get a smile back from the “Green Man” or other nature spirits. Don’t be alarmed if their smile is a bit cool or impersonal, as they are not human.

Smile to Heart of Planet Earth

We can keep this smiling wave moving even farther. Let’s try smiling to the heart spirit of planet earth, by smiling deep inside the globe itself. You might choose to smile straight down below your feet to the center of the earth. Or you might prefer to expand out into space, like an astronaut, so you can see the whole planet at once, a beautiful blue pearl hanging there in black space.

Smile, a huge smile, accepting the planet for being whatever it is. This kind of planetary intelligence is so vast that it is harder for us tiny humans to recognize. But let’s simply be open to receiving a smile with a very deep vibration returning to us. *Silent practice, one minute.*

Smile to Moon, Planets, Space

Now, let's smile out into space, into the spirit of the moon, into the spirit of the other planets. See them floating past in your inner vision, and just totally accept their cosmic functions, both natural and astrological-soul functions. Smile to their individual or collective heart, and be open to feeling them smile back. *Silent practice, one minute.*

Smile to Sun and Stars

Finally, let's smile out even further, to the sun and the other stars beyond it. Our human mind is an integral part of their *chi* field. Wherever you shift your attention, your mind is already there, because your mind is everywhere the *chi* field is. We are using the sun and stars just to navigate a gradual sense of expansion out into the infinite *chi* field. Let yourself expand out just as far as you feel comfortable right now.

As you smile, acknowledge the *chi* field has no boundaries, it extends all the way across the universe and beyond. We are always connected to it, part of the universal field, we humans are single points of consciousness woven into that vast sea of consciousness. So if one part of the field, a tiny human on earth, starts smiling, it sends a wave that is instantly transmitted to the far end of that field across the universe. According to physics, that instant travel time sounds impossible.

Yet it's possible because the speed of consciousness is faster than the speed of light. Visible light is just a photon particle, a packet of energy physically travelling through the field at 186,000. miles per second. Consciousness *is* the whole field, and so its communication process is instantaneous.

Nothing, including your inner smiling wave of conscious chi, actually travels anywhere. When you smile, it's already there, because time-space-energy is unified by consciousness. The universal field of consciousness (Original Spirit) is constantly aware of itself as the entirety of time, space, and intelligence.

We are born part of the universal field of consciousness. So when we smile into all the beautiful stars, into the vast cosmic intelligences that live in the center of those spiraling galaxies with billions of stars, we reach them immediately. It doesn't take light years for the inner smile to communicate your smiling feeling of acceptance. It is instantaneous! Let's smile to the stars, and be open to the stars smiling back to us immediately. Silent practice, two minutes.

Smile to the Dark Ocean Beyond the Stars

We can just as easily allow our inner smiling wave to flow beyond the stars, beyond the galaxies and black holes out there. We can smile to the field of pure space itself, the dark velvety part of the night sky which is just pure dark energy, pure potential, waiting to be tapped by us. Remember, it may look like an empty void, but its actually "open space" filled with unborn *chi*, like a pregnant cosmic womb ready to birth future galaxies and life forms. That cosmic womb contains the primordial seeds of your future thoughts, feelings, and sensations – all waiting to be downloaded, like cosmic interactive patterns that you will use to shape your identity.

This in effect means we can smile into other dimensions. There are invisible dimensional boundaries that may keep out large particles, but not a spiritual wave of smiling consciousness. Let's now smile into the inky blackness of space, into spiritual realms where we might receive guidance, or messages, or whatever we are open to.

Let's remember that smiling is just a way to take our inner heart and focus it wherever it is needed, to radiate total unconditional acceptance. So as we smile to other dimensions of our self, let's be open to receiving that unconditional smiling acceptance in return. As the other-dimensional smiling energy flows in, our local mind, in order to make it more recognizable, may shape it into a voice, an image, a feeling, a thought or a sensation. *Silent practice, five minutes or longer.*

Allow Yourself to Feel the Return Smiling Wave

Thank all those aspects of the universe that have individually smiled back to us, or responded in some way to our smile. We've now radiated our smiling wave from our body center out to the center of the universal body and beyond. It's time to follow the return wave of that inner smile.

When you send a smiling wave way out to the deep center of the universe, or however far you smiled, you can expect a response back from the universe. Feel it smiling back as a collective wave, a smiling wave traveling through the *chi* field, in past the stars, the sun, in past the planets, the moon, in through the earth and all its great collectives of plants and animals, the smile flowing back towards us, back to the room we are in, and back into our aura, and back into our physical body.

It doesn't matter how far you smiled out. You may have been smiling out in the planets, the stars, or you might have only smiled as far as your pet dog on the other side of town. No matter, just feel like your smiling wave is coming back to you, to your body in this room where we are sitting. Feel there is a lot of space inside you to receive that smiling wave of *chi*, the inner body space we cleared and opened up earlier.

Gather the Wave of Smiling *Chi* in your Body

Let the wave enter deep inside your body. Feel your inner heart and inner family of body intelligences are open to receive this flowing, smiling wave from the larger *chi* field. We fill up on this *chi*, and allow it to concentrate itself into our lower dantian, in our inner ocean. Gather it into a glowing golden *chi* ball. Smile and rest your mind in this lower energy center, the source of power behind your instinctual belly brain.

The warm, glowing *chi* ball is your body's spiritual aspect, its pure energetic self, the crystallization or essence of all the universal frequencies of energy that we've smiled into on our journey. When the *chi* ball or pearl becomes stable, warm, and pulsing, we feel safe in releasing the density of our physical body, and shifting the center of our life to our energy body.

Note: many people learn the pacing and feeling of the Inner Smile more easily from listening to audio tape than by reading it. Please know that a guided Inner Smile tape is available for you at the end of chapter 7. [Click for audio tape offer](#)

Chapter Six

Inner Smile Questions & Answers



Silent smiles radiate from the 2000 year old stone heads of Cambodia's Angkor Wat temple. Asian artists, more so than Western artists, historically seem to have held the peaceful inner space needed for the flowering of the Inner Smile. The Daoist spiritual technologies offer a practical method for Westerners to access that smiling inner state of peace and acceptance.

Q: How long do I practice the Inner Smile at any one sitting?

We just did a long guided meditation of nearly one hour (transcribed in text above). We took a lot of time to open up new pathways of inner communication, with verbal reminders of what we were doing. We were basically re-programming our energy bodies, and that needs to be done slowly and thoroughly. It is hard to meditate while reading, so some people may want to get an audiotape version so they can close their eyes and be guided. (available on www.HealingDao.com as code MC1A, or in package with videos as MP1A).

When you practice at home, it won't require this much time, since the pathway is already open, and the practice is silent. With more practice, the internal communication process of smiling gets easier and quicker.

The amount of time needed to for dedicated practice, in a place with no distractions, will vary according to each person. Don't expect that you will cover everything in any one practice session. Often you hit something deep and may choose to stay with that for the entire session. Eventually the smiling process becomes more internalized and familiar, and you will begin practicing all day long, even while engaged in other activities.

Start with 15 minutes, and see if it naturally grows longer. You have to balance your time between moving and sitting practice. Smile inside, and ask your heart spirit how long it wants for dedicated practice. Learn to trust what your heart tells you. Sometimes a two minute quick inner smile will suffice to get you centered in the middle of a stressful day.

Other times you will need much more dedicated practice time.

Q: How can the Inner Smile help (married) couples having difficulties?

My wife and I use the inner smile all the time. If we get into a position of difference, and are heading into a possible argument, we have an agreement that either one of us can stop the dialog from deteriorating into disharmony by placing their hands over their heart and smiling. That is a signal for the other person to relax and smile, find their heart center, before continuing the dialog.

Again, creating the inner space within by smiling automatically mirrors itself out into the outer space of the event or relationship. And that is much more effective than the other way around, negotiating some neutral outer space with two angry hearts lined up on either side.

That is what mediators do, and it can eventually work, whether in divorce or business, but the inner smile is deeper and faster. Even if you use outer mediation techniques, the Inner Smile will speed them up.

If you are having trouble getting to a smiling space with your partner, you may need to supplement it with more *chi kung* practice, healing sounds, or pull out the heavy artillery like the Fusion of the Five Elements. It trains you to eat negative emotions for breakfast before they eat you for lunch.

Q: What do you do if you just feel bored while smiling, like nothing is really happening?

Boredom is a state of being disconnected from the Life Force. Whether you are being born, whether you are dying, or whether nothing is happening at some midpoint between those events, it's not boring if you are fully present. The Life Force is equally present for all those events.

Being present to the Life Force totally transforms boredom because it really means all of you, all of your internal spirits and all your energy channels and all of your collective higher being is present, and coming into one moment of collective focus. That is what is meant by the "present moment". Lots of people talk about being present, which is good. But in my experience many are not aware of the practical internal communication-energy pathways available to them, that are clearly mapped out in Daoist internal alchemy.

Being present changes everything. Because even if it appears nothing is happening externally in your body or in your life situation, the reality is that you are being born each moment. Creation doesn't stop just because you are feeling bored. To even be able to create a "bored you" is an exciting process that requires the cooperation of the entire *chi* field, which means the entire Cosmos. So when you are bored, just appreciate the entire Cosmos is working hard to sustain your illusion of boredom. That means the rest of the universe is not

bored, even if you believe you are or that life is boring.

Once you can smile and accept there is this exciting level of creation going on in your inner life, you won't feel boredom. It may help to do some *chi kung* movements first to stir up your blood and *chi*, which may be a bit stagnant. Boredom is a kind of rigidity, so break it up using whatever means available. When you practice the smile afterwards, smilingly ASK, from your heart, to see what is underlying your boredom, so that you can embrace it.

Or just smile to your body-intelligences, specifically the one that is bored, until it or they get excited about the fact that you are smiling to them instead of ignoring them. So boredom is a form of resistance. A lot of resistance is created by excessive focus on our outer life and ignoring our inner life. You want to embrace your resistance, smile to what is alive at a deeper level, behind it or buried inside it.

Q: I have struggled with boredom and depression for a long time. Do I need to try harder for a breakthrough?

Again, don't struggle with the boredom, it will win that game, and drag you down into its pit where it is also trapped. Just relax and alertly smile to it until the next layer opens up. Be patient. The Inner Smile can open all Inner Doors. When it opens up,, you don't feel struggle, you don't feel like life is out to get you or someone else is out to get you and stifle your creativity.

You just appreciate whatever floats up, and say, "OK this is a flow, this moment this is happening, it might look good, it might look bad or boring, but its still a flow of life." The smile is always very neutral, it is engaged but not entangled. It has a nice warm heart behind it, but it is not attached and certainly not co-dependent on anything or anyone.

The smiling wave of acceptance is arising from the Source within yourself. Sometimes it helps to say to yourself, as you are smiling your way through some blocked energy pattern: "I accept you, no questions

asked,, no judgment”. That is especially useful when you are so depressed that you don’t feel like you have a real smile happening inside you.

Sometimes you must accept an even deeper movement into contraction and darkness. You don’t fight it, just follow it neutrally to its maximum yin state. When it hits bottom, it will expand back out naturally into lightness. But the real point is that you are embracing the process from a neutral point, an inner heart that is neither light nor dark.

The advice I am giving for boredom can be applied to any other chronic emotional state, anger, jealousy, fear, etc. Underneath all these states of feeling separate is the harmonious level of your inner being, waiting to be embraced by your smiling intention. Then the dark clouds in between dissolve and you feel the inner sunshine again.

Then you feel you are smiling from the inside-out, your natural and true self. When you are smiling from the outside-in you are still in a state of separation. But that is what people call normal reality here. They grow up with it, with living a numb life. They get used to it and actually defend it. Sometimes they defend it by attacking someone who doesn’t buy into their reality. Best way to defuse that? Inner Smile. The Master of the Inner Smile has no enemies.

Q: What’s the difference between Inner Smile as a “Water & Fire” dissolving technique and Tao water-only dissolving methods?

The water-only method can be summarized as “ice dissolves to water, water dissolves to gas”. This principle is applied to *chi* flow in the human body and psyche. It’s a perfectly legitimate method of dissolving. It works on the principle of expansion and contraction, mostly on progressive letting go of body density and expanding to a vaporous (*chi*) state.

But the water-only method does not specifically activate the inner Heart Spirit (which has a fiery, or at least warm nature) and does not directly invoke the *yuan shen*, the Original Spirit, as the source that is ultimately dissolving all false *yin* or false *yang chi* stuck in the body. So for myself, the water-only method does not penetrate as deep into my psyche as opening the smiling inner heart. This is why after several years of testing water only methods, I went back to the Inner Smile.

I found for myself that the heart-felt quality of unconditional acceptance evoked by the Inner Smile is missing from a purely *chi*-based dissolving process. Spirit (*shen*) controls the quality of Energy (*chi*). You can have lots of energy dissolving, but still lack heart. It is the difference between martial and spiritual *chi kung*. The spiritual *chi kung* is sometimes called *shengong*, or “skill with spirit”. The Inner smile is really a form of *shengong*. It explores the relation between *chi* and *shen*. *Shen* shapes the feeling quality of the *chi*.

The water-only dissolving approach does not use Daoist five element theory or open up communication with the five vital organ spirits. It primarily uses Daoist *yin-yang* theory, but even here it does not employ the Microcosmic Orbit or other specific energy channels in the body like the Eight Extraordinary Vessels used in One Cloud’s Fusion of the Five Elements. In the water-only approach, everything in the body is simply a mass of ice, water or gas.

Yin-Yang theory and Five Element or Five Phase theory were two parallel schools of early Chinese thought. They were integrated by Tsou Yen’s School of Natural Cosmological Thought about 350 b.c. During the Han Dynasty (about 200 bc) *yin-yang* and five phase theory were combined to form the Chinese calendar we have today.

The water-only method may be from an archaic *yin-yang* school that did not have five phase or body channel theory. Water-only enthusiasts sometimes claim their approach is the original and thus only true Tao method, based on Lao Tzu talking about the power of water and softness overcoming the hard. But there is abundant evidence these claims are historically false. Inner alchemy, the ancient root of all Daoist practices, always seeks equal balance of water and fire, *yin* and

yang.

Daoism (Taoism) is known as the Water-course Way, and it honors the water element as the first amongst the five elements. Its early legends are often pro-feminine, focusing on the womb-birthing function of the Tao. It is *yin-yang* theory, not *yang-yin* theory; the emphasis is to always honor the feminine-*yin* first, because we live in a physical body that is considered *yin*. But “water first” does not mean “water only”. Cultivating *yang* and inner fire is equally important.

I find water-only dissolving method works best for excess fire types (Type A personality) and for martial artists, who usually need lots of water to balance out their “Mars” or fiery warrior which has a tendency to be over controlling of other people. It can be useful in the beginning for anybody who needs to slow down, which is a large percentage of the American population. But you can get the same or better results with *yin* body-dissolving practice of the Inner Smile.

Water-only is generally slower than the water & fire method of using the heart fire. It is especially effective to combine the Inner Smile with the Microcosmic Orbit and Fusion of the Five Elements to dissolve deep core emotional issues. The Inner Smile in the beginning uses a primarily very *yin* fire, soft and watery and nurturing, and gradually adds more *yang* fire and expansiveness as needed. The other techniques and channels used in inner alchemy allow you greater precision in healing or in managing your energetic life.

Does Lao Tzu’s Tao Te Ching mention the Inner Smile?

As far as I know, the Inner Smile is not mentioned by name in Lao Tzu’s *Tao Te Ching (Daodejing)*. But if you have training in Daoist meditation, it is easy to understand the parables of Lao Tzu as practical teachings rather than as mystical poetry or intellectual philosophy. The scholar Harold Roth has shown conclusively in his book *Original Tao* that Lao Tzu’s *Tao Te Ching* was a meditation manual. It had probably been around for hundreds of years already, as

the collected wisdom from that tradition of meditation. He proved this by showing that many of the same phrases and teachings existed in an older text known as the *Nei Yeh*, The Scripture of Inner Training.

The Tao Te Ching, supposedly written by Lao Tzu about 400 BC, says the Tao is huge, it's vast, it covers all the universes, yet at the same time it's tiny, it's smaller than the smallest thing, and it doesn't judge any of the 10,000 creatures. "Can you live without judgment?" it asks. Living without judgment is what the Inner Smile embodies: total, in-the-body acceptance of destiny as it arises each moment.

Humans struggle to do this and that and the Tao just keeps adjusting. Tao can never be thrown off center by humanity, because Tao *is* the totality of the chi field, Tao is what births both Heaven and Earth. Lao Tzu is describing the movement of the life force, and the total, unconditional openness of the Tao to everything in creation.

The challenge facing the Daoist adept is to internalize that radical, total openness to life inside their Energy Body. The Inner Smile is the simplest Daoist method to do that. The Inner Smile emulates Lao Tzu's principle of total acceptance from our vast cosmic level down to our tiniest cellular level.

If you look at all the statues in China of what appear to be a kind of stylized Lao Tzu character simply known as "Long Life", with a high bulge on his forehead (swollen third eye) and carrying a gourd curved in a figure eight filled with the Original Elixir of True Yin and True Yang – you will see they all have a wonderful smile on their face.

The smile is saying, I am free of concern about death and worldly troubles, because I have grasped the secret of the Tao. (see illustration of Lao Tzu riding an ox in chapter Two). So the quietly ecstatic Inner Smile definitely has a strong presence within the ancient Tao tradition, even if it is not named in words.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion:

Inner Smile as Path to Enlightenment



Tao inner alchemy energetically takes us on a reverse journey back to the Origin: from mortal, ego-driven adult to innocent child to pre-natal purity in mother's womb to Original Spirit in the cosmic womb of the wuji, the Supreme Unknown. Spiritual rebirth then takes us back into Creation, but

this time the ego is consciously fused with the will of Original Spirit and thus becomes Eternal. Photo: author with Daoist adept Lehechun in the famous Green Goat Temple, Chengdu, China. Lihechun cultivated his serene Inner Smile during a year long retreat in a cave on Mt. Huashan.

The application of the Inner Smile is endless, from the simple to the sublime. Before I eat a meal, I inner smile from my heart into the food on my plate to make it easier for my body to energetically digest whatever chi it has to offer me. I feel it raises the vibration of the food, it awakens and enlivens it. Animals are very sensitive to human energetic shifts, and many use the Inner Smile to communicate with their pets.

Others use the Smile in stressful daily work situations, to assist loved ones going through the dying process, or help children going through difficult emotional transitions. It can be used to communicate with non-human forms of life, be it plant spirits or other natural elemental forces in oceans and mountains. I know one astrologer who uses it before reading a chart, to open up communication with the planetary beings that are a prime moving force behind all astrology.

But the Inner Smile was originally transmitted by the Tao hermit One Cloud as a tool for enlightenment, as the linchpin of his *Seven Alchemy Formulas for Immortality*. One Cloud himself was a “breatharian” for many years, meaning he lived on *chi* alone, and ate no food in his mountain cave on Long White Mountain in northeastern China. If you are interested in enlightenment, please join me in a smiling exploration of Tao cosmology and its implications for those of us living in a body and trying to figure out the spiritual meaning of free will.

As humans, we are drawn like magnets back to our spiritual origin. This is what ultimately drives all spiritual, religious and metaphysical quest. The very notion of Origin implies ultimate authority in life, the spiritual center of gravity that inexorably draws all of Creation back into its vortex.

The Inner Smile process, taken to its highest level, eventually connects our human body-mind-soul trinity to its Origin, the universal

center of consciousness. There we find ourselves facing the innermost gateway to what in Tao cosmology is known as the wuji, the Supreme Unknown.

Tao Cosmology: Unfolding the Original Trinity

Wuji is just the Daoist way of describing the universal womb of the Tao from which everything is born – a kind of Godhead with no God or Goddess sitting inside it. Inside this womb is the pure Mystery of the Unknown. It is the “Holy of Holies”, in which non-being transmutes itself into Original Spirit-Breath-Substance, the primordial trinity. This is the silent, mysterious act of Original Will which is present in every moment of manifestation.

Original trinity in turn initiates the Song of Creation, and the primal yang God of heaven and primal yin Goddess of earth begin to move. Their *Tai Chi* movement is a cosmic love-making that births “the ten thousand beings”. We cannot know the Unknowable, that will always remain a Mystery. But we can cultivate our Original trinity and its smiling expression – our powerful Original Will (*yuan yi*)– to create our life anew. This is what it truly means to “be in the present moment”. It is an act of creatively shaping our body and our life, not a passive witnessing of something or someone else shaping our destiny.

Daoist cosmology gives us a good working map for our spiritual journey. It describes a cosmic egg or gourd that explodes the original trinity-as-unity inside the egg in a burst of primal thunder. This 3-in-1 trinity is a non-sexual field of Original Substance - *yuan jing*, Original Breath - *yuan chi*, and Original Intelligence (or Spirit) - *yuan shen*. Original Will implies a movement of this trinity towards embodiment or Creation. Thus the Original Substance, or *yuan jing*, is a key factor in this movement.

After the egg explodes, this 3-in-1 trinity takes on sexual characteristics as primal water-female and primal fire-male. It begins dividing into *yin* and *yang* aspects that copulate and procreate. Daoism

is thus guided by principles that equally honor the *yin* and *yang*, water and fire, female and male, as the offspring of the Tao. Both fire and water are essential to the flow of the Tao and the unfolding of its “*de*”, its virtue or spiritual power, into our physical world.

But the Original Spirit doesn't disappear just because Yin and Yang Breaths begin creating more tangible worlds of Yin and Yang Substance. The trinity is still functional, they are just functioning in a different dimension. *Yuan shen*-Original Spirit remains as the ever-present silent observer within our human body. Our eyes cannot see this hidden Self, but it sees through our eyes, it listens through our ears. It is the Silent Witness to every phase of our life. It also colors the flow of chi with its innate intelligence and spiritual qualities.

How can we know this Original Spirit? It seems unfair – it can know us, but we can't grasp its elusive essence. Meanwhile, modern humans are suffering, feeling alienated and cut off the Tao or Divine or God or Source of Life. The goal of all Daoist inner alchemy practice is to resolve that gap by restoring the trinity of *yin-yang-yuan chi* flow within our physical body. To do that, we must cultivate our Energy and Spirit bodies as well.

The Inner Smile becomes an act of Original Will when it is used to align our human ego with Original Spirit, and our human physical body with Original Substance. This is how the Inner Smile can be used as an Enlightenment practice, to help us experience more fully our true and original presence here *in the flesh*.

The Inner Smile is silent, heart-centered, and effortless, which allows us to penetrate into hidden, silent levels of our deep core in a way that mantra, visualization, breathing techniques, movement methods or simple empty-mind meditation may not achieve. It is especially not easy to grasp our Original Substance and feel it in the body.

Of course, there is no guarantee of enlightenment, which in the end is only definable and knowable by each person. Thus each person needs to apply the Inner Smile differently – as a *yin* practice, a *yang* practice, or a *wu wei (yuan)* practice. These three methods of Inner

Smiling suggest different directions of flow of our Original Will. *Yin* flows in towards the center, *yang* flows out from the center, *yuan* (or *wu wei*) flows in both directions simultaneously.

Only our Original Will can penetrate into and shape all three human treasures –*jing*, *chi*, and *shen* – and thus change the destiny of the three cosmic treasures of heaven, earth, and humanity. I sometimes call Original Will by a new term, Original Smile. I feel this term captures better for humans our original feeling of self-arising causality and our ability to joyfully shape a peaceful and harmonious reality.

Remember, the Inner Smile is not directed at any one physical object, but at any aspect of the *chi* field that we are able to resonate with. The Original Smile is also objectless, as it resonates with the entire chi field of Creation.

Sounds great in theory, doesn't it? So what is stopping us from resolving our perpetual identity crisis as to "who" we truly are? Why can't we will our every desire at the snap of our fingers? A single four letter word will describe it nicely: the b-o-d-y. Also known as matter. You've heard it before: the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. It's also known as the body-mind split, or the matter-spirit split.

Let's briefly consider some thorny issues facing a serious spiritual seeker. Let me say up front that I am not trying to convert anybody to believe anything. I don't really care what your religion or your beliefs are. A Daoist accepts all religions as carrying valuable truth for its believers. There has never been a religious war in China, despite it's "invasion" by Buddhists and Muslims at different times in history. Daoist process allowed them to simply absorb from other religions anything it felt was useful and in alignment with natural truth.

My greatest wish would be for all of us to be able to easily smile to and from the very core of our original being into every cell of our body and out into the world beyond. As a Daoist, I want us to unfold our true spiritual essence and destiny. But there are a whole load of words and concepts linguistically embedded in various cultures and religions, both Eastern and Western, that are restricting our right to freely smile. I

want to alert you to that possibility. It may be causing you to struggle unnecessarily in life. It may be preventing your soul from expressing its Original Smile.

The Confusion of Spoken Language – Spiritual Being vs. Bodily Becoming

Whenever there is a lack of clarity in our language, it furthers the split between mind-body. We start living in concepts instead of living in our body. It can also create confusion about the use of individual will power. This typically occurs with transcendentalist religions and approaches to life that advocate “surrender to higher spirit”.

They tend to ignore the “will” of the body, and pretend that if we can just stay focused on formless “spirit” that everything is in reality perfect. They accuse the body of creating attachments that lead to misery. They generally have no concept of Original Substance or the sacredness of body and matter.

The truth is, the body spirits do not want to dissolve into formless spirit. They love physical life. They have a mission here to complete their destiny, and dissolving into spirit equals aborting that mission prematurely. This is exactly what makes the Tao different from many other paths. The Tao cultivates both worldly body-destiny and spiritual soul-destiny. The Tao is about completing all aspects of your self in all dimensions of existence.

This gets to the heart of the difference between the Inner Smile as a deliberate exercise of EMBODIED inner will versus simply surrendering our will to an abstract inner being or abstract God or other disembodied deity or Savior. When we surrender to an abstraction, we are really just projecting our chi into it to try to make it more solid or powerful.

The purpose of having a method like the Inner Smile is not so that you can “fix” yourself, since the self isn’t broken. But humans are still

evolving, just as Nature itself is evolving. Daoist inner alchemists are not trying to save their soul, they are simply trying to speed up its natural maturation process. The Inner Smile gives us a new communication pathway between the different dimensions of the self, between the “becoming” and the “being” aspects.

Even though these outer and inner aspects of self are a seamless continuum, the very notion that one can “surrender to” or “smile to” the intangible central being (or smile back from the Being level to the Becoming level) reveals that some kind of practical difference can exist between them.

The front and back sides of a coin are made of the same piece of metal, but different things may be shaped or imprinted on each side of the coin. In human terms, that difference in “shape” translates into the fact our “human bodily Becoming” and our “human core inner Being” are having qualitatively different experiences, even though they are one.

Thus the mortal Becoming self may be suffering great physical pain in one dimension, while the immortal formless Being aspect of Self is not feeling any time pressure to heal its body aspect. This is because our Being side mostly lives in another dimension, beyond linear time, and in continuous ecstasy. Being knows everything will resolve eventually, if only at death, because it lives in an eternal time that is beyond past, present, and future distinctions. This core being “experiences” the different densities of itself from the perspective of a neutral witness simultaneously present in all three time zones.

So the question is really just a pragmatic one: what is the best way to improve the communication and energy flow between the two faces of our coin, our personal and our cosmic Self? It is not a metaphysical or theological or philosophical-intellectual issue – none of those will cure the pain. It is rather a nuts and bolts “how-to” question. From the Daoist perspective, the question is how do we reshape our personal *chi* field?

Obscuring the solution to this age-old issue is the problem of

spoken language. What do the words “body” and “mind”, or “becoming” and “being” refer to? What’s the difference between “personal energy” and “soul”? Why do the two sides need to talk to each other, anyway? If nothing is broken in the Self and Spirit is so perfect, why are millions of people seeking spiritual guidance? Why is our civilization about to pollute or nuke itself into destruction?

The transcendentalists have no practical answer to this, only abstract metaphysical or religious beliefs. Bottom line is that they pray to their Deity to intervene and fix it, or to save them at doomsday. This kind of prayer is in effect asking Deity to manifest their personal will (“save us”) expressed in the prayer.

But this reliance on a higher or separate will does not work in Daoism. The collective of creation must take responsibility for itself, it must collectively *will* the energetic shape of its own moment to moment existence. As a scholar evaluating a 2nd century Daoist text on cosmology put it so succinctly:

The Judeo-Christian God or Plato's Forms impose a pre-assigned design on the chaos of a recalcitrant world. Natural change is instrumentalized, driven as it is by a linear teleology which takes us from creation to the realization of the given design. There is a plan, a beginning, a more or less straight line, and an end...

Within the Daoist search for an explanation of origins, there is the assumption that the world is "self-so-ing" (ziran) and auto-regenerative, with the energy of transformation residing within the process itself. There is no external efficient cause. (Yuan Dao: Return to Source, by Ames and Lau, 1998)

This means that it is pointless to pray to an abstract external cause, because none exists. All cause is internal, meaning inside the body. We can substitute “god” or “supreme deity” for “cause”. If you want to pray to God, you have to pray inside to your own self-arising power to exist, which is Original Spirit expressing its Original Will. Daoists have spent many thousands of years developing a spoken language to help talk about our spiritual journey between Origin and Creation and back.

Their language describing the precise relationship between substance (*jing*), energy (*chi*) and spirit (*shen*) is lacking in most other cultures and religions. Lack of language is why people find it difficult to communicate their spiritual experiences. They must fall back on quoting poetic or mystical literature or cultural myths as their authority.

The body-mind split is often present even in the mystical literature and myths. It is a reflection of a global religious culture of anti-body perception, i.e. the tendency to blame the body as either the source or repository of all suffering. Perhaps that is why religionists often tell you to stop asking hard questions and just have faith in their deity. They lack, in their religious culture, any way to communicate with the spiritual aspects of the body. So instead many pray to a disembodied outer force rather than to their own embodied inner force.

Smiling Chi Flow as the Silent Language of Nature

Daoism is radically different. With Tao you don't have a dogma or a deity to believe in, only a cosmology-as-collective-process to be experienced in each unique moment IN THE BODY. But they can "talk about it" with spoken language, as well as "talk to it" with non-verbal energetic language.

There is a continuous line of Tao practitioners who have developed and refined silent alchemical practices. The energetic patterns in those practices constitute a deep language in itself. This is the hidden energy language of Nature. Nature is the body of the Tao, and its movement patterns, both physical and subtle, are the embodiment of the language of the Tao.

The Daoists wisely chose the same energetic language that is used by nature – the unity of Original Breath flowing through the entire body of Nature, present in the stillness of stars. The patterns of *yin-yang* in sun and moon cycles, of five phase *chi* flow in the changing seasons and chirping of birds, the innocent smile on an infant's face – these are

all the communications of a natural energetic language.

These silent energy language patterns of outer Nature are mirrored in human body nature. They enable Daoists to keep their physical and energetic body grounded and aligned to the rhythms of outer time as well as its eternal still center. They learned to listen to and observe Nature instead of projecting head trips – concepts and culturally constructed deities – onto natural forces. They preferred to deal directly with the life force and its natural bodies as the source of all spiritual power, rather than its human-invented Gods as intermediaries.

This solid grounding allowed Daoists to explore the mystical reaches of the unknown within their own bodies. Their Supreme Unknown, the “godless godhead”, is not above one’s head in a paradise-like heaven, but rather is right under our nose, sitting quietly inside the central energetic channel (*chongmai*) of the human body-mind.

The Inner Smile is the simplest of the grounded, silent energy language tools of the Tao. Every aspect of the body’s intelligence (*shen*) and energetic function (*chi*) is systematically contacted, smiled to and embraced. By smiling to one’s inner bodily intelligence, one is not surrendering to them. Rather one is resonating with them so deeply and subtly from one’s inner heart that any resistant, struggling, unhappy aspects surrender to the spiritual center of gravity held by the heart of the inner smiling adept.

These fragmented aspects are expressions of our outer will, our human “becoming self”. These are the rough edges of our personality and our negative behavior. They are slowly brought into harmony with the seemingly intangible central “being”, the Original Spirit that is never born and never dies, in the language of the Tao. But it is still living quietly and silently within our body. Original Spirit never forces its Will upon us, and waits until we smile to it and invite its presence to become active within our body-mind.

Its breath or *chi* flow always occurs within the context of a body. It might be our physical human body, our human subtle energy body, or

the body of Nature, our environment. There is no change without body, without the transmutation of spirit and breath into substance and back again. Form is equal partner with Formless. Being and Becoming, spirit and matter are the two sides of the same coin though they wear different faces.

This is where having an understanding of how the *chi* field works in the body is very practical. This is what I personally got from Tao that I did not get practically from yoga, Buddhism, Hinduism, Kaballah, or Christianity. This is not to say the information is not there, but it is not clearly mapped out or accessible as embodied practice.

The simple progression of Tao is first inner smile through the body layers into the body's core, its center of Original Substance, Breath and Spirit. Then from that space *yin-yang* and five phase *chi* flow radiates out. The exact pathway in the body is unique to each person's astrology and to their situation in life.

Nobody can complete your spiritual destiny for you, but they can offer you methods to correct it within yourself. Why can't a powerful spiritual teacher do it for us? Because the missing ingredient necessary for soul completion involves personal will. If you rely on the teacher's will and skill, your own skill and will is weakened. So you can get inspiration from a transmission to speed you on your own path, but not completion.

Strengthening personal will depends on having a personal body. Hence the radical Daoist conclusion: cultivating the physical body and its inner space is the doorway to enlightenment and immortality. No body, no more cultivation possible. This is the opposite of most other eastern approaches that believe the body is crude and an obstacle that needs to be dropped by the soul as quickly as possible so the soul can fly to a happier heaven.

The Daoist approach is to cultivate heaven-on-earth. It allows individuals to adapt the spiritual tools of the path to their individual needs. Some need to go fast, they apply the tools such as the Inner Smile in a *yang* fashion. Some need to go slow, they smile in a *yin* way.

Those are the fire and water paths I discussed earlier. That is why I stress the Inner Smile can be used as a *yin* method, a *yang* method, or as a *wu wei* method.

It's why the Inner Smile is even more powerful when connected to practicing the Five Animals *chi kung* or the Six Healing Sounds, Microcosmic Orbit, Fusion or Kan & Li inner alchemy practice. Each tool gives you more specific ways to accelerate the completion of your will, your shaping the flow of *chi* as a rhythm in time. When your river of *chi* flows in a different direction, your destiny is altered.

Smiling Builds Trust in Original Substance-Body

It is unfortunate that much religious language and otherwise valuable spiritual teachings that support hidden dualistic assumptions that are essentially anti-body. These notions occur both east and west, in Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic and Christian literature. They are often concealed within transcendental solutions that conceal anti-body sentiments.

For example, one popular modern writer speaks about a “pain body” as a container for all our suffering. This is similar to Hindu-Buddhist notions of our bodily attachments creating acquired karmic pain and thus the need to get off the wheel of incarnation and be free of the “gross” body. The very notion of “pain body” linguistically implies a negative judgment against our body-nature itself.

Is it the body's fault that it can feel pain, as well as pleasure? Why not instead call it a “pain spirit”, and see the restoration of the original body (*yuan jing*) as the solution, not the cause? The physical body in actuality is an innocent, neutral child onto which various spirits project their positive or negative experiences in life. In my opinion, the physical body has received an unfair bad rap due to unclear spiritual thinking, unclear language, and a profound fear of being truly present in the body.

You often hear the phrase, “the mind must learn to trust the body”.

Ironically, this phrase itself creates a mind-body split. It implies the body has some kind of hidden intelligence that is separate from the more trustworthy intellect. This supports the illusion that all thinking occurs in the head-mind, even though another kind of essential but “lower” intelligence occurs in the body. It’s more accurate to think of the head as a processing center for sensory information that all five body-spirits interact with and control.

In Tao theory, the body-mind is a single complex. The different aspects of the five *shen*, the biological intelligences of the heart, liver, spleen, etc. do all our sensing, thinking, and feeling. There is no separate physical body that needs to be trusted; all five body spirits exist along the same pulsing continuum of substance-energy-intelligence (*jing-chi-shen*). These five human body spirits are also known as the “five wills”, and exist in many octaves of our greater consciousness, such as the five cardinal directions of space, the five planets, the five stellar quadrants, etc.

There is ultimately only one trust issue for humans, and that is whether the five body spirits or five wills (= ego mind) can collectively trust the Original Spirit and its Original Will, which manifests as the universal *chi* field. Trust is established by the inner smiling process. It can only arise if the smiling force comes from the whole body-mind consciousness. Any mind-body split in our spoken language, belief, or behavior, weakens our original trust in the life force.

The Inner Smile helps develop a kind of faith that is energetically embodied and personally experienced internally, not projected into an abstract external deity. Now it becomes clearer why we smile to the five vital organ intelligences, to all the physical parts of the body, and harmonize their smiling response. We are grounding our faith in spirit given bodily presence.

If one treats the body as something less than or separate from mind, there is a dualistic mind-body split being created. This type of intellectual ego-mind can never escape from the snare of its own dualistic language. The mind-as-intellect gets exhausted, like a dog chasing its own tail. The only practical way to short circuit this spiral of

mind-chasing-the-body with words and concepts is to stop all conceptual talking. One solution is to start smiling silently, at a deeper level than the words and concepts can reach. This allows us to contact a more primal level of our will.

Smiling is a kind of silent talking. There is no need to surrender individual will in the Tao inner smiling process – only to harmonize and focus the five outer wills of the vital organ spirits so they come into alignment with our self-arising Original Will. In this sense, all five of the individual ego-wills are strengthened by the Inner Smile, but only when they come into harmony.

Our central will becomes more powerful the more one smiles and embraces the separate parts of our body-mind into an internal collective unity within the *dantian*. In the Daoist view, the universal collective of beings is responsible for self-creating their reality in each moment. If each being smilingly “wills” its part of the cosmic symphony, there is harmony and balance. We can experience this “microcosmically” within our body, and “macrocosmically” when we smile beyond into the body of Nature.

The in-the-body, self-arising Tao cosmology differs radically from many Christian and Hindu-Buddhist transcendental notions that the ego must surrender its personal will or bodily desire (= evil) so that one can become the will of God or Brahma or Buddha (= good). This has unfortunately led to the notion that one must “kill” the ego.

But ego is just a form of untrained consciousness. From this perspective consciousness cannot truly be killed, only suppressed, denied or transformed into a different shape. Consciousness, however evil or ignorant or prideful, cannot be killed because it is part of the universal field of consciousness. How can a part of the field kill the whole field? It can possibly disturb it, but it is not powerful enough to kill it.

I believe the idea of “killing the ego” is just another form of anti-body thinking, a religious attempt to win the mind-body battle, a sneak attack so abstract spirit can dominate matter once and for all. Should

parents kill their children because they mis-behave? It's same question. Should Original Will kill its human five baby ego-wills because they are confused or disturbed by their life in the physical plane? Or should it practice smiling to them, loving them back into a wiser course of collective harmony?

If an abstract, disembodied God exists, and He didn't want humans to have individual will or bodily desire, why did that God give humans individual will and bodies? Just so humans could choose to surrender their will, and give up their body? This theological belief has an ultimately immature premise that humans should remain helpless children by surrendering their will over their own body, and that instead an omniscient Father God should decide everything for them and for their body.

Of course, this is exactly what modern science is rightfully trying to combat as being disempowering to humanity. Science is saying, humans should take control of their destiny, not some invisible god or gods. But science often goes too far in the opposite direction by denying that any collective inner will can be attributed to Nature or that any divine intelligence exists. It only accepts as real what can be measured by math or by machines.

The result: a huge split between deity-worshipping religion and matter-manipulating science. I believe that the Daoist cosmology-as-process offers a true middle way to cultivate both spirit, body, and free will. It does not deny the body or the spirit, but integrates them into a functional continuum. Daoist energy science could become the foundation for an emerging global sacred science, just as its stepchild, Chinese medicine, is one of the most powerful forces in alternative medicine.

Modern techno-science is cold. It lacks heart. Its most brilliant thinkers are generally top-heavy intellects that are often disconnected from the heart and body. Its techno-visionaries focus more on developing new smart machines than cultivating our existing bio-intelligence. We need a balance of ancient and new technologies. Tao inner alchemy can accept the results of natural science even as it

energetically expands beyond it. It is systematic, but has a smiling heart.

The Great Secret of Internal Alchemy

The Inner Smile is central to embracing the hidden third force in Nature, our Original Breath. Original Breath mediates between Original Spirit and Original Substance, which we experience as human spirit and human body. Original Breath also mediates between all our dualities, such as good and evil. It is able to mediate them as this subtle, self-arising neutral breath finds itself converted into all polarities by humans exercising their free will.

Of course every culture has its esoteric alchemical teachings that go beyond the good-evil duality, but they are mostly suppressed or hidden away. Or they survive as texts, but the practices and lineages are lost, so the texts remain inaccessible to the modern reader. Why did the lineages of Western inner alchemy largely die out? Perhaps due to excess secrecy by alchemists. It is my mission to help make the still living lineages of Tao inner alchemy become available as part of an accessible modern sacred science.

The great secret of all alchemists is that the third force hidden with the Tai Chi of yin and yang, the Original Breath (yuan chi), can restore our Original energetic and spiritual body (yuan jing) within the physical dimension. When this is crystallized it is known by many names: the Elixir, Golden Light body, immortal body, Immortal Child, the Pearl. Without the personal will to create this body of inner light and inner sound, the Original Breath gradually disperses.

We could go deeper into the questions raised by all this, but that is what the higher level inner alchemy courses (both live retreats or Home Study audio-video) are for. These courses take you through One Cloud's seven stages of spiritual and bodily evolution step by step. Each step has a chi kung movement practice as well as a meditation practice that helps you birth your "immortal child" and raise it to sagehood. There is nothing to join, and no religious or philosophical-intellectual dogma to believe in.

The sole proof on this alchemical path of the Tao is whether one feels increasing levels of higher frequency *chi* flow in the body-mind. This is verifiable by one's own bodily experience of physical vitality, and inner peace and joy. If you feel more harmony and balance in life, your practice is successful.

If we cannot smile inwardly and accept the underlying unity of our body and its life experiences in the immediate physical body, then replacing it with blind belief in an abstract higher Self that will arrive someday will not create that unity either. Deferring self-realization by projecting it into the future is an unconscious sabotage that separates us from our truth in the embodied present moment.

The Healing Tao practices of Six healing Sounds, Five Animals Play, Microcosmic Orbit, Fusion of the Five Elements and Kan and Li (Water and Fire) practices are all designed to dissolve blockages that separate body-mind and past-future. They all have another thing in common: they are focused on crystallizing our inner essence in the present moment. This is its key difference with the many excellent but piecemeal systems of *chi kung* and *tai chi*. The Healing Tao method combines *chi kung* with *neidan*, inner alchemy meditation.

Where do these practices lead? The human spirit evolves to become a grounded, self-realized, authentic human (zhenren). This spontaneously cultivates ethical behavior and harmony with the social whole. Practically speaking, the practices build an Energy Body that is gradually refined into a spiritual Body of Inner Light and Inner Sound. This level of practice is what makes the Inner Smile ultimately a spiritual *wu wei* method rather than a *yin* water or *yang* fire method for balancing our body and personality.

The Inner Smile is great for dissolving chi blockages. It is great for restoring everyday health and chi flow in an infinite number of simple but profound applications that come from unconditional self-acceptance. But as its greatest virtue, the Inner Smile can also be a path to Enlightenment.

Inner Smile can become a Way to cultivate our humanity, the deeply

embodied will of our collective human Original Spirit. Humanity is one of the Three Treasures of the Tao, along with Heaven and Earth. Humanity surely is in great need at this time of nourishing its Original Smile.

As a final smiling thought, I defer to an ancient Chinese master. Confucius, who also considered himself a student of the Tao. He had an interesting insight on smiling:

*We come into this world crying, while those around us smile.
We leave this world smiling, while those around us cry.*
- Confucius, 460 b.c.



90 year old Swiss lady whose smile has become part of her face. Even though her mouth turns down, a smile still shines through.

If you choose to pursue the Inner Smile as part of your path, I am confident that you will be able to smile beyond both life and death into the heart of the mysterious Tao.

That concludes this book. I hope that as I leave you to embark upon your own path, you will explore the possibility that we are all smiling into the same inner space inside our body. For humans, that is the inner heart space of our collective humanity that joins us ultimately as one being.

Inner Smiles,
Michael Winn

p.s. Please feel free to send your experiences with the Inner Smile to me at winn@HealingDao.com. I may include your experience in a future edition of this book. I am very interested in your own discoveries made playing with the Inner Smile. So please share! I cannot promise to reply to all emails due to volume received, but they will be read!

p.p.s. Most people find it easier to practice the Inner Smile with a guided audio. You simply close your eyes and listen. Your smile flows without trying to read the text. Get this guided audio - with Michael Winn's soothing voice transmission - in these packages:

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Testimonials for Michael Winn's Chi Kung Fundamentals Products

I would like to tell the whole world to get this video

"I'm writing to call your attention to my whole-hearted rave about Chi Kung Fundamentals #1 home study course, which I just now posted on our Forum "Tao Speaks!" You might enjoy seeing it, and thanking Michael Winn on my behalf. As my fellow forum members know, I was expected to die at any moment from the severity of my asthma.

I am 68, and also have emphysema, and this video, more than any other source has improved my health, mental and physical, remarkably. I am able to do my own shopping, for the first time in ages, can walk half a mile without creating an emergency for myself, can get around the house and yard without the ski pole I'd relied on. I wish I was a faster learner, but this has been so amazing. Thank you so much!" In Tao -- Sister (Kate Hawthorne)

Sister Kate's review of Michael Winn's Five Animals Do Six Healing Sounds, from Tao Speaks! Forum:

"Each animal play has a particular emotional problem it is expected to dispel. In his system, Tiger (white, lungs, cloud) dispels grief; Bear (blue, kidneys, ocean) dispels fear; Deer (green, liver, vegetation) dispels anger; Crane (red, heart, fire) dispels self-judgment; and Monkey (yellow, spleen, sun) dispels worry. Interesting to me, because from the emotional perspective, this lists problems I have had, in order of severity, AND it lists the exercises, for me, in order of difficulty.

I had no problem with Tiger and Bear. Deer is very awkward for me. Crane! you have to stand briefly on one leg and then the other for this, and I have always had a problem with balance, which has worsened radically in recent months.

Well, first I was able MIRACULOUSLY to improve my balance very much, THEN I was able to release self-judgment, and THEN I was able to do the Crane reasonably well, at least for a brief period. As to Monkey, tonight was the first time I was able to do it at all, and suddenly it made sense and was easy and fun. Leaving me still with Deer, in the middle, residual anger to shed.

I am so happy about all of this, and I would like to tell the whole world to get this video and do these exercises. I have NEVER had any medicine so therapeutic in my life. I have been bursting with this, and that's why I just had to post it. Happy, happy, hopeful of attaining true Qi in one lifetime."

Sister (Kate Hawthorne) —

I just forgot about my asthma, and it started to disappear like magic!

I had asthma problems. I tried doctors, yoga, etc. nothing helped. I took Chi Kung Fundamentals from Michael Winn. The guy got me laughing and moving and breathing like I never had before. He was great. I just forgot about my asthma, and it started to disappear like magic! Later, I taught my mother the Six Healing Sounds. She is pushing 75. This boosted her like a rocket, and a lot of her pains went away. Amazing stuff! Powerful!!!!

J. Carruthers — N.J.

Succinct, comprehensive, consistent explanation of Daoist (Taoist) thinking

I have been studying tai chi for 13 years, first yang style, then chen, then began doing chi kung almost exclusively after studying with Grandmaster Feng in Illinois in August 2000. During these years of practice, I have gathered bits and pieces of information about energy development, daoist thinking, and modes of practice (sitting, standing, forms, etc.).

What has been missing for me is the big picture, a way to put it all together, that is presented to me in a way that I, an English-speaking westerner, can understand. In your workshops, which I've just taken in fall 2002, you have provided me with this missing piece. Here is what keeps me coming back:

1. Succinct, comprehensive, consistent explanation of Daoist (Taoist) thinking. I have tried to get this from my Chinese teachers, and could just never before (primarily due to language barriers & cultural differences) see how it all hung together (yin-yang theory, five phases etc).
2. Explanation of the "why" and the "how" of the physical practices. For years I have heard, "focus on your dan tien".... but I never understood why or how. I am now able to feel movement in and through my dan tien that I have never felt before. Your portal concept was revolutionary for me!
3. Simple movement practices that give quick access to practices such as the microcosmic orbit. I have been practicing the orbit for a few years now, but after learning your form in Chi Kung Fundamentals, I can feel the orbit much more clearly, have a better understanding of what was blocking it before, and how to unblock, also a better understanding of how to teach it to others.

There is much more that I could say, but this is a good start.

I'm really glad to have someone of your teaching ability who is willing to share!!

Sandra F. Seeber, MA, MAEd, LPC — President, Synergy Clinical & Consulting Services, Inc., Winston-Salem, NC

And some kudos from Michael's Kan & Li Retreats

His course was fantastic! Michael Winn is an extraordinary teacher – a modern day Taoist master. Having undergone the Tibetan three-year retreat, I was able to appreciate these profound energy and mind techniques as truly unique and transformative. ANYONE on any spiritual path can benefit immensely from Michael's gentle, yet powerful wisdom teachings. *Dr. Asa Hertshoff*, —author of "Homeopathic Remedies" and "Herbal Remedies".

Michael Winn is a creative force, an embodiment of the spontaneous soul of the Tao. Expect the unexpected with him. He teaches alchemy formulas, yet is deeply embedded in the Cauldron of the "No Formula" tradition. He gives emphasis to BE HERE NOW. A masterful sage who fills the Cauldron with the rich ingredients of boundless love, soul, and humility.

I have covered the metaphysical globe over many decades. I developed a powerful "spiritual crap detector" in the process. His workshop passed the test. It added a tremendous dimensional enrichment to the unfolding

of my global quest. *Aida V. Nelson*

Michael Winn is a Taoist Sage. His understanding and competence are really amazing. He really lives what he teaches. *Jose*, —from Spain

Chi Kung Fundamentals #1 & 2

Details of Content

Chi Kung Fundamentals #1:

- Video: *Five Animals Do the Six Healing Sounds*
- 1.5 hr shows warm-ups, 5 Animals, & 6 Healing Sounds.
- [View Video clip](#)
- Best to get both audio and video, as audio gives theory and detailed explanations of movements, plus questions & answers.

Day 1 Audio MC1A (4.5 hrs, 3 tapes) covers:

- **Audio includes 4 pages of handouts:**
 - Five Animals movements (described)
 - Six Healing Sounds (illustrated, with descriptions)
 - How to Deepen the Six Healing Sounds: Advanced Practice
 - Chart of Chinese 5 Element theory & list of associated energy.
- **Theory: What is chi? How can we know it is real?**
 - The Life Force as personal teacher present to us in every moment.
 - Chi Kung as language of nature, allows us to speak with our teacher.

A. Chi Warm ups

Shaking the Tree, gentle loosening of joints, muscles & internal organs.

Advanced level: "Two Year Old Chi Kung": use sound, release trapped chi.

Cool down: Rocking and Earth Chi breathing from Soles of feet.

Ground the chi deep into earth, into body, above head.

Toss out Evil Chi method. Comb out Sick Chi with Golden Finger Chi.

1. Taking stock of your energetic status.

If your body is an experiment, How to take a baseline reading.

2. Ocean breathing as key method to quickly open lower belly cauldron.

B. Theory: infinite sea of chi in the body vs. sea of chi outside the body.

Front door (dan tien) vs. Back Door (ming men).

Lying position practice. Feel the Chi between the Hands while lying.

Standing position. Ending, gathering.

Shaking the belly and laughing to loosen tense chi layers in the belly.

C. Five Animals Chi Kung as Dynamic Releasing of Trapped Chi

1. Five animals as shamanic precursor to Chinese 5 Elements theory. Link between Belly Sea of Chi, vital organs, and our personality. Five Animal Organ Spirits (Shen) as "dark side" of mind, holding secrets to our natural good health.

2. Opening the heart preparation for the Animals.

3. The Tiger hisses as it prowls. White Metal chi, lungs.

4. The Tiger scares off the enemy. Grasp Lung chi to kidneys.

5. Bear tosses aside fear, stretches its kidneys, Black/blue Water Chi.

6. Deer Leaps thru Forest. Green Wood/Liver chi. Disperses anger.

7. The Crane flies, opening and closing its Heart. Red Fire Chi is cleared.

8. Alchemical Crane, mixing kidney water with heart fire.

9. Monkey Guards His banana. Yellow Earth chi/spleen. Release worry.

10. Butterfly Transforms itself: descends heat, clears the head and chest.

D. Six Healing Sounds as sitting chi kung method of releasing trapped chi.

same sounds as with animals but in relaxed sitting position.

method of using sound to release trapped emotion.

method of expanding vital organ chi and pulsing it.

method of skin breathing (vs. using lungs)

E. Inner Smile: Shen (spirit) smiles thru energy layers of physical body.

different ways to practice. 3 dantian method, spine, organ, bones.

Inner Smile Wave method to heal others at a distance,

link with sun, moon, stars, spirit guides.

Note: [Workshop material is constantly being refined.](#)

[In some audio versions part of Inner Smile starts Day 2](#)

Chi Kung Fundamentals 2:

- Video: *Open Chi Flow in the Orbit*

- 1.5 hr; practice section on beautiful beach in Mexico; detailed training in ocean breathing and 5 movements at mountain lake.
- [View Video clip](#)
- Best to get both audio and video, as audio gives theory and guided internal meditation practice, detailed energetics of movements, plus questions & answers.

Day 2 Audio MC1B (4.5 hrs, 3 tapes) cover:

• Audio includes 4 pages of handouts:

1. diagram of major points on Orbit
2. list of 10 major methods to open orbit
3. diagram of 3 Treasures of Tao in human, heaven, and in earth
4. list of Cosmic Orbit movements from chi kung form

A. Microcosmic Orbit Meditation, Jing-Chi-Shen-Wu Theory

Learn the ancient Tao secrets of circulating the internal golden light (chi, or qi) up the spine and down the body's front channel. This famous "Embryonic Breathing" or "Micro-Cosmic orbit" meditation stops energy leaks, balances all your meridians and energy centers into a single "wheel of chi" or unified chakra.

This is the safest method to open your kundalini's warm current and activate the healing power of your "inner elixir". It balances the seemingly polarized forces of Heaven and Earth, male and female, yang and yin, and thereby creates a vessel for the hidden third force of the Tao, the Original Chi (yuan chi).

This method of circulating chi in the Micro-Cosmic orbit is so famous that many different techniques have been developed over the millennia to make it easier for the adept to develop this harmonious yin-yang chi flow. I give the ten major methods I have found, integrated into a single guided meditation. From this you can choose the technique(s) most suited to you and develop them further. I explain the deep relationship between the Orbit and the Taoist alchemy theory of jing-chi-shen-wu (essence - energy - intelligence - openness).

I also give an 11th method, still a quite secret method from Wu Dan Mountain, that is particularly powerful at mixing the blood and chi within the human body. (This is not on the video, only on the audio). Blood and chi are the fundamental essences of Earth and Heaven, so when they are harmonized, your Original Self (Yuan Shen) can emerge and take substance. This is also the beginning of the True Inner Smile meditation, where your Inner Presence radiates effortlessly (wu wei), spontaneously, and continuously!

B. Unique Chi Kung to Open Chi Flow in the Orbit

This audio course has verbal instructions that complement and deepen the video instructions for the movement portion of this training. Enjoy five simple chi kung movements that will open chi flow in your orbit and give you many other healing benefits of China's "miracle exercise". This custom chi kung form I developed over 25 years of practice with many masters.

I developed this chi kung form after observing that westerners have such powerful "monkey minds" that they use too much force/effort in meditating upon the pathways of the orbit. This would create

frustration and sense of failure, for the chi would stop flowing in the orbit after they ceased their mental effort. Using chi kung movements to open the orbit **BYPASSES** the ego mind and its struggles and gets the chi flowing at a deeper level than western type visualization by the mental body can achieve.

I love this chi kung form. It will relax your body, keep the spine flexible, and develop healing hands. It marries the chi of Heaven and Earth. It opens the difficult front (chest) channel, where a lot of emotional chi gets stuck. It's easy to learn < you can feel the chi flow in a few minutes!

This day long workshop lays the foundation for learning Taoist sexual practices. It is a **PRE-REQUISITE** for without opening the orbit, your sexual jing chi has no easy path to flow in. So this is the **FAST** method for guiding your wild sexual impulses into useful spiritual pathways of creativity. The Micro-Cosmic Orbit is the foundation for the Fusion of the Five Element practices as well as all the other six higher formulas of Taoist inner alchemy, the science of cultivating ordinary chi into immortal spirit.

Appendix Two

Michael Winn's Tao Home Study Courses

Recommended sequence of study

Weekend Workshops – in the privacy of your home

Available separately or in audio-video packages (discounted).
Packages are best, as audio & videos cover different things.
Satisfaction Guaranteed (30 day return).

1. [Chi Kung Fundamentals #1](#) – Tao Basics

- a. [Day 1 Audio](#) 4.5 hr
Inner Smile, 5 Animals, 6 Healing Sounds
- b. [Day 1 Video](#): 5 Animals + 6 Healing Sounds 1.5 hr

2. [Chi Kung Fundamentals #2](#) – Tao Basics

- a. [Day 2 Audio](#) 4.5 hr: Theory & guided Microcosmic Orbit meditation, deeper *chi kung* instruction.
- b. [Day 2 Video](#): Open Chi Flow in the Orbit Chi Kung 1.5 hr

3. [Internal Chi Breathing](#) (Chi Kung Fundamentals #3)

- a. [Day 1 Audio](#) 4.5 hr. Inner theory, guided breathing, 5 core postures
- b. [Day 1 Video](#): (same as for Day 2)

4. [Internal Chi Bone Breathing & Rooting](#) (CKF #4)

- a. [Day 2 Audio](#) 4.5 hr Advanced dantian breathing in postures, bone breathing, spiraling, and compression
- b. [Day 2 Video](#): Internal Chi Bone Breathing & Rooting, 27 tendon & joint movements; 5 core postures 1.5 hr
(You need audio #3 & #4 for internal instructions)

5. [Fusion of the 5 Elements #1](#) Emotional Alchemy

2 Days Audio 9 hr Daoist Depth Psychology

6. [Fusion of the 5 Elements #2 & 3](#)

- a. [2 Days Audio](#) 9 hr Open Psychic Powers
Body as Living I Ching
- b. [Video](#): 8 Extraordinary Vessels Qigong 1 hr
+ PanGu Mystical Qigong + Nurture 5 Shen Qigong

7. [Taoist Secrets of Cultivating Sexual Energy](#)

- a. [2 Days Audio](#) 9 hr Healing Love Internal instructions.

- b. [Video](#): Sexual Vitality Chi Kung 2 hr
25 Sexual Power movements, open inner fire & water.

8. [Taoist Dream Practice](#)

2 Days Audio 9 hr Theory & guided meditations

9. [Primordial Chi Kung](#) – STAND ALONE PRACTICE

Video, 1.5 hr aka “*Tai Chi* for Enlightenment”

10. [Deep Healing Chi Kung](#) - STAND ALONE PRACTICE

Video, 1 hr lengthy form of medical chi kung
GOOD FOR SERIOUS ILLNESS or CRISIS

Week Long Retreats in Water & Fire Internal Alchemy

Audio tapes average 18 hrs per retreat, 12 tapes x 90 min.

11. [Inner Sexual Alchemy](#)

- a. [Audio](#): Lesser Enlightenment of Kan & Li (Water & Fire)
- b. [Video](#): Gods Play in Cauldron of Original Chi 1.5 hr

12. [Sun-Moon Alchemy](#)

- a. [Audio](#): Greater Enlightenment of Kan & Li
- b. [Video](#): Primordial Chi Kung 2 hr

13. [Planetary & Soul Alchemy](#)

- a. [Audio](#): Greatest Enlightenment of Kan & Li
- b. [Video](#): Primordial Chi Kung 2 hr

14. [Star Alchemy](#)

- a. [Audio](#): Sealing of the 5 Shen (& the 5 Senses)
- b. [Video](#): Primordial Chi Kung 2 hr

15. [Heaven & Earth Alchemy](#)

Audio tapes currently sold only to students who are reviewing live course.
Very subtle, needs live transmission.

Appendix Three

A Poem called "Smile" By Barbara Hauck, age 13

SMILE

She smiled at a sorrowful stranger.
The smile seemed to make him feel better.
He remembered past kindness' of a friend
And wrote him a thank you letter.

The friend was so pleased with the thank you
That he left a large tip after lunch.
The waitress, surprised by the size of the tip,
Bet the whole thing on a hunch.

The next day she picked up her winnings,
And gave part to a man on the street.
The man on the street was grateful;
For two days he'd had nothing to eat.

After he finished his dinner,
He left for his small dingy room.
He didn't know at that moment
that he might be facing his doom.

On the way he picked up a shivering puppy
And took him home to get warm.
The puppy was very grateful
To be in out of the storm.

That night the house caught on fire.
The puppy barked the alarm.
He barked till he woke the whole household
And saved everybody from harm.

One of the boys that he rescued
Grew up to be President.
All this because of a simple smile
That hadn't cost a cent.

- from *Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul*
By Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen and Kimberly Kirberger