

Notes from a meeting with Prof. Zhang

Questions:

Do you release the tongue from the 'magpie bridge', and if so, why?

Generally, put the tongue on the palate throughout. Why? You are connecting the Ren and Du channels, thereby connecting the 12 meridians - the microcosmic orbit.

The Ren channel controls the Yin channels, and the Du channel controls the Yang channels, therefore when Yin and Yang are connected, all channels are connected.

Generally you touch the palate, but sometimes you release it. The energy in the channels is moving all the time, but sometimes you can lower the tip of the tongue.

Why? Ren/Du channels are like a river - the tongue is like a potential dam; when you disconnect the connection, it stores, and when you connect it, it 'flushes' the system out.

Breathing.

Daoyin breathing has similarities and differences to other forms of qigong. In other qigong at certain times you use the abdomen, at other times you use the chest, but in Daoyin, you only use the abdomen. This is a long, deep, fine, and even breath.

In the Wushu world you use the abdomen, but in Daoyin you use all the way down to your Heels (a Daoist technique).

Whether you're doing abdominal or to the feet, it is important that it is deep, long, even and fine. Although you are only breathing with the abdomen, it is the *mind* that goes down to the heels. When you breathe, your breath goes down to your heels -> calm & quiet -> longevity = Tu Na principle. "When you breathe to your belly button, your life will be like the stars", i.e. forever.

Why 'Fine, even long & deep'?

The diaphragm is the biggest breathing 'machine' in the body. It can move up and down, above it is your heart and lungs, and the other organs are below it. Below it therefore the organs are massaged as you breathe, and therefore more digestive secretions are produced which help the absorption of food. The massage of the heart helps the blood to circulate more freely. In addition, your large and small intestines will work better and therefore discharge better (better functioning eliminatory system).

The nervous system is also affected.

Breathing also helps your spleen/stomach, improves the function of the kidney and gall bladder, and also the liver.

When your diaphragm presses down, your lungs, gall bladder, stomach, spleen, kidney and bladder are 'squeezed', and you increase the capacity of the lungs and heart. By doing so, the lungs can take in more air and so more oxygen; the Daoists believe that you should 'bring in the new and get rid of the old'. If you use shallow breathing, you cannot bring in so much air and the diaphragm doesn't work so well.

For example:

| Long, deep, even breathing (A) | Shallow chest breathing (B) |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| About 8+ breaths per minute | About 32+ breaths per minute |
| 1200ml intake oxygen | 300ml intake oxygen |
| = 9600ml oxygen | = 9600ml oxygen |

i.e. the same total for both.

(B)'s method only uses the trachea - the air never gets beyond the pipe system, it doesn't get to interact with the body. The pipe system accounts for 150ml, so the shallow breath only takes 300ml-150ml = 150ml into the body.

(A)'s method is 1200ml-150ml = 1050ml.

$1050 \times 8 = 8400\text{ml}$

$150 \times 32 = 4800\text{ml}$

A difference of 3600ml every minute.

In a day there are 1440 minutes ie 5,184,000 ml for A and 216,000 ml for B a massive difference of 4,968,000 ml.