

17. Circling the Qi around the Dan Tian

Step back to original position and lower to horse riding stance.
With palms facing down, bring both hands down in front of your lower dan tian.

- A. Move both hands counter-clockwise as if outlining a circle and
- B. Move your lower dan tian in a smaller circle in conjunction with your hands



Repeat A-B 6 times

- C. Move both hands clockwise as if outlining a circle and
- D. Move your lower dan tian in a smaller circle in conjunction with your hands

Repeat C-D 6 times

Things to Notice:

- Remain in the horse riding stance throughout this movement.
- Relax the kua (pelvis).
- When circling hands, breathe out when pushing your hands away from the lower dan tian and breathe in when bringing hands toward the lower dan tian.
- Remember to leave some space in the armpits.

The key to doing this movement is not just moving the arms. The key is your lower dan tian internally generating the movements; your arms just follow. Indeed, all tai chi movements are generated from the lower dan tian. Since your limbs are connected to the lower dan tian, as the lower dan tian internally does the work, your limbs just follow.

At the beginning if you want to feel this connection, you may have to physically circle your lower dan tian a little more. Once you really feel the connection from your lower dan tian to your hands, the movement from your lower dan tian can be subtler. Eventually, it should be so subtle that there is almost no outward movement. All the work is done from inside.

This movement is extracted from a very good qigong system called Tai Chi Ruler or Tai Chi Stick. If you have some spare time, you can do this movement as many times as you like because it has many benefits. First, it trains you to build up the connection between your lower dan tian, your arms and the body. Secondly, it is beneficial in building up the energy from lower dan tian. Furthermore, you may even be able to achieve Samadhi from doing this movement!

There was a very famous Zen master, the 6th generation Zen master called Hui Neng. Though he could not read or write, he is the most influential Zen master in Chinese history. Since he was illiterate, he was assigned to work at the kitchen of the temple. One day he was assigned to grind the rice. In order to grind the rice, he had to stand in front of the grinding tool and keep turning it for hours. The motion of grinding rice was similar to this movement. Just from doing this very simple and repetitive movement, he became enlightened. So, sometimes just a simple movement can bring about a miracle!