

Journal Exercises for Module 7

Circular Breathing – Cleansing the Centres

The meditation at the end of Module Seven described one way we might cleanse blockages from the spiritual centres. Over the last two thousand years, as the Western Mystery Tradition was forced into hiding, teachers in the East were expanding their understanding of the energy bodies and developing techniques to strengthen the inner energies.

Our exercise this week comes from the Chinese tradition of Qigong (also spelled 'Chi Kung'). Qi (pronounced 'Chi') is the Chinese name for the etheric energy which circulates throughout the etheric body. Blockages in this circulation may be caused by many factors. Specific injuries in the body – especially those affecting muscles and nervous system are one such factor; but even long periods of sitting – the side effect of many modern occupations – may create an obstacle within the etheric levels. Blockages in the spiritual centres may also result from emotional traumas and other life experiences. One of the simplest ways to work with the inner energies is through breathing. With every breath we take, changes occur within the subtle bodies. With each inhalation, the astral expands, and the etheric body contracts; with each out breath, the etheric expands and the astral contracts. If we add the power of focus and concentration to our breathing, then we become able to actually direct the flow of energy within the astral and etheric bodies.

Part One

Sit quietly in your chair. Focus your mind on the Sacral centre (the Chinese name for this is Tan Tien). Quietly and slowly breathe out through your nose. As you exhale, draw your belly in so you feel you are squeezing the air out of your torso from the bottom up. Breathe out smoothly and soundlessly until you feel you have emptied your lungs. When you are ready to breathe in, inhale through your nose and allow your belly to expand outward as if the incoming air is actually filling your abdomen. Allow this to happen naturally: don't force your belly out, just let the air filter in smoothly and steadily without tension.

Once you become proficient with this, only concentrate on the *out* breath. This will help you relax, and your inward breath will have a natural, full flow.

Part Two

When you have mastered this breathing it is time to add the visualisation.

As you breathe in imagine you are drawing energy from the *bottom* centre, the Base centre. This energy travels up the spine to the very top of the head. At this point smoothly move into the out breath. Make sure your tongue is pressed against the palate, for this acts as a conduit for the energy as it descends through a channel in the centre of the front of the body into the Sacral centre. Imagine that all the energy is stored in this point, about one third of the way into the body. From here it flows out into the rest of the body finishing in the tips of the fingers.

This technique is called 'circular breathing'. It may take some time to master, but you should find that a few minutes of circular breathing each day will increase vitality.

