

# TAOIST BREATHING EXERCISE

*(with modifications by Margaret Emerson)*

Focused breathing and imagery builds qi in the primary abdominal dan tian, then circulates it to the heart and finally to the third eye. All three dan tians are energized and connected.

1. Take nine deep breaths, expanding and contracting the abdominal dan tian and focusing on qi coming and going from the point of origin of the breath in the center of the sphere. The exhalation is twice as long as the inhalation. The quietest place in the breathing cycle is at the end of the exhalation. Linger here as long as is comfortable. You may see the qi as glowing white light. The energy builds.
2. Open the bai hui in the crown of the head. Breathe in new qi from the universe, take it down the spine, around the genitals, through the abdominal dan tian, and into the heart. Cycle between the heart dan tian and abdominal dan tian in this way (down the back, up the front) nine times, each time augmenting the flow with energy pouring in through the crown of the head. Focus on connecting the two energy centers—heart and abdomen. You may see the heart filling up and expanding with glowing white light.
3. Breathe in new energy from the universe through the bai hui and cycle down the back, through the abdominal dan tian, through the heart dan tian, and into the third eye. Focus on cycling through and connecting the abdominal dan tian and the heart with the third eye, each time pulling in fresh qi through the bai hui. Do this nine times. You may see the third eye filling and expanding with glowing white light.
4. Sink into the lower dan tian. "Look at" the central point, breathe normally, and be still there.

