

Circle Breathing or Circulating the Microcosmic Orbit

by Rebecca McLean and Dr. Roger Jahnke

Whenever you feel stressed, remember that you have a choice: to practice stress or to practice peace and well-being.

Practice doing 5 or 10 circle breaths. Make it your goal to try this centering exercise a few times a day if you can. This will help your body and mind to create a strong, positive habit.

Soon your body and mind will shift into circle breathing automatically when you are scattered, anxious, or “off center.”

In Chinese Qigong life force cultivation practices, this is a method of balancing the heaven and earth energies (Yin and Yang) in the “small universe” of your body. This creates balanced energy within your body/mind.

1. Inhale and stretch your arms over your head, giving a sigh of relief and lowering your arms as you exhale. Relax your arms as your exhale. Relax and keep your arms lowered for the rest of the exercise.
2. Now imagine that you are inhaling a stream of peaceful, renewing energy into a spot a few inches below your navel.
3. Inhale the warm stream into the base of your spine, and then imagine it traveling up your back to the top of your head.
4. Exhale, and mentally follow your breath out: back down the front of your body to the point below the navel where you will begin the next in breath. Your breath has now made a full circle up the back of your body, down the front, and back to the starting place below your navel.
5. Continue this breathing pattern for 5 to 10 breaths. You can also use circle breathing for a longer period as a relaxing form of meditation.

