

DAN TIAN BREATHING: CONNECTING TO THE CENTER

What does it mean to be centered?

In Qi Gong terms, it signifies having energy in the center of the body (aka the Dan Tian).

Think of the Dan Tian as a reservoir and a place of inner strength. The Dan Tian, located in the lower abdomen between the navel and the pubic bone, corresponds to the physical functions of digestion, elimination, and reproduction.

Psychologically it functions by giving us a sense of stability and balance. It is also a source of power for physical energy, sexual vitality & inner power. When a person is connected to their center, not only do they have more physical energy and vitality, but they are also more stable emotionally. Imagine if stress and life's continual ups and downs, didn't affect or throw you off. Imagine not feeling pushed and pulled off balance by the people in your life, from work relationships to family relationships. When you are centered, these challenges don't negatively affect you. By having energy in the center, we become much more resourceful.



Exercise: Deep Abdominal Breathing(Dan Tien Breathing)

- Sit in a chair with the spine straight and bring both hands over the lower abdomen.
- Breathe in and out through the nose. Breathing through the nose helps to cultivate more “qi” out of the air.
- Exhale all the way out to clear the lungs. During “normal” breathing, we usually only exhale 40 percent of the air out, which leave little room to take in a deep breath. So, at the bottom of your exhale, see if you can exhale a little more.
- Then, inhale down into the lower abdomen so that the belly expands. This allows the diaphragm to relax and air to move into the deeper areas of the lungs.
- Again, exhale and squeeze the air out from the lower abdomen. Then, take in a full deep breath down into the lower abdomen.
- During this breathing exercise, keep the chest relaxed. Visualize a golden ball of energy, like a small sun, growing in your lower Dan Tian. With each breath see this light growing brighter and brighter.
- Practice for at least 3 to 5 minutes (10 minutes is ideal). Throughout the day, take one or two Dan Tian breaths to recharge your internal energy.