



## THE FIVE ELEMENTS CHI KUNG

### BEGINNING

Stand facing north with feet parallel shoulder width apart, weight evenly distributed between balls/toes and heels of feet and between left and right feet. Soften the feet and melt them into the ground. Relax the legs as much as possible; allow the hips to open and the buttocks to relax. The lower back does not over-arch and the tail bone sinks a little. The shoulders fall sideways neither arching back nor hunching forwards. The arms hang lightly at the sides. The neck and back relax, lengthen and widen. The crown of the head is suspended from above by a thread. The face and scalp relax, the tongue rests behind the front teeth against the top palate, lips and teeth are held gently together. Breathe evenly and gently through the nose. Take the attention to the lower tan tien. Allow the eyes to relax and become more aware of peripheral vision.

### WATER

*Water evaporates, rises, moves along the sky as a cloud, rains down to earth finds its lowest place and collects in a pool.*

**Breathing in:** raising Ki: hands rise shoulder width apart until they are at shoulder height. Hands are relaxed yet alert. **Breathing out:** as hands sink so does the body, remaining quite upright as we sink down, heels rotating inwards as we come up onto the toes. Reaching hands down to gather water.

### WOOD

*Water gives life to a seed, which germinates, sends up a shoot, grows into a tree and spreads its crown*

**In:** come back up to upright position, hands come together to form 'namaste' in front of the heart at the same time that we come back to parallel stance.

The hands carry on moving up together until just above the head. **Out:** they separate and reach up towards the ceiling then spread outwards as if they could extend and touch the walls, arms never locked straight. Sink into the knees a little as the hands press outwards as if against two pillars or tree trunks. Make sure you can still see your hands in peripheral vision when looking directly forwards.

## THE FIVE ELEMENTS CHI KUNG

### FIRE

*We gather wood for a fire, flames go out to the left, then to the right.*

**In:** sinking 70% into our right leg we turn the body to the left gathering in with our right arm and rounding our left arm until they are in double ward-off, body facing right, still sunk into our right leg, the left toe has turned out to the left. **Out:** turn the hands to face outwards, roll forward onto the left foot and press forwards with the hands, sinking into the left leg 70%. The left knee does not extend beyond the toes; the torso is still upright, not leaning forwards.

**In:** turn the hands back inwards into double ward-off roll back onto the right foot. **Out:** turn body to face front bringing left foot back to parallel, weight evenly distributed. **In:** sink weight 70% left and turn to right, right toes turn out. **Out:** press, mirror image to left movement.

### EARTH

*Scatter the ashes over the earth, gather all our people together, sow the seeds, reap the harvest, and bring it all home.*

**In:** leave the right hand where it is, relax the left hand to horizontal, palm facing downwards, and as the body turns towards the front the hand is pulled as if along the horizon to just in front of the left shoulder. Move the weight 60% into the left foot; the right foot is pulled round to parallel. **Out:** press hands out as in wood, as if against tree trunks, coming to even weight distribution and sink into the legs a little more. **In:** turn the hands to face forwards and move the hands in a big sweeping embrace until they cross in front of the heart, left hand innermost, with some space between the hands and chest. **Out:** open the arms wide as if broadcasting seeds. **In:** sweep the arms back inwards until they are in front of the body, with the hands facing the ground. **Out:** pull the hands down towards the ground until they rest, fingers pointing downwards, palms facing each other a hands width apart, in front of the groin. Sink into the ground.

### METAL

*From deep in the earth we extract metal and raise it to the stars, and from the stars we bring metal back down to earth.*

**In:** turning to the left front corner we sink 70% left and raise both hands together in an ellipse towards the sky, coming up onto the ball of the right foot, watching our hands. **Out:** bring the hands back down in front of us to the start of metal position, return the right foot to parallel. **In:** repeat mirror image of left. **Out:** repeat mirror image of left.

### ENDING

Let breathing return to normal. Let hands fall apart and return to beginning posture (parallel stance) then to attention posture. Alternatively, turn 90 degrees to right to face east and repeat whole sequence; then to south; then to west, returning to standing facing north for at least a minute.

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