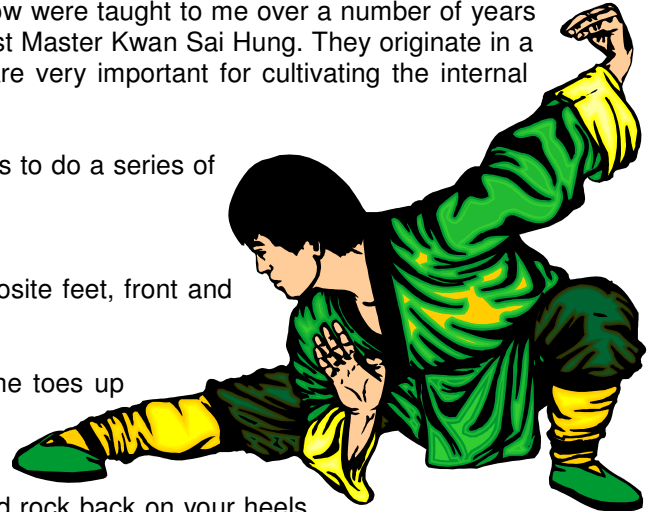


# CHI GUNG

# THE FIVE ANIMALS

The Five Animals exercises outlined below were taught to me over a number of years by Rex Lassalle, who studied with Taoist Master Kwan Sai Hung. They originate in a specific Taoist lineage in China, and are very important for cultivating the internal energy of the organs at many levels.

Before performing the five animals, one needs to do a series of warm up exercises, as outlined below



- **BRAIN GYM** Hands slap opposite feet, front and back
- **MOVING THE TOES** Wiggle the toes up and down about 20 times
- **CALF RAISE** Rise up on your toes breathing in, come down and rock back on your heels on the exhalation. Repeat about 20 times.
- **CRACKING THE BAMBOO** Feet together, hands on knees, rotate knees in circles outwards about 12 times and then inwards about 12 times
- **STIRRING THE POT** Stand on one leg and “stir the pot” with the other, clockwise 10 times and anti-clockwise 10 times. Repeat with the other leg.
- **ROTATE THE TRUNK** Feet together, hands behind back. Rotate from the hips, describing a circle with the upper body about 3 times. Repeat the other direction.
- **HIP ROTATION** Stand upright, feet apart, and make big rotations with the hips 3-5 times. Reverse.
- **SHOULDER ROTATION** Same position, and rotate the shoulders forward about 5 times, and then back about 5 times.
- **PUNCH THE WALL** Horse stance, clench fingers over thumbs to make fists. Bend elbows, bring arms back and punch hard, exhaling vigorously. Repeat 12-18 times
- **PUSH CHIN WITH HANDS** Lock fingers under chin, palms down. Bring elbows together while breathing in and push head back with thumbs. As you exhale, press head forward and return to original position. Repeat 12-18 times.
- **HAND SAWING** Legs wide, one hand on hip, other screwing fingers into ground as you breath out vigorously. Do the same with the other arm. Repeat 12-18 times
- **PUNCHING HEAVEN** Very wide legs, knees bent, swing body to left and punch up with right hand, fingers pointing upwards, as you exhale vigorously. Look up at your fingers. Do the same with the other arm. Repeat 12-18 times.
- **NECK MOVEMENT #1** Stand with feet together, drop head forward, then stretch head back. Repeat
- **NECK MOVEMENT #2** Drop head from one side to the other. Repeat.
- **NECK MOVEMENT #3** Drop head forward, then roll it round in a big circle twice. Reverse.

- MICKY MOUSE FACE You know it!
- WALKING THE EARS You know this one, too!
- EYEBROWS TO HEAVEN Stand straight, keeping head very still. Look up to Heaven, look to the tip of your nose, and then look at your eyebrows. Repeat several times.
- LEG STRETCH Legs very wide apart. Bend one knee and crouch the body over that knee and extend and stretch the other leg. Transfer the weight to the other side. Repeat 12-18 times.
- VIBRATE LEGS Stand erect, feet together. Vibrate legs rapidly for a minute or so.
- WALKING ON HANDS Feet very wide apart, bend forward and walk three “steps” on your hands. Turn hands inwards and do three body dips. Take three “steps” backwards with the hands, and end with hands pointing backwards, eyes forward. Repeat whole cycle 5 times. At end, bring hands to centre, bring the legs together, jump up and shout YIIPPEE!
- FLOOR MOVEMENT #1 Lie flat on your back. Arms at sides, bring legs straight over head into the yoga “plough” position. Hold for a few breaths and then roll forward with legs out straight and clasp toes, bowing head toward knees.
- FLOOR MOVEMENT #2 Legs wide apart, elbows on inside of knees and hands flat on floor, bring head close to hands. Bounce 10 times
- FLOOR MOVEMENT #3 Repeat the stretch to each side, bouncing 10 times each side.
- FLOOR MOVEMENT #4 Soles of feet together, clasp in hands. Bounce knees apart, with back straight. Bounce head to toes. Repeat 10 times. Rock body weight forward a few times to finish.
- FLOOR MOVEMENT #5 Sit on heels and then lie flat on back. Rest and breathe deeply.
- BALLET STRETCH Stand on one leg with the other supported by a bar or a table. Stretch sideways over the standing leg, sliding your hand down the calf and stretching the other arm over your head. Come upright, then bend forward over the raised leg, bringing the head to the knee. Repeat the cycle 5 times. Squat 5 times. Repeat on other side.
- STORK Stand upright on one leg, lift other leg behind you with bended knee. Stretch thigh parallel to ground repeat 3 times. Repeat on other side.
- REST Squat down, with hands over side of head, and rock forwards and back, breathing into your hara.



## **THE TIGER**

This exercise works on the meridians between the shoulder blade and the lower lip. It is beneficial for back pain and shoulder pain, as well as inflammation of the liver, swelling of the liver and spleen and high blood pressure.

## **THE DEER**

This exercise develops the four limbs, clearing and opening the blood vessels and meridians of the whole body. It helps to stimulate the tailbone and the venous system.

## **THE MONKEY**

This exercise helps to stimulate the eight extraordinary meridians, and addresses problems with the fingers and toes, the heart meridian, the bladder meridian and also aches and pains in the upper body. It also benefits the circulation of blood and various eye diseases.

## **THE BEAR**

This exercise stimulates the bladder and gall bladder meridians, helping to regulate blood pressure and addressing pain in the lower back and legs. The movement also stimulates digestion.

## **THE CRANE**

This exercise benefits the small intestine, triple heater and gall bladder meridians, as well as treating headaches and pain in the upper shoulder.