The Eight Silken Movements or The Eight Brocades
From Master Zhou - Wudong, China - May 2018

Also called Baduanjin Qigong (1st writings from Dao Shi, c. 1150)

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- *The Baduanjin (or Brocades) are usually considered a form of medical Qigong, meant to improve health. The slow movements are excellent for Arthritis!*
- *It is one of the most common forms of Chinese Qigong, as such there are many variations in name and movements each Master having a slightly different style.*
- *It is named after Silk Brocade fabric – suggesting a feeling of smooth, silken movements*

Move at a pace, and do the number of repetitions, which match your fitness and health level. By completing these Qi Gong movements, you may notice improved health, increased energy, reduced stress, a revitalized mind and body, improved balance, and an overall sense of well-being. These movement may also be done seated.

- (I) = Inhale
- (E) = Exhale
- (R) = Right
- (L) = Left

- Rise = crown of head reaching for heaven, body follows, legs straight but not locked.
- Sink = knees bend slightly, feeling the pull of gravity, spine stays upright.
  - “Sinking and Rising” helps tone, strengthen and improves circulation.

**ALL EXERCISES CAN BE DONE SITTING**

**Centering Meditation - in Wuji stance** (feet shoulder width apart).
- Connect with your environment and the 3 Treasures. (Earth, Heaven and Life)
- Pay attention to the 3 points of mindful focus. (Body, Breath, Mind)
  - Good posture to help the body, allow the breath to become smooth and let the brain relax and the mind feel vast and like an ocean.
    - When sitting, the equivalent body movement, to obtain good posture, is to sit up then rock slightly back and forth and side to side to find a centering point.
  - Take a few relaxed centering breaths.

**Open**
- Stand with feet together, relaxed knees with slight toning towards midline in the feet.
- (I) Rise: raise and rotate shoulders up and back, lifting chest up.
- (E) Sink: relax shoulders down. 2 x’s
- (I) (E) Step left: inner ball of foot touching first.
  - Shift weight: so weight is equal over both legs.
1. Holding up the Sky with Two Hands

This full body stretch with slow rounded movements and deep breathing helps to shift the nervous system into parasympathetic; balancing the Triple Heater (Sanjiao) which helps us act appropriately in any given situation (fight or flight). This is also an excellent practice for the shoulders, and to help improve posture and circulation of blood.

Start in a Wuji stance: feet hip width apart, slight toning of legs, knees relaxed, lift up through crown of head, but drop the tail. (long spine)

1. **(I) Rise:** Raise hands up center, palms facing your body slightly; bring up to the heart.
2. **(E) Sink:** Arms extend forward at chest level, palms facing up; “Offering”.
3. **(I) Rise:** Open arms out to the sides fingers facing up like a flower blooming, elbows bent; “Gathering” from all around you as you sweep the hands towards back.
4. **(E) Sink:** Hands and elbows naturally lower – “find your ground”.
5. **(I) Rise:** Feet push into earth, legs straighten (do not lock), arms raise palms facing up,
   - o continue to inhale filling and stretching the entire body… pause…
   - o it may take more than one breath to fully extend and fill the with breath.
   - o sometime gentle movements can move stagnant Qi (bowing, lifting the heart etc)
   - o just make sure to finish this stretch on an (I).
6. **(E) Sink:** RELAX - Sweep arms down, out to the side with your palms facing down.
7. **(I) Repeat** (from #1) as many times as desired.
   - o Note: All the Brocades can be stand along practices.

Note: According to Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), this movement helps to regulate the triple burner, and relieve fatigue by activating the fluid flowing in the triple burner and ensuring proper nourishment throughout the body. The Triple Burner rules body liquids to keep them moving and plays an important role in coordinating digestion, communicating with the spleen and stomach and delivering Original Qi to all organs. This movement is also called “Push up the Heavens" and "Pressing the Heavens with Two Hands”.

Transition - Settling Breath (or Centering Breath): begin in Wuji stance (see above)

- **(I) Rise:** arms sweep up - out to sides (palms face up) and up overhead.
- **(E) Sink:** palms turn face down over head, slowly lower hands down the midline relaxing nearby body parts as they pass.
- Hands may end at belly (Tai Chi hands – Left thumb to right palm – left fingers wrap around thumb; right fingers wrap around left knuckles)
  - o or let hands sweep all the way down to sides.

2. Pulling in and Punching with Tiger Eyes

According to TCM, this movement helps stimulate and revitalize the liver. The movements of fingers tightening into fists, rotating wrists then releasing helps circulation in wrists, hands and fingers. A wide Horse stance improves the muscles of the legs, thighs, helping to strengthen and support the knees.
Step left to a wide Horse stance:
2. (E) Sink: step (L) into a wide Horse Stance.
   o Bend your knees and squat down lower, if comfortable
   o Tall back, knees centered over your toes. (slight turn out)
3. (I) Rise: bring hand up to heart like in #1
4. (E) Sink: turn palms away, pushing out, chest height. (flexed wrists)
5. (I) Rise: gather fingers into fists, palms rotate up, pull fists in to ribs, elbows back.
6. (E) Sink: “punch” (R) fist, from core, turning palm down (feel toning of abs).
   o At end of (E) open fist release through fingers, letting go.
   o (L) hand stays by the side, elbow back.
7. (I) Rise: (R) hand gather chi making a fist turning palm up, bringing towards body
   o About half way in (L) begins punching out, turning palm down
8. (E) Sink: continue pulling (R) fist in, while “Punching” (L) fist out, turning palm down
   o At end of (E) open fist release through fingers, letting go.
9. (I) Sink: Gather chi with extended hand, returning fist to side.
10. **Exhale** (Remain Low). Step back to Wuji position.

Note: Eyes are wide open and glaring, strengthening eye muscles. Imagine fire, determination, courage, or toughness. See the energy traveling out of your fist. This movement is also known as "Punching and Glaring", "Punching with Angry Gaze", "Clenching Fists and Looking with Eyes Wide Open".

Transition:
- (I) Rise (E) Sink: step (L) foot in to resume Wuji stance - shoulder width.
- Continue as in #1 above.

3. **Stretching to Heaven & Earth**
   *This good side stretches helps to stretch the muscles in the arms and shoulders, balance the stomach and spleen meridians, also tones the core. The spleen is responsible for filtering the blood and discerning what is good and what is waste. When these organs are balanced the mind is better able to discern and make good choices, toning the core helps to feel more stable.*

   **Start in a Wuji stance** – feet hip width apart.
   1. (I) Rise: both palms open, face up at waist level, elbows back.
      o Turning (R) from the lower Dantien, begin raising your (R) hand diagonally up the front of your body towards the (L) palm faces up.
      o At the same time turn the (L) palm down and begin pushing down towards the earth. Until both arms are extended fully. (R) hand to Heaven (L) hand to Earth
2. **(E)** Release – Sink: and return to the starting position, sliding the (R) hand down to the side with both palms up at stomach level.

3. **(I)** Rise: continue rotating to the (L) from the lower Dantien.
   - (L) hand reaches up towards Heaven (R) hand turns down to the Earth,
   - Fill completely with breath as you deepen the twist.

4. **(E)** Release – Sink: and return to the starting position, with both palms up at waist level.

5. Repeat Stretching to Heaven and Earth movements on both sides.

Note: This movement contributes to the ascending of spleen-qi and the descending of stomach-qi, thus promoting the digestive functions. Also called "Touch Heaven & Earth" and "Plucking Stars", and "Raising the Hands to condition the Spleen".

**Transition:** as described in #1 above.

4. **The Big Bear Turns from Side to Side –or Shake head and Wag tail**

   *This movement strengthens legs and waist, increases spinal mobility and tone, causes the kidney-yin Qi to ascend, reducing excess heart fire, and bring balance to the heart fire.*

**Step left to a wide Horse stance:** (I) Rise slightly in Wuji stance (E) Step (L) like in #2
   - Place hands just above your knees with your thumbs on the outside of your legs and your elbows pointed out to the sides, chest lifted.
   - Practice rotating the abdomen - as if moving it around in a barrel
   - Note the weight shift (R) and (L) as you rotate the abdomen

1. **(I)** Shift: weight (L) move ribs (L): and tailbone (R) and right ear to shoulder.
   - Relax arms down by sides
   - Circle ribs to the front then towards the (R) side
   - Toning legs: isometrically pulling in towards midline and up - lift from lower back Dantien and open the heart stretching belly out

2. **(E)** Shift: weight (R) ribs (R): tailbone (L) and left ear to shoulder
   - Continue circling ribs to the back, belly to the spine, making a “C” curve with the spine, then towards the (L)

3. Relaxed arm – shoulders roll naturally

4. Repeat. Then reverse the process, same number of repetitions.
   - As you complete the movement, place attention on the bubbling wells in the bottom of your feet.

**Transition:**
- **(I)** Rise (E) Sink: step (L) foot in to resume Wuji stance - shoulder width.
- Continue as in #1 above.

Note: When the heart fire is balanced it burns beautifully; with a soft warm light, and a sense of kindness and harmony. When out of balance it can feel over exerted, burnt out or out of control. Energy from the heart has been measured over 10 feet away from the body; so, this sense of harmony can affect your environment, including relationships with other
people. Also known as "Rotate Head and Trunk", "Search the Clouds", and "Shake Head and Sway Buttocks to Extinguish Fire in the Heart".

5. **Trace the Meridians (Furling and Unfurling the Fern/Spine)**

   *This movement will stretch, tone and lengthen the muscles of the lower back. According to TCM, this movement stimulates various meridians in the body and increases circulation.*

   **Start in a Wuji stance** – feet hip width apart.

   1. **(I) Rise:** squeeze torso slightly with upper arms as you bring hands towards your face (breathing in Life)
   2. **(E) Sink:** Fingers point up now, smooth over face (trace channels), over the top of the head, down back of head
   3. **(I) guiding fingers under neck, down throat, thumbs down chest to sternum, hands in prayer - fingers pointing away, heel of hands separate gliding across ribs towards back
   4. **(E) continue moving hands down the back, bending forward “furling the spine”**
      - Continue moving hands down hips, legs (back and outer) to feet, hands tracing the channels, sweeping out and off the little toe sides of feet.
      - Take good care of your back - modify if needed only bending forward partway, using intension to move energy to toes

   5. **(I) Rise:**
      - Pull belly back, drop tail as arms rise
      - Undulate up through the spine “unfurling” vertebrae by vertebrae arms floating forward and up above head.
   6. **(E) Sink:** Relax arms down out to the sides
   7. **(I) Repeat:** tracing the meridians and furling/unfurling the fern.

   **Note:** This is also known as "Carrying the Moon", "Nourishing the Kidneys", "Touch the Sky, Press the Earth", and "Touch Toes to Reinforce Kidneys"

   **Transition:** as described in #1 above.

6. **Wise Owl Gazes Backward – Dispel 7 diseases and illnesses**

   *According to TCM, practicing this movement helps your lungs, immune system, and large intestines (Focus on extension of Thumb and Index fingers). It enriches Qi and blood, calms the mind, and promotes organ functioning. Rotations of the wrists, and the extension/release of the fingers increases circulation and flexibility in hands. As you warm up, try turning your head farther each time to help neck mobility.*

   **Start in a Wuji stance** – feet hip width apart.

   1. **(I) Rise:** Raise your hands, palms facing your body slightly, bring up to the heart.
2. **(E)** Sink: Arms extend forward at chest level, palms facing up. **“Offering”**
3. **(I)** Rise: Open arms out to the sides fingers facing up like a flower blooming, elbows bent, **“Gathering”** from all around you as you sweep your arms back
4. **(E)** Sink: fingers turn towards the earth in an “S” palmas ending face down, flexed wrists  
   - **“find your ground”**.
5. **(I)** Rise: Turn (L) from the lower Dantien, head following slowly, looking left, chest raised  
   - rotating palms so fingers turn out on BOTH hands, *(focus on extension of thumb and index fingers)* opening the chest Gaze behind you (or to the horizon) as far as you comfortably can.
   - Filling fully with breath, pause if comfortable
6. **(E) release**, Sink: Return your head to the center and relax your shoulders
   - rotating palms point forward
7. **(I)** Rise: Turn (R) from the lower Dantien, head following slowly, looking left, chest raised
   - rotating palms as above. Gaze behind you as far as you comfortably can.
8. Repeat, looking out to the horizon on both sides.

Note: This is also known as “Looking Right and Looking Left”, and "Looking Behind"

**Transition:** as described in #1 above.

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7. **Drawing the Bow**

*Practicing this movement strengthens the muscles of the hands, arms, chest and thighs.*

*According to TCM, practicing this movement, enhances the function of the respiratory and circulatory systems*

**Step left to a wide Horse stance:** like in #2

- Arms relaxed by sides
  1. **(I)** turn lower Dantien slightly to the (R) lifting (R) arm up to shoulder height (L) hand moves to right hip
  2. **(E) Sink:** begin turning the lower Dantien (L), sweeping arm horizontally **gathering**  
     - (L) hand sweeps to left hip  
     - When both arms are on (L) side gather energy to heart
  3. **(I) Rise:**  
     - Make an “L” with thumb and index finger of (L) hand  
     - Grab imaginary bow string/arrow with the (R) hand  
     - Pulling both apart simultaneously, open chest, shoulder blades together on back  
     - This can take more than one breath. Just end on (I) with expansion.
  4. **(E) Release:** “shoot your arrow”  
     - (R) arm drops by right hip, (L) arm sweeps horizontally to the right **gathering**  
     - When both arms are on (R) side gather energy to chest
  5. **(I) Rise:**  
     - Make an “L” with thumb and index finger of (R) hand

Shared with the Foundation for Peripheral Neuropathy ([www.foundationforpn.org](http://www.foundationforpn.org))

By the Metro DC Area Support Group ([https://www.dcpnsupport.org/](https://www.dcpnsupport.org/))
o Grab imaginary bow string/arrow with the (L) hand
o Pulling both apart simultaneously, open chest, shoulder blades together on back
o This can take more than one breath. Just end on (I) with expansion.

6. **(E)** Release: “shoot your arrow”
   o (L) arm drops by right hip. (R) arm sweeps horizontally to the right **gathering**
   o When both arms are on (L) side gather energy to heart

7. Repeat, drawing the Bow on both sides.

Note: this is also known as "Drawing the Bow and Letting the Arrow Fly", and "Drawing the Bow and Shooting the Serpent"

**Transition:** after last arrow is released both arms drop down by sides
- (I) Rise (E) Sink: step (L) foot in to resume Wuji stance - shoulder width.
- Continue as described in #1 above.

8. **Bouncing on the Toes** - whole body is relaxed – soft knees – no jarring movements

   This movement will exercise your calves and thighs. According to TCM, bouncing in this manner stimulates the immune system and helps rid the body of many diseases.

**Start in a Wuji stance** – feet hip width apart.
1. (I) Rise: Raise your hands, palms facing your body slightly, bring up to the heart.
2. (E) Sink: Arms extend forward at chest level, palms facing up. **“Offering”**
3. (I) Rise: Open arms out to the sides fingers facing up like a flower blooming, elbows bent, **“Gathering”** from all around you as you sweep the hands back.
4. (E) cover your ears (so you can hear your inner world)
5. (I) Rise: Come up onto tip toes.
6. (E) Lower down onto your heels with a moderate degree of force, bouncing with a sense of letting go.
7. **Repeat**, raising onto tiptoes and returning heels to the earth, **letting go 7 x’s.**

8. **Finish with**
   o (I) Rise: lower Dantien begins twisting (L) then chest, then eyes look follow, hands still over ears, elbows wide
   o (E) Sink: return to center
   o (I) Rise: lower Dantien begins twisting (R) then chest, then eyes look follow, hands still over ears, elbows wide
   o (E) Sink: return to center, releasing arms down to sides

Note: This movement is also known as "Jolt Body to Keep All Illnesses Away", "Lift the Back", and "Cure the 1000 Illnesses".
Transition: as described in #1 above.

Close:
- (I) Rise:
- (E) Sink: Stepping left foot next to right foot so weight is equal over both legs.
- (I) Rise: Raise and rotate shoulders up and back, lifting chest up.
- (E) Sink: Relax shoulders down.
- (I) Rise: Meditate, hands in “Tai Chi position
  - (L) Thumb touching Center of (R) palm (Laogong position)
    - (R) fingers wrap around (L) thumb
    - (L) fingers wrap around (R) knuckles

Other closing hand positions
1. Make a fist with (R) hand and cover with open (L) hand
2. (L) thumb to center of (R) hand, (L) fingers on back of (R) hand.
3. One hand on top of the other on Lower Dantien – “Seal the Caldron”
4. Hands in Prayer: palms together, may have a small space between palms

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