

Fig. 12 Beginning position: With knees up, move the coccyx, sacrum and lumbar; upper vertebrae are in normal position.

3. Inhale and relax, gently letting your 'lumbar' release and your sacrum return to the mat first, then the 'thoracics' one by one. Totally relax your spine and psoas. When you do it this way, the lumbar, hips, and sacrum are all moving. The resting period is very important. Rest and smile to the whole spine. Feel a stream of Chi flow from the head down the spine to the lumbar, psoas and to the sacrum/coccyx. Repeat this 3–6 times.

4. After the final movement, unbend your knees and take a longer rest. Do the conscious breathing to the areas affected by the movement, especially the lumbar and psoas muscle. Smile to an area and feel fully relaxed, drawing the smiling golden energizing light to it with your in – breath. Exhale the released tensions, toxins and tired energy in the form of cloudy grey colour down through your legs and feet into a hole in the ground for Mother Earth to transform.



Fig.13 Raised position: The simultaneous lifting of the sacrum and the thoracic vertebrae as you press the lumbar vertebrae to the mat – combined with the exhale – creates the valley.

Comment:

The River Flows into the Valley exercise is aptly named. When done correctly, you will understand with the mind, and you will 'get it' in your body.

The simultaneous lifting of the sacrum and thoracic vertebrae as you press the lumbar to the mat while exhaling creates the valley below the abdomen in the area of the five lumbar vertebrae and the psoas.

Raising the upper body (the twelve thoracic vertebrae) forms the riverbed, and thus, the 'golden energizing light' flows 'down the river into the valley' from the head. The more you practice (a little every day), the more profound your realization of the river and valley and the energetic flow becomes.

This movement is fundamental to this set of Tao Yin exercises. Get this, and you will easily achieve results in the following positions. Let the river flow!

Water up and Fire down

Meridians Activated:

A. Yin: Kidney & Yang: Bladder

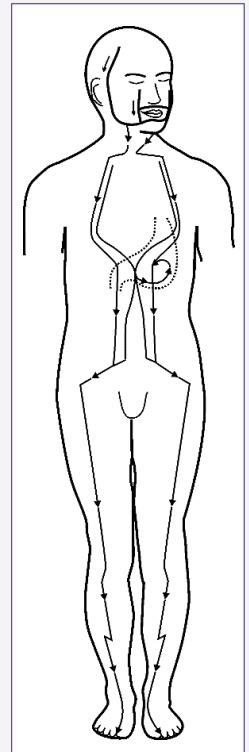
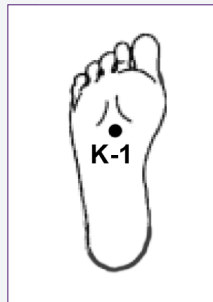
B. Yang: Stomach

C. Yin: Pericardium (Lao Gong Point)

In Tao Yin, it is important to bring the excess heat from the heart down to the psoas muscle and kidneys. This relaxes and warms the psoas muscle and the lower back.

From the bubbling spring point in the sole of each foot, you can raise the water energy up to the kidneys and up to the heart to nourish the fire or to cool excess heat. The psoas doesn't like cold. When it is cold, the muscle will contract and pull the spine towards the thigh. Cold and fear from the kidneys can affect the psoas, causing it to contract and thereby impact negatively on the body's condition. This exercise balances the fire and water elements in the body, creating harmony throughout the entire system.

*Fig. 14
Toes flexed toward head: Legs extended,
gently flex toes back towards head activating
the Bubbling Springs (Kidney Point, K-1).*



Part I: Activating the Bubbling Springs

1. Inhale – Flex toes back: Lie flat on your back, legs extended and slightly apart, arms at your sides. As you inhale, gently flex your toes back toward your head, feel like you are curving your toes back, and feel the soles of your feet stretch open. Feel a suction drawing the water energy up into your soles. Do this until you feel moderate tension in your calves.

2. Hold – Feel Chi from feet: Be aware of the soles of the feet and feel some bubbling Chi rising up from the 'Bubbling Spring' points to the kidneys and onward, pouring into your heart.

3. Exhale – Lumbar to mat – Heat to psoas: As you exhale, relax your feet and sink your chest. Feel the heat sink down toward the spine and lightly press your lumbar toward the mat. Feel the excess heat from your pericardium and the heart flowing down through your spine to the psoas muscle and the kidneys, warming them up. The psoas will feel relaxed and expanded and fear will melt away from the kidneys.

4. Rest – Heat in psoas – Energy pooling in soles: Rest. Smile to your psoas muscles. Be aware of how the psoas feels. The rest period is very important. Collect the energy. Feel the warmth and heat vibrating in the psoas muscles. Bring your attention to the soles of your feet and feel a pool of energy gathering there and rising up. Repeat a few times.

Part II: Activating the Lao Gong Pericardium Points

5. Inhale – Flex soles inward – Curl toes in – Make fist: Inhale, flex your feet inward (sole toward sole) and curl your toes in. Close your hands into a fist and press into your palms with your middle fingers at the Lao Gong points, the pericardium points.



Fig. 15 Toes curled in: Flex your feet inward and curve your toes in. Make a fist and press your middle fingers into the Lao Gong points.