

THE FIVE *TSA LUNG* MOVEMENTS ~ INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRACTICE

There are five *tsa lung* (*rTsa rLung*) movements in the Bön Mother Tantra or Ma Gyu (*Ma rGyud*). In Tibetan, *tsa* means channel and *lung* means vital breath or wind. (Perhaps more familiar is the Sanskrit word for vital breath, which is prana, or the Chinese *qi* or *chi*). Through bringing the focus of the mind, the breath, and the movement together, we seek to open particular chakras (*khorlo* in Tibetan), which are energetic centers along the channels, and clear or exhaust the *lung* or winds that disturb and obscure us.

In each exercise there are four stages to the breath: **inhaling, holding, re-inhaling, and exhaling**. The inhalation has a welcoming quality. With the inhalation, take in the positive and nurturing aspects of air through the side channels (described below), especially those qualities you lack, and feel the central channel fill with positive energy. While holding the breath at the chakra specified in each exercise, you hold all the positive qualities like a vessel holds nectar. Re-inhalation creates the heat and energy necessary to distribute or spread the nectar throughout the body with the main concentration at the chakra specified in each exercise. At the end of the movement, the exhalation exhausts, expels, and clears those *lung* or winds that cause harm.

Assume the Five-pointed Meditation Posture:

To begin, sit cross-legged, with spine straight, chest open, hands in equipoise position (palms facing up, left palm resting on right) resting about four finger widths below the navel, with the neck slightly bent forward.

Visualize the Three Channels:

The central blue channel rises straight through the center of the body and widens slightly from the heart to its opening at the crown of the head. The side or secondary channels, one red and one white, have diameters the size of pencils and join the central channel at its base. The juncture of the channels is four finger-widths below the navel. The secondary channels rise straight up through the body on either side of the central channel before curving around under the skull, passing down behind the eyes, and opening, one at each nostril. The right channel is white representing method, and the left channel is red representing wisdom. The channels are made of light.

1. Upward-moving *lung* or prana is related to the earth element. Inhale through the side channels and imagine that pure air enters and fills the central channel. Hold the breath, concentrating the focus at the throat chakra. Re-inhale and continue to hold and maintain the focus. Feel that the *lung* spreads internally, nurturing all the sense organs located in the head. Bring to mind the obstacles of the *lung* you seek to clear or exhaust. Slowly start rotating the head five times counterclockwise. Feel that the *lung* is moving upward through your head in a spiral movement. Then reverse directions and rotate the head five times clockwise, continuing the same feeling of the nectar spreading upward in a spiral movement. At the end of the movement, exhale the air. The breath descends the central channel and leaves the body, clearing the obstacles through the nostrils via the side channels. The subtle *lung* is expelled through the crown chakra. Repeat the exercise for a total of three times. With each repetition the exhalation releases and exhausts the particular *lung* being focused

upon. After the third time, rest in open awareness with eyes either open or closed as long as it remains fresh.

NOTE: The instructions are to hold the breath throughout each exercise and exhale only at the end. However, if you feel you need more air before the movement is completed, do a short re-inhalation. If that is not enough air, repeat a movement three times, building up your stamina over time until you are able to do five.

2. Life-force *lung* or prana is related to the space element. Inhale through the side channels, feeling the breath enter the central channel. Hold the air at the chest level, concentrating at the heart chakra. Re-inhale, holding and maintaining the focus at the heart chakra while feeling the *lung* spread internally through your chest nurturing the area of your heart. Bring to mind the obstacles of the *lung* you are seeking to exhaust and clear. Rotate your right arm five times counterclockwise with motion like a lasso, [a gathering motion] feeling that the vital air is expanding your chest and your life force is being strengthened. Then rotate the left arm five times clockwise with the same lasso motion. Still maintaining the breath and the focus, place your hands on the sides of your hips and rotate the right shoulder five times and then the left shoulder five times, further opening the chest. At the end, exhale the breath out the side channels through the nose, while the subtle *lung* is expelled through the heart. Feel the obstacles are released and exhausted. Repeat for a total of three times. At the end, rest in open awareness as long as it remains fresh.

3. Fire-like *lung* or prana is related to the fire element. Inhale the pure air through the side channels, bringing the *lung* into the central channel. Hold the air with the vase retention (*bar lung*, *kumbhaka*). In the vase retention, the muscles of the anus, perineum, and pelvic platform are pulled up creating a basket while the diaphragm pushes down creating a lid. Take care not to hold with too much pressure. Concentrate at the navel chakra within the "vase." Re-inhale, maintaining the focus and vase retention. Feel that the *lung* spreads, filling the vase and nurturing the navel area. Rotate the abdomen five times counterclockwise, maintaining the concentration and the vase retention, as well as the focus on the obstacles of the particular *lung* you are clearing. Then rotate five times in a clockwise direction. At the end of the movement, exhale down through the central channel and out the side channels through both nostrils. *Lung* is also released from the navel chakra. Repeat for a total of three times. Then rest in open awareness as long as it remains fresh.

4. Pervasive *lung* or prana is related to the air element. Focusing on the chakra four finger-widths below the navel, inhale pure air through the side channels, bringing the *lung* into the central channel and holding there, letting the *lung* spread throughout the whole body. Re-inhale, letting the vital breath spread, particularly nurturing those places where the energy seems blocked. Focus on the obstacles of the *lung* you seek to exhaust and clear. Clap your hands above your head and rub them together feeling a sense of heat and energy. Massage the whole body, particularly those areas where you feel any blockages. Feel these areas come alive, as if every cell of your body were vibrating. Still holding the breath, perform the movement of shooting an arrow, extending the upper torso five times to the right and then five to the left. At the end, *lung* descends the central channel and the obstacles are expelled through the nostrils via the side channels. The obstacles of the *lung* are also released through all the pores of the body. Repeat for a total of three times. Then rest in open awareness as long as it remains fresh.

5. Downward-moving *lung* or prana is related to the water element. With the hands holding the knees and the right leg in front of the left, inhale through the side channels bringing the *lung* or prana into the central channel. Hold by pulling up on the muscles of the anus, perineum, and pelvic floor. Concentrate the attention and the vital breath at the secret chakra just below the junction of the three channels. Re-inhale and continue to maintain the focus and hold while letting the *lung* spread, feeling that you are nurturing this area. Bring to mind the particular blockages associated with the *lung* you are clearing. Hold your right knee with both hands, and rotate your lower abdomen towards the right leg (clockwise) five times. Next, hold the left leg at the knee and rotate toward the left leg (counterclockwise) five times. Hold both knees and rotate the abdomen five times in one direction. If you have enough air, you can also do five rotations in the other direction. Throughout the movement, the breath is held and the focus is maintained on the secret chakra as you work to exhaust and clear the obstacles of a particular *lung*. At the end, exhale the air through the side channels and out the nostrils while the *lung* is also naturally released downward through the secret chakra. Repeat the exercise for a total of three times.

If this is the last repetition, remain for a longer time in the state of contemplation, experiencing the changes at the level of the body, energy, and mind. Rest deeply in open awareness as long as the experience remains fresh.

Drawn from Awakening the Sacred Body by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche