

The Eight Pieces of Brocade



It is recommended that you do each exercise eight times, with the exception of #7. The following principles will apply during all of the eight “precious” exercises.

- There should be no muscle tension at any time.
- Breathing should be long, slow, even and quiet. Inhale and exhale through the nose.
- The tip of your tongue should rest gently on the roof of the mouth, behind the front teeth.
- Suspend the head from the crown and slightly tuck the chin.
- Keep your knees slightly bent at all times. Do not ‘lock’ your knees.

Stretch Two Hands up to Hold the Sky

Heels together, toes apart, knees relaxed. Clasp hands together at the waist, palms up. Inhale as you raise your hands above your head; palms rotating outward. When arms are stretched all the way, palms should be up towards the sky. Exhale as you lower your arms and palms to their original position.

BENEFIT: This one is excellent for expanding the lungs and stretching the ribcage. It also stimulates the “Triple Burner” meridian and circulates the ‘dormant Chi’ from the lower abdomen to the tip of the spinal column and to the forehead.

Put Two Hands Down to Grab Your Toes

Heels together, toes apart, knees relaxed and not locked. Exhale as you bend over and stretch down toward your toes. Inhale as you straighten up. Exhale, back straight, bend at the knees, hands out, palms down. Inhale as you stand to the original position.

BENEFIT: This one stimulates the kidneys, strengthens the back, and keeps the waist flexible.

Stretch One Hand to Hold the Sky and One Hand to Press the Earth

Heels together, toes apart, back straight, knees bent. Hands crossed in front of your chest, palms facing your chest. Left hand inside. Inhale as you straighten your legs and simultaneously raise your left hand and lower your right hand. Turn the thumbs and palms outward. Exhale as you bend your knees and simultaneously draw your hands back to your chest, crossed with the right hand inside. Rotate the palms inward. Repeat with right hand going up, left hand going down.

BENEFIT: This one conditions the liver and enhances the stomach digestive functions. It also relieves the shoulders of strain while stretching the entire body to its fullest extent.

Turn the Head and Look Back

Heels together, toes apart, knees relaxed. Cup your left hand inside your right hand (palms up) at your waist. Inhale as you turn your head to the left. Exhale as you turn your head back to the center. Inhale as you turn your head to the right. Exhale as you turn your head back to the center.

BENEFIT: This one strengthens the muscles of the chest and neck, and enhances the blood circulation in the head. It also removes the fatigue of the brain and the central nervous system.

Open the Bow Left and Right to Shoot the Hawk

Body in “horse stance”. Feet shoulder length apart, toes facing forward. Knees slightly bent, back straight - as if riding a horse. Turn head and shoulders to the left. Left arm up, horizontal to ground, first finger pointing out at 45° angle. Right arm in position to “pull back a bow string.” Inhale as you draw the bow string and simultaneously face forward. Continue to pull the string until your right arm is extended all the way to the right. Imagine yourself holding a giant beachball. Exhale as you bring both arms in front of your chest. Imagine yourself holding a soccer ball. Repeat on other side.

BENEFIT: This one strengthens the shoulders and the arms, and by expanding the chest, it increases a person’s lung capacity. It also helps the kidneys and spleen.

Wiggle your Tail and Swing your Head

Body in “horse stance”. Hands resting gently on your thighs. With back straight, bend slightly forward. Inhale as you rotate your body in a circle toward the left. Continue inhaling until you are 3/4 of the way around. Exhale the remainder of the circle. Repeat in opposite direction.

BENEFIT: This one improves the functions of every organ and every system of the body. It also removes the abnormal nervous tension. This removes excess heat or fire from the heart.

Stand up on your Toes and Bounce Seven Times

Heels together, toes apart, knees relaxed. Inhale as you raise your hands, palms up, shoulder height and come up on toes. Exhale as you drop hands and land on your heels. Repeat 49 times.

BENEFIT: This one promotes health by slightly vibrating every organ and system of the whole body. It keeps the nervous system strong and youthful, and ‘smooths out’ the Chi and keeps away illnesses.

Squat Down to Scoop the Stream

Body in “horse stance”. Inhale as you bring your arms up over your head and embrace the sky. Exhale as you bend at the knees, squat down and take water from the stream. Inhale as you stand, palms up with water dripping from your fingers. Exhale as you turn palms down, bend at the knees and lower hands slightly.

BENEFIT: This one helps to strengthen the legs, and it enhances the respiration and the blood circulation. This also increases general vitality and muscular strength.