



# Five Elements

imparted by Mark Broscheit  
Golden Lotus Qigong



## Introduction

In Taoist philosophy, the forces that create Life, from birth to death, growth to decay, are referred to as the Five Elements. These are Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, and Water. Each Element has unique characteristics that contribute to the cycle of physical life. Each element also affects, and is affected by, the other four. The movements of this practice allow the practitioner to gain a deeper understanding and experience of each of these elements. As such, these movements create better balance and harmony, as the Five Elements work in our personal lives.

### 1. Wood

Bring the palms together in front of the chest. Keep the left hand stationary, while moving the right hand downward and out to the side. Follow this hand movement with your eyes and head. Continue moving the right hand/arm upward and then in front of the body, the hand higher than the crown, as you turn your right palm to the right side by twisting your right wrist/forearm. Lower the right hand so that the inside of the right forearm (the heart meridian) contacts the middle, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> fingers of the left hand. Touch the tip of your left middle finger to the crease at the wrist of the right hand. Hold. Bring both palms together at the heart.

Repeat the movement with reversed hand positions, then bring both palms together at the heart.

### 2. Fire

Move the palms slightly apart, fingertips still touching. Visualize strong fingers, hollow palms. Separate both hands to shoulder-width apart, palms facing up, fingers pointing upward. Hold. Visualize the fingertips as individual flames. Bring the fingertips to touch in front of the chest. Hold for a moment.

Repeat the sequence, then flatten the palms together in front of the chest.



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## 3. Earth

Move the hands downward to waist level, palms facing downward, fingers pointing forward. Hold for a moment. Turn the palms so that the fingers point toward each other. Fingertips should be close, but not touching, and the elbows turned out to the sides. Hold for a moment, and visualize the connection between the palms and the earth. Turn palms so the fingertips point forward, and repeat the sequence.

## 4. Metal

Begin with fingertips pointing toward each other. Raise both arms slightly, in the horizontal position in front of the chest, bringing the right arm above the left, with your palms facing inward toward you. Point your left thumb toward your right elbow, and your right thumb upward. Allow your fingers to be naturally straight and slightly separated. Hold for a moment. Maintain the same arm position, but rotate the hands so that both palms face forward. Now your right thumb points to the left elbow, and the left thumb points downward. Repeat the sequence, keeping your shoulders relaxed but your arms feeling strong.

## 5. Water

With your palms facing forward, sweep both arms downward beside the hips, and begin to make small circles with your hands, to both sides. Imagine the circles are ripples on water, gradually expanding from the center. As the ripples expand, visualize gathering water element Qi in your palms. On the largest circle, bring the hands around to the back, and touch the palms to the lower ribs, roughly where the kidneys are located. Visualize water element Qi from your palms filling the kidneys. Hold for a moment.

Bring the arms back to circling at both sides, again beginning with small circles then becoming larger. Continue to gather more water-element Qi. This time, bring both palms to rest at the lower abdomen, below the navel, roughly where the bladder is located. Visualize water-element Qi from your palms filling the bladder. Hold for a moment.

Note: water flows in any direction with ease. When circling the palms, you may reverse direction a few times, allowing the change in direction to occur without attachment.



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## 6. Finish

Bring both hands together in front of the chest, palms touching.

## 7. Closing: San Jiao Movement (also called Three Blessings)

With gratitude for the Qi you have received, extend the arms forward with palms together, then move them upward to the level of the chest. Bend the elbows, bringing the thumbs to lightly touch the third eye (forehead). Pause for a moment. With fingers still pointing upward, bring hands down to the middle of the heart (chest). Touch the thumbs together lightly at chest level, and pause for a moment. Bring both hands down, below the navel, to the level of the Dantian. Turn the hands so that the left palm rests on top of the right palm, both palms facing upward, and the tips of the thumbs touch to form a circle.