

The Tibetan Figure 8 Pattern and Healing

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Throughout the Tai Chi set there is an underlying pattern that moves from the foot to the head, from the right to the left, from the front to the back, in a continuous and fluid figure eight pattern. This infinity sign is a network for communication between all aspects of the body, mind and spirit, and supports a strong energy flow and harmony for the whole person. In the Tai Chi moves there is a flow in the movements that find connection and flow for the person as they move through the actions in the set.

Let's look at the commencement. The feet connect to the hands to the head before any action starts. The breathing pattern is engaged. The center core is activated. As the hands rise, they create a figure eight pattern with a lengthening out from the body, a lowering with the bend of the elbow, a drop or connection of the hands to the floor before rising again. The hips have a similar action, as does the shoulders. A standing Don Yu continues this same action while there is a drop into the feet and a lowering of the body.

In the Tor Yu there is figure eight that transitions through the feet, around the pelvis, through the arms and out the shoulders and head as the body moves from one foot to the other. This pattern can have an openness that transfers through an open hip, or it can have a closed action with a rise and turn to square the hip. The hands can move through a full figure eight pattern on a diagonal from the back to the front, or it can be lessened through the traditional hands pushing forward and crossing center with the sit in the back leg.

"Parting Horses Mane" develops the Lower Dan Tien's Golden Pill as the body expands and contracts with each movement. The hands come together in the middle with "hold the ball" and then expand out to form the loops with the hands at opposite ends of their extension. The placement of the hip into a sink of the front leg provides a similar action for the shoulder and hips, and the whole experience can be felt through the bottom of the foot.

"Move hands like clouds" bring a three-dimensional movement into the action that includes a linking of front-back, side-side, top-bottom. This intricate pattern is working in a holographic context due to the nature of the movement.

The seated Don Yu triad is another great example. The seated Don Yu first falls forward into the feet as the hands sweep forward and up and then in and down as pressure applied to the feet brings you back to a seated position. The second action the figure eight of the hands move horizontally forward as weight is taken onto the feet and the buttocks are moved forward from the chair seat, the eight pattern loops at the outermost extension to sweep back in towards the body and the body glides back to sit on the chair. The third action the figure eight action begins moving out and the weight shifts onto the feet. With a push into the feet the hands sweep upwards in a more up and down pattern and the body rises from the seat. The pattern is finished with the elbows dropping and the hands falling in and down as the body relaxes and opens to sit back down onto the chair.

What does all this mean? The figure eight pattern is more than just a swish of the hand, there is a ribbon of energy that flows with information throughout the system. The center of the eight is a cross

over of information and direction. A yang pattern runs one direction with flow, while the yin travels opposite, they cross over in the middle and exchange or create liaison points for the system. As well, the ribbon is not flat but full and flowing, within its core are layers like the auric field that transfer energy about the physical body, lower body, mind and spirit, and then the higher body, mind and spirit. Anywhere within this loop can have a warp or a collapse, and in such a case the trajectory of the flow can be altered, and the information can be lost. As well, a shift of flow with yin and yang can create a beaver dam of flow where one flow can cross over into the other flow. To get an idea of this flow, look at the video of the yin and yang symbol at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FI3Eg5jKsaY>.



With a vision board, a marble can be pushed or rolled along the pathway with the yin pattern travelling down the middle first, and then the yang pattern going up in the middle next. If you imagine both patterns travelling together, you can see how they will share space and support each other when the flow is balanced.

In Qi YINtegration we use Kundalini Rising to link up the figure eight patterns both inside and outside of our physical body and its corresponding connections. The Wishing Jar dance also has similar actions and activities. Many belly dancing moves also have figure eight patterns through the hips, torso and legs, as well as the arms and fingers with mudras. There are so many ways we can connect.

Cook's hookups can also be helpful for this pattern. Goal setting, relaxing, energizing, calming and more can happen with Wayne Cook's protocol. First cross the right ankle over the left or vice versa, then cross the right wrist over the left and turn the palms towards each other so that the fingers can link. Put the tongue on the roof of the mouth and breath deeply for at least 60 seconds. Part two, place the ankles side by side, put the finger tips of both hands together and place the hands in front of the belly button. Keep the tongue on the roof of the mouth. Breath deeply and hold this for at least 60 seconds. This can be done sitting, standing or lying down. It realigns the whole body. I use the body pendulum to shift weight with the second position when everything is aligned.

Brain Gym International uses the figure eights to link up the hemispheres of the brain and coordinate the eyes and proprioception by tracing the eight on a picture or with a pen, or using the arm outstretched and imitating an elephant to trace a figure eight in space with movement through the feet and the whole body.

The Tibetan Figure Eight Mini workshop created by Bruce Dewe and Joan Dewe provides many ways for the figure eight patterns to be assessed and then strengthened. This includes larger patterns and smaller patterns as well as spirals and vortices. Using muscle monitoring the areas of challenge can be identified so that a focus can be placed on these areas rather than doing a whole set of exercises that might not be necessary.

More information about the figure eight pattern can be found in:

"Tibetan Energy and Vitality Workshop" by Bruce and Joan Dewe and taught by a Touch for Health Instructor.

"The complete edition of Touch for Health" by John and Matthew Thie.

"Energetic Kinesiology: Principles and Practice" by Charles Krebs and Tania O'Neill McGowan