

Meditation is like work?

by Andrew L. McCart



Imagine the office or factory manager who demands that his employees regularly work around the clock. The manager gives the employees poor wages, no breaks, ignores their feedback, and only pays attention to them when there's a problem.

What would the employees do in a scenario like this?

What would you do if your employer was like this?

I think most of us would imagine the employees going on strike, eventually getting burned out, walking off the job, or just dropping dead altogether. Unfortunately, the way this factory manager treats his employees is how many people treat their internal organs. When was the last time we invested in our relationship with our spleen? Or had a daily check-in and conversation with our physical and emotional heart? Do we hear people talk about their gallbladder, other than when there is a serious problem? The Taoists believe that listening to the feedback of our organs helps us modify our lifestyle in order to modify our death style.

Forming a relationship and having routine check-ins with our organs is exactly what **The Inner Smile Meditation** is designed to do. By having a relationship with our organs, we know what makes them happy, sad, function well, and what stifles the many unconscious processes they do on our behalf every minute. Further, according to the Taoist view of the body, each organ is associated with an element, a color, virtues, and aspects of nature (not to mention planets, times of day, phases of the moon, stars and constellations, tastes, smells, gem stones, etc. etc.) Strengthening these aspects inside of us strengthens our connection to these aspects of the natural world outside of us.

By interacting with your organs and keeping the color and positive virtue in mind while expressing gratitude for what the organs do, we are speaking the language of that organ and it can more clearly hear us. It is not necessary to learn and memorize every characteristic of the Taoist five element theory.

For the practice of The Inner Smile and experiencing more peace inside the body, it can be helpful to learn the color and one positive virtue for each organ.

Many of these are intuitive, based on are cultural language and norms. For instance the color for the heart is red and the positive virtue is love. In the meditation of the inner smile, one thinks about love and visualizes a pleasing color of red, while expressing gratitude to the heart for pumping blood around the body.

When we energetically and meditatively bathe the heart in love or the other organs in their associated colors and virtues, it creates the field around the organs that is copied and passed on to the next generation of cells as the cells divide. Then, exponentially we are quickly reprogramming our organs every time we practice the inner smile. The table below provides the bare basics of the organs' characteristics, such as their colors and positive virtues.

Organ	Color	Virtues	Season	Element
Heart	Red	Love, Joy, Happiness	Summer	Fire
Lungs	White	Strength, Courage	Autumn	Metal
Liver	Green	Kindness, forgiveness	Spring	Wood
Spleen	Yellow	Stability, Trust	Indian Summer	Earth
Kidneys	Blue	Creativity, Gentleness	Winter	Water

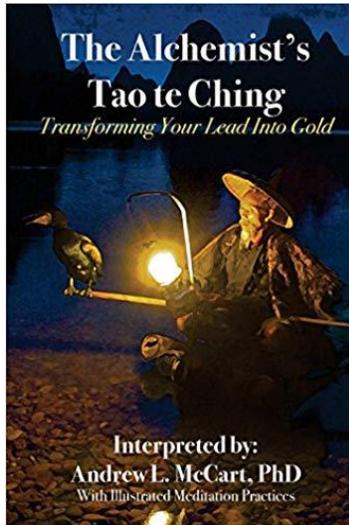
Furthermore, the Inner Smile meditation is about acceptance. It is about noticing and acknowledging 'what is' and saying 'thank you.' It is not about judging ourselves, berating our organs for not being better, or regretting the time we spent ignoring and taking for granted our most important vital functions. We already know how to out ourselves down.

One end result of this Taoist system, or any spiritual path, is an acceptance of creation and finding oneself at peace with the universe and all that it contains. A feeling of connectedness with all of the manifest and nonmanifest world is an experience sages throughout time have explained explicitly or implicitly. Where better to begin this process than in one's own body? And of course, if we can't experience peace in our body, what hope do we have or feeling connected to all of creation? I believe this Taoist system allows the practitioner to build this feeling from the ground up, so the interrelated feeling with creation is hard-wired into the very being of the practitioner. There are stories of instant enlightenment, but I believe the method of slowly building spiritual virtue in the body is akin to investing for retirement, versus hoping to hit the lottery.

In closing, at a minimum, **one can simply put one's hands over the heart and say thank you.** This draws the energy of gratitude to the heart. Then, if you want to visualize red, feel love, and even look at the

anatomical picture of the heart and other organs, it'll only serve to strengthen the meditative experience, and thus the overall well-being.

From The Alchemist's Tao Te Ching, by Andrew McCart



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