

DO-IN: AN ANCIENT TRADITION OF SELF-MASSAGE

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What exactly is DO-IN and why learn about it? The knowledge of DO-IN is one of the most healing, self-empowering gifts I have ever received. DO-IN (pronounced dough-eeen) originates from the ancient traditions of the Far East and has been brought to the West by Michio Kushi, his contemporaries and his students. Based mainly on the time-tested principles of acupuncture, it is a simple, safe and easy method of balancing the energy flow in our body. DO-IN is the perfect morning routine to clear our mind, put us in a good disposition, get our organs and body parts working and give us a good source of energy. It also makes a great mid-day break activity to quickly relax us and recharge us. Normally done in a kneeling position, we can modify it into a standing or sitting position so it can be easily be done in our home or office. We can even do parts of it sitting in our car, waiting for traffic to move. (Who cares what other people think!) It's free, it feels good while we're doing it and it can easily be taught to others.

How does DO-IN work? It is a series of rubbing, tapping, twisting, pulling, and gentle massaging on the body's skin-deep pressure points located on our meridians, the channels that transmit electro-magnetic energy (chi, ki, prana) throughout various parts of our body and its organs. (Our bodies need this energy flow to maintain good health.) Through these points we access the energy to our whole body, not only releasing hardness and stagnation from the muscles, joints and tissues, but also reaching our inner organs, directly or indirectly, to re-establish the proper flow when necessary.

With DO-IN we do not have to be experts. Although I recommend knowing the location of all our organs, it is not necessary to know their exact location or their pressure points because with Do-IN we cover areas broad enough to effect them. As we massage or move parts of our body, we not only bring more energy to them, help lubricate them, and/or make them more flexible, we can also effect a corresponding body part. For example, massaging various parts of the hand helps with constipation, cramps, headache, heart and respiratory problems. Tapping or rubbing parts of the head not only benefits the brain, eyes, ears, sinuses, gums, teeth, jaws, and skin, it also benefits the intestines, bladder, gall bladder, liver, stomach, kidneys, lungs, and reproductive organs. It can even help release tension, ease TMD (temporomandibular dysfunction, formerly know as TMJ syndrome) and reduce hemorrhoids! Tapping our thymus, however, is the most important and most recommended daily exercise for us to remember because the thymus gland is our immune-system booster and it's special gift is to bring together love energies of the heart the creative communication of the throat into total loving communication..

Although both men and women benefit from DO-IN, there are even more benefits for women. We all need to keep our lymph functioning properly to remove bacteria and foreign particles, but it is especially important for us women to tap the nodes under and around our arm pits to keep them clear to help avoid breast cancer. As we age, we women also are in more need of regenerating our bone cells. DO-IN gives us a simple leg and heel tapping exercise that will help. Combined with breathing and visual exercises, these are especially efficacious.

We all benefit by touch and massage and we all benefit from nurturing ourselves and getting as much knowledge about our body as we can. If you already receive massage or other pressure-point healing treatments on a regular basis, congratulations. Your whole

body greatly appreciates it. If you don't get regular massage, you owe it to yourself to at least learn about self-massage, especially if you don't have a companion or child to rub an aching muscle or at least share a hug with you. Loving touch is vital for health.

If you think you don't have enough time to learn DO-IN, think again. If you only have five minutes a day, you can do the thymus tap, head and feet massage and/or work on whatever you feel is most important. DO-IN can easily be adapted to incorporate with any other program you are currently doing for yourself. Many similar exercise principles are used in warm-ups for Yoga, Tai Chi and Chi Kung (Qiqong). If you don't have time in the morning, you can do it when you need an energy break followed by a glass of pure water. This will be far better than consuming coffee, tea, or soda for energy and thirst.

Knowledge put to use is power. DO-IN may not replace other forms of massage or pressure point methods of bodywork, but it does enhance them and keeps us in better balance between visits. When paired with good nutrition and daily exercise, the regular practice of DO-IN helps assure us of a constant supply of energy that keeps our nervous system and emotions in peak condition, too. The higher purpose of DO-IN is to help us unite with the vibrations of the universe that relate to our intuition, our judgement and our spiritual guidance, thereby helping us more easily deal with the great changes that are now occurring in so many of our lives.