

六字诀 *Liu Zi Jue* 'Six Character Formula'

The *Liu Zi Jue* "Six Character Formula" or 'Secret' was first described by a leading Daoist and Chinese Medicine practitioner, *Tao Hongjing* of the Northern and Southern dynasties, 420 - 589 C.E. The series originally involved diaphragmatic breathing techniques combined with chanting of specialised healing sounds. Slow rhythmic movements were later added to strengthen the therapeutic effect.

The sequence regulates the rise and fall of *qi* in body through pronunciation of the six syllables. Each of the vocalisations creates a unique vibration that resonates with an element and corresponding organ. This helps to rid turbidity or 'detoxify', and guide healing energy to the viscera. The coordination of the body movements helps to circulate the breath and *qi* through the blood and channels to nourish the tissues. The sound of the fire element supplements the heart and treats emotional disturbances; the wood sound calms the liver for eye problems and rising *qi*; the earth sound fortifies the spleen (stomach), aiding digestive diseases; the metal supplements the lungs, benefiting skin, dryness, chest and nasal illness; water reinforces the kidneys for coldness, back and joint pain, fertility and the ears; an additional fire sound regulates the *sanjiao* 'triple burner' the three organ cavities of the body (upper-thoracic, middle-abdominal, lower-pelvic) for heat conditions.

The method is to inhale through the nose and then exhale through one of six different tongue and mouth shapes. Variations may include use of audible intonations or 'mantras', whilst others recommend remaining silent and reciting the word in the mind. Some also include changes in air pressure expelled and degree of throat constriction. At times in its history, the five musical notes of Chinese pentatonic scale have been employed in the process too as has practice in accord with the four seasons. The six forms are:-

1	嘘	<i>Xu</i>	(<i>shoe</i>)	'Sighing sound'	Wood	Liver
2	呵	<i>He</i>	(<i>her</i>)	'Laughing sound'	Fire	Heart
3	呼	<i>Hu</i>	(<i>who</i>)	'Exhaling sound'	Earth	Spleen
4	呬	<i>Si</i>	(<i>sir</i>)	'Breathing sound'	Metal	Lungs
5	吹	<i>Chui</i>	(<i>ch-way</i>)	'Blowing sound'	Water	Kidneys
6	嘻	<i>Xi</i>	(<i>she</i>)	'Giggling sound'	Fire	Triple Burner

