

Ki – Energy (Life)



The ancients understood that the body was primarily liquids: water and blood. Water becomes active when heated, such as boiling water inside of a pot by placing the pot over a fire. The ancients considered your breath hot, akin to fire. On a cold winter's day, it's normal to breath on your hands to warm them up. A deep exhale produces steam against the cold air.

During Neh Gong Bup, activating the breath (heat) stimulates the blood, generating Ki, which can be translated as life energy. As the blood is "warmed" through the breath, it moves more easily through the body, providing life to our cells. This process can be described by the character for "Ki" on the right.

Breath is an essential element in Moo Duk Kwan training. Our sincere effort in training can be categorized in three distinct areas: Shim Gong or mental effort, Neh Gong or internal effort, and Weh Gong external effort.

The three work together as follows:

- **Shim Gong** is our sincere mental effort in training. The process must start with the right intention to arrive at the right result. This intention is called Uido. If the intent is always focused on the dan jun, we can maintain proper choong shim, or a centered mind.
- **Neh Gong** is our sincere internal effort in training and focuses on breath. The breath comes from the dan jun. As you inhale, the dan jun expands like a bellows, in all directions, not only the front of the body. Direct your mind to the dan jun and imagine your lower spine expanding when you inhale and your dan jun contracting while you exhale. Referring to the character above, breathing heats the dan jun, which cooks the rice, which provides energy to the body. Some techniques require "reverse breathing" where the dan jun contracts on inhale and expands on exhale.
- **Weh Gong** is our sincere physical effort in training and focuses around the huri. The huri, or the waist, houses the dan jun and is the focus of our mind intention. Connecting to the earth with a strong jaseh and then shifting and twisting the huri, creates the proper line, speed, and beauty (sun sok mi) of our technique.

Beginning with the right mind intention and focusing on the dan jun creates the proper breathing. The proper breathing provides the energy (ki) to move the body via the huri. Connecting all three results in the right action.

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