

# Simple Soother

DANTIANS = the body's three reservoirs of energy, located between the eyes, the middle of the chest, and below the navel

rejuvenate

*Life is stressful*, and it's not unusual to feel fearful or anxious on occasion. A common symptom is the sense that you are "not in your own skin." This feeling is caused by your energy, or *qi*, rising up and out of your body, according to Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). In TCM, fear is believed to spring from the kidneys, and anxiety is thought to be a sign of disharmony between the kidneys and the heart. This simple centering practice creates harmony between the middle and lower *dantians*, which can keep you calm in times of stress.

This exercise is designed to ground your energy, bringing you back to earth by reconnecting you with your breath and your center, says Shoshanna Katzman, L.Ac., author of *Qigong for Staying Young*. Keep your eyes open throughout the exercise so that you are fully present in your body.

**1 | choose a comfortable place to sit,** preferably away from other people. Sit up straight and keep feet flat on the floor. Imagine, and feel, your feet being rooted and connected to the earth.

**2 | place one hand on your chest** (at your middle dantian) to nourish the energy of the heart, which "houses the mind." Place your other hand on your belly just below your navel (at your lower dantian) to nourish the energy of the kidneys.

**3 | begin taking slow, deep breaths;** concentrate on your body expanding and contracting. Visualize your energy sinking lower and lower into your body. Breathing into the lower dantian strengthens kidney energy and helps release fear and anxiety. In doing so, you create more stability, becoming more centered and secure with in yourself. Continue this breathing exercise for one to three minutes. ✦

