

PLEASE NOTE !

Gentle Gym exercises, like any exercise program, should only be attempted by persons who are generally in good health, and should not be attempted by anyone with any illness, disease, injury or other physical condition or disability which might make such exercises dangerous.

Please consult your physician before beginning any exercise program. The exercises, instruction and guidelines presented in Gentle Gym are not intended to override or take the place of proper medical advice or supervision.

For optimal results, please read the enclosed URU Self Discovery booklet before you begin Gentle Gym.

INTRODUCTION

When we hear the word exercise, we often think of conditioning our muscles through weightlifting or other rigorous movements like calisthenics, aerobics or jogging. There seems to be little or no emphasis on what we can do to strengthen and condition who we are on the inside.

According to ancient Mazdaznan teachings, good health, harmony and balance can be achieved from within. This is why Mazdaznans have put together a series of enlivening relaxation exercises called "Gentle Gym" that are great for the mind, body and soul.

Gentle Gym exercises naturally stimulate and bring into motion the most sensitive system in our body --- the endocrine glandular system. Stimulating our glands is like food for the brain; they are the key factors in our living processes. Our glands affect all our internal operations like digestion, breathing and circulation.

The glands in our body function as a cohesive unit. If one is not working properly, it causes the other glands to become unbalanced, automatically affecting one another similar to the domino effect. So, performing exercises that stimulate all our glands will help make them work more harmoniously, keeping us well balanced, mentally alert and energized.

WHAT MODERN SCIENCE TELLS US ABOUT THE GLANDS

Our bodies are controlled by three operational systems: the circulatory system, the nervous system and the endocrine glandular system. Although all three systems are vital to our quality of life, there is one in particular that is considered the governing system, responsible for controlling all our bodily functions --- the endocrine glandular system.

The endocrine glandular system is composed of a group of glands whose function is to produce hormones that will regulate and maintain a well-balanced internal environment. Other hormones produced in the body by glands such as the sweat glands and salivary glands pass through tubes or ducts. For the most part, this is not the case for the hormones produced by the endocrine glands. With the exception of the gonad glands, hormones of the endocrine glands are secreted directly into our internal environment, and do not pass through tubes or ducts. This allows them to be transmitted via the bloodstream to distant points in the body, instead of being used only in the vicinity of the gland.

The regulation of bodily functions by the endocrine system depends on how the hormones are received in each of the targeted points in the body (i.e. the organs). For this reason, each organ has specific receptor cells that are designed to respond in specialized ways to whatever amount of hormones have been released to them. They are also responsible for regulating hormone

levels. Some endocrine hormones affect nearly all body cells; some affect only one organ. Either way, they are essential to regulating and controlling the growth and development of our internal functions.

Although there are several endocrine glands to speak of, we will be focusing on six: the pituitary gland, the adrenal glands, the thyroid gland, the gonad glands, the thymus gland and the pineal gland.

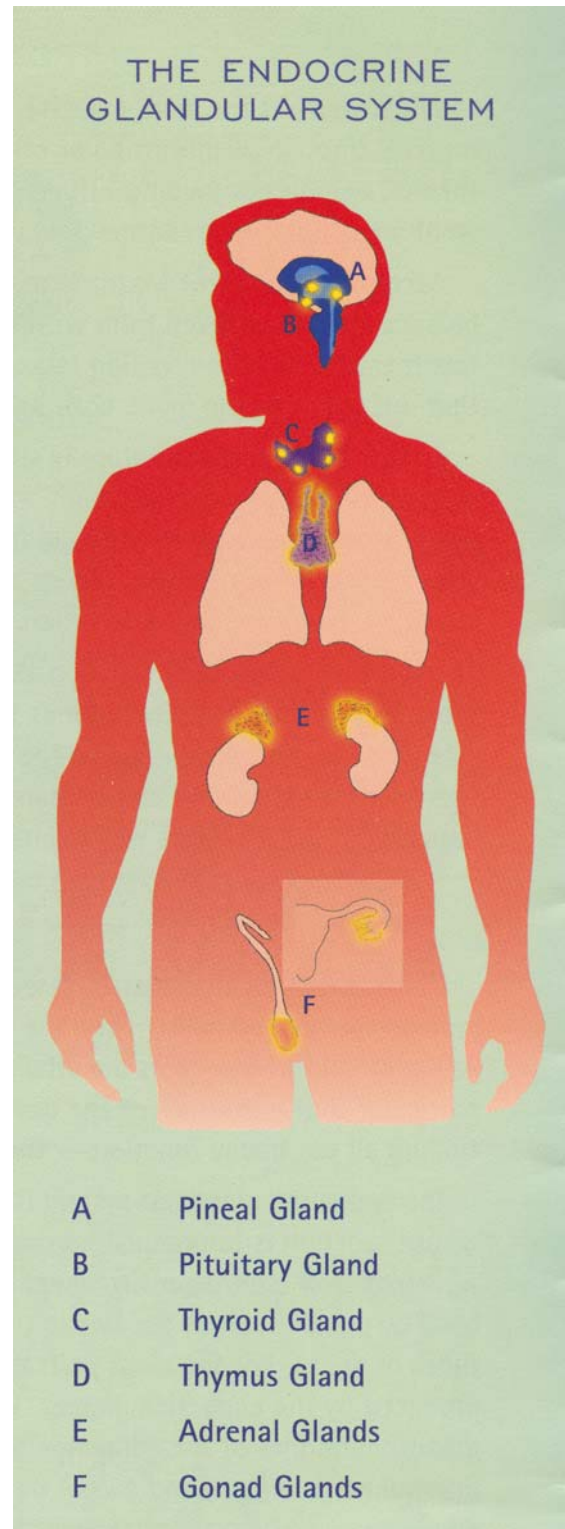
The pituitary gland is considered the master gland because it regulates many of the other endocrine glands. Located at the base of the brain, it secretes at least five hormones that directly affect the other endocrine glands. Some of the hormones it releases are : the adrenocorticotropic hormone (ACTH), which regulates the activity of the adrenal cortex; and three gonadotropic hormones --- the follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH), luteinizing hormone (LH) and luteotropic hormone (LTH) --- which control the growth and reproductive activities of the gonad glands (or sex glands).

The adrenal glands, which are controlled by the pituitary gland, sit on the top of the kidneys and consist of an inner and outer part. The outer part, called the adrenal cortex, is essential to life as it secretes hormones that regulate salt concentration in body fluids and glucose, fat and protein metabolism. The inner part, called the adrenal medulla, secretes epinephrine (adrenaline) and norepinephrine, which are needed to help the body respond to danger or stress.

Also controlled by the pituitary gland are the thyroid gland and the gonad glands (also called the sex glands). Located on both sides and in front of the windpipe, the thyroid gland secretes two important hormones: thyroxin, which controls the metabolic rate of most body cells and calcitonin, which maintains proper calcium serum levels in the body.

The gonad glands, as you might guess, are essential to reproduction. In males, the testes produce the hormone testosterone, which controls the development of the male sex organs as well as secondary sex characteristics. In females, progesterone and estrogen are produced, which control the female sex organs, regulate the secondary sex characteristics and prepare the uterine lining for implantation of a fertilized egg.

Other endocrine glands that are not directly controlled by the pituitary are the thymus gland and



the pineal gland. The thymus gland secretes hormones that are responsible for the development of the immune system. The pineal gland produces melatonin, which has an influence over the development of the male and female sex glands.

WHAT ANCIENT WISDOM TELL US ABOUT THE GLANDS

The Mazdaznan glandular exercises were introduced to the western world in the early 1920s. However, western science has only recently begun to realize that there are certain phenomenas which cannot be explained unless we dare to expand our mental and spiritual horizons. As a result, topics such as the positive health effects of a well-balanced vegetarian diet, deep breathing, positive thought meditation and more sensitive body exercising are gaining more exposure as health professionals recognize their value. We are happy to see that science has been moving in this direction and validating the practical Mazdaznan teachings.

It is through keen observation and intuitive practice that Mazdaznan teachers have been able to look at the mental and spiritual effects that the endocrine glands have on the human body and its chemistry, emotions and development. Mazdaznans believe that to more fully realize the importance of the endocrine glands, in regard to how Gentle Gym exercises will affect our overall well being, we must look not only at their relationship to the physical, but to the mental and emotional dimensions, as well.

It has long been argued that human beings have not even begun to scratch the surface when it comes to using our mind power to its full potential. It is this concept that fuels our discussion about exercising the glands. Consider that only a small portion of our brain is in use, while the rest is waiting for further development.

According to ancient Mazdaznan teachings, the glands are responsible for charging and recharging brain cells, which directly affect our mental development. As the brain cells are recharged, other cells that have been dormant become charged, allowing new thought waves to surface in our minds. Through this process, our minds will continue to develop to a higher level of consciousness, making new realms in life possible.

When looked at individually, each gland affects our mental development. The pituitary gland controls perception and reveals our thinking. About the size of a pea, the pituitary is the gland of energy and pep, transmitting great vitality to the mind. Without the pituitary being fully conditioned, we have no reasoning power. Therefore, proper conditioning of this gland is important, especially when difficult situations arise and we need greater power to cope, reason and comprehend that which is unsettled in our lives.

The thymus gland affects our understanding and gives us confidence, assurance and faith. When the thymus is not conditioned properly, we tend to get discouraged easily and perceive things to be "wrong" in our lives. On the other hand, when fully conditioned, we might experience a change of mind or a degree of subjection that will allow us to experience happiness and joy in our life.

The adrenal glands are considered the strength center of our body, giving us our physical and mental firepower. The more we develop our adrenal glands, the stronger our qualities of perception become and the greater activity our brain will experience.

The thyroid gland controls our intuitive powers and gives us determination and tenacity. When the thyroid gland is being exercised, powers within are being ignited or illuminated, enabling us to take great strides forward in our lives.

When under control and properly conditioned, the gonad glands give us foresight, a strong, clear voice, ambition and the power of application. They are also responsible for helping us to delve into the spiritual, ethical and moral realms, giving us a broader understanding of all things.

Lastly, buried deep within the lobes of the mid-brain, the pineal gland monitors all of the operations of the brain. By developing this gland, we are giving color to our outlook and raising our level of awareness amongst others in the world.

GENTLE GYM : A COMBINATION OF BREATH, SOUND, MOVEMENT & CONCENTRATION

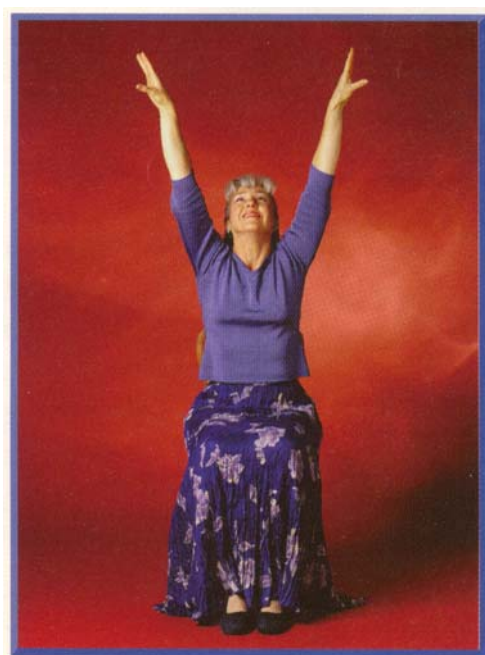
The Gentle Gym exercises are designed to stimulate or "stir" the endocrine glands, enhancing mental development and restoring health and vitality in your life. But what do the exercises actually entail and how can you get the most benefit when performing them?

The important fact to realize is that Gentle Gym consists of a series of "active" relaxation exercises, meaning that they include exercises that move your body from head to toe, but are meant to be done in a peaceful state, void of tension. In order to make this happen, Gentle Gym exercises utilize the combination of breath, sound, movement and concentration

Conscious breathing is an essential part of these exercises. Inhaling allows the lungs to take in the natural energy in the air, while exhaling gets rid of the harmful carbons in your body, allowing the blood to circulate better. Therefore, taking deep breaths before performing each exercise will help ensure that your body is in a relaxed state. Combined with the natural exhalation that occurs, your blood will be properly circulated for increased energy.

Joyful singing is also an integral part of the Gentle Gym exercises. Through song, tones of your voice and vowel sounds cause an inward vibration, while the natural vibrations from within are released outward. These vibrations through song, when coordinated with outward body movements, will help to establish harmony throughout your entire body and your mind by releasing tension within.

Finally, when performing these exercises, you must be conscious to everything you are doing --- all motions, words and melodies. By involving yourself in every exercise, you will automatically be exercising the mind through thought. When you consider that one of the most important outcomes of practicing these exercises daily is to stimulate mental development, this makes perfect sense. You will find that the more present you are to what's going on, the more relaxed your body will be naturally.



The Relaxing Breath: conscious breathing is an essential part of these exercises.

THE GENTLE GYM EXERCICES

Gentle Gym relaxation exercises are a wonderful source of energy and help make you feel invigorated. You will find that the combination of singing and movement is enjoyed by people of all ages, from young children to seniors. The exercises should be practiced daily to get the most benefit, and it is recommended that you perform them first thing in the morning, before eating breakfast. You will find it is an empowering way to start your day!

The Gentle Gym exercises are divided into six groups according to the glands they are designed to stimulate. However, you will notice that we have not designated a specific grouping of exercises for the pineal gland. This is because, collectively, the Gentle Gym exercises will stimulate this gland automatically. Remember, the pineal gland is the regulator for the brain and is responsible for all its operations. This being so, because you are doing these exercises consciously, giving thought to your movements, breathing and song, you are automatically stirring this gland.

All the exercises are done sitting on a chair or bench (preferably one without arms), keeping your back straight and legs and arms relaxed. Each exercise is performed twice and taking deep breaths before each exercise is vital.

Stimulating the Pituitary Gland

1. Move your head slowly forward and back (perform twice)
2. Move your head from side to side beginning to your left (perform twice)
3. Gently rotate your head to the left, keeping your eyes open (reverse and repeat this exercise)

For the next three exercises it's important that you follow your hands with your eyes, keeping your head still.

4. Move your hands up and down (perform twice)
5. Move your hands in circles (reverse and repeat this exercise)
6. Move your hands side to side beginning to your left (perform twice)

Before starting the next set of exercises, take more deep breaths.



Stimulating the Thymus Gland

1. With loose fists, gently pound your upper chest area in a circular motion to your left (reverse direction and repeat this exercise)
2. With your fingertips, trace your ribcage to the sternum and vibrate with your fingertips to the melody (perform twice)
3. Loosely whirl your hands around each other (reverse direction and repeat this exercise)

Before starting the next set of exercises, take more deep breaths.



Stimulating the Thyroid Gland

1. Start by placing your thumbs near your armpit circling your shoulders forward (repeat this exercise, circling your shoulders back)
2. Swing your arms in and out, crossing your arms in front (perform twice)
3. Swing your arms in big circles (reverse direction and repeat this exercise)
4. Move your arms up and down (perform twice)
5. Like you're skiing, extend your arms forward and circle them back with elbows bent (reverse direction and repeat this exercise)



Before starting the next set of exercises, take more deep breaths.

Stimulating the Adrenal Glands

1. Give yourself a big hug and rock forward and back (perform twice)
2. Still hugging, twist from left to right (perform twice)
3. Still hugging, rotate your body from the waist in circles (reverse direction and repeat this exercise)
4. Reach your arms forward in a rowing motion, making sure that your entire body is partaking in the rowing motion (reverse direction and repeat this exercise)
5. Placing your arms in front of you and sitting on the edge of your chair, gently bounce as though you are a jockey on a horse (perform twice and accelerate your movement each time)



Before starting the next set of exercises, take more deep breaths.

Stimulating the Gonad Glands

1. Lift up off your chairs and reach your arms up toward the sky (perform twice)
2. Staying seated, march in place starting with your left foot (repeat this exercise, starting with your right foot)
3. Staying seated, bounce both feet up and clown together (perform twice)
4. Seated again, cross your legs one over the other starting with your left leg (repeat this exercise, starting with your right foot)
5. Seated, rotate both your ankles to the left (reverse direction and repeat this exercise)
6. With loose fists and wrists, move up and down your legs massaging as you go, starting with your left (perform twice)



GENTLE GYM AND U-R-U

The U-R-U Self Discovery System recognizes that you are unique and helps you determine your base, which will act as your guide toward healthier diet, exercise and breathing. The concept is simple: if you want to improve your overall well being and attain a harmonious lifestyle, then you must choose an improvement program that fits your individual needs.

U-R-U reveals whether you are practically based, spiritually based or analytically based. Once your base has been determined, it will help you to know which areas you will need to cultivate the most in order to experience balance throughout your body. The Gentle Gym exercises can drastically aid in helping you achieve balance.

Referring to the U-R-U booklet, you may recall that there is a body region from where you gain strength, depending on your base. If you are practically based, your abdominal region is your stronghold; if you are spiritually based, it is your pelvic area; and if you are analytically based, you have your chest area as a source of strength. Keeping this in mind, depending on which body region each exercise is stimulating, you can determine which will best strengthen your base. For example, Gentle Gym exercises that work your mid-body region are best for those that are practically based, those that use the upper section of your body are great for those that are analytically based, and the exercises that use your lower body are designed to strengthen those that are spiritually based.

Practicing the Gentle Gym exercises daily will help you gain health, strength and vitality in your

life. Through U-R-U and the Life4Sys Programs, you can begin a systematic method of living that includes selecting your food according to your base (Colorfood), practicing rhythmic breathing to feed your brain (En-Air-Getics) and developing a proper exercise routine (Gentle Gym) that will fit your specific needs.

REFERENCES

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ABOUT THE SPONSORS

The Mazdaznan Temple Association as a contribution to the welfare of the individual, the community and the world sponsors the Life4Sys Program. It is available to all persons interested in improving their lives.

We encourage you to try the Life4Sys Program. We believe it will help enhance your overall quality of life as it teaches you to achieve your highest potential.

Alfonso R. Calderon, Life4Sys Program Director and his wife Almut Schroeder, are highly trained in and dedicated to the principles and practices of Life4Sys. They and their fellow instructors look forward to meeting you and helping you move toward your goal of a happier, healthier life.

To obtain more information about the Life4-Sys program, please contact :

Life4-Sys
4364 Bonita Road, #617
Bonita, CA 91902-1421, USA
Toll free (888) LIFE484, (888) 543-3484
FAX (619) 470-9484
<http://wwwv.life4sys.org>