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What is Nei Dan ?

The following poem is probably the best description of what Nei Dan is. Nei Dan which has 5000 years of history helps the practitioner to produce “jing”(精), the essence of life which includes good hormones and enzymes. These modern scientific terms were obviously unknown to people in ancient times, hence the use of a more inclusive term “jing”.

「煉精化氣氣化神、煉神還虛保自身
自身自有靈丹藥、何需深山把藥尋」

Nei Dan is about producing jing which leads to chi and chi to spirit. With the spirit uniting with God we will then preserve our body. Our body has actually all the medicine we need. Why do we need to go to the mountain to seek for herbs ?

In the Nei Dan Sutra(太上老君內丹經), we are advised to quiet and purify our body and heart by regularly practicing Nei Dan(夫煉大丹者，精勤功行，清靜身心). When we are quiet within and without, our chi and spirit will be steady and calm and the universal chi will be with us(內外安靜，神定氣和，元氣自降).

The Sutra continues by encouraging us to ensure that we preserve our spirit within our body because this will lead to healthy and long life(神不離身、身乃長健).

The Sutra concludes that the spirit within the spirit is the Tao of Nature(God) and we need to follow the Tao of Nature(神中有神是我自然之道也).