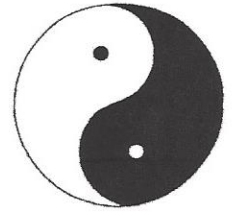


# T'ai Chi Chih®

## Tips on Moving



### 1) RESTING POSE

**The Upper Body:** The head should be suspended from the crown; the shoulders rolled back and relaxed (slightly concave); the spine erect, lengthening at both ends; elbows hanging loosely at sides and the hands floating, palms facing downward at sides.

**The Lower Body:** The feet are <sup>in a "V" position or up</sup> up to about hip width apart in a comfortable stance; the ankles should be softened to release tension; the knees slightly bent over the toes and softened to release tension; the hips are slightly tilted with the tailbone comfortably tucked under and the waist is soft and pliable.

**FOCUS:** Attempt to keep the ankles and knees relaxed. Comfortably tuck in the tailbone and keep the mental focus at the soles of the feet. Take a vacation from your thoughts and rest in stillness.

### 2) THE THREE LEVELS OF MOVEMENT

**Resting Pose:** See above for posture tips. From the resting pose, we ready ourselves to begin movement. All movements begin from the resting pose and end with the resting pose. The jin-chi and the yang-chi flow together in the resting pose.

**Sinking/Moving:** From the resting position, sink a bit lower to begin the movement. This is done by softening the ankles and knees and shifting the weight to the leg remaining in place while stepping either forward or to the side. Once we have sunk the body, the other leg steps out (either forward or to the side) and the foot is placed in the heel down/toe up position. We are now ready to begin the weight shift from one leg to the other. We stay at the level to which we have sunk to perform the movement(s). When we are ready to conclude a set of movements we rise and assume a standing position before returning to the Resting Pose.

**Standing:** The standing position is assumed when all the rotations have been done and the outstretched foot is brought back into place. We rise up, standing as it were, in order to bring in the foot and then move into Resting Pose to conclude the movement(s). The standing posture is essential to completing the move efficiently and appropriately. It allows comfortable retraction of the outstretched leg. We do not stay in the standing position very long, but it is an important part of each movement, providing welcome relief to the lower back.

### 3) LEG MOVEMENTS

#### FRONT/BACK

**Left Side:** Soften the knees, shift the weight onto the right foot, lift the left heel and step out, heel down and toe up. (No body weight moves, it is as if the heel is resting on a blade of grass that you do not want to crush.) Then release the front knee/leg and let the weight roll forward as the foot flattens. Continue the weight shift until the knee



comes over the foot and the right heel begins to come off the floor naturally (all by itself – do not assist by lifting the heel.) Begin the front to back leg movement, shifting the weight forward (be sure to stiffen the back leg, but don't lock the knee all the way.) Let the back heel lift only slightly off the floor. Then shift the weight back allowing the toes to lift up (be sure to stiffen the front leg but don't lock the knee) As the weight shifts forward, the front knee bends (releases) and the left leg becomes the substantial or weight bearing leg. The back leg straightens. As the weight shifts to the back leg (right leg), the right knee bends (releases) as the right leg becomes the substantial leg and the front (left) leg straightens. The knees never lock.

**Right Side:** Done in the same manner as for the left side.

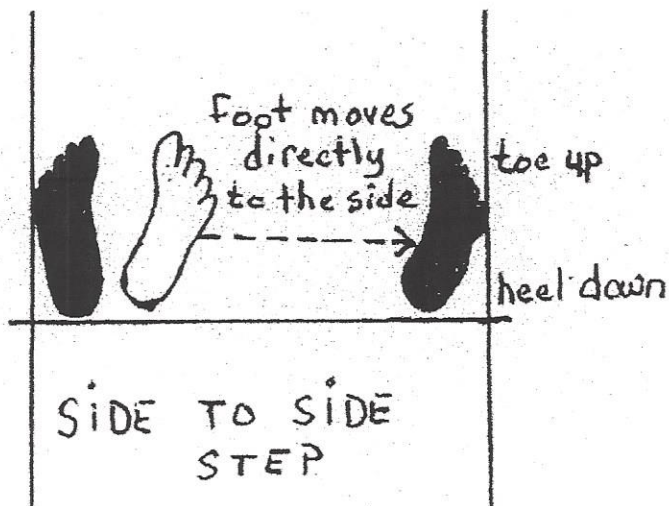
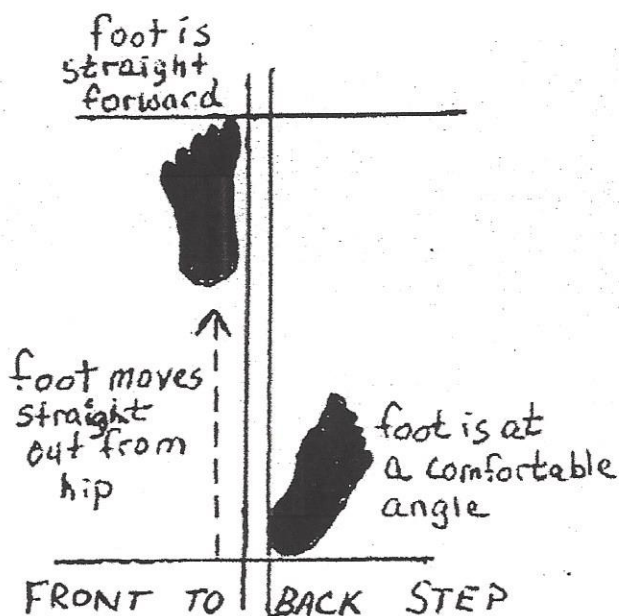
### SIDE-TO-SIDE

**Left Side:** From the Resting Pose, soften the knees, shift the weight to the right, lift the left heel and side step straight out to the side, heel down and toe up. (No body weight moves, it is as if the heel is resting on a blade of grass that you do not want to crush.) Then release the left knee/leg and let the weight roll onto the foot as the weight is shifted and the foot flattens. When the weight is fully shifted, bring the right foot over to rest by the left foot to conclude. Be sure the heel steps out straight to the side, your left and right heels should be in alignment. Allow the knee to bend to start the weight shift.

## 4.) FOOT PLACEMENT

The foot stepping out to the front or to the side moves straight forward out from the hip or straight out to the side in the side-to-side movements, except in Anchor Taffy where a slightly pigeon toed front step is used. The foot moving forward does not move out at an angle to the side. Be sure to check your stance to see that feet are aligned properly. One can not move properly unless the feet are in the correct position.

The back foot can be placed at an angle somewhere between 45 to 90 degrees – to your level of comfort. This is also the foot with which you can adjust your stance. Using the front foot may be awkward.



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