



TAI CHI CHUAN

FOR HEALTH, FITNESS AND SELF DEFENSE

Improve the Quality of Your Life - Clear Mind Clutter - Enjoy Meditation in Motion

Tai Chi Chuan can:

Help reduce stress and anxiety

Strengthen your immune system

Increase circulation & flexibility

Improve posture, balance and concentration

Restore vitality

Once you learn the form, it's yours for life.

"Tai Chi Chuan, the great ultimate fist, strengthens the weak, raises the sick, invigorates the debilitated, and encourages the timid."

Grandmaster Cheng Man-Ching

An early Tai Chi master once wrote that the ultimate purpose of learning Tai Chi is to live forever in the spring season of your life.

Of all the exercises, I should say that Tai Chi is the best.

It can ward off disease, banish worry and tension, bring improved physical health and prolong life. It is a good hobby for your whole life, the older you are, the better. It is suitable for everyone - the weak, the sick, the aged, children, the disabled and blind. It is also an economical exercise. As long as one has three square feet of space, one can take a trip to paradise and stay there to enjoy life for thirty minutes without spending a single cent. ~ T.T. Liang (Liang Tung-Tsai, 1900-2002)

Muddy water, let stand, becomes clear.
Relax and calm yourself

For just a few minutes a day, relax your muscles and clear your mind.
Empty yourself from stress and complications.
Just stand quietly and scan your body for any tension and try to release it.
Consider your time at class as a mini vacation from the stresses of everyday life.

While you're in class or just doing a workout, say to yourself, "I will think about my problems later, for now I will relax my mind and my body."
If any distracting thoughts enter your mind, just brush them off like a stream going around a rock. The water does not care about the rock. Be like water.
You can think about your problems after class. You may find that *after* class you have a new awareness and a fresh perspective with which to deal with your problems more effectively.

Qualities of the breath

Concentrate on your breathing and make it as long, soft, slow, thin, silent, even, and deep as you can without forcing it. Do not force your breath; 70-80% lung capacity is fine. More than that will create tension in the lungs.

Points To Remember Before Starting The Form

RELAX - CONCENTRATE - MOVE SLOW - BREATHE SLOW-
And always a subtle smile

Head straight as if suspended from above.

Tailbone dropped - Shoulders down

Elbows down - Chest relaxed

Relax the muscles in your face and always have a subtle smile.

Eyes half closed but not sleepy. The spirit excited.

Only breathe through the nose as slow as you can.

Keep your tongue rolled back slightly touching the upper palate with its tip.

About Smiling :)

Smiling and humor are very powerful medicines. They affect the mind, body and emotions in positive ways. Frowning shuts down and stagnates Chi flow in the body whereas smiling frees up your chi flow. Free flowing chi in the body is one sign of health and well being. By combining smiling with Tai Chi & Qi-gong one creates powerful tools for health and happiness.

Before your form, start out by thinking of something which makes you smile. Focus that thought or image between your eyes. Then, let that feeling fill your body. Make your smile more internal and less external. Have the corners of your lips upturned. A large gaping smile can also constrict chi flow in the face. A small Mona Lisa smile is just right for your practice. It is more internal than external. This is the Inner Smile. :)

Begin and end the form by doing 3 long thin even deep breaths from your nose all the way down to your dan tien and then back up and out your nose. Your dan tien should expand on inhale and contract on exhale.

When doing the form, don't force your movements. You must find comfort and balance in all your moves. You must always be in a position of balance, strength and stability. Coordinate your movements with your breath. Connect your upper and lower body. The whole body moves together. The hands finish with the legs and the waste.

While doing the form you must have your mind "in" the form. You must have intent in all your movements. You must mean it!

The postures should be without defect, without hollows or projections from the proper alignment; in motion the form should be continuous, without stops and starts. The whole body should be light and agile, with all parts of the body linked as if threaded together.

Do not be desirous to have things done quickly; do not look at small advantages. Desire to have things done quickly prevents them from being done thoroughly. Looking at small advantages prevents great efforts from being accomplished. ~ Confucious

Above all, be truthful to yourself in your daily practice.

It is a long journey that nobody will be able to do for you. It is up to you to advance steadily and effectively. Listen to your instructors and seniors: the real enjoyment is in the path, not at the summit of the mountain.

Also bear in mind that there are no shortcuts. The best approach is consistency and the best way to observe it is to make Tai Chi Chuan your new way of life.