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**Tai Chi**

**By Sheila Dickinson**

Tai Chi

The answer to this question lies in another question, "What are you looking for?"

If you are not happy with any area of your life today, then Tai Chi can help you. I have been studying and teaching the tai chi Health Arts for over twenty years. During this time I have learnt that the answer to all questions lies within each of us.

The above may sound like a bold statement, yet it is based on facts handed down over the centuries. Because of the vast variety of benefits available to everyone who practises tai chi ,

many articles have been written on the subject. The majority of the articles shroud the understanding of the art of Tai Chi in mystery. Today, Western Medicine is acknowledging that Tai Chi can help many ailments and recently an article appeared in the national newspapers claiming that doctors agreed that Tai Chi worked but they couldn't explain how.

I would like to share with you my own understanding of Tai Chi which is taught purely for health and is based on the principles of Chinese Medicine.

Your own body's internal energy (Chi energy), plays a vital role in the quality of your health. Chi energy is with you from the day you are born until the day you die. A person with a highly developed Chi energy through practicing Tai Chi experiences very few illnesses. That is what we are all working towards.

Most of us understand how our blood flows through our body and have a basic understanding of how our organs work.

Did you know that a person with highly volatile emotions, often has stagnation in the liver and gallbladder? The stagnation I am talking about is the stagnation of your Chi energy. This is because the flow of your body's internal energy is not moving freely around your body and nourishing your

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organs properly. My late master used to say 'If you lose your temper or raise your voice you are ill.'

The movements of the Tai Chi Form start to work on the development of your internal energy (Chi) from your very first lesson.

Our movements are simple to perform and once learnt and practised regularly, the health benefits will last you a lifetime.

Our Tai Chi Chuan Form provides the foundations upon which all the other aspects of our arts are based. It is the starting point of training, for all those wishing to improve the quality of their health.

To progress in any area of your life, your mind needs to be calm. If you are tense ideas will not flow freely and you will find the act of daily living a strain.

Because we teach these traditional movements in a modern way, you will find that your mind becomes calm, as you learn the mechanics, your balance and co-ordination will also improve. This is because your mind is pleasantly occupied with the constant repetition of trying to perfect the simple movements

Another vital aspect of our Arts is correct breathing, yet most of us go through our lives without even giving it a second thought. When I was at school I was taught to breathe in and pull everything in. If we analyse what is actually happening to the lungs when you use this type of breathing you will find that only the upper part of the lungs are being used.

This allows toxins to form and build up in the lower part of the lungs. If you watch a baby breathing you will notice that their stomach appears to expand as they breathe in and contract as they breathe out, this type of breathing allows the whole of the lungs to be used correctly.

When your lungs are working correctly, this helps the rest of your body to work efficiently, your blood will flow freely and your body's natural energy (Chi) will move around your body; taking care of your inner well being.

You will also find that your mind is more alert and ideas flow easily to you, providing solutions to areas of your life which may be causing you strain. People who suffer from breath related ailments such as asthma have found great benefit from practising Tai Chi .

Because the movements of Tai Chi Chuan are gentle and practised without strain they are suitable for everyone. We encourage people to progress at their own pace.

Remember if you are feeling under pressure in any area of your life today, your mind, body and spirit are not in complete harmony.

The movements we teach work, they have helped many people suffering from ailments such as arthritis, asthma, back pain, cancer...

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balance, circulation, knee problems, low fertility, heart problems, hip problems, high blood pressure, low blood pressure, insomnia, neck problems, M.E. M.S. shoulder problems, thyroid, stress and many more. These ailments will be covered in greater depth in future articles.

The subject of the Tai Chi is vast and the knowledge and information I have to share with you has already helped many people. I have many written testimonials from people who have already reaped the benefits of practising Tai Chi.

For more information go to our website address is

[www.lfataichi.com](http://www.lfataichi.com)

Sheila Dickinson has produced 8 books and 5 videos on Tai Chi our website address is

[www.lfataichi.com](http://www.lfataichi.com)

### **The Art Of Tai Chi Sparring**

**By Laurence Clunie**

Curious about Tai Chi but running short on time and patience to make an in depth research of your own? Here is a simple but accurate article on the topic of Tai Chi sparring. It's organized and easy to digest.

Tai Chi, also known as Tai Chi Chuan (taijiguan) or Taiji, is commonly translated as Supreme Ultimate Fist and is known throughout the world as a Chinese martial art that combines the principles of self defense with the mental and physical fitness. This art is practiced by millions of people these days for several purposes, including self defense and for its health benefits.

Sparring is involved in basic Tai Chi practice. Tai Chi sparring is in fact one of the most important stages of this ancient martial art. As noted in most resources, Tai Chi sparring is strongly considered as the only way to teach students of the art the importance of self defense, distance and speed.

Tai Chi sparring is practiced at a slow, meditative pace. According to its proponents, the slow and continuous movements are generally designed to impart the powerful physical skills of the sparrer, as well as to stimulate the flow of energy within the body. This slow, meditative pace involved in Tai Chi sparring also helps to develop balance, coordination of breath and movement, concentration and relaxation. Simply, Tai Chi sparring teaches you how to move easily without tension in order that your mind and body can function smoothly. I think this a great health benefit.

There are three major levels of training involved in Tai Chi sparring. The first has something to do with postures; the second with self defense applications; and the third with coordination of breath with movement.

In terms of posture, the Tai Chi sparring training primarily teaches you the right postures. What I am

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actually talking about here is where exactly to place the hands and feet when sparring. The training also includes the fundamental shape of the movement, including the transitions between these movements. According to some Tai Chi sparring experts, it is through the mastery of the right postures that the student can develop an insight into the nature of flexible strength. This level, however, requires long and diligent practice in order to master.

The next level of Tai Chi sparring involves understanding of the energetic and self defense applications. In the first place, Tai Chi sparring is viewed as an energy exercise. This notion perhaps stemmed from the fact that when practicing Tai Chi sparring, you are calming and energizing your body.

How does Tai Chi do this? First, Tai Chi sparring eliminates the impurities caused by tension, and then it rouses energy to flow through the body. It is this flow of energy that actually cleanses the entire body.

In terms of self defense applications, Tai Chi sparring simply teaches you to understand every move involved in the practice. The general rule here is that every move can be done at three levels, which is high, middle and low. Aside from these levels, the movements can also be performed in five directions, involving left, right, back, forward and center. For many Tai Chi practitioners, it is very vital that every

sparrer understand these applications so as to keep movements precise.

Finally, Tai Chi sparring involves coordination of the breath as well as the movements. What is usually considered in training is that you inhale with movements that lift or roll back, and in turn exhale with movements that press or sink. However, it is very important to note that in Tai Chi not every move will require a full breath. The coordination between the breath and movement is something that happens slowly and in unexpected ways. In the end, your body will find its own breathing rhythm.

I hope you enjoyed reading this article. There is, indeed, a lot to learn about this topic, or even a lot to learn about the world. There's always something new to discover!

The article you have just read is just one of several informative articles on the subject martial arts sparring that you can find here:

<http://www.martial-arts-sparring-gear.com>

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