



Linda's T'ai Chi

Weekly Handout March 30, 2020

How many days has it been since our stay-at-home, social distancing strategy has been enacted to contain the virus and halt the spread? It feels like forever but I know it is not. And, I think it will go on for some time. There is a light at the end of the tunnel but I fear it is a train. The numbers continue to rise. It is disturbing and worrisome. I know all of you are being safe and using the hygiene and social distancing techniques to stay healthy.

I subscribe to the Blue Zone Study newsletter as some of you do as well. I found the information interesting and helpful so I am stealing shamelessly from the newsletter but adding a few of my own thoughts. Many of you already use these strategies.

#### 1. Fear Less and reach out to people you love

Fear about the spread of the illness, how it impacts your health and resources is normal. Being persistently fearful, however, may increase the risk of getting sick. Fear can be self-fulfilling to the extent that it does suppress immune function and makes someone more likely to get the very disease they're most afraid of.

Also, staying at home and social distancing help prevent transmission of the virus, but feeling lonely can be harmful to your health. Study after study has shown that people who are lonely and isolated are **3-10 times more likely to get sick** and die prematurely of virtually all causes when compared to those who have a strong sense of love and community. Fortunately, there are many things we can do to enhance our immune function to help protect us. We all understand staying at home, using good hygiene are the best strategies for staying healthy, it is also wise to spend more time socializing with family members who are living with you as well using video or just audio technologies like Zoom or the phone to virtually spend time with friends and family in other places.

#### 2. Reduce and manage your Stress

Linda's T'ai Chi March 30, 2020

In a number of studies, there is an empirical relationship between the rates of both respiratory infection and clinical colds and increases in the degree of psychological stress. It is well known that chronic and persistent stress suppresses our immune function making us more susceptible to illness. Unrelenting anxiety and depression can also affect our overall health and response to care and treatment.

### 3. Eat Well and stay hydrated

Numerous studies have clearly shown that a healthful, whole foods plant-based diet enhances your immune function. There are thousands of substances in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, and soy products that are protective against infections. So, when you can, choose these foods to help boost your body's response to infection. Drink lots of water. Did I mention a piece of chocolate from time to time?

### 4. Keep Moving

Many studies have shown a clear, inverse relationship between moderate exercise and risk of a wide variety of illnesses, including infectious diseases. Natural movement enhances immune regulation. Just walking 15-30 minutes/day makes a big difference in your immune function. Performing T'ai Chi, practicing deep breathing exercises, and walking like a cat can calm the brain and bring the mind, body and spirit to homeostasis and peace.

You are in my thoughts and looking forward to the time we can come back together again.

In the meantime, my wish.....

Be Kind to yourself

Be forgiving of yourself

Trust yourself

Engage your creative self

Bathe in nature daily

Rely on people who are dear to you and those you trust

Peace to those who suffer