



Linda's T'ai Chi Weekly Handout February 28, 2021

Key Concepts as you perform T'ai Chi

There is a lot to think about as you perform T'ai Chi- breathing, posture, internal peace, stance, placement of feet, arms, hands, position of your eyes, balance and imagery. How does one accomplish this? First, it comes with practice and time. Second, it comes with attention to each of these one at a time throughout your learning and practice. At some point, these concepts become second nature. Perhaps you have noticed that yourself. Perhaps you find yourself moving like clouds without thinking about it.

With all of that said, there are three important concepts for you to consider: movement control, body structure and internal energy.

Movement Control

- Move slowly so that you can be mindful of each posture and integrate mind, body and spirit. Postures should be performed smoothly to facilitate serenity. They should flow continuously like water in a river. The continual flow gathers inner energy growing as it flows.
- [Move as though you're moving against a gentle resistance with every movement to generate a soft inner power. Another good way is to imagine the air around you becoming denser or imagine moving through water.](#)

Body Structure

- Maintain an upright posture. Studies have shown that good posture strengthens the deep stabilizer muscles which support the spine. It also provides more space for internal organs. What's more, when you are upright you feel stronger and more positive. Qi flows better in a well aligned body. A poorly aligned body puts extra strain on the spine and compromises your balance.
- Be mindful of weight transference. Balance is an essential part of T'ai Chi. Like nature, we are happier and healthier when in harmony.

Internal Components

- Loosen the joints. You should relax when you do T'ai chi, but relaxing does not mean letting your muscles get floppy or limp. Instead, consciously and gently stretch your joints from within. When your joints are loose, qi moves smoothly and powerfully through. Tensed joints hinder the flow of qi. Loose joints strengthen the internal ligaments and muscles, enhancing the function of

joints.

- Develop a state of mental quietness or ‘静 – Jing’. Think about the word “Jing,” the Chinese word for “quietness.” Use this word to describe your mental quietness. If you’re like most of us, your mind is racing all the time. Put your mind in quiet mode. Work on the quietness from within. First, quiet your eyes. Imagine you’re in a tranquil, quiet rain forest- see it, feel it, smell it, touch it, taste it. Soon you’ll become quiet from within, and then you will be able to focus on what your body is doing. This is what T’ai Chi practitioners sometimes call “listening to your body”. You are more mindful of the present and the self when you are Jing, allowing your mind to be quiet from within.

One of these images may be inspirational as you find your “jing”

Peace, *Linda*



