Linda's Tai Chi Weekly Handout July 18, 2021

"Quan Shen Fang Song"

The Whole Body Relaxes

This week I will teach the 5 Breath Practice based on the "whole body relaxes" qigong. Quan Shen Fang Song translated means softness, releasing, loosening, sinking, and opening

Here are the 5 components of "FangSong." This is translated from the Mandarin to mean relaxation

1. Soften the body
2. Create space in your joints
3. Elongate the spine
4. Internal harmony
5. External harmony

How these components are defined:

- To *soften the body*, one has to let go of any tension in the mind, body and spirit. Each of these three can hold tension. You may not even notice as holding tension becomes habitual.

- To *create space in your joints*, one has to release the tension in all joints. This creates flow of energy (qi) and allows the natural flow of fluids, blood to easily

pass through. Focus on the body sensation of openness and softness to achieve the creation of space in your joints.

- To *elongate the spine*, one has to image being tall, not straight, and honoring the string of pearls. Stretching upward to the top of the head and let the spirit rise. Avoid leaning and leading from the chin or chest or leading with the lumbar. Lead with the belly button as if it were a flashlight leading the way. Avoid leaning back, Sit down deeper instead.

- *Internal harmony* comes when we focus on how our body feels, being aware of discomfort but letting our mind notice but not focus on the discomfort. Of course, severe pain is all encompassing and pervasive. Pain is not discomfort. Without intervention, pain requires care outside of Tai Chi. Tai Chi can restore but not cure as a general rule.

- *External harmony* is our awareness and connection to life outside of ourselves. Nature, animals, other people and moments of awe are how we harmonize with the world.

In class we will breathe deeply and slowing and with each breath, we will focus on each component as we sink deeper into the world of "Song"

Peace,

Linda