



Linda's T'ai Chi  
Weekly Handout June 16, 2024

These past few weeks in class we have been focusing on stillness. Finding that place within ourselves, free from the past, the future and the activity of the present. We cannot control noise- whirring fans, ticking clocks, barking dogs , passing cars, trucks and the endless noise of our surroundings. However, we can control stillness because stillness lies within and within our control.

Qigong and Tai Chi are about cultivating stillness. Of course, when we are in a learning mode, we are not still. Our mind is not still as we focus on getting it right. At some point, that will pass and you can be still as you perform your Qigong or Tai Chi. But, once we can feel more confident in the postures of Tai Chi and Qigong, we can quiet the mind and, become still.

Stillness is the calm, quiet, motionless state of mind, body, spirit and breath. We can be still even when there is chaos around us. Noise is external , usually beyond our control but stillness is our internal state that we can learn to cultivate

Here are some simple techniques to quite the mind, body and sprit to become still.

## **Begin with your Breath**

Taking slow, deep breaths induces the parasympathetic system and slows your heart rate. The parasympathetic system is the system that calms us after our sympathetic system- fight flight freeze- is engaged. Often, we stay in the high alert of fight flight freeze because of the endless onslaught of our modern life. We really do have to Stop the World and Get Off from time to time.

## **Practice**

We can practice anywhere, anytime. Regardless of where you are or what you are doing, you can practice stillness. Use your breath to calm, soften and relax. As you practice more, you can attain stillness in seconds.

## **Create Space to be still**

If you aren't creating stillness spontaneously, try to schedule it and keep this time sacred (free of the past and future). This is a gift you give to yourself. You deserve it.

## **Find a favorite spot**

You can experience stillness anywhere. But it can help to start at a favorite place. This might be outdoors, such as a park or bench, or at home, in complete silence. This space is a place of comfort, safety and beauty.

## **Music can help**

Sometimes, people are afraid of being alone with their thoughts. This is when creating more structure is helpful. One way is by listening to soft, slow music. Music is also great when silence becomes deafening or scary.

### **Use repeating calming phrases**

Repeating calming phrases can give your stillness structure like “I am calm and still” or “I can create stillness”

### **Strive for progress not perfection**

If you are new to creating stillness, you may not feel what you want to feel. It is okay. As you practice, you will get better at letting your mind clear, your heart settle and your body soften.



Life is a journey, not a destination  
Are we there yet? - is not an expression you will hear in Tai Chi or Qigong.

Peace, Linda