

**Wonderful feeling of
Tai Chi spirit**



Hand written calligraphy
by Grandmaster
Chen Zhenglei in China

Tai Chi For Health

Written by Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei
and Master Liming Yue

*Co-authors: Dan Chisholm, Tim Birch, Steven Burton, Nick Taylor
Anthony Ruston and Bill Wilkinson*



Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei and Master Liming Yue

This book was written by Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei and Master Liming Yue over a two and a half year period. It is recognized by the International Tai Chi Festival committee and the Chinese Martial Arts Association in China. It is a highly recommended instructional book to the Tai Chi practitioner across the world. The book was officially released at the opening ceremony of the International Taijiquan (Tai Chi) Festival and the 3rd International Taijiquan Exchange Competition in Jiaozuo City, Chinese August 2005, which is hosted by the Chinese Martial Arts Association and the Henan Province Sports Council.

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Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei and his wife – Mrs. Lu Lili visit London, April 2003.

Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei, 11th generation Head of Chen Style Taijiquan, 19th Generation of the Chen family.

Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei is ranked as one of the Top Ten Martial Arts Grandmasters in China and is honored for numerous contributions to Martial Arts by the Chinese State Sports Council.

Chen Style Family Taijiquan is the original form from which all modern forms of Taijiquan have developed – come and drink from the source.

太極願世界和平

The ancient Yin Yang philosophy is over 2000 years old and comes from the I Ching – Book of Changes. Around 350 years ago, the 9th generation Chen family Grandmaster Chen Wangting created the original and authentic Chen Style Tai Chi hand form movements, weapon forms and routines, push hands and Qigong exercises. They combine Yin and Yang philosophy with Chinese Martial Arts movements and breathing techniques. Originally these wonderful powerful Martial Arts exercises were a carefully guarded secret, kept in the Chen village, Wen county, Henan Province, P.R. China, and only passed on to family members. This is the first time that the whole series of health exercises has been opened up and made available worldwide by the 19th generation Chen family representative, Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei.



Tai Chi brings peace and health to the world
Photographed and published by Manchester Evening News 2003



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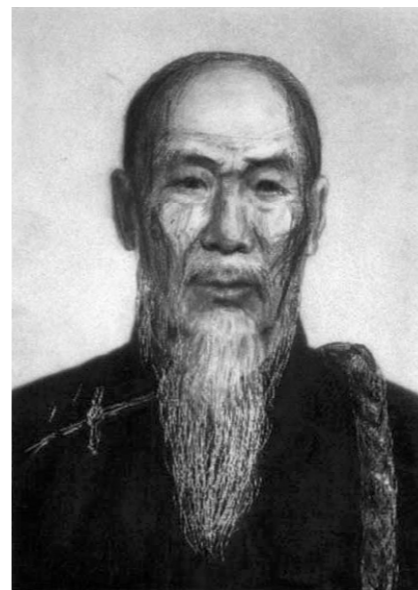


太極拳創始人陳王庭遺像
(1600-1680)

Grandmaster Chen Wangting – The founder of Chen Style Tai Chi and seventh generation of Chen Family (1600 1680).



Grandmaster Chen Wangting with his senior student Jiang Fa (stand behind)



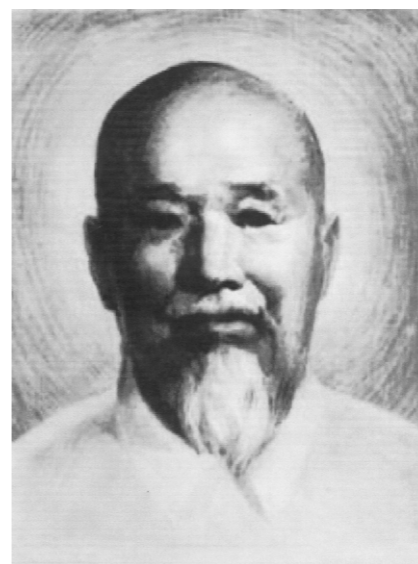
太極宗師 陳公長興
(1771-1853)

Grandmaster Chen Changxing – the fourteenth generation of Chen Family and the Sifu of Yang Luchan, who is the founder of Yang Style Tai Chi.



陳發科老師
陳氏十七世、太極拳第九代傳人
(1887-1957)

Grandmaster Chen Fake – the seventeenth generation of Chen Family and the final founder of Xinjia – 83 Form and Cannon Fist.



陳照丕
陳氏十八世、太極拳第十代傳人
(1893-1972)

Grandmaster Chen Zhaopi – the 18th Generation of Chen Family and the primary Sifu of Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei.



陳照奎
陳氏十八世、太極拳第十代傳人
(1928-1981)

Grandmaster Chen Zhaokui – the 18th Generation of Chen Family.



Lazy About Tying Coat posture taken in a park in Manchester, UK 2003.
Photograph taken by Master Liming Yue.



White Crane Spreads its Wings.



太極揚天下



Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei accepts Honorary Presidency of the Chen Style Tai Chi Centre UK in 2003.



Group photo of Silk Reeling Energy seminar with Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei in Manchester, UK 2003.



Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei with Master Liming Yue and Wang Haijun meet a group of students from AGE Concern, Ashton – U – Lyne, Manchester, UK 2003.



83 Form seminar with Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei in Manchester, UK 2003.



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太極晨練



Morning practice in the park in China during the China Trip 2004 organized by Chen Style Tai Chi Centre UK. Training led by Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei.



Single Whip Posture.

太極
養生功



Seminars in Paris, France 2003 in Dr. Jian Niujun Tai Chi and Qigong College.



Residential seminars in Denia, Spain 2004 with attendants from France, UK, Canada and local students from Spain.



UK visit to Chen Style Tai Chi College in Bury, Greater Manchester 2003 by Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei and his wife – Lu Lili.



Seminars in Denia, Spain 2005 with attendants from UK and local students from Spain.



Push Hands by Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei and Master Liming Yue in Manchester, UK 2003.



Arm lock application by Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei and Master Liming Yue in Manchester UK 2003.

This is a group picture during the UK visit in Manchester 2003 of Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei and his wife Mrs Lu Lili.





Foreword

by Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei

Economic progress, social reforms, improvement in living standards and greater automation in people's daily working lives have all contributed to a general reduction in the levels of physical exercise and fitness. As activity and exercise decrease, physical and mental health as well as general well-being begin to deteriorate. More and more people are turning to practices like "Wushu" and "Qigong" to try to redress this imbalance in their lives.

For a long time Taijiquan has been held in very high esteem by many Chinese people. In the last century, it has become more popular in the rest of the world because of its health enhancing and self-defence qualities. "Taijiquan" strengthens bones and muscles, regulates "Jingluo" (the body's main energy channels), keeps in balance the nervous system and helps prevent the onset of disease. Personally, I have practiced "Taijiquan" since I was a child. I have first hand, personal experience of its health benefits and particularly of "Qigong". For centuries, the special benefits and practice of "Qigong" were closely guarded secrets inside the Chen village where I was born. Even though it has seldom spread outside of my village, I now wish to share its secrets and recommend its practice to everyone who is interested in its health enhancing properties.

"Taiji", born out of "Wuji", was divided into "Liangyi", changed into "Sancai", then "Sixiang", ultimately evolving into the eight Diagrams and then to Infinity. "Qigong" is the new term, which has appeared in recent years and is synonymous with internal energy "Kung Fu". The internal energy aspects of "Qigong" are at the very heart of "Taijiquan". Its purpose is to understand and learn how to collect, develop and increase internal energy. This internal energy is then retained in the "Dantian", is upgraded to a



Chen Style Tai Chi Sabre posture.

spiritual level and then released back to non-existence. The development of physical energy into spiritual energy allows space, earth, body and nature to exist as one and is the ultimate goal of "Qigong".

There are some old Chinese sayings, "Look after the roots and the leaves and flowers will grow healthy." "If plenty of water is feeding the stream, the stream will last longer and go further." "Tai Chi" internal energy "Qigong" is based on the same principles of looking after and taking care of individual's sources of energy. With this book, I wish to share and introduce to all people interested in "Taiji", Chen Style Taijiquan for health, the "Taiji" skills of internal energy and The 18 forms of Chen Style "Taijiquan". In this way, everyone can begin to understand and to realize the physical health and mental benefits to be gained from regular practice of "Taijiquan".



Chen Style Tai Chi Sabre posture.



Chen Style Tai Chi Spear posture.

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養生功

Guidelines for using this book

This book offers an easygoing introduction to Chen Style Tai Chi. An authentic, comprehensive reference book for the specific style of Tai Chi, the content also pays particular attention to the health benefits available to students. There are also two volumes of instructional DVDs/Videos available from the Chen Style Tai Chi Centre UK which accompany this book. Silk Reeling Energy and Tai Chi 18 Short Form. These DVDs are available from the online shop: www.shop.taichicentre.com

For better understanding, readers may wish to refer to the direct insights from first person accounts. See Chapter 6: Interviews with Practitioners. Whether you decide to read this book in a linear fashion or not, readers are advised that a method of continual reference will prove the most beneficial. Practitioners of Chen Style Tai Chi undertake a long road of progression in which faithfulness is rewarded and honesty prevails. Enjoy the journey.

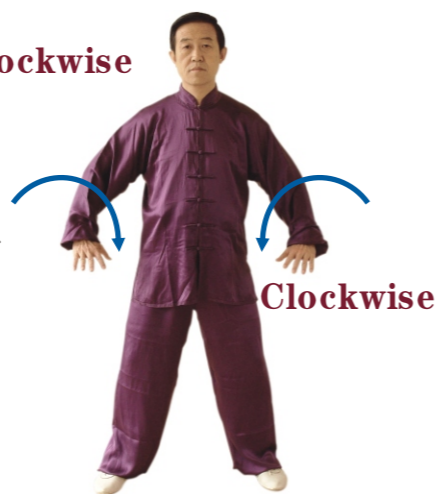
Technical Terms

Counter-clockwise

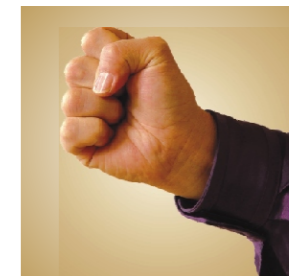
Rotate Clockwise: is defined as the turning movement towards the right side of the body in a circle or twining motion when you look at your arm rotate from your own eyes position. It is shown on the diagram with arrow and line of dots.

Rotate Counter Clockwise: is defined as the turning movement towards the left side of the body in a circle or twining motion when you look at your arm rotate from your own eyes position. It is shown on the diagram with arrow and solid line.

Hook: The fingers are bunched together with the crook of the wrist relaxed do not bend too much and form a rigid curve. Over bending of the wrist can cause tension on your arm and shoulders. Keeping the wrist in a leader position to direct the strength and internal energy flow.



Fist: The fingers are clenched together with the thumb folded over the index and middle fingers as shown in the diagram. Keep fingers relaxed and loosely hold the fist during the movement and only tighten your fist at the last moment of energy releasing. Keep the fist straight forward from your forearm.



Palm: Chen Style Taijiquan requires the palm to be like a row of roof tiles. The thumb and the little finger are intending to push toward each other slightly from distance, while the index, middle and ring finger all stay straight naturally and stretch out slightly to the rear. All five fingers are slightly bunched together, but without using any stiff strength (no tension). The centre of the palm is empty and the middle finger is the key finger of your intention during Tai Chi practice.



Empty step: Place the ball of the foot on the floor with toes touching the floor lightly and no weight or only very limited weight (10%) on the toes. Most of your weight is placed on the supporting leg.

Weight: Weight is defined as your centre of gravity. In Chen Style Tai Chi the weight normally is deployed on both legs by percentage, either 40% and 60% or 30 and 70%. So, in the book when we indicate where the weight is, it means that approx. 60-70% of the weight is placed on that leg unless we say whole weight or specify exactly the percentage of the weight.

Tai Chi Chuan – Taijiquan: Taijiquan is the Mandarin spelling and Tai Chi Chuan is the Cantonese spelling and it means Tai Chi martial arts or Kung Fu under the guidance of Tai Chi philosophy.

Tai Chi – Taiji: Tai Chi and Taiji in terms are the same thing. Taiji is the Mandarin spelling and Tai Chi is the Cantonese spelling and it is an ancient Chinese philosophy - Yin and Yang.

Tai Chi stance: This is posture to stand still with both arms holding in a circle in front of your chest and fingers toward each other. Thumb pointing upward slightly and separate from others fingers. Weight is placed in the centre





between two feet and both feet separate shoulder-width wide with both toes pointing outward slightly. bend both knees slightly and relax the hips. Head erect and body upright. Keep chin in and sink the chest down slightly. The crown of your head lifts up slightly as if you are holding a cup of coffee on top of your head lightly. Tongue touches the upper pallet with eyes lightly closed or looking forward downward. Breath in and out using your nose and let the breath deeply going through to your lower abdomen (Dantian). This is the best posture to feel the Tai Chi energy flow inside of your body. Once you have experienced the nice feeling of internal energy inside your body, it is recommended that you extend this feeling into all the movements when you practice the forms.



Bow Step: In traditional Chinese Martial Arts the Bow Step has a bent front leg and straight back leg with both feet firmly on the floor. In Tai Chi this move has a softening in the back knee and outward turn of the knee producing a more relaxed and flexible stance.

Silk Reeling Energy: This is a set of turning and spiraling movements which improve body stretching and flexibility removing blockages along the acupuncture channel maintaining good flow of internal energy. This feature differentiates Chen Style Tai Chi from the other styles of Tai Chi. It includes single hand and double hand movements working in co-operation with the feet.

Dantian: It is an acupuncture point located just three fingers width lower than your navel. It is considered the centre store of internal energy and focus point of the breath during Tai Chi practice. This is the most sensitive area where you can feel the increasing of Qi energy.

Baihui: An acupuncture point located on the top of the head connecting internal energy with sky energy. In Tai Chi, Baihui is considered the important point for internal energy flow and spiritual activities. It is considered the leader or commander of the whole body and energy.

Yongquan: Is an acupuncture point located at the centre of the sole of the foot (the place that does not touch the floor). It is a connecting point between your body and the earth.

Acknowledgments

The original book was written by Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei, translated by Xu Hailiang and published by Zhongzhou Publishing House in Zhengzhou city, Henan Province, P. R. China in September 2002. It is published in both Chinese and English and is entitled 'The Chen Style Taijiquan for life Enhancement' with ISBN: 7-5348-2181-9.

The content of the book in Chinese is of excellent quality and invaluable for those people who are interested in learning Chen Style Taijiquan. Unfortunately, the English translation of the book does not convey all the original correct meanings of the Chinese.



When I saw this book for the first time I was very excited about it as I thought that my students would have an English version of the Chen Style Taijiquan technique book to read. However after I read through this book, I became concerned about the clarity of the English translation of the book, particularly when I received feed back from those students who had read it. Many sentences in the book either lost their original meanings or offered only a very poor English translation. After discussion with Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei, I therefore decided to retranslate the book from its original Chinese content completely with clear and concise English.

As this newly translated book is in English and is to be distributed in English speaking countries in the West, I broadened the content of the book adding new chapters with answers for the most common questions that come from Taijiquan practitioners in the West. It includes the benefits, experience and knowledge that Western practitioners have gained from Taijiquan. There is a series of interviews with individual Taijiquan practitioners around the UK by journalist, Tim Birch. There are also dialogues with myself, Master Liming Yue, interviewed by Danny Chisholm, Nick Taylor and Anthony Rushton.

In order to make my English translation accurate and easy to understand while still capturing and communicating the original meaning of the Chinese version of the book, I have worked very closely with a group of my senior students who are currently working as Chen Style Taijiquan instructors in the UK. First I wrote a literal English translation of the Chinese. Then my students would



explain the meaning of the sentence to me from their own understanding. At the same time I also explained the original meaning of the Chinese to my students. We would not put any sentence into the book until both myself and my senior students compared the meanings carefully and we were all fully satisfied that the translation of the sentence matched with the Chinese meaning. Our goal was to publish a high quality English version of Chen Style Taijiquan which lets all the practitioners in the world receive the maximum benefits of the style.

To improve the quality of this book, I chose to use high resolution imagery and print in full colour. A further development is the addition of an instructional DVD for absolute clarity and convenience in the study and practice of Taijiquan. During the period of writing the book many of my senior students and friends have given me a lot of help. In particular, while I was translating the instructional chapter of the 18 Short Form, Ploutarchos (Pluto) Vlachopoulos, Sue Johnson and John Bolwell helped me as a team. After I finished the translation of the form movements from Chinese, we used one person to read the instruction of the form while others tried to follow the instructions to demonstrate the movements as described in the book. At all times I ensured everything went correctly. This process ensured that all the translation in the book is accurate and understandable to all readers.

After I drew up the first draft I sent it around to a group of my senior students and other friends to proof read and asked them to give me feedback. Those people include: Peter Donaldson, Bill Wilkinson, Geoff Leversedge, Dan Chisholm, Nick Taylor, Linda Wilkinson, Steven Burton, Anthony Rushton, Tim Birch, and Shabir Akhtar. I also remember that one day I took a copy of a draft to one of my classes at Age Concern, Ashton-under-Lyne, Greater Manchester. Students in the class separated the entire book into sections and took home one set each to read through and bring back with their feedback at following classes. There are many stories like this and I am very appreciative of all the kind help



Sword Posture – Closing the Door.

from all of those people. In addition I would like to mention my senior students in Manchester including: Cemil Egeli, Bruce Li and Gillian Egeli for their support and dedication over the years. This also includes those people who have given help in any format but whom are not named in the book.

It has taken me two and a half year of hard work, and now the final draft of the book has been settled. I hope every reader enjoys it and gains great benefits from the book.

Master Liming Yue, 8th August 2005



Sabre against Spear, demonstrated by Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei and Master Liming Yue in Manchester, UK 2003.

太極
養生功



Sabre defends the attack of the Spear.

成功源自貴人相助

Introduction to Chen Style Taijiquan

Written by Master Liming Yue

Chen Style Tai Chi (Taijiquan) was created in Chenjiagou Village, Wenxian County, Henan Province, China in the late Ming Dynasty, almost 400 years ago, by the 9th generation Chen family member, General Chen Wangtin. Following a decorated military career, General Chen retired to Chenjiagou where he began formulating an internal martial art that incorporated the wisdom of the ancient philosophy of Yin and Yang, with specialized breathing techniques, and a profound understanding of the internal energy meridians "jingluo" used in Traditional Chinese Medicine.

Such was its intrinsic power that the art was only passed from master to student in great secrecy and remained hidden for almost 300 years. It was not until the 14th generation of the Chen family (around 120 years ago) that Grandmaster Chen Changxing taught the art to Yang Luchan, a household servant. Yang Luchan (founder of Yang Style Tai Chi) was the first to take the art away from the village and quickly his reputation spread throughout China as an unbeatable master using this fascinating martial art.

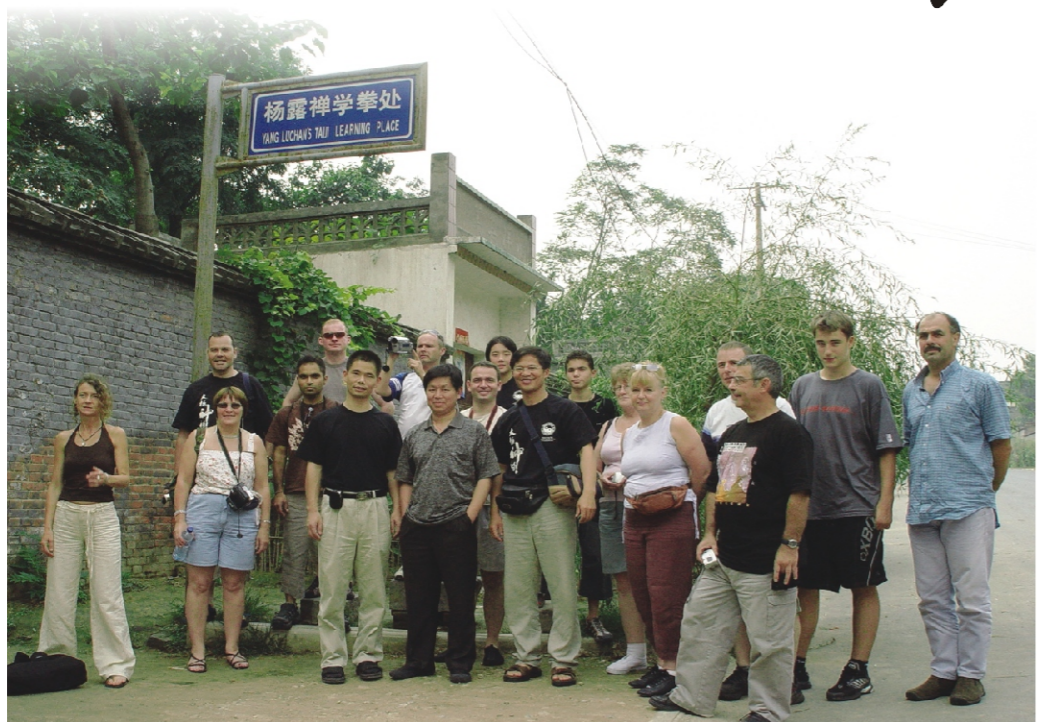


Grandmaster Chen Changxing passes his Tai Chi books to Yang Luchan (the founder of Yang Style Tai Chi)

During the rapid popularization of Yang Style Tai Chi, the Chen Family Style remained within Chenjiagou, the village members being dedicated to the advancement and preservation of all aspects of the tradition, just as their ancestors had done for almost 400 years.

Chen Style Tai Chi has recently made its appearance on the international scene and is fast becoming the most popular form of Tai Chi in the world today. Old and new students alike are beginning to appreciate why generations of the Chen family were determined to maintain their sacred art in its purest form, so that everyone may experience the maximum benefits under their guidance.

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養生功



Group Picture in front of the house where Yang Luchan (The founder of Yang Style Tai Chi) learnt Chen Style Tai Chi in the Chenjiagou Village, Wen County, Henan Province, P. R. China 2004.

Chapter One

The Principles of Chen Style Tai Chi for Health

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Chen Style Tai Chi for Health presents the most valuable and essential health aspects of Chen Style Taijiquan which include unique methods for increasing internal energy, energy collection and energy control. The exercises also help vitalize and enhance mental capacity. In combining the body movements of Taijiquan with the movement of the breath it is also possible to develop and improve spiritual awareness.

The exercises or body movements that will be discussed in this book, are the Foundation exercises (warm up, footstep exercises and silk reeling exercises), Qigong exercises (meditation, Tai Chi stance and energy collection) and the Chen Style 18 Short Form, which together, form the principles of Chen Style Taijiquan for Health.

All of these exercises are easy and straightforward for people to learn and practice. They are very effective in helping to reduce high blood pressure, heart disease, arthritis, neurasthenia, gastric ulcers and other chronic diseases. These exercises can also benefit weight loss, stress relief, disruptive sleep patterns, and greatly enhance health and fitness.

The practice of Taijiquan does not require a big space or any special equipment for personal training. It can be practiced at any time of day or night, indoors or out. Taijiquan is suitable for all people, regardless of age, sex, or level of fitness.

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Section One

The Features of the Exercises

Tai Chi for Health contains still exercises, meditation and the Tai Chi stance, along with dynamic moving exercises called forms. It places equal emphasis on external body movements and internal energy control. Mental awareness is combined with body movements. The conscious mind focuses on the movements, directing the body to move through the forms.

During practice, keep quiet, calm and relaxed. Follow the principle “When one part of the body moves, the whole body moves accordingly. When one part of the body is motionless, the whole body is still”. Let awareness, body movements and breathing combine to complement each other, co-operating and working together simultaneously. Your body and the space around you should form one unit. Collect all of the sky and earth energy (Qi) into the body and use it to nourish and replenish yourself. At the same time release harmful negative energy from the body. This helps to achieve good health and a long and happy life.

After a period of practice, your Qi energy, inherited at birth, will start to concentrate in your Dantian (located three fingers width below the navel) and energy surges throughout the body. As energy increases, feelings become stronger and your mood improves, making you happier, more cordial and more tolerant of other people, eliminating nervousness and anxiety. Strengthening Qi energy in this way is very beneficial for health, boosting the immune system and helping to protect against sickness and disease.

Once in command of energizing the body, the next step is to learn how to release energy. Releasing energy forms the powerful opening or closing elements of self- defense. Great care needs to be taken when using the energy release movements contained within the form. Energy release can both protect you from injury and also cause injury to an opponent.

In general, Tai Chi movements are very flexible and fluid. For practice purposes, you should follow the principles above and try to be as natural as possible. Try to avoid focusing purely on the movements themselves. Also try to remain aware of the philosophy behind the movements and your own internal feeling of energy.





Section Two

The Health Benefits of the Exercises

1. Enhancing the health of the nervous system and conditioning the reflex reactions.

All of the bodily functions in your daily life are guided by the nervous system. In particular, the co-ordination of the body muscles and the regulation and control of the internal organs. Most Taijiquan exercises require a focused and relaxed mind during practice. As a result of this, the exercises stimulate and enhance the energy flow within the body, which in turn reinforces the ability of the nervous system to concentrate and focus more easily. In addition, as the nervous system improves, the peripheral nervous system is enhanced, as is your sensitivity within sensory organs such as the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin etc. This makes your reflexes and reactions noticeably faster, and can also help to improve your ability in learning new skills. Regular practitioners of Taijiquan find that they feel more energized and fresh, thinking more clearly and feeling happier, with a better and more efficient motivation for work.



Chen Xiaobin teaches Tai Chi in Denia, Spain 2005

Normally, people's emotions are highly linked to the state of their health. Positive motivation and healthy ambition are important factors for good health. An excess of the emotions such as happiness, anger, worry, thinking, sadness, paranoia or depression and fear can cause health problems which can often appear as physical symptoms of illness. In China, these are called the seven emotions. According to ancient Chinese medical philosophy the seven emotions are considered as the root cause of illness. They are connected to the six internal organs of the human body. If you are too happy, it can cause heart problems. However if you are too angry, it can cause liver problems. Too much worry and

thinking can cause spleen problems while too much sorrow can cause lung problems. Excess paranoia or depression can cause kidney damage and excessive fear can damage your gallbladder. There are also six external physical conditions that can contribute to sickness, they include excesses of wind, cold, heat, dampness, dryness and fire. Normally, the six external causes are not strong enough to create illness, but when one or more of the seven emotions are out of balance, the body's defence is weakened against the six external influences entering the body and causing illness. This is why the ancient Chinese medical book Neijing places emphasis on keeping quiet and ignoring any external interruptions, clearing your mind and focusing on your internal feeling when you are practicing Qigong, which is also a key requirement for Taijiquan.

Stressful, busy, fast and intensive modern city life causes people many problems such as stress, short temper, anxiety, inefficiency and poor sleep patterns. Tai Chi for Health exercises utilize the Neijing principle of using your own mind to relax your body and spirit, relieve stress, and calm the seven emotions. This reduces the chances of becoming ill, and improves overall health.

2. Improving the condition of bones, joints and muscles and the ability to exercise

Tai Chi for Health exercises are based on turning, spiraling and twisting movements. These types of movement co-ordinate the bones, joints and muscles, increasing the density, thickness and strength of the bones, the muscles also becoming stronger. In turn, this makes bones harder and more resistant to being injured or broken. The joints and the tendons around them also become more flexible and elastic. This is good for the well-being of the joints and muscles, improving the practice of Taijiquan and significantly increasing your ability to apply or defeat a lock movement. Beyond that, the sensitivity gained from practicing these exercises improves both the relaxation of mind and body as well as enhancing the ability to react to external stimuli.



Chen Xiaobin teaches Tai Chi in Denia, Spain 2005



Tai Chi For Health

Wonderful feeling of Tai Chi spirit

All of these twisting and spiraling movements are controlled by the mind, based on the relaxation of the body. The whole body co-operates with itself, with muscle fibre becoming longer (because of the twisting movements), more elastic and stronger. One of the benefits of this kind of exercise is its ability to reduce the amount of fat around the muscles and open the pores



Chen Xiaobin teaches Tai Chi in Denia, Spain 2005

of your skin, resulting in the skin looking and feeling smoother, softer and healthier. A further benefit is that slim people are able to put more muscle on, and over-weight people are able to get rid of excess fat, aiding weight loss.

3. Strengthening the digestive system and improving the respiratory functions



Chen Xiaobin teaches Tai Chi in Denia, Spain 2005

to circulate more freely inside the body, flowing through all of the internal organs. The muscles of the abdominal region benefit functions of the digestive system greatly from long and deep breaths taken

The basic functions of the digestive system are to ingest food, absorb nutrients and expel waste. In Chinese medicine the digestive system and a person's state of health is closely connected to the ability of the six internal organs to function correctly. Tai Chi for Health exercises are smooth, gentle and slow. The breath naturally follows the body movements which, in turn, allows internal energy

During Tai Chi exercise. It feels like a soft massage on the stomach and the intestines. Whilst exercising in this way secretions from the digestive glands increase, reducing digestion times and improving the absorption and assimilation of the nutrition of food. Thus practicing Tai Chi for Health exercises improves appetite, enhances the helps to cure dyspepsia, gastrointestinal neurosis, gastric ulcers, anorexia, bilimbi and eating disorders.

Tai Chi for Health exercises require the body movements and breath to co-operate with each other, allowing Qi energy to flow to the four extremities (the tips of fingers and toes), resulting in the breath becoming slower, deeper and longer. During such a process, the contraction and expansion of the abdominal muscles can be improved, and the traction force between the thoraxes increased. The contact area between capillary vessels and alveoli enlarges, improving lung capacity and efficiency. A benefit of this is being able to maintain your concentration longer without getting tired and improving your working efficiency.



Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei in Denia, Spain 2005

4. Strengthening the functions of the heart, improving the condition of the blood vessels

Taijiquan life enhancement exercises can make the cardiac muscle fibre wider and stronger, the wall of the heart thicker, the contracting ability better and blood circulation easier. In addition, it can improve the flexibility and fortitude of the arterial wall, making the diameter of coronary arteries wider. These changes improve the functioning of the blood vessel system which, in turn helps nutrition to be absorbed by the digestive

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