

Benefits of Tai Chi Chuan

There are many benefits to learning and practicing Tai Chi ranging across the entire spectrum of mind, body and spirit. Some of these are discussed here.

Stress Relief Stress causes your mind to race, your muscles to tense up and your body to issue its 'fight or flight' response, depressing your immune system. These effects increase the risk of accidents, physical injuries and disease. As a martial art that uses 'soft' to overcome 'hard' and gentleness to defeat aggression, Tai Chi naturally releases your stress leading to a happier, healthier life.

Well-Being The sense of well-being that comes with regular practice is hard to describe. It is like self-confidence without the ego or contentment without the pride. You will feel both energised and at peace. Over time, as you learn more about letting go and being still, fears and anxieties will fade and life will be there to enjoy.

Self Confidence Self-confidence starts from within. To look confident on the surface but feel nervous underneath is a very common problem. It is a prime cause of damaging stress. Tai Chi can help by flushing out the emotions caught in your body and mind from past experiences, whilst showing you stronger, more positive ways of handling the present and future.

Relaxation Tai chi is great for relaxation. Regular practice of tai chi will calm the mind and settle the body. By bringing balance to the body, mind and spirit, relaxation will follow as the body naturally learns to relax, and the mind learns to deal with any causes of stress.

Health & Fitness The positive influence of Tai Chi on health is well-documented. Some examples are its ability to:

- Increase stability in the elderly
- Decrease blood pressure
- Improve some cardiovascular conditions
- Improve many muscular-skeletal injuries or heart problems and speed recovery from injury, operation or disease.

With even a small amount of practice you will notice a difference. Of course prevention is always better than cure: by offering an increased protection against physical injury, methods of relaxing the muscles and joints, ways of focussing the mind and calming the spirit regular practitioners of Tai Chi find they can take their physical endeavours further and remain active much later into life.

In short Tai Chi will bring out your best.

Inner Balance Tai Chi works the mind, body and spirit. People often comment that our Tai Chi finds the weakest aspect: discovering, healing and strengthening it before moving to the next. This upward spiral of internal problem solving is the path to inner strength. It cannot be achieved by ignoring any of the 3 aspects of mind, body or spirit. That's why we call our approach Holistic.

Meditation Tai Chi includes various methods of standing and moving meditation which still, quieten and strengthen the mind. This process brings increased tolerance, concentration, will-power and self-awareness. In turn this decreases stress and frees energy to invest in what you want to do.

Chi Development Each class begins with Chi development, looking at:

- Its cultivation through Chi Kung (a series of postures that harness and concentrate the body's natural internal power)
- Its circulation through the practice of the Tai Chi Form

Beyond the form the classes then look at more practical uses of Chi through a variety of training exercises performed as individuals, in groups or with training partners. With experience you can use this Chi and the knowledge you gain from your interactions with fellow students and the instructors to:

- Improve you own health
- Improve the health of others
- Learn effective Self-defence

Self Defence The much publicised healing and strengthening of mind body and spirit has always been important as the foundation for the traditional aim of Tai Chi – Self Defence. These days this aspect is less critical than it once was in feudal China. However, for those who wish to explore this area, JDIATCC has kept the knowledge of how to apply internal power in real situations. The skill takes much time and dedication to achieve. The results cannot be adequately described in words; only felt.