

# The Magical Power of Taiji

by Shoshanna Katzman



**T**aiji (Tai Chi) strengthens mindfulness as it requires concentrating on several aspects of the body at once. This involves

making sure all movement is guided by the waist, one's center of power. It is both fun and challenging to play with qi (vital energy) while moving the body with grace and power. Taiji choreography is made up of a combination of poses and stances, postural alignment and breathing techniques. Each posture was designed by the ancients to improve health and agility while also calming the heart and spirit.

The energies from nature are used to strengthen the connection between a Taiji player and the forces of heaven and earth. This is achieved by maintaining postural alignment throughout the dance which promotes formation of solid stance work. It also increases agility and empowers a player to move from one posture to the next with greater ease, balance and centeredness.

Maintaining balance throughout the performance of Taiji is achieved through rooting into the earth and lifting the crown of the head upward toward the sky, while keeping the body relaxed and the energetic body centered within one's physical body. This takes great focus and explains why this ancient exercise is known for its meditative effects and mindfulness training. It provides a way to release extraneous thoughts and bring oneself completely into the present moment. It helps a player integrate the physical and energetic aspects of their being and thus come into a place of greater peace and harmony.

Holding proper energetic alignment allows qi and blood to flow freely, continuously and plentifully throughout the body. It balances the complementary forces of yin and yang while invigorating health and toning



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the body's vital organs. Taiji nourishes and softens the skin through drawing blood to the surface, thereby making a player look younger than they actually are. It strengthens energetic immunity which serves to ward off external pernicious influences.

This is precisely what makes this ancient dance look so serene and magical. It also turns a Taiji player into a peaceful warrior as it teaches them how to protect themselves from oncoming aggression whether physical, emotional or energetic. This keeps a player free and clear of negativity, leaving them with the bandwidth to achieve their daily life goals with greater ease and clearer focus.

If you are longing for an exercise that you love to do, this gentle, yet powerful form of moving meditation could be the perfect exercise for you, one that you can practice the rest of your life. It promotes strength, flexibility, balance and endurance making it an excellent workout in and of itself or

combined with other forms of exercise. Do yourself a favor a give it a try, you may just find that Taiji becomes your new best thing!

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