

IN TAI CHI WE TRUST

Like any other discipline Tai Chi is a great mirror of truth if we dare to look. It shows us where we are not full and present in our bodies and so not full and present in our daily lives. It reveals our fears, doubts and frustrations that keep us from going deeper into the form and into ourselves. And it shows us our attachment to our own narrow and small perspective that blinds us from trusting in the bigger picture.

To move through these challenges along our way an abiding sense of faith is necessary. The heart of the discipline of Tai Chi rests in trust. The art of Tai Chi asks us to trust the moment, to trust our teacher, to trust the tradition of the art, and ultimately to trust ourselves.

Tai Chi brings life to each sacred moment, each breath, each movement. Instead of embracing the magnitude of the unfolding moment, often we move through life either fast forwarding into the future or rewinding the tape backwards into the past. To trust in the moment is to remain open to everything and attached to nothing. In Tai Chi we reside in the neck of the hourglass where the simplicity of the moment is always expanding outwards to an eternity of possibilities.

Tai Chi asks us to trust our teacher. We cannot always see the bigger picture or know what is for our highest good. Where we look depends on what we expect to see. What is seen depends on who is doing the looking. We all think we should decide for ourselves what, when and how much we are willing to learn. But what we think we need may be just the thing that keeps us from growing. Our own blind spots weaken the way. The nagging voice of "it should be like that" can detour us off the path more than anything. To not know how things will turn out but to keep moving forward in trust creates the true inner strength that Tai Chi nurtures.

Tai Chi teaches us to trust ourselves. We learn to be at home with who we are, to be patient and comfortable with ourselves. We gradually begin to trust ourselves to let go of those ideas and responses that weaken our spirits and undermine our intention. We become gentle with ourselves and also with others. We become the best of martial artists as we gradually trust ourselves in any situation.

Tai Chi nurtures a trust in the bigger picture. We begin to trust that the walls we encounter along the way are merely opportunities for growth. There is a qigong exercise called "wall squatting" where we are literally physically pressed up against a wall bending our knees to rise and lower, feeling every ache, pain and resistance. But it is not the wall, but how we face the wall that matters. Trust the wall. Bow to the wall. The wall is our teacher. For being against the wall means that we trust our discipline enough to keep growing and learning.

Trust the tradition of Tai Chi. This is an art that is centuries old and has been passed down from master to student for countless generations. Respect the beauty, depth and wisdom of Tai Chi by trusting in its inherent benefits. Something does not stand such an enormous test of time without having many gifts to offer.

So, reside in trust. In Tai Chi there are no failures. We can only stop trying. We need to simply just keep coming back, even when it seems like we are going nowhere. To keep going is to connect with the most natural and powerful rhythms of life - the sun rises, the sun sets. Going on nurtures a trust that whatever situation we meet, we will be able to embrace it with both integrity and gratitude. While there are no guarantees, total trust and commitment to the discipline will generate its own center and stability.

So surrender, let go all expectations, and trust Tai Chi to take you to places you've never been before and never thought you could go.

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