

Aikido Ai
of Southern California



6725 Comstock Avenue
Whittier, CA 90601
562 696 1838
www.aikidoai.com

WELCOME TO TAI CHI MOVEMENTS & MEDITATION!

Congratulations on starting your journey to learn the beautiful art of tai chi!

Tai chi is fun. It will help you be...

..*flexible* like bamboo
...**STRONG** like a big tree
...*relaxed* like water
...*quick* like a snake
..
...**STILL** like a mountain
...*swift* like the wind
...have the **FOCUS** of a tiger
...the **BALANCE** of a beautiful bird..
...and the **fierceness** of a dragon.

I love Tai Chi. Tai Chi gives me energy and makes me strong and healthy. It is my friend that helps me feel better when I'm tired, upset or sad. It is a lot of fun to practice either by myself or with friends. I plan to continue to practice for the rest of my life.

I have studied Tai Chi for over ten years. My teacher is Sensei (Sen-say) Frank Mc Gouirk who teaches at the Aikido-ai Dojo in uptown Whittier. A "dojo" is Japanese for a school or place of study. I invite you and your family and friends to come visit there anytime.

I look forward to sharing Tai Chi with you!

Suzette Hodnett

BENEFITS OF TAI CHI



TAI CHI FOR OUR HEALTH

Improves coordination and balance.
Promotes proper muscle development.
Increases mental and physical endurance.
Boosts the immune system.
Increases circulation.
Enhances breathing.

TAI CHI FOR OUR MIND

Reduces stress.
Calms our emotions.
Helps develop imagination.
Promotes creativity.
Improves self-esteem.
Improves self-confidence.
Increases attention span.
Promotes positive body image.

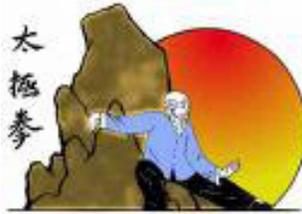
TAI CHI FOR SELF-DEFENSE

Helps us become alert and aware of our surroundings.

Promotes values of humility, non-aggression and playfulness.

Teaches nonviolence and self protection.
Shows how to not get hurt by being relaxed, soft and yielding.

WHAT IS TAI CHI?



Tai Chi (tie-jee) is a martial art that began about 400 years ago. It was first created for combat but today many people practice Tai Chi to improve their health, calm their mind and have a better and longer life.

In the old days Tai Chi was kept a secret. The masters would only teach their family members. Sometimes, because Tai Chi was so special, they would only teach one move a year. Today we are lucky as the many benefits of Tai Chi can be enjoyed by everyone.

Tai Chi is based on the laws of yin and yang. Yin and yang are opposites. Nothing exists without its opposite -- up and down, front and back, hard and soft, fast and slow. Everybody has both yin and yang energy. Tai Chi helps us bring these energies into balance.

Millions of children and adults practice the art of Tai Chi every day. Tai Chi can be done anywhere -- your room, your backyard, on a mountain top or at the beach.

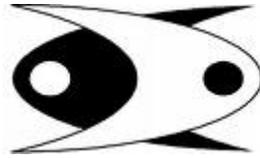
Tai Chi is different from other exercises, such as jumping jacks, in that tai chi exercises consist of very slow, continuous movements that concentrate on body connection, meditation, and breathing.

Even though Tai Chi is a martial art, it is not used for fighting. Tai Chi teaches us how to get out of the way of trouble by being soft and relaxed. People who fight are hard like sticks and are easily broken. People who practice Tai Chi are soft and flexible like bamboo. They bend and sway and don't get hurt. They are alert and aware of their surroundings so can remove themselves from situations before any harm is done.

Cats are some of the best Tai Chi masters. They are relaxed and slow when they choose but can be very fast and focused when necessary. They are quick but always in balance and control.



IMPORTANT WORDS



TAI CHI:

Means "Grand Ultimate"

YIN YANG:

The law of opposites - day and night, dark and light, left and right, slow and fast, empty and full.

QI (jee):

The life force that fuels all living things.

RESPECT:

*Regard for the feelings, wishes or traditions of others
- polite greetings (give respect to your teacher)*

QIGONG:

Qi is our life force, energy. Gong means a period of study. Qigong is a period of study to develop our qi, or life force.

ROOT:

Focusing our energy going through our legs and feet and deep into the earth. Feeling as if we were a tree with roots into the ground. that even a fierce wind cannot knock down.

CONCENTRATION:

Using our mind to focus on each movement and each breath.

SLOW:

Tai chi movements are meant to be slow. Slowness helps us be more patient, more exact, more balanced and strong.

IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES



BE SLOW

BE RELAXED

BE NON-AGGRESSIVE

BE COMFORTABLE

BE ALERT

BE IN HARMONY

GO WITH THE FLOW

BE MODERATE

BE IN THE MOMENT

BREATHE

WARM-UP EXERCISES



1. *Spider Hands*
2. *Bear Walk*
3. *Bounce the ball*
4. *Up and down, Open and Close, Open and Drop
Hand up/Hand Down, Hold Sky/Push Earth*
5. *Neck and shoulder Circles and Stretches*
6. *Wrist and Ankle Circles*
7. *Hip stretches*
8. *Moving the Ball*
9. *Polishing the Table*
10. *Step, Kick and punch*
11. *Fly like a bird*
12. *Shake, shake and shake*
13. *Tapping the body*
14. *Tree Sways in the Wind*

RELAYS AND GAMES



1. *Caterpillar*
2. *Nature : Tree. Wind. Rushing River*
3. *Slow walk: Tiger. Bear. Crane*
4. *Fast to Slow Relay*
5. *Hyper/relaxed*
6. *Sticky Hands*
7. *Calm Pond*
8. *Toss the Energy Ball*
9. *Balancing Act*
10. *Making Molasses*
11. *Around the clock*
12. *Sneaky Cat*

QIGONG EXERCISES



1. Elephant Drinks the Water
Releases tightness in the back, stretches and relaxes the spine and increases energy. Connects earth energy and the heaven energy through the body.



2. Shoot the Bow and Arrow
Strengthens the muscles of your ankles, knees and hips. Improves focus and concentration. Strengthens the digestive system and opens and cleanses the lungs.



3. White Crane Stands on One Foot
Opens the chest. Improves balance, encourages deep breathing, promotes the flow of energy to the heart and stomach, improves focus by concentrating on the root for balance.



4. Catch a Sunbeam
Opens the microcosmic orbit. Calms the heart and increases lung capacity. Balances the yin and the yang energy.



5.. Lion Sleeps

Improves the strength and alignment of the legs, ankles and knees. Tightens the stomach muscles and builds strong energy. Strengthens the lower back and kidneys.



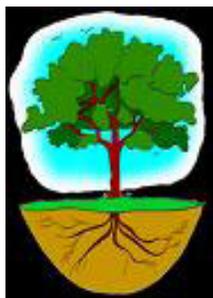
6. Picking Fruit

Opens and strengthens the kidneys, adrenals and pelvic area. Stretches and opens the entire back. Strengthens the legs and arms.



7. Tiger Charges

Brings energy into the legs. Opening the eyes very wide stimulates the cerebral cortex. Clenching the teeth sends energy to the kidneys.



8. Tall Tree with Deep Roots

Strengthens the energy to the spine and brain. Strengthens the ankle and calf muscles. Relieves pain throughout the body, especially that resulting from bad posture.

12 MOVES OF THE TAI CHI FORM



SECTION ONE

Beginning
Wild Horse
White Crane
Brush Knee

SECTION TWO

Grasp the Bird's Tail
Cloud Hands
Strike Ears with Fist
Kick Right and Left

SECTION THREE

Snake Creeps Down
Golden Cock on One Leg
Touch the Sea Bottom

SECTION FOUR

Turn and Punch
Withdraw and Push
Close

THINGS TO REMEMBER



NO INJURIES:

Be careful and aware of your surroundings. No physical or emotional injuries. Sometimes mean words can hurt as much as a punch.

SHOW RESPECT TO YOUR TEACHER AND CLASSMATES:

Greet your teacher with a bow. Place your left palm (open) over your right closed fist and bow slightly forward. Treat other students as you would like to be treated. Pay attention to your teacher's instruction.

HAVE FUN

Laugh as you learn. Make mistakes.

BE PATIENT

Don't try to go fast. Tai chi is a journey and not a race to cross a finish line. It may seem difficult at first but after awhile it will be clear, easy and fun.

TRY YOUR BEST

Everybody goes at their own pace. There is no rush to learn quickly. There is no competition with anyone else. Try your best and you will learn. Some of the best tai chi students are the ones that learn slowly with determination and patience.

LISTEN TO YOUR BODY:

Your body has a natural range of motion. When you go beyond its limits, your body will feel pain. Always listen to what your body tells you. If a move feels uncomfortable, don't do it. Stay relaxed.

TO THE PARENTS



Dear Parent,

Thank you for your encouragement and support of your child learning the art of Tai Chi.

It is a misconception that tai chi is merely a form of gentle exercise for adults and not a form of exercise and enjoyment for children. People say that kids do not have the patience to learn or to keep still long enough to focus on the movements. While their attention spans sometimes aren't as large as adults, they have many characteristics that actually make it much easier for them to learn -- they aren't worried about doing it wrong, have active imaginations and enjoy a sense of play, and have bodies that are still flexible and relaxed.

Encourage your children to show you what they have learned. Tai chi is a wonderful exercise for parents and children to do together. Some of the moves can be done before sitting down to do homework, before going to bed, or before a big test.

Want to learn tai chi yourself? Tai Chi for adults is taught at our dojo or school in uptown Whittier.

All the best,
Suzette

BENEFITS AND STUDIES



Recent studies have shown these amazing results of tai chi practice for young people:

A study at the University of Miami, Touch Research Institute showed that adolescents with ADHD showed improved behavior, less daydreaming and hyperactivity after 10 sessions of Tai Chi.

The American Journal of Medicine and Sports, (Vol. 111, Number 11, March/April 2001) lists a series of studies showing that tai chi can improve concentration, focus, performance, physical and emotional balance, reduce blood pressure, anxiety and depression, improve reactions to stressful situations and enhance the immune system.

Studies have shown a relationship between physical activity and development of self-esteem, particularly with adolescents and children with special needs. Gruber, J.J. (1986) American Academy of Physical Education papers. Vol. 19, pp. 30-48.

A series of studies have shown how Tai Chi helps students who exhibit violence or aggressive behavior. This is particularly effective at the middle school level. (2002 Adolescence. Vol. 36, Issue 143). (Adolescence. Vol. 33, Issue 1) (Human Relations, Vol. 39, Issue 12).

Studies showed a positive effect on the anxiety and mood of children with learning disabilities after a series of one-hour, twice weekly session of Tai Chi Chuan. Lois J. Baron and Christine Faubert, 2004.

A 1984 research study introduced tai chi to obese 3rd, 4th, & 5th graders in a primary school in East Boston (Slide 3). To avoid targeting the children as "obese," the school nurse checked for a number of parameters, including heart rate, blood pressure, height, and respiratory rate. The findings concluded that doing tai chi for 30 minutes on a once a week basis helped lower the children's blood pressure by about a 10% average.

ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR

Suzette Hodnett is a third degree black belt in Tai Chi and has been training for ten years. She teaches Tai Chi at the Aikido-ai School in uptown Whittier and at various outreach locations.

She also has over 20 years experience as a psychotherapist working with families, adults and children. She currently works as a Life Coach, blending her experience as a licensed psychotherapist, tai chi instructor and professional artist to bring physical and emotional health to youth and adults.

Suzette is available for individual sessions. Sliding scale available.

NOTES