

# Tai Chi and Qi Gong

## Introduction to mind-body exercises



**Vithleem (Emi) Chatzipanagioti**  
**P.E. Teacher, Tai Chi instructor & coach,**  
**International judge Tai Chi Chuan**

# Rexamining older approaches for the understanding of the meaning of Health

**Can mind - body exercises be the answer for a better health and well-being?**

**→Ancient wisdom - a vision to past is meeting cutting-edge science research that look forward to a new and promising future**

**→East meets West - mutual understanding and current developments**

**→Necessity to engage Science and medical research**

# What is Tai Chi?

A mind-body exercise :  
roots in Ancient Chinese wisdom and traditions  
traditional Chinese medicine  
martial arts  
Philosophy

“TaiChi training integrates slow, intentional movements with breathing and cognitive skills (for example mindfulness and imagery). It aims to strengthen, relax and integrate the physical body and mind, enhance the natural flow of Qi, and improve health, personal development, and self-defense.”

(Wayne Peter, The Harvard Medical School Guide to Tai Chi, Shambala Publications, 2013 by Harvard Health Publications)

# The variety of Tai Chi

*' Tai Chi is a journey to a balanced system - it cannot be accomplished overnight'*

**Internal martial art**

**Relaxation exercise**

**Breathing exercise**

**Enhancement of creativity and art expression**

**Therapeutic application**

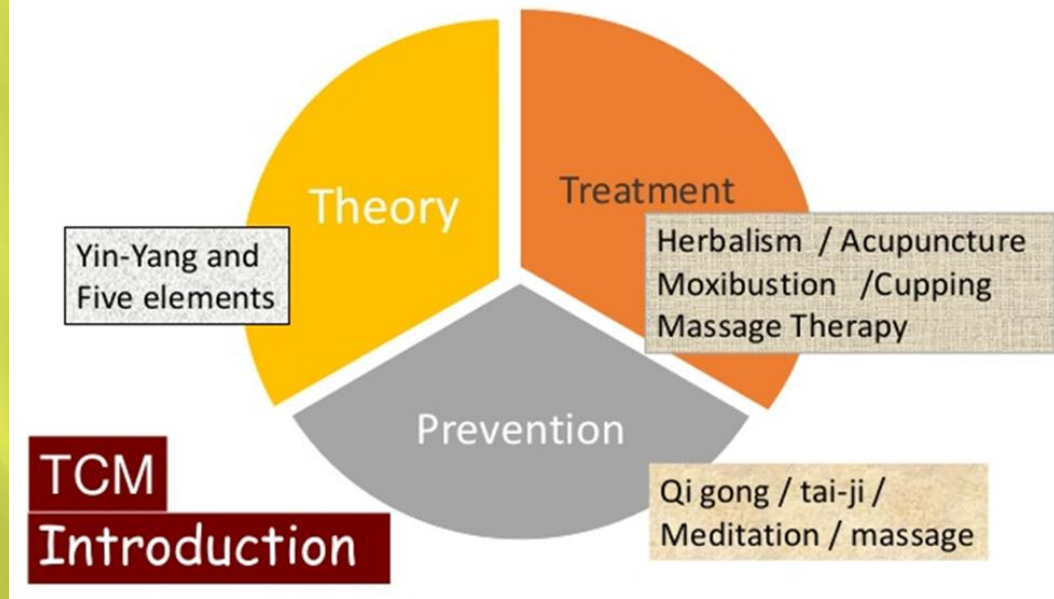
**Holistic and alternative exercise**

**Mild self-defense applications**



# Tai Chi - TCM

- Traditional forms of medicine have been used in China since the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century. Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) system consist three parts.



# The science of Tai Chi

Cutting edge - research supports that Tai Chi  
improves

Flexibility, balance and mobility, sense of well-being

During Tai Chi training the combination of movements  
leads to a coordination and integration of the upper  
halves with the lower parts of the body, the left with the  
right halves of the body and the external expressions  
with the inside or the core.

Components of exercise:

rythmic and concious breathing

Cognitive and emotional ( intention, visualization,  
imagery, focus of attention, concentration)

# Research

**'Reductionism is less effective when dividing a problem into its parts - this can lead to a loss of very important information of the whole.'** (2006, A. C. Ahn et al.)

**Multiple factors are often responsible for a disease such as diabetes, coronary artery or current low-back pain.**

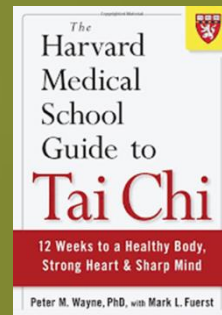
**- 'Meditation in motion' or 'Medication in motion' is often used to describe the sensation of Tai Chi & Qi Gong**

**- Mindfulness means discovering the mind-body connection**

# The example of Harvard Medical School – 'The look to the East'



- The Holistic thinking evidence in medicine:  
Research evaluation of complementary and integrative medical therapies
- Educational programs to the medical community and the public
- Designing sustainable models of complementary and integrative care delivery in an academic setting
- 2000 Division for Research and Education in Complementary and Integrative Medical therapies
- Harvard Medical School & Osher Center for Integrative Medicine & Brigham and Women's Hospital





# Tai Chi - integration with the social and physical environment

## Tai Chi - lifelong learning Social environment

Practicing in a group -

Responding and coping to other people cues,

Tuning in to a larger group dynamic activates the  
motivational process

## Physical environment

Practicing outside -

Connecting with nature is a recharging and nourishing  
feeling

# Tai Chi - Physiology of exercise

- **Alignment of posture and body structure**
- The Vertical spine ( Tai Chi for back pain protocol by Dr. Paul Lam)**
- Attention to the Hips and Waist ( having good flexibility and range of motion)**
- Alignment of the feet – the Foundation**
- Sense of ‘Rooting’ (improves the ankle range of motion)**
- Proprioception – Refinement or the ability to ‘feel’ the body movement in space**
- **Safe and effective practice**

# What is Qi Gong?

Development and Strengthening of vital energy with the aim of improving health, body and spirit harmony

Direction and distribution of energy flow through meridians and energy channels

Exercise the energy potential for self-healing purpose

Ancient practice which includes therapeutic postures, movement patterns, walking forms, self-massage, breathing techniques and mental exercise

# Qi gong - Physiology of exercise

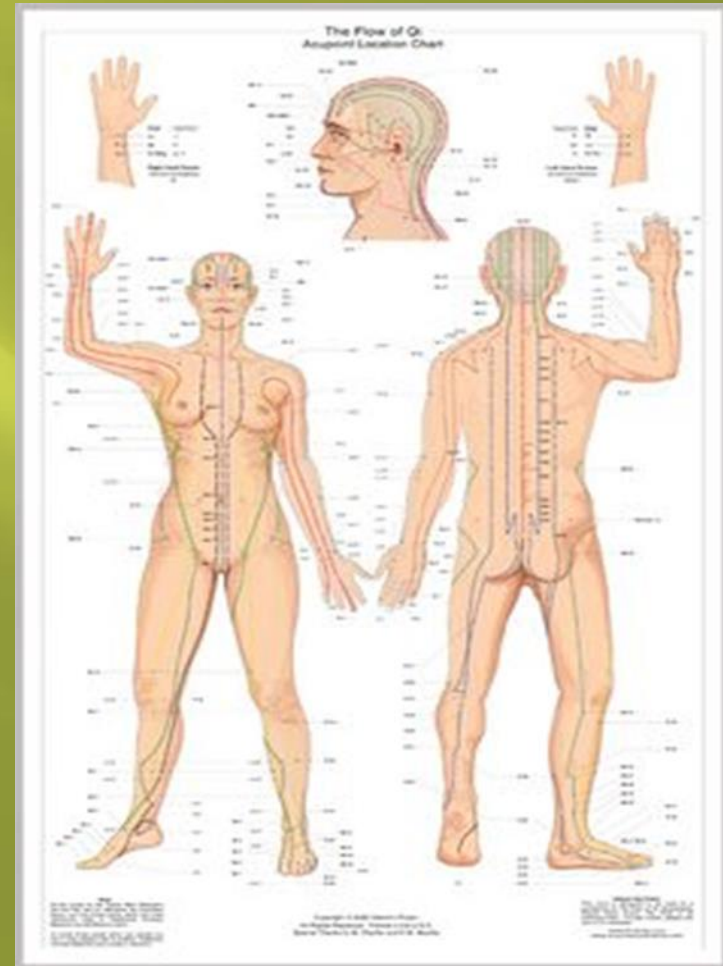
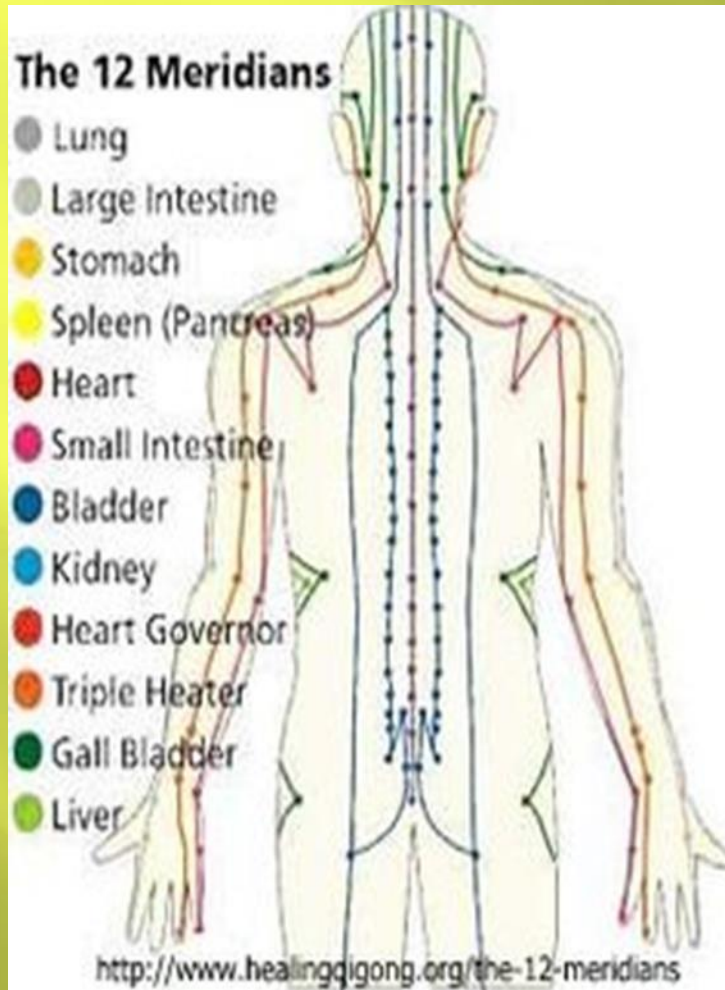
The breathing → Shun Hu Xi → natural flowing breathing

Correct posture of the trunk' - Standing like a Tree

Fang Song Gong - the art of relaxation  
Or effortless exercise

Keep clam and exercise Qi Gong!

# Qi gong - energy flow through the meridians



# Tai Chi & Qi Gong - Quality of Life



# Quality of Life

## World Health Organization:

is the general well-being of individuals and societies, outlining negative and positive features of life. It observes life satisfaction, including everything from physical health, family, education, employment, wealth, safety, security to freedom, religious beliefs, and the environment

QOL is not only the absence of disease but a condition of body, mind, psychological and social well-being

# Taichi benefits....

- reliefs pain
- copes with depression
- reliefs arthritis
- deep breathing
- balance improvement
- decrease of blood pressure
- improves mental clarity
- strengthening of lower limbs
- enhances vitality
- improves sleep quality



# Qi gong - rehabilitation

Qi gong:

Relaxation

Strengthening - trunk, upper and lower limbs

Breathing exercises

Walking and Sitting  
routines and forms



# Tai Chi & Qi gong - modification

## Tai Chi

Standing and sitting routines

Wheelchair Tai chi

Tai Chi Ruler





Emi Chatzipanagiotti, Tai Chi - Go Fit 2018



Emi Chatzipanagioti, Tai Chi - Go Fit 2018

# Tai Chi & Qi gong - methodology

**Designing a Tai Chi program....**

**TaiChi for children/school**

**Tai Chi for elderly**

**TaiChi in cancer treatment**

**Tai Chi for chronic disease**

**TaiChi synergy with other sports**

**On -the-job Tai Chi**

**Tai Chi and the Arts**

**Tai Chi in tourism**

# Tai Chi & Qi gong – methodology

**Tai Chi and autism**

**Tai Chi and ADD/ADHD**

**Tai Chi and kids with special needs**



# Tai Chi & Qi gong and rehabilitation



Emi Chatzipanagiotti, Tai Chi - Go Fit 2018

# Tai Chi & Qi gong in Tourism

## Alternative Tourism

Tai Chi by the sea

Tai Chi in resorts

Tai Chi in China





# 6 reasons to learn Tai Chi



## 6 reasons to learn Tai Chi

**Improves elasticity and mobility**

**Improves balance**

**Muscular efficiency**

**Cardio Health**

**Treatment of Stress and depression**

**Enhancement of mindfulness and concentration**

# Thank you for your attention

