



Hello all,

Welcome to Coherent Breathing®, Volume 3, Issue 5: *A Brief Treatise About Tai Chi, Breathing & Esoterica*. I hope you enjoyed Volume 3, Issue 4: *Its Time To Ask Again - Does Coherent Breathing Wash The Brain?*

Many readers may know that one of my long term passions has been Tai Chi. As it is my nature to want to know the fundamentals of things, I've spent ~40 years researching *what it is?* I asked this question knowing that it is a mystical tradition with ancient roots, and that there are “many secrets” that I did not know. This article is about a few of those secrets, where I hope this information will save aspirants the many years it took me to understand – at least what it is that I think I know now...

I consider Tai Chi to be a fundamental method of training the body/mind to the very finest degree, where an objective is to realize conscious awareness and control over every aspect of movement and motion, from the tips of the fingers to the tips of the toes. There are rules that apply to how we move, and by applying these rules with deliberation, we learn more and more about them, and in doing so, the awareness of our body and mind grows. On one hand this is not very different than “practicing” anything, e.g. juggling, or playing a musical instrument, the more we practice, the higher our skill level. On a neurological level, practice builds and strengthens neural networks in brain. With enough practice, the subconscious mind can control what once required conscious control. Mindfulness is required for this to happen, where the more mindful the practice, the more benefit is realized. *As we practice, the mind is focused on controlling the body in space and time. The rhythm of movement is the rhythm of breathing, and vice versa, i.e., while unseen, diaphragm motion (breathing) is slow, deep, rhythmic, and relaxed.* Our mind is immersed in controlling the body – this immersion is in-itself “strong medicine”.

Out of necessity, the motion of Tai Chi is cyclic, yin and yang, as is our breathing. Both movement and breathing cause the blood in the body to move. *Breathing is a circulatory function.* Actually, there are several “forces” at work, gravity, breathing, and movement. When they are combined the circulation of blood and fluids is maximized, given that we remain relaxed. As the reader may know, resonant, “Coherent” breathing alone causes the blood to move. When we combine Tai Chi with resonant breathing, the effects are multiplied. I see this as one of the reasons that Tai Chi and its predecessors, Tao Yin, and Qi Gong have been heralded for their health benefits for millenia. Created in 1956 by the Chinese Sports Committee, the 24 posture Yang Style sequence was promoted nationwide and in “re-education camps”(Wikipedia), to maximize health and well-being of the population and of workers. I posit that one of the reasons Tai Chi is so beneficial to health is that it promotes slow, deep, rhythmic breathing, even if one does not know about the significance of “resonant breathing” – it is *natural* to slow down one’s breathing when practicing the form slowly. Without practicing slowly, we’re missing the entire point. Resonant, Coherent Breathing alone is also strong medicine, eliciting the Awakened Mind brainwave pattern, etc. (Awakened Mind is a registered trademark belonging to Judith Pennington.) When we combine the two, we enter the meditative state during practice. *Tai Chi should be moving meditation – practicing the form in the meditative state of mind.* Meditation is also understood to be strong medicine.

Tai Chi太極 *supreme and pole* is an ancient Taoist principle that arose from the observation of nature, where the *pine tree* is cited as an example, rooted in Earth and reaching for Heaven, as it grows it is always seeking balance, the distribution of limbs and branches assuring equilibrium. Regarding the practice of Tai Chi, we aspire to be “a moving pine tree”, always balanced. The definition of balance is: the ability to distribute our weight such that we can stand, walk, and move without falling. But in Tai Chi, “balance” is much more than this. In Tai Chi, balance means that we adhere to the vertical center connecting Heaven and Earth. I believe that the practice of Tai Chi assumes that we have practiced certain prerequisites. Personally, I learned this backwards. I spent decades practicing Tai Chi paying attention to every detail and





principle, but did not have a proper understanding of what I could have, should have, learned in advance, this being proper breathing, standing, relaxation, and mental focus. I had a good understanding of the external, but not the internal. Almost everything that has been published makes some reference to Tai Chi being an “internal” art, many books that I’d studied long and hard. I’d also studied with numerous teachers over the years. How is it that I could not have learned what I needed to know? During this period, 1975-1995, I had also been practicing qi gong, yoga, kundalini meditation, and Reiki, but I did not find the missing pieces there either. Here I will not speculate.

As Dr. Meng-Sheng Lin and I articulate, Wuji Qi Gong accomplishes this via Taoist *alchemy*, synonyms for alchemy are “chemistry” and “magic”. It is the alchemy, the internal work that I was either not doing or not doing correctly, and I knew it. I knew of bits and pieces of it, but because it is a puzzle, I didn’t understand the wholistic practice. Hence, I was always reading, always researching. In 1995, I found the parts that I was missing: a) breathing slowly, deeply, and rhythmically, i.e. “resonantly”, b) relaxing deeply, c) finding and cultivating the centerline, d) attaching the mind to the navel. These 4 things, need to be incorporated in this order, and then practiced simultaneously, such that they become one.

When we know how to stand properly, then we carry standing meditation with us when we practice Tai Chi. Dr. Meng-Sheng Lin and I have written about this method in *Wuji Qi Gong And The Secret Of Immortality*, an attempt to articulate the essential philosophy and method of the *Can Tong Qi*, one of Taoism’s most revered, yet arcane writings. While I had been practicing standing meditation of some years, I only learned of critically important “secrets” in 1995 with the reading of *Wujishi Breathing Exercise* by Cai Song Fang, which I studied and practiced very diligently for 6 months (the period to which I commit to any new practice with seriousness). Six months is all it took to convince me. My Tai Chi and martial arts skill raced forward in leaps and bounds. Also, my understanding and comprehension of esoterica, a reason Meng-Sheng and I could grasp the meaning of the *Can Tong Qi* which she translated and I transliterated – I had been practicing what we had come to call *Wuji Qi Gong* for over 15 years. (More importantly by mid-1996, the kundalini genie returned to the bottle for the first time in a decade.) I credit this with restoration of “Yin”, largely due to Meng-Sheng’s application of Traditional Chinese Medicine, which began in August, 1995, but I also give some credit to Wuji Qi Gong, the method has the objective of restoring and preserving Yin – the Earth element.

Wuji Qi Gong is the “engine” behind the generation of *qi* or energy. As we know today, bio-energy is produced by the mitochondria that exist in all of the cells of the body, producing energy in the form of ATP, and in the process facilitating an electrical current, electrons flowing within every mitochondria within every cell, the sum total of current adding up to somewhere in the range of 320 Amperes. It has been estimated that the average adult generates more energy than the sun mass-per-mass. A purpose of Tai Chi is to aid this generation and to allow the qi to flow freely, to every cell in the body. Qi is bio-energy, the outcome of the electron flows produced by the “respiratory chains” of each mitochondria of every cell, the sum total of respiratory chains being in the range of 10 quintillion. Electricity is “life”. When it stops flowing, cells perish and the body disintegrates. An objective of Wuji Qi Gong and of Tai Chi is to “cultivate qi” (bioelectricity), opening the system of meridians through which it flows. How and why this missing practice yields this quantum difference requires a Taoist explanation.

In Taoist cosmology, there is the principle: Taij 太極 comes from Wuji 無極. Note that they share the same 2nd character, “ji”. Wuji is commonly translated as *void* or *nothingness*, it is a reference to “in-the-beginning”, before the universe differentiated into Yin and Yang, before dynamism. Interestingly, it also speaks to the practice of Tai Chi, the practice of Tai Chi is necessarily built on the practice of Wuji, for without this foundation, Tai Chi does not function as designed and one can spend decades in futility. There is Tai Chi for fun, health, and well-being, *and then there is Tai Chi, the esoteric art as intended.*

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P.S. We plan to offer the 2024 Coherent Breathing certification course beginning in May. Stay tuned for dates.