

Tai Chi for Emotion Balance

(A Chinese Philosophical Approach to Healing)



Dr. Aihan Kuhn

Master of Tai Chi and Qi Gong

Disclaimer:

This book is only intended to help to understand the depression and how to use natural methods to assist healing of depression as well as prevent relapse of depression. This book is not intended as a substitute for medication, neither intend to cure depression. Please check with your doctor for medical advice.

Dr. Aihan Kuhn

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Tai Chi for Depression: Book Description

Depression is a major health hazard affecting many people's lives in the world. In the United States, one in every five people, or about 54 million Americans, experience some type of mental disorder each year. Some can control depression with medication and others may continue to have a poor quality of life, even with medication. Most research focuses on medication as a remedy. Tai Chi and Qi Gong involve a natural energy workout that can help to relieve and heal depression. Aihua Kuhn, a Chinese physician trained in mainland China, has been practicing natural medicine in the United States since 1992, and has had excellent success healing illness with natural medicine and Chinese exercise. Depression is one of many diseases which she has treated. After years of training in Tai Chi and Qi Gong with well know masters in China, observing the specific response from students and patients, and with her vast knowledge of Chinese medicine, natural healing methods and Daoist philosophy, Dr. Kuhn designed this specific form of Tai Chi to help people prevent or recover from depression. This unique form of Tai Chi combines Chen style Tai Chi and Yang style Tai Chi, Qi Gong, Martial arts and meditation, creating a high quality practice. Many students say that this is the most enjoyable and relaxing form of Tai Chi that they have ever practiced.

The characteristics of this form are: it is short, easy to learn, easy to remember and easy to practice. The obvious circular movements create a better energy flow in the body. The martial art character empowers the mind, strengthens the body, improves stamina, and increases self-esteem. Symmetrical movements help balance both sides of the brain to harmonize brain activity. The sophisticated movements stimulate brain function and encouraging the student to learn. Slow and balanced movements calm the brain chemicals, increase serotonin levels, and become a "natural tranquilizer." Moderate amounts of physical movement (exercise) enhance the energy flow and daily energy levels. Localized steps require little space to practice and coordinated, soothing, and open (big frame) movements improve overall coordination. It helps people suffering from all kinds of depression. The theory is that the specially choreographed movements following special music work to harmonize the bio chemicals in the brain that makes one feel calm, powerful, and in control of emotions. Tai Chi can help relieve the stresses in life, improve daily energy levels and enhance immune function and mental clarity.

In this book, Dr. Kuhn teaches us to incorporate "Taoist" philosophy in our life, to stay focused, balanced and detached from old trauma or stress. She gives many self-healing tips to relieve stress and prevent depression in our daily life. She examines depression in both Western and Chinese medicine in order to provide a clear picture of why and how it occurs and how it can be prevented. Learning Tai Chi is not just learning the exercise movements, it's about learning to balance your life.

My Teacher's Comments

Aihan Kuhn, author

You did very nice work to create this form. It is obviously a healing form of Tai Chi that involves balanced movements with big frame and is a combination of the Yang style and Chen style of Tai Chi. The silk reeling in this form is profound. Keep up the good practice.

-----Feng Zhi Qiang,
Grand Master, Chen Style Tai Chi Chuan
Beijing, P.R.China
Summer, 2004



The things I like best about Dr. Aihan is her bringing Eastern and Western medicine together, and bringing Tai Chi into healing. This kind healing modality has a huge potential for our health and life. She is a truly dedicated doctor. I really admire her.

----- Li De Yin,
Vice Chairman of Martial Art Committee in PRC
2006



Dedication

I wasn't a Daoist follower during my youth and wasn't even considering becoming a Daoist. I was, however, influenced by my older sister who was always giving me suggestions that seemed to make sense during crises in my spiritual life. I often wondered how she got so smart, and lived so wisely. After studying Daoist philosophy (the way of nature and spontaneous) and practicing Daoism, I finally realized that my sister is a true Daoist and might not even know it. When Master Duan Zhi Liang stayed with me for several days he taught me something I never forgot "If you treat your friends as friends, and your enemies as friends, you will no longer have enemies". I soon found this made sense. If we treat each other like friends, the world would be more peaceful and harmonious.

I dedicate this book to my older sister Ji Zhen Nan who was the first person to introduce me to harmonious Daoist living, to Grand Master Duan Zhi Liang who taught me how to see things in a natural and harmonious way, to Grand Master Feng Zhi Qiang who taught me the best way of learning Tai Chi, to Zu Tian Jai who taught me the way of practice Tai Chi, and to Grand Master Li De Yin who has a great deal of knowledge in Internal Martial Arts. Thank you, my dear masters!

I dedicate this book to my daughter, Sharon Kuhn. It is her, I began to write this book. This book is a gift to her from my heart.

Dr. Aihan Kuhn

Acknowledgement

It is easy for me to express my knowledge of Tai Chi and Qi Gong, but it is difficult for a Chinese speaking person like me to write a book in English. It took a great deal of time and effort to figure out how to say things correctly. In Chinese, we speak and write in the opposite order from English, so we say “English speaks opposite.” In order to finish this book, I needed and received a lot of assistance with the language and would like to take this opportunity to thank all the people who reviewed this book, made corrections, and gave me encouragement.

I’d like to thank my husband Gerry who did the first edit. He was the one who had to translate my “Chinglish” into English. I’d like to thank my dear friend Marie Murphy, a professor of Curry College who did further proof reading and corrections, and who gave me many valuable suggestions. I’d like to thank Susan Bullowa, who has edited my first books “Natural Healing with Qi Gong.” She has done a wonderful job. I’d like to thank all of the volunteers who did preliminary reviews, Dennis Pearne, Ann Waddle, Jamie Midwinter, Ruth Ann Bleakney, Ralph Ferraro, Eva Friedner, Tom Valovic, Bonnie Mitchell, and Kathy Berghorn. Their positive comments helped to assure me that this book should be completed because it could help people recover from depression, especially in spiritual way. I especial want to thank Bonnie Mitchell who provided the detailed editing to make the book clearer. Finally, I’d like to thank David Ripianzi from YMAA, who published my other books “Natural Healing with Qi Gong”, “Simple Chinese Medicine” which got book award. David also gave me valuable suggestions on book writing and publishing. He was the one who really pushed me into my writing journey, so I can share my Chinese medicine healing knowledge and experience with you, my reader. The time, effort, and encouragement of all these people are greatly appreciated. I could not have accomplished these projects without their help.

I would also like to thank to all of my students who are dedicated to studying Tai Chi and Qi Gong. Jim Agnetta, Paul Wilson, Carol Jurewicz, Ellen Maguire, Ann Waddell, Dennis Pearne, Larry O’Sullivan, Kathleen Sakovitz, Miyo Yokota. Their dedication and study motivates me to continue to explore the power of Qi and healing. Improvements in their health and general well-being give me more confidence in both teaching and exploring. They help to prove my belief that if you work hard on natural healing, the healing will happen.

I want to thank the instructors, Jeanne Donnelly and Ellen Maguire, Ann Waddle, who trained at CMH (Chinese Medicine for Health), and New England School of Tai Chi. They have been quality instructors at our facility for many years and help me to maintain a tradition of excellence by teaching and sharing their knowledge of energy medicine. Their hard work is greatly appreciated, as is the work of Suzidee Hansen, who has had success improving seniors’ health and quality of life by teaching Qi Gong at the Mansfield Senior Center.

I’d like to thank Joyce Cerutti who contributed her art work.

I thank my mentor, Grand Master Feng Zhi Qiang, a very well known grand master of Chen style Tai Chi Chuan in China, who taught me the fundamental principles of Chen style Tai Chi practice.

I also want to thank Grand Master Duan Zhi Liang, a very well known Qi Gong master in China, who not only taught me Qi Gong, but also taught me how to apply Qi Gong to achieve a stress free and quality lifestyle.

I deeply thank Professor Li De Yin, who helped me and our students with the traditional Tai Chi form and deeper understanding. His knowledge in Chinese martial art and Tai Chi has brought us deeper understanding in fundamental Tai Chi practice.

I very much thanks Grand master Zu Tian Cai, who was from Chen village in China, taught us whole sequence of Chen Style Push hands. It certainly helped our students understanding the importance of “building breaks” for Tai Chi practice.

All of these masters had deep influence in my Tai Chi journey and helped me a great deal in my teaching. They gave me much valuable information regarding Qi Gong and Tai Chi practice. The unique part of each one of them had broaden my knowledge which made me more creative and effective in my healing and prevention work.

Finally, I thank all of you for reading my book. Your open mind and positive attitude will surely help to spread the words about the benefits of natural healing and Tai Chi.

Dr. Aihan Kuhn

Introducing the Author

Dr. Aihan Kuhn is a 1982 graduate of Hunan Medical University in Chang Sha, China. She has had training in both conventional Western medicine and traditional Chinese Medicine. Traditional Chinese Medicine is a natural healing form of medicine that involves many different natural therapeutic methods to treat various diseases and bring the body to optimum health. For six years prior to coming to the United States in 1989, Dr Kuhn practiced medicine in hospitals in China as an OB-GYN. In her practice, she was able to use both Western and Chinese Medicine. She has always been interested in nature and natural cures for disease. She started to learn sword since ten years old and started to study Qi Gong, Tai Chi, and other oriental exercises in 1978. She began teaching in China in 1984 and has been teaching in the United States since 1992.

Dr. Kuhn continues her study of Tai Chi and Qi Gong in China every year, mentored by well known Tai chi and Qi Gong grand masters, such as Master Feng Zhi Qiang, a famous grand master of Chen style Tai Chi Chuan, and Duan Zhi Liang, a famous Qi Gong grand master and doctor of traditional Chinese medicine. She had mentored with Li De Yin, one of the most well know martial art professor in China, a previous Chairman of Chinese Martial Art Committee, who also participated in choreography of national form of Tai Chi. By continuing to study and explore, she has sustained a high quality of teaching and has become more effective in her patient care and Chinese natural healing. Dr. Kuhn believes that maintaining good health and preventing illness is more important than treating disease. To achieve a healthy lifestyle, Dr. Kuhn has found that one should work hard on improving “Qi”, the life force that is within us. To help others get well, she focuses on healthy ways of thinking and eating, routine Chinese exercise to enhance energy flow and immune system, and the practice of Traditional Chinese Medicine. To share her knowledge and experience in ancient Chinese healing, Dr. Kuhn has provided many on site workshops and seminars to hospital professionals and at wellness centers, senior centers, schools and colleges, nursing homes, companies, and her clinic. Periodic lectures, as well as CEU programs for nurses and physical therapists, are held in her clinic and other locations. Dr. Kuhn has been teaching Tai Chi, Qi Gong, and other healing exercises in the United States since 1992. Some of her students with mild to moderate depression have felt better after practicing for a period time. She is a unique “Natural Psychologist” who searches for wisdom from nature and applies it to daily life. She has a reputation as being “the best teacher and instructor”, “an excellent speaker and lecturer”, “a wonderful healer”, and “an amazing doctor, [which is very hard to find]”.

Dr. Kuhn was very first Massachusetts state sponsor for “World Tai Chi and Qi Gong Day”, a worldwide event created to promote and foster awareness of the health benefits of practicing Tai Chi and Qi Gong. Tai Chi and Qi Gong groups all over the world practice in public parks on the same day at same hour, to spread the healing spirit.

Dr. Kuhn is the director and owner of Chinese Medicine for Health and President and founder of the Tai Chi & Qi Gong Healing Institute (TQHI), a non-profit organization promoting natural energy healing. TQHI is committed to improving health care using traditional Chinese healing arts such as Qi Gong, Tai Chi and other TCM methods to

improve body energy circulation in order to heal ailments, prevent illness, bring harmony to our lives, and delay the aging process.

Gerry Kuhn

My Path to Natural Medicine

Dr. Aihan Kuhn

When I was just starting out as a doctor, my focus was mainly on treating disease. I was proud of being able to treat people with medication, perform surgeries, etc. The prevention part was not my focus. Part of the reason was that preventive health care work was not appreciated. People appreciate that you can cut open their body and take the tumor out, or give them medication to make them feel good in 30 minutes, or find out what name of their illness. People get disease and don't even know how they got it; family member don't even know how their loved one died; people tired and unable to work don't even know why; kids don't understand why parents drinking; people don't know why they feel depressed. As my practice go on, I realize the importance of the preventive work. The more I practice, the stronger I felt that I should help people to prevent the illness.

Now, my focus is on teaching people how to prevent disease and treating patients in the early stages of their illness so they can avoid additional problems. My work may not seem that impressive to some people, but it has tremendous value in maintain good health, happy life and preventing illness. When I see my patients and students enjoying good health because of my care and teaching, my joy is indescribable.

When I was in medical school studying conventional Western medicine, I never believed in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), Tai Chi and Qi Gong. I thought "Qi Gong" was based on superstition and Tai Chi was a regular exercise like any other. I thought Chinese medicine was just "comfort therapy" and not real medicine. In China, all the medical schools were required to teach TCM, and all of the medical students were required to memorize its content, including the theory of "Yin Yang," "five elements", "Zhang Fu," "Jin, Qi, Shen", physical examination of "Glossy tongue", "Slippery pulse", therapeutic herbs, and acupuncture points and meridians. At that time I was 24 years old and had no idea what "Qi" was. How can you identify or measure Qi? Who could understand the "Chinese Kidney" or "Chinese Liver"? I was very skeptical and just tried to memorize the content of the book and pass the tests. I did well on my tests; but did not have a deep understanding of TCM as real medicine.

Soon after I began working in the hospital, I had a severe toothache that was a "nerve pain" preventing me from sleeping at night, even with antibiotics. To relieve the pain, I went to an acupuncture doctor. He used three needles, two on my face and one on my hand. Fifteen minutes later the pain was reduced 80%. The best of all, I can sleep.

Some time later, I had my first child, a daughter, and started breastfeeding. I soon developed an infection on part of my breast. I took an antibiotic for several days and was also using a topical antibiotic cream. The infection did not subside and I experienced intolerable pain that affected my breast-feeding. My milk production was diminished and my baby cried because she didn't like the cow's milk that I substituted for her.

I went to the OB-GYN department of the TCM hospital, where a woman doctor looked at my problem. She did not give me a prescription of herbs. Instead, she suggested that I

wash the area with rice water 3 or 4 times a day. (In China, we always had to wash the rice before cooking it, so that was the rice water to which she was referring) I followed her instructions and by the second day, the pain was reduced and by the third day, the infection was more than fifty percent improved. By the fifth day, I felt almost normal and had very little discomfort. Initially, I thought it was correct to use an antibiotic for the infection because I learned that in school. When I returned to the doctor, she explained the rice water was so effective because it contains a lot of B vitamins and my dry skin was due to a B1 deficiency. By supplying nutrition to the area, the skin was able to heal quickly. What a lesson I had learned. I hadn't learned about "rice water" in medical school.

After several similar experiences I started to believe in the power of TCM and natural medicine and natural healing. I started to pay attention to my feelings, my energy, my thoughts, my healing, the change in nature and its relation to discomfort, certain food and its effect on the body, and the role that attitude and lifestyle play in health. It all made sense. I began to realize that, because we came from nature, nature is really a vast and beneficial resource for us to use. I remembered at one time when I was in the countryside at 17, a farmer told me: "Anything growing that is green could be a medicine, only we haven't found a use for it yet." It was then that I start to get into the nature and its relation to human health. From many amazing personal experience with TCM, I decided to use Chinese Medicine in my practice. I began to use acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine in my OB-GYN practice in China, and I found that the patients responded better with combination of both Western and Chinese Medicine.

After living in the United States for a while, I began to have back pain, insomnia, asthma, chronic sinus problems, headaches, hip problems, and wrist tendonitis. I was lucky that I was able to use TCM to help myself. I do not suffer from most of those problems. I teach and practice Tai Chi, Qi Gong and other Chinese healing exercises regularly, I teach people of the natural therapies and self help, I continue to help people with various medical issues, and I realized that my healing ability has improved to the level very few therapist know. I use these natural healing techniques for my own healing. maintain my energy level and immune function. It is very effective.

Even though I was trained as western doctor and studied both Eastern and Western medicine, but much of my knowledge was from the time I spend in TCM hospital worked as TCM doctor and seeing many patients in 1995. I went back to China to continue my education in TCM and Tai Chi and Qi Gong in order to broaden my knowledge in TCM and build better skills for patients care. I worked in a TCM hospital and rotated in the Department of Acupuncture, Chinese Massage, TCM Dermatology, and TCM Orthopedics. I also continued my study of Qi Gong, Tai Chi, and other Martial Arts. I learned so much TCM theory and hands-on therapy. It really opened my eyes as well as my heart to the path of TCM and I'm convinced that Chinese medicine is a treasure from our ancestors. It is a gift to our society from ancient China. It is the most complete natural healing system and has tremendous value. Chinese Medicine holds 4000 years of value due to its safety and minimal side effects. It is highly efficient for treating many illnesses and it has a mind body connection and long-term benefits.

Chinese Medicine, Tai Chi and Qi Gong exercises are a wonderful approach to natural healing and they have helped me to improve my body and my mind. They can help many ailments, but the healing effect depends on the severity and the duration of the illness, the age of the person, the patient's cooperation, life style, diet, exercise habits, and mind-set. Generally speaking, the closer you are to nature, and the more open-minded and disciplined you are, the better the results that you can expect. The more medications you take, the less healthy you are; the more stubborn you are and unwilling to change, the less healthy you will be both mentally and physically. The more regularly you practice Tai Chi or Qi Gong, the more likely your overall health will be positively impacted.

You have to have an open mind to learn Tai Chi or Qi Gong, or other internal martial arts. In China, it has been used for healing for over 4000 years and is still popular. They must be doing something right. I invite you to practice Tai Chi regularly to see what happens in your life. I hope this book gives you enough information about this wonderful ancient Chinese Healing art and human energy science.

**Dr. Aihan Kuhn,
Master, Tai Chi & Qi Gong
Director & Owner of Chinese Medicine for Health, New England School of Tai Chi
President, Tai Chi & Qi Gong Healing Institute**

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Part I: Understanding Emotion Imbalance

1. About Emotion Imbalance and Depression

"I haven't been feeling well for a very long time. I have no energy, no appetite. I have tried very hard at work but nothing seems to get accomplished". "I don't feel successful. I have no focus. I really don't like feeling this way but I don't know what I can do". "My creative powers are reduced. I feel a restless indolence. I have no feelings for things that I used to enjoy. I lose many friends. Things become more and more difficult." Statements like these are commonly heard in doctor's offices. In many times, some people feel lost but don't know why and how it happened, therefore they don't even know how to correct these unpleasant feeling. Only certain amount people are able to face these symptoms and go doctor to get anti-depressant medication.

Emotion imbalance has many different forms and one of the most common forms is Depression. Depression is a common affective disorder characterized as disturbances of mood and emotion that affect the lives of many Americans. It is sometimes called "the common cold of psychopathology" because of its high frequency of occurrence. In the 1980's, it is estimated that 5% of all men and 10% of all women experienced serious depressive symptoms at least once in their lifetimes. In the 1990's, it is estimated 7% of men and 12% of women experienced serious depressive symptoms. It is possible that the men could have had more undiscovered cases of depression due to lack of data on those who did not see doctors. In general, men are less likely to tell people about their problems, especially their feelings and this might account for the lower figure for men.

Studies by the National Institute of Mental Health indicate that 18.8 million American adults suffer from clinical depression. A 2003 National morbidity Study sponsored by the National Institutes of Health states that 35 million Americans (more than 16% of the population) suffer from depression severe enough to warrant treatment at some time in their lives. Out of the group of Americans who are 18 to 54 years old, 19.1 million suffer from anxiety disorders. This represents 13.3% of this age group. (source: National Institute of Mental Health). Many of the people who suffer from depression also suffer from anxiety (and vice versa).

According to the "Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health, 1999," one in every five people, or about 54 million Americans, experience some type of mental disorder each year, although fewer than 8 million seek treatment. Serious mental illnesses affect more than 10 million Americans, nearly half of whom have severe and persistent disorders (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services, 1997). Untreated and mistreated mental illness cost the United States \$105 billion in lost productivity and \$8 billion in crime and welfare expenditures (British Journal of Psychiatry, 1998). Mental illness is now a global health hazard, which needs to be given serious consideration.

We have all felt 'depressed' at one time or another due to the many different things that happen in our lives. Sometimes it can be due to poor communication with our family or our friends, or a difficult teenage child, seasonal changes, hormonal changes, difficulty at work, business is not

going well at the time, problems in a marriage, career dissatisfaction, unpleasant childhood experiences, difficult parents, and the list goes on. These can cause us to feel depressed, but do not necessarily indicate a disease. If symptoms do not subside, depressed mood could become depression, then depression could advance and require treatment. Feeling depressed about a situation might be a motivation for changing the situation. However, clinically diagnosed depression is a type of mental illness and can be distinguished from a depressed mood by its persistence and severity. Those with clinically diagnosed depression have depression persistently everyday for long periods of time. It interferes with their ability to cope at home, at work and in daily life. It is a disorder, an illness, just like diabetes, ulcers, or hypertension and treatment is required. Depression occurs when neurotransmitters, such as serotonin or epinephrine, are either at low levels or not functioning properly (neurotransmitters are specific chemical agent released by a pre-synaptic cell, upon excitation, that crosses the synapse to stimulate or inhibit the post synaptic cell). Key symptoms are feeling down, weepy, pessimistic, useless, hopeless, irritable, agitated, low sex drive, poor appetite or suddenly overeating, or lack of motivation. Depression can become a problem if left untreated and it's critical to get help in the early stages before it becomes too severe. Early intervention may include many alternative therapies such as group therapy, counseling, Tai Chi, Qi Gong, Acupuncture or Chinese massage, Martial art, Daoist study, etc. In United States, there are some other non drug alternative therapies available. In my experience with healing depressed patients, many of them feel better when treated with either Chinese medicine or from practicing Tai Chi, some of them also take medication but eventually they are able to get off their medication and still feel good.

I have lived and practiced medicine in two countries and have experienced two different life styles and cultures. Practice medicine in China, I hardly saw cases of depression. At that time, Chinese life was much simpler. The diet was simple and the life was less competitive. Recent years the lifestyle and economic changes have changed health status in China. The rate of divorce, unemployment, stress in the workplace, and dietary changes has had an impact on the emotional health of those in modern Chinese society. More children and teenagers have more depression than ever before. The suicide rate in young adults has increased in the past ten years. Unfortunately most Chinese who suffer from depression are untreated because they are ashamed of what they consider to be a "mental illness" and because of the lack of professional therapists treating depression. The number of patients who do get treatment is only 5%, compared with western countries with a rate of 35% (Chinese Journal of Neurological and Mental Disease, 2004).

2. The Definition and Symptoms of Depression

Depression is an affective disorder that involves disturbances of mood (which is subjective experiences of emotion) and an affect, which is the observable expression of emotion. Mental health professionals and physicians are careful and deliberate when evaluating their clients for clinical depression. It takes more than just tearfulness or a feeling of sadness on the part of the client to indicate the presence of depression.

There are two major affective disorders: Bipolar (Manic depression) and Unipolar (Major depression). As defined in DSM-III, these are distinguished by whether or not there has ever been a manic episode. Since manic and major are the most serious types of depression and sufferers may display destructive behavior, medical treatment is required. Less common and mild types of depression are as dysthymia, cyclothymia, post-partum, seasonal affective disorder (SAD), existential depression, mood disorders due to a medical condition, and substance-induced mood disorders. These can be treated with alternative therapies, including Tai Chi and Qi Gong. The combination of Western and Eastern therapy provides the best results in treating all forms of depression and Tai Chi practice can always be prescribed as additional therapy. This will be discussed in a later chapter.

There are many symptoms in these different types of depressions, but once the type is identified, we can provide the appropriate treatment.

Generally speaking, depression includes these symptoms:

- Low self-esteem
- Less control over emotions such as pessimism, anger, guilt irritability and anxiety
- Low capacity to experience pleasure: you can't enjoy what's happening now, nor look forward to anything with pleasure. Hobbies and interests drop off.
- Low tolerance or no tolerance, including emotional, stress or physical pain.
- Low sex drive, either reduced or none.
- Loss of concentration and memory, especially short-term memory. Missing appointments.
- Little or no motivation to do anything
- Low energy levels
- Sleep disorders
- Withdrawal from relationships, anti-social behavior
- Physical aches and pains that seem to have no other cause
- Suicidal thoughts and/or behavior

3. Different Types of Depression

- Major Depression
- Manic-Depression
- Dysthymia
- Cyclothymia
- Post-partum Depression
- Seasonal affective disorder (SAD)
- Existential Depression
- Mood disorders due to a medical condition
- Medication-induced Depression
- Substance-induced mood disorder

Major Depression

(Also known as clinical depression)

Major depression refers to any form of depression that requires treatment. Major depression is the leading cause of disability in society and is separate from “normal depression.” It is normal for people to become depressed in response to something bad happening, such as the death of a loved one, the end of a relationship, dissatisfaction with work, or seasonal change, etc. This kind of depression usually subsides after some time passes, with or without treatment. But in some cases, symptoms persist for a long period of time, causing health and social problems, and interfering with daily home or professional life, this would be diagnosed as clinical depression. Major or clinical depression is a severe disease that requires treatment, which can include both western and eastern medicine. Along with manic-depressive illness, clinical depression is the most serious of the mood disorders and can result in suicide when left untreated. Besides medication, patients should consider alternative therapies to assist with healing. A combination of therapies may make the treatment more effective and have long-term benefits. Please refer to Part II for therapy references.

Summary of DSM-IV Criteria for Major Depressive Episode

If depressed mood or loss of interest or pleasure persists for more than at least a two-week period, consider the diagnosis of major depressive episode. The diagnostic criteria are summarized below:

- A. At least five of the following symptoms have been present during the same two-week period, nearly every day, and represent a change from previous functioning. At least one of the symptoms must be either (1) depressed mood or (2) loss of interest or pleasure:
- (1) depressed mood (or alternatively can be irritable mood in children and adolescents)
 - (2) Markedly diminished interest or pleasure in all, or almost all, activities
 - (3) significant weight loss or weight gain when not dieting
 - (4) Insomnia or hypersomnia
 - (5) psychomotor agitation or retardation
 - (6) fatigue or loss of energy
 - (7) feelings of worthlessness or excessive or inappropriate guilt
 - (8) diminished ability to think or concentrate
 - (9) recurrent thoughts of death, recurrent suicidal ideation without a specific plan, or a suicide attempt or a specific plan for committing suicide
- B. Symptoms are not better accounted for by a mood disorder due to a general medical condition, a substance-induced mood disorder, or bereavement (normal

reaction to the death of a loved one).

- C. Symptoms are not better accounted for by a psychotic disorder (e.g., schizoaffective disorder)

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Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders, 4th edition: primary care version. Washington, D.C.: American Psychiatric Association, 1995:39-40. © American Psychiatric Association

Manic Depression (Bi-polar depression)

Although manic-depressive illness is less common than major depression, it maintains a high profile because of the many creative artists who have suffered from it. Manic depression has two distinct sides, the depressive state and the manic state. Because it is sometimes hard to distinguish between normal and manic states, this kind of depression is often under diagnosed. When patients are in a manic state, they can be impulsive, unrealistic, use poor judgment, easily become irritable, have outbursts of anger or fear, and have minimum control or tolerance. Some people with bipolar depression require little sleep or food, may abuse alcohol or drugs, and may be unfocused and disorganized. At the same time, they can be very creative and very active.

Criteria for Bipolar Depression:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • optimism | • impulsivity |
| • euphoria | • spending large amounts of money |
| • little need for sleep | • socially inappropriate behavior |
| • little need for food | • heightened sense of awareness |
| • irritability | • flight of ideas |
| • inflated self concept | • pressured speech |
| • grandiose schemes | • tremendous energy |
| • unrealistic thinking | • enhanced creativity |
| • poor judgment | • hyperactivity |
| • loss of inhibition | • feeling that nothing can go wrong |
| • delusional thinking | • outbursts of anger |
| • increased sexual activity | • alcohol and drug abuse |

If you have most of these symptoms as above stated, you are likely to have bipolar depression.

The problem with mania is that due to the impulsivity and poor judgment that it brings, an episode can wreak havoc on family, friends, and the community. Moreover, when the high

inevitably wears off, the individual comes crashing down into a state of total darkness and despair. The alternation of mania and depression illuminates a second aspect of manic depression-its cyclic nature. Periods of creativity, productivity and high energy alternate with times of fatigue and apparent indifference. Mania leads to depression, which leads to mania, which becomes depression, etc. This extreme flip-flop of mood between peaks and valleys is extremely dangerous, as shown by the fact that 20 to 25 percent of untreated manic depressives commit suicide.

Prevention

In addition to taking medication, bipolar individuals can employ a number of preventive strategies to decrease the likelihood of having a full-blown manic attack. Once they recognize the early warning signs of mania (e.g., insomnia, surges of energy, making lots of plans, grandiose thinking, speeded-up thinking, over commitment, excessive euphoria, etc) they should talk to friends, family, or therapists to let them know these symptoms may lead to a manic episode. Caretakers should try to provide a stable environment and make suggestions for activities. In addition, it is recommended that bipolar individuals eat a diet high in complex carbohydrates and fiber and avoid foods such as simple sugars that can cause mood swings. Eating a diet consisting of too much protein can also affect mood and alcohol and caffeine should be avoided. In trying to stay focused and grounded, regular physical activities such as walking, jogging, going to the gym, and practicing Tai Chi and Qi Gong is recommended. Spending time with family and friends can help prevent depression, but if one feels that things are getting out of hand, they should seek medical attention and support groups. Please see Part II for healing modalities.

Dysthymia

Dysthymia is also called “depressive neurosis” and is far less severe than bipolar depression, though crippling in its own way. Dysthymia consists of long-term chronic symptoms that do not disable, but keep one from feeling really good or from functioning at full steam. Physically, it is akin to having a chronic low-grade infection-you never develop a full-blown illness, but always feel a little run down.

Although dysthymia implies having an inborn tendency to experience a depressed mood, it may also be caused by childhood trauma, adjustment problems during adolescence, difficult life transitions, the trauma of personal losses, unresolved life problems, and chronic stress. Any combination of these factors can lead to an enduring case of the blues. While teaching in the United States, I have seen a number of my students suffering these symptoms. Many have derived improvement from their Tai Chi practice.

Some of the most prominent symptoms of dysthymia are:

- Depressed mood, loss of interest in ones activities for most of the time, for at least two years.
- Difficulties in sleeping.
- Difficulty in experiencing pleasure.
- A hopeless or pessimistic outlook.
- Low energy or fatigue.
- Low self-esteem.
- Difficulty in concentrating or making decisions.
- Persistent physical symptoms (such as headaches, digestive disorders or chronic pain) that do not respond to treatment.

A dysthymic disorder is characterized not by episodes of illness but by the steady presence of symptoms. Because dysthymia does not incapacitate like major depression, as a rule, dysthymic people do well in psychotherapy (medication can also be used) as well as many other therapies. During stressful times, a person with dysthymia may be catapulted into a major depressive episode, called "double depression." Dysthymic disorder is a common ailment, affecting about 3-5 percent of the general population. Unfortunately, because dysthymia is not as severe as clinical depression, the condition is often undiagnosed or dismissed as a case of psychosomatic illness. ("It is all in your head," is the all-too-common response from doctors.) Having a dysthymic temperament also brings with it positive traits. Dysthymic individuals can be serious, profound, deep, prudent, dependable, industrious, patient and responsible.

Cyclothymia

Cyclothymia is a milder form of manic depression, characterized by hypomania (a mild form of mania) alternating with mild bouts of depression. The symptoms are similar to those of bipolar illness but less severe. Many cyclothymic disorder patients have difficulty succeeding in their work or social lives. Their unpredictable moods and their irritability creates a great deal of stress, making it difficult to maintain stable personal or professional relationships.

Cyclothymic people may have a history of multiple relocations and alcohol or substance abuse. Nevertheless, when their creative energy is focused towards a worthwhile goal, they may become high achievers in art, business, government, etc. (The cycles of cyclothymia are far shorter than in manic depression.) The ability to work long hours with a minimum of sleep when they are hypomanic often leads to periods of great productivity. Many people suffering these symptoms are left untreated because this disease is not easily recognized and sufferers may be considered to just have "personality issues."

Postpartum Depression

In the period that follows giving birth to a child, many women experience some type of emotional disturbance or mental dysfunction. A large percentage of these "baby blues" are characterized by grief, tearfulness, irritability and clinging dependence. These feelings, which may last several days, have been ascribed to the woman's rapid change in hormonal levels, the stress of childbirth, the awareness of the increased responsibility that motherhood brings, and the loneliness of being home and losing social contact. As the baby gets older, and the mother is able to feel more confident, these symptoms go away.

In some cases, however, baby blues may take on a life of their own, lasting weeks, months and even years. When this occurs, the woman suffers from postpartum depression - a syndrome very much like a major depressive disorder. This depression may also be accompanied by anxiety and panic. In extreme cases, symptoms may include psychotic features and delusions, especially concerning the newborn infant. There may be suicidal ideation and obsessive thoughts of violence to the child, especially with an uneasy child. It is estimated that approximately 400,000 women in the United States experience postpartum depression, usually six to eight weeks after giving birth. Postpartum depression is a treatable illness once recognized.

In mainland China, in the 1950's and 1960's, a woman's life was different after giving birth. In the Chinese tradition, a woman would stay home for 56 days after giving birth. During these 56 days, the woman mostly rested and nursed the baby. Family members would come to visit often, help with the housework, and help take care of the baby. This reduced the burden for the new mother and there seemed to be much less post partum depression. Now, with the modernization of everyday life along with economic changes and reform, everyone is busier and those rituals have diminished. Postpartum instances have increased, in China, and this indicates that frequent positive social contact can help prevent this kind of depression.

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

Patients with Seasonal Affective Disorder tend to experience depressive symptoms during a particular time of the year, most commonly fall or winter. They often begin in October or November and remit in April or May. People who love to garden and do outdoor activities, after the first frost, may experience some of these symptoms. The symptoms of SAD, also known as "Seasonal Depression" and "winter depression," are included in, but are not limited to, the list below:

- Difficulty in getting out of bed in the morning and getting going.
- Increased lethargy and fatigue.
- Apathy, sadness and/or irritability.
- Increased appetite, carbohydrate craving and weight gain.
- Decreased physical activity.

Researchers believe that Seasonal Affective Disorder is caused by winter's reduction in daylight hours, which desynchronizes the body clock and disturbs the circadian rhythms. Winter depression can be treated by morning exposure to bright artificial light. By providing appropriately timed light exposure, the body's circadian rhythms become resynchronized and the symptoms of SAD resolve. In addition, it is important for the person with SAD to get as much natural light as possible and using Chinese medicine, such as acupuncture, can help, as well. In my school (New England School of Tai Chi), student enrollment is always highest in the fall class session and perhaps, some of these students are seeking a way to prevent seasonal change problems.

Although the most common form of recurrent seasonal depressions in northern countries is the winter, SAD researchers at the National Institute of Mental Health have uncovered a type of summer depression that occurs during June, July and August. Summer SAD tends to occur more in the southern states such as Florida, as well as in Japan and China. Summer depressives frequently ascribe their symptoms to the severe heat of summer, although in some instances the depressions may be triggered by intense light.

Mood Disorders Due to a Medical Condition

Clinical depression commonly co-occurs with general medical illnesses, though it frequently goes undetected and untreated. While the rate of major depression in the community is estimated to be between 2 and 4 percent, among primary care patients it is between 5 and 10 percent. For inpatients, the rate increases to between 10 and 14 percent.

Treating the co-occurring depressive symptoms can improve the outcome of the medical illness while reducing the emotional and physical pain and disability suffered by the patient. Here are some medical conditions that have been implicated as triggering depressive symptoms:

- Endocrine conditions (hypothyroidism, etc.).
- Neurological disorders such as brain tumors.
- Epilepsy.
- Diseases that cause structural damage to the brain.
- Viral and bacterial infections.
- Inflammatory conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis and lupus.
- Vitamin deficiencies (especially vitamin B12, vitamin C, folic acid and niacin).
- Heart disease.
- Stroke.
- Diabetes.
- Liver disease
- Kidney disease.
- Multiple sclerosis.
- Chronic pain due to any reason
- Cancer.

Anyone who suffers from one or several of these disorders should treat the underlying illness medically and pursue psychotherapy or counseling if depression accompanies the physical illness.

Medication-Induced Depression

Many people do not realize that a number of common prescription drugs have side effects that can induce depression. For example, pain medication, may cause depression and low energy and patients should consult with their doctor to minimize its use. In addition, consider reducing the use of the following prescription drugs with depressive side effects:

- Cardiac drugs and hypertensives
- Sedatives
- Steroids
- Stimulants
- Antibiotics
- Antifungal drugs
- Analgesics
- Some antihistamines

In addition, taking recreational drugs or being exposed to toxic chemicals in the environment may also have an adverse effect on mood. Usually, stopping the intake of the offending substance will eliminate the symptoms, but you need to talk to your doctor for the right guidance when discontinuing any prescribed medication.

Substance-Induced Mood Disorder

If you're depressed, you're more likely to use alcohol and other drugs to medicate your feelings. And if you use alcohol and other drugs, you are more likely to develop depression. When you are both depressed and dependent on alcohol or drugs, you are given a "dual diagnosis." A dual diagnosis simply means that you suffer from both a psychiatric disorder (it may be a bipolar disorder or major depression) and chemical dependency. Having a dual diagnosis complicates the healing process, since it means that you have to overcome two major illnesses in order to get well. Fortunately, many outpatient and resident treatment centers specialize in treating individuals with dual diagnoses. These centers are able to offer long-term treatment.

4. Prevalence of Depression

The term “prevalence” of depression refers to the estimated population of people who are managing depression at any given time.

A number of epidemiological studies have reported that up to 2.5 percent of children and up to 8.3 percent of adolescents in the United States suffer from depression. Approximately 4% of adolescents get seriously depressed (NIMH). It is estimated that 5.3% adults (USSG) suffer from depression and the lifetime risk of an episode for women is 20%. In addition 3 to 4 million men suffer depression in the United States.

An NIMH-sponsored study of 9 to 17 year-olds estimates that the prevalence of any depression is more than 6 percent in a 6-month period, with 4.9 percent having major depression. In addition, research indicates that depression onset is occurring earlier in life today than in past decades. A recently published longitudinal prospective study found that early-onset depression often persists, recurs, and continues into adulthood, and indicates that depression in youth may also predict more severe illness in adult life. Depression in young people often co-occurs with other mental disorders, most commonly anxiety, disruptive behavior, or substance abuse disorders, and with physical illnesses, such as diabetes.¹

In a given year, between one and two percent of people over age 65 living in the community, i.e., not living in nursing homes or other institutions, suffer from major depression and about two percent have dysthymia. Depression, however, is not a normal part of aging.²

Additionally, recent NIMH studies show that 13 to 27 percent of older adults have subclinical depressions that do not meet the diagnostic criteria for major depression or dysthymia but are associated with increased *risk* of major depression, physical disability, medical illness, and high use of health services. Subclinical depressions cause considerable suffering, and some clinicians are now beginning to recognize and treat them.³

Nonetheless, among people 65 and over, as many as 3 out of 100 suffer from clinical depression. It can be serious and can even lead to suicide.⁴

An estimated 6 percent of Americans ages 65 and older in a given year, or approximately 2 million of the 34 million adults in this age group in 1998, have a diagnosable depressive illness (major depressive disorder, bipolar disorder, or dysthymic disorder).⁵

Major depressive disorder affects approximately 9.9 million American adults, or about 5.0 percent of the United States population age 18 and older in a given year.⁶

Depression affects people of all ages, but is less common for teenagers than for adults. Approximately 3 to 5 percent of the teen population experiences clinical depression every year. That means among 25 friends, 1 could be clinically depressed.⁷

Footnotes:

1. excerpt from [Depression in Children and Adolescents A Fact Sheet for Physicians: NIMH](#)
2. excerpt from [Depression Research: NIMH](#)
3. excerpt from [Depression Research: NIMH](#)
4. excerpt from [If You're Over 65 and Feeling Depressed Treatment Brings New Hope: NIMH](#)
5. excerpt from [Older Adults Depression and Suicide Facts: NIMH](#)
6. excerpt from [The Numbers Count: NIMH](#)
7. excerpt from [What to do When a Friend is Depressed: NIMH](#)

Last revision: July 1, 2003

<http://www.wrongdiagnosis.com/d/depression/prevalence.htm>

5. What causes Depression?

There are many things that can cause depression. Stressful events may elicit an episode, medication you are taking, an underlying medical problem, difficulties stemming from childhood, different social or work conditions, and changing cultural trends can contribute, to some degree, to differing depressive types. These factors are of varying relevance to depressive subtypes. Some depressions do have a genetic loading that runs in families. Some family members may be prone to depression, or mood swings, in the same way that other family members have a tendency towards stomach ulcers, diabetes or migraines. For many who develop depression, however, there is no family history. Social, psychological, biological factors and medical conditions may contribute significantly to depression, but in individual instances, it is often difficult to explain how and why the disorder came on.

There are three main points of view about the **causes of Depression**. Most commonly held is the view that it is generally some combination of these three.

1. Depression is a medical disease, caused by a neuro-chemical or hormonal imbalance.
2. Depression is caused by certain styles of thinking.
3. Depression is a result of unfortunate experiences.

The theory of the cause of depression can be explained as several aspects:

- Biochemical disorder or malfunction,
- Genetic factor,
- Psychoanalytic theory,
- Learning deprived,
- Learned helplessness,
- Cognitive impairment.

Biochemical factor

There are two major biochemical theories of depression. One states that low levels of serotonin can cause depression, but the relationship between Serotonin and mania is less clear. The other theory suggests that low levels of norepinephrine yield depression while excessively high levels cause mania. Although brain levels of serotonin cannot be measured directly, it has been possible to analyze cerebrospinal fluid and urine for concentration of main metabolite of serotonin, 5-hydroxy-indoleacetic acid (5-HIAA). Both manic and depressives appear to show significantly lower CSF level of 5-HIAA than controls and the low concentrations persist even after manic or depressive symptoms have disappeared. Norepinephrine, however, has been shown in bipolar depressives to be excreted more in their urine during the manic phase of the illness than during depressive phase.

Genetic factors

A family history of depression can cause depression, in some cases and the rate is estimated to be 10 to 20 % from first-degree family members. Among twins, concordance of bipolar depression ranges from about 23% in fraternal twins to more than 50% in identical twins. Relatives of bipolar depression sufferers are not at high risk for uni-polar depression, and in fact the heritability of uni-polar depression is less clear.

Psychoanalytic

Psychoanalytic theory, as developed by Freud and others holds that depression arises from a failure to appropriately resolve the grief arising from actual or symbolic loss. People who are overly dependent on the feedback of others to boost their own self-esteem are especially prone to become depressed.

Learning deprived

The learning deprived view of depression attributes depression to a reduction in activity and reinforcement. These two factors contribute to a vicious cycle. The fewer activities the individual initiates, the less reinforcement is received and this low rate of reinforcement reduces activities even further.

Learned helplessness

According to this theory, depression arises from a belief that the outcome of a situation is uncontrollable and therefore one cannot act to help one's self. It is thought that depressed people are inclined to feel that they have no control. In situations in which their efforts really can affect outcomes they continue to attribute success to external factors, like luck, rather than to their own efforts. The perceived lack of control results in a lack of self-confidence and little motivation to act.

Cognitive

In this theory, depression results from certain errors in logical thinking. These faulty thought patterns result in the depressed person exaggerating the importance of mildly negative events and blaming himself for things that are beyond his control.

Social Causes

Many other issues caused by our social and economical status can eventually cause a person to become depressed.

Unhappy experiences in childhood:

There are many people who have had an unhappy childhood. They have experienced poor early education, poor guidance from parents, mental or physical abuse, tremendous stress, medical illness, dysfunctional family problems, and either too much or too little attention.

A young 14 year old boy told me his childhood was very unhappy. His parents were divorced since he was 4 years old and he lived with his mother and stepfather. He did not get along with his stepfather who was abusive and the mother could not stop yelling and shouting. At age 14, he wanted to get out of the house but had nowhere to go. He wanted to look into a foster home, but decided not to go after watch a program about foster home in which the situation even worse. He wanted to report to police, but afraid of being through out of home. He finally had to give up the thoughts of leaving home and became depressed. He suffered not only physical abuse, but also mental abuse. His parents often stated that he was not smart. He wanted to prove that he could be successful and prove his parents were wrong. He was a smart child, but lacked guidance and support. Too much negative influence in this child's life caused his depression.

Children get a lot of attention in some families, and not enough in other families. Either too much attention or not enough attention could cause problems in later life. Too much attention reduces the child's self esteem and independence in thinking and doing things. The child will have much less tolerance for stress and eventually become depressed from not being able to handle things well. Not enough attention may make the child more independent, but could bring on depression due to lack of communication with adults when needed during growth periods. The neglected feeling could remain for a long time. In Eastern philosophy, anything that is either too much or too little can cause the imbalance which ultimately leads to health problems. This is a universal law in Daoist philosophy.

Social, cultural, and environmental

Certain things in our culture can affect some people's mental state. It does not necessarily mean we have to change them, but rather, we can recognize them as factors in triggering depression in some people. Generally, if a person has a healthy mind and body, these factors may not affect

him. If a person doesn't have a healthy mind and body, these factors can be a trigger for depression.

The media: Many people complain that commercial television has some programs that are not appropriate for a child's education and mental growth. Children learn and mimic the behavior seen on television and this some times leads to social problems. The news often focuses on the negative such as killing, suicide, and sexual misbehavior and constant exposure to this kind of media coverage may influence people's view of the world and eventually impact their emotional well-being.

Drugs: The use of illegal drugs can cause many health problems and may trigger depression in some people.

Our culture: In this country, we value good manors, greater educational opportunities, and freedom and economic opportunities for all people. However, we do not always value constructive and friendly criticism. Sometimes, hearing the truth, even though its negative, might be helpful in improving our work and skills. It's often the way we learn. Not being able to express feelings among family members and keeping things inside can make people depressed. I tried to teach my kids: if a person is able to point out your weakness, this person is your true friend. I don't know if my kids understood, maybe eventually will.

The life of Senior citizens: In this country, many older people's lives are not easy. Some seniors live by themselves with medical problems, rarely see their children or other relatives, and may rely on others to care for their needs. In Chinese culture, respect for the elderly has been a tradition for centuries and older people are usually taken care of by family members in early years. But this can be a difficult responsibility for offspring. If the cultures could meet in the middle, things might be better for senior citizens. Although, the rate of depression for seniors in the United States is much higher than in China, the rate in China has increased over the past ten years. Loneliness impacts depression in the elderly in both cultures.

Medications: Many seniors take too much medication. The side effects make them feel poorly and they then look for other medication to relieve the side effects. As we know, as we get older, our organ function decrease, we need to use less chemicals rather than more chemicals. We should try to avoid chemicals that are toxic to our liver and kidneys. My father in-law died not from his illness, but drug side effects that cause kidney failure. Many seniors rely on their doctors to give them medication. They think only their doctors can help them. It is true in certain case not for every day life. They need to know that the natural way can also save lives. Certain exercises such as walking, biking, and other exercise, such as Tai Chi and Qi Gong, eating an appropriate food, visiting a Chinese medicine doctor to have a "tune up" treatment, taking Chinese herbs and preventative tonics for minor ailments, and participating in healthy activities are all helpful in preventing illness in seniors' lives too. Daily exercise can help to avoid dependence on medications, some of which may cause depression.

Children and Teenagers.

In school, many children experience peer pressure. Children want to be loved by family, but also want to be involved and included in a friendly environment. Some children feel left out from

groups that make them feel unaccepted or worthless. They may not want to share these feelings with their parents or teachers. If they are unable to express themselves, they may feel hopeless, depressed, and hate to go to school. Perhaps, if children were exposed to concepts taught in Daoist philosophy they might better recognize their own value and understand that being yourself is better than being someone else. As they grow into adults, some teenagers think so hard, worry so much, and have lost their natural way of living. If our natural energy is blocked, anxiety or depression is more likely to occur.

Individual energy:

People do things individually more often than in a group. Maybe this is part of the reason that many people feel lonely. Living in United States for 17 years, I have seen much loneliness. Some people are afraid to reach out, afraid of being rejected, and don't have many friends. When you have no friends, the loneliness can cause depression, trigger depression, or make depression worse. To certain people, they need to be alone so that they can complete their task. These people less likely suffer depression.

People lose trust in people.

I sometimes hear the expression "don't trust anyone." One of my friends accidentally cut a dead tree that belonged to a neighbor. Her neighbor filed a lawsuit for \$1000.00 and they never spoke to each other again. Is the \$1000 more important than living in harmony with a neighbor? In first several years of my practice in Chinese medicine, my husband expressed his concern about my seeing patients. He was afraid that someone would sue me for false reasons. Although I didn't share his concern, I may have been somewhat naive. I believe that trained as a doctor, a healer to help people get well is a good thing and I wasn't concerned about lawsuits. Being able to help so many people using natural healing, has been rewarding to me. Fortunately I have many wonderful patients and many of them have become my friends.

More material, less spiritual.

Many people think money is everything and that they will be happier if they are wealthy. The person with a lot of money and without a spiritual life can never be a happy person. There are many people who have money and still suffer from depression.

Several years ago, a patient came to see me and was very anxious. He said his business was not doing well and he had mortgage payments on two homes. Thinking he would have less pressure and stress, I asked him what would happen if he just kept one house. He did not say anything. Desire in humans is natural, but if you have too much material desire and less spiritual desire, you will have less happiness and more stress. In Chinese healing, moderation is always the best way to go. Many people feel "the more the better" and they work so hard to achieve wealth. When they reach the goal and have a lot of money, they find out they are not much different than other people. Do we really need two or three houses? With good Feng Shui (environmental energy) that I created, I made my home like a little sanctuary, very soothing, relaxed and comfortable and re-designed my garden with a variety of flowers and bushes. I decide to continue to learn "the less the better" in my life.

A Chinese woman lived in the United States for a short period of time. She worked so hard to make money to bring back to China, but was very unhappy with her job and cried often. When

she saw me for the first time, she cried and complained about her job. I asked her why she stayed if she was not happy and she told me that she wanted to buy a car when she got back to China. I felt sorry for her but couldn't understand her purpose. In China, there is very convenient public transportation and people don't really need a car. She did not need to be living miserably just for something she could have. What if she lost her health after she got what she wanted? What is more important: your health or your car? Human desire has no limit and the more you have the more you want. If we want less and desire less, we might live in harmony and happiness. I did not want to tell her what to do, just provide comfort to her. I believe true happiness should come from within you. Other people can only make you happy temporarily, money can make you happy temporary, but good spiritual health can make you happy for a life time.

Our society focuses on fixing problems rather than preventing

Prevention has been a Chinese tradition over centuries. Many things could be better if we pay more attention to preventive work. In the health care industry, the majority of work is focused on treating disease. I moved to this country in 1989 and I realized, early on, that it was hard to find a safe place to walk without driving some distance. There is no walking path near my house and walking on the road is not safe. Even if I wanted to ride a bike to work, there is no safe place for me to ride. My life is full of immobility unless I make time for exercise. It took me a long time to get use to it. In China, we would walk to work on the sidewalk, or bike to work on the bike lane and it was safe. Imagine if we had walking paths everywhere, bike trails from house to house, and bike trails next to the main road, how many people would use these trails to work, to exercise, to shops, to visit friends? I would, especially the gas cost is so high.

Food Causes

Preservatives: There are many chemicals preservatives in our food and drink supply, especially in fast food. If we consume too much chemicals, these chemicals accumulate in the body, disturb our natural body chemistry, and eventually cause damage to our organs, cells and tissues. Too many chemicals can cause a blockage to our liver energy and can cause of depression.

Sugar: People consume a lot of sugar in this country. Many people use sugar in coffee, in cooking and consume candy, deserts, and soft drinks. On some holidays, like Halloween, we give our children loads of sugar. Even though it is our tradition, but we can still make a difference by substituting with other healthy foods. Obesity, ADD, heart disease, high cholesterol levels and diabetes have been problems in many families. A high sugar diet can cause irritability, mood swings and illnesses such as diabetes, hypoglycemia, high blood pressure, and obesity. Once a person develops a weight problem, it is likely they will develop some form of depression. The high incidence of attention deficit disorder (ADD) may be linked to a diet with too much simple sugar.

High protein diet: People believe that a high protein diet can help them lose weight, but they may be short sighted. The Chinese expression, “Zuo Jin Guan Tian” (a frog sitting in a bottom of the well and looking at the sky), describes the limits of this way of thinking. It is true that a high

protein diet can fill your stomach so you don't feel hungry and you will not over eat. But, in Daoist philosophy, everything has two sides: the positive side and the negative side. The negative parts of a high protein diet are that it takes more energy to digest, so it leaves you less energy for healing and it causes the body to become saturated with uric acid, which significantly weakens all organ functions, especially that of the kidneys. A high protein diet might cause mood swings and reduce tolerance for stress. It can also cause more mucus accumulation in the body and lower energy levels. Studies of high protein diets in mice indicate that this diet accelerates brain aging and atrophy. In cancer patients, a high protein diet is not recommended and is found to cause a higher recurrence rate of the disease. Many animal products are saturated with environmental toxins and residues from antibiotics and growth hormones in their feed. From a longevity point of view, in general, people who eat a high protein diet have a shorter life span. Using animals as a reference, a tiger's life span is 15 years and a giraffe's life span is 28 years. In my practice of TCM, besides treating patients, I also give them a diet and exercise plan and they seem to do better with this combination. Without changing one's diet, healing is only partial.

My own experience

There were three times in my life when I suffered depression and felt very imbalanced emotion. But each was caused by certain conditions. The symptoms were the same as clinical depression. I felt a major imbalance in my life and knew I wouldn't have felt better if I had taken medication without solving the problems. The first time I suffered symptoms was during the Cultural Revolution when China was in chaos. I was 10 years old. My father was accused of being a "capitalist follower" and was taken by "Red Guard" several times. Sometimes the "Red Guard" physically abused him in front of hundreds of people and other times the "Red Guard" made him write false confessions of things he never said. My father was a good man. He was a hard worker, an honest person, and always helped others. Because he was in a high position, he could not avoid the turbulence of the Chinese Cultural Revolution (at that time, the majority people with high leveled positions, including government officials, were in trouble). The children in my neighborhood would either throw stones at my house or at me, they would swear at me when I was walking on the street, and sometimes they hit me in school. If I told my older brother and tried to get revenge, it would make the situation worse and they hit me even more the next day. I did not feel safe at that time. My parents argued a lot for some reason, but I did not understand until after the Cultural Revolution. I constantly asked myself "why did this happen?"

The second time I felt depressed was my fourth year living in the countryside, after graduating from high school. At that time, all Chinese teenagers that graduated from high school had to go to the countryside and live there to participate in labor work with farmers. By the fourth year, many students had gone back to the city to work. I was nominated to be the leader of this particular farmer's community. Obviously, they liked me, but I really wanted to go back to the city where I came from. In China, life on a farm is not the same as in the United States. There is a lot of poverty, the farmers rarely leave the local town, and they know very little besides farming. This is how they grew up and how generation after generation lived and they don't want to change. Their life was very simple and the physical labor was extremely difficult. Even

though I loved nature and the outdoors, I was not used to such difficult physical labor and felt I wasn't the right person to spend my life on a farm. I felt I was wasting my life there and was unable to use my talents and skills. I felt trapped and hopeless.

The third time I felt depressed was when I was in medical school. Chinese medical school was extremely difficult and I studied both conventional medicine and traditional Chinese medicine. It was difficult for me because I did not have a good memory. According to TCM theory, the memory is related to kidney energy. Both of my parents had poor health I knew both of them had poor kidney energy. I had to study harder than the average student to be able to memorize everything required. It was important to get the good grades in order to get the better job in the future. There was no life besides studying. I spent seven hours in classroom lectures and then another six hours studying to memorize the course material. I also had to study the English language and medical terminology. I would read medical books on the bus, while waiting in line for food, and while visiting my family. I did not want to be a failure, so I carried a great load on my shoulders. I developed severe insomnia and sometimes could not sleep at all. I was tired during class, unable to focus and this became a vicious cycle affecting my mood. I was depressed. Looking back, I should have handled the stress differently by just trying to do my best without "strangling" myself and by seeking some form of treatment.

6. The Importance of Treating Depression

Depression is a highly treatable condition and there are various methods that can be used to reduce symptoms. It is very important to get help in order to avoid becoming dysfunctional or disabled and lose productivity, the joy of life, or friends and family. Treatment can help to prevent depressed individuals from being a danger to themselves or others or even suicidal. Early intervention may prevent such a crisis, but only if people realize they have depression and seek help. If, treatment is sought, it's more likely that dangerous events, such as women suffering from post partum depression and harming their babies, may be avoided.

Treatments for each type of depression can vary in effectiveness and usefulness - antidepressant medication might be better than psychotherapy for one type of depression and the opposite may be indicated for another depressive type.

Social, psychological, biological and medical conditions do not always provide "the explanation" for depression, although each may contribute significantly to "samples" of depressed patients assessed in any study of causes. For example, a family tendency toward depression, difficulties in childhood, and changing cultural trends may need to be considered in treatment. For some depressive types, genetic factors may be the principal "cause" and life stresses of minor relevance. For others, the reverse may hold true. Please see part II for healing depression.

Depression and cancer:

Depression and cancer have a close connection. In my over 20 years of medical practice, the evidence has shown me that cancer patients who have depression die sooner than non-depressed cancer patients and those who suffer from depression are more likely to have cancer later in life. In Chinese medicine theory, when suffer from depression, some of your channels (energy pathways) are blocked and your blood circulation is consequently blocked. This could allow for the “mutation of normal cells” causing cancer to develop. In an effort to try to prevent cancer, it is beneficial to keep a healthy mind, spirit and body, and take care of the early symptoms with whatever methods are available.

7. Understanding Depression in Chinese Medical Theory

There are major differences in the way mental illness is viewed in Eastern and Western medicine. The Western focus is on the bio-chemical imbalance, whereas the Eastern view looks into the energy imbalance or disharmony. When I studied Chinese medicine in conventional medical school, it didn't always make sense to me. After practice so many years, I realize that this kind natural healing modality make perfect sense. Now, not only do I practice this natural medicine, I also teach natural methods to my patients, students, health professionals, and people in other fields. If you also set aside what you learned in school and remain open to natural healing, you may soon understand that although human energy science is not visible, it can change things. Just like electricity, you cannot see the electric current, you can only see the wires. The energy science is not same as the medical science we have learnt. The energy science need time to explore and study, as well as patience. Just like study astronomy, it takes us a long time to study, explore and still exploring. Once you understand the eastern way of thinking and its philosophy, you may find that both Eastern and Western medicine can work together effectively to treat depression.

Disease and Healing in TCM:

In western medical science, diseases are caused by germs, chemical imbalance, traumas, or inflammations that cause bodily changes, either structural or in elements of the blood stream. Western scientists look at the metrics of change and the results of all kinds of testing in order to provide appropriate treatment. This kind of approach sometimes works and sometimes doesn't work, because it is an incomplete medical science. Just think bout if you have a team for sport competition with five members, if these members don't want to work hard, you would still loose the game; but if you have members who work really hard and well trained, you would win. This mean the TCM pay attention to quality rather than quantity which is the focus of Western medicine. When used in conjunction with Chinese medicine, it becomes a complete medical system.

Generally speaking, western medicine focuses on correction and eastern medicine focuses on prevention. Western medicine focuses on removal and eastern medicine focuses on putting in.

Western medicine corrects structural problems and eastern medicine balances energy problems. Western medicine looks into scientific approval and eastern medicine looks into the results of patients overall wellbeing. Chinese doctors focus on energy problems and they look for how to adjust the flow of the “electric current” in the body. They look into balancing the internal organs, unblocking the energy in the body, harmonizing the mind and the body and they treat the whole person rather than disease. Once the person is balanced and harmonized, they will be healed. If you are a gardener, you realize that improving the quality of the soil is the key to having healthy plants.

Yin Yang theory, five elements theory:

Traditional Chinese Medicine has been in existence for over 4000 years and is still popular today because of its effectiveness in treating and preventing illness. The theory behind it is to follow the Yin-Yang, the principle of nature, or the way of the nature.

The concept Yin Yang and five elements were devised by the ancient Chinese as a method of defining and explaining the nature of all phenomena. They present the Chinese conception of Nature as fundamental to all natural sciences. Not only medicine, but also astronomy, calendar science, geography, and agriculture made extensive use of and were strongly influenced by these theories. The Yin-Yang, five elements theories have played a major role in the development of medical theory and represent the mainstay of philosophy, pathology, diagnosis and treatment. The theory of Yin-Yang, derived from age old observations of nature, describes the way phenomena naturally group in pairs of opposites: heaven and earth, sun and moon, night and day, winter and summer, male and female, black and white, up and down, inside and outside, movement and stillness. These pairs of opposite are also mutual complements that they depend upon and counterbalance each other. Furthermore, they are mutually convertible, since either may change into its complement. The day eventually become night, the night eventually become day, the bad can eventually become good; the good can become bad. Yin-Yang is rooted in each other and they are indispensable and mutually engendering. They are interdependent. Without Yin, there would be no Yang, without black; there would be no white (no contrast). Yin and Yang counterbalance each other. Yin extreme can be weakening to Yang, and Yang excess can be weakening to Yin.

Health related:

In the human body, if you have excess in one organ, another organ might be weak. In the human brain, if you over develop one side of your brain, the other side of your brain might be weak. This may explain why some artists suffer from depression. In normal daily life, if you focus on one aspect and ignore the other aspect, you lose balance and other problems may surface. If you do anything in extreme, your body will, most likely, develop some physical problems.

Social and every day living:

Some people have great academic skills but lack social skills and they tend to have problems in their lives, such as dealing with people, cope with stress, etc. Some athletes focus on physical

development, but lack mental and spiritual development, which may cause other problems in their lives, such as difficulty in maintaining relationships, or mood control, etc.

Searching for life companionship:

It is important to understand this Yin Yang concept (from Daoist philosophy) when developing close relationships with others. If you have a Yang type personality, the Yin type person would be ideal for you and the relationship is likely to last much longer. If you have Yin type personality, the Yang type person would be a better choice. If you are a Yang type and married to a Yang type person, you most likely would live with a lot of arguing and fighting and eventually the marriage could end. If you are Yin type person and married to a Yin type person, you could also have problems being unhappy and bored with life. If you are willing to change, things can be different. For example, if you are Yang type and married a Yang type person and you really love her (or him) you need to balance the relationship. If you become more adaptive, yielding, and flexible, the relationship is more likely to last a long time. Sometimes we need to sacrifice in order to make things better. This is “following the universal law.” As we discussed before, Yin and Yang depend upon and counterbalance each other, they are mutually convertible, since either may change into its complement. Living in daily life, we have losses and we have gains. People who don’t understand loss cannot gain. Yin Yang is in everyday life and is at the core of the idea of balance.

The five elements:

The theory of the five elements rests on the notion that all phenomena in the universe are the products of the movement and mutation of five qualities: wood, fire, earth, metal and water. These are known as the five elements or five phases. In Chinese medicine, this theory has had considerable influence in physiology, pathology, diagnosis, treatment, and pharmacology. The ancient Chinese gained the knowledge of the nature of the five elements through long observation of nature and ascribed certain value to each. Thus:

“Wood (tree or timber) is the bending and the straightening,” having the characteristics of growth, up bearing, and effusion (upward and out ward movement). The related organ energy is the Liver.

“Fire is the flaming upward,” having the quality of heat and upward motion. The related organ energy is the Heart.

“Earth is the sowing and reaping,” representing the planting and harvesting of crops and the bringing forth of phenomena. The related organ energy is the Spleen.

“Metal is the working of change,” having the qualities of purification, elimination, and reform. The related organ energy is the Lung

“Water is the moistening and descending to low places” having the qualities of moistening, downward movement, and coldness. The related organ energy is the Kidney.

Five elements (or five phases) theory is based on an understanding of the nature of these qualities attributed to all phenomena in the universe. The interaction of the five phases explains the nature

of all phenomena. In medicine the internal organs, body tissue, sense and other organs, emotions, and even medicinal properties are all categorized according to the phases.

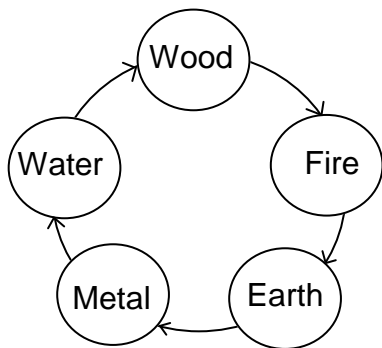
Five Elements Categorization of Phenomena

Item	Wood	Fire	Earth	Metal	Water
Season	Spring	Summer	Indian Summer	Autumn	Winter
Weather	Wind	Heat	Dampness	Dryness	Cold
Direction	East	South	Center	West	North
Development	Birth	Growth	Maturity	Withdrawal	Dormancy
Color	Green	Red	Yellow	White	Black
Flavor	Sour	Bitter	Sweet	Acrid	Salty
Viscus	Liver	Heart	Spleen	Lung	Kidney
Bowel	Gallbladder	Small Intestine	Stomach	Large Intestine	Bladder
Sense organ	Eyes	Tongue	Mouth	Nose	Ears
Tissue	Sinew	Vessels	Flesh	Body Hair	Bone
Mind	Anger	Joy	Thought	Sorrow	Fear

The five elements (or phases) are constantly interacting with, engendering and restraining each other to achieve balance. Engendering denotes the principle whereby each of the phase's nurtures, produces, and benefits another specific phase. Restraining refers to the principle by which each of the phases constrains another phase.

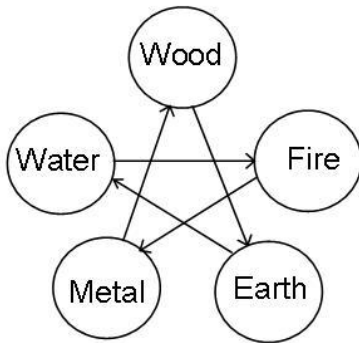
Arranged in cyclic form, the engendering relationships are as follows (starting with wood engendering fire):

Wood -> fire -> earth -> metal -> water -> wood (Five Elements figure 1)



The restraining cycle (starting with wood restraining earth) is as follows:

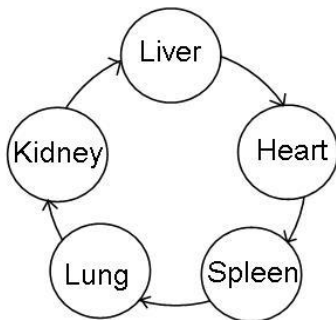
Wood -> earth -> water -> fire -> metal -> wood (Five Elements figure 2)



In their correspondences to the viscera, the engendering and restraining cycles appear as follows:

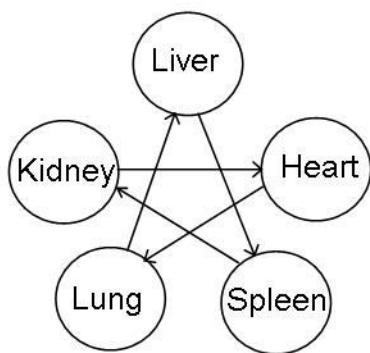
Engendering:

Liver -> heart -> spleen -> lung -> kidney -> liver (Five Elements figure 3)



Restraining:

Liver -> spleen -> kidney -> heart -> lung -> liver (Five Elements figure 4)



The motions of engendering and restraining posit a conception of the natural world as a united whole made up of interrelated parts. *The Illustrated Supplement to the Categorized Canon* (lei jing tu yi) states:

“The dynamic of creation cannot be without engendering or restraining; without engendering there is no way by which things may arise, and without restraining, things may become unduly powerful and cause harm.”

As you see, all organs are interrelated. If any one organ has either weakness or excess, this engendering and restraining function would be lost. So the body would have various symptoms and illness. We now understand that Chinese Medicine is whole health medicine.

Organ System

Heart:

The Chinese organ system is not the same, conceptually, as the western organ system. For instance, the western term “**heart**” (anatomic heart) is to pump blood. The term “**heart**” in Chinese medicine is not only pumping the blood, but is also related to your mind. The “heart” in Chinese medicine is the storage of the mind and spirit. When you have a lot in your mind, you might develop insomnia. This means your heart energy is imbalanced. The Chinese doctor will try to correct the imbalance of heart energy. In Chinese, the saying for a person with an evil mind is “Xin bu zheng.” “Xin” means “**heart**” and “Bu Zheng” means “not up right”. It is similar to when you say “my heart is broken” is really means the mind, your feeling and thoughts are very sad but your heart is still pumping blood. The Chinese term **heart** is also related to the tongue, which means that a Chinese doctor will treat your **heart meridian** when you have canker sore on the tongue. The **partner organ** of the heart is the small intestine.

Liver:

The term “**Liver**” in western anatomy is a “chemical processing factory”. The “**liver**” in Chinese medicine is related to human mood and emotions. It stores the blood and governs the tendons. Alcoholics are often angry and short tempered because their liver energy is blocked

from too much alcohol. Depression is due to liver energy stagnation. The partner organ of liver is the gall bladder.

Spleen:

The Spleen in western medicine is related to the immune system and it stores blood. In Chinese medicine, the **spleen** is related to digestion and absorption of food and water. It governs the movements and transformation of grain and water and the distribution of its essence. The spleen is also related to water metabolism in TCM. It manages the blood and nourishes the muscles too. People who are over weight often have a damp spleen, which means the water metabolism and food digestion or absorption is not functioning well. Water tends to be stored in a certain area and is not moving in the right path and routine. If a person is feeling tired even with a good diet, it is likely that the spleen energy needs a “tune up” (other organ energy blockage can also cause fatigue too). If a person is malnourished, his spleen energy is not working well. There are many problems caused by malfunctioning in spleen energy. The partner organ of the spleen is the stomach.

Lung:

The western term “**Lung**” relates to breathing, The Chinese term “**Lung**” not only governs the breath (the Qi), but also regulates the water metabolism along with the spleen, kidney, intestine and bladder. The **Lung** also relates to the skin and the sinuses. That is why when a person has skin problems or sinus problems, the lung meridian should be treated. Many allergy problems are due to the imbalance of **Lung energy**. The Lung is also related to the respiratory immune function. The partner organ of lung is the large intestine.

Kidney:

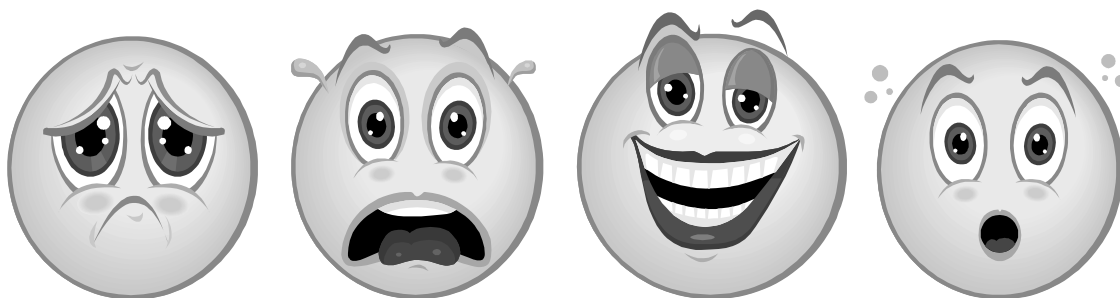
The term “**kidney**” in western knowledge mainly relates to the elimination of wastewater in the body. In Chinese medicine, the **kidney** is the most important organ in maintaining daily energy and maintaining normal function in all of the organs. “Kidney” energy is inherited from parents, which means you will have strong kidney energy if you got the strong gene from your parents. Not everyone will get the strong gene, even if your parents are in good health. Not only related to water metabolism, the kidney energy is also related to the **adrenal glands**. Kidney stores essential Qi, and is responsible for growth, development, and reproduction, including sexual function. In treating male sexual dysfunction, we often strengthen the kidney Qi. The Kidney governs memory and engenders bone marrow, bone strength, and good immune function. The Kidney also relates to joints, hair, and teeth. The partner organ of kidney is the bladder.

Organ systems and their meridians are very important in Chinese medicine. Each organ has its own meridian, such as heart meridian and liver meridian. When the diagnosis is clear, such as certain organ energy is either weak, excessive, or blocked, treating the correlated meridian should correct the problem. For example, if the symptoms are due to lack of kidney Qi, the kidney meridian is treated with supporting methods to strengthen the kidney Qi. If a person has too much liver Yang (too much anger), the liver meridian is treated with a dispersion method, either reducing the liver Yang or strengthen the liver Yin.

The Causes of Disharmony or Imbalance:

My patients often question “Why do I have this disease?” or “What was the cause?” Diseases are caused from multiple sources that affect our energy and immune system. Living in a stressful society, we should pay more attention to the balance of our energy, in order to stay well. Stress can affect our minds and emotions and eventually impact our bodies to a point where sickness develops. Another important cause of illness is our diet. Our health is impacted by the wrong foods and too much food. Chinese medicine emphasizes a balanced diet, including quantity and quality. We will discuss this in a later chapter. Being overworked also causes an imbalance of our energy. The European lifestyle is one of balancing time to eat, rest, socialize and work. This may account for their low rate of heart disease. Another indication of imbalance is that some people often don’t take preventative care and only go to the doctor when they are ill. TCM divides the causes of disharmony into three main areas: Internal Causes, External Causes, Miscellaneous causes

Internal Causes:



Internal causes refer to illnesses caused by human emotions. These include anger, sadness, worry, fear, joy, pensiveness, and shock. They are usually referred to as the seven emotions. In western terminology, it is called emotional change caused by stress. When you are having stress, your body is tight; when your body is tight, your energy and blood circulation is diminished; when your energy and blood circulation is diminished, the organs in the body lack oxygen and nutrients; lacking oxygen and nutrients will cause reduced functioning of those organs; this will cause illnesses and will affect the immune system. While these emotions are normal, a healthy response to situation changes we encounter in daily life will not affect our body’s energy flow. Disease is caused when emotional responses are intense and prolonged, or not expressed or acknowledged over a long period of time. In the other words, if emotions are too extreme, other health-related problems are more likely to occur.

The first complete book on Chinese medicine “Yellow Emperor’s Classic” written over 2000 years ago mentioned five emotions that affect specific organs:

*Anger affecting the liver
Over joy affecting the heart
Worry affecting the lungs
Pensiveness affecting the spleen
Fear or fright affecting the kidneys*

Other Chinese doctors discovered more emotional/organ relationships over the years and expanded the list to include:

Anger affecting the liver
Over joy affecting the heart
Worry affecting the lung and spleen
Pensiveness affecting the spleen
Sadness affecting the lungs and the heart
Fear or fright affecting the kidneys
Shock affecting the kidneys and the heart

These are called the “seven emotions” and, in the classic study of Chinese Medicine, are considered harmful to the human body and mind. In modern society, other emotional changes can cause an imbalance of human energy. Thus, the list of emotions could be expanded as follows:

Anger (and frustration and resentment) affecting the liver
Over joy affecting the heart
Worry affecting the lungs and spleen
Pensiveness affecting the spleen
Sadness (and grief) affecting the lungs and heart
Fear or fright affecting the kidneys
Shock affecting the kidneys and the heart
Love affecting the heart
Hatred affecting the heart and the liver
Craving affecting the heart
Guilt affecting the kidneys and the heart

The “Simple question” (from over 2000 years ago) in Chapter 23 mentioned:

*“The heart houses the mind,
the Lungs houses the Corporeal Soul,
the Liver houses the Ethereal Soul,
the Spleen houses the intellect and
the Kidneys house the Will-Power”.*

In Chapter 9 it says:

“The heart is the root of life and the origin of the mind... the lungs are the root of Qi and the dwelling of the Corporeal Soul... the kidneys are root of sealed storage (essence) and the dwelling of Will-Power... the Liver is the root of harmonization and the residence of the Ethereal soul...”

All organs are related in human mind and emotions. The closest related organs to depression are the heart and the liver. Generally speaking, the heart is related to your mind and the liver is related to your emotions. Other organs can affect the heart and the liver. In Chinese medicine, when one organ's energy is blocked, it sooner or later affects other organs, causes an imbalance, and many symptoms develop. That is why people who have depression most likely have multiple physical weaknesses.

External Causes:

External causes that create disharmony are mostly related to climatic conditions. There are six of these conditions, usually known as the six pathogenic factors or the six outside evils. They are: *wind, cold, dampness, fire (heat), dryness, and summer heat.*

We usually adapt to the changes in climate conditions as they come and go each season. However, extremes in weather, such as a very cold winter, or unseasonable weather, such as a warm spell in the winter, make us more vulnerable to the effects of that climatic condition and consequently make us feel ill. Also, people who have an underlying condition are more vulnerable to the effects of climatic conditions than those who have a strong constitution. Some people may develop diarrhea after exposure to extreme wind conditions, or develop a skin rash when the weather is too hot and wet. Some people may feel tired on a rainy day and some may get a cold when the weather changes. People with arthritis may complain more about feeling pain in the cold weather.

Other external causes are environmental factors and microorganisms, such as exposure to chemicals, bacteria, X-Ray or other radiation, and pollutants. These can cause imbalance in the body energy that leads to illness.

Miscellaneous causes

Miscellaneous causes of disharmony include over work, lack of exercise, poor diet, abnormal sexual activity, and physical trauma. TCM teaches that these factors can have a profound influence on our bodies. For example, too much physical work can impair Qi, too much mental activity can damage the spleen, and too much anger will impair the liver. Someone who works outdoors is more liable to be at risk from the microorganism including bacteria, viruses, and parasites. Outdoor workers are also easily affected by climate changes. Excessive sexual activity is considered to impair the kidney energy, especially kidney Jing (essence). These injuries would make the body more vulnerable to outside pathogens. Mental attitude can also be a factor in causing disharmony. A strong negative attitude can cause problems and blockages, especially affecting the liver and heart (TCM liver or heart are not same as the anatomical liver and heart). In many cases, disease is caused by multiple factors, but the important lesson of Chinese healing is to do things in moderation, neither too much nor too little. It is about the balance of Yin and Yang. If your body is balanced, you will be not only healthy, but also happy. This is the secret of the health and longevity that has been used by many Chinese for centuries.

The nature of the “mind” in Chinese culture, and Chinese medicine:

In order to treat mental-emotional disorders with Chinese medicine, one needs to understand the Chinese concept of the “mind (thoughts)” and “spirit” (Shen), which is not exactly the same as in western concepts.

The mind (Shen) in Chinese culture means, “spirit.” “Shen Qi” means “strong spirit” and also means “spiritual power.” “Mei Shen” means “poor spirit” or “no spiritual power.” “Shen” also means “God,” “fairy,” “mystery,” “supernatural,” “magical,” “miraculous skill,” or “expression.” As you see, they are all beyond material substance and above material levels. In Chinese medicine, “Shen” is one of the vital substances of the body. It is the most subtle and non-material type of Qi.

“Shen” is related to the activity of thinking, sleeping, consciousness, cognition, insight, intellect, wisdom and memory. All of which are related to the “Heart” energy. Shen is related to Qi, (vital energy). One of the most important characteristics of Chinese medicine is the close integration of body and mind. Most people know “Qi” means energy in the body, but do not know “Shen” is also energy; it is called “the mental energy,” or “spiritual energy” of a human. There are three most important substances in the body called “Jing,” “Qi,” “Shen,” and also called the “three treasures”:

“**Jing**”: is the essence that stored in the kidneys.

“**Qi**”: is the energy of the air managed by the lungs.

“**Shen**”: is the mind stored in the heart. It includes the complex of all mental spiritual aspects of a human being, i.e. the mind itself, the ethereal soul, the intellect, and will-power.

These three important substances have a very close relationship. They represent three different states of **condensation** of energy in the body. The essence being the densest, Qi the more rarefied, and the mind is the most subtle and non-material. The activity of the mind (Shen) relies on the essence (Jing) and energy (Qi) as its fundamental basis. Hence the essence is said to be the “foundation of the body and the root of the mind.” Thus, if essence and Qi are strong and flourishing, the mind will be happy, balanced and alert. If the essence and Qi are depleted, the mind will suffer and may become unhappy, depressed, anxious, or clouded. However, the state of the mind also affects Qi and essence. If the mind is disturbed by emotional stress, it will affect the Qi, and then weaken essence. These are three important substances.

When a person’s heart energy is blocked, it certainly affects his “Shen” (mind), the way of thinking, reasoning, analyzing, will power, etc. will all be distorted and disorganized and mental illness can occur. In Chinese medical theory, all organs can affect heart energy. If your lung or liver energy is blocked, it affects the heart. On the other hand, if your heart energy is blocked, it affects other organs too. This is the origin of “Body Mind Medicine.”

Fei Bo Xiong (1800-1879) put it very clearly when he said:

“The seven emotions injure the five Yin organs selectively, but they all affect the heart. Joy injures the heart, ... Anger injures the liver, the liver cannot recognize anger but the heart can,

hence it affects both the liver and the heart. Worry injures the lungs, the lungs cannot recognize it but the heart can, and hence it affects both the lungs and the heart. Pensiveness injures the spleen, the spleen cannot recognize it but the heart can, hence it affects both the spleen and the heart.”

Yu Chang in “Principles of Medical Practice” (1658) stated:

“Worry agitates the Heart and has repercussions on the Lungs; pensiveness agitates the Heart has repercussions on the Spleen; anger agitates the Heart and has repercussions on the Liver, fear agitates the Heart and has repercussions on the Kidneys. Therefore all the five emotions (including joy) affect the Heart.”

Each emotion has a particular effect on the circulation of the Qi. The “Simple Questions” (200 BC) in chapter 39 states:

“Anger makes Qi rise, joy slows down Qi, sadness dissolves Qi, fear makes Qi descend... shock scatters Qi... pensiveness knots Qi...”

Ancient Chinese doctors summed up these emotional disturbances and their relationship with health from many years of clinical observation, practice, and study. They give us direction on how to live in harmony and prevent illness. Sometimes when you are scared, you might have incontinence and this is due to kidney weakness from the sudden fear. Sometimes when you have anxiety, you might also have incontinence due to weakening of the kidneys and the heart. When you have a lot of stress and worry, you might catch cold more often than other people, and your diet may be effected too.

Many years ago, I had many sicknesses such as insomnia, headaches, bronchitis, asthma, anxiety and depression, back pain, and sinus problems. I was ill for many years. Part of the reason was emotion instability, which caused the “three treasure-Jing Qi, Shen” imbalance, organ network imbalance, and immune system imbalance. In the past 15 years my life has changed dramatically and most of my symptoms are gone. This is due to the regular practice of Tai Chi, Qi Gong, martial arts and Taoist study. This kind of practice developed an “anti-depression personality.” Over the past 5 years, I haven’t been sick or depressed. I feel good almost everyday (especially mentally), even with a lot of stress. I set myself as an example for people to see the true way of natural healing. This is a good way to have a happy and healthy life.

Our emotions can affect our internal organ energy and cause imbalance. Our organ imbalance can affect our emotions and cause imbalance. Without correcting either one, we lose the ability to work or enjoy life. We all have emotional shifts in our daily lives, but learning to control our emotions can be a good preventive exercise, because it keeps us balanced in all aspects of our lives. Studying Tai Chi, Qi Gong, and Daoist philosophy can enhance and change our lives, over time. Please see Part II for details.

Part II: Healing Depression

For many years, I have heard from people saying “Am I ever going to get better?” “My doctor said I have to deal with this for rest of my life”. “I don’t think anything will work”. “My doctor told me that I need to take this medication for a lifetime, but I am having a lot of side effects”. “I feel better with the medication, but I still don’t feel normal”. People who suffer from long term emotional problem are discouraged from not being able to live and work like normal people. I deeply hope this book would open their eyes to see many other opportunities in their healing journey. Let’s read some comments from our Tai Chi students:

"When I first started to learn tai chi I found that my body was improving physically; I was becoming more flexible and more balanced. After continued practice and learning the various skills and techniques, I found that the same improvements in flexibility and balance were happening to me mentally. I found that I was able to cope with the day-to-day stresses and problems, that everyone encounters every day, without the aggravation and stress that I used to experience before learning tai chi. In the end I learned that tai chi is a great way to exercise your body AND your mind." I have been practicing tai chi for four years now, and plan on continuing my practice for the next 100 years. At first, learning tai chi was confusing for me, I kept worrying about which foot should be in front or where my hands should be and any number of details. The tai chi movements felt a little awkward, because I still hadn't learned how to move in a natural, relaxed way. Relaxation was something that I was not used to doing in my fast-paced, high-stress career; however, with some time and patience I found that my body was improving physically; I was becoming more flexible and more balanced. Once I learned to relax in my tai chi practice, the movements started to make sense, and I was able to very quickly learn the basics about many different tai chi forms. One thing that surprised me was that I found that I was able to cope with the day-to-day stresses and problems, that everyone encounters every day, without the aggravation and stress that I used to experience before learning tai chi. After continued practice and learning the various skills and techniques, and most of all learning to relax, I found that the same improvements in flexibility and balance were happening to me mentally, affecting my personal and business relationships for the better. In the end I learned that tai chi is a great way to exercise your body AND your mind.

-----Jim

I studied Tai Chi 16 Step with Dr. Aihan Kuhn from September, 2005 through May, 2006. The results of this practice have amazed me! I offer the following two examples of what Tai Chi practice has accomplished in my life:

1. After the very first Tai Chi class I felt a re-connection between the two sides of my head. There had been a very, very slight feeling of disconnection for the 26 years prior - this manifestation had occurred as a reaction to an ear infection and was made worse by an extremely stressful life event. No doctor except a chiropractor had ever been able to improve this situation, and the correction was only temporary even with chiropractic. After only one Tai Chi class, the problem disappeared.

2. *A few weeks after beginning 16 Step Tai Chi practice I found myself saying one day, "My joy has returned." Though I had spent the previous nine years giving attention and care to three elderly relatives then experiencing their deaths; living under conditions that were less than comfortable; and working at a demanding job, my natural joy returned. Nothing in my life except Tai Chi practice was different. My life situation was the same as it had been for many years - only Tai Chi practice had been added, and that made all the difference.*

I realized that for as long as I could remember - and that is many years, as I am now a grandmother - I had to work at bringing up and keeping a joyful attitude; now, it is no effort at all - it happens on its own.

----- Elaine

I started my Tai Chi/Qi Gong exploration in January, 2003, at 51 years of aging. The random fitness efforts I was engaged in were not producing a stable state of well being. My energy level was up and down in big swings, even during the course of a single day. I was recovering from a frozen shoulder with physical therapy, but felt like age was catching up with me. I was also presenting symptoms of liver disease, due to fatty liver. I enjoyed benefits from a meditation practice, but also recognized that life is an exploration of mind, body and spirit. My mind body connection was sending out an SOS for help. After reading some information on Tai Chi Healing, I decided I would get evolved in Tai Chi practice. Patience, persistence, controlled relaxation, along with breathing in and with the flow of Chi provided me with a wide range of healing. My energy level is now most often on an even keel, the symptoms of fatty liver, have been relieved, and my range of motion has improved dramatically. There are multiple Tai Chi forms and Qi Gong exercises that provide great benefits. The 16 step form is where I find my greatest balance. Its design promotes harmony of thought, and a deeply rooted sense of well being. The 16 step form incorporates all the elements, and benefits, of basic Tai Chi practice. With patience one begins to gradually add synchronization of breathing with the movements of the form. The combination invokes a level of relaxation that I have only achieved previously during meditation. This in combination with improving, balance, lower body strength, and range of motion has helped me feel younger, and more optimistic in maintaining an active and healthy life style now, and into the years ahead.

Thank you, many times over, to Aihan Kuhn, the New England School of Tai Chi, Chinese Medicine for Health, Inc, and all the gifted and talented instructors, and healing practitioners.

-----Best Regards, Larry

1. Healing is possible

There are many ways to help patients with depression. If one method works for one person, it doesn't always mean it will work for another person. You have to try different treatments to find out what is the best way for you, or your family member, or your friend, or your client. Both eastern and western methods are helpful in preventing and healing depression and people have good results using either method or combining both. Generally speaking, in the early stages of

depression or in a mild case, a natural way of healing should be the first thing to try. Exercises such as Tai Chi, Qi Gong, acupuncture, or Taoist study, psycho therapy, and group support, are all non invasive, have no side-effects, and are effective. For advanced or severe cases, anti-depression medication is indicated, but the combination of medication, counseling and eastern healing modalities are also very effective. Some patients come to me before starting medication because they want a more natural way of healing. For mild cases of depression, the natural way has worked very well. Some patients, already on medication, come to me after their symptoms have stabilized because they want to either reduce or eliminate taking medication (because of the side effects). These cases also work well with natural treatment and exercise. It is the patient's choice to choose their healing path. Depression is not easy without person's effort, that means the external help is based on internal to initiate.

For people who have a family history of depression, preventive work is necessary to stop major depression from occurring in the future. Preventative work has been effective with many my patients and students. Using Chinese healing methods and Tai Chi classes, they have improved their quality of life. When a person develops major depression, healing takes longer and involves more work. Some have found that using both western and Chinese medicine, including Tai Chi and Qi Gong, are effective in the healing process. When you have a family history of depression, you should incorporate more anti-depression activities into your life and not let genetics lock you in. For example, my father had poor respiratory function (he had Tuberculosis when he was 9 years old) and my mother had severe arthritis. I, no doubt, carry some of their unhealthy genes. Therefore, I practice all kinds of Chinese exercises to try to avoid having problems like my parents. So far, I only have mild symptoms that my parents had. I determined to do much preventive work and stay as healthy as I can. There is a Chinese saying "nothing is impossible if you try hard enough and do it right." We will discuss healing methods in a later chapter.

Getting the proper help for depression begins with a proper diagnosis and getting help at an early stage is also an important step in the healing process. As a western trained doctor, I know the importance of urgent intervention. As a Chinese medicine healer, I know that preventive work has a high value in maintaining quality of life. I always tell my students and patients, "When you have a small hole in your clothing, you still can wear it after a few stitches; when you have a big hole in your clothes, you might have to throw it away." It's the same as having a car. If you do the appropriate maintenance work, such as keeping the oil changed, having a tune up, rotating the tires, and taking care of small problems adequately, your car will last longer. It is the same for healing depression. Early preventive work is important because, it not only saves a lot of time and energy, it ensures a better quality of life. With depression, there are some early symptoms or warning signs that signal early preventive work is required.

2. Early signs to watch for to prevent depression

Most people think depression presents itself only in outwards signs of extreme emotional withdrawal or sadness. Some people can have symptoms, or thoughts and feelings that seem

normal, but can really be early signs of depression. Expressions like these may reveal a deeper problem:

I don't like people, or crowds, but I don't like loneliness either.

I can't stop worrying, even though I try very hard.

I just can't seem to get things started.

I keep spending money and I regret it afterwards.

My boss says that I am an angry person and I don't even know what's wrong with me.

I get so mad when things are not working!

My life is up and down.

It seems I have to work so hard to be happy while others don't.

I have no energy.

What's the point, it's not going to work out anyway.

Particular attention should be paid to more negative thoughts and statements like these:

I read the whole page and I can't remember what I read.

I can't stop eating.

It's so hard to make decisions.

Leave me alone.

I'm a nervous wreck.

I am not crazy, you are crazy.

I just can't seem to get things finished.

I hate myself.

Stress turns me into a monster.

It's so hard to listen and pay attention.

I get bad moods for no reason.

My mind never, ever stops.

I feel so empty inside.

I can't seem to have a happy, successful relationship.

When these thoughts are in your mind, you need to pay attention and take action to avoid major depression.

3. Early prevention of bipolar depression and relapse

- 1) Recognize the early warning signs of mania-e.g., insomnia, surges of energy, making lots of plans, grandiose thinking, excessive euphoria, spending too much money, etc. Let friends and family know of these symptoms so that they can help to avoid an attack of depression by creating a stable lifestyle, with regular sleep habits and a regular/healthy diet. Foods containing simple sugars and alcohol and caffeine should be avoided.
- 2) Use planning and scheduling to stay focused and grounded. Make a list of things to do and stick to it. Refrain from taking on too many projects or becoming over- stimulated.

If you feel an excess of energy starting to overtake you, channel it into productive physical activities, such as going out for a walk, hiking with friends, or starting to practice Tai Chi, and some other positive activities. If you just “go go go” non stop, eventually you will have anxiety attach. The depletion of your energy will make symptoms more dominant.

3) Listen to relaxation music every night before going to sleep.

4) If you feel that things are getting out of hand, call your doctor or therapist. If you start losing sleep, get help immediately. Sleep deprivation is one of the major contributors to mania. I remember when I was in my 20th, due to severe insomnia, I had manic attach. At that time I did not realize it was related.

5) Don't be afraid of talking with a good friend about your feelings. Sometimes a good friend can comfort you and give you advice. Ask a good friend or family member to track your activity level. Listen to them because they are the one who would give you the honest suggestion. Sometimes, a manic episode can "sneak up on you," and an objective person may be able to spot it before it gets out of hand.

6) Start to practice Tai Chi regularly, especially this healing form Tai Chi. (See later chapter for details)

4. Help from Family Members

Depression not only causes trouble in the sufferer's life, but also creates stress for family members, especially for family members who don't know how to cope with it. Some may think the sufferer has a personality problem and are not aware it is a disease. Family support can be very important in preventing and healing major depression and the better the family members understand the nature of depression, the better they can assist with prevention and healing. This book can be helpful for people with depression and for family members involved in both the prevention and healing processes.

Family members need to pay attention to what is going on with this person who is not doing well either in school or at home. When a person has symptoms of depression, his or her mind is not processing correctly, not reasoning. When this happens, family members should avoid conflict, ensure channels of communication are open, and create an atmosphere of calm and caring. Families should be aware that the sufferer may not be processing information normally or positively and may or may not want unsolicited suggestions for treatment. If that's the case, it may be necessary to let the depressed person find their own path to healing and just let them know support and encouragement is available. It is important that family members remain patient and provide an environment that encourages doing things wisely and learning things wisely (see Daoist philosophy section). I believe Tai Chi practice can also provide this kind of positive support to those suffering from depression.

5. The Western Way to Treat Depression

In 1990, 11 million people in the United States suffered from major depression. Surprisingly, little research has been done on the effectiveness of the different treatments for depression. In the next 20 years, the rate of increase will depend on how much preventive is accomplished.

Therapies for Severe Major Depression

- Antidepressant medication
- Electroconvulsive therapy
- Lithium (for prevention)
- Interpersonal psychotherapy
- Cognitive therapy
- Psychoanalytic psychotherapy
- Family therapy
- Group therapy
- Self-help groups

Psychotherapy or Pharmacotherapy?

In 1989, the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) completed the most careful study ever done comparing the success rates of psychotherapy vs. antidepressant drug therapy in the treatment of major depression. Patients with major depression were assigned at random for 16 weeks to one of four treatments; an antidepressant drug (imipramine), a placebo pill (monitored by brief, supportive, weekly visits to a physician), interpersonal therapy, or cognitive behavioral therapy.

The interpersonal therapy focused on the immediate social context of the depression and the depressed person's relations with other people. The cognitive therapy focused on correcting the patient's negative thinking, irrational guilt and pessimism.

Most patients in all four groups improved during treatment. The major findings were surprising:[\[3\]](#)

- For the Less Severely Depressed Patients; (about 60% of the total) all four treatments were equally effective.
- Placebo therapy (weekly visits to a supportive physician to receive an inactive pill) was just as effective as weekly visits to a psychologist or psychiatrist for psychotherapy.
- Placebo therapy was just as effective as antidepressant drug therapy.
- For the Severely Depressed Patients; (about 40% of the total) the antidepressant drug therapy was highly effective (76% improved on imipramine and only 18% on the placebo).
- Interpersonal therapy was moderately effective, but not as effective as antidepressant drug therapy.
- Long-term interpersonal therapy (once a month) was directly compared with imipramine for the ability to prevent recurrence of major depression among severely depressed

patients who recovered. The average time until a recurrence was two-and-a-half years for patients taking the antidepressant drug, a year-and-a-half for patients in psychotherapy, and ten months for those who had neither.

- The interpersonal therapy provided no further help for patients who were already taking the antidepressant drug.
- Cognitive therapy for these severely depressed patients was ineffective (being no better than placebo).
- The National Institute of Mental Health study issued a warning. It concluded that only 16 weeks of psychotherapy or antidepressant drug therapy for major depression was insufficient since it resulted in very high relapse rates. [\[8\]](#)

What are the important implications of this National Institute of Mental Health study?

- For Non-severe Major Depression, time-consuming or expensive psychotherapy or antidepressant drug therapy is not needed.
- Non-severe depressed patients usually spontaneously recovered. According to one recent study, the average episode of major depression lasts 4 months. In another recent study, 40% of depressed patients recovered within three months, 60% within six months, and 80% within a year.
- If the average episode of major depression lasts 4 months, then for these mild cases, all that is required is seeing a therapist frequently for brief, supportive visits until the depressed patient spontaneously recovers.
- For Severe Major Depression; once there is major impairment in social or vocational functioning, antidepressant drug therapy must be given.
- For severe depression, antidepressant drug therapy is highly effective (for example, in the NIMH study, 76% improved on imipramine and only 18% on the placebo).
- For severe depression, antidepressant drug therapy must be given for at least 6-12 months, or even longer (since the NIMH study showed that only 4 months of antidepressant drug therapy for major depression resulted in very high relapse rates).
- It would be medical malpractice to give a severely depressed patient antidepressant drug therapy without some form of frequent, supportive counseling.
- Severely depressed patients suffer greatly and are high suicide risks. It takes weeks before antidepressant drug therapy starts to work, thus these patients desperately need a caring professional who will emotionally support them and their family until their body recovers.
- This supportive psychotherapy probably would be much like the interpersonal psychotherapy of the NIMH study that is very focused on resolving the immediate social problems burdening the patient.

Psychological and biological factors can cause depression. The dramatic success of antidepressant drug therapy for severe major depression has made many scientists question if depression has a strong biological, rather than psychological basis. Thus, many are questioning whether genetics or stress plays the major role in causing major depression. Recent research has shown that both play a major role in major depression.

Surprisingly, stress has been shown to play a major role in the patient's first two episodes of major depression, but not in later episodes.

So what causes major depression?

- Stress appears to play the most important role for the first two episodes of a patient's depression.
- Genetics and temperament appear to play the most important role for later episodes of a patient's depression.

It appears that major depression often requires stress to "get the ball rolling," but after a few episodes, the illness develops its own momentum and no longer needs stress to "keep rolling." This is a familiar pattern seen in many medical illnesses.

Thus, the treatment of major depression must address the major contribution that stress, genetics and temperament play in this disorder. Unfortunately, most current therapies lack this well-rounded approach. (<http://www.mentalhealth.com/bookah/p44-dp.html>)

The above study brings some conclusions:

1. Mild depression can be helped with non-medication therapy.
2. Severe or advanced depression needs medication and other supportive therapy, as well.
3. Stress is partly the cause of depression. Reduced stress can help to prevent depression.

Psychosocial Therapies

Interpersonal Therapy

The National Institute of Mental Health studied interpersonal therapy as one of the most promising types of psychotherapy. Interpersonal therapy (IPT) is a short-term psychotherapy, normally consisting of 12 to 16 weekly sessions. It was developed specifically for the treatment of major depression, and focuses on correcting current social dysfunction. Unlike psychoanalytic psychotherapy, it does not address unconscious phenomena, such as defense mechanisms or internal conflicts. Instead, interpersonal therapy focuses primarily on the "here-and-now" factors that directly interfere with social relationships.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

The National Institute of Mental Health studied cognitive behavioral therapy as another successful type of psychotherapy. The cognitive behavioral theory of depression states that the patient's excessive self-rejection and self-criticism causes major depression. This therapy seeks to correct these negative thoughts or dysfunctional attitudes in order to overcome the patient's pessimism and hopelessness. Homework assignments are given to break through the depressed patient's vicious cycle of increased negative thinking, leading to increased social isolation which further increases the negative thinking.

A recent review of the scientific literature concluded that cognitive behavioral therapy for depression was promising, but not yet adequately tested.

Recent research suggests that, for moderately to severely depressed patients, pharmacotherapy is superior to cognitive behavioral therapy (at 8 and 12 weeks).

Critics of pharmacotherapy have argued that antidepressant medication only removes the symptoms of depression, but doesn't treat the patient's underlying dysfunctional attitudes.

Critics of cognitive behavioral therapy have argued that the depressed patient's pessimistic, negative thoughts are a result of their major depression, not its cause. Recent research has shown that pharmacotherapy of major depression removes these negative dysfunctional attitudes.

Psychoanalytically Oriented Therapy

The psychoanalytic approach to treating major depression, unlike other psychotherapies, focuses on hypothesized unconscious phenomena, such as defense mechanisms or internal conflicts. This approach to psychotherapy analyzes the historical reasons why the patient has "turned anger inwards against the self" and become depressed. This focus on the patient's past is in direct contrast to the "here-and-now" focus of interpersonal therapy and cognitive behavioral therapy. Psychoanalytic psychotherapy for major depression usually continues with one or more weekly visits for several years. Hence, this form of psychotherapy is the most time-intensive and expensive of all the psychotherapies.

There is a surprising lack of any scientific research done on the effectiveness of psychoanalytic psychotherapy for major depression. A modified form of this technique, short-term psychodynamic psychotherapy, has yet to be scientifically proven effective.

Family Therapy

Family therapy is not generally viewed as a primary therapy for the treatment of depression, but it is indicated for cases in which (1) the depression appears to be seriously jeopardizing the patient's marriage and family functioning or (2) a patient's depression appears to be promoted and maintained by marital and family interaction patterns. Family therapy examines the role of the depressed member in the overall psychological well being of the whole family and it also examines the role of the entire family in the maintenance of the depression.

Patients with mood disorders have a very high rate of divorce, and approximately 50 percent of spouses report they would not have married the patient or had children had they known that the patient was going to have a mood disorder. Family therapy, therefore, can be a crucial and effective modality in the treatment of mood disorders.

Hospitalization

The first and most critical decision the therapist must make is whether to hospitalize a patient with major depression, or to attempt outpatient treatment.

Clear indications for hospitalization are: (1) risk of suicide or homicide, (2) grossly reduced ability to care for food, shelter, and clothing, and (3) the need for medical diagnostic procedures. A patient with mild to moderate depression may be safely treated in the office if the therapist evaluates the patient frequently. The patient's support system should be strengthened and involved in treatment whenever possible.

Antidepressant Drug Therapy

Antidepressant therapy for major depression can dramatically reduce suicide rates and hospitalization rates. [18]

Unfortunately, very few suicide victims receive antidepressants in adequate doses and, even worse, most receive no treatment for depression whatsoever. [19] [20]

Most patients don't stay on their antidepressant medication long enough for it to be effective. A recent study found that only 25% of patients started on antidepressants by their family physician stayed on it longer than one month. [21] (<http://www.mentalhealth.com/bookah/p44-dp.html>)

The brain communicates with itself through the use of special chemicals called neurotransmitters such as "serotonin" and "norepinephrine." There is a strong correlation between the amount of these chemicals in the brain and a person's mood. If levels of these chemicals get too low, people feel depressed. Doctors elevate these brain chemicals with the use of drugs.

There are many different families of antidepressants available today. The two most common groups are:

- **SSRI's** (Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors) These drugs increase the brain's level of serotonin, thus improving mood. SSRI's have also been shown to be useful in the treatment of obsessive-compulsive disorder and some forms of severe nervousness.

The side effects include: heartburn, drowsiness and difficulty achieving an orgasm. They can sometimes produce a transient loss of appetite. SSRI medications can have drug interactions. You should consult with your doctor or pharmacist prior to mixing them with other medications.

These are:

Celexa (citalopram)
Lexapro (citalopram)
Luvox (fluvoxamine)
Paxil (paroxetine)
Prozac (fluoxetine)
Zoloft (sertraline)

- **Tricyclic Antidepressants** get their name from their chemical structure. This class of drugs is very effective in combating depression but can have drug interactions. You should consult with your doctor or pharmacist prior to mixing them with other medications.

The side effects: drowsiness, dry mouth and constipation.

These are:

Amitriptyline
Desipramine
Nortriptyline

Other families of antidepressant drugs include the MAOI's (monoamine oxidase inhibitors). MAOI's are very effective but have potentially life-threatening drug interactions and food interactions. **If you are taking a MAOI drug, it is important that you consult with your doctor before you take any other medicines. Your doctor will also tell you which foods to avoid mixing with your medicine.**

Side effects include: low blood pressure, feeling light headed, trouble sleeping, sleepiness, dry mouth, drowsiness, fainting, sexual dysfunction, weight gain, reduced tolerance for alcohol, high blood pressure, stiff neck, headache, palpitations, chest pain, nausea, vomiting, fear, chills, and sweating.

These are:

Nardil (phenelzine)

Parnate (tranylcypromine)

Effexor (venlafaxine; Drug Family: serotonin and norepinephrine uptake inhibitor)

Remeron (mirtazepine; Drug Family: tetracyclic)

Serzone (nefazodone; Drug Family: phenylpiperazine)

Trazodone; GENERIC (Drug Family: triazolopyridine)

Wellbutrin, Wellbutrin SR (bupropion; Drug Family: aminoketone)

6. The Natural Way of Healing for Depression

Treating depression with Chinese natural healing methods can be very effective when done correctly. The Chinese way of healing is whole body healing. It is mind - body healing that involves many different methods and techniques. The methods can be used in combination but they all work in harmony to create smooth energy flow in the body. These methods include Chinese herbal medicine, acupuncture, Tui Na (Chinese massage), Daoist learning and practicing, healthy diet, a balanced life style, and Tai Chi and Qi Gong practice. These all aim to balance the human energy and organ network to make the body strong and vital. All of these methods are important in the healing process. Many people like a quick fix. Even though the medications do help to reduce the symptoms of the depression in a short time, the reality is there is no quick fix. Some times the side effect from medication could cause many other illnesses in the future. Chinese healing might take longer time to work, but it is effective, powerful and lasts a long time, when done correctly. Chinese healing has been around for over 4000 years and is still popular in Asian countries, as well as many others around the world.

A preventive approach

There is an old saying in Chinese history “you pay the doctor when you are healthy, you don’t pay doctor when you are ill.” It means that the doctor’s job is to keep patients healthy.

Many years ago in China, when medicine was not readily available, people completely relied on the “Village doctor” for their health. The doctor’s job was to keep people healthy. Patients paid doctors to keep them healthy and did not pay the doctor when they were sick. Our ancestors wisely stated, “The sages of antiquity did not treat those who were already sick, but those who were not sick.” When a disease occurs and is only then treated, it’s like waiting for thirst before digging a well, or waiting to go into battle before casting weapons” (Nei Jin-200 BC). These words are from an ancient medical practitioner and were stated more than 2000 years ago. They express the primary importance of preventive medicine. They are proof positive that Chinese medicine has long been valued as preventive medicine rather than emergency disease intervention. The private physician who worked for the Emperor had the most difficult job. Centuries ago, the most prestigious doctor worked to take care of the Emperor. If the Emperor got sick, that doctor could end up being executed. It emphasizes the point that a high quality doctor was measured by the health of his patients, not by how many sick patients he had.

These preventive approaches existed for such long time due to their effectiveness in human healing and disease prevention. It is so natural and makes perfect sense. These natural methods improve the immune system, lift the energy level, balance body chemicals and hormone levels, and delay aging. In general, the Chinese medicine is better for preventive work and western medicine is better for emergency care and quick relief of symptoms. But The Chinese can treat many kinds ailment include all field such as heart disease, lung disease, stomach disease, liver disease, bone and muscle disease, joint disease, cancer, autoimmune disease, blood disease, infectious disease, injuries, and mental disease.

In China, people who get sick have choice to go either Eastern or Western medical profession. People have choice to take either herbs or medication. In overall, there are more and more people go for preventive care rather than urgent care. The younger people start to go gym, Tai Chi and Qi Gong classes.

Fifty / fifty theory

Disease and healing are a two-person job: the physician and the patient. The physician’s work is 50% and the patient’s work is also 50%. If you just rely on the physician to take care of you and do nothing else for your health, you only get 50% care and you are not going to be really healthy. I often give my patients homework, including recommending eating certain foods for balance, practicing appropriate exercise, and learning ways to deal with stress. Patients often will improve faster if they follow the directions and do their homework. For example, one of my patients wanted to lose weight and I recommended she avoid eating late (which contributes to weight gain) and reduce her intake of certain foods. She said my recommendations were not possible and she continued to have difficulty with her weight. My treatments can help with patient’s metabolism and the harmony of their organ system, but will not reduce fat if they eat too much fatty food or eat before sleeping. It is important for patients seeking improved health to be disciplined in their effort to maintain a healthy lifestyle. This ability comes from learning and observing. I call it “wise living”.

I understand that a person who is depressed has a weaker mind and poor motivation, or irregular motivation. Our mind is so important in leading us in the right direction in life. Sometimes, you just have to push yourself to get motivated and just do what needs to be done. Many times after class, my students tell me “I am so glad I came to class, I feel better now.” When you finish what you wanted to do, you are glad you did it and feel better afterwards. Getting well comes from within the person. If you want to get well, you will get well. From your intent, you will be determined to work hard and strengthen the body and the mind.

7. Treating Depression with Chinese Medicine

Most cases of depression need multiple approaches, such as a combination of medication and Acupuncture, or medication and Tai Chi practice. For mild cases and preventing depression, the Tai Chi, Qi Gong, or a combination with acupuncture treatments can be very effective. For any kind of depression, practicing Tai Chi and Qi Gong regularly and studying Taoist philosophy can give you the wisdom needed to fight the illness, and assist in healing. To understand Chinese healing, you need to understand the concepts of Yin and Yang.

Yin Yang Theory in Healing

The first thing we need to understand about Chinese healing is the “Yin” and the “Yang”, the principle of nature, the **Daoist** principle or the way of the nature.



The concepts Yin / Yang were devised by the ancient Chinese as a method of defining and explaining the nature of all phenomena. They present the Chinese conception of nature as fundamental to all natural sciences. As previously discussed, the fields of medicine and other sciences use the Yin / Yang to enrich and balance peoples lives and work. The Yin-Yang theories have played a major role in the development of medical theory and represent the mainstay of philosophy, pathology, diagnosis and treatment.

The theory of Yin-Yang, derived from age old observations of nature, describes the way phenomena naturally groups in pairs of opposites: heaven and earth, sun and moon, night and day, winter and summer, male and female, black and white, up and down, inside and outside, movement and stillness. These pairs of opposites are also mutual compliments in that they depend upon and counterbalance each other. Furthermore, they are mutually convertible, since

either may change into its complement. The day eventually becomes night, night eventually becomes day, bad can eventually become good, and good can become, as well. In human life, we have healthy days and sick days and the sick days eventually become healthy days. We have pleasant periods and unpleasant periods, but the unpleasant days pass in time. When we are young, we are full of Yang energy. We are active, able to work long hours, and able to do heavy work. However, our mind is still developing and immature and we often make mistakes. As we get older, our Yang energy diminishes and our Yin energy increases. We become less active, unable to work for long hours, unable to do heavy work, but our mind is much more mature, more clear and stable. We are wiser and we make fewer mistakes. Everyone has two sides: a strong side and a weak side (Yin side and Yang side). We cannot say which is good and which is bad. All we need to do is to adjust ourselves to be more accepting and open to the opposite. If you want to be a perfect person, or look for a perfect person to be your partner, or try to have perfect health, you might have to keep this dream to yourself, because it is not possible. There is no such thing as a “perfect person,” “perfect health,” “perfect life,” “perfect husband,” “perfect wife,” “perfect job,” “perfect parents,” “perfect children,” etc. Keep in mind, everything has two sides, positive and negative.

Yin and Yang are rooted in each other and they are indispensable and mutually engendering. They are interdependent. Without Yin, there would be no Yang. Without black, there would be no white (no contrast). Yin and Yang counterbalance each other. Extreme Yin can be weakening to Yang and Yang excess can be weakening to Yin. Yin Yang is in everyday life and it is at the core of the idea of balance.

In disease and healing, understanding the Yin Yang is a big part of the practice of traditional Chinese medicine. If an organ is weak, we use strengthening methods and if the organ is in excess, we use reducing methods. If a person has too much dampness, we use dry methods and if the person has stagnation, we use disperse methods. If the person has too much mind activity, we use calming methods and if the person has too much heat, we use cooling methods, etc. Most people can benefit from understanding and incorporating the Yin and Yang concepts and Daoist philosophy into their work lives, as well. For example, if a doctor is too busy and books too many appointments, the quality of patient care provided will suffer. If we work too much, eat too much, and worry too much, our health and energy level will be negatively impacted. If we understand the importance of the Yin and the Yang balance of nature, we can incorporate this principle into your healing treatment and receive its benefits.

Depression in Chinese Medicine

As we discussed in the first Part of this book, depression is related to Qi and blood stagnation of internal organs, especially the heart and the liver. Genetic factors that cause stagnated energy in the liver, which is the primary organ related to depression, can be passed on to children. There is saying in Chinese medicine: the liver and kidney are from the same source. Therefore, people who have depression often have energy blockages in both the liver and the kidney. Heart energy imbalance is more likely caused by excessive stress after birth and then the damage extends to the liver and kidney. Eventually, it has a domino effect on all the other organs. When the organ

“Qi” is stagnated, it affects blood circulation and causes blood stasis. Then the blood stasis causes all organs to decrease in their functions. Consequently there will be various symptoms.

Depression in Chinese terminology is called “Yo Yu Zheng.” The term “Yo” means worry, sad and the term “Yu” means unhappiness. The term “Zheng” means syndrome, or symptoms. It is also called “Zang Zao” (restlessness of organs) in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), which is understood to be caused by abnormal emotions leading to the stagnated flow of Qi. This stagnated flow of Qi causes unhappiness, moodiness, sleep disorders, irritability, clouded mind, sadness, etc. Depressed emotion leads to a disturbance of the mind. As was previously discussed, the mind is related to “Heart” (heart energy) and the disturbed mind can lead to depressed emotion.

Protracted or excessive emotional depression could consume the heart Qi and undermine the blood so that the heart fails to be nourished and is unable to house the mind, so the mind becomes out of order. Consequently, there will be manifestations of susceptibility to sadness and weeping, pale tongue with white coating, and wiry-thready pulse. As the symptoms continue, the damage may extend to the spleen. Other symptoms are excessive thinking and worrying and are caused by an insufficiency of both Qi and blood. The heart is malnourished and the mind is disturbed, resulting in the waning of heart Qi and the declining of courageousness. As a consequence, such manifestations may occur as palpitations, timidity, insomnia, amnesia, poor appetite, sallow complexion, listlessness and fatigue, pale tongue, and thready and weak pulse. The treatment concentrates on building up the spleen to reinforce its Qi and replenishing blood to nourish the heart.

Certain depression involves constitutional Yin deficiency or prolonged liver-Qi stagnation and turns to fire, which takes from the Yin-fluid in the body. The insufficient Yin leads to the flaring up of liver fire and the floating of the imbalanced Yang. The manifestations that would take place as the consequence include: palpitations, insomnia, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, quick temper, red tongue, and wiry-thready-rapid pulse. The treatment focuses on nourishing Yin to clear away heat, and calming down the mind by means of heavy and suppressing medicinal materials. In Chinese medicine, if one organ is blocked, it will affect another organ sooner or later. The kidneys and lungs would also be affected. This explains why a person suffering with depression also has many other physical ailments.

Healing with Chinese Herbal Medicine



Chinese herbal medicine is effective in balancing the organs. Chinese herbs are used in various combinations to balance the body, unlike western herbs, which are used individually. In Chinese herbal prescriptions, some ingredients reduce liver heat, some calm the heart, some nourish the spleen, some support the kidneys, etc. The prescriptions used are the modified form of "Gan Mai Da Zao Tang," "Shao Yao Wan," "Bo Zi Yang Xin Wang," "Gui Pi Wan", "An Shen Yang Xin Wan," etc. These herbs are in pill form and easy to take but less effective than the prescription made from raw herbs. These herbs are used for different organ blockage causing symptoms of depression. You need to find a well-trained and professional Chinese herbalist for this kind of herbal treatment (it might not be easy to find a high-quality herbal practitioner), in order to ensure the treatment is effective. The down side of Chinese herbs is that they are difficult to take for the raw herbs. Most herbal prescriptions (raw herbs) taste bitter. You need to have a strong mind to be able to take these herbal decoctions. Prepare a candy before you take it, drink it all at once (avoid sipping) and put the candy in your mouth immediately after drinking the herbal decoction. In severe cases, you need to take herbs for one to three months and such long-term herbal therapy requires consultation with a high-quality herbalist in order to ensure the safety of the prescribed herbs. Once symptoms improve, the pill form of herbs can be used for maintenance. If you develop any reaction to the herbs, you should contact your practitioner immediately to find out which ingredient is causing an allergic reaction and discontinue its use. As previously mentioned in the 50% theory, it is best not to rely on herbs alone. Chinese healing is "team work." All the modalities of Chinese healing should be taken into consideration, such as exercise, diet, Daoist study, and learning, etc. This means you need to take charge of your health and the practitioner provides only 50% of the equation.

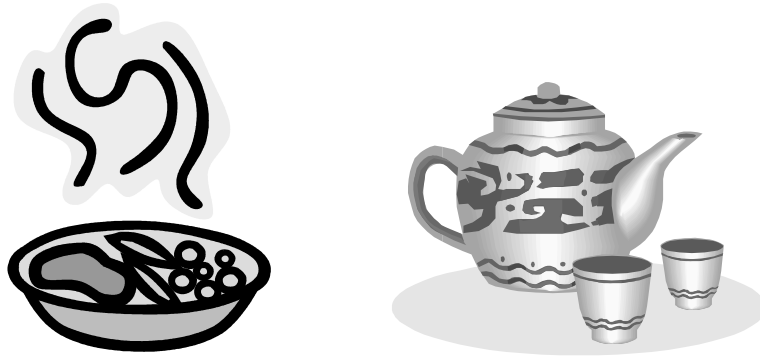
Many people take the self-help approach to using herbs for healing. They read the label on the bottle and believe the herbs can help them. In many cases, it could be a waste of money, unless a professional practitioner has provided suggestions for your type of healing. Most herbs in western markets are not tested for effectiveness, but the Chinese herbs have been tested for effectiveness for many centuries. The patterned Chinese herbs for depression that you can get from a Chinese herbal store are "Xiao Yao Wang" and "An She Bu Xin Wang." You still need to consult the Chinese herbalist for details on taking these herbs.

Healing with Acupuncture and Tui Na (Chinese massage)

Acupuncture is a good treatment for a tune up of the organ system. It reduces the excesses, supports the weaknesses, and unblocks the organ energy. Tui Na (Chinese massage) can be used in conjunction with herbs and acupuncture to unblock the stagnated Qi and promote circulation. Both acupuncture and Chinese massage are effective when you have a well-trained practitioner. Either method should be done in conjunction with Tai Chi practice. Acupuncture treatments involve multiple visits. The more severe of the symptoms you have, the more treatments you need. You need to finish these visits. For severe case, you need to have 12 weeks, two times a week for first 8 weeks, and then once a week for another 4 weeks. For maintenance, you then can have treatments every other week for three months. If you practice Tai Chi or Qi Gong and study Daoist philosophy, you would need less acupuncture treatments. If it doesn't work in the

first 6 weeks, you need to find a different practitioner, or go your doctor to get prescription. Because at this point, your illness is far more advanced. Acupuncture and Chinese massage work very well for sufferers of mild and moderate depression, particularly if you have a high-quality well trained practitioner. For severe depression, you should be treated with acupuncture and Chinese massage to help reduce the side effects from medication. This approach may also help after long-term use of medication, either when you want to reduce or eliminate the use of medication. These treatments will help in both cases and, in my practice, have been very effective.

Healing with Diet



A healthy diet can play an important role in preventing and healing depression. A vegetarian or partial vegetarian diet is more effective in the healing process because of the avoidance of animal products. A survey in both China and the United States discovered that high amounts of animal products in the diet affects the mood and can cause mood swings which could trigger depression. Just think of each animal's temper: giraffes and tigers have totally different tempers, as do coyotes and rabbits. A meat diet is more Yang and vegetarian diet is more Yin. Healthy Chinese diet is more Yin and American diet is more Yang. If your body constitution is more Yang, you need to eat more Yin-type food. Some Americans eat in excess which contributes to many health problems. Avoidance of excesses in alcohol, meat, dairy, sweets, salt, and fat will help to balance your diet. If that balance is lost, it could result in liver disease, colon cancer, weight problems, diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, digestive problems, etc. My suggestions include:

1. Eat a partial vegetarian diet. This means you could eat meat, but in small quantity and less frequency. Although you may think a complete vegetarian diet is healthier, you may not be getting the variety of food required for maximum nutrition. In addition, a completely vegetarian diet may not cause the feeling of fullness that prevents people from overeating.
2. Eat a variety of foods, including the foods you like and the foods you may not like as well. If you eat a variety of many kinds of foods, you'll have a balanced diet. This provides wider nutrition to our body and helps the body to maintain normal functions. Many people take vitamins instead of eating a variety of foods. The vitamins derived

from natural foods have a better absorption rate and causes no side effects. Taking too many vitamins could cause side effects.

3. Eat in moderation. Overeating is a big problem in this country, particularly during the holiday season. We have a lot of fun at holiday parties, but we often feel bloated, tired, or even sick after we overeat. Overeating causes the blockage in your digestive system, which in Chinese medicine includes stomach and the spleen. These two organs are very important in maintaining human energy level and immune function. If you do feel tired after overeating, you might think that eating more will give you energy, but that is not the case.
4. Eat natural foods and avoid processed foods. Processed foods lose nutrition, so you might be lacking in certain vitamins and minerals if your diet consists largely of processed foods.
5. Avoid eating late. Eating late contributes to weight problems, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and insomnia. Two hours before bedtime you should only drink water and eat no food. You burn less calories at night because your circulation, both energy and blood, is much slower. You should have no stimulants and let your body be restful.
6. Drink more water and tea. People drink soda and juice for liquid supply, but too much sugar intake can cause the pancreas to malfunction and this can lead to diabetes. In the human body, biochemicals work like a chain, similar to the Chinese organ and meridian system, where one part can affect another part of the body. If you have diabetes, you most likely have other problems too.

Eat food to suit your personal constitution. A person with a Yin-type constitution should eat more Yang-type food and a person with a Yang-type constitution should eat more Yin-type food. If you have a neutral body constitution, you can eat both type foods. If you are in the stage of menopause with hot flashes, or have hemorrhoids (Yang), you should avoid hot spicy food. If you have “Reynolds” syndrome, or arthritis, which gets worse in cold weather (Yin), you should eat more hot spicy food.

Yin type food and Yang type food (for reference only):

Yin Food	Yang Food
Fruit Apple Banana Pear Persimmon Cantaloupe Watermelon Tomato All citrus	Fruit Cherry Citrus peel Date
Vegetable Lettuce Radish Cucumber Celery Button mushroom Asparagus Swiss chard Eggplant Spinach Summer squash Chinese (napa) cabbage Bok choy Broccoli Cauliflower Sweet corn Zucchini	Vegetable Parsnip Parsley Mustard greens Winter squash Cabbage Kale Onion Leek Chive Garlic Scallion
Legumes and Grains Soy milk Soy sprouts Tofu Tempeh Mung beans and their sprouts Alfalfa sprouts Millet Barley Wheat and its products Amaranth	Oats Parsnips Sunflower Seeds Sesame Seeds Quinoa Walnut Pine nut Chestnut Spelt Sweet brown rice
Other products Kelp and all seaweeds Spirulina; wild blu-green Oyster-shell calcium Wheat and barley grass Kudzu Yogurt Crab Clam Herb and Spices Peppermint Dandelion greens and root Honeysuckle flowers Nettles Red clover blossoms Lemon balm White peppercorn Cilantro Marjoram	Other products Butter Anchovies Alcohol Cayenne pepper Dried Ginger root Buckwheat Rye Cloves Nutmeg Herb and Spices Spearment Hot peppers Fennel Dill Anis Caraway Cumin Sage Rosemary Basil

8. Other Eastern Healing Modalities

Learning

Learning and experiencing are a big part of healing. Anything that is interesting to you can be your target of learning. Don't be afraid of learning and don't think about your age when you want to learn something new. You can learn anything if you are focused and determined to learn. Once you have mastered something new, you have the satisfaction of an accomplishment. Once you have this kind of feeling, you are less likely to be unhappy, and you feel like a winner. Learning can come from reading, doing things you've never done before, experiencing things you've never experienced before, listening, watching, observing, practicing, etc. These are anti-depression activities.

Balanced life style

The Yin and Yang are in everyday life. This is the universal law of "wise living". Anything in excess will cause problems or imbalance: over eating, over angry, over sleeping, over excitement, over working, over analyzing, over sexed, over worrying, over exercising, over spending, etc. Doing everything in moderation is always safe and healthy. More and more westerner including doctors, scientists, engineers, house wives, teachers, are using this philosophy in their daily practice.

Daoist Study and practice



What is Dao? "Dao" (sometimes written in "Tao") means the Natural Way, following what is most natural, alive and spontaneous. Its guiding principle is to follow what is natural to you, and your own inner nature will effortlessly unfold. So everyone unfolds in different ways. The only person you need to follow is yourself; you perform whatever is right for you! Many Buddhists, Christians, and Sufis study and practice the Tao because it helps to ground the spirit into the body. The Daoist (Taoist) principles of Qi, the life force, are the same for all creatures. They are based on balancing the receptive and expressive, or Yin and Yang, forces that resonate within

every body, every society, and every atom of nature. These pathways have been thoroughly mapped for over thousands of years.

Daoists have no stress, no problems, no fear; they live in peace and wisdom.

Dao Te Jing 2:1

When all people know beauty as beauty, ugliness arises.
When all people know good as good, evil arises.
Thus being and non-being generate each other.
Difficult and easy compliment each other.
Long and short form each other.
High and low support each other.
Tone and voice harmonize each other.
Front and back follow each other.

Dao Te Jing 2:2

Therefore the sage:
Manages affairs without action,
Teaches without speech,
All things arise but he doesn't originate them.
He works without exception,
Accomplishes without taking credit.
Because he takes no credit,
The credit remains with him.

Everything on the earth has two sides. Thus, the original duality of being and non-being is mirrored in the dualities of the physical world. If one thing is difficult, there must be something else which is easy by comparison. The same is true for long and short, high and low, and so on. One of the keys to Daoist thought is the recognition of dualities. This is the Yin and the Yang. All processes have active and passive principles. All physical conditions have opposites. Most failures come from thinking of the dualities as the polarities. Instead of seeing active and passive aspects of action as complimentary, we label one as good, automatically making the other bad, and try to ignore or eliminate the other. This makes no more sense than trying to cut a magnet in two to remove one of the poles. There is no absolute right and wrong; it depends on the situation. Some wrong can be right in the future, and some right can be wrong later. Some people think something is wrong, but others may think it is right. The more we understand this philosophy, the better future we would have. This is why we call the Daoist life “wise living”. Sages practice action without deeds. They teach by example. Natural processes go on around them, but sages do not start them. They work without dwelling on rewards or notoriety. They accomplish results without trumpeting their own achievements. Because they demand no credit, the credit is already there. This gives us another thought: without looking for results, the result will come; if looking for results is too hard, you may not get results.

Dao Te Jing 4:1

The Dao is an empty vessel, yet its use is inexhaustible.
The Dao is a vessel, which is both the source and receptacle for all things.
It simultaneously empties and fills.
It can never be exhausted.
It is the profound source of all things.

Dao Te Jing 4:2

It blunts the sharpness,
Untangles the knots, mutes, the glare, and combines with dust.
Within the greater context of the Dao all things are leveled, blunted, muted and simplified.

Dao Te Jing 4:3

It is pure, still, and ever present,
I do not know its origin,
Its image precedes the lord.
The Dao is unlimited in creative power.
It is everywhere and always.

Dao is a word, which can be both a noun and a verb. It conveys both the idea of a path and the act of walking on the path. This asks us to see it is an inexhaustible vessel, which produces things from nothingness. It is both the form of the vessel and the function of producing things from the vessel. The Dao is not describable. It is a beautiful path for everyday life, and everyone who chooses to walk on it. It is simple, dull, mild, smooth, soothing, pure, still but is moving. It is in everything and has unbreakable power. Dao is the way that has no end. Since the Dao was written over 2000 years ago, the original meaning might be more in depth and have multiple uses.

Dao Te Jing 48:1

In the pursuit of learning, one accumulates everyday.
In hearing the Dao, one simplifies everyday.
Simplify and simplify again,
Until the state of action without deeds is achieved.
Through action without deeds nothing is left undone.

Dao Te Jing 48:2

One can win the world by leaving it alone.
If one meddles in the world, he is unfit to win it.

In the pursuit of academic learning, we stuff our minds with facts and figures. In hearing the Dao, we simplify. By continuously simplifying, we can achieve a state of deep understanding of the underlying process. With this understanding, we accomplish everything that needs doing with a minimum of action. This tells us that the more complicated mind we have does not mean we are smarter. Sometimes, the more complicated mind causes more problems. It has been said

that modern education trains us to use technology, but does not teach us to think. Thus, we become wise fools. We assume that everything should be organized to fit our technological conception of order. The children in school now use computers more than they use their brains. Sooner or later, they may forget how to calculate a simple math problem. They may not be able to balance a checkbook. People program phone numbers into their “speed dial”, so they don’t have to memorize or look up the numbers. Technology is important and useful, but the natural way and natural skill is also important and should not be lost from generation to generation. Living in modern society, we sometimes forget how to simplify. We want so much and it’s never enough. We want a big house, a big car, a big diamond, a lot of money, and a lot of everything. It certainly complicates our lives. Many years ago, when I came to this country, I had fewer clothes. I did not need to spend much time trying to figure out what to wear before I went to work. After many years, I now have a lot more clothes and have to spend extra time to figure out what to wear to work. It certainly generates extra work and stress for me. I realize it is not really necessary to waste time on this.

We think we are better at organizing nature than the nature from which we learned our skills. We can win over the world by letting nature’s processes run without interference. If we tamper with the world, we are unfit to win it over.

Dao Te Jing 9:1

Better to stop in time than to overfill a vessel.
Over sharpen a blade and it will soon lose its edge.
A store of gold and jade cannot be protected.
Pride in wealth and rank brings calamity on oneself.
Withdraw when the work is done.
This is the Tao of heaven.

This teaches us to not over exert. It is better to stop short, than to fill to the brim. It is better not to try to be loud and over exaggerated. The more riches you acquire, the more likely you will be robbed. The more pride that you have, the more likely you will be humiliated. Instead, do a full day’s work, and then retire without calling for attention. This is the way of Dao. Modesty has been a tradition in Chinese culture for many centuries. You can always learn more no matter how smart you are and how successful you are. I always tell my children, “The day when you stop learning, is the day when you are dead.” Nothing is static in nature. Even the greatest mountain range, though enduring, will eventually wither away. So will we. There are only two phases in our lives, growth and decay. The moment we say with pride, “I have arrived,” we will fall into decline, because once you think you know enough, you stop growing.

Daoist philosophy teaches us to flow with nature but not against nature, to be plain and simple, to desire less and be satisfied with what we have, to walk on the path without analyzing the path, to be humble, to be gentle, to be easy, and to be empty and full. This way you will be able to handle stress better at work, able to let go of your tangled mind, and able to live with peace. Daoists believe that if you do things in moderation, you would not be sick or unhappy. If you do things excessively, or think excessively, you will tend to have more problems.

9. Tai Chi and Qi Gong



(Qi Gong practice on the top of the mountain)



(World Tai Chi and Qi Gong Day, Framingham Common)

Tai Chi practices have been known for centuries for its health benefits, including mental benefits. Tai Chi practice can stabilize one's mood due to the smooth flow of the Qi (vital energy) in the body. What this means from a western scientist's point of view, is that it balances bio-chemicals in the body. Many people in China practice Tai Chi and Qi Gong early every morning in the public park or other places to enhance their immunity and energy to prevent illness.

Tai Chi is an ancient Chinese healing art that is used for health improvement, spiritual growth, disease prevention, healing of the body and mind, and self defense. It involves slow, circular and balanced movements, mental concentration, breath control, and meditation. It has been proven that Tai Chi practice offers great health benefits, including improvements in circulation, metabolism, neuro-muscular, respiratory, flexibility, posture, mental concentration, immune function, daily energy level, digestion and absorption, emotional balance, self awareness, improved relationships with people, harmony in your life, and more. Tai Chi is not just for seniors. It is an exercise for all ages, all nationalities, both sexes, and all levels of ability. It is a high quality energy workout with tremendous whole body benefits. It is a gift from the Chinese culture, a healing gift for everyone. We take it for granted. We should cherish this ancient treasure and make maximum use of it for assisting human healing.

What is Tai Chi?

“Tai” in Chinese means “bigger than big.” “Chi” is not actually the correct word. The correct word should be “Ji.” Ji means extreme. The correct combination for “Tai Chi” in Chinese is: “Tai Ji Chuan.” It means “grand force boxing.”

- **Tai Chi** is an *art*, as can be observed in its beautiful movements. It is a form of body motion art that has intrigued people from all over the world.
- **Tai Chi** is also a form of *meditation*; it is sometimes called “moving meditation.” This kind of meditation involves deep calmness of your mind while the body is in motion. This kind of moving meditation helps you to focus on present, detach yourself from old and disturbing memories. It helps you to relieve stress, balance your emotions, untangle your troubled life, and get rid of much of the things that interfere with your happiness.
- **Tai Chi** is an *energy workout* that builds your strength internally and externally. Tai Chi

is a type of **Qi Gong**. It is considered “the highest level of Qi Gong.” Qi Gong is also thought of as “an energy workout.” This practice can improve energy and blood flow in your body, enhance your immune function, and improve your daily energy level and mental sharpness.

- **Tai Chi** is a *training of discipline and focus*. This type of training and discipline can help you to improve many things that happen in your life. It can also help you to reach your future goals.
- **Tai Chi** is a *martial art*. Tai Chi promotes internal strength physically, mentally, and emotionally. That strength comes from building strong internal energy which is why it can be a powerful training tool for martial art practitioner. However, you don't have to be a martial art practitioner to benefit from Tai Chi. People of all ages practice Tai Chi. Many people with disabilities and ailments also practice Tai Chi as therapy. If you are interested in the martial aspect, you can find a martial application in all of the movements. As your practice proceeds to higher levels, you might be able use it for self-defense in an urgent situation. This is what will happen as you continue to study Tai Chi in-depth after many years. But you don't have to learn Tai Chi for martial art purpose. The coordination you get from Tai Chi practice can help you in everyday life, such as lifting heavy things, shoveling snow in winter (I call “Tai Chi Shovel”), cleaning the yard, etc. It helps to prevent injuries, especially back injuries. The bottom line is, Tai Chi can make you strong.
- **Tai Chi** is *medicine*; it is called “energy medicine,” “natural healing medicine,” “preventive medicine” because it enhances your self-healing ability, balances your energy and helps to prevent disease. Tai Chi can assist healing, especially for people who have chronic ailments where conventional medicine has offered no relief. For people who have cancer, Tai Chi is an excellent natural medicine to enhance their immune system. Tai Chi is also a “social medicine” for preventing violence and other social problems. Tai Chi focuses on group energy to create a Qi field that affects individuals in a nurturing way. That is why you feel good even if you don't understand Tai Chi in depth.
- **Tai Chi** is a type of *training of intelligence*. Due to Tai Chi's balanced movements which are constantly changing and moving the Yin and the Yang, both sides of the brain receive signals of activity, because both sides of the brain are stimulated and harmonized. Therefore, your brain becomes well developed on both sides. You are able to learn new things with ease, analyze things correctly, see things clearly, and make choices easily. Tai Chi also helps you improve other skills, such as in sports, music, writing, dancing, logical thinking, and many other pursuits. A student of mine told me that she has improved her piano skill dramatically according to her teacher.
- **Tai Chi** is a type of **body language** that expresses everything in motion. The movements express many different concepts, such as “peace on earth” (Tai Chi preparation), “blocking negative energy” (ward off), “letting go of the past”, “push away negative energy” (step back), “embracing” (horse stance, holding a tree), “getting rooted” (horse stance), “generating energy” (many other movements), “following the Dao” (snake creeping down), “life after life” (wave hands like clouds), and “I can do it” (high kick). There are many thoughts and intentions that you can express with Tai Chi movements. These give us many positive psychological benefits.

The benefits of practicing Tai Chi are many. The Tai Chi's benefits are the entire body from top to bottom; mentally, physically, and spiritually. It strengthens all of the organ systems: muscles, tendons, joints, circulation of blood and energy. It improves the immune system, mental concentration, balance, coordination, alertness, learning ability, and much more. Since everyone experiences things differently, as you start to explore the path of Tai Chi, you will discover other aspects.

Tai Chi - The Perfect Exercise?

(an article from www.HealthNewsDigest.com)

"Tai Chi & Qigong have exploded across the media landscape recently. Time Magazine in an article on Tai Chi benefits called Tai Chi 'the perfect exercise.' While The Wall Street Journal recently did a front page lifestyle story entitled '[Qigong] The Next Yoga: A Sweat Free Workout - Tiger Woods' Secret Weapon?' So, why all the buzz on Tai Chi & Qigong? Partly because today's high stressed fast moving population is seeking, not only health & fitness, but serenity. Serenity may sound superficial in today's busy world, but that aspect of Tai Chi, may be why it is increasingly utilized in healthcare, corporate wellness, education, and even in prison and drug rehabilitation programs. The current hubbub about Tai Chi & Qigong may be that we are only now seeing the breaking of a tsunami wave of growing evidence unearthed by western medical research that has been quietly building for the last decade. Qigong is a Traditional Chinese medical/health practice that directly translated means 'breathing exercise,' or 'energy exercise.' Tai Chi is a sophisticated form of moving qigong, which involves a series of choreographed movements done in a relaxed and flowing way. Both have gained increasing attention by western medical researchers in the last decade that has been gaining steam, and resulted in more research dollars going toward discovering their benefits. The National Institute of Mental Health has increased funding to further research these ancient, yet modern, health techniques. A couple of such study's findings, one a ten year study through Harvard, Yale, and Emory Universities, stunned researchers when they discovered that the gentle, slow, relaxing, low impact Tai Chi improved the balance of practitioners profoundly, reducing their risk of falling by 47.5%.

Another found that Tai Chi offered significant cardiovascular benefits, roughly the same benefits as moderate impact aerobics. Yet, another study sited in the Hawaii Medical Journal asserted that Tai Chi increased breathing capacity and relieved back and neck aches in practitioners. The pain relief and low impact aspects of Tai Chi was good news for everyone, but offered even more hope for those suffering from rheumatoid arthritis (RA). Tai Chi being a weight bearing exercise offered the potential advantages of stimulating bone growth and strengthening connective tissue. The only concern was if they (RA sufferers) could handle a weight bearing exercise without exacerbation of joint symptoms. The American Journal of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation reported on a study that found RA sufferers practicing a specially tailored form of Tai Chi suffered "no" significant exacerbation of joint symptoms. This was great news, not just for RA sufferers but for all maturing baby boomers looking for a health regimen that is kind to the joints. Surprisingly, given its gentle nature, Tai Chi burns a significant amount of calories as well, 280 per hour. To understand how significant this is, realize that down-hill skiing burns about 350 per hour. Yet, Tai Chi is gentle enough to be done in business clothes in the office without even breaking a sweat. Which is one reason Tai Chi and Qigong are increasingly being used in corporate wellness programs. However, there are perhaps even more

important reasons Tai Chi is being used, not only in corporate wellness, but health care, education, and even prisons and drug rehabilitation institutions. Tai Chi provides a grouping of benefits that helps: reduce productivity losses in employees; may reduce health care costs preemptively; enable students to focus; and also empower those rehabilitating from drug abuse, etc.; to evolve more healthy productive lifestyles. This is the result of mood homeostasis Tai Chi practice fosters. The Journal of Psychosomatic Research reports a Tai Chi study's findings, "[Test Subjects] reported less tension, depression, anger, fatigue, confusion and state-anxiety; they felt more vigorous, and in general they had less total mood disturbance.

Given that 70 to 85% of illness sending patients to the doctor are rooted in unmanaged stress, and that U.S. business is estimated to be losing upwards of \$300 billion annually due to unmanaged stress, Tai Chi's potential mood-stabilizing benefits are gaining increasing attention. Also in education, the rise in ADD and ADHD symptoms in our nation's youth, has peaked interest in Tai Chi by some education professionals. This may be partly due to a recent study from the University of Miami School of Medicine finding that Tai Chi provided substantial symptom reduction in students suffering from Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). In light of the multi-dimensional benefits these ancient health practices offer, which are now being validated by modern health research, Time Magazine's description of Tai Chi as "the perfect exercise," may be a very accurate description for this ancient mind/body health technique."

Tai Chi is a lifetime journey due to its sophisticated and scientifically choreographed movements. A brief study of Tai Chi does not mean you have learned Tai Chi; it only means you had exposed this exercise. It takes time and patience to learn and practice Tai Chi. When you practice Tai Chi consistently, you are recognized as a special person, not only because you have chosen to take this long journey, but also because you have developed a Tai Chi discipline that very few people have. Just like in the Olympics, the athletes work hard year after year in order to get their medals; you work hard regularly year after year in order to get the "medal of a better life," a "medal of good health," and a "medal of Tai Chi discipline." This medal is long-lasting and it is rewarding. It will help you to excel in whatever you do. This medal is invisible to see, but its effects can be felt.

Tai Chi is not just for senior citizens. ... It is for everyone.

A common misconception is that "Tai Chi is only for old people." Because seniors are limited in what exercises they can do, and because Tai Chi is slow and not aggressive, it is ideally suited for seniors, but this does not mean it is only for the older generation. Tai Chi practice does give seniors many benefits, but it is good for everyone. Younger people find it a little easier to learn. If you continue to practice Tai Chi throughout your life, you will be a very good practitioner when you are older. In general, the older you get, the less you could do. But in Tai Chi practice, the older you get, the better you are (through years practice). You will notice that life seems easier in adulthood, and you will have a more positive outlook. Your success rate will be higher due to having a focused mind and a well balanced body. If you study and practice Tai Chi throughout your life, you will become a very special person and have a strong body and mind.

Many studies have indicated that Tai Chi benefits senior's health and prevent illness. Benefits include improved balance, improved circulation, and balanced mood and energy level.

It can be used for healing, to prevent an existing illness from getting worse, or to prevent illness

from occurring, and delay the aging process. Older people may find some movements difficult, but they still can learn it well, if they devote the time to practice.

Some people tell me that Tai Chi seems too slow and it doesn't look like a physical workout. You will be surprised how much of a physical workout Tai Chi practice is, if you do it right. Tai Chi's workout is invisible and is subtle. It is slow, but it has an absolute power that is irresistible. This kind of power will help you in many ways, even with your house work and daily life. Tai Chi is the most valuable of all exercises.

Healing aspects of Tai Chi for depression

Tai Chi study and practice help you to stay in the “present.” When you are practicing Tai Chi, your mind is focused on learning and moving with controlled energy. Once you learn to stay in the present, you become detached from the old spontaneously. You feel good! You will not let things bother you. You feel calm, peaceful, centered, grounded (rooted). You may see things clearly, use wisdom rather than emotion. You may be able to make the right decisions and have the right energy to work.

Instead of analyzing why and how, Tai Chi practice and Daoist healing teach you to let go. Let go of all the negatives, which is not very easy for people to do. We sometimes need to analyze to figure out the best method and sometimes we need to avoid analyzing. Sometimes, over analyzing is like trying to pick and poke at the injured tissue or playing the old tape over and over. Each time you play it, it is re-imprinted in your brain and makes you think more about it. Life is not a bottle of honey; it is a bottle of bitter and sweet wine. We should cherish the sweet and let go of the bitter, this way you will always have the sweet. If you cannot let go of the bitter, your life will always be bitter. I encourage letting go of unpleasant events, and keep the sweet and pleasant memories. Otherwise, your depression will not go away completely, but be just temporarily relieved. In Chinese medicine, when you are unable to let go, it means that your heart energy and liver energy are not flowing smoothly; you get stuck in “Qi stagnation”. Practicing Tai Chi can relax your mind and help you let go of negative thoughts by creating a smooth moving energy throughout your whole body. One important prevention approach for cancer patients is not to have any “Qi stagnation” in your body. One important prevention approach for depression is also not to have any “Qi stagnation” in your body. Did you know that cancer and depression have a close relationship? When a person has end stage cancer, the patient will die much quicker if depressed.

In Tai Chi study, one of the most important factors is to create the smooth flow of energy (Qi). Once your Qi flows smoothly, you become more positive, stronger, and able to face the negatives with ease. You eventually are able to shift your energy from negative to positive. That is why the real Chinese Tai Chi masters are less likely affected by negativities. They are optimistic, kind, generous, and easy going. My mentor, grand master Feng Zhi Qiang, is a very easygoing man. When I am with him, I feel very relaxed. He is very kind to me, as he is to other people. *Tai Chi has two ways of practice*, the martial way and the harmonious way. The martial way focuses on techniques and applications to improve fighting ability. The harmonious way

focuses on the smooth energy flow in the body to bring inner peace and improve quality of life. It is people's choice to practice either way. You can practice one way or both ways.

Other benefits of practicing Tai Chi are: improve digestion and metabolism, improve sexual functioning; increase blood circulation and cardiovascular fitness; increase youthfulness and longevity.

Tai Chi practice is a true reflection of the Dao. Not only are Tai Chi movements natural, balanced, and relaxed, another important aspect of Tai Chi practice is that it creates a positive attitude, like creating a shield that protects you from sickness, unhappiness and outer negativity. It helps you to let go of negative thoughts, opens your mind to the universe and frees your mind. It helps to develop emotional well-being and a positive attitude toward life; cultivate concentration, self awareness, and self discipline; and lead to a more positive and spiritually oriented life. *Tai Chi practice helps you to be more aware* of what is going on. You can start early correction to prevent bigger problems later. That way, we can use Tai Chi to prevent many illnesses, including depression.

Tai Chi practice is a positive chain that consists of: energy flow – able to let go of negative thoughts – become more positive – open to all. Both Tai Chi and Qi Gong come from Daoist practice and involve balance and nature. All movements in Tai Chi practice entail the Yin and Yang: constantly shifting weight and turning the waist; left and right, up and down, empty and full, stillness and movement, mind and body, breath in and breath out, etc. Both of Tai Chi and Qi Gong are energy healing exercises that regulate your breath, your Qi (energy), your mind, and your body. They are especially effective in conjunction with acupuncture, Chinese herbs, and Chinese massage for chronic ailments. Western researchers have done work to see if using Tai Chi can improve balance to prevent falls, and improve cardio vascular function. Practicing Tai Chi has many more benefits than just keeping balance and preventing falls. Its greatest benefits are found in healing many illnesses including depression. I encourage western scientists or doctors do more research on “Tai Chi for preventing and helping to heal depression,” “Tai Chi for reduce Blood pressure,” “Tai Chi for helping to reduce violence,” “Tai Chi for helping to treat ADD,” and “Tai Chi for helping to treat symptoms of menopause.”

For depression, most of the time, a doctor will recommend that the patient take antidepressants for at least one year to ensure long-term effectiveness. Many of patients are not able to continue this treatment long-term and may discontinue their medication because they feel it's not working or because of the negative side effects. By starting to learn and practice Tai Chi, the time period that the patients need to take antidepressant medication can be reduced. Tai Chi practice also helps patients respond to their medication better. Although antidepressants are an important treatment, they do have side effects and Tai Chi practice can help to reduce the side effects too.

Keys to successful Tai Chi practice

1. Your mind comes first in healing. Calming the troubled mind is the first step. Some people have depression and others have problems that could be more devastating than depression, even life threatening, such as cancer. Regardless of the nature and scope of your health problems, keep your mind quiet and calm is part of healing process. When practicing Tai Chi, you need to focus on the body movements and internal feeling. Don't let your "Shen (mind and spirit, in Chinese)" walk away. When your mind starts to creep away, you need to bring it back to the present, focus on your movements again, even if you have to do this many times.
2. Becoming determined comes second in healing. Once you determined, you are already start the healing process. You now can make up your mind to start the journey. Do it without any hesitation. Come to practice, even if you have low energy, a headache, or if something is troubling you. You can even practice outdoors, where you can breathe in more oxygen, if you don't like being indoors. Outdoor practice is better if the weather permits.
3. Practice with a group, with appropriate music, and do it regularly. You should attend regular classes and try to avoid missing classes. Practicing with a group helps your mind to be more focused. A positive social environment gives you more positive feedback and reinforcement. If you cannot find a quality teacher, you can also start your own little group. You can start your journey by following the video tape of a special form of Tai Chi (16 Step healing form Tai Chi from this book). After a while, you become more aware of what is going on in your internal feeling.

10. Ten Secrets of Happiness

1. Exercise regularly, whether it is western or eastern forms of exercise. You can choose to do jogging, walking, running, swimming, tennis, ball game, hiking, Tai Chi, Qi Gong, martial art, aerobic, even playing chess.
When a person is not happy, there are two things that need to be addressed: your mind is troubled, tangled, disturbed by negativities that make your spirit low; or your energy flow in the body is blocked, stagnate, or not flowing the way it is supposed to. When a person is happy, his mind is clear and healthy, his body's energy is harmonized and flows smoothly. Tai Chi practice including special body movements and correct patterns of breathing can help to balance the energy flow in your body, and balance the energy between your mind and your body. These benefits from Tai Chi are known to last longer than other exercises. Actually, any form of exercise, if done regularly, will always help you to achieve benefits. The key is doing it regularly.
2. Keep a positive attitude.
If you have a positive attitude, and take positive action, you most likely will be successful in whatever you do. If you fail, you can always get up and start over again. There is no big deal in failing; it is a part of life's journey. Besides, there is no such thing as "never failing". When you have a positive attitude, people like to be with you, they feel

cheerful, and they feel good when you are around. Not many people like to be with someone who is negative, you lose friends that way. When you have no friends, depression becomes more pronounced. It is like a negative circle, everything becomes worse and worse. Without a change in attitude, or a change in the way of thinking, antidepressants are less likely to be helpful. A friend of mine has depression. His main problem is the negativities in his mind. He cannot see the positive side of things and we know that everything has two sides. He lost friends one after the other and he lost girl friends one after the other. He continues to feel lonely and frustrated, continues to feel powerless and hopeless; he has no energy, and is unable to work. He continues to sink into the darkness with many different kinds of medication. This type of person is very difficult to treat because they don't have a positive mental attitude and they aren't willing to change their way of thinking.

3. Don't be afraid of hard work.

Hard work can be a good learning experience and the more you do, the more you learn. People may complain that they work too hard, but if you enjoy the work you do, even if it is hard work, it can be still be rewarding. If you complain about everything you do, you are in trouble, and you need to get help. (I hope this book can help you at least help you to begin your healing journey. But you should read through the whole book and put the theory into practice.) Complaining creates negative energy that not only makes you unhappy even more, but disturbs other people, as well. You should be able to enjoy working with different people, being exposed to different knowledge, and getting paid for your hard work. If you are a positive minded person, you will find ways to enjoy things.

4. Be honest with yourself, and with others.

Honesty is a very important way of living in harmony. It would make the world different if we were all honest with each other. If people lose trust in family, friends, business associates, politicians, etc., it creates problems in their daily lives and in society. Some people play mind games and try very hard to figure out what to say or what to do and they modify their behavior because they are so afraid of being criticized. They don't understand that if they are honest, they have nothing to worry about. Otherwise, the constant tension creates stress and blockages in your energy system and also makes your life too tiring and stressful. You cannot be happy when you carry a lot of tension and stress.

5. Helping other people.

Human beings have a long history of helping each other in order to survive and live. For example, in China, families help each other, friends help each other, and co-workers help each other. Even though they have a lower average income, the Chinese people were always considered a "happy culture" in the past; now they still have this kind of culture in some provinces. In United States, privacy seems most important in many people's life. A while ago, my husband and I accidentally walked in a neighbor's yard (it was a huge place next to a public road). While I was complementing the beautiful place, a man came out to tell me that the place we were walking belongs to him and asked us not to walk there any more. I felt very cold in front of this young man, I also felt bad for this man because I just knew this kind of mind set would not create a happy life. A friend of mine

accidentally cut a dead tree in her neighbor's yard, and the neighbor filed a lawsuit for \$2000 against her. My question was: is a dead tree more important than friendship with a neighbor?

From many years of observation and experience, I found that people who tend to give more are happier than people who tend to take. When you help other people, or give to people, you get psychological reward from being able to give to others. The positive action makes you feel good and happy. If you think you lose something by helping others, or if you are worried that you are giving out too much and not getting back, or if you try to calculate if it is fair or not fair, you create tension and stress that causes the blockages: in your body, in your mind, in your life, in your relations, in your health,..... etc. Calculation of "how much I get" weakens your spirit. Life is not just about another day, another dollar.

I some times volunteer for a non profit organization, even had to postpone my own work. I don't feel that volunteering is a waste of my time, because I enjoyed working with other people and learn new things too. I enjoy being productive and generous for something I believe in and I enjoy the group energy. It has had a very positive impact on my spirit and I have learned a lot from this group activity.

I suggest that people try to appreciate the help they get from other people and acknowledge that help, forget what you have done for others, give for the sake of giving, and don't feel the need to get back. Giving is priceless, it is from your heart, and nothing can measure the value of giving. You will be a lot happier because you know you have something to offer.

6. Avoid over analyzing.

There are major differences between western psychology and Daoist psychology. Western psychology tries to analyze everything, looking for reasons for everything. Sometimes, when you try so hard to find a reason, or try to find the exact answer, try to be so smart, you create an ongoing battle within yourself. You may understand the cause of the problems, but may not know how to get rid of them. Things happen for many reasons and get solved for many reasons.

Daoist psychology uses the Daoist philosophy to correct the imbalance in your mind, to help you to let go of whatever is bothering you, and thereby preserve your energy and your spirit. I have a patient with many mental and emotional issues. She has been seeing a psychotherapist all her life and still has many problems. She is unable to let go of the negativities of the past. She totally understands where her problem comes from, but she cannot make things better. She still blames whoever caused the damage to her life in the past. She holds onto these negative thoughts and this causes worry that forms a barrier to many positive activities. Some people worry about things that might never happen, which is a complete waste of energy. Cautiousness is good to have in order to deal with situations that are unexpected, but being overcautious will create negativities and blockages in the mind and you will lose enjoyment of the event. Our minds are already too busy that often causes trouble in our life. People think too much, worry too much,

plan too much, and fear too much. This behavior creates stress and tension, and can trigger depression, anxiety, and panic attacks.

You cannot control everything that happens and you cannot predict everything that happens. The more you analyze the more problems you may get. Try not to waste your energy this way. It's better to preserve your energy for improving your health, happiness, and well-being. When things happen, you will find a way to deal with them.

7. Forgive others

"True forgiveness includes total acceptance. And out of acceptance, wounds are healed and happiness is possible again." - Catherine Marshall.

Forgiving others can create positive energy and help you to let go. We all make some mistakes in our lives and we all learn from mistakes. Love can create forgiveness and forgiveness can nurture love.

Do not hold onto something insignificant and negative. Let go of unpleasant things that happened in your past. When you hold onto negative things, you lock yourself in the cage and can have no freedom. Once you are able to let go, you set yourself free, your energy channels are opened, your mind is free, and your happiness arrives. Try to remember that everyday is a new day, a new life. Life is like water constantly flowing with no end and it flows to one direction and does not flow back. Why should we always try to bring the old things back, especially things that were not pleasant? Remember, these unpleasant events are already gone forever.

8. Use Daoist wisdom

As we discussed before, learning Daoist philosophy and living with Daoist wisdom can help you to become natural and spontaneous. You then become more relaxed, accepting, tolerant, appreciative and positive. Chinese people have used Daoism for centuries. In almost every field, people use Daoism to find the right answer for their own needs. The military uses the Dao to make correct battle strategies. The scientist uses the Dao to figure out how to make things happen. Chinese doctors use the Dao to help patients to get well in the most efficient way. Teachers use the Dao to provide quality and balanced teaching. Astronauts use Dao to stay focused and do better science. Farmers use Daoism to predict the weather and follow the weather pattern to prepare for planting and harvesting. Chinese believe that if you use Daoist wisdom, your success rate is higher. Why don't we take advantage of this philosophy and use this ancient wisdom to help ourselves? This wisdom does not directly tell you what to do, but it does give you a light and direction to help you to see things more clearly. It teaches you to unload yourself, free your mind, and let things happen spontaneously and naturally. Generally speaking, the natural way is the correct way. If you are against the natural way, you may live with many "obstacles." In Daoist study and practice, you can be happy whether you are rich or poor, or any intellectual level or occupation, and at any age.

9. Continue learning and keep your mind open.

The more you learn, the greater understanding you will have. The day you stop learning is the day you are deceased. Knowledge has more value than money. This has been a

tradition in China and Europe for many years. Since I was a child, I always liked to be around people who had vast knowledge, or who knew more than me. I felt like they were a source for me, teaching me to do things right, understanding that things happen for a reason. I love to learn anything that can enrich my mind and help my understanding of the world. One obstacle that many people have is a closed mind. People were taught in a certain way and continue this way generation after generation. Willingness to change goes together with a willingness to learn. Change is not a bad thing. In the past 100 years, we have changed so much, some things change into good and some things change into bad, or unpleasant, but eventually things change to good again. Everyone has changes as he or she matures. Some people are happier than others and some people are more successful than others. Learning is an important aspect in changing for the better. Open your mind, learn from many different sources and learn from the past (but don't stay in the past). This will help you understand life more completely.

10. Cherish love and friendship in your life.

"Love comes when we take the time to understand and care for another person."

—Janette Oke.

I believe that sharing love, being honest with each other, forgiving each other, understanding each other, helping each other, taking care of each other, caring for each other, giving to each other, supporting each other, all help to avoid family problems. If we always think only about "me," "my comfort," "my sleep," "my pleasure," "my life," "my needs," without thinking much about our partner's comfort, sleep, pleasure, life, or needs, then we will have many failed marriages. Even though being married to a person with depression is not easy, with love, compassion, conscientiousness, and moral strength, the relationship can endure and the person suffering from depression can be helped.

"We can do no great thing, only small things with great love."—Mother Teresa.

We all have the ability to give love and enjoy being loved. Love can be interpreted in different ways other than just for couples. Love between mother and daughter or son, love between husband and wife, love between friends, love between siblings, and love between you and your pet. All these kinds of love can be appreciated and cherished. There is an old saying in the Chinese culture: once you become a friend, you are a friend forever. One of my trips to China, a girl who has been my friend since middle school gave me a big punch as soon as she saw me, the reason was I didn't tell her sooner that I was coming to China. I had to apologize ten times while laughing hysterically. This kind of feeling is hard to find in the United States. Living in this country for sixteen years, I found that the friendships in many cases don't last. People moved away and never stay in touch. Even within families, some family members hardly ever talk to each other. Sometimes, people don't cherish friendships and may even abuse a friendship. The friendships are likely to be short, quick, or temporary. Remember, if you give love, you also receive love. If you abuse friendships, you will never have true friends. A rule of

thumb is: If you don't like other people to treat you unpleasantly and with disrespect, you should not treat them that way.

11. Tips for Improving Stress Management

People live different life styles, have different personalities, have different occupations, and come from different cultures. We are all different, but we can also be happy with who we are, what we have, and with whom we associate with. There are certain things we would like to pay attention in order to have relaxed life.

1. Avoid flying off the handle.

When a person is upset or angry, seeking temporary distance can give this person time to quiet their mind. Time is part of healing. If you try to argue or "clear" yourself, it might make things worse. Even if you are right, arguing is still not the best way to solve the problem. If it's about something you didn't do, but you are getting blamed, you can always explain things later. If it can't be explained, it's not crucial. Not everything can be clarified. People shout and yell to make statements clear. Just because you raise your voice louder doesn't mean that you are right. Nor does it mean you can solve the problem. Learn to use a soft voice, speak slowly and clearly. Sometimes a soft voice is more powerful than a louder voice. As long as you are honest, things can be straightened out without arguing.

2. Do take time to think over your situation.

We often tend to blame other people. Blaming other people might make you feel good but is not the best way to solve the problem. In many cases it might make the situation worse. Before you speak out, or blame others, ask your self "what can I do to change this situation?" "Maybe it is my problem". Very often, you are the one who can change the situation. If you change yourself, you might be surprised to find that others change too.

3. The art of communication

There are many broken families, due to a lack of good communication skills. Language is an art. You need to speak in a peaceful way. Not everyone is trained at being able to understand the person rather than the language. People misunderstand quite often and that misunderstanding causes many problems. Speak in a way that is positive, peaceful, and harmonious. Learn to say, "I think..." "I feel..." "I would like..." "I hope..." "I wish..." "I would prefer..." It is better to say something about yourself than to criticize or to blame. Avoid make vague requests. Say what you mean, and mean what you say, but in positive way. You should not expect others to read your mind. Sometimes, you think it is common sense, but it's not common to other people. People, including your family members, are too busy to read your mind.

4. Try to appreciate the fact that people are different.

Different perspectives and ways of reacting do not necessarily mean that one person is right and another is wrong. Sometimes, right could be wrong and other times, wrong

could be right in a different situation or a different time. This is the philosophy of the Yin and Yang, and of nature, the Daoist. Remember the fact “nobody is perfect,” and nobody is right all the time. If you disagree with something but have no choice, it might become a good learning experience. Avoid participating in an intellectual argument that goes nowhere (don’t spin your wheels trying to convince others of the “rightness” of your position). Agree to disagree.

5. Avoid being over sensitive.

If someone is unfriendly one day, it does not mean he or she doesn’t like you any more. It only means he or she has some problems at that time and these problems can be either physical or emotional. Being over sensitive can only hurt you. Trying hard to guess what’s in another’s mind is very tiring and stressful. In many cases, your assumption are wrong and you may act inappropriately. Just be natural and relaxed, and your life will be much easier. On the other hand, when people find you are over sensitive, they are less likely to tell you the truth, because they don’t want to hurt you. Then you are facing an unrealistic life, a truthful life. If you want truth, you have to be able to handle the truth, which involves some things you may not like. If you have the right attitude, you will have a realistic life.

6. Do recognize each person is responsible for her or his own behavior.

You cannot change people unless they are willing to change themselves. You assume if you help someone whom you care about, things will be better. You might be surprised by the results. Things do not always happen the way what you want them to happen. You might get frustrated from trying so hard and not seeing any results. You might be hurt, and you might be depressed. It is wise to just let the person wake up by himself. Healing is from the inside. There is an old saying: when a person wants to be healed, the healer arrives. Everyone knows this: you can lead the horse to the water, but you cannot make the horse drink.

7. Good things take time.

Don’t get discouraged if you fail several times as you try to put theory into practice. You will have many opportunities to get back on track and be successful. Even the most successful business takes time, from many failures to success. Time allows you to learn, time allows you to heal, time allows you to forgive others, and time allows you to find happiness. Time gives you plenty of whatever you need for nourishing your spirit. But don’t waste time, use it wisely. It is too valuable. Time is like water, it flows only in one direction.

8. Don’t always expect a positive response. Be prepared for a negative answer.

Being prepared for the worst situation is always wise. This is different with being negative. Prepare for the worst situation so you will not be surprised, and you will have the way to deal with the situation. If someone borrows money from you, you need to be prepared that this person might not return the money. If this person returns it, that is good, no one would get stressed. If this person does not return the money, and if you are not prepared, you will be very upset; you would lose your night sleep, and eventually lose the

friendship. The worst thing is to lose your health. If you cannot be prepared for the worst, or cannot take the worst, you should not go down that road.

If you need to ask someone to do a favor for you, hesitation will not help. Just ask without fear and you might get somewhere. The worst that can happen is they say “no”. That is not a big deal; you will just have to find another way. On the other hand, if someone asks you for a favor, you can say “no” if you are not able to do it, or say “yes” if you can help. I often tell people to remind themselves to say “No big deal” if something insignificant goes wrong

9. Focus on the present

To stay focused on the present is a tough thing to do for many people. Our minds are always active, driving, working, walking, do errand, and even when we are sleeping. We have so many distractions in our lives and it seems like the more we have, the more stress is associated with it. We get distracted by too many bills, by being overloaded with work, by vacation planning, by children, by how to save money, etc. When we are driving, we cannot just focus on the road, but have to call someone on the cell phone. When we are doing one thing, our mind is in a different place. Many traffic accidents, mistakes at work or at home, and delays in completing projects are from distractions. All these things happen because of our distracted minds and lives. In order to be productive and accomplish you work with less stress, you need to focus on the present, focus on whatever you are doing at the moment. I sometimes have to remind myself to focus on the here and now. All Daoist and Buddhist practice requires that the mind remain focused on the present. Buddhists especially use this kind practice to reach enlightenment.

10. Appreciate a good night's sleep.

No matter how stressful your day has been, try not to let things interfere with your sleep. This is easier said than done. A good night's sleep can restore your energy and help you to let go of the things that happened yesterday. Appropriate rest is part of healing. Some people have physical problems that affect their sleep. Some people have too much on their minds and it affects their sleep. We all have too much going on in our lives, so much to think about; so much to worry about. We should try to put everything on a sheet of paper to help us unload our minds. This way, we can take care of whatever written down on the paper the next day, or make a schedule to do things one by one. If you have no apparent reason for insomnia, you need to find a good doctor, either western or eastern, to help you. A good night's sleep can help you to start a new day, a new life.



12. Sixteen Steps Tai Chi for healing and preventing Depression

Tai Chi practice can minimize the symptoms and prevent depression and this preventive work is important in maintaining overall physical and mental health.

I created this unique therapeutic form of Tai Chi combining Chen style Tai Chi, Yang style Tai Chi, Qi Gong, martial art, and meditation to make a high quality practice for healing. It “only” took me over 10 years to create this healing form of Tai Chi and find the right music for this specific form. It comes from a lifetime of study in Chinese healing art, Tai Chi, Qi Gong, martial art, meditation and my passion for helping people. I believe if you are faithful to this kind of approach and practice, your life will have less stress and less unhappiness, and be positively impacted.

The characteristics of this Tai Chi form are:

- It is short, easy to learn, easy to remember and easy to practice.
- Obvious circular movements create better energy flow in the body.
- The martial art characteristic empowers the mind, strengthens the body, and improves stamina and self esteem.
- Symmetrical movements balance both sides of the brain to harmonize brain activity.
- The sophisticated movements involve learning that stimulates brain functions.
- The slow and balanced movements calm and balance the brain chemicals, increase serotonin level, reduce noradrenalin level (hypothesis) which acts as a “natural tranquilizer.”
- The moderate amount of physical movement enhances energy flow in the body and improves daily energy levels.
- The localized steps require a small space to practice (can be practiced indoors when the weather is inclement).
- The coordinated, soothing, and open frame movements (big frame) improve coordination and balance, open energy channels, and help you to open up to nature.
- Most movements are slow, soothing, calming, graceful, peaceful, but, several movements are also fast and powerful. Because depression can be accompanied by anxiety, the slow movements balance the anxiety and the fast movements balance the depression.

This form is helpful for people who suffer from all types of depression, including depressed moods, depression with anxiety, and mild to moderate depression. Most importantly, it can help to prevent depression. The theory is that the specially choreographed movements following special music harmonizes the biochemical in the brain that make you feel like you are gaining power and able to control your emotions and mood. You often feel better immediately after practice. It can help you relieve the stress in your life and improve your daily energy level, immune function, and mental clarity. While you are learning Tai Chi, you’re not just learning the exercise movements; you are actually learning about life and how to use Tai Chi to balance your life.

How it helps with depression

1. Learning

Learning is a big part of healing. Tai Chi involves learning “big time.” When you start to learn things you didn’t know, you start to shift your focus onto new knowledge, new approaches, and a new life. You have less time to be bothered by your mood. It is like you are shifting negative energy to positive energy. The more positive energy you have, the better chance that you can be healed. Once you focus on learning, you then start practice diligently; your Tai Chi form will become more graceful and beautiful. This gives you a feeling of accomplishment and satisfaction.

2. Specific and balanced movements

This combined Chen style and Yang style Tai Chi is a very soothing, relaxed, and open frame method that helps to open all your energy channels. In this form, the movements are symmetrical to harmonize the chemistry in your brain. It is like a natural tranquilizer that immediately calms your mind and your body.

It also stimulates both sides of the brain to improve all brain functions, including memory. The brain has different functions on the two sides.

(Please see chart on next page, “The Brain Function of Hemisphere”)

Most people have dominance of one side or the other in their brain function. Some are strong in language, while some people are strong in shape and space recognition, and time, but weak in communication. Some people learn certain things quickly and other things slowly. Generally speaking, men are stronger on the left side of their brain, women are stronger on the right side of the brain. But some men are stronger on the right side and some women are stronger on the left side. Many people overuse the dominant side of the brain throughout their lives, and fail to use the minor side of their brain; they don’t stimulate the whole brain. Generally speaking, overuse of one side of the brain can weaken the other side of the brain. The mind of a construction worker or an engineer can be less flexible than the mind of an office worker. People who are artistic can be more sensitive than engineers. But, with special training, our dominant side can become less dominant, fostering a greater balance of the two sides. Once your brain is more balanced, you may be more pleasant with your partner or companion, more easy going, and less rigid or stubborn. Tai Chi and Qi Gong exercise balances both sides of the brain, so you develop well-balanced cognitive skills, communication skills, and social skills that all come from the smooth flow of the Qi.

3. Create the smooth Qi (energy) flow in the body

“Qi”, is vital energy, or life force. It is the energy that underlies everything in the universe. Qi in the human body refers to the various types of bio-energy associated with human health and vitality. When you breathe, air enters the lungs. The lungs extract the external energy and blend it into the bloodstream, which is carrying the internal energy extracted by digestion of food and water. The resulting blend is the basis for human energy, which is related to metabolism and immune function. Qi is present internally and externally; it controls the function of all parts of the body. There are many different

types of the Qi, which I discussed, in my first book “Natural healing with Qi Gong” (you can find from major book store).

With the Tai Chi workout, your energy starts moving in the body smoothly, your internal organs start to work harmoniously, and your mind and body start to work together. This harmonious energy promotes more rapid healing

4. Group energy

For many centuries, human being are always involves in group activities, functions, performances and other social events. Human beings are social beings. In United States, there are thousands of associations, professional societies, churches, study groups, and street gangs. People seek others like themselves to do thing they enjoy, to enrich their lives and spirits. Tai Chi practice brings out a great deal of group energy and is most often practiced in group settings in a classroom or outdoors. This method of practice fosters discussion, friendship and all the positive benefits of group energy. People who come and participate in Tai Chi class at our school feel happy and relaxed. Students tend to do better when they practice together, because the energy of each individual affects the energy of others in the class. The more energy channels an individual is able to open, the better the results will be from the Tai Chi practice. When everyone’s energy channels open, the whole field is full of energy. You cannot see this, but it can be felt by everyone. In any kind work, teamwork always brings the best results. Many western exercises are beneficial, but often focus on the individual workout. This may make you feel good for the short term, but group energy makes you feel good for a long time.

5. Martial art involvement

In almost every form of Tai Chi, most of the movements have some martial relevance. People choose to practice Tai Chi for different reasons such as find the inner peace, for healing, for martial art or self defense, for relief of stress, for longevity, for maintain good health or disease prevention, for flexibility, for increasing energy and stamina, etc.. Tai Chi originated from Qi Gong and martial arts. Some movements are more pronounced in the martial art aspect, and can be used for self defense, or to build a stronger body and mind. These martial art movements make you feel stronger, more powerful, and more in control of yourself. It gives you a solid, safe, stable, and determined feeling.

6. The right music along with the movement

The music used in Tai Chi practice also has healing benefits. Certain movements require certain music. Older people and people who have heart disease would also benefit from listening to the relaxing music used in this practice. After having listened to thousands of pieces, I chose this music because I felt it was appropriate for this Tai Chi form. If not right music, the results of practice can be little different. On the other hand, it can be less effective.

The Brain Function of Hemisphere

The Left Hemisphere of Brain	The Right Hemisphere of Brain
Analytic Analyzes data	Intuitive Responds to data intuitively
Logical: Uses logic in handling information	Spontaneous Handles information spontaneously
Temporal Is aware of time: past, present, and future	Atemporal Processes information without consideration of time
Sequential Deals with events and actions sequentially	Random Deals with events and actions randomly
Orderly Organizes information	Diffuse Diffuses information
Systematic and Formal Deals with information and objects in a variety of systematic ways	Casual and Informal Deals with information and objects according to the needs of the moment
Linear Reduces the whole to its parts and reassembles parts into the whole	Holistic Sees only the gestalt (wholeness) of information and objects
Verbal Processes language into meaningful Communication: receptive and expressive	Nonverbal Responds to tones, body language, and touch
Compositional Writes music scientifically	Responsive Responds to tones and sounds
Computational Uses mathematics and computation	Visuo-spatial Perceives shapes and patterns; intuitively estimates
Practical Concerned with cause and effect	Originative Concerned with ideas and theories
Abstract Has abstract-oriented cognitive functions	Sensory Has sensory-oriented cognitive functions
Factual Uses facts	Visual Uses imagery
Concrete Explicit, precise	Metaphoric Symbolic, representational

13. Fundamental Principles of Tai Chi Practice

In order to have beneficial study and practice, you need to understand Tai Chi's principles. Once you understand the principles, your Tai Chi journey will be easier and you will develop better skills through the practice. Many people throughout the world practice Tai Chi, but only a very small portion of them practice correctly and consistently. The people who practice correctly will have much better health benefits, better Qi circulation, better martial arts skills, and a better understanding of the Tai Chi philosophy. Most people practice Tai Chi because they hear so much about the benefits either from newspapers, television, or other sources. Yet, these media sources do not always provide details on how health benefits are achieved or how to do Tai Chi correctly. In addition, many places offer Tai Chi without having well trained instructors. In the United States, very little research has been done on Tai Chi exercise. In China, there has been evidence accumulated over many centuries to show the great health benefits of Tai Chi practice when it is learned correctly. You can practice Tai Chi any way you want as long as you enjoy it, but you will not reach higher levels if you don't practice correctly. The Tai Chi principles are a treasure given to us by the masters over the centuries. They give us the guidelines to help us practice Tai Chi properly and to achieve higher martial levels and better health benefits. We take these things for granted. We know we can use them to enrich our life and our society.

Tai Chi Mental Status and Physical Postures:

When you start Tai Chi practice, the first thing you need to know is the body posture from head to toe. Generally speaking, every part of you should be relaxed.

1. Your mind:

Your mind should be a relaxed oasis in the cosmos. Just imagine your body is a miniature universe filled with energy and vital materials.

Mind clear and focused: there is nothing in your mind except Tai Chi. You should focused on your energy center, which is located in your lower abdomen, visualize the smooth energy flow in your body and full of positive energy surrounding you. Your intention is to start to use Tai Chi to generate strong energy and let the energy work for you and nurture you. If you are self-conscious and carry stress, your mind will not be clear because you are focused on your problems not on Tai Chi practice. You can never practice Tai Chi well if you focus on your problems or have other distractions. There is hypothesis that Tai Chi practice has effect of helping people with attention deficit problems. This is partly because of the concentration required for training. Once your mind is relaxed, you can generate the intention of moving energy. Then, once you are breathing correctly, the movements begin to come more naturally, smoothly and effortlessly. The most important thing in Tai Chi practice is your intention. This is true of most things, isn't it?

2. Your Head, eye and mouth:

Your head should be upright and naturally lifted. Your neck is relaxed and you feel the lifted

spirit. You can imagine a string attached to your head, lifting your head up. Your weight is centered and you feel balanced.

Your eyes should be aware and generate intent with your mind. You should not look at the floor (which many beginner students do). Your eyes correspond with the arm or leg movement during practice. Your eyes should be focused in the direction of your **Yang** body part, or **Yang** movement. You express the intent of the movement with your eye. Then you will feel that your Tai Chi performance is “alive” with power, your spirit is lifted, your “Qi” is moving. (The “Yang body part” means the dominant part of your body in Tai Chi movements). The good Chinese martial art practitioners have a very good “spirit of the eye.” This is a key factor in “winning” when fighting or sparring. In daily life, if you hear a person say “I can’t do it,” you can see that his or her eyes are dull and have no spirit. If you hear a person say “yes, I can do it,” you see the eyes show the power of doing things, they have spirit. Your mouth should be relaxed, your lips are closed, and your tongue is loosely touching the upper pallet.

3. Your Shoulders, Arms, and Hands:

Your shoulders should be relaxed. The elbows should be relaxed but not pointing straight down toward the floor. They should be about 45 degrees from the body. If you elevate your elbows or shoulders, you create tension in your arms and shoulder area, then your whole body will be tense. People find themselves tensed up in many situations, such as working, planning, cooking, reading, doing computer work, teaching, writing, even talking. All of these situations can create energy blockages in your body and reduce blood circulation. When this happens over a long period of time, you will have symptoms of headache, dizziness, insomnia, sinus, low energy, stiffness, infection, emotional problems, anxiety, tightness in the neck, shoulder, back, etc. In the United States, the high tension is found in all occupational fields. Among doctor’s office visits, 90% of ailments are caused by stress. The correct Tai Chi posture helps you to improve your awareness that helps to relieve the tension. This gives us plenty of reasons to learn correct Tai Chi.

From a martial arts standpoint, relaxing your shoulders and dropping the elbows is a protective strategy. If your shoulders are raised, your elbows will also be lifted, you are giving the chance to your opponent to get you down or lock you up. Only if you are relaxed you are able to respond quickly to any movement by your opponent.

Your arm should follow your body in every movement of Tai Chi. You do not intentionally move the arms, rather let the arms go wherever the body goes. If you focus too much on your arm movement, you look like you are dancing rather than doing Tai Chi.

Your wrist should be relaxed and flexible but well controlled. Wrist relaxed doesn’t mean floppy, having no strength. The well controlled doesn’t mean rigid. This will give you more readiness to change any way you need to in a fighting situation. Although practicing Tai Chi is not just for fighting, but we should know the correct way of practice in order to have better energy flow in the body. On the other hand, you will have a self defense tool to use in an urgent situation. We often say in Chinese: “We train soldiers for a thousand days but only

need them for one critical day.”

Your hands should be relaxed with fingers slightly closed together. Hand joints are not obvious to see. You can feel the heat in your palm sometimes. That heat is a phenomenon of energy. Some Tai Chi movement require fist motion; if you make a fist, it should not be very tight. The thumb is above the first finger-joint between the index finger and middle finger.



4. Your Torso:

Your torso should be relaxed. If you can relax the body, it allows for a smooth circulation of blood and energy. Your organs receive better energy and blood. If you are in tense, you will create stagnation of energy in your organ system. No matter how you move your body, your back should be upright and relaxed. You will be very uncomfortable if your body is twisted or bent. You can get hurt or injured if you practice with a wrong body posture. Especially the lower back should be relaxed. You can tuck the buttocks inward to keep the lower back straight and relaxed. Your kidney points in the lower back area are opened if you keep your lower back straight and relaxed. To open the kidney energy is very important in Tai Chi practice in order to keep energy flow in the body smoothly. This is important in any Chinese martial art practice too. The waist and hips should also be relaxed. The waist and hips which connect your upper body and lower body, are the most important parts of the body in Tai Chi practice. As you see, the lower back, kidney area, reproductive organ area, lower end part of the spine, hip, and lower abdomen, are all in one area which we call the “**Dan Tian**” area. This is a place for the storage of energy, as well as the center of your body which affects all other parts of the body. If your waist moves, your entire body moves.

From a martial arts aspect, the waist is your **powerhouse**. When your waist is loose, the power generated by your legs can be easily transmitted to your arms through your Dan Tian area. Your Dan Tian area can also generate power that directly moves energy to your hands. If your waist is stiff or tight, the power generated from your legs cannot be transmitted to your hands. Your “**powerhouse**” therefore, has no power. Ancient Tai Chi masters from China stated: “The root is at your feet; power is initiated by your legs and directed by your waist, then expressed through your hands.”

5. Your Legs and Feet:

Your legs should be bent during the entire Tai Chi practice. However, you don't have to bend very low. For beginners or seniors, you can just unlock your knees. For advanced or younger people with a flexible body and strong legs, you can bend the knees a little more and sink the body lower. It depends on the individual's ability. Doing it correctly is more important than just a low stance. With each shifting of weight and turning the waist, you can clearly distinguish between substantial (full) and insubstantial (empty), Yin and Yang movements. Once you begin to understand the idea of substantial and insubstantial, you will have a centered and a balanced feeling, solid and grounded no matter what the movements may be. If you do not feel balanced, that means you haven't found your center, you are not rooted. If you are not rooted, you cannot generate the power.

6. Your Entire Body:

Once you have relaxed all parts of the body, your entire body should be rooted, balanced, and centered, just like a tree. A tree with strong roots can defend against heavy wind or storm. Once the entire body relaxes, you will feel your "generator" is in standby mode, ready to generate the energy. This is a very important skill to learn in Tai Chi practice. It also helps you relieve stress, detach from all the distractions in your mind, and let go of all tensions. Tai Chi is an entire body exercise and involves coordination of all body parts. Through Tai Chi practice, you will improve your coordination too. One Tai Chi principle from an ancient master states: "When there is an upward movement, then there is also a downward movement; when there is a left movement, then there is also a right movement." Your body moves before your arm, your leg moves before your body. Each part of the body follows, one after the other. If you are able to relax your whole body, you will be able to focus on Dan Tian energy and move Dan Tian energy any way you wish.

7. Your Breathing:

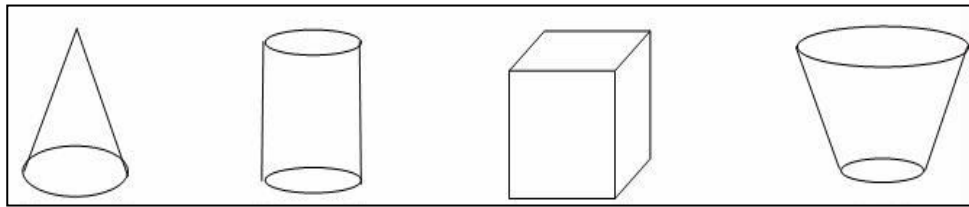
Breathing should be deep and slow and synchronize with the movements. It should be addressed in advanced students, but not with beginners because it can cause confusion when trying to learn complicated Tai Chi movements. As you practice for a while and master the whole form, you can start to pay more attention to your breathing. But in this special form Tai Chi, the breathing is important for all levels. Generally speaking, you breathe out when your movement is directing energy out; you breathe in when your movement is to bring the energy in. If you move hands out, you breathe out; if you move hands in, you breathe in; you breathe in with open arm movement, or move up; breath out with close arm movement, or press down movement. But there are exceptions to this rule. Certain movements have different breathing patterns which you will learn in the classroom from your teacher. You should not be afraid to ask your teacher about breathing or any other movements if you have any doubt.

Tai Chi Basic Movement Requirements:

1. Whenever there is movement, the whole body moves. When one part of your body moves, all other parts also move. Tai Chi is a whole body exercise.
2. There is motion in stillness and there is stillness in motion in every movement. When your body is in motion, you feel calm and peaceful. When you are practicing Tai Chi, your mind is quiet, peaceful, calm, and you are able to circulate energy.
3. All movements are rooted in the feet, initiated from the leg, controlled by the waist, shaped by the hands and fingers. Being rooted in feet creates a strong root of the stance, and then your leg starts to move, followed by the waist. This is how it appears in movement. But in reality, once you are rooted, your next focus should be moving the Dan Tian energy which is below the waist. Many people put too much focus on the hands and arms. It causes too much tension and leaves out the energy center. This will not help your energy flow.
4. The mind produces internal movement and internal movement produces external movement. All movements are directed from your mind. If your mind is not there, your movements do not mean anything and your Tai Chi is powerless. That is why the mind is most important. Just like anything else, if your mind is off track, you will not be able to do things right.
5. The upper and lower parts of the body are coordinated; left and right are coordinated, mind and body are coordinated, breathing and movements are coordinated. Do not worry if you have poor coordination, it will improve after you practice Tai Chi for a while.
6. All movements are in a circular and continuous motion. There are many things in the natural and physical world that are in the shape of a circle, such as the earth, the moon, the sun, a cup, a dish, a ball, a wheel, your eye, most fruits and certain vegetables, the pot you use for cooking, and so many other things. Many of them have energy. This is part of the reason why the circular motion is so important when you practice. Otherwise, you would feel unnatural, or uncomfortable.
7. Relax the mind, sink the shoulders, elbows, and back, sink Qi to Dan Tian, keep the lower back straight, distinguish Yin and Yang (empty and full), as we discussed before.
8. Each Yin and Yang movement should be completed. The Yang movement is followed by the yin movement; the Yin movement is followed by the Yang movement. When you complete the Yang movement, your yin movement starts; when you complete the Yin movement, you start the Yang movement. The end of Yin movement is the beginning of Yang movement; the end of Yang movement is the beginning of Yin movement. Just like everything else; when something happens to one extreme, the opposite begins. The same phenomenon exists in life too: when extreme fighting (war) begins, death comes after; when our economy gets so strong, this is the sign it will slow down; when our

economy gets weak, this is the sign that it will be better soon. This is a part of nature and a part of Daoist philosophy.

9. Your weight is continually shifting from left to right. The weight shifting is constant and continually changing from side to side. The waist position is also constant and continues turning from side to side. This clearly describes the Yin and Yang of Tai Chi movements.
10. To maintain stability in a body is to maintain the equilibrium of the body. Let's look at the shapes below: What shape has the best equilibrium?



A. Shape of a cone B. Shape of a column C. Shape of a square D. Shape of a bucket

It should be obvious that the cone shape has the best equilibrium. This idea is similar in Tai Chi. It has a strong base and its power is in the equilibrium of the movements; a big and strong base is able to keep energy centered. In Tai Chi stance, the shape of the body is like a cone, you do feel more stable, grounded, and solid like a tree.

Tai Chi Practice Requirements:

The best way to practice Tai Chi or Qi Gong is in a group. Ancient Chinese writings always emphasize group energy rather than individual energy. In western culture, individual energy is often dominant. This might contribute to some of the social problems in United States, causing mental and physical health problems.

In ancient Chinese healing, each individual has energy channels and collaterals. As we discussed before, if the channels are open in one person, it might affect another person in same room; if the channels are open in many individuals, the energy in the room can be felt. If one person's channels are open and another person's are not, soon that person's channel will be opened as the practice proceeds. You can feel the difference when you practice with a person who has good energy and the balanced body. Sometimes you may also feel it when someone has too much negative energy, or blocked energy, or scattered energy, or poor energy. But this person's energy might change after practice for a while and you would feel the difference later.

Not only is it important to practice with a group, but it is also important to practice individually. This can be challenging, but rewarding. You can open your channels by practicing correctly and persistently. There are several things to keep in mind that will help you to achieve your goal:

- Discipline
- Patience
- Confidence
- Positive attitude
- Diligent practice

Discipline:

Developing Tai Chi discipline is very important in Tai Chi practice, although it is difficult to develop. It takes effort and mind power. You have to constantly remind yourself that you are a special person which means you should not compare yourself with other people who have excuses for not practicing regularly. Remember: Your hard work will pay off in the future and you are not wasting the time. Most people don't have this kind of discipline and have excuses for not practicing. They will take much longer to get results. The only way to be successful is with diligent practice and good discipline.

Patience:

Nothing comes easily and nothing comes overnight. Being frustrated can only get you down and make you feeling depressed. Tai Chi learning is like a natural healing journey and it takes time. There is no short cut, or quick way to learn Tai Chi. If you don't get it right this week, maybe it will be next week, or next month, or next year. It doesn't matter how long it takes. What we do care about is making it the right journey for everyone who chooses it. Many people think that learning Tai Chi form is all there is to Tai Chi study. To learn Tai Chi form is not that difficult. To learn Tai Chi skill which can make Tai Chi form correctly is difficult. It can take a very long time. The Tai Chi form is not important; it just gives you a tool to use. You can use this tool correctly or incorrectly. The correct way to use this tool is to pursue real Tai Chi skills. The incorrect way to use this tool is to show off. Showing off will only keep you away from being a good Tai Chi practitioner, or Tai Chi teacher. If you want to do it the correct way, you should be prepared for a long journey. If you want to see the beauty of a mountain view, you have to plan a trip and hike to the top, this can be a hard work. Many Tai Chi masters in China have studied for a lifetime and still practice regularly. In Chinese martial art, there is no belt rewarded. The reward is inside the practitioner. When its time for a real battle (tournament), you can see the true and real skills. Many people look for shortcuts to success and they don't understand there really is: there is no shortcut. Trying to find a shortcut causes people to be shallow, superficial, and unable to solve real problems. Only real skills, that come from long-term learning, practicing and training, will build the kind of strong character that can solve real problems. If you want quality, you need to be dedicated and patient.

Confidence:

You must be confident about yourself. No one is born with skills. You can do anything if you put your mind to it. Everyone has strengths and weaknesses, nobody is perfect. Everyone has different experiences. Some people learn Tai Chi quicker and some people learn other things quicker. However, everyone can learn if they choose to learn and they are determined to learn. Imagine you are going to college. You will graduate if you choose to graduate, or you will drop out if you make that choice. If you choose to use Ta Chi to enrich your life, stay healthy, create

a harmonious life, and to learn true human energy science, you will learn it very well. At the beginning, you might feel slow, but once you have learned the Tai Chi foundation and skill, your confidence will increase. The longer you practice, the more confidence you will have.

Positive attitude:

A positive attitude is important for everything. You will not succeed in what you do if you have a negative attitude. If you are negative in Tai Chi, you should not be practicing Tai Chi. You might choose to do some other physical activity or exercise, which can also give you benefits. With anything you want to learn, you should include a positive attitude. Sometimes you might have a negative experience, but this shouldn't give you a reason to be totally negative. It might be positive the next time. Things can change; your attitude can change too. I had a person tell me that she hated Tai Chi. I asked her why. She said the instructor who taught the class made her very uncomfortable. She could not learn from him, so she quit. After I explained what real Tai Chi is, and how to study Tai Chi, she decided to try again. Later, in fact she did extremely well. We need to understand that one Tai Chi instructor cannot represent the entire Tai Chi community.

Diligent practice:

Without diligent practice, you will not develop your Tai Chi skill, and you will not reach your goal. As in life, if you had to make a choice about seeking help from a doctor, you would, most likely choose an experienced doctor who has many years of practice, over one with less experience. If you need service from a company, would you choose a new company or well known company that has been providing quality service for many years? Remember, good skill comes from diligent practice. The practice of Tai Chi should be fun, not a chore. It is like a well designed game. If you think it is fun, you might practice regularly and if you think it is work, you might not. Try to think of it as a fun physical game, especially when doing it with others.

Tai Chi Mentality Requirements:

- * Full concentration
- * Aware of energy center
- * Relaxation
- * Non-competitive

Full concentration:

When you are ready to practice Tai Chi Chuan, full concentration is required. Leave everything behind, detach from all things, and cherish your precious time with Tai Chi. If your mind starts to wander, you should start again, to focus. Otherwise, you will not have good results from your practice. We call Tai Chi a type of "moving meditation" because it involves full concentration and is sometimes referred to as "mind cleansing."

Find Your Energy Center:

Once you have full concentration, you can easily find your energy center and then other parts of the body will just follow your energy center. If you cannot find your center, you will not be able to practice Tai Chi or well. The energy center is in the lower abdomen, we call it Dan Tian. It is adjacent to your hips. Therefore, it is important to know how to move your hips properly. You need to know how to use your hips to guide the other parts of the body. Be aware, you may move the hips the wrong way misleading the other parts of the body. If this happens, you will feel uncomfortable or tight, you need to ask your instructor to correct this. If this still happens, you can ask your instructor to find out from the master who trained your instructor. Asking questions is an important part of learning. Once you find your center, you then need to keep your body stable no matter how you move.

Relaxation:

We have been talking about relaxation so much, because it is very important. It needs to be addressed many times because we often become tense for many different reasons. When I was teaching beginner class, I told students that all I want from them is the relaxation, no matter what. Your body and mind must be relaxed with no tension in any part of your body. Tai Chi is a simple, yet sophisticated relaxation exercise that encourages the muscles to let go of tension, the mind to let go of worry, and the heart to let go of anger. This will allow energy in the body to flow smoothly and reduce various health problems. You should not feel bad if you can not do the movements correctly at first, or if you are corrected several times. Just relax and do your best and not let any tension interfere with your practice. It really doesn't matter if you get it sooner or later. The only thing that matters is that you do not become stressed during your practice, even if you are corrected by instructor many times. Everyone gets corrected many times during Tai Chi training. It is alright if you are not so accurate with movements as long as your mind is relaxed. This is how we learn. If you feel tight in any part of the body, you need to stop and start again with complete relaxation. Don't be afraid to stop and start again.

Non-competitive:

There is no competition in Tai Chi practice. There is no need for you to compare your skill to other people's. Tai Chi is for health maintenance, disease prevention, as well as to build inner peace, to delay aging, and for the healing of illness. Don't worry if you see someone's coordination is better than yours. You only compete with yourself to improve day to day, not with other people. There are no belts in Tai Chi practice. The real belt is measured by how you have improved your overall wellbeing over time; how you have improved in relaxation, coordination, and in general physical and mental health.



14. Tai Chi Practice (16 Steps, healing form Tai Chi)

Warm-up exercise:

The warm up and cool down are important in Tai Chi practice. Appropriate warm up and cool down can help you avoid any injuries. Even though Tai Chi is a safe workout, it still can cause chronic injuries if not practice correct. For warm up, you can choose many different ways according to your interests. If you enjoy walking, you can walk 15 to 20 minutes before practice Tai Chi; if you like jogging, aerobics, jumping, or other fast paced workout, you can use them for a warm-up exercise. If you prefer not to go outside, you can use these warm up exercises described in this book before your Tai Chi practice. If you choose indoor warm up exercise, you should play some soft music for background. Not only the Beautiful music gives you a sense of peace, but the rhythm helps you to do exercise. In general, you need to spend 10 to 15 minutes for warm up exercise.

1. Turning waist (1-1)
2. Neck movement (1-2)
3. Shoulder movement (1-3)
4. Shoulder rotation (1-4a), (1-4b)
5. Arm pressing (1-5)
6. Wrists rotation (1-6)
7. Wrist and elbow rotation (1-7)
8. Hip rotation (1-8)
9. Knee rotation (1-9)
10. Ankle rotation (1-10)
11. Upper body rotation (1-11a, 1-11b, 1-11c)
12. Holding sky touch earth (1-12a, 1-12b)
13. Bend backward (1-13)
14. Side lunge (1-14)
15. Lunge (1-15)
16. Reach up (1-16)
17. Stretching quadriceps (1-17)
18. Stretching hamstring (1-18)
19. Round sitting (1-19)
20. "S" sitting (1-20)
21. Floor stretching (1-21)
22. Twist leg squatting (1-22)
23. Horse stance (1-23a, 1-23b)
24. Empty stance (1-24)



Fig 1 - 1



Fig 1 - 2



Fig 1 - 3



Fig. 1 - 4a



Fig 1 - 4b



Fig 1 - 5



Fig 1 - 6



Fig 1 - 7



Fig 1 - 8



Fig 1 - 9



Fig 1 - 10



Fig 1 - 11



Fig 1 - 11b



Fig 1 - 11c



Fig 1 - 12a



Fig 1 - 12b



Fig 1 - 13



Fig 1 - 14



Fig 1 - 15



Fig 1 - 16



Fig 1 - 17



Fig 1 - 18



Fig 1 - 19



Fig 1 - 20



Fig. 1 - 21



Fig. 1 - 22



Fig. 1 - 23a



Fig. 1 - 23b



Fig. 1 - 24

Name of the Steps

1. Parting wild horse, empower Dan Tian.
2. Step forward brush knee.
3. Step back open energy channels.
4. Circle hands punch forward.
5. Circle hands squat, left fist upward.
6. Turn body and lead energy, push to right.
7. Circle hands squat, right fist upward.
8. Turn body and lead energy, push to left.
9. Circle Yin Yang, side fly and elbow strike to right.
10. Circle Yin Yang, side fly and elbow strike to left.
11. Fair lady move the shuttle.
12. Left kick, right punch.
13. Elbow strike back
14. Circle arm forward, punch up.
15. Circle arms empower Dan Tian.
16. Tai Chi ending.

Step By Step Learning:

Before you start to practice, you need to understand the direction in the Chinese way of practice. There are eight directions in Tai Chi practice: South, Southwest, West, Northwest, North, Northeast, East, and Southeast. These correspond to a clock at 6:00, 7:30, 9:00, 10:30, 12:00, 1:30, 3:00, and 4:30. Make believe you are facing south, your right hand is toward west, your left hand is toward east, and your back is towards north. This way you will understand when I talk about east, west, northeast, northwest, etc. The real practice direction you are facing can be whatever direction you feel comfortable, if you don't know which direction is south. Just make believe you are facing south. For details on precautions for Tai Chi and Qi Gong practice, reference my first book "Natural Healing with Qi Gong", published by YMAA, Boston.

1. Tai Chi preparation, parting wild horse empowers Dan Tian.

Put your feet together, relax your shoulders and your body, and breathe through the body: when you inhale, you visualize the air coming into your body through Bai Hui point (the acupuncture point that is on the top center of your head). When you exhale, the air goes through your whole body, coming out through Yong Quan point (the acupuncture point on the bottom of your feet). You then make a nice Qi connection between heaven and earth. This also helps you to focus (Fig 2-1).

Take a deep breath, exhale and sink your body. Sink the Qi (energy) to the Dan Tian area that is located in your lower abdomen. Step to the left. Turn the body to left 45 degrees, raise your arms from the left 45 degrees up to shoulder level (Fig 2-2), shifting your weight to the right with your arms following to the right, then shifting your weight to the left bringing the right hand under left hand, palm facing up just like you are holding a ball on the left side, and bring the right foot next to the left foot with no weight (Fig 2-3). Step to the right and move your weight to right, the right hand follows the weight out to the right, the left hand gentle press down next to your left hip (Fig 2-4). Shifting your weight to the left, bring the right hand to front of the body, inhale, press down exhale (Fig 2-5, Fig 2-6) as you shift weight to right, turn both palms up along side of the body raise arms up over your head, inhale; then press down in the front of your body, exhale. Simultaneously bring the left foot closer to the right foot at shoulder width. (Fig 2-7, Fig 2-8, Fig 2-9)

Opposite practice: Turn your body to the right 45 degrees, raise your arms from the right 45 degrees up to should level (Fig 2-10), shifting weight to the left with arms following to the left, then shifting weight to the right bringing the left hand down (under right hand), palm facing up just like you are holding a ball on the right side, bring the left foot next to the right foot with no weight (Fig 2-11). Step to the left and shift your weight to the left, the left hand follows the weight out to the left, the right hand gently presses down next to your right hip (Fig 2-12). Shifting your weight to the right, bring the left hand to front of the body, inhale, then press down exhale (Fig 2-13, Fig 2-14) as you shift weight to left, and turn both palms up and raise both arms up over your head from side of your body, then circle down in the front of your body (press down). Simultaneously bring the right foot closer to the left foot at shoulder width (Fig 2-15, Fig 2-16, Fig 2-17).



Fig 2 - 1



Fig 2 - 2



Fig 2 - 3



Fig 2 - 4



Fig 2 - 5



Fig 2 - 6



Fig 2 - 7



Fig 2 - 8



Fig 2 - 9



Fig 2 - 10



Fig 2 - 11



Fig 2 - 12



Fig. 2 - 13



Fig. 2 - 14



Fig. 2 - 15



Fig. 2 - 16



Fig. 2 - 17

2. Step forward brush knee

Turn your body to the right, your hands follow your body in a circle motion at hip level, the right hand circles clockwise circle to palm facing up, the right foot steps to the front 45 degrees, put weight on the right foot, move the right hand out to the south-west (right front) 45 degrees. Your left hand stays in front of your chest (Fig 2-18). Continue to shift your weight to the right foot and bring the left foot close to the right foot, while you turn your body to the right and your right hand follows the body to the right (point at north-west) (Fig 2-19). The left foot steps forward, put weight on the left foot, push the right hand forward, the left hand brushes across your body ending next to the left hip, most of your weight is on the left (Fig 2-20). Shifting your weight back then forward, outward circle your left hand from palm down to palm up then moves towards the south-east direction (left front) as you put your weight on the left foot, the right hand in the front at chest level (Fig 2-21); continue shifting your weight to the left foot, bring the right foot close to the left foot, your left arm swings to left side as you turn your body to the left (Fig 2-22); push the left hand forward as right foot steps forward, the right hand brushes across your body ending next to the right hip (brush knee), most of your weight is on the right foot (Fig 2-23).



Fig 2 - 18



Fig. 2 - 19



Fig. 2 - 20



Fig. 2 - 21



Fig. 2 - 22



Fig. 2 - 23

3. Step back, open energy channels.

Shifting your weight on the left leg, let your hands and arms relax down in front of you, then open by lifting your arms up from the side of the body, palms facing up, body facing south east, you feel the channels of the whole body are all opened (Fig 2-24). Your hands continue to rise up as you bring the right foot in (next to the left foot) either with or without touching the floor (Fig 2-25); the right foot steps back 45 degrees (north-west), hands press down in the front of your body (Fig 2-26), and you put your weight on the right leg, simultaneously open arm (you are facing south west) (Fig 2-27). Your hands are on the side of your body with palms facing up (you are facing southwest), and bring the left foot in closer to the right foot (Fig 2-28), then step back as you press down in the front of your body (Fig 2-29); As you shift your weight to the left, you continue to move your hands to the side of your body, your hands naturally turn palms facing up (Ref. Fig 2-24). Continue to circle your arms and hands up, bring the right foot close to the left foot (Ref. Fig 2-25), step back 45 degrees hands press down in front of your body (Ref. Fig 2-26). As you shift your weight to right, you continue to move your hands to the side of your body, and your hands naturally turn palms facing up. Now your arms are open and most of your weight is on the right (Ref. Fig 2-27).



Fig 2 - 24



Fig. 2 - 25



Fig. 2 - 26



Fig. 2 - 27



Fig 2 - 28



Fig 2 - 29

4. Circle Hands Punch forward.

Turn the left palm down and move the left arm down, then change into a fist in the front of your lower abdomen, bring the left foot close to the right foot (Fig 2-30); the left foot steps forward with weight on, the left fist punches forward, the right hand is in the front of your chest (Fig 2-31). Sit back, move the right hand above the left forearm and circle both arms with the right hand up and the left arm circling down (Fig 2-32, Fig 2-33). Continue to circle until the right hand changes into a fist in the front of your lower abdomen while you bring the right foot close to the left foot (Fig 2-34, Fig 2-35); the right foot steps forward with weight on, and the right fist punches forward and the left hand is in the front of your chest (Fig 2-36).



Fig 2 - 30



Fig. 2 - 31



Fig. 2 - 32



Fig. 2 - 33



Fig 2 - 34



Fig 2 - 35



Fig. 2 - 36

5. Circle hands squat, left fist upward.

Continue to put weight on the right foot, move the left hand above the right forearm starting to circle up while the right arm circles down, the left foot crosses behind the right foot (Fig 2-37). Slowly lower your body while continuing to circle your hands with the left hand under the right hand and the left hand changing into a fist in the front of your lower abdomen (Fig 2-38, 2-39), then move the left fist to the upper while you squat down and the right hand is next to the right hip (Fig 2-40).



Fig 2 - 37



Fig. 2 - 38



Fig. 2 - 39



Fig. 2 - 40

6. Turn body and lead energy, push to right (west)

Slowly raise your body (Fig 2-41), turn left and facing back (Fig 2-42a, 2-42b), and continue to turn your body with arms on side of the body, weight on right foot (Fig 2-43), the left foot steps back (east) (Fig 2-44), your hands follow your body to the left, place the right hand over the left wrist (Fig 2-45), lifting up from the left side of your body to your chest level, turn your body to the right (west) (Fig 2-46), then press to the right (Fig 2-47a), separate your hands with palms down (Fig 2-47b) and follow the weight shifting on to the left leg (Fig 2-48), then push to the right (west) (Fig 2-49).



Fig 2 - 41



Fig. 2 - 42a



Fig. 2 - 42b



Fig. 2 - 43



Fig 2 - 44



Fig 2 - 45



Fig 2 - 46



Fig 2 - 47a



Fig 2 - 47b



Fig 2 - 48



Fig 2 - 49

7. Circle hands squat, right fist upward.

Shift your weight to the left with both hands following (with wrists naturally turning with palms facing out) (Fig 2-50) at chest level shift your weight to the right with both hands following (wrists naturally turning with palm facing out) (Fig 2-51). Circle hands with the right hand above the left hand (Fig 2-52), up and down separate hands, the right foot crosses behind the left foot (Fig 2-53), slowly lower your body as you continue to circle your arms (Fig 2-54) until the right hand is under the left hand, then change the right hand into a fist in the front of your lower abdomen (Fig 2-55), slowly lowering your body as you slowly move the right fist to the upper right and move the left hand palm down next to your hip while you squat down (Fig 2-56). (Opposite to step 5.)



Fig 2 - 50



Fig 2 - 51



Fig 2 - 52



Fig 2 - 53



Fig 2 - 54



Fig 2 - 55



Fig 2 - 56

8. Turn body and lead energy, push to left (east)

Slowly raise your body, turn your body to the right facing back (Fig 2-57a, 2-57b). Continue to turn your body both arms on side of your body, weight on left foot (Fig 2-58). The right foot steps back (west) (Fig 2-59), your hands follow your body to the right, place the left hand over the right wrist (Fig 2-60), lifting up from the right side of your body at your chest level, turn your body to the left (east) (Fig 2-61), then press to the left (Fig 2-62a), separate your hands palms down (Fig 2-62b) and follow the weight shifting back on the right leg (Fig 2-63), then push to the left (east) (Fig 2-64). (Opposite to step 6.)



Fig 2 - 57a



Fig 2 - 57b



Fig 2 - 58



Fig 2 - 59



Fig. 2 - 60



Fig. 2 - 61



Fig. 2 - 62a



Fig. 2 - 62b



Fig. 2 - 63



Fig. 2 - 64

9. Circle Yin Yang, side fly and elbow strike to right.

Shift your weight to the right as you move your right hand to the right (open arm frame) (Fig 2-65), start to circle with the right hand circle down and the left hand circle up (close arm frame) (Fig 2-66), continue another circle (Fig 2-67), as you bring the right arm down and the left arm up (closed arm frame), you bring the right foot close to your left foot (Fig 2-68), then the right foot takes a big step to the right as you move both arms to the side (big open arm frame) (Fig 2-69), slightly higher with the right arm. As you shifting weight to left then to right, the right hand circles down then change into a fist, left hand push right fist to right as you shift your weight to the right (Fig 2-70, 2-71). This is called elbow strike to the right.



Fig 2 - 65



Fig. 2 - 66



Fig. 2 - 67



Fig 2 - 68



Fig 2 - 69



Fig 2 - 70



Fig 2 - 71

10. Circle Yin Yang, side fly and elbow strike to left.

Detach your hands place left hand under right hand (Fig 2-72), start to circle your arms in the opposite direction: shift your weight to the left as you circle left hand up to the left (open arm frame) (Fig 2-73), left hand circle down (close arm frame) (Ref. Fig 2-72), continue another circle, as you bring the left arm down and the right arm up (closed arm frame), you bring the left foot close to your right foot (Fig 2-74), then the left foot takes a big step to the left as you move both arms to the side (big open arm frame) (Fig 2-75), slightly higher with left arm. As you shifting weight to right then to left, the left hand circles down then change into a fist, right hand push left fist to left as you shift your weight to the left (Fig 2-76, 2-77). This is called elbow strike to the left.



Fig 2 - 72



Fig 2 - 73



Fig. 2 - 74



Fig 2 - 75



Fig. 2 - 76



Fig. 2 - 77

11. Fair lady move the shuttle (in three direction).

Shifting your weight to the right as you circle the hands in the front of the torso (Fig 2-78), then shifting weight to the left then bring right foot close to left foot as you bring hands on left side body (Fig 2-79); step towards the NW (north west) direction (back, right side), and push the left hand to NW while the right hand on the upper right (block) (Fig 2-80).

Shifting weight back on the left, your arms in the front of the body with right hand above left (Fig 2-81), shifting weight to right, bring the left foot close to the right foot as you bring hands on right side body (Fig 2-82), step towards the SW (south west) direction (front, right side) and push the right hand to SW while the left hand on upper left (block) (Fig 2-83).

Shift weight back on right, your arms in the front of the body with left hand above right hand (Fig 2-84), shifting weight to left, bring the right foot close to the left foot as you bring hands on left side body (Fig 2-85), step towards the NE (north east) direction (back, left side) and push the left hand to NE direction while the right hand on right front (block) (Fig 2-86).



Fig. 2 - 78



Fig. 2 - 79



Fig. 2 - 80



Fig. 2 - 81



Fig. 2 - 82



Fig. 2 - 83



Fig. 2 - 84



Fig. 2 - 85



Fig. 2 - 86

12. Left kick, right punch.

Sit back (weight on left) and turn your body to the right, open your arms (Fig 2-87); circle the arms to side then downward, put weight on the right foot as you cross your forearms in the front of your body and lift left foot (Fig 2-88); kick your left foot while you hit back of the left foot with your left hand (Fig 2-89). The left foot steps down and right foot steps to right as you move hands down in front of your body (Fig 2-90); then open arms to the side (Fig 2-91), shift your weight to the right with the left hand on guard and the right fist palm up on the right waist (Fig 2-92). The right hand makes a quick punch to the front as your weight shifts to the left (Fig 2-93).



Fig 2 - 87



Fig 2 - 88



Fig 2 - 89



Fig 2 - 90



Fig 2 - 91



Fig 2 - 92



Fig 2 - 93

13. Elbow strike back.

Bring your right foot close to the left foot as you bring the right hand down and the left up side of the body (Fig 2-94), the right hand changes to a fist at the lower abdomen level right foot step back (north-west direction) (Fig 2-95), shifting weight on to right foot moves right hand up from the front of your body until the right elbow strikes upward and backward. Your left hand is in front of your left hip (Fig 2-96).

Bring left foot close to the right foot, the right fist relaxes, the right arm moves down in the front of the body, the left hand changes to a fist at the lower abdomen level (Fig 2-97), step back with left foot (north-east direction), shift weight on to left foot moves left hand up from the front of your body until the left elbow strikes upward and backward. Your right hand is in front of your right hip (Fig 2-98).



Fig. 2 - 94



Fig. 2 - 95



Fig. 2 - 96



Fig. 2 - 97



Fig. 2 - 98

14. Circle arm forward and punch up.

Shift your weight forward (onto the right foot) as your left fist punches down along the left side of your body and the right hand moves up in front of your body (Fig 2-99); the left foot steps forward as your left fist punches upward in the front of the body and the right hand presses down along left side of the body (Fig 2-100a), (Fig 2-100b).



Fig. 2 - 99



Fig. 2 - 100a



Fig. 2 - 100b

15. Circle arms empower Dan Tian.

Bring the left foot back close to the right foot as you press the left hand down along the left side of your body, the right foot steps to the right and the right hand starts to circle toward the lower abdomen (Fig 2-101a), (Fig 2-101b); shift your weight to the right and circle the left hand to right toward the lower abdomen (Fig 2-102a), (Fig 2-102b), shift your weight to the left while circling the right hand toward the lower abdomen (Fig 2-101a), (Fig 2-101b); shift your weight to the right circling the left hand toward the lower abdomen (Fig 2-102a), (Fig 2-102b). Bring the right foot slightly forward closer to the center as you place right hand in the front of the chest, bring left foot next to right foot with shoulder-width apart from right foot and toes point front, at same time putting the left hand cross to right hand in the front of your chest (Fig 2-103a), (Fig 2-103b). Your weight is centered and balanced, your mind is calm and peaceful, and your body and mind is harmonized.



Fig. 2 - 101a



Fig. 2 - 101b



Fig. 2 - 102a



Fig. 2 - 102b



Fig. 2 - 103a



Fig. 2 - 103b

16. Tai Chi ending.

Take a deep breath and turn your palms down (Fig 2-104a), (Fig 2-104b); relax the shoulders sink both elbows, and relax the hands to sides of your body and bring left foot next to right foot. (Fig 2-105).



Fig. 2 - 104a



Fig. 2 - 104b



Fig. 2 - 105

Cooling Down:

After practice, you should spend about 5 minutes to cool down. As we mentioned before, both warm up and cool down are important to avoid injuries.

1. Stretch quadriceps
2. Stretch hamstring
3. Bend forward
4. Bend backward
5. Bend to the side
6. Floor: open leg apart
7. Floor: open leg apart (lean body forward)
8. Floor: Bend one leg, lean over extended leg
9. Floor: half spinal twist
10. Floor: foot to foot
11. Floor: kneel and sit back, relax and breathe deeply



Fig. 3 - 1



Fig. 3 - 2



Fig. 3 - 3



Fig. 3 - 4



Fig. 3 - 5



Fig. 3 - 6



Fig. 3 - 7



Fig 3 - 8



Fig 3 - 9



Fig 3 - 10



Fig 3 - 11

15. Planning your Healing Journey

Making up your mind is the first step. Remember, you need to push yourself, you must be a winner in this healing race that means you have to compete with yourself, looking toward the future and not getting stuck in the to past. You are now ready to face the challenge of practice. People tend to have excuses for things such as they don't want to practice when they feel weak and they give up when they feel uncoordinated. But if you are determined, you can just do it without hesitation. You have nothing to lose. The amount of effort you put into your practice will give rewards in the future. If you feel uncoordinated with some of the movements, or you cannot get it right away, you should continue to practice many times until you feel good. You want to prove that you can do it. This is called accepting a challenge in a positive way, or "positive addiction". When you reach your goal, you will feel like you are a winner.

Ten-week plan to help you to start your journey

I made this chart for you as a convenient home work. You may use this chart to help you to keep track of your practice and other activities. So, if things do not improve as well as expected, you can look back at this chart to see where the problem might be. For severe depression, you need to consult with your doctor for additional help. Those with severe depression may not respond well to this plan. The scale from 1 to 10 means you did each activity to the best of your ability. A #1 on the scale means you made only minimum effort and #10 is that you did the best. Sometime it is difficult to decide the number. But that is not big deal; just roughly write down whatever you feel is right. If you miss a week from being too busy, being on vacation, or being involved in some other things that interfere with your regular schedule, that is not big deal; just add another week to the chart. Remember, as long as your mind is there, your intention will lead you to this path.

Week # _____

Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Stress level										
Sleeping										
Follow the plan										
Tai Chi Practice										
Other activities										
Diet										
Study of Dao										
Your Feeling										

Week one

Start slow and easy.

1. Set up your practice time, either morning or evening, whichever you prefer. Once you have chosen a time for practice, you need to keep this time and not change it, unless you are really unable to practice. Try to practice 15 minutes a day.
2. Use warm-up exercises for 10 to 15 minutes. You can walk or jog to warm up, or you can do Yoga to warm up, whatever you like. Practice Step 1, Tai Chi preparation, parting wild horse. This movement empowers the Dan Tian (energy center). Practice it over and over again, until you feel comfortable. Make sure you have the music (Journey to East); you can order it from our school.
(call 508-429-3895 or on-line at www.taichihealing.com).
3. Start to learn to cook some vegetarian or partial vegetarian meals.

Week Two

Gradually add more.

1. This week you will feel a little better than before. At least two times, you should try to cook a very healthy and delicious meal to reward yourself for having accomplished the first week's practice. Your healthy meal will have delicious vegetable, little meat with spice (lift your spirit and circulation), little flavored rice or noodle, and fruit after (as your desert).
2. Walk outside at least one time for 4 or 5 miles.
3. Practice Step 1.

4. Add Steps 2 and 3.

Week Three

You are happier. Let's celebrate.

1. This week you will feel a little better in both knowing the form and in your self-confidence. You are going to invite one good friend and cook a healthy and delicious dinner. Preparing delicious food, which you will enjoy so much, is a good learning and good practicing experience. The food for this week will include fish with spice, different vegetables (from last week), some corn and cake for desert (not cheese cake). You are not only gaining from the healthy and delicious meal, but also enjoying the social setting with your friend(s), and so you start to feel happy.
2. Practice Steps 1, 2, and 3, over and over, until you feel the flow of the energy.
3. Add Step 4.
4. Walking 30 minutes a day.

Week Four

You are an achiever. Let's continue the journey.

1. Ask one or two friends to go out with you and toast (do not overeat).
2. Continue to practice the Steps you have learned.
3. You are going to challenge yourself by adding Step 5. This is a harder movement than before, but you can do it.
4. Get a copy of the "Dao Te Jing" (Tao Te Ching in English translation). Start to read it at bedtime, not seriously but just for fun and curiosity.
5. Spend a full day hiking in the beautiful mountains with a good friend or two. Hiking not only gives good physical workout and enables you to breath fresh air, but also nurtures you with the natural beauty and energy. The beauty of the nature embraces you and will leave you good memories.



Week Five

You feel good, but need more fresh air.

1. Practice outdoors as much as you can.
2. Add Step 6.
3. Set up a walking program for yourself, 30 minutes a day. Avoid roads with heavy traffic and look for a quiet place to walk.
4. Find another healthy recipe. Go to the store to get the ingredients, then cook and enjoy the meal. This time use your imagination and experience you had before, create something you never had before. Experiment cooking is part of healthy living.
5. Continue to read the “Dao Te Jing”, but more serious than before.

Week Six

You are moving in the right direction and you need to continue.

1. Find a place where there is water: a lake, a pond, the ocean, etc. Practice next to the water to feel the difference in the energy. The energy from nature blends into your energy that nurtures you.
2. Invite two family members to come for a dinner that you are going to make. Share this feeling with them and invite them to practice with you if they willing to. If no, it is OK, you can just show them what you have learned. Be sure to use music.
3. Practice what you have learned.
4. Add Steps 7 and 8; these steps are the opposite of Steps 5 and 6.
5. Continue your walking, 30 minutes a day.

Week Seven

You need to reward yourself this week. Go shopping to find a pair of nice practice shoes and a shirt that indicates anything related to “energy” (or contact our school: New England School of Tai Chi, our T shirt “The Balance of the Nature” is the most popular shirt).

1. Practice outdoors as much as you can, unless the weather prohibits it.
2. Continue to practice Steps 5, 6, 7, and 8. Repeat this group of steps many times.
3. Start to challenge yourself by learning two new movements: Steps 9 and 10.
4. Challenge yourself and practice at a beach with friends, if weather permits.

Week Eight

Did you practice at the beach last week? If not, you can do it this week just to see how practicing at a beach is different from practicing in other places.

1. This week learn Steps 11 and 12.
2. Start to pay attention to how you are breathing while you are practicing the form. A movement accompanies each breath in and each breath out. This can be challenging but also very powerful. Try to practice as much as you can to get the breathing right.
3. Invite one of your good friends to go a movie. Don’t be afraid of asking a friend. The worst that can happen is your friend says “no.” You need to understand the “No” is OK. That is no big deal, just ask another friend. This is good practice for accepting “No.”
4. Don’t forget you still need to walk. This week, walk as much as you can, weather permitting.

Week Nine

You are almost there, but it does not mean you are done with your journey. It means you are beginning to another new journey. It is a good journey towards better health.

1. Continue to practice Steps 1 through 12.
2. Learn Steps 13 and 14.
3. Spend time to read this whole book again, especially Part II.
4. Start to write down your thoughts about these past weeks of practicing and learning. What have you learned and enjoyed? What has been challenging?
5. Practice letting go of whatever has bothered you in the past. Letting go is part of healing. Sometimes you might need to pinch yourself to remember to letting go.

Week Ten

It is the big completion of the first part of your journey! Remember, this is not an ending, but instead it is the beginning of your real journey: a good healthy journey! You are more open minded and more accepting, have more energy, and are more at peace. You should make plans for a party by inviting your family and friends to a celebration. You don't have to tell them what it is for, unless you want to. You can just tell them that you learned a new recipe or no reason at all, its just for fun. Not everything needs to have a reason. People can have fun at any time.

1. Continue practicing and learning this form. Practice Steps 1 through 14. Learn the two steps of the form, Steps 15 and 16.
2. Plan for your party.
3. Write down your thoughts about the past ten weeks of practice.
4. Continue to study Daoist philosophy.
5. Hike in the mountains once a month.
6. Walk 45 minutes a day.
7. Make a goal for yourself and a plan to reach this goal.
8. Share this form with others, teach them for free. Your reward is to get group energy.

Your success

When you complete this journey, you are actually step on a path, a healing path, a happy path, a path that will lead you to a real good life. When you are facing a real good life, you will be able to deal all kind things including positives and negatives. You are able to let negativities go by quick. Tai Chi teaches us much more than just body movements: harmony, balanced emotions, clear mind, etc. Tai Chi is an important practice to keep the mind healthy. But if the negative thoughts keep creeping in on you and you cannot change, you need to go visit a good Chinese doctor to get a “Tune up” treatment to unblock your energy. You will find this is very helpful.

In our modern fast paced society, we need a slow and balanced exercise to help regulate our life. If we are busy all the time and have no breaks or rest, our body will be over-used, and just like an over-used car it will break down sooner. When our body chemicals such as adrenalin and noradrenalin are at a high level for a long time, our heart can be over stimulated, so as to the blood vessel. We are prone to heart disease, high blood pressure, neurological disease, diabetes, and accelerate aging. We will also have many other problems, such as high cholesterol, energy problems, low immune function, cancer, anxiety, depression and many other illnesses. A dog runs fast and its life span is around 18 years. The turtle moves slow and its life span is around 150 to 1000 years, depending on its species. The average human lifespan is about 65 years and it can be longer and better (happier) if you know how to balance your life. A study from Institute of Traditional Medicine, National Yang-Ming University School of Medicine, Taipei, TAIWAN, showed the effects of Tai Chi practice on Autonomic Nervous Modulation in older people. The study showed the enhanced vagal modulation tilt and the sympatho-vagal balance toward decreased sympathetic modulation in older people. This means that the heart rate, arterial blood pressure and pulse all decreased in those studied and the results are beneficial to everyone's health and longevity.

Tai Chi journey is not an easy journey. It takes a very special person to go through this journey and continue it, as a lifestyle. But it will become very meaningful to your life. Whatever you would have achieved from Tai Chi practice, please share it with your doctor or your therapist, your friends, your family, and other people with or without depression. You may be surprised that people might follow your steps. The Tai Chi journey might be a long journey, even a lifetime, but it will all be worthwhile. We cannot live forever, but we certainly can live a quality life, a happy life, and an enjoyable life. We have to put in some effort to make this happen. If you want your life to bloom like beautiful flower, you must start to plant the seed, then water, fertilize, and weed it. You might be surprised by what you can do to change your life: surrounded by beautiful flowers.

Have a wonderful healing and happy journey!

April, 2005 finished first draft
October, 2006 completed

Dr. Aihan Kun
Master of Tai Chi and Qi Gong

Tai Chi for Depression

(Book description)

Depression is a major health hazard affecting many people's lives in the world. In the United States, one in every five people, or about 54 million Americans, experience some type of mental disorder each year. Some can control depression with medication and others may continue to have a poor quality of life, even with medication. Most research focuses on medication as a remedy. Tai Chi and Qi Gong involve a natural energy workout that can help to relieve and heal depression. Aihan Kuhn, a Chinese physician trained in mainland China, has been practicing natural medicine in the United States since 1992, and has had excellent success healing illness with natural medicine and Chinese exercise. Depression is one of many diseases which she has treated. After years of training in Tai Chi and Qi Gong with well know masters in China, observing the specific response from students and patients, and with her vast knowledge of Chinese medicine, natural healing methods and Daoist philosophy, Dr. Kuhn designed this specific form of Tai Chi to help people prevent or recover from depression. This unique form of Tai Chi combines Chen style Tai Chi and Yang style Tai Chi, Qi Gong, Martial arts and meditation, creating a high quality practice. Many students say that this is the most enjoyable and relaxing form of Tai Chi that they have ever practiced.

The characteristics of this form are: it is short, easy to learn, easy to remember and easy to practice. The obvious circular movements create a better energy flow in the body. The martial art character empowers the mind, strengthens the body, improves stamina, and increases self-esteem. Symmetrical movements help balance both sides of the brain to harmonize brain activity. The sophisticated movements stimulate brain function and encouraging the student to learn. Slow and balanced movements calm the brain chemicals, increase serotonin levels, and become a "natural tranquilizer." Moderate amounts of physical movement (exercise) enhance the energy flow and daily energy levels. Localized steps require little space to practice and coordinated, soothing, and open (big frame) movements improve overall coordination. It helps people suffering from all kinds of depression. The theory is that the specially choreographed movements following special music work to harmonize the bio chemicals in the brain that makes one feel calm, powerful, and in control of emotions. Tai Chi can help relieve the stresses in life, improve daily energy levels and enhance immune function and mental clarity.

In this book, Dr. Kuhn teaches us to incorporate "Taoist" philosophy in our life, to stay focused, balanced and detached from old trauma or stress. She gives many self-healing tips to relieve stress and prevent depression in our daily life. She examines depression in both Western and Chinese medicine in order to provide a clear picture of why and how it occurs and how it can be prevented. Learning Tai Chi is not just learning the exercise movements, it's about learning to balance your life.

The clearly stated step-by-step instructions in this book help you practice at home along with the videotape. For video information, please contact Chinese Medicine for Health, Inc. New England School of Tai Chi, 1564A Washington St., Holliston, MA 01746. (508) 429-3895
www.taichihealing.com

Other Books from Dr. Aihan Kuhn

Natural Healing with Qi Gong, published from YMAA
Simple Chinese Medicine, published from YMAA
True Brain Fitness, published by Iuniverse
Qi Gong for Travelers, published by Create Space
Twelve Minute Qi Gong for Computer users, sold in CMH
Tai Chi Student Hand Book, sold in CMH
Wheel Chair Tai Chi Qi Gong, sold in CMH
Weight Loss the Natural Way, sold in CMH

DVDs from Dr. Aihan Kuhn

Tai Chi Basics (for beginners),
Tai Chi Chuan, Yang Style 24 Steps (for beginners)
Tai Chi Chuan, Combined Style 42 Steps (for intermediate),
Tai Chi Chuan, Chen Style (24 Steps)
Tai Chi 16 Steps (for healing)
Tai Chi for Kids, martial form for youth and adults, (VHS)
Tai Chi Sword, 42 Steps (for all level), (VHS)
Therapeutic Qi Gong,
Meridian Qi Gong,
Circle Energy Qi Gong
Twelve Minutes Qi Gong for Computer Users
Qi Gong for Arthritis (DVD)
Qi Gong for Cancer Healing (DVD)
Qi Gong for Regulating Nervous System
Daily Exercise for Energy Boost and Immune Function (Set of 2 DVD)



Introducing the Author

Dr. Aihan Kuhn is a 1982 graduate of Hunan Medical University in Chang Sha, China. She has had training in both conventional Western medicine and traditional Chinese Medicine. For six years prior to coming to the United States in 1989, Dr Kuhn practiced medicine in hospitals in China as an OB-GYN. She has always been interested in nature and natural cures for disease since she was a child. She started to learn sword exercise at the age of ten, and started to study Qi Gong, Tai Chi, and other oriental exercises in 1978. She

began teaching in China in 1984 and has been teaching in the United States since 1992.

Dr. Kuhn continues her study of Tai Chi and Qi Gong in China every year, being mentored by well known Tai chi and Qi Gong grand masters, such as Master Feng Zhi Qiang, a famous grand master of Chen style Tai Chi Chuan, and Duan Zhi Liang, a famous Qi Gong grand master and doctor of traditional Chinese medicine. Another of Dr Kuhn's mentors is Li De Yin, one of the best know martial art professors in China, a former Chairman of the Chinese Martial Art Committee, who also participated in the choreographing of the national form of Tai Chi. By continuing to study and explore, Dr. Kuhn has maintained a high level of quality in her teaching and has become more effective in her patient care with Chinese natural healing. Dr. Kuhn has provided many on site workshops, seminars, as well as CEU programs for nurses and physical therapists at various locations. She is a unique "Natural Psychologist" who searches for wisdom from nature and applies it to daily life. She has a reputation as being "the best teacher and instructor", "an excellent speaker and lecturer", "a wonderful healer", and "an amazing doctor, [which is very hard to find]".

Dr. Kuhn has been featured on numerous occasions on TV programs, and numerous newspaper articles.

Dr. Kuhn is the director and owner of Chinese Medicine for Health and the President and founder of the Tai Chi & Qi Gong Healing Institute (TQHI), a non-profit organization promoting natural energy healing.

"By reading Dr. Kuhn's book, I felt like I have a new life, a very positive future." ----Mary

"Dr. Kuhn has vast knowledge of natural healing; I was lucky to find her". ----Joanne

I loved your book. It was very well presented and organized and I found the tables to be very helpful. --Kathy

I never knew there were so many forms of depression. The discussion of Tai Chi for treatment was very interesting. --Ann



(Dr. Kuhn and Grand Master Zhu Tian Cai, who is from Chen Village in China)