

## Tai Chi     What is it in 2016 – Interview with 90.1 FM February

Tai Chi is an Ancient Martial Art originally from China, only relatively recently in the West. We start by learning gentle movements, simple and easy – until our mind tries to make it more complex! Tai Chi gives us ways to balance, breathe gently, let go of tension in the body, improve our posture and gently look after the internal organs of the body. Mind body soul. It's like servicing the car regularly so it runs well – same with our body if we don't do the maintenance things start to go wrong!

It's hard to convince people that a slow moving exercise has so many benefits!! The hardest part is our Monkey mind – endless 'self chatter' that we can't stop – but we can train ourselves not to pay so much attention to it.

Gradually we can quieten the mind – funny really, we don't let people keep talking rubbish to us yet we let our mind replay rubbish over and over, nice to find the pause button for a while!

It's like working from the inside to outside – quite different. We start to let go of tension that may have been in the body for decades ... that's why it is slow – takes time to develop, Guess it's the same in most things – Roger Federer plays much better tennis than me but I still enjoy having a game and my body benefits!

Everything in Tai Chi relates to nature, coming in and out of balance and letting go of tension. In a busy 'stressy' world it's nice to take an hour just to find the stillness inside and relax. We all know that we handle stress better when we come from a calm place. If we're out of balance ourselves we often don't make the best choices in a situation!

My teacher in Adelaide has been doing Tai Chi for 30+ years – he has no force in his body yet is agile, balanced and calm, one day I aspire to be as soft as him! I've only been doing Tai Chi for about 15 years ...long way to go. One of the great things about it is that it **keeps getting better** – My first teacher Karen Anderson (from Goolwa) told me that. She was so right – it does. She also told me that I needed to learn patience – good lesson, still a work in progress, but I definitely take the things I learn from Tai Chi into everyday routines and its made my life so much better! I can do Tai Chi when I'm driving, standing, walking – so I'm in better shape!

One of the treasures of teaching Tai Chi is coming into contact with wonderful people – my students are from 5 years to my oldest turning 93 in April. I am very lucky and learning every day – the more I know the more I don't know! Really we're all students – never stop learning. Little bit by little bit – it is a process, people who learn the guitar take a while to play well – tai chi takes time too, but feels good quickly!

Benefits students have told me range from -

More flexibility

Better posture

Better sleep and ways to get back to sleep

Enjoying time just for them

Doing something different and feeling more relaxed

The list goes on – everyone is unique, some students have amazing stories of rehab and teaching their body to do things again.. sometimes people just come to relax or simply just to try something different.

I know it doesn't suit everyone – there are lots of ways to relax!

Just putting it out there ... you know your body best. Find a way to build tension release into your day.

Treat your body well - you're worth it! Right now just release your shoulders downward and feel your breath deepen – ahh that's better!

Sometimes you can come back to something – you might not have been ready for it when you tried it before, we're not open to some challenges at certain times of our lives. Listening and being prepared to stick to it for a while to see if the body responds is fun!

Like anything new to learn it takes some effort and patience – its not a quick fix in this fast world – however I personally feel the difference in my own life, vitality and energy and I see people who are willing to take up the challenge and make little changes, things start to improve. It's brilliant!

New sessions popping up - Lakeside 9am Mondays Riverside 10.30 Mondays

Tuesdays 10am GAC and 7pm Anglican Hall Croker St

Strath 10am Wed Milang institute 1pm Wed First session is complementary.

Personalised, flexible classes to suit, if you don't want to attend classes

Everyone wants to heal but people don't want to change! AS one of my 90 yr old students says -Well nothing will happen if you don't put the effort in! Another legend!!

Happy Chinese New Year!

Thanks for the opportunity

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