

# HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM YOUR PRACTICE

Here are a *few simple things* to help you increase the benefits and enjoyment you will get when learning a Tai Chi or Qigong program:

- **Practice with INTENTION.**  
Start with a set time and place to practice, and make this time a habit. Ten to fifteen minutes of practice each day will bring you faster results than practicing in large bursts of an hour once a week. Clear your mind before you start, and focus on your task.
- **Learn at your pace, and learn methodically.**  
Work through the lessons at a measured pace, and take your time in understanding the details. It is better to learn a few exercises well than many of them carelessly.
- **Stay within your limits.**  
You are responsible for your own safety. Use the 70% rule when practicing a program: estimate your greatest ability to perform any given exercise, movement or task, and practice at only 70% of that maximum level.
- **Review what you have learned frequently.**  
Make your own notes of the physical movements, and breathing techniques. Read the handouts, if any.
- **Find a space where you can be alone and practice without interruption.**  
If indoors, inspect the floor for obstacles. Depending on your foot attire, you may wish to choose a non-skid area, or a non-carpeted place. Some people prefer carpet and supporting shoes; others practice in bare feet. Make sure you can move safely and easily on whatever surface you choose, whether it is indoors, or outdoors.
- **Sound.**  
Music that is soft and slow can help you with slowing your pace, and can also provide a more tranquil environment.
- **Record your results.**  
Everyone has different reasons for doing Tai Chi; to improve balance, or health, or to reduce the harmful effects of stress and improve concentration. Keep a journal of your practice, what you are learning, and what physical changes you are aware of at this time. Evaluate yourself after each practice session and become aware of any changes.
- **Have fun and laugh.**  
Learning new things can be fun if you put that as one of your main goals.

