

Second Tuesday

A Newsletter about Tai Chi Books

Hi Everyone,

Today I want to talk about Tai Chi as a meditation practice.

Even though Tai Chi is often described as “mediation in motion” there are not many books that actually explain how tai chi is a form of meditation or spiritual practice.

An exception is a book called **Bagua and Tai Chi: Exploring the potential of Chi, Martial Arts, Meditation and the I Ching** by Bruce Frantzis.

This book has a chapter where it describes tai chi as a form of Taoist Meditation, where the aim is, as the author puts it, is:

- *“Exploring Non-duality and the Underlying Nature of Opposites.”*

This is possible, the author argues, as at the core of human awareness there is a space where any two yin-yang thoughts can simultaneously and comfortably coexist.

- *“This is the tai chi spaces of your mind. You can experience it in the practice of tai chi as meditation.”*

Therefore, the goal is to get the tai chi practitioner to experience non-duality (our true essence) by a study of duality, or as the authors puts it “the nature of opposites”, “the principle of yin-yang” through the movements of the tai chi choreography.

- *“Tai chi’s main meditation goal is using movement to explore the Taoist principle of yin-yang ...*

... The key is to find the place inside your mind where it does not get polarized into yin or yang –to tap into the Heart-Mind. In this space, you can fully accept both the yin and yang of anything: good and bad, this and that, up and down, forward and back, in and out. In this space your mind has no definitions and yet any definition can naturally come out of it –anything in any shape, manner or form.”

The term "heart-mind" has been translated into English by different authors in different ways. I will probably down the line write a Newsletter about the different translations for the "heart-mind" tai chi concept. In the meantime, see how the author described the heart-mind in relation to tai chi as a form of meditation:

- *"The space of the Heart-Mind is classically described in Taoism and Buddhism with phrases such as, "mind/no mind, form/no form." If you have "no mind," you can functionally use it to usefully comprehend differentiation. If you have "no mind," you're incapable of comprehending why any two thoughts could be in destructive or disharmonious conflict with each other in the first place."*

The "Tai Chi Classics" (see the first [Newsletter about the Tai Chi classics](#)) are full of references to the heart-mind and the tai chi space. The author lists a few:

- *"Form is emptiness, emptiness is form."*
- *"From stillness comes movement and from movement comes stillness."*
- *"Seek the straight from the curved."*

From this perspective tai chi's yin-yang rhythmic motions (moving forward and then backward, then right and left, one arm goes up the other down, etc.), make more sense, and explain how through these movements a person can find their centre of stillness or emptiness.

I'd like to finish this newsletter with the Taoist notion of the "wonderful accident" that the author shares with the reader:

- *"... the basic meditation practices the arts contain will serve primarily as a means to manage stress and calm an anxiety-driven mind. Yet with practice almost everyone will experience the odd moment when they catch a glimpse of their spiritual essence. They are suddenly left within themselves. A residue of inner peace may remain that is more profound than most people experience in a lifetime. In*

Taoism this is what is called the "wonderful accident". Such experiences often inspire people to commit to engage in the more advanced practices of Taoist meditation."

To the wonderful accident, may we all get a glimpse of it!

Elena

www.taichi-motion.com

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Checkout my new VLOG about my personal practice: <https://www.taichi-motion.com/vlog>

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