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Wu Style Tai Chi intervention at Research Lab – Falling About

The notions of ‘dropping’ and ‘sinking’ are very important in the practice of tai chi chuan. This takes place through ‘putting the mind into the dan tien (centre)’, and involves what is called ‘breathing into the dan tien’.

The basic premise for tai chi chuan is a physicality that is loose and relaxed. Power comes from a sense of ‘letting go’ of physical, emotional as well as mental tension. Such tension causes what is called ‘double-weightedness’ where the practitioner is ‘stuck’ or ‘delayed’ in her reaction.

Exercises:

Warm-up exercise of swinging arms, letting them ‘drop’, bringing energy downwards

Warm-up exercise of kicks, letting the legs ‘drop’ rather than using force involving tension

Five-element meditation – bringing mind and breath into the dan tien
Stillness in movement – move into any direction until limit and use arms to regain balance

Movement in stillness – standing still, sense of standing under a warm waterfall
Still mind and body – any thoughts, let them go, listen to your breathing
‘Dropping the mind’ deep into the ground

Concept of ‘SONG’ – ‘relax and let go’

State of complete readiness while holding minimal tension

Relaxation without excess tension, yet not collapsing. The mind must be disciplined.

The body as well as the ‘chi’ needs to sink/drop, which allows the ‘spirit’ to gather, and the mind becomes clear.

There needs to be yin energy before yang energy can be exerted.

Rooting

The body is the vessel for the mind to send intent where it is needed

Application exercise:

When receiving a push, instead of blocking it, sink/drop and turn, to divert the force. Use of spiral energy.