

urbantaoist

So what is the point of Chi Gung and Nei Gung?

The idea is to open the body and the joints, stretch the tissues in a relaxed way to let energy move freely and blocks dissolve to produce a feeling of well being and health. That is pretty good in itself; however, there is more, much more!

All our negative patterns and destructive cycles are the result of traumas and experiences being stored in the body - absolutely everything that has ever happened to you - the Taoists (not sure which ones!) say that everything that has ever happened to your energy since time began is stored in your being. So the idea is to dissolve the physical blocks, open the energy channels, gain health and ease and then, if you so dare, go deeper and deeper into your inner space releasing more and more - cleaning your connection to everything 'out there' by going inside. This is the Tao realised. There is no 'path' as such, just practices and methods that you may find handy. It is an individual thing.

Chi Gung movements can be challenging to learn

Many people find that the movements are not easy to learn. Even professional athletes and dancers are challenged by the coordination they involve. Many get frustrated because they cannot make the left hand move at the same speed as their right foot, or remember in which direction to turn or which hand or foot to put forward.

New skills require patience and practice

Be patient with yourself. It takes most people anywhere from a few days to a few weeks or more to comfortably assimilate any set of new physical movements or energetic principles. It also takes time for the body to relax and soften enough to become conscious of and be able to accommodate the more complex physical and energetic dynamics.

The 70 % Rule (The Golden Mean)

This fundamental guide is to use only 70% within all these exercises. (70% means more than half of your capacity but way off your maximum - we say 70% because it sounds about right!). This not only keeps one from inadvertently causing injury, but allows your system to integrate the material. This comes from the idea that anything is only as strong as its weakest link and pushing to 100% can both damage this link and contract the whole system. This goes against the purpose of all these exercises, which is to produce a relaxed and well functioning system.

You don't have to be an expert to get benefits from practising chi gung. As you grow in experience and are able to pay more attention to body alignments and energy mechanics, you'll find yourself gaining more and more from your practice.

BEN GILBERT

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