

Knots of the mind and allows a natural state of relaxed alertness to replace the unnatural state of tense frenetic activity.

There is one other aspect to these exercises: they are devised with a knowledge of the internal energy known as Chi. This system of energy, or life force, moves around the body in its own circulatory system supplying every part of the body's organs with life - sustaining energy. You can stimulate it by moving and stretching those parts of the body in which these lines of energy lie.

It is this combination of improved blood circulation, a relaxed and integrated mind and body, and a healthy energy system which makes these Shibashi exercises quite exceptional.

Through the practice of these exercises you gain the flexibility of a boy, the wisdom of a sage and the stillness of a deep pool. Shibashi is such a beautiful thing to give yourself, it is such a wonderful way to join forces with a new day. Why would you not want to do it?!

Hridayagita



Tai Chi Shibashi



With

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The Shibashi sequence was first brought to us by Heather Williams of RDTC Llandindodd Wells. It is also known as Tai Chi Gong and Taiji Shibashi. It acts as a bridge between Tai Chi Chuan and Qigong. It allows the practice of an easy-to-learn exercise form that is simple, safe and from which benefit can be derived in a short time. Its gentle quality makes it ideal for older people. Shibashi does not have any difficult steps and each movement involves the whole body. It can be a useful preliminary to learning or studying Tai Chi Chuan as it initially builds confidence and makes the learning of a more complicated stepping form accessible.

There are a great variety of Qigong meditations and exercises with different branches stemming from different sources: Buddhist, Taoist, Medical and Martial Arts Qigong. Each school has developed its own approach, functions and results. Nowadays a system of Qigong is often a combination of different styles: The Flying Crane, the Wild Goose, Taijishibashi are some examples. The Rising Dragon Tai Chi School currently practices the following Qigong forms:

- Taoist Health Exercises
- Vancouver Breathing Form
- Eight Strands of Brocade
- Shibashi

There are many other Qigong systems but we feel that these require a more personal tuition over many years if problems with stuck energy are to be avoided. We disagree with the current practice of making exercises available through books and videos which were originally, for good reason, kept private and taught on a one-to-one basis. The exercises we use are for general use, are extremely and can be practiced alone and in safety. If an in depth study of Qigong is required we suggest you study with an officially recognised master of the art.

It is good to practice these exercises as a sequence because it is like giving yourself a treatment. Practise each one for the same number of breaths so your whole system can be treated equally. However nothing is written in stone – you may like to explore putting them in a different order or practising them individually if there is one you particularly like. Having said that, as far as Shibashi is concerned, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Shibashi is a very flexible and complete tool. It is flexible because it is based around the breath. During one breath of in and out you make one repetition or round of each exercise. The more rounds you decide to do the longer it takes to do it a whole sequence. As I mentioned earlier, if you have only a short period of time then just use the one breath, one round per exercise, then this will increase the time it takes and make the sequence stronger and deeper.

Shibashi is a complete exercise system because it is a synthesis of a whole range and variety of Chi Kung styles. Each of these styles cover within them warm - ups, stretches, posture - work, breath, cleansing, Chi stimulation, directing Chi and the symbolic or universal connection to the Tao.

So how does it work? Essentially tensions in the body are caused by tensions in the mind. So by easing and moving the body we can touch the mind. How do we do this? First, we move slowly so that care and attention can be brought to bear allowing us to see the imbalances of incorrect posture and unnecessary holding in the muscles of the body. By correcting the alignment of the body and releasing tension, the circulation can flow more easily, without recourse to strong physical exertion. This has the added advantage that people with heart conditions or who are not strong enough for vigorous exercise can participate in Shibashi.

By resting in the moment, in the centre of your experience, you release the mind that is continually striving into the future or holding onto the past. This in the long run undoes the

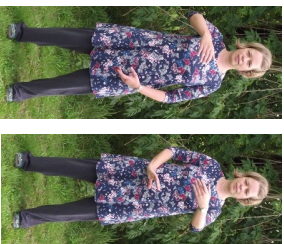
5. Swinging Arms



6. Rowing a Boat



7. Lifting The Ball



8. Gaze at the Moon



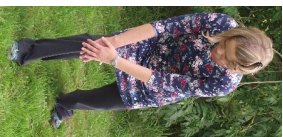
9. Micro Form



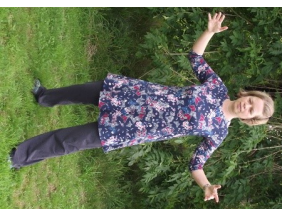
10. Wave Hands



11. scooping the Sea



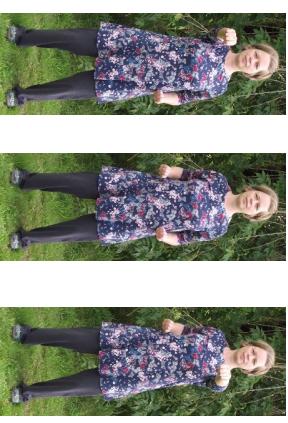
12. Pushing Waves



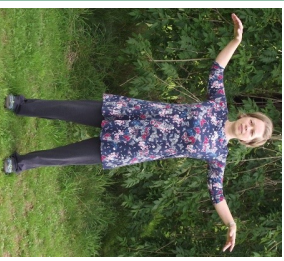
13. Dove Spread Wings



14. Punching



15. Flying Wild Goose

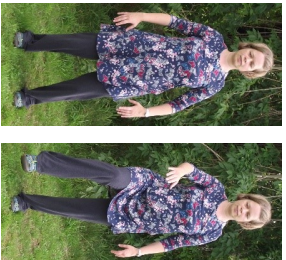


16. Spinning Wheels..



...16. Cont...

17. Bouncing Ball with Steps



18. Palms in Calmness



1. The Beginning -

To balance the blood pressure and strengthen the heart. The gentle flexing of joints smooths the channels of energy, helping to

2. Opening the Chest -

Beneficial for those suffering from depression, insomnia, hypertension.

3. Painting a Rainbow -

To balance blood pressure, aid the digestive system and relieve stomach ache.

4. Part the Clouds -

Useful in stretching the legs, stimulating the kidneys and raising the spirit of vitality.

5. Swinging Arms -

Beneficial for those suffering arthritis or asthma.

6. Rowing a Boat -

Aids the digestive system and is beneficial for backache, headache and the kidneys.

7. Lifting the Ball -

Stimulates blood circulation.

8. Turning to Gaze at the Moon

To balance blood pressure and reduce insomnia.

9. Micro Form -

Strengthens the spleen and promotes leg and back energy.

10. Wave Hands like Clouds -

Aids digestive system and helps prevent arthritis.

11. Scooping the Sea and See the Sky -

Relaxes muscles, improves circulation, balances blood pressure.

12. Pushing Waves -

Strengthens the waist and leg energy and is beneficial is suffering hypertension.

13. Flying Dove spreads its wings -

Good for Breathing, asthma. Disperses feelings of oppression in the chest and promotes the digestive system.

14. Punching -

An invigorating practice promoting all round body

15. Flying Wild Goose -

Strengthens the legs and kidneys. Balances blood pressure and improves low blood pressure.

16. Spinning Wheels -

Improves low blood pressure, reduces back stiffness. Helps a tired body

17. Bouncing Ball with steps -

Good for relaxing the body and recovering from tiredness. Helps balance.

18. Pressing the Palms in Calmness -

For calming and balancing the Ch'i, can be practised on its own for this purpose.

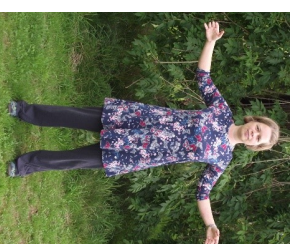
Tai Chi Shibashi

- Stand Quietly to begin, with a feeling of relaxation throughout the joints of your body.
- Keep the weight in your feet even letting the soles of the feet relax into the floor.
- Breathe naturally, do not control the breath.
- When you are ready, let the movements follow the breath
- Do not force the muscles, use repetition and relaxation to help you release.
- Practice the exercises in a smooth flowing way, maintaining your own soft limit and gradually increase each one from 3–10 times.
- Let the movements be a vehicle of self expression, let them nourish and support you. Let the poise of your spine show your inner self worth.

Standing

1.The beginning

2. Opening the Chest



3. Painting a Rainbow

4. Part the Clouds

