静 敬 精 勤 謹 恒
calm, peaceful, quiet, still, serene, tranquil
courteous, deferential, dutiful, gentle, polite, respectful
excellent, fine, outstanding, splendid, superior, transcendent
assiduous, diligent, energetic, industrious, sedulous, studious
careful, cautious, detailed, discreet, prudent, thoughtful
constant, obstinate, patient, permanent, persistent, tenacious
The destination of Taiji is to reach harmony between a human being and his or her environment

**WHAT IS TAIJI?**
Taiji is a mind-body practice that originated in ancient China. Designed to focus on self-defense, Taiji has gradually evolved as an effective means to enhance flexibility, relaxation, stress control, and overall health. It is practiced widely in China and is now becoming popular in the West. The five major aspects of Taiji listed below combine with each other, blending spirit with body, and individual with society.

**ART**
The graceful movements of Taiji bring relaxation to participants and enjoyment to spectators. Practicing Taiji can enhance artistic judgment, and help one discover wonderful things they haven’t previously noticed.

**SPORT**
Taiji involves low-impact, weight-bearing exercise. Taiji’s unique movements, paired with technical breathing, can invigorate the blood system and enhance energy circulation. Taiji can relax one’s whole body as well as promote a joyful mood.

**MARTIAL ARTS**
Every movement of Taiji - such as raising the hand or extending the leg - reflects the essence of self-defense training. Taiji emphasizes perseverance, persistence, and patience.

**PHILOSOPHY**
At the core of Taiji is a philosophy of balance. Taiji movements, such as forward-backward, left-right, virtual-real, open-close, mobile-static, extend meaning to ying-yang, black-white, sky-earth, internal-external, living-death, and much more. The destination of Taiji is to reach harmony between a human being and his or her environment, which is called “Union with the Universe.”

**HEALTH**
A wide range of potential health benefits can result from the practice of Taiji.

- Improve balance, flexibility, immune system, sleep quality, and strength
- Improve cardiovascular, respiratory, circulatory, lymphatic, and digestive functions
- Improve bone density and osteoarthritis
- Reduce chronic pain and high blood pressure
- Reduce risk of falling, fibromyalgia, and stroke
- Reduce the symptoms of Parkinson’s & Alzheimer’s
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- Reduce risk of diabetes
- Reduce anxiety, depression, and stress
- Help participants find greater awareness, calmness, and an overall sense of well-being

Ongoing research shows evidence that Taiji practice improves quality of life.

**WHAT IS FOUR HANDS TAIJI?**
Four Hands Taiji is a Taiji training series designed for Taiji beginners. It selects and synthesizes basic Taiji movements from various Taiji styles. The teaching process suits people of all ages. Students can learn and understand Taiji concepts through systematic training.

Four Hands Taiji has been developed by Haiming Chen. Mr. Chen is a passionate and gifted Taiji trainer, currently offering Taiji classes through the Confucius Institute at the University of Iowa.

For more detailed class information, visit our website at:
http://international.uiowa.edu/confucius/iowa-city-culture-classes-and-workshops

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