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Breathe !

Tai Chi Qigong for Children

Written and Illustrated by Linda Tenenbaum

Preface

Qigong is the system of breathing, meditation and gentle movements based on Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). It is the thousands of years older ancestor of Tai Chi-an internal martial art. Simpler to learn and perform, Tai Chi Qigong is a modified version that includes aspects of both.

When my grandson was 2, he enjoyed and imitated my Tai Chi moves. I realized that a simplified version of moving meditation was not only suitable for young children, but very appealing to them. How wonderful would it be for our children if they had Tai Chi Qigong in their skill set to use later on in their lives when needed?

What I didn't anticipate is that many kids are ALREADY stressed; that their lives are not always as free from stress as adults might think.

“Children are human beings, so whatever stresses you out is likely to stress them out too,” says Peter Wilson, director of YoungMinds – a children’s mental health charity in the UK. “Unlike adults, children are not emotionally and mentally developed enough to cope with these pressures.” So in a sense, they need stress coping strategies even more than adults.

“Stress that is prolonged and managed poorly can result in negative physical, mental, and cognitive outcomes for children and youth.”¹

¹Steinberg, L. (2005). *Adolescence* (7th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Tips for enjoying this book

The exercises in Breathe are intended for all ages. Children under 16 should practice with adult guidance. This book is not intended to replace medical treatment or take the place of in-person classes. It is a very simple, gentle introduction to familiarize you with the art of moving meditation; studying with an experienced teacher is best.

I suggest first reading the book as a story. You may want to watch the videos prior to reading it with your child to familiarize yourself with the moves.

I have *not* focused on the breathing techniques on each page, other than to remind you to breathe softly and slowly without force. Please don't force your breathing to be deeper than is natural for you. I don't want you to create tension or get light headed by trying to follow a specific breathing pattern. As you become more familiar with the moves, the breathing will start to follow the moves naturally as long as you do not hold your breath.

While doing the moves remember to: relax your muscles, unlock the joints, move slowly, breathe softly and rest when you feel tired. All of the moves may be adapted for sitting rather than standing. Don't be too serious. Pay attention to your moves but don't concentrate too hard. Repeat the moves as little or as much as you feel, suggestions are given on each page. It's not necessary to do all the moves every time, but always warm up and always cool down.

Please consult your health care provider to ascertain if this activity is appropriate for you and your children and don't forget to ...BREATHE!

Click on the blue words on each page: [PLAY VIDEO](#) to see the moves online or go to www.followmetaichi.com *Please note: The pictures and videos are mirror image so they are easier to imitate.*

SOMETIMES

I feel sad, angry or scared.

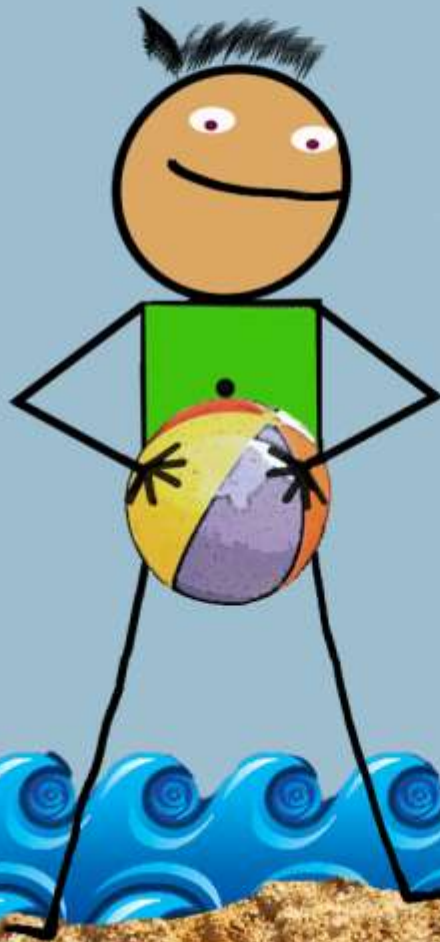
That's okay, but I don't want to feel that way for too long.

I can feel better by doing Tai Chi Qigong.



1. SILK REELING: GATHERING ENERGY

I imagine I am holding a beach ball under my belly button.



[PLAY SILK](#)
[REELING](#)
[VIDEO](#)

Now my hands are on top of the beach ball
and it floats up in front of me to my chin.

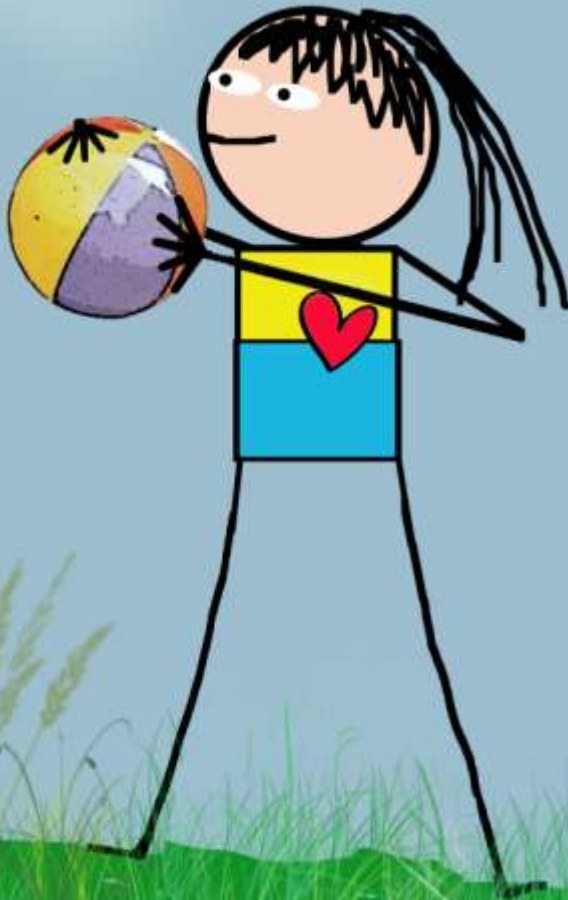


Then I gently bring it
back down under my
belly button.*

Repeat 8 times.

**This area is called
the Lower Dantien.*

2: LIFT THE BALL SIDE TO SIDE



I hold the beach ball
below my heart
then gently lift it to
my left ear.

I look over my left
shoulder to see the
clouds.....



[PLAY](#)
[LIFT](#)
[BALL](#)
[SIDE TO](#)
[SIDE](#)
[VIDEO](#)

Then I bring it back
below my heart and
lift it to my right ear
and look over my
right shoulder to see
the birds.

****Tip: Repeat 3 times on
each side.***





Breathe!

*A fun Tai Chi Qigong Program
for Children of all ages*



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Grandma Linda has been studying and teaching Tai Chi and Qigong for over 27 years. Discovering these stress relieving arts as a young mother, she continues to teach both adults and children alike how easy and fun it can be to learn and practise moving meditation.

In this interactive program, readers can choose from electronic or traditional books and also see the quick one minute videos that accompany the moves.

“I love the book! Beautifully written with age appropriate language and great illustrations that entertain while teaching Tai Chi Qigong concepts. I truly think it is a wonderful book and will make a sound contribution to the well-being of our young people.”

*Patricia Corson Ed.D. Associate Professor,
Ryerson University, Toronto*

