**Tai Chi Qigong Shibashi Set 2**

This second set of Shibashi is more demanding than the first. The first set builds qi in the upper half of the body whereas, the second set helps to build qi in the bottom half of the body. It is very good for circulation, balance, endurance and overall body coordination. But just like the first set it is designed to clear blockages in the meridians and transport qi around the body. The overall effect being to reduce mental stress and physical tension carried in the muscles of the body. Its gentle movements can help to increase energetic vitality, rejuvenate the body, mind and soul, and gain more physical agility and flexibility

Shibashi movements also encourage the stretching and stimulation of the smaller muscles and ligaments which ensure that the joints are protected, and slowly build up the muscles that help protect the joints. This is unlike other forms of exercise, which work on the larger muscle groups and can often put the body under stress.

In this set the gentle stretching and releasing of the movements, combined with deep, relaxed breathing, and mental quietness encourages tension held deep in the body's tissues to soften and release and brings about a feeling of deep joy.

Simply doing these movements will bring about positive results of relaxation, gentle stretching and muscular development. However, it becomes much more of a Qigong when the person practicing the forms also incorporates the Tai Chi principles. Professor Lin hou-Sheng developed Shibashi as a simpler form of Tai Chi making it easier to learn and more accessible for people. However, it was still intended to be practiced within the principles governing the practice of Tai Chi. Adhering to these principles can help people become much more aware of the life energy streaming through their arms, legs, and body which happens when the mind and breath more actively enter the process to direct and guide the qi.

**The first principle is to calm the mind:**

This is done whilst standing in wuji stance. Calming down is often easier said than done, but with regular practise it can be achieved. This calm state necessitates total focus of the mind. It helps if you encourage your learners to concentrate on their abdominal breathing and 'visualise' the breath going in and out in a slow regular flow, this will help them focus.

**The second principle is relaxation:**

Again, focus on your abdominal breathing, relax the shoulders, and go through the whole body, checking that there is no tension whilst you stand in the wuji stance.

**The third principle posture:**

It is important that your learners know the correct posture to perform the exercises and great emphasis should be placed on knee toe alignment.

Over stretching should be discouraged as it is more important to ensure the movements are completed within a person’s own comfort range but that breathing, relaxation and mental quietness are the stars of the show.

**The fourth principle is ‘flow’**

This is where it all comes together. When a person is in ‘flow’ they are fully engaged with the movements and not aware of time or the space they are in. They are just engaged within that moment and movement. If they are also calm and relaxed that’s when a person enters the ‘flow’. Studies have shown that when a person can achieve this ‘flow’ they become happier and more fulfilled in life

To achieve ‘flow’ emphasis should be placed on synchronizing the movements with proper breathing techniques, good posture, relaxation and a calm mind. When all these principles come together that is when the magic happens and qi begins to flow.

**MOVEMENT NAMES:**

**1. Regulating the Qi**

**2. Zhou Tien Circle (Microcosmic Orbit)**

**3. Wind that Blows the Willows**

**4. Needles at sea bottom**

**5. Fisherman Casts the Net**

**6. Immortal Points the way**

**7. Mischievous Boy Kicking**

**8. Crane Prays to the Moon**

**9. Dragon bears its Claws**

**10. Bend the Bow to Shoot the Eagle**

**11. Twin Dragons Emerging**

**12. Double wave push**

**13. Lion Plays with the Ball**

**14. Embracing the Moon at the Dantien**

**15. Phoenix Spreads Its Wings**

**16. Striking Opponent with double fist**

**17. Bringing the Qi to the Dantien**

**18. Sau Gong (Collecting the Qi)**

**1. Regulating the Qi** - Lift the hands in front of your body palms facing down, , raise them up above your head then turn palms facing away and bring them down the sides of the body. Bend the knees as you bring the arms down and straighten the knees as you bring the arms up.

**Breathing: Breathe in as you bring arms up and breathe out as arms come down**

2**. Zhou Tien Circle (Microcosmic Orbit) -** Hold both palms lightly together at the Dantien in prayer position. Bring them up with fingers pointing downward when you reach chest height turn hands so that fingers point up and circle up above your head and out from your body. Bend knees when arms are circling down and straighten knees as hands come up. Focus on the energy coming up the spine, across the top of the head, and then down the front of the body to the Dantien.

**Breathing: Breathe in as hands come up and breathe out as hands come down**

3. **Wind that Blows the Willows** - Step forward with left leg and extend right arm forwards and the left arm out behind, weight on front leg. Shift the weight back whilst looking behind and allow the arms to change direction with the turning of the body. The legs straighten and bend alternatively as you come back and go forwards. Change legs and repeat on the other side.

**Breathing: Breathe in as you come back (straightening the front leg) and breathe out as you go forward (straightening the back leg)**

4**. Needles at sea bottom –** Place weight into right leg. Extend left leg forward, toe touching the ground, with no weight on it. Palms should be facing each other around 10cms apart. Take palms down either side of the left leg and bring them back up to rest at the dantian while you swap legs and do the same on the other side.

**Breathing: Breathe in as you come up and breath out as you go down**

5. **Fisherman Casts the Net** Hold both palms facing outwards, one at head height and the other at waist height. Turn the waist and allow the arms to follow whilst focussing outwards like ‘casting a net.’ Repeat from side to side.

**Breathing: Breathe in whilst turning one way and out whilst turning the other**

6. **Immortal Points the way** – Arms circle together in front of you first in a clockwise direction. As they come down place your ﬁngers in ‘sword-hand’ position and take them out passed your shoulder to the left pointing the way at the same time you step to the side and sink into a curtsy. Sink as little or as much as you feel comfortable. Then do the move in an anti-clockwise direction.

**Breathing: Breathe in as arms come up and around and breathe out as you step the leg back into a curtsy**

7. **Mischievous Boy Kicking -** Stand on one leg whilst raising the other knee up to waist height, then stretch the leg forward with the sole of the foot kicking out.

**Breathing: Breathe in as knee comes up, breathe out as you kick out, breathe in again as knee comes up again and breathe out as foot comes back down.**

8. **Crane Prays to the Moon** – Turning your waist to the left take both arms out and up as if gathering qi, as arms circle overhead and come together place palms together in prayer position at the left side of the chest, just below the shoulder, at the same time step your left foot behind your right leg again as if curtsying with just the toe of your left foot touching the ground. Repeat alternatively on each side.

**Breathing: Breathe in as hands circle up and breathe out as you step behind and bend legs into curtsy.**

9. **Dragon bears its Claws** - Stand with feet shoulder-distance apart and hands by your sides. Pull the hands upwards in front of you whilst grasping soft ﬁsts. When they reach shoulder, height open the hands separate your fingers and push outwards. Legs straighten with the upward hands and bend as you push out.

**Breathing: Breathe in as you draw fists up in front of your body and breathe out as you push your fingers out.**

10. **Bend** **the Bow to Shoot the Eagle -** Stand with the feet shoulder-distance apart and raise your arms up in front of your body with palms facing each other. When the palms reach the forehead turn the palms outwards and shift the weight to one side whilst extending one arm out to the side with palms facing out. Like shooting a bow. Repeat alternatively on each side.

**Breathing: breathe in as hands come up and out as hand separate to shoot the bow.**

11**. Twin** **Dragons Emerging** – Step forward with left foot. Fingers of each hand have the thumb and middle ﬁnger lightly touching, facing outwards. Bring the hands upwards, above the head whilst leaning backwards. Turn the hands as you bring the weight forwards to the front leg whilst leaning forwards until the hands come up behind the body. As you lean forward the back leg should straighten and as you lean backwards the front leg straightens. Repeat on other side.

**Breathing: breathe in as you come back and out as you lean forwards**

12. **Double wave push –** With feet hips width apart place your left foot onto its heel and turn it and your body to the left as you shift your weight onto the left foot push forwards with both your arms bringing the right heel up. As you bring your arms back into your body turn your left foot back to face front (just by lifting it onto its heel and turning) and repeat on the right side. The idea here is that the feet stay in the same position it is just the direction of the foot that changes. Movement is back, and forwards and is coming primarily from the waist.

**Breathing: breathe in as arms come back and breathe out as you push arms out.**

13. **Lion Plays with the Ball -** Stand with the feet hips width apart and imagine carrying a ball up to the chest. Place left hand close to your waist and your right hand on top facing down as if holding a ball. Lift your left leg up and step out placing it down heel first. As you do this bring your left hand up and out to head height with palm facing out and at the same time the right arm pushes through also with palm facing out. As you step back in keep left hand on top and right hand stays on the bottom to repeat on the other side.

**Breathing Breathe in as you bring arms in and breathe out as you push out**

14**. Embracing the Moon at the Dantien –** Turnwaisttowards the left and raise arms each side as if gathering qi. As you turn back to centre bring the arms down to face the lower Dantien. Repeat both sides. Straighten legs as you gather qi and bend knees as you bring the qi back to the Dantian.

**Breathing: breathe in as you gather the qi and breathe out as you turn back to centre**

15. **Phoenix Spreads Its Wings –** Again turn waist to the left allow arms to float up each side of the body to shoulder height as if flying. Right foot heel comes up as arms are extended. Repeat both sides.

**Breathing: breathe in as arms come up to shoulder height and breathe out as arms come down.**

16. **Striking Opponent with double fist –** Start with hands in soft fists resting by hips. Step out forwards with the left leg, as you place the heel of the left foot onto the floor bring the arms upwards in a circle to punch an opponent with both fists at ear height. Repeat both sides.

**Breathing: Breathe in as you step out and breathe out as you step back in**

17. **Bringing the Qi to the Dantien -** Hold the palms face down at the height of the lower dantian as if resting on a table. Move hands in a circle moving out from the dantien and back in. Do eight rotations either direction.

**Breathing: Breathe in as hands move in to the body and out as hands move out from the body**

18. **Sau Gong (Collecting the Qi) -** Bring the hands out and up each side of the body, palms up and allow them to circle over the head. Bring the hands down the front of the body, palms facing downwards.

**Breathing: breathe in as hands come up and out and in as hands come down.**

**Shibashi Set 2 Workshop**

**Saturday 28th April**

**Timetable**

10am Welcome and Introductions

10.20am Warm up with Shibashi Set 1

10.40am Demonstration of Shibashi Set 2

10.50am Detailed look at the form

Break for Tea/Coffee

11.15am Group Practice

11.40am Final Run Through

12pm Finish with Zhan Zhang Meditation