



...Those new to t'ai chi AND those wanting to continue their t'ai chi practice are WELCOME to join this community event. In each session we will focus on our breath, engage in gentle movement, learn t'ai chi basic exercises and over time explore t'ai chi postures (movements).

The Interchange of Yin/Yang Energy

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A PDF of handout is located at communityevents.mononaterrace.com under Health/Wellness Programs, T'ai Chi at Monona Terrace.

Yin can be described as slow, soft, earthy, feminine, absorbing, introspective, receptive, tranquil, reflective, theoretical, intuitive, nurturing, interdependent, introverted, etc. Because of its relationship to the earth/moon, the energy is also heavy, dark, moist, and has coolness. It is the energy that allows a seed to germinate in the winter.

Another image is water flowing down a river gently washing on and around rocks. Environmental change is close, subtle and continuous.

Yang can be described as hard, strong, swift, creative, masculine, action-oriented, extroverted, solution-focused, forceful, independent, expansive, scientific, adventuresome, etc. Because of its relationship to the heavens/sun, the energy is also light, dry, has heat. These conditions make the seed sprout in summer.

The water image is more forceful, rushing down the river moving rocks in its path. Environmental change is swift and readily visible.

Wu Chi is considered to be "Mother of yin/yang." It is the state of wholeness. Being undivided and without separation it is represented as a circle. A baby at the time before birth can be described as being in the state of Wu Chi. S/he has no sense of self as separate. As the infant interacts with the environment and develops relationships, yin/yang emerges.



Yin/Yang

The symbol represents balance, and thus equal parts. Yang is represented by the light and yin by the dark. While seemingly opposite, together they create a unique union. A little of one always exists in the other. Even in the extreme one can transition into the other, such as night gradually transitioning into day and day into night.

Some of us adapt to the challenges of the world by becoming still and introverted. Others of us respond with action and quickly move outside of ourselves. While neither response is right/wrong or good/bad, the key is *mindfulness and agility*. Do we know when the situation requires a yin response and when yang would be more useful? Of equal, and perhaps of more importance, do we have the flexibility to quickly make the transition from one to the other?

T'ai Chi

The study of taijiquan (t'ai chi) requires that we understand the interaction of yin/yang energy, and the balance created by this union. Some of the movements help us understand how to absorb, spiral down and root (yin energy). Other movements require us to spiral up and release (yang energy). All of the movements require softness, agility, connection with our breath and mindfulness.

Our t'ai chi practice continues throughout the day. Regardless if we are in relationship with the environment, ourselves, others... we look to create balance. When someone is talking (yang), we listen (yin). When the energy around us is chaotic (yang), we become still (yin), seeking more appropriate responses.

Integrating mind, breath, and action.