



# Tai Chi & Mental Health

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# Learning Objectives

1. Participants will demonstrate understanding of the relationship between mental health, OT, and Tai Chi.
2. Participants will identify physical benefits and mental health benefits of Tai Chi.
3. Participants will demonstrate simple Tai Chi movements and short sequences to utilize in practice.



## What is Tai Chi?

Tai Chi is a gentle form of martial arts.

It is a mind-body exercise that is often considered a moving meditation.

Tai Chi can be practiced standing, seated, or even lying down.

# Health Benefits of Tai Chi

## Physical Benefits

Tai Chi can...

- Improve strength
- Improve flexibility
- Increase aerobic conditioning
- Improve balance
- Lower blood pressure
- Prevent falls
- Decrease arthritis pain

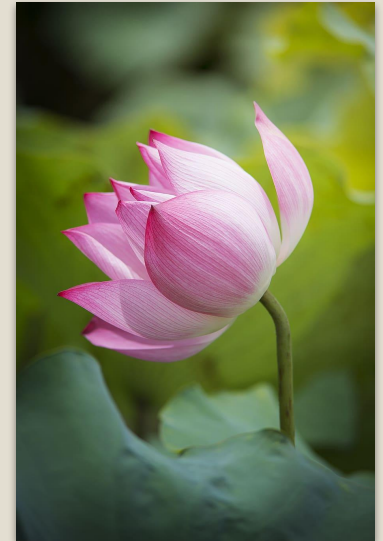
## Mental Health Benefits

Tai Chi can...

- Increase relaxation
- Improve grounding
- Decrease anxiety
- Lower stress
- Improve memory
- Improve focus
- Enhance sleep quality
- Increase self-awareness

- ❖ Client seen in a clubhouse setting in community-based mental health
- ❖ Client with schizoaffective disorder and a brain tumor
- ❖ Symptoms included poor organizational skills, poor sequencing, decreased balance, decreased attention
- ❖ Participated in weekly Tai Chi groups run by COTA
- ❖ After approximately 6 weeks, client was demonstrating increased attention, improved memory, better dynamic standing balance, and increased social participation even outside of the group

## Case Study Example





Practice

# Mental Health Toolkit

- ❖ Can incorporate breathwork into daily practice
- ❖ Participate in Tai Chi groups or individual sessions to learn short, simple sequences
- ❖ Can give clients videos of practice to utilize as a home exercise program
- ❖ Practice daily to learn how to slow down - in Tai Chi slower is better!
- ❖ Follow the guiding principles of Tai Chi
- ❖ Tai Chi practice can be as short as 10 minutes or as long as your client would like

I have taken several continuing ed courses over the years.

- [PESI](#)
- [Motivations](#)
- [Holistic OT](#)
- [Dr. Lam Tai Chi for Health Institute](#) - my personal favorite
- Check out your local senior center for classes too!
- Watch YouTube videos of Tai Chi
  - There are many types of Tai Chi & Qi Gong out there, much like yoga.

Where can I  
learn Tai  
Chi?





- ❖ <https://taichiforhealthinstitute.org/> - this is one of the programs I have studied
- ❖ <https://holisticot.org/tai-chi-for-fall-prevention/>
- ❖ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4295286/> - an article about stroke and tai chi
- ❖ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6068268/> - more tai chi and stroke
- ❖ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1569186113000466> - tai chi and Parkinson's
- ❖ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3285459/> - more tai chi and Parkinson's
- ❖ <https://www.medicare.org/articles/5-health-benefits-of-tai-chi-for-seniors/> - even Medicare supports tai chi!

Great  
resources!



**Research**



# Thank you!!!

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