

How can Tai Chi improve your Golf game?

A white paper on “Tai Chi for Golf” by Ian Deavin

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The Martial Art of Tai Chi seeks to develop optimal body usage and includes the use of weapons – in this case comparable to use of golf clubs where balance, sensitivity, control and the issuing of power are of utmost importance. This is achieved by a way of relaxed moving that enables the integrated use of mind and body to achieve consistency and power on the fairway coupled with delicate control on the green.

Adding Tai Chi exercises to your Golf play makes the most of your abilities and raises your game giving better results, greater enjoyment and improved health.

For example we can consider that the role of the Grip is to provide the structure which presents the club to the ball in relation to its lie and the layout of the hole in such a way as to meet the needs of the physics involved. The Grip extends into the body – so that a correct and relaxed body posture enables the correct hand grip and posture to address the ball.

We can therefore understand that the role of the grip extends to integrating the body connection with the club and ultimately the ball – so as to facilitate the Swing or Stroke – raising the question - how do we maintain connection with the club while executing the swing?

Similarly the role of the Swing or Stroke –is to bring the club to the ball in correct orientation so as to create the desired behaviour of the ball and to utilise the physics of the club/ball relationship while enabling optimal transmission and control of power.

Tai Chi practice deals with these internal factors of golf play – the structures and tensions involved – the mind/body linkage - so helping the player to adapt to specific circumstances and to develop their own skill in reading the elements of the course – the lie, the wind, the topography etc. and to evaluate the technological factors involved in the equipment.

Tai Chi teaches optimal use of the mind and body allied to development of sensitivity and power utilising proven principles relevant to any activity. Tai Chi for Golf addresses the following issues:

- Balance
- Posture
- Body awareness
- Fluid movement
- Transmission of power
- Relaxation
- Control
- Sensitivity
- Consistency

Body mechanics – moving about your axis

Repetitive practice – slow, with visualisation

 Creating a comfortable pathway for your stroke

Mindfulness – thoughtful observation – attention to detail

Calm mind – quiet body – the meditative state – getting into the zone

Focus and commitment – a holistic view

 Creating intention – the ball goes where you look. Intention creates the internal connection and the stroke pathway

Integrating with your clubs

The role of the grip

The role of the stroke
Internal feeling – developing connection – the “sung” feeling
Tai Chi exercises
Exercises with clubs
How do we use the whole body in a consistent way?
Moving from the centre – developing a Tai Chi Golf swing
Relaxation and self-alignment.

Like Golf – Tai Chi exercises are physical but draw on the mental and emotional aspects of ourselves – they are a mixture of technique and approach – the “what we do” and the “how we do it” can only be properly understood with physical practice.

The “*Tai Chi for Golf*” approach therefore focuses on the areas of Tai Chi that support the needs of golf players in developing their game and at the same time enables individuals to re-balance their movement.

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