

Things to do when practising Taiji:

1. reduce activity of external senses (close down superficial mind)
2. turn awareness from outside world back into your own body, concentrate and listen inside using internal sensors
3. allow the mind to gradually sink deeper by looking for more subtle aspects of the movement (e.g. small changes which precede the movement)
4. use intention and listen to the result with awareness - a deeper intention will produce more refined results, a deeper awareness will pick up more subtle things, hidden to the superficial mind

From the Taiji classics (Yang Chengfu):

用意不用力 Yòngyì bù yòng lì: Use yi (<i>intention</i>), don't use li (<i>external strength</i>)
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Training of the intention:

- always close down surface part of the mind first and turn your awareness into the body/listen deeply to internal changes
- begin with moving the awareness thru the body
- move the mind with the waves of movement
 - a) with the maximum peak of waves of movement
 - b) then with the early stages of the waves of movement
 - c) then move the mind ahead of movement/with the pressure wave and with the internal changes which precede movement

Elastic forces (jin) are transmitted through the body in a wave of stretching muscles. They appear if "*motivated by the Yi; energised by the Qi; issued from the root and transmitted through the body in a wave of stretching muscles*".

Three types of waves:

1. longitudinal (compression) - 2. exercise; center movement: up/down
2. transversal (bamboo) - 5. exercise; center movement: forward/back
3. torsion (twist) - 3. exercise; center movement: horizontal turn

For dynamic illustration see

<http://www.patrickkellytaiji.com/TAIJIQUAN/MOVINGART/waves.html>

*Taiji in the tradition of Zheng Manqing, following Master Huang Xingxian und Patrick Kelly
A system for the Development of Inner Strength and Harmony through Concentration, Co-ordination
and Relaxation of Mind, Energy and Body*

Quotes from my teacher, Patrick Kelly:

"Taiji is an art where the soft overcomes the hard, the calm subdues the aggressive and the subtle transcends the gross. It is a method of bringing ourselves into harmony with ourselves, those people with whom we interact, and all the energies of our larger environment. Taiji Form develops internal strength. Pushing-hands develops sensitivity. Being externally relaxed while internally strong allows the possibility of resolving pressure without conflict. Through building inner harmony and internal strength, together with physical relaxation and the philosophy of yielding, we gradually arrive at that place where the defense of the self in daily life no longer serves any purpose."

"When the Qi is motivated by the Yi - the directed intention of the mind - and combined with the breath and loose body movements, it produces the Elastic Spring Force known by the technically correct term Jin. This Jin is a completely different character from the Jing - of Jing, Qi and Shen. Jin is a specialised term in the Chinese martial arts and can have little meaning to those without practical experience of it. This Jin or internal power is commonly, but confusingly, referred to as Qi and translated as Ki in Japanese."

"The muscle cycle can be understood by considering what happens when a ball, initially resting on the ground (phase 0), is lifted (phase 1), released (phase 2), compresses against the ground (phase 3), then expands away from the ground (phase 4). Whenever the body moves, the power inside the body changes dramatically through these 5 conditions, but few have the mind training in place to sense it and fewer have the ability to influence and harness it.

Note the refinement that when the movement is slow, releasing the ball allows it to drop almost immediately, whereas when the initial movement is fast the ball, due to momentum, continues upwards as it is released, only falling after slowing to a stop."

"The main reason for learning Taiji is to help yourself and the main reason for teaching is to help others."

<http://www.patrickellytaiji.com>
<http://www.9clouds.ch>

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