



## Doing or Not Doing Tai Chi

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As an instructor I know there are only two kinds of tai chi: doing tai chi and not doing tai chi. It's the same with any kind of exercise; there cannot be any gains when you don't exercise. Occasional exercise is better than no exercise, but regular exercise is better.

Your tai chi form may be different than anyone else in the group but that doesn't make it good or bad, it's just your tai chi. We often talk about improving our tai chi form, but what we are really doing is improving our balance or breathing or flexibility or being more relaxed or whatever while doing tai chi. Improving our tai chi form means improving the mechanics of our exercise, and improving them improves our tai chi form.

Focussing on how you feel as you do your tai chi should tell you where you need to make improvements. This may be by smoothing out your breathing, or taking a smaller step, or sinking down a little to lower your centre of gravity, or...

Relaxation and balance are important. If you feel muscle stress or have balance problems try taking smaller steps, keeping your movements smaller and sinking slightly to lower your centre of balance.

Breathing is also important, Eventually you'll learn to breath in as you lift, and breath out as you sink or push away. In the meantime breath in and out through your nose, keep your breathing even, and avoid holding your breath.

But the bottom line is that you must do tai chi in order to make these improvements.

The 60 & Better tai chi class provides a relaxed and informal approach to tai chi. More formal instruction is available from the Academy through evening classes in Mt Morgan, Yeppoon and Rockhampton. Phone Debbie on 07 4936 1858 for details.