

## I. The Mind Must Be Willing

The mind must be willing to enact the structure of T'ai-Chi Ch'uan in order to achieve a feeling of equanimity and ease. If the mind is reluctant, it is due to an emotional state (of mind) and the result will be half-heartedly experienced and un-unified.

To appreciate and to begin to understand the process of the movement and the progress of the developing forms, it is necessary to accept this fact—that the mind must be present at all times of the physical activity. To keep the mind alert and present, the determination to do so—exercising the will—is essential. This is the nature of T'ai-Chi Ch'uan discipline. The mind of the player must be willing to be brought to the stage of willingness, to participate in the action continually. When the mind is not willing, then we can say there is no exercising.

Though the structure of T'ai-Chi Ch'uan is intriguing, it nevertheless is a mental challenge to move arms and legs in differing varying formations or to go from one place to another, since there are *many* aspects which involve and demand attention. The one which is supremely necessary to attend to is that of coordination—never simple even on an elementary level. The mind that is aware of the coordinated and changing situations can function fully—even without an effort of will in some cases. All the elements of T'ai-Chi Ch'uan composition *employ* the mind.

The progress of the mind retentiveness keeps in step with the body's ability to function with increasing complexities

of space-form-time dynamics. The balanced way of mind and body channels the spirit (the feelings) *away* from negative emotions as well as creating heart-ease and composure. Nothing can be done without the *mind's* instigation. Even from the beginning, one realizes that the exercise is physically based and mentally directed. With deeper perception, it also can be seen that the exercise is physically directed and mentally based.

T'ai-Chi Ch'uan, it is to be remembered, is a "from the mind" exercise for physical, emotional, and mental well-being. There is nothing in the complex structure of T'ai-Chi Ch'uan that cannot be done by the natural human body. But it is the mind that must be willing to induce the body to remain on the road to self-development.

Since the physiological laws of nature are embodied in T'ai-Chi Ch'uan, the entire exercise is objective and impersonal, not colored by individualized sentiment or background. And so it can become, paradoxically, a personal, life-long activity for all people who have "willing minds."