

Essential Taijiquan Practices For Managing Age Related Change in Health and Body Systems

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Understanding Age and Age Related Changes

Age Means Many Things: Measuring Age in Developmental Science

- Chronological Age
 - How many times have you been around the Sun?
- Functional Age
 - Biological Age
 - Psychological Age
 - Social Age

Causes of Biological Aging

- Primary Aging- Gene coded aging.
 - Ex. Telomere length



- Secondary Aging- Environment, disease, disuse, abuse.

Age Related Changes

❖ Sensorimotor function

- ❖ Sensory input
- ❖ Motor output
- ❖ Reaction time, decision making, multitasking
- ❖ The maintenance of vital functions within optimal range

❖ Musculoskeletal function

- ❖ Strength declines
- ❖ Bone mass loss
- ❖ Osteoarthritis

Age Related Changes

❖ Cardio- Respiratory Systems

- ❖ Vital capacity
- ❖ Hypertension

❖ Immune System

- ❖ Thymus Shrinkage- T Cell Production
- ❖ Autoimmune disorders

❖ Neurological System

- ❖ Brain mass loss (atrophy, damage)
- ❖ Autonomic Balance

Age Related Diseases

- Cardiovascular Disease
- Diabetes
- Cancer
- Dementia
- Neurological and Autoimmune

The Role of Traditional Cultural Practices and Healing

- Compensation for Morbidity

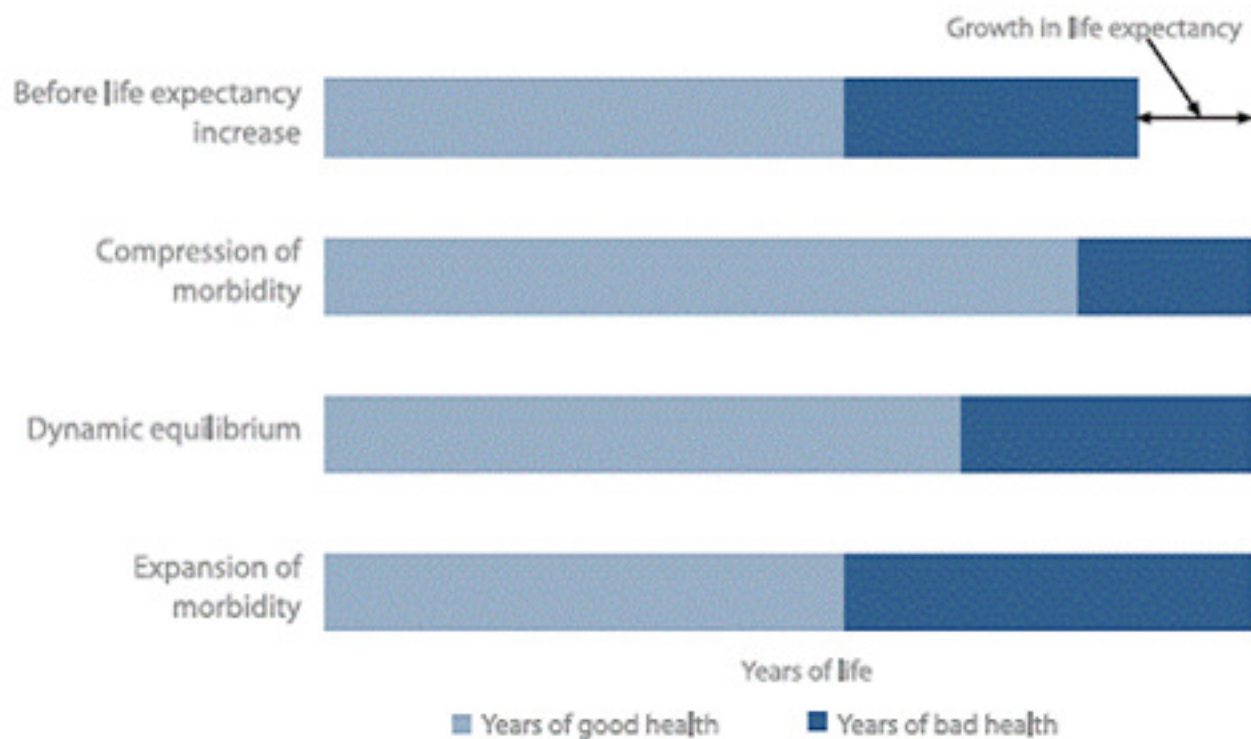


- Reversal or Compression of Morbidity
 - Dean Ornish PMRI



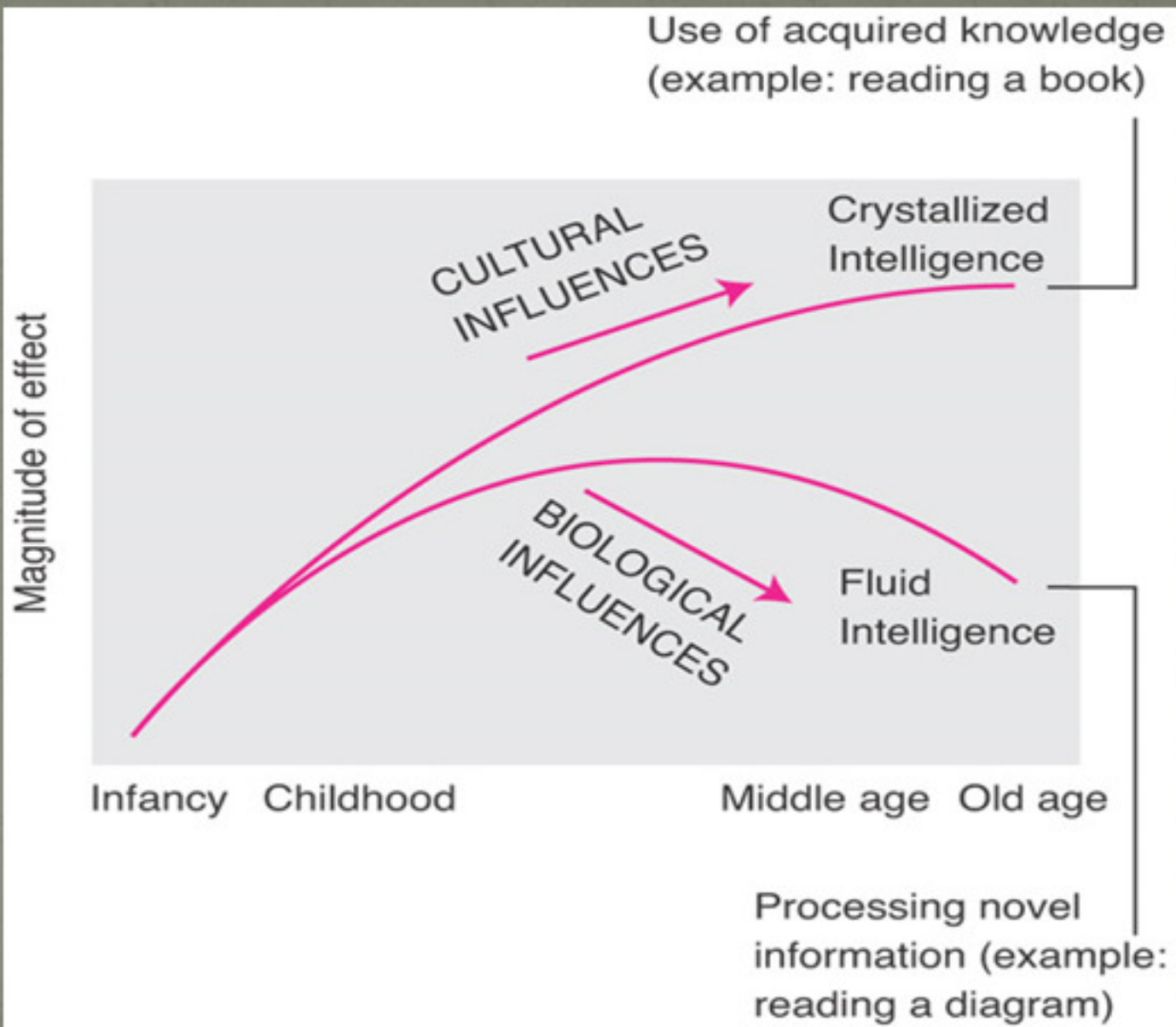
Compression of Morbidity

Figure 6.3: Possible future health states in years of life



The Role of Wisdom and Expertise: Aging is not all downhill

- Crystallized Intelligence
 - Experience
 - Pragmatics
 - Wisdom
- Plasticity
 - Learning
 - Repair



What's in your S.O.C. playbook?

- Paul B. Baltes
- Selective Optimization with Compensation
 - The use of pragmatic faculties to overcome adverse declines, maintain optimal functioning and quality of life.

Taijiquan as Mind-Body Wisdom



History of Taijiquan

- ❖ Ming Dynasty 大明国 1368-1644
 - ❖ Zhang Sanfeng- Daoist Hermit
 - ❖ Chen Wangting- Knight of The Ming
- ❖ Chen Village 陈家沟
- ❖ Shaolin Monastery 少林寺
- ❖ Huashan Hermitage 华山
- ❖ Wudangshan Hermitage 武当山

History of Taijiquan

- ❖ Chen style (陳氏)
- ❖ Yang style (楊氏)
- ❖ Wu/Hao style(武氏)
- ❖ Wu style (吳氏)
- ❖ Sun style (孫氏)

3 Essential Components of Traditional Taijiquan

- Qigong 氣功 (Energy Work)
 - Sitting, Standing, Recumbent
 - Iterative movement
- Form 陳式老架 (Functional Choreography)
 - Partner Training 推手 (Push hands)

[Taijiquan: The art of nurturing, The science of power. \(Yang 2005\)](#)

What Are The Benefits?

Yang 2005

Primary
(Skill-Related)

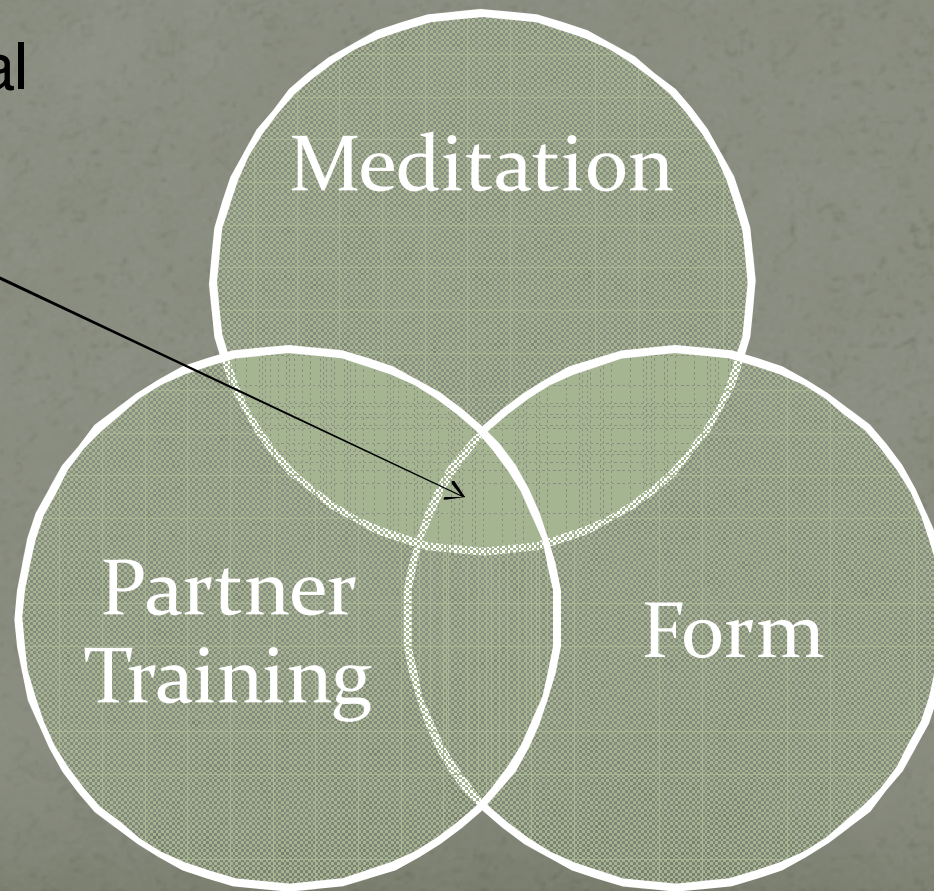
Secondary
(Other Therapeutic)

Holistic

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Postural control/balance• Flexibility• Coordination• Agility• Strength/power• Sensitivity/awareness• Reaction time• Confidence | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Digestion/bowel function• Cardio-respiratory function• Immune system function• Prevention or treatment of arthritis• Cognitive function (e.g., attention, concentration, learning, memory)• Prevention of osteoporosis• Physical improvements in multiple sclerosis patients• Quality of sleep | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avoidance or repair of stress related injuries/illness• Social interaction/sense of community• Spiritual development (calmness/peace/tranquility) |
|---|---|---|
-

Interactive Benefits of Traditional Training

Zone of Optimal Development



Preliminary Findings: Survey of Taijiquan Practitioners' Wellbeing and Practice Curriculums

- N=98
- Average Age: 55
- Average Years in Practice: 18
- Reporting Poor or Fair Health:
4% vs NA 18.9%
- Missed Activities in 30 days:
20% vs NA 40%

Preliminary Findings: Survey of Taijiquan Practitioners' Wellbeing and Practice Curriculums

Do you feel your practices (Taiji, qigong, etc.) have benefited your physical health, mobility and/or functionality?

- 98% Yes
- 00% No
- 02% No Sure

Most Common Themes:

- Strength and Stamina
- Resilience (disease)
- Recovery and Rehabilitation
- Vitality (Youthful/Sexual)

Preliminary Findings: Survey of Taijiquan Practitioners' Wellbeing and Practice Curriculums

Do you feel your practices (Taiji, qigong, etc.) have contributed to your mental health?

- **98 % Yes**
- **00% No**
- **02 % Not Sure**

Most Common Themes:

- **Positive/Productive Emotional States**
- **Sense of Connectedness to Others/Society/World**
- **Mental Clarity/Awareness/ Mindfulness**
- **Reduced Stress**

Thank You

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