

## MIND/BODY HEALTH BENEFITS OF MARTIAL ARTS TRAINING

By Sifu Frank Versagi

Yes, martial arts training can be for you, and you don't have to be a Bruce Lee to gain the many health benefits available from your training. Under the umbrella of the Chinese martial arts you have an array of things to do, all of which do wonders for your mind and body. You can simply sit, relax and breathe deeply for a few minutes a day, yes, that is martial arts training; you can take Tai Chi, which incorporates slow movements and deep breathing; or you can do the Kung-fu, which is more in line with self defense and hard aerobic exercise. The goal is that the mind gets a break from all the clutter normally associated with our daily routines, the body begins to move and the juices start flowing again.

Too often the potential martial arts student thinks, "Oh, I couldn't do that," or "That's just for the young people"; nothing could be further from the realities of training in the martial arts.

The body is an extremely responsive machine, it wants to be used, to be oiled, to stretch, flex and open up its pores; the mind longs for new "stuff" to learn, digest, and filter through into its daily existence, keeping the brain from getting bored and not as alive.

Whether your preference is calming the mind through meditation, getting the body and mind to work together as a unit and slowly work the body into shape through Tai Chi, or cranking it up a notch and learning Kung-fu for self defense, the Chinese martial arts are there for the taking; anyone don't have to expend an inordinate amount of time and totally redo your life's schedule.

Start with two or three hours a week, feel the difference; move into four or six hours a week and go from there, that's not a lot of time. Compare those six hours worth of value to the six hours you might spend watching TV; there is no comparison.

It has been said that the body is the shell that houses your soul, doesn't your body and mind deserve your utmost care. Use this day, right now, to start working on the new, improved version of you, calm your busy mind, increase the rate at which the blood flows through your body, stretch and build your muscles so that your body and mind are healthier and happier.

From a healthy mind and body, springs the essence of life.

There is no better time than the present to start anew.

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