**Tai Ji Quan: From Traditional to Contemporary Applications**

Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance® (TJQMBB) is an evidence-based fall prevention program for community-dwelling older adults and people with movement disorders. The program consists of a variety of activities that have been transformed, on the basis of Tai Ji Quan theory and clinical practice, into an integrated movement therapy for balance training. The novel clinical approach of TJQMBB extends the boundaries of Tai Ji Quan tradition by engaging predetermined movements with self-initiated balance-challenging actions. This methodology has moved Tai Ji Quan to the forefront of contemporary exercise-based balance training applications designed to address postural instability and gait disorders and, subsequently, prevent falls.

TJQMBB is the world’s first tailored and multi-trial-supported Tai Ji Quan program for balance training and balance recovery. Research on its effectiveness began in early 2000, and scientific evaluation has continued as the training approach has evolved. Additional research has focused on how to most effectively promote its availability and use in the community as well as examine its cost effectiveness.

TJQMBB is built around 8 individual Tai Ji Quan forms that were adapted from the contemporary 24 forms developed in China in the 1960s. These modified forms were initially practiced as a sequence emphasizing movement flow, coordination, and control. With advances in research, the approach of simply practicing a sequence of 8 forms has been replaced by a more comprehensive and diverse training approach that emphasizes individual form practice combined with exercise variations and supplementary activities (Tai Ji Quan – Mini Therapeutic Movements®) that are designed to provide additional challenges to balance, gait, and mobility. The underlying motivation of this unique style is to ultimately integrate Tai Ji Quan (actions, respiration, mindfulness) and human balance systems (musculoskeletal, sensory, cognition) so that TJQMBB becomes more efficient in optimizing control of the center of gravity relative to base of support, either in static conditions or during locomotion in varying living environments.

The overarching goal of the TJQMBB program is to improve static and dynamic postural stability, mindful control of body position in space, functional walking activities, movement symmetry and coordination, range of motion around the ankle joints, and lower-extremity strength. To achieve these functional objectives, the program incorporates movements that enhance ankle stability, weight transfer, active eye-head movement, and spatial orientation, as well as refine skills directly transferable to daily functional activities such as reaching, moving from sit-to-stand (and stand-to-sit), stepping and turning, and walking. Exercises follow a progression of difficulty, from completely seated, through sit-and-stand, to chair-assisted, standing, and stepping.

Overall, TJQMBB provides an integrated Tai Ji Quan experience for better balance, locomotion, and mobility, with the ultimate aspiration of improving performance of daily functional tasks and reducing incidence of falls among older adults and people with movement impairment.