

## Why Tai Chi?

### *The Physiotherapist*

When patients come to see a physio there is an expectation that they will leave the appointment with a sheet of exercises. There can often be an expectation of de-ja-vu, with the same old exercises being prescribed again and again, and worse yet, an anticipation of these exercises either not helping or making things worse (as will have often happened before)!

These were my reflections on seeing patients in a pain team setting, when trying to engage them in exercise and increased activity. I would often meet resistance, fear, and avoidance of exercise; **not** a promising start for a physiotherapy consultation.

However, my reflections took me back to the research and I found some interesting literature suggesting improvements to body awareness, breath regulation, befriending of bodies, and gentle movement as more successful entry points for patients in pain. With this new concept I tracked down a course specifically for AHP's using adapted Tai chi. Since I have been using this form of exercise, I have found patients have preferred it, and positively enjoy the ability to move with increased comfort and ease, thereby becoming braver with their bodies.

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