

Camp Course of Chinese Traditional Archery: The Integrative Practice of Chinese Traditional Archery and Modern Health Preservation

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Abstract

In the fast-paced modern life, people's demand for health preservation is increasing day by day. As a sport with profound traditional culture, Chinese traditional archery not only has unique artistic charm but also shows significant value in the field of health preservation. This essay takes the Chinese traditional archery camp course as the research object to explore the internal logic and practical path of improving personal health preservation ability through systematic training. The study shows that the camp course can effectively enhance physical fitness, regulate psychology, improve personality, and promote the harmonious (harmonious coexistence) of individuals with nature and society through systematic training in four dimensions: body, mind, virtue, and harmony, providing a new paradigm for modern health preservation that combines cultural depth and practical efficiency.

Keywords

Chinese Traditional Archery; Camp; Health Preservation Ability; Physical And Mental Harmony; Cultural Inheritance

1. Introduction

With the acceleration of urbanization, modern people who live in fast-paced lifestyle are faced with health problems such as high work pressure. As lacking of exercise, the "sub-health" status has become a common phenomenon. Traditional sports health preservation has gradually attracted people's attention because of emphasizing its concept which is the unity of body and mind and the cultivation of both internal and external. As one of the six traditional Chinese arts, Chinese traditional archery has formed a unique health preservation system of judging virtue through archery and combining movement and stillness after thousands of years of development. In recent years, Chinese traditional archery camp courses have quietly emerged across the country. With their systematic training mould, they combine archery techniques based on health preservation concepts,

providing an effective path to participants to appreciate health preservation and wisdom from traditional culture. This essay aims to reveal the unique value of Chinese traditional archery in modern health preservation by analyzing the core content and practical effects of the camp courses.

2.The Health Preservation Philosophy of Chinese Traditional Archery and the Camp Course System

2.1 The Health Preservation Philosophical Basis of Chinese Traditional Archery

The health preservation concept of Chinese traditional archery is rooted in Chinese traditional philosophy, with the core of the theory of yin and yang and the five elements, the theory of meridians, and the theory of essence, qi, and spirit. The Yellow Emperor's Inner Canon emphasizes that if the righteous qi is stored inside, evil cannot invade. Archery can promote the circulation of qi and blood and balance yin and yang through the coordinated training of body regulation, including breath and mind regulation. For example, the requirement of keeping the body upright in the bow-pulling action is in line with the concept of straight and stable body and can harmonize the spinal meridians; the breathing method of opening the bow with strong deep inhalation and releasing the arrow with exhalation can enhance lung function through deep abdominal breathing, reflecting the regulatory effect of breath regulation on the internal organs. In addition, Chinese traditional archery focuses peace of mind and upright of body, and cultivates concentration through aiming to the object to achieve the mind governs the spirit, which coincides with the Taoist thought of attaining the extreme of emptiness and maintaining stillness.

2.2 The Core Framework of the Camp Course

Traditional technique inheritance and modern health preservation needs are the double-cores in The Chinese traditional archery camp course. We built a four-in-one course system which is theoretical cognition, technical training, practical experience and cultural infiltration.

Specifically include:

2.2.1 Theoretical Courses: Contain the history and culture of Chinese traditional archery, health preservation philosophy, sports anatomy, etc., and introduce Chinese traditional archery from in a scientific and gradual perspective way.

2.2.2 Technical Training: Divided into preparatory movements (stand, nock an arrow, draw the bow with grace), basic movements (lean against the string, release and close) and scene applications (10-meter and 30-meter target practice). Those train aims at standardization of action, as well as the coordination of breathing and intention.

2.2.3 Health Preservation Module: Improve the ability of physical and mental coordination by a cyclic practice of seeking stillness in movement and promoting movement in stillness. Trying to see the big from the small and reflect oneself. Likewise, a single drop of water cannot become an ocean, but thousands of drops of water gathers to form an

ocean. There is saying The path of truth is simple, but knowledge is easy to acquire while action is difficult. Chinese traditional archery seems like a simple sport with action of drawing a bow and shooting an arrow which actually conforms to the laws of heaven and earth and the rhythm of yin and yang continuously and endlessly. Use the bow to carry on the spirit of Tao and promote the achievement of harmony.

2.2.4 Cultural Practice: In the practice of Chinese traditional archery, as early as the Book of Rites • The Meaning of Archery, there is a clear requirement that therefore, in archery, the advance and retreat must be in line with propriety. That is, every action of drawing, shooting, and picking up an arrow should conform to the etiquette when enter and exit the field. Whether it is towards the bow, arrow, target, or an opponent, whether hitting the target or not are all the secondary. The behavior of reciprocity is essential that reflects people's understanding of etiquette from different angles. At the same time, the virtues of seriousness, preciseness, humility, politeness, strength, and trustworthiness which cultivated in the practice are also the virtue that we often talk about. Confucius said: Judging virtue through archery means that archery comprehensively reflects a person's virtue. Those who can be outstanding and graceful in the etiquette of archery must also be able to maintain their demeanor in other fields. Because of this, the princes and emperors in ancient times especially chose archery as one of the assessment methods for selecting ministers and promoting talented people.

3. The Four-Dimensional Path of the Camp Course to Improve Health Preservation Ability

3.1 Physical Fitness: Systematic Optimization of Physical Functions

3.1.1 Comprehensive Exercise of the Musculoskeletal System

The technical movements of Chinese traditional archery involve the coordinated work of multiple muscle groups throughout the body. Standing requires feet apart as wide as the shoulders, putting the center of gravity on the front palms, which can activate the lower limb muscle groups and enhance core stability; the resistance training of pushing forward and pulling backward while drawing the bow can effectively exercise the upper limb muscle groups such as the latissimus dorsi, pectoralis major, and deltoid. Meanwhile, through the action specification of five flats and three leans (elbow flat, shoulder flat, arrow flat, hip flat, foot flat, cheek lean, hand lean, chest lean), it can correct bad postures, such as hunchback.

3.1.2 Synergistic Improvement of the Respiratory and Circulatory Systems

The control of breathing in Chinese traditional archery runs through the whole process. When drawing the bow, take a deep breath in until the mouth spits out feathers and the ears hear the string, and when releasing the arrow, exhale slowly to form a rhythmic breathing pattern. This abdominal breathing can make the mobility of the diaphragm effectively as well as improve the symptoms of chronic respiratory diseases.

3.1.3 Strengthening of the Nervous System and Sensory Functions

Chinese traditional archery requires visualize the bullseye and reach the top of the head, the ciliary muscles frequently adjust from near to far, which can exercise the eye movement ability and delay vision decline in the process of aiming. In addition, when people deal with environmental changes such as wind speed and light, the brain needs to quickly integrate sensory information and adjust movements, those practices also improve neural response speed and body coordination significantly.

3.2 Mental Cultivation: Psychological Regulation and Spiritual Sublimation

3.2.1 Stress Release and Emotional Management

The Chinese traditional archery training demands participants to concentrate and eliminate distractions during the bow-drawing process, which is similar to the flow inside experience in modern psychology, which can enhance the activity of the prefrontal cortex of the brain and inhibit the emotional response of the limbic system. Chinese archery thereby can reduce anxiety levels and improve emotional stability in a great deal. The concept of natural nonaction at the moment of release even guides participants to face the results with a peaceful mind, in order to cultivating the psychological resilience of not being arrogant in victory and not being discouraged in defeat.

3.2.2 Cultivation of Concentration and Willpower

From beginning of nocking the arrow to releasing the arrow needs lasting 10-20 seconds, which puts forward extremely high requirements for concentration. The camp gradually prolongs the concentration time through advanced-level training such as fixed-point aiming and moving target tracking. At the same time, the process of overcoming the resistance of a strong bow and insisting on completing the daily training plan exercises people's willpower effectively.

3.2.3 Spiritual Growth in Cultural Infiltration

The Chinese traditional archery camp reproduces the ancient archery ceremony, which allows participants to experience the solemnity of traditional culture in the ritual of archery. and subtly enhances self-identity and cultural confidence. A participant wrote in the training log: When wearing Han clothing and performing the archery ceremony, I suddenly felt the responsibility of our ancestors self-cultivation, family regulation, state governance, and world peace. This sense of cultural belonging fills my heart with strength. This spiritual sublimation further strengthens the unique value of archery as cultural health preservation.

3.3 Virtue Cultivation: Personality Shaping and Social Adaptation

3.3.1 Moral Cultivation in Etiquette Norms

Chinese traditional archery takes etiquette as the core, and everywhere reflects Chinese traditional ethics, from equipment arrangement if a craftsman wants to do his work well, he must first sharpen his tools") to treat people bow and yield to ascend, lower oneself to drink). The camp sets up an etiquette assessment link, requiring participants to practice

virtues such as reverence, humility, and integrity" in training. For example, when taking arrows, it is necessary to point the arrowhead downward to ensure safety, which reflects care for others; in competitions, not resenting those who have won against oneself but seeking within oneself that cultivates the habit of self-reflection. Long-term training makes participants pay more attention to etiquette norms in daily social interactions.

3.3.2 Strengthening of Team Collaboration and Sense of Responsibility

In courses such as the team archery competition, participants need to complete the goal through division of labor and collaboration: (observe the wind direction), adjust the target position and record results. This cooperation model breaks the atomization state of modern society and rebuilds interpersonal connections. Moreover, the responsibility of maintaining equipment and guiding novices offer opportunities to cultivate participants' sense of social responsibility.

3.3.3 Positive Guidance of Values

Chinese traditional archery emphasizes the cultivation of both virtue and art and also combines the improvement of skills with the perfection of morality. The camp leads participants to understand the deep connotation of judging virtue through archery" and to establish values of value righteousness over profit" and harmonious (harmonious coexistence)" by interpreting classic literatures such as The Authentic School of Archery in the Military Classics and Record of Guande Pavilion. A college student participant said: Archery makes me understand that true strength is not about defeating others but about constantly surpassing myself. This concept has changed my view of competition.

3.4 The Realm of Harmony: The Harmonious Coexistence of Individuals and the Multidimensional World

3.4.1 Harmonious Interaction between Man and Nature

The camp often chooses natural venues for outdoor archery training. Participants practice archery in the green mountains and clear waters and need to adjust their breathing and movements according to the changes of the four seasons (such as being stretchable in spring sprouting and calm in winter saving. This training mode of correspondence between human being and nature" strengthens the cognition and respect for natural laws.

3.4.2 Harmonious Coexistence between Man and Society

The concept of harmony without uniformity in Chinese traditional archery culture is practiced through the diversity members practice together activities in the course. Participants have different ages, occupations, and cultural backgrounds, they exchange skills and share experiences in the camp, forming an inclusive and symbiotic community ecology.

3.4.3 Harmonious Unity of Self-Physical and Mental

Through the comprehensive training of body, mind, virtue, and harmony, participants gradually achieve the harmonious state of combination of form and spirit. The human

body is a dynamic balance, then the excessive exercises and stillness are both unfavorable to human health. The balance of them matters. The unique exercise mode of seeking stillness in movement and promoting movement in stillness in Chinese traditional archery is more suitable for maintaining the dynamic balance of the human body. The harmonious integration of movement and stillness also makes it suitable for almost all age groups, from children and students to middle-aged and elderly people. Everyone can enjoy themselves in archery and guide their bodies to health from the inside out.

4. The Practical Effects and Development Suggestions of the Camp Course

4.1 Practical Effects

4.1.1 The first core of health preservation value of Chinese traditional archery is reflected in the body health.

Chinese traditional archery is relatively simple and convenient requirements of venues and time. it's suitable for a wide range of population. Through the exercise of Chinese traditional archery, all parts of the body can be correspondingly exercised, thereby promoting strong physique and physical coordination, reducing physical illnesses. It definitely can maintain physical health and prolong lifespan.

4.2 The second core of health preservation value of Chinese traditional archery is reflected in the mind health.

The seemingly monotonous and repetitive movement is actually a baptism of the heart every time. It builds a peaceful and comfortable psychological environment, then reducing great emotional fluctuations and eliminating psychological diseases.

4.3 The third core of health preservation value of Chinese traditional archery is reflected in the virtue health.

Chinese traditional archery conveys the principle of how to be right-minded human being in real life through technique to thoughts. The gentleman's qualities of seriousness, preciseness, humility, politeness, strength, and trustworthiness, those characteristics can be cultivated through practice, those virtues also can be recognized and valued in daily life.

4.4 The fourth core of health preservation value of Chinese traditional archery is reflected in the harmony health.

An individual's healthy and upright life pursuit just like a "drop of water" that can effect society harmony. A single drop of water cannot become an ocean, but thousands of drops of water gather to form an ocean. In return, a harmonious society can guarantee human's well being. Only in a stable and peaceful society can people have the time and energy to pursue their personal ideal life. Therefore, the harmony health pursued by Chinese traditional archery is highly consistent with the pursuit of an individual's healthy and upright life and the pursuit of a harmonious society's stability and prosperity.

4.5 Development Suggestions: Paths to Optimize the Course System

- **Technology Empowerment:** Introduce sports monitor equipment (such as heart rate belts and motion capture systems) to analyze training effects in real time and formulate individual health preservation plans.
- **Cross-Industry Integration:** Cooperate with fields such as traditional Chinese medicine physiotherapy and psychological counseling to develop archery + health preservation packages, such as "archery acupuncture conditioning" and archery mindfulness stress reduction.
- **Education Popularization:** Promote archery into campuses and communities, and combine with intangible cultural heritage inheritance projects to expand the audience base, especially among young people.
- **Cultural Innovation:** Create cultural and creative products with an archery theme (such as archery picture books and ancient-style archery short videos) to interpret traditional health preservation wisdom in a modern communication way.

5. Conclusion

The Chinese traditional archery camp course provides modern people with an effective path to draw health wisdom from traditional culture with its unique four-dimensional health preservation system of body, mind, virtue, and harmony". Through systematic technical training and cultural infiltration, participants can not only improve physical fitness and regulate mental health but also improve their personality in the practice of judging virtue through archery" and achieve harmonious coexistence with nature and society. In today's increasingly diversified health needs, the health preservation value of Chinese traditional archery needs to be further explored and promoted. Its inherent holistic view, balance view, and harmony view will surely inject new vitality into modern health preservation concepts and help the implementation of the Healthy China strategy. In the future, through technological integration, educational popularization, and cultural innovation, this ancient skill will be revitalized in modern society and become an important choice for national health preservation.

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