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The Abbey: January 15th
Lombard Park District: March 20th
The Abbey: May 21st

Eliminate heartburn, indigestion, acid reflux and many more digestive issues with simple exercises.



COMPLEMENTARY

Winter 2014 **FREE!** HEALTH & EXERCISE

Your reliable source for information on complementary forms of health and exercise

Volume 9, number 1

www.7StarsMA.com

Circulation: 300+

How to Learn Tøai Chi

Tai Chi Chuan (Taijiquan) is an ancient Chinese "internal" or "soft" martial art often practiced for its health-giving and spiritual benefits; it is non-competitive, gentle, and generally slow-paced. By increasing strength, flexibility, body awareness and mental concentration tai chi can improve your health. Contrary to the Western concept of "no pain, no gain" one hour of tai chi actually burns more calories than surfing and nearly as many as downhill skiing, so it's a veritable workout.

Continued on page 10

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Full class schedules and more!



Tai Chi Moving for Better Balance

FEATURES

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Holistic Ceremonies

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We can assist you in creating a ceremony that truly reflects and expresses your beliefs and commitments to one another. Traditional, civil, unity sand & candle, hand-fasting and Celtic ceremonies are available. We can legally preside over your wedding ceremony after you have obtained a valid license from the county.

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Honoring a new or change of name is an important moment in our lives; a time to present the new individual to the community; ensuring that they are a part of something greater, placing them under the protection of those present.

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We can cleanse your dwelling, room or possessions of negative or stagnant energies and dedicate them to your own spiritual needs, creating a sacred space filled with peace, harmony and healthy positive energy mirroring who you are.

Rites Of Passage

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All our ceremonies are individually designed to reflect your spiritual beliefs, wishes and intentions; to create an occasion as truly unique as you are.

Contact Reverend John

630 229 4434

John@HolisticCeremonies.com

www.HolisticCeremonies.com



Complementary Health & Exercise

Winter 2014

Editor & publisher - John Robertson



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Martial Arts



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Because of the nature of some of the products, services or techniques advertised/discussed in this magazine, you should consult a physician before using these products or services or applying these techniques.

The wisdom of Confucious

"Wheresoever you go,
go with all your heart."

Editor's Notebook

Our annual student dinner was a great success; good food, good company and many students won awards and took home a few raffle prizes! We raised \$570 for The Chicago Voyagers; this will help them to continue to help kids escape the drugs and violence they're subjected to.

Our classes at Glendale Heights resume after extensive reconstruction of the facility. To begin with we will be teaching T'ai Chi Express on a Friday evening.

Our next Reiki training program begins in March, anyone interested in a wonderful healing practice should consider this

In September we start our first teacher training program. This year long; 200 hour program consists of one weekend a month for 10 months; plus a regular in-class apprenticeship allowing students to gain real world experience of teaching. Students will be able to complete the program and be teaching within a year.

The program will include: Philosophy & Taoism, Lifestyle, Meditation, Respiration, Technique Practice, Teaching Technique, Oriental Physiology, Oriental Anatomy, Western Anatomy, Fall Prevention, Ethics, First Aid, CPR & AED.

Successful completion will certify students to teach our T'ai Chi for Health classes and also fulfills the requirements for National Qigong Association Level I Qigong Instructor certification.

On completion of the program there will be part-time teaching opportunities available with Seven Stars.

More details are on our website, and we are happy to answer any questions you may have.

John Robertson

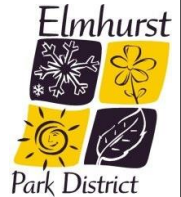
*"He lives most life whoever
breathes most air"*

T'ai Chi Express

Every Monday at 8:00pm
January 6th & March 3rd

Courts Plus

186 S. West Avenue,
Elmhurst, IL 60126
630 833 5064



Using the 8 Step T'ai Chi form; a shorter more compact version of the 24 posture form taught in our T'ai Chi Chuan classes

It requires less time & space and is great for those without the room to practice the 24 form, or those with busy lives who still want the all the benefits of T'ai Chi

Friday at 5:45pm
March 14th - April 25th



The Sports Hub
250 Civic Center Plaza,
Glendale Heights
630 260 6060

The Tortoise and the Hare

Aesop - 620 - 560 BCE

Once upon a time there was a hare who, boasting how he could run faster than anyone else, was forever teasing tortoise for its slowness.

Then one day, the irate tortoise answered back: "Who do you think you are? There's no denying you're swift, but even you can be beaten!" The hare squealed with laughter.

"Beaten in a race? By whom? Not you, surely! I bet there's nobody in the world that can win against me, I'm so speedy. Now, why don't you try?"

Annoyed by such bragging, the tortoise accepted the challenge. A course was planned, and the next day at dawn they stood at the starting line. The hare yawned sleepily as the meek tortoise trudged slowly off.

When the hare saw how painfully slow his rival was, he decided, half asleep on his feet, to have a quick nap. "Take your time!" he said. "I'll have forty winks and catch up with you in a minute."

The hare woke with a start from a fitful sleep and gazed round, looking for the tortoise. But the creature was only a short distance away, having barely covered a third of the course.

Breathing a sigh of relief, the hare decided he might as well have breakfast too, and off he went to munch some cabbages he had noticed in a nearby field. But the heavy meal and the hot sun made his eyelids droop.

With a careless glance at the tortoise, now halfway along the course, he decided to have another snooze before flashing past the winning post. And smiling at the thought of the look on the tortoise's face when it saw the hare speed by, he fell fast asleep and was soon snoring happily.

The sun started to sink, below the horizon, and the tortoise, who had been plodding towards the winning post since morning, was scarcely a yard from the finish.

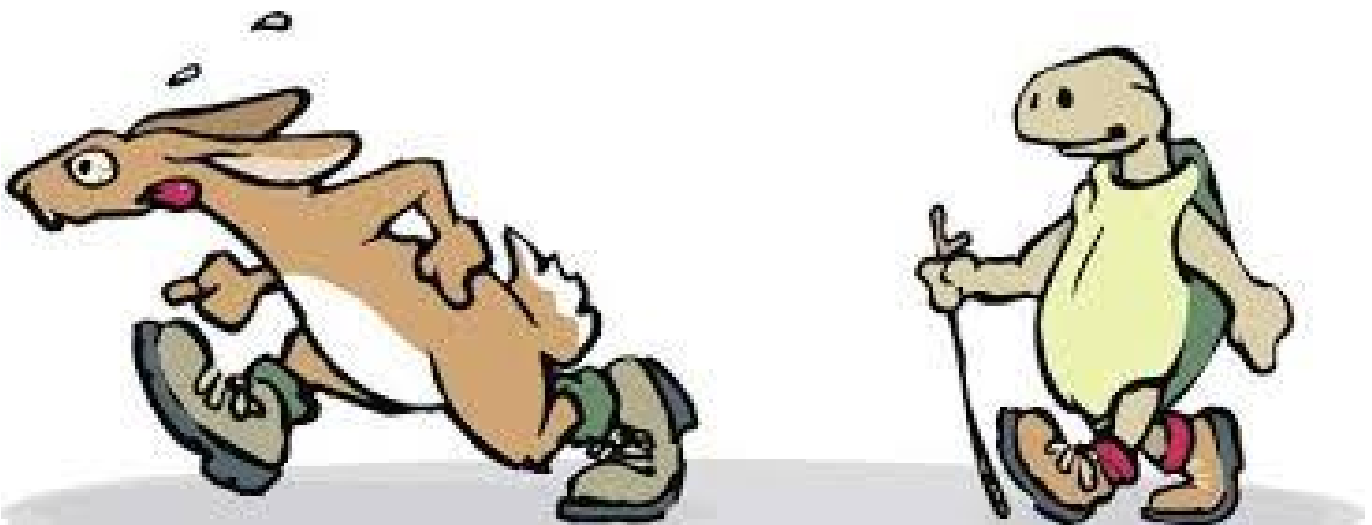
At that very point, the hare woke with a jolt. He could see the tortoise a speck in the distance and away he dashed. He leapt and bounded at a great rate, his tongue lolling, and gasping for breath. Just a little more and he'd be first at the finish.

But the hare's last leap was just too late, for the tortoise had beaten him to the winning post. Poor hare! Tired and in disgrace, he slumped down beside the tortoise who was silently smiling at him.

"Slowly does it every time!" he said.

The story of the tortoise and the hare is very appropriate to the practice of Tai Chi and Qigong. Those students that choose to be the tortoise and take their practice slow and steady are sure to reap the benefits.

Choose to be the tortoise!



What Should I Wear To Practice Tai Chi?

© By Dr Paul Lam

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What should I wear to practice Tai Chi?

Loose, comfortable clothes and thin, flat soled shoes.

Clothing For Normal Practice

Cotton is the best type of clothing to wear for everyday practice because it allows your skin to breath and absorbs sweat. It is convenient to dress in layers because in winter, it can be cold but when you practice, you can work up a sweat. You might need to take some clothes off. In summer, you might get overheated. Again, you can remove a layer. But remember, if you are overheated; avoid practicing in a windy area. And when you practice in a colder area, put on a light jacket. After your practice do not subject yourself to extreme change of temperature quickly, for example if you are hot and sweating, do not go to a very cool and windy place, cool down gradually. Your clothes should be loose and comfortable. While clothing such as leotards might allow your body to move freely, such clothing is not good for Tai Chi. In Tai Chi, mobilizing the Qi is an important goal. Qi travels along its meridians (energy channels), which are close to the surface of the skin, so clothing that stick tightly to the skin such as leotards do not help the flow of Qi. Also avoid tight elastic around your waist and pant legs because, again, this might restrict the flow of Qi.

The ideal practice shoes should:

1. Feel very comfortable and soft.
2. Be light, with a thin sole.
3. Have broad base support in the sole to help balance.
4. Have shock absorbent pads to minimize injury.

Lace-up shoes like the martial art shoes, for example Adidas or Prospect martial art shoes, can be suitable, although they are not designed for Tai Chi practitioners, and they don't offer good base support or shock absorbance. Shoes specifically designed for Tai Chi are needed.

Bare feet

Some people like to practice in bare feet. For others, it might be difficult. Shoes can give you good support and enhance balance. Sometimes the ground might be uneven or dirty. Also, if your feet get cold, it could impede the flow of Qi. For people with diabetes, good shoes are essential.

Tai Chi clothing and shoes are available to purchase from your instructors.

T'ai Chi for Health & Qigong teacher training

Learn the foundations of Qigong and T'ai Chi and how to teach the core curriculum to allow you to successfully facilitate Qigong & T'ai Chi for Health classes.

Over the yearlong program we will delve into the history, philosophy and exercises of Qigong, learning how to explain and teach them.

Application forms, dates, tuition and more information is available on our website

www.7StarsMA.com/Students/TeacherTraining.html

**Program begins
September 2014**



七星
武
道



The Lighthouse Center,
165 S. Church Street,
Winfield, IL 60190

John@7StarsMA.com



630-229-4434



Be guided to a higher quality of life
by the wisdom of the ancients

Don't let stress stress you out!



Stress could be called the plague of the 21st century; it is said to be responsible for around 85% of Doctors visits.

Learn simple, effective ways to reduce both chronic and acute stress

January 5th ~ 2:30pm

Sunset Knoll Recreation Centre
820 S. Finley Road, Lombard

630 620 7322



February 5th ~ 12:30pm

Elmhurst



The Abbey Senior Center
407 W. St. Charles Road,
Elmhurst, IL 60126

March 20th ~ 7:30pm

ROSELLE PARK DISTRICT

Clauss Recreation Center

555 W. Bryn Mawr Ave, Roselle, IL 60172

630 894 4200

Gong Fu

Pahka Dave

"The Chinese word Gong--among many other things-- means: 'A 100 Day Training Period.'

One Gong is One Hundred Days. This is how we train ourselves..

Chinese Gongfu Masters have known for centuries that if you can get a student to do anything daily for 100 days, that new activity will become a new habit.

This is why Masters have a saying and encourage students to stick with One Path..

'Better 100 steps on One Path than 10 steps on Ten Paths.'

It is not that you would not benefit from walking 10 paths, but it would take so much longer to cultivate your Qi.

The particular form one practices is not more important than the process of Gong. If you work on one Gong per day you can only accomplish 3 & 2/3 Gongs per year.

Master Martial Artists often work on Several Gongs per day: Long Form Taiji Gong, Sword Form Taiji Gong, Push Hands Taiji Gong, Meditation Gong.

But they are Masters because they have already learned the Benefit of Gong. Gong has become a habit for them.

They wish to increase the benefit so they pursue several Gongs per day. This is the Chinese way. Nei Gong and Wai Gong.

Internal and External Training. In China, Martial Artists are set on the Straight Path at a very young age. But here in the West we walk the Crooked Path.

If you are new to Qigong, better 100 steps on One Path, than 10 steps on Ten Paths."



Learn to use your own healing abilities

Reiki

We all have innate healing abilities. In this class you will learn to tap into that inner wisdom; and using the natural energy of the universe help yourself and your family heal.

This energy can help you to re-establish balance and harmony on the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual planes so that the natural function of your body is restored and its ability to heal itself is activated.

This is a hands-on workshop under the guidance of a Reiki Master Teacher and Qigong Instructor.



Register early ~ class is limited to 6 participants!

Level 1

Saturday, March 15th
9:00am - 5:00pm

Our Reiki Student course teaches you all the basic principles of Reiki: Natural Energy Healing!

Helping you to harness the energy of the universe

All for only \$157!

Level 2

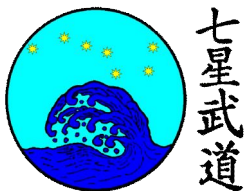
Saturday, April 19th
9:00am - 5:00pm

Take your practice to a higher level and begin to work with the public! Enroll in our Reiki Practitioner course (1 & 2) for only \$297 ~ save \$57! Plus! get a laminated hand position and a symbols chart free!

Level 3

Saturday, May 17th
9:00am - 5:00pm

Enroll in our Reiki Master Practitioner course (1, 2 & 3) for only \$497 ~ get a laminated hand position chart, 2 laminated symbols charts, a session CD, & a Reiki for Dummies book free ~ a total saving of \$158!



七星武
道

The Lighthouse Center, 165 S. Church Street, Winfield

Call 630 229 4434 or register online at:
www.7StarsMA.com/Metaphysicsclasses/Reiki.html



T'ai Chi's Supreme Ultimate Benefit

by Bill Douglas, Founder of World Tai Chi & Qigong Day

Taiji's name of "supreme ultimate" gives a vision that is both profound and limitless. Articles and studies isolate taiji's individual mental/physical health benefits, but what about its greater potential, or its supreme ultimate purpose? For a world sagging from the weight of an exploding population, a straining environment, and the deafening roar of an information age igniting around us, taiji may offer much more than its more commonly considered benefits. Taiji may help the world thrive in a precarious future, not because taiji teachers have the answers, but because taiji may help the world "open to its own answers." Yet, even though teachers aren't responsible for the answers, it may greatly enhance their teaching to consider taiji's greater promise.

Taiji doesn't "fix" us, but simply enables us to "let go of our major malfunction," which is our inability to "let go of what is not healthful or useful to our evolving lives. Internally we feel blocked energy as stress tension. What causes the block is our "holding on" to what is no longer useful, be it a thought or a feeling. Imagine a river of change flowing at you constantly while you try to "hang on" to the past or to "old ways." This forces the river to beat you senseless. However, when you "let go of the rock of the past and learn to flow, or surf, with the force of change moving toward the future you begin to thrive on that force, and rather than being destroyed by it you are lifted by it. Taiji lubricates our ability to flow with change, so that we can learn to surf the future powerfully with less damage. Discomfort and disease, whether personal or environmental/social, is the result of us getting "stuck" in a way that won't allow inevitable change to flow through us. The same energy flowing through the world flows through us, and the discomfort or dis-ease we feel internally when we "block energy" is felt by the entire world when the world fights inevitable change, rather than working "with it."

The world has never more desperately needed taiji's lubricating effect. Modern times demand that we become utterly fluid in our ways of living, as the speed of social change moves at a deafening pace. Bill Joy,

Chief Scientist for Sun Microsystems, recently said that due to the dawn of the information age, change is now not only doubling, but doubling exponentially every eighteen months, while psychological research shows that change is stressful, even good change. 70% of all illness according to the National Institute of Mental Health is due to stress, but actually rapid change isn't really the problem, but our inability to adapt to change is. Therefore, taiji could conceivably save American society \$700 billion per year in avoidable illness, if taiji were used more widely. The stress crisis pushes us toward the opportunities of taiji.

The Chinese character for "crisis" is made of the two characters "danger" and "opportunity," meaning crisis provides not only danger but opportunity to grow. The "danger" of the modern stress crisis provides the world with such an opportunity. By fostering taiji's rapid expansion across the planet it may be literally changing the world. As corporations, hospitals, schools, and even prisons now adopt taiji to help people deal with the stress of rapid change, something profound is occurring. For, just as taiji's quiet mindful health practice encourages us to a healthier diet, sleep patterns, and life habits in our personal lives, it now moves society in healthier directions as well. When taiji is practiced in corporate boardrooms, hospitals, schools and even prisons throughout the entire world, it affects the decisions that create our future economy, environment, government, and society at all levels in more healthy and compassionate ways, just as it does within each taiji practitioner's own life.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Bill Douglas is the Tai Chi Expert at DrWeil.com, Founder of World T'ai Chi & Qigong Day (held in 60 nations each year), and has authored and co-authored several books including a #1 best selling Tai Chi book *The Complete Idiot's Guide to T'ai Chi & Qigong*. Bill has been a Tai Chi source for *The Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, etc. You can learn more about Tai Chi & Qigong, search a worldwide teachers directory, and also contact Bill Douglas at <http://www.worldtaichiday.org>

Tai Chi Chuan

"the secret to anti-aging" it's the
"miracle exercise" for people seeking
to avoid drugs, surgery, and expensive
doctor bills. Dr. Mehmet Oz on Oprah

Elmhurst

Courts Plus
186 S. West Avenue,
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Continuing students meet every
Tuesday at 12:30pm
January 7th & March 4th

Beginner students meet every
Thursday at 12:30pm
January 9th & March 6th

Call: 630 833 5064

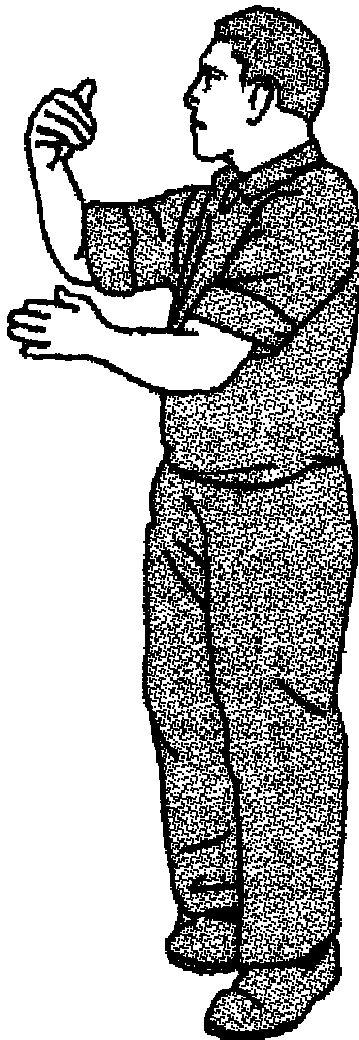
Lombard

Sunset Knoll Recreation Centre
820 S. Finley Road,
Lombard, IL 60148

Beginner students meet every
Monday at 5:00pm
January 6th & March 3rd

Continuing students meet every
Monday at 6:00pm
January 6th & March 3rd

Call: 630 620 7322



Roselle

Clauss Recreation Center
555 W. Bryn Mawr Avenue,
Roselle, IL 60172

Beginner students meet every
Tuesday at 9:00am
January 7th & March 4th

Continuing students meet every
Tuesday at 9:00am
January 7th & March 4th

Call: 630 894 4200

Villa Park

Iowa Community Centre
338 N. Iowa Avenue,
Villa Park, IL 60181

Beginner students meet every
Tuesday at 2:00pm
January 7th & March 4th

Continuing students meet every
Thursday at 2:00pm
January 9th & March 6th

Call: 630 834 8970



How to Learn Tai Chi

Edited by Jack Herrick, From Malaysia, Ben Rubenstein, Zack and 33 others

From the front cover:

The art of tai chi is said to improve the flow of Chi (Qi), the traditional Chinese concept of a physically intangible energy or life force. In scientific studies, tai chi has been proven to improve a host of medical conditions including, but not limited to: muscular pain, headaches, fibromyalgia, cardiovascular problems, arthritis, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, Diabetes and ADHD.

Though its low-impact workout is especially helpful to seniors, tai chi is for everyone and is deceptively simple in appearance.

To understand the nature of Tai Chi Chuan (meaning "Supreme Ultimate Fist" we have to put it into context with the culture from where it has come from. Meaning we have to look closer at the Chinese culture and, in particular, the spiritual tradition of Taoism which is where Tai Chi Chuan finds its roots and sustenance.

Now; the thing to keep in mind about Taoism, and those that would call themselves Taoists, is that Taoism is about an attunement with nature. Not just nature outside of us, but also the nature within us.

In fact one of the key principles of Taoism comes from the Tao Te Ching written by the sage Lao Tzu. This principle is called Tzu Jan, or Ziran in pinyin, and it is the principle of being "self-so" or embodying one's "self-nature" .

So beyond the health benefits and stress relief, Tai Chi Chuan is also a means to tap into one's inner self.

This article is a beginner's guide to getting into tai chi initially and sticking with the routine of daily practice. Actual moves are not covered in this article.

1. Check your eligibility.

Anyone can do tai chi, provided you choose the gentler forms of it. The reason for this is that tai chi emphasizes technique over strength, giving every person a chance to master the art regardless of strength or



age. The workout is low-impact and is therefore suitable for most people. If you have any doubts, talk to your medical practitioner.

Those who have joint, spine, fractures, or heart problems, or who are pregnant, should discuss taking up tai chi with their medical practitioner first.

2. Find a knowledgeable teacher who is right for you.

There are no degrees or credentials for teaching tai chi, and the key factor is the compatibility of your learning style with their teaching style. While there may be helpful study guides, it is simply impossible to learn from a book or video. A DVD cannot correct your form, and everyone needs correction as a beginner.

Moreover, the social support gained by attending a class is invaluable. Places to look for a tai chi teacher include your local health club, community center, wellness facility, martial arts studio, YMCA, or YWCA. There are many "tai chi class finders" online.

Factors in choosing a teacher include:

There is no universal (or even widely-used) accreditation system for tai chi teachers. This often makes it difficult for a beginner to judge the veracity or suitability of a particular teacher's tai chi.

A teacher without the ability to answer prolific questions and make individualized adjustments to your form is not acceptable, therefore it is best to trust your gut and keep looking until you click with the instructor.

If you're a newcomer to tai chi, it is completely acceptable to learn from another advanced student. One important factor to consider is if you have any medical conditions which require special attention, such as arthritis or multiple sclerosis. If so, it is essential you choose a teacher who has experience making accommodations for your condition.

Picking a teacher who is an hour drive away is the fastest way to getting tai chi relegated to your New Year's resolution list year after year. Ensure that you find classes that are close and handy to you.

Pay only what you can afford. A fancy studio and a free uniform doesn't mean much if you aren't learning anything. Most traditional classes are held outdoors and are informal when compared to say, your local taekwondo school.

3. Pick a style of instruction.

No matter if your teacher of tai chi is a soccer mom from the burbs' or an old Chinese man with a white beard, pick a style of instruction that works for you. It doesn't matter how knowledgeable they are, if you can't understand them, you won't get any of their experience to show in your practice. Be sure to pick a teacher who has the same goals you do (in terms of health, self-defense etc.). To understand what you're in for, visit the class yourself before signing up.

Teachers who refuse to allow a trial class are hiding something. Anyone who calls themselves, or insists you call them grandmaster or any other equally overblown term, is not worth pursuing.

A true tai chi teacher will tell you that they are still learning to master tai chi, even after many years. Bear in mind that tai chi is not about competition. You are not entering the class to compete with the teacher or the others in the class. You are joining the class to honor and augment the teacher's work, and to learn.

4. Choose a style of tai chi that fits with your needs and interests.

There are hundreds of tai chi styles but each of them has a specific focus of its own such as health or martial arts, meaning that you need to make a decision about what you want to get from the tai chi experience.

The six most popular styles, which originate from family lineages, are the: Chen, Yang, Wu, Sun and Wu-Hao and Fa styles. Yang style is the most popular when focusing on health issues, however Chen style, with its lower stances and focus on martial development, is most popular as a self-defense art. No matter the style, stick with it, and remember that despite visual differences all tai chi styles share the same basic underlying philosophy.

The many types of tai chi styles mean that there are over 100 movements and positions in tai chi that you can learn. Many of these carry the names of nature or animals.

The continuity between all forms of tai chi is: concentration on breathing coordinated with rhythmic movement, and an end goal of achieving inner calm by focusing on the present.

5. Practice.

Reading the cool tai chi magazines is fun, but the primary way to improve your tai chi is to practice. Anecdotes about one tai chi master, the famous Chen Fake, say he practiced his styles form 30 plus times a day.

While you certainly don't need to go to this extreme, practicing once a day is preferable. Twice a week is about the minimum amount of practice in order to learn most effectively, and feel a tangible benefit.

When practicing, focus on what you remember. Don't beat yourself up about not remembering, but rather improve what you can work on. Even if you only remember one posture, standing and holding that posture is good for you.

Develop a routine so that it is both easy to remember and you find it a pleasant association between practicing tai chi and how you feel about your day in general.

What you get from your Tai Chi practice is largely

Continued on page 13:

Tai Chi for Health

Tai Chi for Health is a gentle, beautiful and flowing exercise routine that is a joy to do.

Energizing and deeply relaxing; it brings a stronger immune system, health and vitality to all who practice it.

Elmhurst

The Abbey Senior Center
407 W. St. Charles Road,
Elmhurst, IL 60126

Wednesday at 11:15am
January 8th & March 5th

Call: 630 993-8193



Addison

Classes are held in Wood Dale at:
Wood Dale Recreation Complex,
111 E. Foster Avenue,
Wood Dale, IL 60191

Thursday at 11:00am
January 9th & March 6th

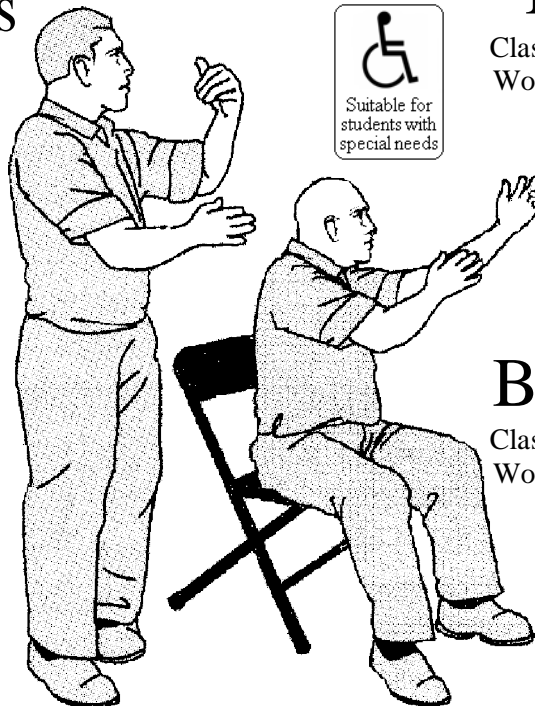
Call: 630 595 9333

Glendale Heights

Classes are held in Wood Dale at:
Wood Dale Recreation Complex,
111 E. Foster Avenue,
Wood Dale, IL 60191

Thursday at 11:00am
January 9th & March 6th

Call: 630 595 9333



Bensenville

Classes are held in Wood Dale at:
Wood Dale Recreation Complex,
111 E. Foster Avenue,
Wood Dale, IL 60191

Thursday at 11:00am
January 9th & March 6th

Call: 630 595 9333

Wood Dale

Wood Dale Recreation Complex,
111 E. Foster Avenue,
Wood Dale, IL 60191

Thursday at 11:00am
January 9th & March 6th

Call: 630 595 9333

Bloomingtondale

Classes are held in Wood Dale at:
Wood Dale Recreation Complex,
111 E. Foster Avenue,
Wood Dale, IL 60191

Thursday at 11:00am
January 9th & March 6th

Call: 630 595 9333



Continued from page 11:

determined by how, and how much you are practicing. To get the most from your training consistency is needed. Set aside some time for yourself every day, fifteen minutes will do. Then, every day, take that time to care for your body and clear your mind with your practice. The reward will be well worth it.

You can practice indoors or outdoors, with friends, or solo. Whatever fits in best for you, tai chi will work with you.

6. Commit to practicing for 12 weeks minimum.

You need at least three months of practicing tai chi before you will notice the benefits. At this point, they should be very evident and ongoing but don't give up or give yourself at least this minimum period to see the benefits. And once you reach this mark, continue for longer and bigger benefits, and for greatly increased skill.

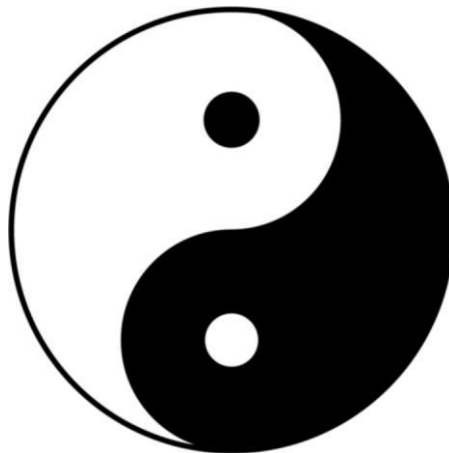
7. Keep distractions out of your practice zone.

During the tai session, you are expected to put aside distractions and focus. The deep breathing aspect will help, as will relaxing:

Relax. Tensing your body is the best way to prevent getting any benefit from tai chi. However, relax does not mean turn into a wet noodle. Retain proper posture without excess tension. Classic tai chi literature often describes this as standing "as if one were suspended on a string on the top of the head".

Breathe. Part of the secret of tai chi's health benefits comes from deep, abdominal breathing. The majority of styles teach "abdominal breathing", in which one breathes in, expanding the abdominal area (not the chest) and exhales by contracting the abs.

All inhalation is through the nose, exhalation through the mouth and the tongue should touch the roof of the



mouth; stimulating salivary function. Live in the moment. Develop the tai chi mental discipline to live in the moment rather than focusing on anxieties.

8. Practice in stressful situations.

Once you are more proficient at tai chi, move it into your daily life to reduce stress. Practice the concepts of tai chi in highly stressful situations, such as traffic jams, or a high-intensity work meeting, to lessen the tension and restore inner calm and balance.

As a form of meditation, tai chi is able to help you learn to understand yourself better and thereby deal with others more effectively. Thus, when stressful situations arise, tai chi learning will help you to be assertive and respectful of others, as well as staying in the present and dealing with the situation before you with calmness.

Tai chi helps you learn to merge the opposing forces of yin and yang, self and the world to achieve a natural balance for physical and spiritual well-being. This balance is represented by the tai chi symbol.

9. Expand your repertoire.

Cross-training in other forms and styles, after you've achieved a basic level of mastery in your first form, is often very helpful at improving your general tai chi knowledge.

The iconic practice of tai chi are the "hand" forms; the slow movements performed in a group or solo.

But tai chi includes a vast array of forms which can improve your health and self-defense abilities. Most teachers only go on to such forms after a demonstrable proficiency in the basic hand form of the style.

Learn about weapons forms. Almost all styles, including those which disregard all martial intent, have tai chi forms practiced with weapons.

Continued on page 14:

50 Secrets



O

f



longest living



people

This class will give you plenty of ideas to help you to live a long and healthy life.

February 7th ~ 6:00-8:00pm

Courts Plus

186 S. West Avenue,
Elmhurst, IL 60126
630 833 5064



February 12th ~ 1:00-2:00pm

Sunset Knoll Recreation Centre
820 S. Finley Road, Lombard

630 620 7322



February 19th ~ 1:00-3:00pm

 **ROSELLE PARK DISTRICT**

Clauss Recreation Center

555 W. Bryn Mawr Ave, Roselle, IL 60172

630 894 4200

Continued from page 13:

These can range from simple staves or swords to esoteric Chinese weapons.

Try a faster form. Ironically, and in opposition to the public's general idea of tai chi, most traditional family styles (including Yang, Chen, Fa and Wu) have a "fast form."

This form is often used as a way of expressing the martial power honed and stored in slow form practice. Sometimes called "Cannon Fist" (pao chui) in Chen style.

Learn about partner work. If forms practice is tai chi's solo workout, "pushing hands" (tui shou) is its partner exercise. Though eventually it can lead into free sparring, push hands is essentially an exercise meant to develop the sensitivity and skill of tai chi in a cooperative way.

Generally, the learning of push hands builds steadily; moving from fixed-stance patterns with a single hand, and ending in a moving step pattern with both hands sometimes varying in height and speed.

10. Read deeply about tai chi.

Classwork is one thing but learning the meaning, philosophical underpinning, and history of tai chi takes time and much of it is best done through reading and learning in your own time.

This is an important part of learning tai chi because it provides you with the opportunity to get a deeper understanding of how tai chi benefits you mentally and physically, and enables you to find new ideas about enriching your tai chi experience.

Other people's learning about tai chi can inform your own and you may want to put some of their ideas into practice to see what works best for you.

Feel free to ask your teacher questions about your self-directed learning, such as what to read and questions about what you have read. That way you will expand your understanding a great deal.

Read the Tao Te Ching and the I Ching. These books discuss the concept of "qi" and how it can become blocked and when this happens, so does illness.



The Symbolic Meaning behind the 108 moves in Tai Chi

Original author unknown

Tai Chi is built on a rich heritage of Taoist beliefs which traces its source back to Chang San Feng, the 11th Century Taoist monk who systematized Tai Chi Chuan.

The Tai Chi long form has 108 moves because the number 108 represents the 36 Celestial Deities and 72 Terrestrial Deities. This number was divined by Chang San Feng himself.

There are six major yang channels in the body, each controlling six minor yang channels, totaling thirty-six. These are the thirty-six Celestial Deities. The six main yang channels are associated with the Six Bowels: large intestine, small intestine, gall bladder, stomach, and the three burning spaces. (The three burning spaces refer to three regions in the body: the lower region, from the sexual organs to the navel; the middle region, from the navel to the diaphragm; the upper region, from the diaphragm to the neck. The three burning places are responsible for regulating nutrients and wastes in the body.) The 36 Celestial Deities refer to the yang elements in our body.

The 72 Terrestrial Deities refer to the yin elements in our body. There are six major yin channels in the body, each controlling twelve minor yin channels, totaling seventy-two. The six main yin channels are associated with the Five Viscera: the heart, with two channels, liver, spleen, lungs, and kidneys.

Together, the 36 yang channels and 72 yin channels complete the number 108. The number 108 represents the yin and yang essences in our body. Performing the 108 move set symbolizes the union of the 36 yang (Celestial) and the 72 yin (Terrestrial) elements in our body. 108 represent completeness.

Any number less than 108 means the imbalance of yin and yang and the lack of completeness. On the contrary, the full 108 symbolizes the harmonious balance of yin and yang and therefore leads to health. The union of all yin and yang elements represents the return to the holistic and undifferentiated state of the Tao.



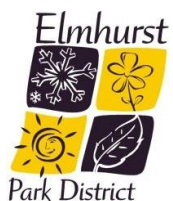
Say goodbye to antacids

Do you suffer from heartburn,
acid reflux, indigestion, GERD
or other digestive issues?

Would you prefer to deal with
the cause rather than masking
the symptoms with antacids
and medication?

Learn exercises that have the
potential to deal with the problem
at the root cause and to eliminate it;
imagine eating your meals without
the threat of that harmful discom-
fort hanging over you.

January 15th ~ 12:30pm



The Abbey Senior Center
407 W. St. Charles Road,
Elmhurst, IL 60126
630 993 8193

March 20th ~ 7:00pm

Sunset Knoll Recreation Centre
820 S. Finley Road, Lombard

630 620 7322



The Six Healing Sounds



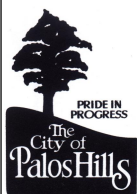
It is said that there is one way of drawing breath in and six ways of expelling breath out. The six ways of expelling the breath are represented by sounds which resonate with specific organs.

Practice of the Healing Sounds promotes optimal organ health, emotional balance, and helps us prevent illness. The sounds are so simple and easy to perform that they seem almost too good to be true, they work the first time, every time.

Once learnt the sounds can be easily used throughout the day, taking only a minute or two to help maintain health and vitality.

Saturday, March 22nd 10:00am - 3:30pm

Learn two complete
Healing Sounds
systems; and how to use
them to promote health and
emotional wellbeing.



Palos Hills Community Center
8455 W. 103rd Street,
Palos Hills, IL 60465
708 430 4500

Important Benefits of T'ai Chi Practice

John Robertson - December 2009

Ancient Chinese exercises, such as Qigong and T'ai Chi, which focus on meditation and relaxation techniques, have proved very beneficial for older adults ó a recent study by researchers at the University of Illinois shows.

Qigong, which dates to at least the middle of the first millennium B.C., is a series of integrated exercises that have positive, relaxing effects on a practitioner's mind, body and spirit.

T'ai Chi is a holistic form of exercise, and a type of Qigong that melds Chinese philosophy with martial and healing arts.

T'ai Chi and Qigong are relatively simple, safe and inexpensive, they require no props or special equipment, making them easily adaptable for practice by older adults.

Those that practice T'ai Chi find that they are better able to resist the heat of the summer and the cold of the winter. They will have more resistance to illness and disease, through improved immune systems.

It improves thinking ability, concentration, hastens your mental and physical responses; reducing your risk of cognitive decline and dementia.

Practicing T'ai Chi everyday will moderate your temperament and reduce both mental and physical fatigue. Reducing stress and aiding relaxation.

The practice of T'ai Chi breathing will result in improved respiration and circulation. The blood will circulate through the body more freely, helping lower blood pressure and further reduce stress.

There will be improvements in digestion and metabolism. The quality of sleep, and consequently rest and rejuvenation will be improved. T'ai Chi will strengthen the body, prolong youthfulness and lengthen life.

Tai Chi and Qigong practice can also enhance lives from a mental, emotional and spiritual perspective.

And remember it is the practice and learning of T'ai Chi, and not the accomplishment of having learnt the form where the true benefits are gained.

*"Someone who hasn't done this has no
comprehension about how much better
it has made me feel."*

The 14 Facts

Author unknown

- 1: The greatest enemy in life is:
the ego...
- 2: The greatest deceit in life is:
this is mine ...
- 3: The greatest failure in life is:
narcissism ...
- 4: The greatest acid in life is:
envy & jealousy...
- 5: The greatest error in life is to
lose self-control ...
- 6: The greatest crime in life is
betrayal of parents ...
- 7: The greatest deplorable in life
is pathetic self- pity...
- 8: The greatest success in life is
correcting own failure...
- 9: The greatest bankruptcy in life
is lewd immoral conduct...
- 10: The greatest wealth in life is
health and understanding ...
- 11: The greatest debt in life is
clinging and lack of purity...
- 12: The greatest gift in life is
patience, tolerance & forgiveness...
- 13: The greatest shortcoming in
life is lack of present awareness !
- 14: The greatest soothing relief in
life is generosity & kind charity !



Introduction to Chinese Health Balls

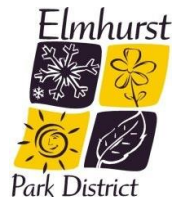
Their use can reduce your risk of
carpal tunnel, arthritis, tendonitis,
rheumatism, repetitive stress injury,
dementia & Alzheimer's.

They can help reduce stress, aid
relaxation and help prolong life.

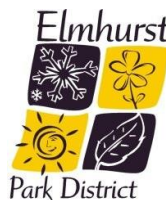
March 7th ~ 6:00 - 7:00pm

Courts Plus

186 S. West Avenue,
Elmhurst, IL 60126
630 833 5064



January 8th ~ 1:00pm



Courts Plus

186 S. West Avenue,
Elmhurst, IL 60126
630 833 5064

Are you over 65?

Your chance of falling in
the next year is 1 in 3

Learn how to reduce your risk, and
how to maintain your independence
until later in life

February 1st ~ 1:00pm

Sunset Knoll Recreation Centre
820 S. Finley Road, Lombard

630 620 7322





T'ai Chi Sword

January 9th & March 6th
Thursday - 3:00-3:30pm

Iowa Community Center,
338 N. Iowa Avenue,
Villa Park, IL 60181

630 834 8970

(Previous Tai Chi experience is required)



"Pilates. Yoga. Maybe a new strain of tai chi. Whatever! We've got to end it before the entire herd is infected."

Upcoming Events

www.7StarsMA.com/SevenStarsStudents.html

Lombard Health Expo

Sunday, January 5th ~ 11:00am - 2:00pm
Sunset Knoll in Lombard

Tai Chi Qigong Shibashi

February 8th ~ 10:00am - 3:30pm
Palos Hills Park District



Tai Chi Qigong Shibashi

February 15th ~ 9:00am - 2:30pm
Relax4Life in Barrington



Roselle Health & Wellness Expo

Thursday, February 27th ~ 6:00pm - 8:00pm
Claus Recreation center, Roselle, IL

Reiki 1, 2 & Master Classes

March 15th, April 19th, May 17th
Lighthouse Center in Winfield



World Tai Chi Day

Saturday, April 26th 2014 ~ 9:00-noon
Theosophical Society in Wheaton



Tai Chi Spring Gathering

Saturday, April 26th 2014 ~ 1:00pm - 4:00pm
Creekside Park / Lighthouse Center in Winfield

Teacher training program starts

September 13th/14th - June 2015
Lighthouse Center in Winfield



TheosoFEST

Saturday, September 6th ~ 10:00am - 5:00pm
The Theosophical Society in Wheaton, IL

World Ki Gong Club Annual Clinic

September 26th-28th 2014
Granlibakken Resort in Tahoe, CA

Holistic Health Fair

Sunday, September 28th ~ 10:00am - 4:00pm
Soup to Nuts in Geneva

Annual Student Dinner

Tuesday, November 25th ~ 2:00 - 4:00pm
Jack & Silverado Grill in Elmhurst



Watch out for flyers for all these events,
and check our website for updates!

Class calendar

www.7StarsMA.com

January

- 5 Health Expo
 - Lombard Park District, Lombard
- 5 Don't let stress stress you out
 - Lombard Park District, Lombard
- 8 Falls: they don't have to happen to you
 - Courts Plus, Elmhurst
- 9 Falls: they don't have to happen to you
 - Wood Dale Park District, Wood Dale
- 15 Say goodbye to antacids
 - The Abbey, Elmhurst

February

- 1 Falls: they don't have to happen to you
 - Lombard Park District, Lombard
- 2 Chinese Health Balls
 - Lombard Park District, Lombard
- 5 Don't let stress stress you out
 - The Abbey, Elmhurst
- 7 50 Secrets of the world's longest living people
 - Courts Plus, Elmhurst
- 8 Tai Chi Qigong Shibashi
 - Palos Hills Community Center, Palos Hills
- 12 50 Secrets of the world's longest living people
 - Lombard Park District, Lombard
- 15 Tai Chi Qigong Shibashi
 - Relax4Life, Barrington
- 19 50 Secrets of the world's longest living people
 - Roselle Park District, Roselle
- 27 Roselle Health & Wellness Expo
 - Roselle Park District, Roselle

March

- 5 Exercise for Mental muscle
 - The Abbey, Elmhurst
- 7 Chinese Health Balls
 - Courts Plus, Elmhurst
- 20 Say goodbye to antacids
 - Lombard Park District, Lombard
- 20 Don't let stress stress you out
 - Roselle Park District, Roselle
- 22 The Six Healing Sounds
 - Palos Hills Community Center, Palos Hills

Learning Lunches

Let your employees learn while taking lunch!

Our series of Learning Lunches Seminars are designed to improve employee health and wellness while increasing productivity, reducing absenteeism and cutting health care costs.



Our classes include:

- Tai Chi Chuan
- Tai Chi for Health
- Exercise at your Desk
- Natural Energy Healing
- The Six Healing Sounds
- Exercise for Mental Muscle
- Don't let stress stress you out
- Stress Relief for the Workplace
- Falls? They don't have to happen to you
- An Introduction to Chinese Health Balls
- 50 Secrets of the World's Longest Living People
- Are You Ready? - A FEMA Disaster Preparedness Program



Breakfast, lunch, evening and weekend sessions are all available.

Sessions can be fully customized for time, length and content.

One time and ongoing classes available.

630 229 4434

John@7StarsMA.com

www.7StarsMA.com/Community/LearningLunches.html

Health and safety education in your location, at your convenience

Tai Chi Qigong Shibashi

Tai Chi Qigong Shibashi is a Qigong exercise based on the philosophy of Tai Chi and extracts some of the best movements from Yang style T'ai Chi Chuan and adds Qigong exercise.

It places emphasis on synchronizing the eighteen movements with proper breathing techniques.

It is a gentle, beautiful and flowing Qigong exercise routine that is both a joy to do and deeply relaxing.

It can be done standing, sitting in a chair or a combination, making it suitable for all ages and abilities.

This is an ideal class for beginners.

If you are a social worker, counselor, teacher or massage therapist and want 5 CEU's for this workshop there is a \$5 additional processing fee

Saturday, February 15th ~ 9:00am-2:30pm

Relax4Life Center, 26402 Edgemoond Lane, Barrington, IL 60010



Relax4Life

Call 847 842 1752

or register online at:

www.relax4life.com/Shibashi.htm

