



# Taiji Peoria, LLC

## MINDFUL MOVEMENT CENTER

Our mission is to improve health through mindful movement. Tai chi (taiji) benefits include improved balance, reduction in anxiety, improved cognitive function, and improved circulation.

### January 2020

#### *Practice... Practice... Practice...*

By Dwight Edwards

In an article published in Martial Arts of China, Gene Chen recounts a story of how the daughter of famous internal arts master Sun Lutang employed her father to impart his secret for achieving martial skill to her and students standing near his bed before he dies. At her urging, he asked for a writing brush and her hand, and wrote on her palm the word *liàn* (練). She then raised her hand to reveal to all in the room his secret for achieving martial skill, "Practice."

David Gaffney, in a recent post, recounts how Chen taijiquan master Chen Xiaowang would respond to questions about training, at times saying, "You know the rules, follow the rules... Train first and often the question answers itself."

Our teacher Dr. Yang when asked similar questions about training often replied by saying, "Practice is likened to a prescription from your doctor. If you do not take the medicine, then it will not work. If you do not practice, you will not gain the benefits of taiji."

Each of these teachers emphasizes the importance of practice in their own way. Sun Lutang ardently proclaims that superior martial skill or *gōngfū* (功夫) is achieved only through practice. Master Chen Xiaowang recounts in terms similar to the old adage, "There are no secrets, only practice" and employs students to follow the principles of taijiquan in their practice. Dr. Yang's statement emphasizes the need to practice routinely if you want to gain both skill and benefits of health. He has at times said to beginners that they should not get lost in the details of movement by stating, "Just practice. Image that you are the greatest taiji master in the world, and just practice." With practice comes experience, and through experience comes understanding. So remember, **Practice... Practice... Practice...**



Sources:

Chen Gene. *Chen Fa-Ke's Secret to Mastery*. Martial Arts of China. Times Printing Company Inc, Hong Kong, March 1991, 18-19.  
Gaffney, David. *Talking Chen Taijiquan with David Gaffney*. Sunday, 13 Oct 2019, <<http://chentaijiquanworld.blogspot.com/>>  
Yang, Yang. *Taijiquan, The Art of Nurturing, The Science of Power*. Zhenwu Publications, 2005.

### *Taiji Plays in Peoria* 2020 Wall Calendar



Taiji Peoria is offering a wall calendar with many photos of Peoria and Taiji players as well as inspirational poetry using Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang's 12 Principles of Taijiquan Practice.

**Check our website or email us for details.**

### *Chinese New Year Celebration*

Taiji Peoria will be performing at the annual Peoria Chinese Association's New Year Program on **Sunday, January 26, 2020**. Groups will be demonstrating a section of the 48 form, saber form and push hands.



## *Tai Chi Works*

By Keith Boswell

Tai Chi (or Taiji) has been practiced in China for hundreds of years and until recently has been closely held in that country. After WWII, Taiji, along with other cultural riches, was introduced in the U.S. Over the past ten years a significant amount of medical research has been focused on quantifying the benefits of this ancient Chinese exercise system. Mayo Clinic, Harvard Medical School, Sloane Kettering Hospital, the National Institute of Health as well as other academic and medical research organizations have conducted studies and published reports summarizing their findings demonstrating the benefits of Tai Chi.

Taiji focuses on connecting the mind and body to improve health. It builds strength, balance, and improves cognitive and cardiovascular function by integrating body, breath, movement, and meditative awareness. The goal is to apply these skills to enhance well-being and improve our daily lives.

### **Qigong**

Qigong uses repetitive movements dedicated to building and cultivating energy. Dynamic exercises as well as passive postures improve circulation, balance, sleep and reduce anxiety. These exercises are essential to any Taiji form.

### **Taiji Form**

The choreographed form combines the techniques in qigong exercises with slow mindful movements to help participants learn the basic principles of Taiji. Practicing the forms teaches how to use our bodies efficiently and safely to improve balance, agility, and strength.

### **Meditation**

A comprehensive practice also includes meditation. The purpose is to quiet the mind and be aware of the body and breath, using posture and muscles efficiently.

### **Sleep and Anxiety**

There are many pressures we face just as a part of daily living. Each of us deals with these pressures in our own ways with varying degrees of success in managing them. At the end of the day (literally) even when we think we are handling it, stress can end up manifesting itself in poor sleep and/or some level or type of anxiety. The optimum way to deal with these issues is to have as many tools in our tool kit as we can. Taiji can give participants a variety of tools to improve the quality of their sleep as well as address some of the conditions that result in increased anxiety.

**Mindful Movement Matters. Try Taiji.**



## *Weekly Classes*

[Check TaijiPeoria.com](http://TaijiPeoria.com) for more details and changes

<b>Sunday:</b>	10:00 a.m. Open Taiji Practice - all levels welcome
<b>Monday:</b>	10:45 a.m. Taiji Basics
<b>Tuesday:</b>	6:00 p.m. Taiji (48 form) 7:00 p.m. Building Core Strength
<b>Wednesday:</b>	10:45 a.m. Taiji for Beginners
<b>Thursday:</b>	6:00 p.m. Beginning Taiji (EBT)/6:30 p.m. Quest for Balance
<b>Saturday:</b>	10:00 a.m. Qigong (Building Energy)/ 10:30 Beginning Taiji (48 Form)

**Check website, [TaijiPeoria.com](http://TaijiPeoria.com) for special offerings:** Sleep/Anxiety series, focused seminars/workshops, and private sessions

**Drop in to try any class for \$10 per session or a monthly membership of \$50 for unlimited sessions. Membership also provides discounts on workshops and private sessions.**

