



# The Tai Chi and Meditation Centre Newsletter

## Balance Body, Energy & Spirit

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### Tai Chi Chuan – An Introduction

Suzanne Takahashi

Tai Chi Chuan (or Tai Chi for short) is an ancient martial art that has its historical and philosophical roots in Chinese culture. Today, Tai Chi is recognized for its many physical and psychological health benefits to help heal and rejuvenate the body through the circulation of life-force energy, or chi flow. Known for its slow, gentle movements Tai Chi, as a healing art, is practiced by people of all ages and from all walks of life around the world.

The practice of Tai Chi promotes a deep state of relaxation on both the physical and mental levels of being, and when practiced over a period of time enhances one's health and general well-being. The rhythmic, flowing movements, called "the form," is sometimes referred to as a "moving meditation" and thus offers the additional benefit of self- or spiritual development.

The essence of Tai Chi is balance; doing the form for only a short period a day (ten or fifteen minutes), on a continual basis, helps one to develop a better balance of body and mind, emotions and spirit.

This series of twelve weekly classes for the beginning student focuses on the first several postures of the classic 108-movement-form which follows the basic principles of Tai Chi practice,

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### Wudang Chi Kung (Qigong)

Sheila Furness

During the Tai Chi and Meditation Centre's trip to China in October 1999, we had the rare opportunity to study Wudang Qigong with Professor Yuzeng Liu and one of his senior students, Yu Ting Zhang.

Qigong translates as "energy cultivation" and forms the foundation of many of the martial, healing, and

spiritual practices at the Centre. Through qigong exercises we seek to regulate the body, the breath, and the mind. While training the body we perform postures and movements that strengthen the muscles and encourage energy to flow freely throughout the body. Breathing exercises, often combined with movement, create a

relaxed state and improve the efficiency of the lungs and oxygenation of the blood. Training the mind, or meditation, allows us to experience stillness within movement, develops insight, helps us adapt to change and reduces stress.

Wudang Qigong has 18 sets of exercises. The first, Extreme Emptiness,

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#### upcoming events

#### Fall Calendar 2005

**WUDANG CHI KUNG**, Mondays, 7:30-8:30 pm September 12, 19, 26, October 3

**TAI CHI CHUAN FORMS Level 1** Introductory begins Wednesday 21 Sept, 6:00-7:00 pm. and Saturday 24 Sept, 1:45-2:45 pm. 12 weeks

**INTRODUCTION TO MEDITATION**, Thursday Sept 22 6:30-9:30 pm

**MEDICAL CHI KUNG**, Certificate Program Level 1B Tuesdays, 7:15 – 9:15 pm Oct.4, 2005 (4 months)  
Certificate Program Level 1A, Fridays 6:00 – 8:00 pm Oct.14, 2005 (4 months)

**PUSH HANDS FREE PLAY**, 1- 4 pm Sunday November 20th. \$10

**WHAT IS TAOISM**, Tuesday 6:00-7:00 pm Nov 1-29

**ENERGIZING WEEKEND RETREAT** at Harmony Dawn Retreat Centre, Hastings. Call for information.

**INTRODUCTION TO MEDITATION**, Thursday Nov. 3, 6:30-9:30 pm

In addition, 3 new classes for members:

**PUSH-HANDS** Levels 1&2, Mon. 6:00 -7:00pm starting Oct17  
**MARTIAL CHI KUNG**, Tues 6:00-7:00 pm Sept.6, 8 weeks  
**CHEN TAI CHI CHUAN FIRST ROUTINE**, Level 1, Wed, 9:00-10:00 pm

**TORONTO: 745 Danforth Avenue, Suite B3, Toronto, Ontario M4J 1L4 Telephone: 416-465-6122**

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or yin and yang theory. Still, it is essentially an internal martial art, as stated previously, and, to add interest at the beginning level, some self-defence techniques will be introduced during forms practice.

#### Some Benefits of Practice

Promotes relaxation, releases tension and dissolves stress, improves muscle tone and joint flexibility, relieves muscle aches and stiffness, improves muscle tone and joint flexibility, improves concentration, stimulates good blood circulation, boosts the immune system, strengthens the heart and lungs, increases strength and stamina, and improves vitality.

*Wudang Qigong Continued from page 1*

cultivates and refines the inner breath (energy) in the lower dan tian, located below the navel. The names of subsequent exercises, such as Pushing the Mountain, Wild Goose Flying, and Supporting Heaven, reflect the Daoist emphasis on the importance of living in harmony with nature. The first few exercises are very simple and the complexity of the movements increases as you progress through the routine. Each exercise may be practiced individually or you can string the 18 sets together to create a tai chi-like form which is both beautiful and physically challenging.

#### Health Benefits of Wudang Qigong

Regular practice improves digestion and regulates the nervous system. Respiration deepens and slows down

so that lung capacity is increased. The winding, coiling, and twisting physical movements of the exercises, combined with directing energy throughout the body, are thought to prevent high blood pressure and hardening of the arteries and blood vessels. The mind is calmed and the body, mind and spirit have a higher degree of coordination, creating a sense of well-being.

Earlier teachers said: "...Wudang Qigong travels the true way. Dan tian practice makes a long life treasure that ten thousand measures of yellow gold cannot offer a person."

<sup>1</sup> (Liu, Yuzeng. *Wudang Qigong: China's Wudang Mountain Daoist Breath Exercises*. Translated by Yuzeng Liu and Terri Morgan. Overland Park: International Wudang Internal Martial Arts Research Association, 1999.

### Medical Chi Kung Training Level A & B

Shifu Donna Oliver

Both courses are taught under the auspices of the International Institute of Medical Qigong (Chi Kung) and are the first 2 of 4 courses offered in the Medical Qigong Practitioner Program. (see [www.qigongmedicine.com](http://www.qigongmedicine.com))

The Level A course is open to those who want to improve their personal health and well being. It concentrates on cleansing, balancing and circulating energy. Level B course consolidates the first (A) and in addition focuses on building, sensing and projecting energy. Each course is worth 50 hours towards certification. Upon

completion of both courses, the participant will be performing basic Qigong healing routines.

A test is written at the end of Level B and upon passing a certificate of completion is issued. The graduate may then go on to become a Medical Qigong Practitioner or Therapist. The recommended method of training is weekly classes, Level A will start October 14th at 6 p.m. on Fridays, Level B will start October 4th at 7:15pm. Both are 2 hour classes that will run for 4 months each. **Course Teacher:** Shifu Donna Oliver. **Cost:** Each 4-month

course of weekly sessions will be \$530 for members of the Tai Chi and Meditation Centre and \$583 for non-members, including the GST.

Students are required to sign a study course agreement before commencing the course.

**Qigong treatments are available with Medical Qigong Therapists.**  
For more information, check out our website at [powerofbalance.com](http://powerofbalance.com) or call Shifu Donna Oliver at the Tai Chi and Meditation Centre, 416-465-6122.

#### EMERGE INTERNAL ARTS

Tai Chi and Meditation Centres

The Tai Chi and Meditation Centre is a Subsidiary of The Taoist and Buddhist Meditation Centre, a Non-Profit Organization

Founder and Director: Andy James  
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#### about our centre....

The Tai Chi and Meditation Centre Newsletter welcomes letters from readers.

Please direct correspondence to: The Tai Chi and Meditation Centre, 745 Danforth Avenue, Suite B3, Toronto, Ontario M4J 1L4 Telephone: 416-465-6122

Instructors Currently certified by the Tai Chi and Meditation Centre are as follows:

**Chief Instructor:**  
Andy James

**Principal Instructors:**  
Sheila Furness, Donna Oliver, Colin Outram  
Suzanne Takahashi, Jeff Willis

**Assistants:**  
Carolyn Johnson, Patricia Wollesen

**In Training:**  
Roseanne Lappin, Roxanna Ng