



CHRISTMAS PARTY PERFORMANCE



TAIJI AT THE ACADEMY



TAIJI AT THE 55 PLUS CENTRE



TAIJI POST



Newsletter of the Peng You Taiji Quan Association
Volume 14, No. 2 - April 2011

Annual General Meeting of the membership.

Saturday April 30, 12:30–3:30 p.m.

Peng You International Taiji Academy

12:30 AGM BBQ and Potluck (bring whatever you like, burgers and dogs provided), followed by the annual meeting to elect Board of Directors. Members in good standing who wish to run for Board of Directors should apply to the acting secretary, Sheila Shannon (767-4150 or djshanno@shaw.ca) at least one week before the AGM.

Following the meeting we will join the world in doing Taiji. So far as we know we are the only Taiji Association in the world to hold our AGM on World Taiji and Qigong Day.

BE A HEALING PART OF HISTORY !!

On Saturday, April 30th, tens of thousands in hundreds of cities, in over 70 nations will come together ... to breathe together ... to provide the world a healing image of our planet and our people. (<http://worldtaichiday.org/>)

Purposes of World Tai Chi & Qigong Day:

- 1) To educate the world of the profound health & healing benefits of Tai Chi & Qigong for individuals, communities, and nations
- 2) To thank Chinese culture for creating and sharing these profoundly valuable gifts with the world
- 3) To bring together people across racial, economic, religious, and geo-political boundaries, to join together for the purpose of health and healing, providing an example to the world.
- 4) To give a powerful example of how the power of the internet can be used to foster global health & healing.

Taiji, Mindfulness and Psychotherapy

By Dr. Doug Rabb

On March 3rd and 4th Master Peng You and I participated in the Sixth Annual Building Bridges Mental Health and Addictions Conference at the Valhalla Inn here in Thunder Bay. We had our Peng You Taiji Quan Association display table in a prominent place throughout the conference to help explain the health benefits of Taiji (much thanks to Brian Nieminen for help with set up). During the conference we signed up a number of people for Peng's June workshop on Taiji Qigong Six Forms for Health. Peng was invited to do Taiji with all 250 plus conference participants at the plenary sessions on both Thursday and Friday. As one of the speakers was late for a concurrent session I attended, I was able to take the participants through some of Taiji Qigong Six Forms for Health to

fill in time as we waited for the scheduled session to begin. I was pleased to meet, as fellow participants, some of my former students from Lakehead University who are now counselors and social workers in the city and the region.

During the workshops, I learned that "mindfulness" is now being used as a technique in psychological counseling, often combined with cognitive therapy. As a Taiji instructor I found this most interesting, as mindfulness is based on ancient Eastern meditative and breathing techniques. One of the major proponents of mindfulness in psychotherapy is Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn of the University of Massachusetts Medical School. In his paper "Mindfulness-Based Interventions in Context: Past, Present, and Future," he suggests "an operational working definition of mindfulness is: the awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally to the unfolding of ex-

perience moment by moment. Historically, mindfulness has been called ‘the heart’ of Buddhist meditation” (Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice Vol. 10, No. 2, 2003). In many psychological clinical studies employing mindfulness, hatha yoga breathing and postures are employed. (Journal of Clinical Psychology in Medical Settings, Vol. 11, No. 4, 2004).

I think that taiji practice could be used most effectively as an adjunct or alternative to hatha yoga in a clinical setting. After all, taijiquan also concentrates on both breathing and moving mindfully. I will illustrate with the move, step up, deflect downward, parry and punch. Actually, I will just concentrate on parry and punch, as that is complicated enough when describing moving with mind intent. The taiji punch, like all taiji moves, is delivered using the waist, not just the arm and fist. Think of your torso as a spool of thread and your arm as the thread unrolling from the spool. The spool must turn to allow the thread to be drawn from it. So you must turn your waist as your arm goes out to deliver the punch. If you are punching with your right fist, your waist turns to the left as your right arm goes out. To begin the parry and punch stand with your heels together, toes facing the front corners of the room you are in. Your feet with their heels together form a kind of “V” shape. Shift weight to your right leg and step out, toward your imaginary opponent at the front of the room, with your left foot, placing it down gently heel first without shifting any weight from your right (now your back) leg, which should be slightly bent, supporting your entire body. At the same time swing your left arm out parallel with your left leg as a kind of parry or block. In a martial arts situation it is there to deal with whatever your opponent is about to do, whether punching or blocking. As your left leg and your left arm go out your waist must turn to the right (remember the spool of thread). Your waist should now be facing in the same direction as your right foot. You are now ready to throw a taiji punch. Form a fist with your right hand, palm up beside your right hip. By straightening your right leg shift your weight slowly forward so that 70% of your weight ends up on your left leg. Bend your left leg at the knee to receive the weight, but do not let your knee go beyond your toes as you shift your weight forward. At the same time turn your waist to face in the direction your left foot is facing and, remembering the spool of thread, deliver the punch by driving your right fist forward in a corkscrew motion so your fist turns a quarter turn from palm up to thumb side up. Your thumb is not on top of your fist. It is nestled safely outside in the crease between your first and second fingers. In the traditional taiji form your left hand comes to rest, fingers up, against the middle your right forearm. Follow the taiji principle “When one part of the body moves the whole body moves. When one part of the body stops the whole body stops.” Your fist should land on your imaginary opponent at the same time as you complete the 70% weight shift and the turning of the waist. They should all reach completion simultaneously. Not only must you keep all this in mind when throwing a simple taiji punch, but you must also concentrate on your breathing. Inhale as you step out and parry. You should expand your lower abdomen as you inhale to ensure as deep a breath as possible. As you punch exhale and just as you complete the punch pull your abdomen in, lifting the abdominal floor ensuring a complete exhale to strengthen the punch.

This kind of moving with mindfulness is done throughout the taiji form. I have used the parry and punch move, as an example to draw attention to the fact that taiji is one of the martial arts. Most of the participants I met at the Building Bridges Conference are addiction counselors. They are a tough lot, as are their clients. Not many of them would be willing to adopt yoga postures or to meditate. This is unfortunate because the literature on mindfulness meditation suggests that it is very effective in dealing with substance abuse. If we can use a martial art like taiji instead of yoga perhaps more of these addiction counselors will consider mindfulness training.

What is needed are well-trained counselors with clinical experience to learn some basic taiji principles and introduce moving with mindfulness meditation in their clinical practice (preferably with a control group so we can assess the results). As we noted above, a number of counselors signed up at the Building Bridges Conference for Master Peng’s Instructors’ Workshop on Taiji Qigong Six Forms for Health, which is to be held in June. Perhaps this is the start we need to conduct further research in this area.

For further reading on mindfulness in a clinical setting see: <http://www.mindfulness.net.au/peer-reviewed-articles/>



TAIJI PARK FUNDRAISING LUNCH AT THE CUMBERLAND RESTAURANT - MARCH 26, 2011





TAIJI CHRISTMAS PARTY
A RANDOM
SELECTION
OF
PHOTOS



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Editors Taiji Post:

Doug Rabb
Oliver Reimer

Yard and Bake Sale

Saturday, May 7
9:00a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Gym at The Boys and Girls Club
270 Windsor St.



This is a Fund Raising Event for the International Taiji Park. Tenders are out and the Park will soon be a reality! Please come out and support this important project to ensure we will have enough funds to complete it this spring.

If you have items (large or small, no clothes please) to donate for the yard sale or can volunteer to help with set up on Friday evening or the sale itself on Saturday contact Adele at 473-0841

Taiji with the Masters
August 26-28

Masters Wu, Zengle & Li, Defang are leaders of a major Taiji school, the Long Fei Association in Tokyo Japan, and head instructors of the Japan-China Medical Health Center. They are originally from Beijing China. Master Li, in family tradition, trained in Wushu and Taiji from an early age. She was a class-mate of Master Peng's teacher, Grandmaster Wang Jianhua. She and Master Wu were both Wushu & Taiji teachers at Beijing Normal University from 1981-1986. At that time she was also Master Peng's teacher. She acted in many Chinese Kungfu movies.

Master Li is the daughter of Grandmaster Li, Tianji, the creator of Modern Style Taiji forms such as the famous 24 Forms Beijing Style now practiced throughout the world. Master Wu is his son in law.

Peng You Tai Chi Academy
Boys and Girls Club gym
270 Windsor St
Thunder Bay, ON

Schedule:

Fri, Aug 26	10am-4pm	32 Sword
Sat, Aug 27	9:30-11:30am	8 Forms
	1-5pm	24 Forms
Sun, Aug 28	9:30am-4:30pm	48 Forms

Cost:

3 days - full course	\$ 200 + HST
2 days	\$ 160 + HST
8 Forms only	\$ 30 + HST
24 Forms only	\$ 70 + HST
48 Forms only	\$ 90 + HST
32 Sword only	\$ 90 + HST

(Refreshments are included)

For more information
phone Master Peng (807) 628-4305
or taichi@tbaytel.net

TAIJI QIGONG: SIX FORMS FOR HEALTH WORKSHOP with Instructor Certification Option.

No previous knowledge of Taiji (Tai Chi) is required. This workshop is especially designed for health care professionals, though all students of taiji are welcome.

Instructed by Master Peng You, the only Taiji Instructor in North America qualified by the creators of Taiji Qigong Six Forms for Health, Grandmaster Zeng Nailiang retired head coach of the Chinese National Wushu team and his wife Taiji Master Wei Xianglian, to offer certification courses in this form of complementary health.

The six forms of Taiji Qigong for Health combine the flowing coordinated movements of Taijiquan with the meditative concentration on Qi and deep breathing of Qigong. The form can be learned in a relatively short time. Though easy to learn the Six Forms offers the benefits of increased strength, better balance and coordination and greater confidence in one's physical and mental abilities. Once mastered it can become the bridge to other forms in Taiji Quan and Qigong.

Location: International Taiji Academy, 270 Windsor St (Boys and Girls Club, Junot entrance)

Time and Date: 9:30 am - 4:30 pm, Saturday June 18 & Sunday June 19, 2011

Fees: Early Bird Special (register before May 18, 2011) \$175.00.

Fee After May 18: \$200.00

Fee for Optional Instructor Certification: An additional one-time payment of \$25.00 will be charged for the Instructors' Examination. To receive certification you must demonstrate knowledge of the basic principles of Taiji (which will be covered in the workshop) and also the ability to teach each of the six moves of Taiji Qigong for Health. There is no charge for additional testing if required.