

# **TAIJI (Tai Chi)**

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **1) What is Taiji (Tai Chi)?**

Taijiquan (Tai Chi Chuan) is a Chinese internal martial art which is famous for its promotion of health, harmony and longevity. It is based on the Yin/Yang philosophy of interacting opposites.

### **2) Why is Taiji sometimes spelled Tai Chi?**

In 1979 the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) adopted Pinyin as the standard Romanization for Modern Chinese, as requested by the People's Republic of China. Pinyin superseded older transcriptions such as the Wade-Giles system of 1859 and others. If you prefer to stay in the past and say Peking rather than Beijing, then continue to use Tai Chi rather than Taiji and Chi rather than Qi etc.

### **3) What style do you teach and what other styles are there?**

I teach the Wudang Style from the Wu style lineage of Wu Jian Chuan (1870 - 1942). The 5 main styles are: Chen, Yang, Wu, Hao and Sun. There are many variations within each of these styles.

### **4) What are the main benefits of practising Taiji?**

Balance, posture, co-ordination, breathing and mental focus are improved. Blood, oxygen and energy circulation are stimulated and this nourishes every aspect of the body. Bone density and suppleness improve. Gradually the body and mind relax and stress-related symptoms lessen or disappear. Taiji helps the body and mind to feel unified, centred and free.

### **5) How long will it take me to learn?**

Ask yourself: How long does it take to learn to play the piano? - and you will have the answer. Everyone is different. What is important is to enjoy the process and the resulting benefits and not tie yourself to the end result, because there is no end.

### **6) How long should I practise each day?**

If you are a complete beginner, 10 minutes each day is enough. When you become more experienced and understand good alignment and the dangers of incorrect training, you can practise for as long as you wish.

### **9) Does it matter if I have learned a different style of Taiji or practise another martial art?**

Taiji principles come from a common source, and stylistic differences are largely superficial. It does not matter what other styles you have practised. If you practise another martial art, Tai Chi will be complementary as long as you recognise that Tai Chi is an internal art and that the emphasis on certain things will be different from an external art.

## **10) What is available in the Taiji syllabus?**

Hand Forms (Traditional Long Form and Two Short Forms); Stance training; Weapons Forms (for more advanced students: sabre, straight sword, spear); Pushing Hands (partner exercises to develop certain qualities); Self-Defence Applications; Qigong (energy cultivation exercises); Neigong (internal strength exercises - 12 Yin and 12 Yang).

Although the syllabus is extensive, there is no need to do more than you wish, or to keep up with anyone else - always practise to your own rhythm with a quiet mind. For some people, just a little is sufficient.