



Guide for Leaders and Sponsors





Guide for Leaders and Sponsors

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Tai Chi Health <https://taichihealth.com/>

Our mission is to make the remarkable benefits of tai chi and qi gong accessible to everyone, regardless of age, ability or physical condition.

Grounded in decades of experience teaching thousands of people, our programs, training courses, books and DVDs range from programs modified for walker and wheelchair use. All programs are based in traditional Yang Style tai chi, which we have taught since 1972.

Tai Chi Health provides Tai Chi Prime Leader Trainings
Tai Chi Fundamentals® Instructor Training Courses
Home practice DVDs and books.



Purpose of this Guide

This guide is for individuals interested in teaching Tai Chi Prime and organizations wishing to sponsoring Tai Chi Prime, an evidence-based class series for community-dwelling adults age 65 and over that features home practice coaching tools, behavior change strategies and innovative exercises to embed into daily life.

Because tai chi is an ideal exercise for life-long health and well-being, this guide also includes ideas for implementing follow-up and ongoing tai chi classes for interested Tai Chi Prime participants and for others with a wide range of ages and physical conditions.



Tai Chi Prime

Guide for Leaders and Sponsors

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INTRODUCTION

What Is Tai Chi Prime?

Tai Chi Prime is an evidence-based six-week class series that features instruction in tai chi and qi gong basics, as well as home practice coaching and exercises to embed into activities of daily living. This unique program reflects the collaboration of tai chi masters and teachers working with health professionals, researchers and community partners. Research has shown that Tai Chi Prime participants had significant improvement in cognitive skills, balance, strength and mobility.

Tai Chi Prime's teaching format and curriculum reflects Tai Chi Master Tricia Yu's experience teaching weekly classes to over 12,000 students at her Tai Chi Center in Madison, Wisconsin, and her decades of ongoing collaboration with physical and occupational therapists. Key to the success of the classes is the home practice coaching component, developed by researcher Betty Chewning, which helps participants establish their own practice routines. Home practice is an essential key for reaping the full benefits of tai chi and gives participants ownership of their progress.

Tai Chi Prime classes meet for 90 minutes 2x per week for six weeks. All classes follow the same varied format beginning with warmups and simple *Basic Moves* training, followed by teatime and seated activities (*Mind/body skills* training, qi gong, home practice coaching and group discussions); class concludes with instruction in the simplified *TCF Short Form* and a closing group circle. Participants practice at home with DVDs and the *Fab Four Basic Moves for Balance* to practice during daily activities such as brewing coffee or washing dishes. (See p. 35 for pictures of class activities.)

A unique feature of Tai Chi Prime is that all participants have a chair by their side to touch for balance when needed. Since this helps them balance for longer without swaying, they can develop increased leg strength and focus on postural alignment, two key ingredients for improving balance.

Unlike most tai chi classes in which participants follow the leader the entire time, Tai Chi Prime classes cue a variety of learning modalities. Each class intertwines learning and reflection, movement and stillness, analysis and intuitive experience and listening and sharing. Informal conversations and structured group discussions help foster a sense of community and support peer learning.

Here's what participants say about Tai Chi Prime.

This is the best course I've ever taken!

Thank you for getting a couch potato to enjoy moving.

Introduction

Researched Benefits of Tai Chi Prime



Research on Tai Chi Prime indicates that community dwelling adults age 65 and over had significant improvement in **balance, cognitive skills, strength and mobility** in just 6 weeks (*see Research on Tai Chi Prime, p. 33*). **The Administration for Community Living (ACL) has approved Tai Chi Prime as an evidence-based falls prevention**

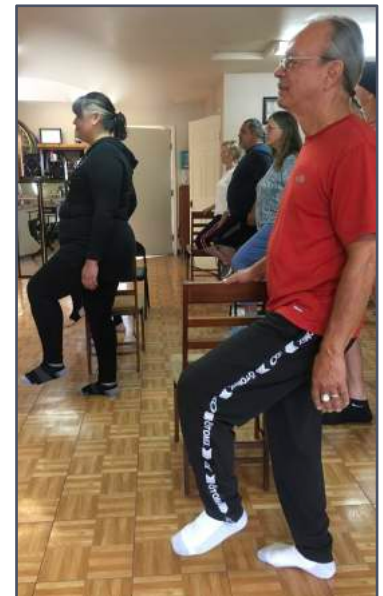
program. The researchers believe that the program's home practice component was essential to its success and that practicing outside of class helps reinforce learning.

BALANCE

A growing body of research indicates that tai chi is an excellent practice for improving balance. Tai Chi Prime classes feature instruction in the Tai Chi Fundamentals® Adapted Program with all movement taught in a simple-to-complex progression to fosters success in developing good balance skills. Each class includes instruction in *Basic Moves* building blocks for learning tai chi, and the *TCF Short Form*, which is based in traditional tai chi.

COGNITIVE SKILLS

Tai Chi Prime integrates *Mind/Body Skills* into all aspects of teaching to improve mental focus and body awareness. Participants learn to relax, breathe deeply and bring awareness into the present moment in order to become more receptive to their body's signals and to what is going on around them. This deeper sense of presence can enhance cognitive skills plus zest for life and rapport with others.



STRENGTH AND MOBILITY

Participants also demonstrated significant improvement in getting up from a chair and in walking and turning around speed.

Benefits of Tai Chi in General

There is a large body of research that suggests that tai chi is useful for a number of conditions. Tai Chi Prime participants may also benefit in the following areas: bone mineral density, cancer quality of life, cardiovascular and respiratory disease, chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia and other autoimmune conditions, chronic lower back pain and other pain management, orthopedic and neurological issues, stroke and stroke risk factors, Parkinson's, MS and other chronic conditions and sleep disorders (*see research on tai chi p.34*).

Here's what one participant says about Tai Chi Prime:

Very helpful in strengthening myself for much better balance & awareness of my thoughts & body.

Introduction

Who Can Benefit from Tai Chi Prime?

Research on Tai Chi Prime indicates that the classes are evidence-based for improving balance, physical function and cognitive function in community-dwelling adults 65 years and older who:

- Live in a home or apartment
- Have fallen within the past year, or have fear of falling
- Are able to participate in class without the use of assistive devices such as a cane, walker or scooter
- Are cognitively intact (able to fill out forms, follow written and verbal directions and interact in a group setting)

Please note: **Tai Chi Prime classes can be promoted as evidence-based only when the structured curriculum is taught to community-dwelling adults 65 years and older** since that is the population that participated in the research.

What does evidence-based mean?

An evidence-based practice or program is one supported by rigorous research demonstrating its effectiveness.



Introduction

Selling Points for Tai Chi Prime

Here are some ideas for acquainting potential participants, Leaders and Sponsors with features and benefits of Tai Chi Prime.

1. **Evidence-based program:** Research has shown that Tai Chi Prime participants had significant improvement in cognitive skills, balance, strength and mobility in just six weeks.
2. **Unique:** It was developed through collaboration of tai chi masters and teachers, health professionals, researchers and community partners.
3. **Short class series:** Tai Chi Prime classes are 1.5 hours, 2x per week for 6 weeks. The short class series has appeal both for participants and for Sponsoring Organizations' schedules.
4. **Popular:** In all three cities, classes had the maximum number of participants. They attended on average 11 of the 12 classes.
5. **Interesting and varied:** Each class features standing and seated movement, relaxation, home practice coaching, and informal teatime and group discussions to build community.
6. **Promotes home practice:** Tai Chi Prime teaches strategies for establishing and maintaining home practice routines, an important key for reaping the full benefits of tai chi. On average, participants reported they practiced 6 out of 7 days for >25 minutes per day.
7. **Features exercises to practice during daily activities:** Participants learn the **Fab Four Basic Moves for Balance** to practice during everyday tasks, such as while brewing coffee or washing the dishes. (*See below*)

Centering in Horse Stance



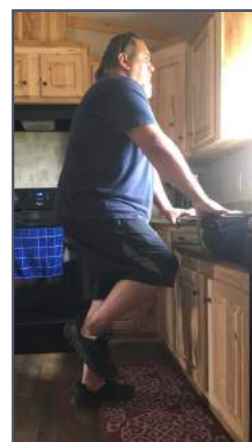
Bear Roots on One Leg



Tai Chi Stance



High Step



Overview of Tai Chi Prime Classes

Each 1.5-hour class includes the following:

Welcome, standing *Energize* warmups and *Basic Moves* instruction, informal tea time, seated activities (including *Mind/Body Skills* training in *Everyday Qi Gong* and group discussion), standing *TCF Short Form* instruction and a closing group circle (see *Tai Chi Prime Scrapbook pp 35-37*).

Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Basic Moves</i>: Part 1 and <i>Fab Four Basic Moves for Balance</i> • <i>Mind/Body skills</i>: centering • Group discussion: orientation, home practice goal setting • <i>TCF Short Form</i>: Part 1
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Basic Moves</i>: Parts 1, 2 and <i>Fab Four Basic Moves for Balance</i> • <i>Mind/Body Skills</i>: breath awareness, introduction to <i>qi (life energy)</i> • Group discussion: practicing <i>Fab Four</i> at home, orientation to Home Practice Planners and Trackers • <i>TCF Short Form</i>: Part 1; theme: being both heavy and light
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Basic Moves</i>: Parts 1 and 2 • <i>Mind/Body skills</i>: awake hands (hand awareness and position) • Group discussion: tai chi applications in daily life, home practice challenges and successes • <i>TCF Short Form</i>: Parts 1 and 2; theme: body mechanics
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Basic Moves</i>: Parts 1, 2 and 3 • <i>Mind/Body skills</i>: sensing <i>qi</i> (sensory awareness of hands) • Group discussion: experiences while practicing sensing <i>qi</i> and funny tai chi stories • <i>TCF Short Form</i>: Parts 1 and 2; theme: slow movement
Week 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Basic Moves</i>: Parts 1, 2 and 3 • <i>Mind/Body skills</i>: Gathering the Stars • Group discussion: living with pain and physical limitation, send out Home Practice Trackers • <i>TCF Short Form</i>: Parts 1, 2 and 3; theme: flexible and rooted
Week 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Basic Moves</i>: Parts 1, 2 and 3 • <i>Mind/Body skills</i>: Bathing in the Light (visualizing light and energy) • Group discussion: final wrap up, collect Home Practice Trackers • <i>TCF Short Form</i>: Parts 1, 2 and 3; theme: string of pearls

FOR COURSE LEADERS

Why Become a Leader?

There are many reasons to love being a Tai Chi Prime Leader. You will have the satisfaction of practicing and teaching key strategies for living life to its fullest - from moving with good alignment and increasing strength and flexibility to learning to relax, breathe and be more fully present to the gift of each moment.

You will also become skilled at leading group discussions and home practice coaching. Everything you teach in your Tai Chi Prime classes applies to every breath, every movement and every interaction - for you and for all those you teach.

There is tremendous satisfaction in teaching what you love while seeing your students benefit. Teaching tai chi can become an essential piece of your personal mind/body fitness program while being of great service to others. Experienced tai chi instructors will tell you that teaching is an ongoing source of joy for them.

Quote from Tai Chi Prime Leader

I am impressed by how effective the Tai Chi Prime curriculum is at teaching participants who have never practiced tai chi before. I have learned a lot about teaching from Tai Chi Prime that I continue to use in my other classes.

Rachel Sandretto



Is Becoming a Tai Chi Prime Leader a Fit for You?

If the slow, relaxed movement of tai chi speaks to you and you enjoy learning and teaching movement, then Tai Chi Prime may be for you. Being a Tai Chi Prime Leader is wonderful because you get the benefits of tai chi practice while you teach! And becoming a patient, supportive Tai Chi Prime Leader can change your life and be of great service to others.



We are proud to say that our leaders are top notch. Tai Chi Prime requires more rigorous training than other simplified tai chi programs, or solely information-based programs, some of which require just a weekend course for certifying instructors. To meet our high standards, Tai Chi Prime Leaders first must be certified in the Tai Chi Fundamentals® Adapted Program (TCFA) before attending a Tai Chi Prime Leader Training. This means that you first will need to dedicate 3-8 months to becoming certified: attend training courses, establish your own home practice routine and successfully complete TCFA certification movement and written exams.

During this process you will develop skills as a teacher while you begin reaping the amazing benefits of tai chi (*see p. 34, Research on Tai Chi*). The great news is that once you become TCFA certified and take the Tai Chi Prime Leader Training, you are prepared to launch a part-time or full-time career teaching tai chi.

We have found that people who answer “Yes” to most of the following questions are good candidates for becoming a Leader

- Are you motivated to learn and practice tai chi, which is slow, quiet and relaxed?
- Are you interested in teaching tai chi, possibly regularly and for the long run?
- Do you have skill in learning movement? Or are you disciplined and motivated?
- Do you have experience in fitness training, martial arts, dance, tai chi or sports, or are you a physical or occupational therapist?
- Do you have experience leading groups?
- Do you have time to take at least 30 hours of training, and to practice regularly?
- Do you have the ability and motivation to learn and memorize movement sequences?
- Do you have the necessary time available for ongoing practice and teaching classes?
- Do you have physical and mental fitness to stand and teach for two hours?
- Are you willing to take direction, which is necessary for modeling tai chi accurately and safely?

If you have answered “Yes” to most of these questions—read on!

How to Become a Tai Chi Prime Leader

There are two steps for becoming a Tai Chi Prime Leader: first, become certified in the Tai Chi Fundamentals® Adapted Program (TCFA). This ensures that the Leader possesses the crucial movement skills that are at the heart of the program. No other certification may substitute for this requirement. Second, attend the Tai Chi Prime Leader Training.

First, become Certified in the Tai Chi Fundamentals® Adapted Program

TCFA is an authentic, traditionally based tai chi program, and certification requires 3-8 months of study and a commitment to regular home practice. Our certified instructors must demonstrate that they can properly perform all movements, have memorized the neurodevelopmental sequence for teaching them, and have basic proficiency in teaching important mind/body skills, such as breath awareness and relaxed movement. They also must know how to give appropriate and effective physical feedback to participants to help their alignment, an essential component of good balance.

As a certified instructor, you will be qualified to teach all program elements, including: *Basic Moves, TCF Short Form, Mind/body Skills, Energize Warm-ups* and *Everyday Qi Gong*. In addition, you will be familiar with TCFA's traditional Yang Style lineage and the principles of physical and occupational therapy that influenced the program's development.

TCFA certification creates career opportunities for you as an instructor and qualifies you to teach tai chi classes wherever you wish. TCFA Certification is also a prerequisite for attending the Tai Chi Prime Leader Training and teaching the evidence-based Tai Chi Prime courses. As a self-motivated teacher who genuinely enjoys your tai chi practice, you will become a great asset to your community (*see TCFA Certification Requirements p.32*).

Then attend a Tai Chi Prime Leader Training

After becoming certified in TCFA, you can attend the 8-hour Tai Chi Prime training to become a certified Tai Chi Prime Leader. This training covers the curriculum and standards of the 12 Tai Chi Prime classes. Here you will receive all your teaching materials and guidance on facilitating group discussions, managing group dynamics and coaching participants in establishing a regular home practice routine.



Congratulations! You did it!

As a Tai Chi Prime Leader, you will have access to a Tai Chi Health password-protected site with files, brochures and posters to tailor for promoting your classes, handouts to reproduce for class participants and informational Power Point presentations about the Tai Chi Prime Program at no additional charge.

Quote from Tai Chi Prime Leader Training Participant

“I absolutely love the manual and materials. They are going to make this a breeze to teach and really get a solid taste of tai chi.”

For Course Leaders

Cost to Become a Tai Chi Prime Leader

Tai Chi Prime Leaders first become certified in the Tai Chi Fundamentals® Adapted Program (TCFA) as a prerequisite for attending the Tai Chi Prime Leader Training. This requires 30 or more Training Course contact hours, regular home practice and usually takes between 3-8 months depending on prior tai chi experience, skill in learning movement and regularity of home practice.

After completing all TCFA training and certification requirements, instructors will have the skills necessary for performing and teaching tai chi. At that time, they can attend the Tai Chi Prime Leader Training which includes an extensive, detailed Leader Manual for conducting the classes, home practice coaching tools, and how to lead discussion groups effectively. They will join a community of Tai Chi Prime Leaders and have access to a password-protected site with files for participant handouts, home practice materials, promotional Power Point presentations and fillable brochures and posters for promoting the classes.

Contact Tai Chi Health for Current Prices https://taichihealth.com/?page_id=593



What Does Teaching Tai Chi Prime Involve?

Once you are TCFA certified and have attended the Tai Chi Prime Leader Training, you will have the knowledge and skills necessary to launch your first class series. Your *Leader Manual*, which you will receive at the Tai Chi Prime Leader Training, includes detailed instructions for preparing for and teaching each class (see *Tai Chi Prime Class Scrapbook pp 35-37*).



If you are setting up your own Tai Chi Prime classes, you will need to find the venue, recruit participants, set up the room and equipment, organize the purchase or streaming of the required DVD, make sure to have a few copies of the recommended book for participants to share https://taichihealth.com/?page_id=2722 and duplicate participant handouts for the classes. Or, find a Sponsoring Organization that already has broad outreach, space for

classes and staff for organizing them (see *Marketing Yourself as a Tai Chi Prime Leader p. 20*).

Once you have students and a venue and your classes have been scheduled, your most important task will be to prepare for each class before teaching it. The first few times that you teach a Tai Chi Prime class series, allow at least ½ hour per class to prepare. Once you have experience teaching the classes, your preparation time will be much shorter.

Keep in mind that Tai Chi Prime is an evidence-based program and its effectiveness for improving participant's balance, cognition, gait and mobility is dependent on maintaining fidelity to the structured curriculum. So, to call it an evidence-based course, you are required to follow the curriculum explicitly and stick to the schedule. This all is presented in the *Leader Manual*, which you will receive at the Tai Chi Prime Leader Training. Your *Leader Manual* provides you with specific cues and references for preparing for each class as well as a detailed schedule, general outline and cue cards for teaching.

Whether or not you have taught tai chi before, you will find that the Tai Chi Prime curriculum gives you an excellent structure with ideas and processes for teaching tai chi effectively and creatively. As you become better acquainted with the classes, you will get into a pattern, rhythm and flow with your participants.

Quote from Tai Chi Prime Leader

*I am delighted to offer Tai Chi Prime to my students and clients of ALL abilities.
I love teaching it, and seeing the improvements in the participants in just 6 weeks.
I've also found that I have personally benefited from the
mindfulness aspect included in this program, too!*

Diane Brose

For Course Leaders

Lead, Co-teach and Assist with Classes

Tai Chi Health recommends that you teach Tai Chi Prime frequently since its broad curriculum provides an excellent framework for learning to teach tai chi and qi gong effectively and for honing your skills in facilitating group discussions and home practice coaching. Here are some options for keeping yourself involved in teaching:

Lead Classes

A Leader, a Leader and assistant, or two alternating Leaders can teach the structured 1.5-hour Tai Chi Prime classes for 6 weeks, 2x per week. Core duties are twofold:

1. Teach the tai chi curriculum and *Mind/Body Skills*.
2. Facilitate group discussion and coach participants in developing and maintaining home practice routines.

Specifically, each class includes instruction in the following: standing *Energize* warm-ups, *Basic Moves*, seated *Mind/Body Skills*, *Everyday Qi Gong* and a closing group circle, which Leaders have learned during their Tai Chi Fundamentals® Adapted Program (TCFA) certification. Other class elements include facilitating group discussions and home practice coaching, which Leaders learn during the Tai Chi Prime Leader Training (see *Tai Chi Prime Class Scrapbook pp 35-37*).



Co-teach

Two Leaders can co-teach the classes, alternating the sessions that they teach or by an arrangement that works for them and the participants. It is important that Leaders stay in close communication to ensure that their classes maintain the standards of the evidence-based curriculum.

Assist

Ideally, there is an assistant at the first class to help orient students, and at another class of their choice during the 12 class meetings. Assistants can attend most or all of the classes in preparation for teaching their own classes, while helping participants and supporting Leaders. Assistants can be those working on becoming Leaders or can be former participants who wish to help with logistics and community-building but not with teaching.

Quote from Tai Chi Prime Leader

“It was a joy to see the excitement about Tai Chi Prime and the improvement participants made after only 6 weeks.”

Patricia Culotti

Access to Materials on Tai Chi Health Website



<https://taichihealth.com/>

The Tai Chi Health Website provides complementary materials for Leaders and Master Trainers using their Tai Chi Prime password-protected sites

1. For Tai Chi Prime Leaders

Leaders can download information for promoting and teaching their Tai Chi Prime classes. These include:

- Power Point presentation about the Tai Chi Prime Program
- Fillable brochures and posters to be tailored for promoting their classes
- Participant handouts, including home practice materials to reproduce for their classes

2. For Tai Chi Prime Master Trainers

Master Trainers can download information for teaching Tai Chi Prime Leader Trainings. These include:

- Leader Training Schedule
- Leader Manual
- Leader Training Evaluations

3. For Tai Chi Prime Fidelity Coaches

Master Trainers who are also Fidelity Coaches can download the following:

- Fidelity Coaching Guide
- Fidelity Tool for evaluating Tai Chi Prime Leaders' adherence to the evidence-based curriculum.

For Course Leaders

Expansion and Sustainability: Add-on and Ongoing Classes

Add-on Classes

Tai Chi Prime classes provide a fabulous introduction to tai chi with tangible benefits after just 6 weeks. If you and your participants feel that 6 weeks was a bit short, you may want to teach Tai Chi Prime add-on classes at the end of your existing Prime classes, if scheduling permits. Two weeks of additional classes (four sessions) are outlined in the *Leader Manual* (pp. 62-64) that you will receive at the Tai Chi Prime Leader Training. You can use these to create extra classes that work for you and your participants.

Ongoing Classes

Tai chi is for life-long well-being; support your students and yourself in doing it for the long haul. Since some of your participants will want to continue attending tai chi classes after completing a Tai Chi Prime course, you can set up a wide range of ongoing classes. Keep in mind that, as a certified tai chi instructor, you are qualified to teach Tai Chi Prime classes and other private and community-based classes of your own design. Your Tai Chi Prime classes can also help you develop a student base for teaching ongoing tai chi classes in your community.

As a Tai Chi Prime Leader, you are certified in the Tai Chi Fundamentals Adapted Program (TCFA). This means that you also are qualified to teach tai chi to people with a wide range of ages and physical conditions. In addition to teaching Tai Chi Prime, you can teach classes to anyone who is interested, and you are free to design your own classes using ideas and experiences from a range of sources.

Some ideas to get you started teaching ongoing classes:

- Combine TCFA Optional Side Support, Walker Support and Seated versions in the same class. That's how TCFA was designed and it works!
- Teach a class with Seated or Walker versions.
- Offer intergenerational classes. Some participants won't need a chair for support.
- Teach people in their 20's-40's. Make class more rigorous; emphasize "holding postures" and practice TCFA's martial arts applications.



There is a deep satisfaction that comes from teaching students who are committed to long-term tai chi practice; you will see their practice deepen as they continue attending classes, practicing at home and reaping the lifelong benefits of this profound mind/body exercise.

Quotes from Tai Chi Prime Participants

"Excellent - I plan to continue with it."

"I hope to continue, so that I can really continue these benefits. THANK YOU!"

For Course Leaders

Promote Your Tai Chi Prime Classes in Your Community

Tai Chi Prime is an evidence-based program: research has shown that Tai Chi Prime participants had significant improvement in cognitive skills, balance and strength and mobility in just six weeks. This is one excellent selling point for promoting classes in your community. (See other Selling Points, p. 9.)

You'll want to strategize on ways to market your class to the community and it is important to utilize multiple forms of marketing (i.e., presentations, newspaper articles, radio, flyers, etc.). Strategies for recruiting participants may differ among communities. Talk with people in your community to find out where they go to find information regarding community events and news.

Ideas for recruiting participants

- Newsletter notifications
- Facebook and other social media
- Community center and church bulletins
- Radio interview
- Personal interest story in local newspaper
- Invite past participants to help promote
- Presentation to support groups
- Presentation to senior groups
- Presentation to community groups
- Presentation to health professionals
- Meet with health professionals individually (potential referral source)



Tai Chi Prime classes tend to fill up quickly and class sizes should be capped at 20. If registration for your classes nears capacity, schedule another Tai Chi Prime class series as soon as possible. Remember to keep a waitlist of interested participants who can be contacted for future recruitment.

When recruiting participants, it's best to have a process in place to ensure that your class is filled with appropriate participants, based on what the program has identified as the target population: 65 years or older; able to participate in class without assistive devices such as a walker, cane or scooter; and have the cognitive skills necessary to benefit from class instruction and to follow through with home practice.

Quote from Tai Chi Prime Participant

*The pace was perfect - the teaching was very careful & precise.
Good individual guidance. The other participants were delightful - I will miss them.*

Market Yourself as a Tai Chi Prime Leader to Sponsoring Organizations

Since there is a growing body of research on tai chi that demonstrates its usefulness for a number of conditions, an increasing number of organizations are interested in offering tai chi classes. Tai Chi Prime has been researched and is an evidence-based program; this is an excellent selling point for organizations that have the staff and outreach for promoting and setting up your classes.



A Sponsoring Organization may already have broad outreach via mailing lists, Facebook and their website, and they may have their own space for classes and staff for organizing them. So, check your local health clubs, community centers, Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC), churches, hospitals and other health care-organizations that sponsor community outreach classes, senior centers, VA hospitals and wellness centers, YMCAs, and tai chi and other martial arts schools. Identify those that might be a good fit.

Ideas for approaching a possible Sponsor for your classes:

- First, get acquainted with who they serve and what they offer: check out their website, Facebook page and/or current class listings
- Call and/or send out emails to potential Sponsoring Organizations
- Make an appointment with the person who organizes classes
- Email them a link to the Guide for Leaders and Sponsors on the Tai Chi Health website
- Prepare: print copies of the following and take them with you to the meeting:
 - Your calling card or contact information
 - What Is Tai Chi Prime? (p. 6), Benefits of Tai Chi Prime (p. 7), Selling points (p. 9) Class Preparation and Set Up (p. 28) and costs (p. 30)
- Check out the physical space: parking, classroom, bathrooms
- Show the Power Point on Tai Chi Prime provided by Tai Chi Health
- Market yourself: your experience and/or your enthusiasm
- If they are interested in sponsoring your classes, review Class Preparation and Set Up (p. 29)
- Give them links or hard copies of information about Tai Chi Prime from this Guide and the website

For Course Leaders

Become a Tai Chi Prime Master Trainer

A Master Trainer teaches or co-teaches Tai Chi Prime Leader Trainings, which prepare certified Tai Chi Fundamentals® Adapted Program instructors to teach the 6-week, 2x weekly Tai Chi Prime classes. They are listed as Tai Chi Prime Master Trainers on the Tai Chi Health website.

Requirements

1. Lead or co-teach at least three Tai Chi Prime class series
2. Apply to become a Master Trainer
3. Be recommended as a candidate by a current Tai Chi Prime Master Trainer
4. Assist one or more Master Trainers with at least two Tai Chi Prime Leader Trainings
5. Get evaluation and feedback from Master Trainers whom you have assisted with Leader Trainings
6. Be recommended to Tai Chi Health as a Master Trainer by one of the Master Trainers whom you have assisted with Leader Trainings

Master Trainers receive passwords to protected Tai Chi Health website pages for all materials necessary for preparing for and teaching Tai Chi Prime Leader Trainings and for conducting fidelity checks.



For Course Leaders

Tai Chi Instructor Advancement

The Tai Chi Fundamentals® Adapted Program (TCFA) can be a gateway for learning the more complex movements of the Original Tai Chi Fundamentals® Program (TCF) and for becoming a traditional Yang Style tai chi practitioner. Tricia Yu created TCF and TCFA as stand-alone programs that can also serve as prequels to learning traditional Yang Style Cheng Man Ch'ing lineage tai chi.

Become certified in the Original TCF Program

As a TCFA certified instructor, you can advance to the next level of training and become certified in TCF, which is done standing without support.

This requires the purchase of the *TCF for Mastering Tai Chi Basics* DVD and attendance at Course Three, where you will learn the *Original TCF Form*, which builds on the *TCF Short Form* that you already teach. There are no other required contact hours. Practice on your own and attend intensives, classes or private sessions as needed to master the Original TCF Form. The certification process is simple: just demonstrate the *Original TCF Form* to a reviewer (see *Certification Information* at https://taichihealth.com/?page_id=156).

Learn the traditional Cheng Man Ch'ing Lineage Yang Style Short Form

Your experience learning TCFA and/or TCF gives you ideal preparation for learning a traditional Yang Style Form. At Tricia's Tai Chi Center in Madison, Wisconsin, she always recommended that everyone start with TCF before trying the traditional form. You can find an instructor at the Tai Chi Health website and/or take a 2-day Yang Style jump-start course at the certified instructor retreats.



FOR SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS

Where Can Tai Chi Prime Be Taught?

Tai Chi Prime can be taught through a range of venues, including but not limited to:

- Health clubs
- Community Centers
- Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs)
- Health Care Organizations
- Senior Centers
- VA Hospitals and Wellness Centers
- YMCAs
- Tai Chi and other Martial Arts Schools
- Senior Apartment Communities
- Faith-based Communities
- Fitness Centers
- Parks and Recreation Centers



Tai Chi Health provides your Tai Chi Prime Leader with fillable brochures, posters and Power Point presentations for promoting the classes.



For Sponsoring Organizations

Is Tai Chi Prime a Fit for Your Organization?

- **Mission:** Is your organization committed to offering community classes that empower older adults to make changes in their health behaviors?
- **Client Base:** Does your organization have clients or patients who meet the criteria for the classes and might benefit from them?
 - 65 years or older
 - Able to participate in class without assistive devices such as a walker, cane or scooter
 - Have the cognitive skills necessary to benefit from class instruction and to follow through with home practice
- **Organizational Support:** Is your management interested in the program; does it have the staff and venues necessary for sponsoring the 6-week class series?
- **Ongoing Classes:** Is your organization interested in offering follow-up and possibly ongoing tai chi classes for participants interested in continuing their practice?
- **Leaders:** Are there already Tai Chi Prime Leaders in your area, or does your organization have resources for training Tai Chi Prime Leaders who can also teach follow-up and ongoing classes of their own design?
- **Time:** Can your organization or a partner organization commit staff time for implementing and sustaining the evidence-based program and possibly ongoing classes? Tasks include (*see Startup Checklist, p. 27*):
 - Securing the venue
 - Organizing and marketing classes
 - Recruiting and registering participants
 - Coordinating the classes
 - Organizing the purchase of home practice DVDs and books
 - Reproducing handouts
 - Coordinating with Leaders



If you answer “Yes” to most of the above, then Tai Chi Prime may be a good fit for your organization.

For Sponsoring Organizations

How to Become a Sponsoring Organization

It's simple! If Tai Chi Prime classes are a fit for your organization, then all you need to do is:

- Find a certified instructor in your area, or help provide training for one (*see next page*).
- Add Tai Chi Prime classes to your roster.
- Prepare for classes (*see pp 27-29*).

Tai Chi Health highly recommends that your organization also provide Tai Chi Prime follow-up and ongoing classes to participants who wish to continue with their tai chi. By offering Tai Chi Prime classes a few times a year, you will have a good participant base for ongoing classes, and your Tai Chi Prime Leader will be well prepared to teach them.

Keep in mind that Tai Chi Prime Leaders are a versatile resource for your organization. They have spent considerable time and energy learning tai chi and preparing to teach it. And as certified Tai Chi Fundamentals® Adapted Program (TCFA) instructors, (a prerequisite for becoming Prime Leaders) they not only are qualified to teach Tai Chi Prime classes, but can teach other tai chi classes to people with a wide range of ages and physical conditions (*see p.18*).



For Sponsoring Organizations

Find Program Leaders

Find a Leader in your Area

Organizations interested in sponsoring Tai Chi Prime courses, can find certified Tai Chi Prime Leaders on the Tai Chi Health website. https://taichihealth.com/?page_id=100 . If you don't find a Leader in your area, you can sponsor a suitable candidate to go through the training.

Sponsor a Leader-in-training

If there are no certified Leaders in your area, an organization can sponsor a potential Leader through the certification process, keeping the following advice in mind:



- Recruit prospective course leaders who have the potential to teach regularly and possibly long-term. Because learning tai chi requires motivation and discipline, Tai Chi Health strongly recommends that organizations avoid assigning or requiring employees to embark on the training. Self-motivated leaders who genuinely enjoy their tai chi practice will become a great asset to your community (see: *Is Becoming a Tai Chi Prime Leader a Fit for you?* p. 12). Ideally, have a minimum of two Tai Chi Prime Leaders available for teaching, assisting and subbing.
- Prospective Tai Chi Prime Leaders must first become certified in the Tai Chi Fundamentals® Adapted Program (TCFA), which requires a significant investment of time and energy including commitment to regular practice (see: *How to Become a Tai Chi Prime Leader*, p. 13). This certification opens up career opportunities for instructors, who, in addition to teaching the evidence-based Tai Chi Prime course, can teach their own follow-up and ongoing classes.

Prime Participants Can Become Leaders

If your Tai Chi Prime classes are popular, there may be demand for additional Leaders. Encourage capable participants to get TCFA certified and become Prime Leaders. Participants interested in becoming Prime Leaders should first develop a strong home practice routine and, if possible, attend ongoing TCFA classes. If it is an option, they can act as Assistant Leaders in Tai Chi Prime classes or ongoing TCFA classes.

For Sponsoring Organizations

Startup Checklist

This is a general overview. For details, (see *Class Preparation and Setup p. 28*).

Course Preparation

Leaders or Sponsoring Organizations may handle this, or they may work together.

- Set up course venue
- Set dates for the course
- Recruit participants
- Register participants and collect any fees
- Order required home practice DVDs and optional books
- Print and bind Home Practice Guides, Home Practice Planners and Trackers
- Arrange for supplies for group discussion and tea time

Course Delivery

- Leaders teach the Tai Chi Prime curriculum with fidelity
- Leaders collect participant evaluations at the end of the course

Course Follow-up

- Review participant evaluations
- Plan for future Prime courses
- Plan follow-up and/or ongoing classes



For Sponsoring Organizations

Class Preparation and Set Up

Facility Requirements

- Quiet, accessible space with ample room for participants and the Leader to practice standing movement, including room for chairs for side support when needed (estimated 750-1000 square feet for a class of 20 participants; scale according to your class size)
- Chairs for the Leader and each participant. Chairs:
 - Do not have wheels
 - Have backs high enough to use for side support without leaning down to grip the chair back
 - Are light enough to move during class, but sturdy enough to lean on for side support
 - If possible, do not have arms
- A second set of chairs for the Leader and each participant if you have space to leave both chair arrangements set up throughout the classes (see next page)
- One or two tables for holding tea and materials
- DVD player and TV with sound, internet access and passcode (or another setup for playing the DVD)
- Audio equipment for playing music (if not provided by the Leader)
- Place for all participants to hang their coats and bags away from the practice area
- Bathrooms nearby
- Contact person on site before class to help set up AV and for troubleshooting throughout training
- Key or access code to the space for the Leader

Teatime Supplies

- A hot water pot, tea bags, napkins, sweeteners and cups for breaks
- A trash can available nearby

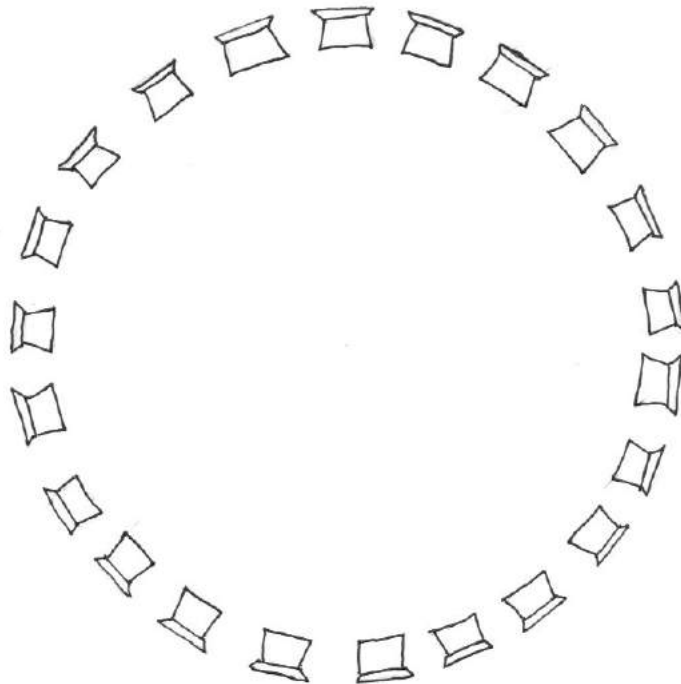
Materials

The following handouts should be available for all participants. The Leader supplies Sponsors with all necessary files and instructions for reproducing handouts at least 2 weeks prior to the training. Sponsor duplicates copies for all participants and has them ready to hand out at the beginning of the training.

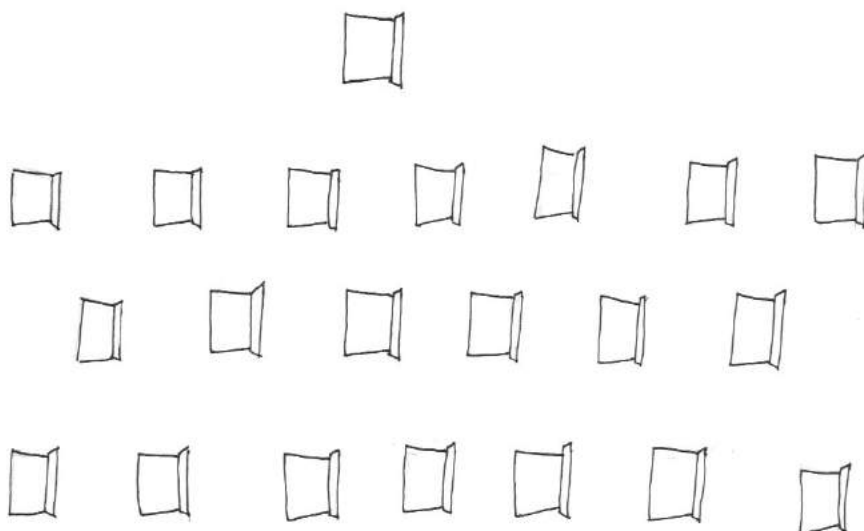
- Nametags for the Leader and each participant plus several blank nametags
- One set of Participant Handouts **for each participant**, including:
 - *Tai Chi Prime Home Practice Guide*, printed on 8.5" x 11" 20 lb. white paper, single sided, bound in a three-hole punch folder with pockets
 - 1 Home Practice Planner, printed double-sided on cardstock (flip on short edge)
 - 2 Home Practice Trackers, printed double-sided on cardstock (flip on long edge)
- 2 extra Home Practice Planners and 6 extra Home Practice Trackers (see printing instructions above)
- Home practice materials to purchase or stream online
 - Required: *Tai Chi Fundamentals*® with *Optional Side Support* DVD
 - Recommended: *Tai Chi Fundamentals*® *Adapted Program* book
- Pens and pencils for each participant, with extras

Classroom Setup

Circle Arrangement for Seated Activities:



Classroom Arrangement for Basic Moves and TCF Short Form:



If you are in a smaller space or only have enough chairs for one arrangement, switch between the two setups throughout the class time as needed. If your space is large enough and you have enough chairs, you can leave both arrangements in place to save time on rearranging.

For Sponsoring Organizations

Costs for Running Tai Chi Prime Classes

If your organization runs classes regularly and has a venue and staff for marketing, registration and participant handout duplication, then direct costs include Leader payment and the purchase of required DVD and recommended book.

Keep in mind that all follow-up and ongoing tai chi classes will be less expensive to run than the evidence-based Prime course since they won't involve detailed preparation, purchase of additional home practice materials or handouts to reproduce.

The following costs are incurred each time a Tai Chi Prime course is run:

Leader Payment

Requires large front-end investment in instructor training which assures skilled and dedicated Leaders. Unlike most other exercise-based classes, each Prime class requires 30 minutes preparation, plus 15 minutes before and after each class for set up, greeting and socializing.

- Recommended: \$40 per hour. Leaders and Sponsors negotiate fees.
- Course Leader Fee: \$960 (twelve 90-minute classes plus 30 minutes of preparation per class x \$40/hour).

Administrative Costs

Costs vary depending on your organization.

- Marketing: \$140 (time and materials)
- Site Coordination: \$40 (2 hours x \$20/hour)
- Registering participants: \$60 (3 hours x \$20/hour)

Materials Costs

The following costs assume a class size of 20 participants. The costs can be directly scaled down for a smaller class.

- Printing & binding Home Practice Guides for participants: \$260 (\$13 x 20)
- Required home practice DVDs for participants: \$350 (\$17.50 x 20 DVDs)
- Optional books for Participants: \$500 (\$25 x 20 books) (or purchase a few to share)
- Teatime Supplies (cups, napkins, sweeteners & tea): \$73
- Nametags for Leader and participants: \$8

Fixed Costs

These may be one-time costs for a new Tai Chi Prime Leader or Sponsoring Organization:

- Hot water carafe for teatime: \$40
- Pens and pencils for use during group discussion: \$5

For Sponsoring Organizations

Expansion and Sustainability

Participants often want to continue their tai chi practice after successfully completing a Tai Chi Prime course. Thus, Tai Chi Prime can be an excellent way to develop a student base for an ongoing tai chi class in the community. If running a class for experienced students, future Tai Chi Prime courses can serve as an introductory class for new students.

Add-on Tai Chi Prime Classes

Many participants in the Tai Chi Prime research study indicated that they would have liked a few more sessions. So, if this works with your organization's schedules, your Leader can add one or two more weeks to the classes to help solidify what participants have learned and provide in-depth exploration. The add-on curriculum is included in every Leader's *Tai Chi Prime Leader Manual*.

Since all requirements for the evidence-based Tai Chi Prime course will have been fulfilled by the end of week six, the add-on classes can be less structured, go more with the flow and focus on areas of special interest to group.

Ongoing Classes

The slow, gentle movements of tai chi are especially well-suited for life-long health and well-being. Many participants will want to continue attending tai chi classes to help maintain good practice habits and enjoy their new community of tai chi enthusiasts. Ongoing classes naturally will be less structured than the evidence-based Tai Chi Prime classes and can provide opportunities for learning. Ongoing classes can:

- Meet either once or twice a week
- Meet for any number of weeks
- Be an entire course series or run as drop-in classes
- Meet indoors or outdoors, weather permitting

Although the class schedule can be more flexible than the structured Tai Chi Prime curriculum, it will be useful to keep the same basic format. Keep in mind that some organizations have offered ongoing tai chi programs for decades.



APPENDIX

Tai Chi Fundamentals® Adapted Program (TCFA) Certification

Important note: TCFA Certification is a prerequisite for attending the Tai Chi Prime Leader Training and teaching the evidence-based Tai Chi Prime classes. TCFA certification also qualifies you to teach tai chi classes of your own design at venues of your choice.

There is a 30-50 contact hours requirement before applying for certification. Since certification is performance-based, individuals will need varying amounts of TCF training to prepare for certification testing. Since TCFA is a simplified Yang Style Cheng Man Ch'ing lineage (CMC) program, streamlined certification is available for experienced CMC instructors. *More information at:*

https://taichihealth.com/?page_id=156

Requirements

1. **Attend Course One: TCF Adapted Program Basic Moves Training** (12-16 contact hours). Receive Certificate of Completion for course attendance.
2. **Attend Course Two: TCF Adapted Program Short Form Training** (12-16 contact hours). Receive Certificate of Completion for course attendance.
3. **Attend Certification Preparation Intensive** (6-contact hours). Review, practice, prepare for certification
4. **Take optional additional classes and/or private sessions** with TCF Certified Instructors as needed for additional review and preparation for certification.
5. **Take a Certification Readiness private session** with a TCF Certified Instructor.
6. **Apply for TCF Adapted Program certification** after your Instructor gives you the go, (additional fees).
7. **Successfully complete written and movement tests** with a TCF Certification Reviewer.
8. **Get certified!** as a TCF Adapted Program Instructor.
9. **Take Tai Chi Prime Leader Training** and become certified to teach Tai Chi Prime.

Certification Training Overview

1. **Course One: No prerequisites** TCFA Basic Moves Training (12-16 contact hours). Teaches Basic Moves: Optional Side Support, Walker Support and Seated versions; introduces the TCF Short Form, Part One for all three versions. Fulfills all prerequisites for attending Course Two.
2. **Course Two: Prerequisite: Course One:** TCF Short Form Training (12-16 contact hours). Reviews Basic Moves and TCF Short Form, Part One, all versions; teaches entire TCF Short Form, all versions.
3. **Certification Preparation Intensive: Prerequisite: Courses One and Two** (6 contact hours) Review and refine movements, principles and teaching strategies. Prepare for certification.
4. **Optional classes, private sessions with TCF Certified Instructors:** take additional training as needed to prepare for certification depending on previous tai chi experience and movement learning skills.

APPENDIX

Research on Tai Chi Prime

Published in *The Gerontologist*, a high-ranking, peer-reviewed journal

Abstract: Chewning B, Hallisy KM, Mahoney JE, Wilson D, Sangasubana N, Gangnon R. Disseminating Tai Chi in the Community: Promoting Home Practice and Improving Balance. *Gerontologist*. 2019 Feb 27. pii: gnz006 <https://academic.oup.com/gerontologist/advance-article/doi/10.1093/geront/gnz006/5366273?guestAccessKey=0ce3509b-d7f1-4346-a887-444a90dfea31>

Full Report: Chewning B, Hallisy KM, Mahoney JE, Wilson D, Sangasubana N, Gangnon R. Disseminating Tai Chi in the Community: Promoting Home Practice and Improving Balance. *Gerontologist*. 2019 Feb 27. pii: gnz006 <https://academic.oup.com/gerontologist/advance-article/doi/10.1093/geront/gnz006/5366273?guestAccessKey=0ce3509b-d7f1-4346-a887-444a90dfea31>

Science Description

The 6-week Tai Chi Prime (TCP) course was evaluated in a 3-city randomized trial with 197 community dwelling adults aged 65 years and older. The study aim was to reduce participants' fall risks while refining key elements of the dissemination and implementation of the course. To meet these aims the team designed TCP as a short course augmented by home practice. To promote home practice participants developed and wrote a personal daily home practice plan on a "planner" and then tracked their practice adherence on a "tracker" twice during the course bringing their trackers back to class for problem-solving and supportive discussion. Participants learned to fit practicing a brief set of *Fab Four* moves during usual daily habits, such as when making coffee.

Results

Results of the trial were positive for falls risk outcomes and self-reported practice patterns. At the end of the course, the course impact on falls risk scores was significantly better for the TCP participants than for the control group. Using validated falls risk indicators recommended by the Centers for Disease Control, TCP participants had significantly better STEADI measure scores for leg strength, tandem stance balance, and mobility and gait. In addition, balance confidence and executive function, measured by trail-making B was significantly better for the TCP participants than the wait-list control group (Chewning et al., 2019). Further, participants reported they practiced an average of 6 days out of 7 for 26 minutes per day. Program implementation resulted in large class sizes, strong participant retention, and high observed fidelity of course delivery by teachers.

History with CAARN

The Community Academic Aging Research Network (CAARN) facilitated the Tai Chi Prime research by identifying community sites interested in tai chi. They helped the research team identify possible Area Offices on Aging in Lacrosse, Milwaukee, and Madison who had strong community center coordinators to partner offering Tai Chi Prime classes. CAARN staff, center program coordinators and the research team had regular bimonthly phone conference calls to address decisions about study design issues, recruitment and enrollment of older adults, and space needs for both the courses and data collection.

APPENDIX

Research on Tai Chi: An Overview

There is a large body of research and clinical evidence that suggests that tai chi programs in general are beneficial for adults 65 and older, adults under age 65, as well as those in assisted living and long-term care facilities for a range of conditions. Thus, Tai Chi Prime participants may also benefit in the following areas:

- Balance
- Bone mineral density
- Cancer quality of life
- Cardiovascular and respiratory disease
- Chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, and other autoimmune conditions
- Chronic lower back pain and other pain management
- Cognitive function
- Orthopedic and neurological issues
- Stroke and stroke risk factors
- Parkinson's, MS and other chronic conditions
- Sleep disorders

For more information: check out tai chi research abstracts in your areas of interest at PubMed <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/>

In the bar at the top, enter “tai chi and _____” (name your topic of interest: e.g., MS, Parkinson's, fibromyalgia, pain, etc.) and press the Search button.

Tai Chi Prime Class Scrapbook

Each class includes instruction in the following: standing *Energize* warm-ups and *Basic Moves* instruction, informal teatime, seated *Mind/Body Skills*, *Everyday Qi Gong*, group discussions and home practice coaching, followed by standing *TCF Short Form* instruction and a closing group circle.



Participants practice the Tai Chi Stance and Bear Roots on One Leg during **Basic Moves Training**: building blocks for learning tai chi taught in a simple-to-complex sequence.



After Warm-ups and *Basic Moves*, participants enjoy **informal teatime** for community-building and break.

Tai Chi Prime Class Scrapbook (continued)

Seated Activities



After teatime, participants learn **Mind/body Skills** such as present focus, breathing and relaxation, and practice **Everyday Qi Gong** for calming, energizing and uplifting energy.



Following qi gong is **home practice coaching** or **discussions** on topics including tai chi's applications in daily life, funny tai chi stories and living with pain and physical limitation.

Tai Chi Prime Class Scrapbook (continued)



Following Seated Activities, participants learn the ***TCF Short Form*** , a modified Yang Style form taught standing in a simple-to complex sequence that integrates skills learned in *Basic Moves* training.



A Closing **Group Circle** concludes the class with a reminder of our connection to the heavens, the earth and the greater circle of all life.

Questions?

Contact Tai Chi Health https://taichihealth.com/?page_id=593

We'll be glad to help

Be Still as a mountain. Move like a great river *from the Tai Chi Classics*



Taos, New Mexico