

*Weiser Signal American's guide to...*

# Healthy Aging



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- Create a Blue Zone
- Exercise your brain
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*"We do not stop exercising because we grow old - we grow old because we stop exercising."* -Dr. Kenneth Cooper



September is National Yoga Awareness Month. Yoga is a low-impact exercise to improve strength, balance and flexibility. Even though it is not considered an aerobic exercise it can be just as good in improving health and strength. Regular practice will strengthen the muscles of your arms, back, legs, and core. Yoga classes are provided twice a week by Nicole Miller on Monday and Wednesday at Small Town Fitness. Weiser Memorial Hospital is also planning a free indoor yoga session in September.

# Yoga low-impact way to improve health

*Ancient practice helps relieve stress, strengthens muscles*

*by Philip A. Janquart*

Yoga is a discipline that began some 5,000 years ago in India.

Today, in the U.S., it is estimated that 20 million people practice the physical and, some say, spiritual art on a regular basis.

Many say that it is a tool that can help improve heart health, relieve neck and back pain, and increase flexibility. In addition, it is low impact and can be done just about anywhere, alone or in groups.

In observance of National Yoga Awareness month this September, Weiser Memorial Hospital is planning an indoor yoga session that will be open to the public.

Originally, the hospital scheduled an outdoor session for Saturday, Sept. 10 at City Park, but it was canceled due to lingering smoke caused by several Idaho wildfires.

"We were looking forward to this event but due to the air quality, we decided to cancel," said WMH Community Health Worker, Oscar Padilla. "We are rescheduling an indoor event but are still working on the details."

That information on the time and place will be released as soon as it is made available.

The session will be free to the public and all ages and skill levels are welcome to attend. A big part of the session, which will be led by an experienced instructor, is to introduce people to the discipline.

"It's not going to be anything crazy; it's going to be kept at a pretty general and basic level," Padilla said.

He pointed out that many jobs in our modern world are performed sitting at a desk and that the hospital's session is meant to help people stretch out muscles and move joints enroute, hopefully, to a healthier lifestyle.

"Nowadays a lot of jobs are sedentary, so we thought this would be a perfect opportunity for people to get moving a bit more, get more in tune with their body, improving the way your body moves, range of motion, and overall flexibility," he said.

They are all things that help keep the body tuned up, working properly, and overall feeling better, a fact that is not lost on Padilla who is also a personal trainer at Beyond Barbell Gym in Weiser.

Padilla, 23, a 2016 Weiser High School graduate, was a soccer standout, earning a scholarship to pursue the sport at the next level. He attended North Idaho College before transferring to Warner Pacific University in Portland, Ore. where he earned a bachelor's in sports medicine. He holds

certifications in personal training and strength conditioning.

He added that there is a meditative quality to yoga and encourages people to give it a try.

"Myself, I didn't try yoga until a few weeks ago," he conceded. "One of my friends invited me and after doing some research, I tried it and really liked it, so I would encourage people to come try it out. You never know, it might be something you enjoy and maybe it will become a lifestyle."

Nicole Miller, who works for the Weiser School District, teaches a class every Monday and Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. at Small Town Fitness, located at 35 W. Commercial St.

Johns Hopkins Medicine offers eight benefits of yoga, which can be found at [www.hopkinsmedicine.org](http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org):

1. Improves strength, balance, and flexibility: Slow movements and deep breathing increase blood flow and warm up muscles, while holding a pose can build strength.

2. Helps back pain: Yoga is as good as basic stretching for easing pain and improving mobility in people with lower back pain. The American College of Physicians recommends yoga as a first-line treatment for chronic low back pain.

3. Can ease arthritis symptoms: Gentle yoga has been shown to ease some of the discomfort of tender, swollen joints for people with arthritis, according to a Johns Hopkins review of 11 recent studies.

4. Benefits heart health: Regular yoga may reduce levels of stress and body-wide inflammation, contributing to healthier hearts. Several factors contributing to heart disease, including high blood pressure and excess weight, can also be addressed through yoga.

5. Can relax and help with sleep: Research shows that a consistent bedtime yoga routine can help you get in the right mindset and prepare your body to fall asleep and stay asleep.

6. Can mean more energy and brighter moods: You may feel increased mental and physical energy, a boost in alertness and enthusiasm, and fewer negative feelings.

7. Can help manage stress: According to the National Institutes of Health, scientific evidence shows that yoga supports stress management, mental health, mindfulness, healthy eating, weight loss, and quality sleep.

8. Connects you with supportive community: Participating in yoga classes can ease loneliness and provide an environment for group healing and support.

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# Aging successfully in Weiser

by Crystal Linn

In 2018 I was asked to write a column on senior citizens and their issues. After explaining to the editor that baby boomers do not like the idea of becoming seniors we compromised and my new column became Aging Successfully.

We all are in the process of aging, regardless of our current physical age, and the decisions we make today affects our future quality of life. Because of these facts the column, Aging Successfully, will always contain informative information for persons of all ages.

The column discusses various aging-related subjects like brain exercises, nutritional issues, healthy relationships, and much more.

Earlier in the summer I was thrilled to receive a phone call from Philip Janquart and Sarah Imada of the *Weiser Signal American*, asking me to share my column with you readers here in the greater Weiser area. Thank you, Philip and Sarah, for this opportunity to share my column with everyone.

In addition, I also want to take



this opportunity and publicly thank the community of Weiser for welcoming me with open arms.

In 2020 I realized living in my home state of Washington was no longer affordable or safe which made me weep. The process of finding a good community in which to relocate was long and hard as there

were many good choices. After leaving Washington I spent time with family and friends in the Southwest. Then in August of 2021 I settled in Weiser, my top choice for relocation. I continue to be glad for my decision to settle here.

To kick off this first official column, I would like to offer all of you readers a contest.

Email us a topic you would like to read about in future columns and, if your topic is chosen, you will receive a free copy of our first Aging Successfully book. Please note: there is opportunity for multiple winners.

Thank you again, *Weiser Signal American* and the community of Weiser. I look forward to sharing many insightful columns with you over the years to come.

Email me at [information@crystallinn.com](mailto:information@crystallinn.com) with your topic suggestions for future columns. I reply to every email personally.

*Crystal Linn, health columnist, who writes Aging Successfully is also a multi-published author and an award-winning poet.*



Five locations in the world were identified as being the healthiest places to live and had the most centenarians with less chronic disease. Researchers have designated these areas as Blue Zone. The five places include Loma Linda, Calif., Nicoya, Costa Rica, Sardinia, Italy, Ikaria, Greece and Okinawa, Japan. Read the article below to find out the 10 main factors that contributed to the longevity.

## Create a Blue Zone to increase longevity and healthfulness

by Crystal Linn

A modern-day explorer named Dan Buettner met with National Geographic, the National Institute on Aging and other longevity experts. Buettner along with two colleagues then set out to identify locations around the world where people lived the longest and the healthiest.

This team discovered five locations where the majority of the population lived to be centenarians with less chronic disease than the rest of the world. These five areas were given the name the Blue Zone.

When I first learned about the Blue Zone I assumed the name came from the fact that these five locations are close to the Pacific Rim, where there is more sunlight and more blue sky. However, the name came from the fact that when Buettner and his colleagues discovered a location which met their criteria they would circle that area in blue.

The five locations identified by these men for health and longevity are: Ikaria, Greece; Ogliastro, Sardinia, Italy; Okinawa, Japan; Nicoya Peninsula, Costa Rica; and Loma Linda, Calif., specifically the Seventh-day Adventist community.

While these are the only cultures discussed by the Buettner team, there may be other pocket areas in the world with a large centenarian population who experience minimal chronic disease.

Here is a list of the 10 main factors these longevity communities have in common, and it includes more than diet and exercise.

1. Their diets are predominately plant-based with only 5 percent to 25 percent of their diet being animal-based foods. The meat dishes are reserved for special occasions. This means 75 percent to 95 percent of their meals are plant-based.

2. Everyone practices reduced-calorie-consumption, mainly by doing some form of fasting on a regular basis

3. A moderate consumption of red wine is a regular part of meals.

4. Physical exercise is built into their daily lives, and includes activities such as walking to various locations and climbing stairs.

5. Sufficient sleep is a natural part of these cultures. This includes an average of seven-hours of sleep a night, and light napping.

6. Most everyone has a purpose in

life, a reason for living.

7. Each of these five cultures has strong family ties.

8. These populations have strong social networks.

9. All of these cultures appear to have limited stress factors.

10. Most all practice some form of religion.

Buettner lives in the United States where he and his family practice Blue Zone living. He has written several books on the subject and created a Blue Zone website. In addition he has developed a Blue Zone Project to prompt longevity and healthy living throughout the world.

As encouraging as the Blue Zone findings are, Buettner and his “teachings” have received severe criticism. Many records were destroyed during World War II and there is no documentation that some of these centenarians are truly this old. Also, some experts say that Buettner’s findings were based on simple observation and not on solid, scientifically controlled research.

Email us with your thoughts regarding longevity and the Blue Zone. I personally reply to every email. [information@crystallinn.com](mailto:information@crystallinn.com).

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Sudoku is easy to play and the rules are simple. Fill in the blanks so that each row, each column, and each of the nine 3x3 grids contain one instance of each of the numbers 1 through 9. Enjoy exercising your brain to keep it strong.

# Brain exercises – one of the best

by Crystal Linn

Brain Plasticity, also called Neuroplasticity, is the term used to describe the brain’s ability to regenerate itself and to create new pathways. With the proper environment and stimulation the brain can continue this process throughout a person’s life keeping the brain strong and free from dementia.

There are many wonderful, and fun brain exercises available such as brain teasers, word puzzles and Sudoku yet many experts believe memorization is one of the best brain exercises available. Memorization helps establish brain patterns, strengthens cognitive thinking and can help improve a person’s rhythm.

Tim Richards, lead pastor of Dungeness Community Church in Sequim, Wash., gave his permission for me to share the following.

During the fall of 2018 he invited members of the congregation to memorize Romans chapter 12. Part of the activity included everyone sharing their ideas on how to make memorization fun and easy.

The beauty is these memorization tricks work for memorizing anything from your favorite poem to the Gettysburg address. Here is part of the list compiled by the group.

- Add emotions: the brain recalls emotionally-charged words quicker than calmer words.
- Break it down: the smaller the phrase, the easier it is to memorize.
- Cartoon it: draw cartoons of the passage to memorize; the brain remembers silly visuals easier.
- Count it: knowing the number of phrases or lines to memorize can help assure nothing is left out.
- Create motion: use simple gestures, sign language or act out the passage as body motion creates brain patterns.
- Find a friend: someone who can help with the memorizing can make the process easier.
- Find the patterns: word patterns help the brain to organize the passage to be memorized.
- Record the words: record the passage to be memorized and listen to the recording while driving, exercising or working, then quote the words with the recording.

- See it: Use sticky notes or index cards to post the words to be memorized around the home, the vehicle and the office, this guarantees the words are always in sight.
- Sing it: music goes into the brain through a different portal, making memorization easier.

The above list contains good suggestions. I encourage you to use whatever methods work for you. One gentleman who participated in the Romans 12 project shared how he visualized a train with each verse having its own car. It worked as he was able to quote the chapter word-perfect.

Again, these simple techniques will work for memorizing anything from poetry, to song lyrics, to the U.S. Constitution. The more we memorize passages important to us the stronger and healthier our brains become. It is important to me to have a healthy brain! This week I think I will sit down and make a game plan to memorize something each month in 2022. One thing I want to memorize is Robert Frost’s poem; “The Road Not Taken.” What would you like to memorize this year to make your brain stronger?

We welcome reader input. Email us at [information@crystallinn.com](mailto:information@crystallinn.com) and share your thoughts. I personally reply to each email.

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2	9	3	1	8	7	6	4	5
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# Are you prepared to escape if necessary?

by Philip A. Janquart

Everyone should have an escape plan in case they wake in the middle of the night and their house is on fire.

Whether you and your family get out safely could be left to chance, or you could prepare an escape plan ahead of time, significantly increasing the likelihood of survival.

Yet, how many actually have one? It is especially important for seniors.

People over 65 are twice as likely to perish in a fire and those over 75 are three times more likely. People over 85 are almost four times more likely not to make it out alive, according to several sources, including the National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA).

In the U.S., there were 3,515 people who died in house fires in 2019, of which 1,471 were 65 and older, according to U.S. Fire Administration data.

The NFPA and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have developed a program intended to help older adults better prepare for a house fire.

The plan can be found in its entirety on the NFPA’s website at [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org).

Here are a few tips provided by a variety of sources including the NFPA, as well as columnist Scott Grant of [graying-withgrace.com](http://graying-withgrace.com) who adds ways to make your home safer:

- Have a plan: Escaping a fire can be difficult for seniors with mobility issues. Make an exit plan ahead of time. Identify multiple exits, devising a way to leave the home through both the front and back door. Have an exit plan for every room of the home. Figure out the best way to exit the bedroom, kitchen, bathroom and every other room and practice ways of leaving them in different ways.



In case of an emergency an escape plan should be put in place for all household members. In case of a fire everyone should have an exit plan on how to get out of the house, where to meet so everyone knows each family member has reached safety, keep items such as glasses, keys, hearing aids and phones easy to reach. Be prepared to stay safe.

- Mobility challenges: Some seniors use walkers, wheelchairs, or canes. Have these items as close as possible and know where they are.
- Keep items ready to go: Glasses, keys, hearing aids, and phones should always be easy to reach. Keep these things on the nightstand.
- Keep it low: If you live in a two-story home, consider sleeping in a room on

ground level to make escape easier.

- Sound the alarm: Most fire fatalities occur when people are sleeping and smoke can put you into a deeper sleep rather than waking you, so having a mechanical early warning device is important. People who are deaf or have diminished hearing should consider installing a smoke alarm that uses flashing light or vibration to alert them to a fire. A deaf and

hard of hearing tip sheet is provided on the NFPA website.

Other tips include making sure there is a phone on the nightstand, keeping an up-to-date fire extinguisher, don’t wear loose clothing while baking or cooking because it can catch fire, keep hallways and rooms free of clutter and don’t stack things in piles, avoid using space heaters, and don’t leave food unattended while cooking.

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# Money-saving tips for older citizens

10 simple tips that can help save money and live healthier

by Crystal Linn

We all love money-saving tips, and ideas for saving money are of the greatest value to older citizens. One of the downsides to aging is a limited potential for additional income, and some seniors have zero opportunities to make more money.

Since there are many books written on this subject, I will list only 10 tips which are relevant and easy to implement.

**Health:**

Look into special prescription insurance programs or explore the option of purchasing your medications from Canada. They are more affordable, and the medications are easily shipped to the U.S.

If you are on a long-term prescription medication check with your primary care provider to see if you still need it. Taking a medication when no longer needed is an unnecessary expense and could possibly create harmful side effects.

One example is, if a patient is on high blood pressure medication for long periods of time, that patient's blood pressure can stabilize. Continuing the medication can lower his or her blood pressure too much, causing the patient to fall and be unable to get back up.

Make your own denture cleaner using baking soda and water. If there are extra stains add vinegar. Warning: if you have well-water with iron in it, this recipe may not work. Also, brand x denture cleaners cost less and work just as well as the top brand names.

**Food:**

Menu planning saves time as well as money and it eliminates the stress of making last minute meal decisions. If you enjoy

eating out, incorporate times for those opportunities in your actual plan. Be sure and include healthy snacks in your menus.

Another tip for saving time, energy and electricity costs is to cook one day a week and freeze the meals.

Try making your own bread. Homemade bread costs 50 to 60 percent less to make than purchasing bread from a store, and it tastes better. If you are unable to knead the bread, there are many no knead recipes available. My favorite recipe is a no-knead, no-rise bread which bakes in my slow cooker.

**Household:**

Instead of purchasing expensive, and toxic, bug sprays make your own. Any alcohol such as rubbing alcohol, gin or vodka

will kill insects within 30 seconds. Cayenne pepper tincture will kill them within three seconds. One word of caution is, if you pour the alcohol into a spray bottle do not accidentally inhale the mist. It is most painful.

As a preventative measure, sprinkle powdered cayenne in the kitchen garbage container and just outside of any kitchen doors.

Rodents hate mint. Placing potted peppermint plants around your home will keep them away. Another technique is to place old stainless steel scouring pads around the foundation of your home. These pads can be sprinkled with oil of peppermint, making them more potent.

To save on your electric bill, turn off your hot wa-

ter tank at night then turn it back on in the morning. That tank is one of the biggest electricity guzzlers in your home. Also unplug appliances and electronics when not in use. While plugged in these items draw a minimal, yet a consistent amount of electricity. After a friend started turning off her hot water tank in the evening, unplugging the internet, TV, and small appliances, her electrical bill went down by \$10 a month.

These 10 tips can help all of us to save money and to live healthier.

For more ideas go to the Weiser Public Library or check on-line.

I invite you to email your special money-saving tips to share with our readers. I respond to every email: [information@crystalinn.com](mailto:information@crystalinn.com).

October is coming!

Just a friendly reminder to change the batteries in your fire alarms and to make a plan in case you have a fire.

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Eating a plant based diet helps reduce the risk of colon cancer and helps avoid the development or progression of chronic diseases like diabetes and heart disease. The recommended amount of fiber for an adult is 25-30 grams a day.

# What is a whole food plant-based diet?

by Jennifer Stahl, RN

A whole food plant based diet consists of eating primarily plants in their least processed form. Plants consist of vegetables, fruits, legumes like beans, pulses like lentils and root vegetables like potatoes and sweet potatoes and starches like squash.

I am not telling you to go outside and eat the pine needles off the tree, although they are eatable. I am talking about incorporating more plants into your diet and decreasing animal products.

This is not to say you will never eat animal products again but decreasing them to no more than 10 percent of your daily diet will help avoid the development or progression of chronic diseases like diabetes and heart disease.

What makes a plant-based diet so healthy? Fiber and micronutrients.

Fiber is important for healthy bowel movements and acts as a sort of “broom” for your colon, sweeping the colon of bad bacteria and buildup in your intestines. A high fiber diet drastically reduces the risk of colon cancer. A high fiber diet helps you have soft regular bowel movements and prevents constipation.

The old saying an apple a day keeps the doctor away. Apples are the scrub brush for the colon one of the best fruits you can eat for a healthy colon. Let us look at the two types of fiber soluble and insoluble.

Soluble fiber is one form of fiber that absorbs water in the stomach and intestines and forms a gel that slows digestion. It will make you feel full and satisfied, which can help with weight loss. It will also slow the digestion and absorption of glucose, which affects blood sugar levels and sensitivity to insulin. This is an important factor if you are diabetic or prediabetic.

In a report from the CDC 34.2 million Americans have diabetes. That is one in ten people, and 88 million people over the age of 18 have prediabetes which is one in three people.

Soluble fiber also interferes with the absorption of dietary cholesterol. It can decrease the LDL (lethal) cholesterol in the blood. Having low levels of LDL can reduce your risk of heart disease. Foods high in soluble fiber are nuts, seeds, legumes (lentils, beans, and peas for ex-

ample) whole grains, oats, fruits high in pectin such as apples, blackberry, lemons, cranberries, plums and pears, as well as brussels sprout and broccoli.

Insoluble fiber is another form of fiber. It passes through the intestines without breaking down. This is a good thing as it adds bulk and draws water to the stool, assisting in passing the stool through the intestines.

Food high in insoluble fiber are whole grains, nuts, seeds, cruciferous vegetables, root vegetables, onions and green leafy vegetables.

Both kinds of fiber are important to eat daily. There are fiber supplements on the market but getting your fiber from whole plant-based foods is far superior in effectiveness and benefits.

Fiber can make you gassy and even constipated if you increase it too fast. So if fiber is new to your body increase it slowly one to two grams per day.

The recommended amount of fiber for an adult is 25-30 grams a day. Currently the average adult is eating 15 grams daily. Along with increasing your fiber make sure you are drinking plenty of water, a good rule of thumb is half your body weight in ounces daily.

We all are familiar with macronutrients which are fat, protein, and carbohydrates. Micronutrients are vitamins, minerals, phytochemicals, and antioxidants. Plant foods are loaded with them. These micronutrients prevent disease development and nourish our bodies on a cellular level. Eating a diet high in micronutrients keeps us from overeating as it satisfies nutrition on a cellular level.

Whenever you are changing your diet talk to your health care professional before doing so. If you are on medication check with your doctor before starting a fiber supplement as it can lower blood sugar levels and interfere with certain medications. Some people may be taking a diuretic (water pill) check with your doctor before increasing your water intake.

Remember to be present when you are eating, sit in a designated eating place without distractions such as the tv, computer or your phone. Give thanks for the food you are about to nourish your body with. Listen to your body, it will tell you when it is time to stop eating. If you feel “full” you have overeaten. Your goal is to feel satisfied, not full. Also learn to identify emotional hunger and work on ways to sooth yourself outside of food.

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5. Refuse to raise  
9. Edible mushroom  
14. Rap musician in "New Jack City"  
15. Domingo rendition  
16. Plump and then some  
17. Gyro pocket  
18. Dearth  
19. Battlement  
20. Nonstop  
23. Parts of binary code  
24. Senate approval  
25. Embraces  
28. Well-chosen  
30. "Ed Wood" star  
34. Where the bull is thrown?  
35. One of the Titanesses  
37. Gift from a wahine  
38. Nonstop  
42. Bob Hope's WWII gp.  
43. They're in galley banks  
44. Surrender  
45. Ventnor Avenue payment  
47. Hand-wringer's feeling  
48. Biblical divisions  
49. Sweet suffix  
51. Foyer  
52. Nonstop  
59. State-run game  
60. Ethnic dance  
61. Without much meat or fat  
63. Cafe patron  
64. Proficient in  
65. Sport fought to three points  
66. Become weatherworn  
67. Lasting impression  
68. Slowly permeate

### Down

1. Hors d'oeuvre target  
2. Folic, for one  
3. Test version of software

4. Admit customers after hours  
6. Locales  
7. Claim against property  
8. One of "Charlie's Angels"  
9. Sharp-toothed eel  
10. Did as told  
11. Go over a second time  
12. Birthright seller  
13. Spring observance  
21. Lock, stock and barrel  
22. Librarian's gadget  
25. Mr. Rubinstein  
26. Search for water  
27. Pope's "\_\_\_ Solitude"  
28. Came to light  
29. Dien Bien \_\_\_, Vietnam  
31. Tabloid sighting?  
32. Pet annoyance?  
33. Cone droppers

36. Also  
39. Went temporarily off course  
40. Partner of to  
46. Proclaimed  
48. Without an occupant  
50. Siesta sound  
51. Great blue bird  
52. Away from the wind, nautically  
53. Deafening sound  
54. Palindromic emperor  
55. Sound of a dull drop  
56. Crosby's road companion  
57. Handle problems  
58. Place to get a spanking  
62. "Darn tootin'!"

D	A	B	S		C	A	L	L		M	O	R	E	L
I	C	E	T		A	R	I	A		O	B	E	S	E
P	I	T	A		N	E	E	D		R	E	D	A	N
	D	A	Y	I	N	A	N	D	D	A	Y	O	U	T
				O	N	E	S			A	Y	E		
A	D	O	P	T	S		A	P	T		D	E	P	P
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T	W	E	N	T	Y	F	O	U	R	S	E	V	E	N
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R	E	N	T		W	O	E			V	E	R	S	E
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L	O	T	T	O			H	O	R	A		B	O	N
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# What makes Tai Chi so special?

by Crystal Linn

Tai Chi is practiced by approximately 20 percent of the world's population and its popularity is increasing rapidly. It is my opinion that tai chi is the perfect, universal exercise. It is safe for people of all ages and of all physical conditions, including those confined to wheelchairs. No special equipment is needed and the various movements can be done at any time and in any location. Best of all, it is low-impact and stress free.

The history of tai chi is filled with truth, legends and some myth. Historians all agree it was founded by a Taoist monk named Chang San Feng while he studied in the sacred Wudang Mountains of China.

Apparently the monks needed fighting skills to defend themselves against wild animals and warring tribesmen. In an attempt to improve those fighting skills, Chang began watching animals in nature fight, and soon realized there was a back and forth, and a circular movement in each animal's fighting motions. This was opposite of mankind's technique which was a continuous attacking of an enemy until one or the other was defeated.

Chang used what he learned to develop 13 forms (movement patterns) and created a new "soft fighting" martial art. For centuries these Taoist Monks kept their fighting techniques a secret. Some historical records



Tai chi is an ancient form of fighting developed by a Taoist monk as he watched the fighting skills of wild animals who fought in a back and forth motion. He used what he learned to develop the 'soft fighting' martial art. The exercise is known to reduce stress through the graceful movements. The meditative moves promote serenity through gentle, flowing motions.

say even the government people were afraid of the monks with their magical fighting skills.

As recent as 100 years ago tai chi was considered one of the four basic martial art disciplines. Even though it is now considered predominately an exercise

routine, these moves can still be used in fighting off an attacker.

Unlike other martial arts tai chi does not have a rating system, such as a white belt for novices and a black belt for experts. The reason for this is mastering tai chi is viewed internally,

such as better peace of mind and healthier organs as opposed to mastering some physical routines.

Over the centuries this "soft fighting" martial art has evolved into comprehensive exercise routines for the mind as well as

the body.

The various routines, or forms, include deep breathing exercises and relaxing techniques. Deep breathing techniques are beneficial in weight reduction. Tai chi also builds muscle strength, stamina and balance, which are critical for senior citizens. Medical research believes tai chi has additional benefits such as improving one's quality of sleep and reducing joint pain.

If you have watched tai chi you know the movements are slow and flowing, like a graceful dance.

There is "chair tai chi" for those in wheelchairs or others who have difficulties standing. Children and mentally delayed adults can learn basic tai chi forms and benefit from the exercise and health benefits provided. Also, many businesses are now providing tai chi opportunities for their employees.

There are several ways to learn tai chi which are either free or affordable. You can go to the library and check out videos, or use YouTube as both have quality videos on learning tai chi. In addition to general martial arts studios, there are more studios opening that are specifically for tai chi. My favorite method is to find a local class in a community center.

Have you tried tai chi? If so email us with your experiences. I personally reply to every email: [information@crystallinn.com](mailto:information@crystallinn.com).

# Put a twinkle in your wrinkle.

Aging well starts with good habits and preventative care.

*We are happy to be a part of the journey.*

A photograph of a smiling woman with short blonde hair, wearing a green sleeveless dress and a straw hat with a brown band. She is standing outdoors and playing with a young girl. The girl, who has long brown hair and is wearing a pink and white floral dress, is blowing bubbles. The woman has her hands out, ready to catch the bubbles. The background shows a stone wall and some greenery.



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