



TRADITIONAL TAIJI  
ALLIANCE FOR  
VETERANS

<https://stand-easy.com>

NPI# 1235735325

# The Tai Chi Letter

A PUBLICATION OF THE TRADITIONAL TAIJI ALLIANCE FOR VETERANS

*If you're here, you've found home*

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## OUR MISSION

To create a national network of traditional taiji classes and competitive sports events for veterans.

## OUR VISION

To offer a complete range of instruction in traditional taiji practices and methods.

To encourage participation via multiple opportunities and pathways for advancement.

## Benefits of Tai Chi for the Digestive System

Taiji practice benefits the internal organs, including the stomach, liver, spleen, kidneys and intestines.

As we practice, the internal organs receive a gentle massage. This naturally stimulates their normal functions. In addition, the way we practice using continual movement, naturally increases the resilience of the adjacent and supporting tissues.

One of the internal aspects of taiji, not visible outwardly, is one of the more beneficial for the digestive system.

We keep the tongue relaxed and connected with the upper palate, behind the front teeth.

Combined with relaxed breathing and relaxed movement, this encourages the body to naturally produce saliva.



At the end of practice, the mouth should not be dry; it should be naturally moist. Saliva is a 'first stop' on the digestive path. When it is sufficient, food can be processed by the body more effectively.

The benefits to the liver, spleen, and kidneys are related to both the gentle massage and the balancing effects it has on the body functions.

Taiji requires the use of the waist. It is one of the fundamentals for taiji. We turn the waist, right and left and back again, following the circles in the form.

The more we focus on balanced whole body movement, with that easy, side to side turning through the waist, the greater the benefit for these organs.

## Program Introduction: Traditional Tai Chi for Veterans

Our taiji program for veterans includes online and in-person Classes and Events. Paths for participants to advance and use other skills while enjoying the benefits of taiji practice are included.

The opportunity to become a coach, or a teacher, or an event judge all exist. It's an open table.

There are other opportunities, such as team and event organizer, event photographer, and sports writer.

**Interested? We'd like to hear from you.**



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## Outer Practice: The Six Connections

In traditional taiji practice we connect the postures through the form. We must also pay attention to other connections.

The six outer connections are: hands with the feet, elbows with the knees, shoulders with the hips. The waist connects the upper and lower body.

As we move, the transfer of effort, energy and intent extends from the back heel, through the body, and is expressed in the hands. We align the furthest extension of the hands with the toes.

The relative position of the knees and elbows should be coordinated and well-balanced.



This means that the elbows are kept in and down, not sticking out to the sides.

The shoulders and the hips can be problematic, not for their movement, but the lack thereof. The waist gets stuck, doesn't turn, and neither do the shoulders or the hips. Both move, in unison.

In traditional taiji, we have a saying: When one part moves, all parts move. When one part is still, all parts are still.

When the hips turn, the waist turns, and the shoulders turn, in harmony with the body and with the movement the benefits of practice will increase.

## Inner Practice: Quiet the Mind

In traditional taiji practice, we want to quiet distracting thoughts and 'turn down the noise' so we can focus on practice.

One of the first things to do is to be present, now. If you are thinking about going to the store later, you're not present, now. If you're thinking about the kids' birthday party, you're not present now.

Take each of those thoughts and put them somewhere. On a table? In a bag? They will be there waiting for you after practice. They aren't going anywhere without you. Really. They can't.

As you practice, they may come back. (*I really did want to get some ice cream today.*) Let it go. Tell that thought to go sit down

with all the others and you will be with them shortly. Then, quietly return to practice.

When you finish, go take care of whatever it was. This is part of the secret. Acknowledging the distraction and then taking care of whatever it is, that is one key to quieting the mind.

## Taiji or Tai Chi

Both are correct! Taiji is the Pinyin Romanization system for Chinese characters. Tai Chi is the Wade-Giles system. It dates to the late 1800's. Pinyin, developed in the 1950's, is the most widely used today.

