

# BRINGING TAI CHI EASY™ PRACTICE GROUPS TO YOUR COMMUNITY

5<sup>th</sup> Saturday  
Meeting on the Cloud Series  
July 29, 2017

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## Marketing Tai Chi Easy™

By Tom Wittenberg

The suggestions and directions in this protocol are intended for those who have been certified to teach Tai Chi Easy (TCE) and who now wish to implement the central mission of the Healer Within Foundation: "Training thousands to improve the health of millions." It will address the following issues:

Who?

Where?

The Pitch

How much to Charge?

The protocol is based on the business model of the plumber, that is, you will make house calls, as opposed to having your own Tai Chi studio. (In that way you will avoid paying rent for your studio, unless it's a part of your house.)

### Where will you offer classes?

Begin where you are. Do you rent an apartment or condo? Do you own your house? Consider approaching your condo or home-owner's association to see if they are interested in sponsoring your activities. Is there a clubhouse where you could hold sessions? How about an existing newsletter to your neighbors that would carry an announcement of classes? Or a central bulletin board that's viewed by your neighbors?

Looking beyond where you live, consider such agencies as the YMCA or YWCO, Unitarian-Universalist fellowship, churches, agencies that provide care for seniors. Does someone nearby lead classes in yoga? Maybe you can team up with that person. How about a commercial gym or spa? An acupuncture/acupressure clinic? A community swimming pool or sports complex?

Don't overlook public libraries or such civic groups as Lions, Elks, Kiwanis, or Rotary. They are always looking for luncheon speakers, and you could give a brief demo with group participation. It could be that someone in the audience runs a small business and



would welcome your services. Don't forget to take flyers and business cards.

### The Demo

As for the demo, just do several movements from the short form of Tai Chi Easy, e.g., Hands Like Clouds or Gathering Energy from Earth and Heaven. You could do this seated with the program director or head of Human Resources; you could do this standing in front a roomful of Rotary members. Or simply say that for a moment you want to sit a do nothing...except breathe. Then take three slow breaths. The point is to give a hint of what the program is and how beneficial, even in small doses, it can be.

It's like the old adage of how long a woman's skirt should be: long enough to cover the subject and short enough to keep it interesting.

### Who will sponsor your Tai Chi Easy sessions?

How about such agencies as police stations, fire departments and Doctor's offices? The staff of those outfits experience lots of stress and would value the relief!

How about organizations that provide classes for retirees and seniors, for example Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI), with 125 locations all over the country. If there's one near you, you're in luck! One side benefit of taking your class to any of these agencies is that they will provide the advertising as well as the audience.

Next, consider local businesses and small manufacturing companies, where the approach is along the lines of "What if I could improve the productivity of your staff, cut back on Monday Flu, and reduce employee stress?" See if there is a Wellness program already in place that you could be part of. Many forward-looking companies have (cont.)

established Wellness programs because they've been shown to repay the investment times four. Maybe you could help establish one. As a way of informing the local community of your venture, prepare a news release for the local newspaper and send it to the reporter who covers business.

In all of this prospecting activity, be prepared to offer a free demo of Tai Chi Easy. Anticipate rejection, but remember, persistence pays off!

### The Pitch

The approach to any of these organizations is simple and straight forward. First of all, phone the Human Resources Director or Activities Director. Ask for an appointment. Don't try to sell the program over the phone, just try to get an appointment.

Show up on time and bring a handout that describes the program. (See Appendix B for examples.) Do not mail the flyer! (Most likely it will be tossed aside.) You've got to pitch the proposal face to face! The Director needs to size you up, and you need to see where you could give the class: in the break room? The loading dock? The conference or training room? Again, be prepared to do a short demo. Keep the pitch itself simple and personal, perhaps along the lines of the following:

"I've been studying Tai Chi for the last 12 months, and now I've been certified to teach a style called Tai Chi Easy. It's called that because it's easy to learn and easy to duplicate. Most people get the hang of it in 3 or 4 sessions and become self-sufficient in 5 or 6."

"Tai Chi has been practiced, especially in China, for thousands of years. I've read the studies (and you can too). The benefits of regular practice include lower heart rate, lower cholesterol count, heightened immune function, better hand-eye coordination, better balance and reduced fear of falling, but most of all, a deep sense of calm and relaxation."

"My proposal is to come here once a week for 8 weeks and work with your staff for 30 or 45 and 50 minutes per session."

"Once your staff has learned the program, they can continue on their own...forever. As for how much to do? The Center for Disease Control and Prevention

(CDC) and the American Heart Association have suggested that adults should aim for 150 minutes per week of physical activity. That works out to 20 or 25 minutes a day. And remember that we're also counting the short walk you take from car to home and to Wal-Mart; so we're talking about 15 or 20 minutes a day on a consistent basis...all in the name of increasing health and longevity."

That 150 minutes a week, by the way, includes yoga, Pilates, Zumba, gardening, walking, swimming and running. It's not as though Tai Chi Easy has a lock on good health.

### Fees

What to charge for a session of Tai Chi Easy? Your answer will be conditioned by what others charge for similar services. For example, what does the YMCA pay its yoga teachers? If the local Park & Rec department pays its fitness instructors \$25 an hour, it's unlikely that they will pay you \$50.

Here is a formula that has worked for some TCE trainers: \$5.00 per class per participant, or \$50 per class. How many participants per class? Many trainers have found that a range of between 5 and 25 works for them.

Here's another matter to consider: whether to charge a fee per session or to charge for the entire series. Some TCE trainers have concluded that if a participant pays up front, she is more likely to attend all sessions. Related to that is the question of whether to allow new comers to drop in anytime or whether to close attendance once the class has started. Drop-ins tend to limit the momentum of a class, since you are accommodating newcomers at every class.

And finally, keep in mind the words of the *Dao De Jing*:

**"GREAT ACHIEVEMENTS MAY  
EASILY BE ACCOMPLISHED  
BY STARTING WITH SMALL  
ACTIONS."**

-Chapter 63, Jahnke Translation