



Level 1 Community Practice Leader Training Frequently Asked Questions



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Level 1 Frequently Asked Questions + Answers

Is there a need for Tai Chi and Qigong teachers?



The simple answer is *yes* indeed. There is ample evidence to suggest that if people managed their stress better, they would live longer, be more productive and resilient, and perhaps even save money on medical expenses, medications, therapy and doctors visits. This training provides powerful tools to help you manage stress; becoming certified to lead these practices with others prepares you to do just that.

In addition, if people are not well, they may need to manage not just ordinary life stress, but the stress of an illness or injury. In this case, the simple and effective practices you learn in this training are not experienced as another stressor, but as a possible way to soothe the agitation and give it a chance to heal.

What is the Health and Wellness Revolution?

The Health and Wellness Revolution is taking place on many levels – from new policy that affects the delivery of health care and the way doctors offer “personalized medicine” to people doing their own medical research online and taking responsibility for their choices in health care. This is new! Gone are the days when we had a single doctor for the duration of our entire lives.

Technology has changed things, including the types of pharmaceuticals you can take or not choose not to take. This is good news. As a Qigong practitioner and practice leader, you become part of the solution and the growing trend of people becoming more and more empowered to make choices and decisions that affect their lives. While this is good news, it is also overwhelming and stressful to navigate. Qigong and Tai Chi can help you help others create the space and time for the decisions and become part of the solution in a very gentle and powerful way.

What is the difference between Tai Chi and Qigong?

In the classic definitions of Tai Chi and Qigong, they are vastly different. In a learning context, you want to think of them as related “categorically” and philosophically. Qigong is a way of working with “energy” (or Qi), which includes a way of breathing, moving and being. Tai Chi is a way of breathing, moving and being that fits in this philosophical category called “Qigong.”

In this sense, Tai Chi is a moving or dynamic form of Qigong. There are many, many forms of Qigong, and you could say that all Tai Chi (all styles, all families, all forms) is a type of Qigong. In practice, practitioners and teachers would say that Tai Chi and Qigong are vastly different, and this is true if you look at certain aspects of practice, including: biomechanics (how you move), tradition, culture, intentions, applications, and the vastness of human creativity in expressing these arts.

In Integral Qigong and Tai Chi, we seek unities, and not divisions. This is not to say that Qigong and Tai Chi are completely the same. However, there is much that unites them, and much that can be learned by approaching these arts in this way.



How might leading these practices help my community?

Leading community practice can help you help your community in that it is a low cost solution to adding important, regular exercise health and practices for your community. In addition, classes are social events, and recent research suggests that the more social bonds an individual has, the healthier they are.

Can we learn in a week? What if I don't?

Sixteen to twenty-five hours of training was determined sufficient by the 2005 National Expert Meeting on Qigong and Tai Chi at University of Illinois at Urbana-- Champaign (the link for a PDF of the Consensus Report is located at <http://www.agingblueprint.org/PDFs/ConsensusDoc.pdf>). This training and the subsequent Levels 2 and 3 exceed this requirement and the requirements for teacher certification determined by the National Qigong Association <http://nqa.org>.

In the historic gathering of scientists, researchers and Tai Chi experts, at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, the community of experts produced a

report on many issues involved in helping keep communities well. They identified sixteen to twenty-five hours as the minimal amount of time a practice leader needed to be exposed to healthful practices and be able to share them in a safe way.

Dr. Roger Jahnke, the IIQTC Director, was a leading contributor to this work of consensus, which spawned research and collaboration not just between the scientific community and Tai Chi, but also amidst the diverse community of Tai Chi, which includes Tai Chi Families, schools, teachers, masters, and practitioners.

We have found that a week of training delivered in a retreat setting is actually a good, thorough exposure to the material with enough time to engage and practice it. During the training, you also learn about teaching methodology and how different people learn these types of practices and information at different rates. It is all useful information. There is time for questions and answers and for “working out” challenges.

With your sincerity, focus, intention, and determination, yes, you will learn in the timeframe that works best for you! And you may be surprised and delighted to find out what works for you and what works for others. There is no need to worry about “not” getting it, if your intention is to get it. Finding out what you need (and what your audience may need) is the important part.

If this is Level 1 of training, what else is there?

Level 1 is the prerequisite for Level 2 and Level 3 of the Institute of Integral Qigong and Tai Chi 200-hour teacher training. After Level 1, you are certified to lead practice as a community leader. You may choose to go on to learn more, deepen your practice and become a full-fledged teacher.

Completing Level 1 is a prerequisite of attending Levels 2 and 3 (Level 2 Integral Tai Chi Practice Leader and Level 3 Advanced Integral Qi Cultivation). Level 2 is dedicated to learning Tai Chi Fundamentals and uses the Tai Chi Easy™ form and methods.

Level 3 is advanced practice that goes by the name of alchemy – the art and science of turning the dirt, straw and lead of life into the pure gold of liberation.

All training levels feature:

- teaching practicum;
- lectures;
- group discussion;
- group practice.



Is their required reading or other instructional media?

Yes, besides an instructor manual and a DVD of practices, there is also an extensive reading list. You are encouraged to read the books and explore the resources before you train in earnest. This way, you will be familiar with the material and able to integrate and assimilate more information this way. This will help you get the most out of your training.

For the reading list, please visit:

http://www.instituteofintegralqigongandtaichi.org/library_readinglist/

Do I need to know Tai Chi and Qigong beforehand?

No. An experienced Tai Chi and Qigong practitioner might find some aspects of this training somewhat easy to understand, and he or she may find other aspects challenging!

Our approach to Tai Chi and Qigong are important here. Tai Chi and Qigong are vast areas of expertise to which some people dedicate their professional lives. This may have happened for you. It has certainly happened for many people we have trained. They have changed the course of their lives with Qigong and Tai Chi.

Do we get to teach while we are there?

Yes! Part of this training will expose you to opportunities to lead practice. You are not necessarily teaching as much as you are sharing your own practice with others.

Developing this “sharing your practice” perspective may help make your participation in this part of the training less a performance and more a generous, social exchange with the people you are with, where you are the leader of the activity. There is group discussion and group activity. You will work in the big group and a small group setting as well.



Do you teach Medical Qigong as part of this training?

All Qigong is Medical Qigong when the intent is to manage a medical challenge. The IIQTC has trained many Integral Qigong and Tai Chi Teachers who are therapists and doctors. Any Qigong used by a medical professional is potentially Medical Qigong.

In China, Medical Qigong was politically necessary because during the Cultural Revolution all Qigong was banned. However, outside of China Medical Qigong is a somewhat recent invention designed to make Qigong more accessible to the Western populations and in integrative models of health care.

Consumers are habituated to doctors and drugs, and many are likely to be more compelled if they think that Qigong is medical. There are two kinds of medical Qigong. The IIQTC Teacher Training (Levels 1, Level 2, and Level 3) is focused on the aspect of Medical Qigong where Certified Teachers teach participants healing Qigong methods. The other form of Medical Qigong takes place in a context where a “Therapist or Doctor” transmits Qi.

As you will discover there is one approach to Qi transmission that is very accessible and does not require medical training. You will learn this in the IIQTC Teacher Training and other IIQTC courses. This method is presented in the Qi Transmission chapter of *The Healing Promise of Qi*, which is required reading for the IIQTC Teacher Certification Curriculum.

The place of Medical Qigong in Energy Medicine and Mind-Body Energetics is evolving, and we are wise to pay attention to it. In Integral Qigong, using Qigong as “medicine” and to “produce the medicine within” is a key aspect of the curriculum. It is important to remember the mechanism by which Qigong “works” or heals.

Qigong works by improving the practitioners’ immunity response, promoting the relaxation response that affects every system in the body in a way that encourages its restoration of function, and thereby increasing a person’s self-healing and self-recovery capabilities and enhancing one’s self-regeneration potential. Qigong is considered to be effective in improving the effects of many chronic conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, allergy, asthma, arthritis, degenerative disk disease, cancer, depression, anxiety and addiction.

Please see the exhaustive research paper done on the conditions addressed through practices of Tai Chi and Qigong in “A Comprehensive Review of Health Benefits of Qigong and Tai Chi”; Author(s): Roger Jahnke, Linda Larkey, Carol Rogers, Jennifer Etnier, Fang Lin in the *American Journal of Health Promotion*, July/August 2010, V24, I6, e1 25 Keyword(s): Tai Chi, Taiji, Meditation, Qigong).

With this evidence base now in place there are emerging “therapies” and protocols for using Qigong and Tai Chi as complements to allopathic/conventional medicine,

including: general health maintenance, physical rehabilitation, and management of stress-induced/associated ailments such as hypertension, bone density and balance, cancer treatment, arthritis, and back pain.

Dr. Roger Jahnke, IIQTC Founder and Director, was selected to translate/edit the new English version of definitive text on Medical Qigong used in the medical schools of China, *Chinese Medical Qigong*.

How can I be sure I am qualified to do this training?

This deep and sincere question may guide your practice. It reflects a deep yearning for the truth, which you may want to explore during training with other like-minded individuals. People of all walks of life are drawn to this training. Some have had mobility challenges. Some have studied extensively with other teachers. Some are brand new to these practices. But all participants have been open and available to discovering something new about themselves.

Can I do a personal retreat and come with intentions not to teach?

Yes. Many people have come to do just a personal retreat, and they have “ended up” leading practice. You never know. What is helpful is to enter the experience you choose, with the intention that is only yours, and relax into it. You may have a delightful Qigong and Tai Chi vacation or you may discover a calling.

How do I prepare?

It takes many hours to master any skill. These skills may take hours to learn. You will want to prepare depending on your experience in Tai Chi and health education. For example an experienced Qigong and Tai Chi practitioner would not need as much time to learn the program from the instructional DVD.

A health professional will already be acquainted with the science and physiology portions of the program. An experienced teacher will recognize and be able to apply some of the teaching theories and concepts. Your open mind and heart are the critical ingredients here.

Visit <http://IIQTC.org> to view videos and gather information before you get to the training. Read the Required Reading.



Once you get there, you will receive your training materials. See if you can familiarize yourself with the instructional Integral Tai Chi and Qigong Teacher Training manual, and browse and look at the exercises, movements, and relax. You will be memorizing basic movements and learning how to present them in a way that makes sense to your audience.

This is your time to practice. Even if you are not interested to become a certified instructor, this simple preparation is recommended in that it will help you to relax and be oriented while you are there. This way you can gain more skill and knowledge from the training.

Will there be there tests?

No. But you may find some situations testing or challenging, depending on your history, experience and personality. The training is rich, diverse, and meant to train you on many levels, not just learning movements. Relaxing into the process is helpful. Asking questions is also helpful. Knowing what you need is helpful.

Are there written assignments?

Yes. This pertains to you if you decide to go on to complete Level 2 and Level 3 of the 200-hour certification training. There are two written assignments:

1. A course description for a catalogue (YMCA, retreat center) – Description 175 words, outline of the course, a 100 word professional biography
2. A “paper” on a subject matter of your choice. The intent is to exercise the capacity to develop a body of information on a compelling topic and engagement with the material. Several graduates have gone on to publish their written work and have used it to build their reputation with their students, deepen their own knowledge, publish in newspapers and journals. Topics have included: pain management, gardening, energy medicine, mindfulness meditation, the Eight Extraordinary Channels, shiatsu, yoga, opera, spirituality, and many more.

These assignments are discussed in detail in Level 2 and turned in at Level 3.

Have you ever not certified anyone?

The main requirement for certification is completing the training. There have been people who have had to leave the training early on family emergencies and things of that nature. If your intention is to do the training, and you complete the training, then you will likely be certified.

What will we do every day?

Days will begin with morning practice in, followed by breakfast. There will be ample time to have a leisurely breakfast before class. Class will be a mixture of lecture, practice, and small and large group exercises. There is a longer break at lunchtime, and then more class time in the afternoon, dinner, and one last time to meet during the evening. It is training! You will be both busy and engaged as well as encouraged to find quiet time for you to do some self-study and get additional rest if you need it.

Will there be free time?

Yes. There will be time in between scheduled times, and then at least one free evening or afternoon planned.

Is there support for special diets?

Be sure to specify any allergies in the registration form when you register. If your dietary needs are out of the ordinary, please contact Diane Cardamone by email at diane.cardamone@healthaction.net. While we try to accommodate dietary necessities, it is difficult to accommodate every consideration in a retreat center environment.

How much does it cost?

Tuition for the Level 1 Community Qigong Practice Leader Training ranges in price depending on the housing option you select. Lodging options include 7 nights lodging, meals, and on-site training materials. Commuter fees include Level 1 Training tuition, meals, and on-site training materials.

Do you offer discounts, payment plans or financial aid?

Yes. There are options for flexible payment plans when you register. Financial aid is offered on a case-by-case basis and determined through a process that involves a personal interview with the Director of Finance, Sheri Hansen at 805-967-3825 or email SheriHansen@cox.net. We also create special deals and discounts for registering online, and for members of our email list.

What is your refund and cancellation policy?

Our event refund and cancellation policy can be found on the registration web page for this training and registration interview. All cancellations submitted in writing to email refunds@healthaction.net. If you have questions about the policy, contact the Director of Finance Sheri Hansen.

Can I receive Continuing Education for the training?

There are Continuing Education Contact Hours available for Registered Nurses and NCCAOM Professional Development Activity (PDA) for Acupuncture.

For inquiries, contact the Diane Cardamone at 805-617-3390 or email diane.cardamone@healthaction.net.

When/where is the next Certification Training?

Learn about public workshops and certification trainings at <http://IIQTC.org/calendar/>

We Appreciate You!