

Tai Chi classes begin in Margaret River



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Local News



A series of Tai Chi classes has begun in the region, led by former Australian Tai Chi champion Professor Andrew Jan at the Margaret River Community Centre.

The Chi Kung 1 course offers participants the chance to learn the basic Tai Chi form along with basic meditation and an understanding of the principles of the practice.

Dr Jan said the art form could benefit people from all walks of life, and age groups.

"Tai Chi translates from Chinese as the 'supreme ultimate'," he said. "It is supreme because it engages all aspects of mind, body and spirit and attempts to unify them.

"The symptomatic relief and health benefits of Tai Chi and Chi Kung have been investigated in trials for a range of conditions including Type 2 diabetes, chronic pain, fibromyalgia, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, hypertension, depression, and cancer, with variable results.

"Intuitively, however, long term benefit for Tai Chi is likely if used appropriately as an adjunct to Western medical approaches.



Professor Andrew Jan was the 2000 Australian National Tai Chi champion and is adjunct Professor School of Medicine University of Notre Dame Fremantle.

Dr Jan said benefits could be experienced quickly, but the real value comes from ongoing practice.

"Many published scientific studies examine results after only 6 to 12 weeks and show varied health benefits. With more time and practice, improvements in health and proficiency in this art form are likely to accumulate."

Dr Jan told the *Mail* said while the classes were held in a group format, there was also focus on the individual.



"The classes aim to meet the participants' objectives," he said. "Each participant has individual needs concerning their health and wellness from Tai Chi, and this is confidentially and appropriately shared with the teacher and the group.

"All classes start with some theoretical and philosophical concepts of Tai Chi. 'Working the Chi' (Chi Kung) has roots in Chinese medicine and Taoism."

A brief meditation and warm-up follow the theory portion of the class.

"The warm-ups are different from usual calisthenic approaches as the perception of Chi is facilitated, which requires some engagement of the spirit, mind, emotions, and physicality," said Dr Jan.

"A simple, easy-to-learn form with only 13 postures is taught for this initial Tai Chi group. Each pose requires an understanding of its martial application and how to use internal strength. Postures are repeated and corrected, [before] the class ends with a second meditation."

While Tai Chi is a popular activity amongst the older population, Dr Jan said it could complement demanding physical and mental activities for younger people.