

Falling v. tai chi

Regarding the emails from Classmates below, about falling more and more as we age....A few years ago I was stumbling and falling regularly. My doctor ordered physical therapy to help. Medicare only pays for a certain number of therapy sessions. At the last therapy session, my physical therapist told me to go take tai chi, as it would help with my balance as much as his therapy, and it was much cheaper. So I signed up at Lombard Park district to start tai chi classes with John Robertson, who taught tai chi at multiple locations and park districts in the far western suburbs of Chicago, and Online. Below is his most recent Online Monthly Newsletter. (which you can sign up to receive if you want)....

Tai chi not only helps with balance, it also helps with the mind-body connection and other health issues. Because it's basically slow-motion martial arts, there is nothing stressful that will hurt you. And if you have a good instructor like John, if something causes you pain, he'll tell you how to modify the movement, so it doesn't cause you pain or problems. You don't want an instructor at our age who is gonna tell you it must be done exactly 100% a certain way, whether it hurts you or not. We are in it for health reasons, we are not taking our classes so we can enter a tai chi competition.

Since taking these classes, my balance has definitely improved. It's not where I can stand on top of a fence post like the boy in the movie Karate Kid, nor could I walk on a balance beam like an Olympic gymnast, nor do I have the far better balance that I had in my youth. But I don't stumble or fall nearly as much anymore. And if I do stumble, I'm usually able to regain my balance now after taking tai chi for several years. Don't expect overnight results, it takes time for your balance to improve. But it will get better, which is definitely better than having it get worse. And the more that you practice, the more you'll improve. 90% of the people in our classes have been seniors working to improve their balance. As John tells us...Be the tortoise; not the hare... And a journey of 1,000 miles begins with a single step...

Falling is one of the biggest sources of injury for our age group. So what have you got to lose by trying tai chi! John even does training at nursing homes, where he does a sit-down version of tai chi.

Where ever you live, look for classes in your area, or try John's online classes <https://www.youtube.com/7starsma>

Take care and stay healthy everyone!

Roger