

A digital mogul's motto: Just practice it!

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Unless you are in the media industry, you may not know who [Jonathan Miller](#) is. But you probably have some “connections” with him if you own shares of America Online (AOL) stocks, you play video games on [IGN](#) or watch TV and movies on [Hulu](#).



Violet Li



Kung Fu Tai Chi Magazine

Jonathan Miller graduated from Harvard College with honors and embarked his career as a media executive by serving as Vice President of programming at NBA Entertainment for the **National Basketball Association** at age 30. Later, he became a managing director of **Nickelodeon International**, a unit of Viacom's **MTV Networks**, and successfully launched Nickelodeon in the U.K. From 2000 to 2002, Jon ventured into the e-commerce world by working for Barry Diller's **USA Networks** (now **IACI** and **Expedia**) as CEO and President. Immediately, his talent of managing the fast changing technology-driven business has won him respect from the global digital media industry. In 2002, Jon was brought into AOL Time Warner – AOL purchased Time Warner in 2000 and then split in 2009 -- to resuscitate the media conglomerate. Jon left AOL in 2006. People in the media and financial industries credited Jon for his razor sharp operations and bold strategy to transform AOL from a subscription-based company to an advertisement-revenue-generating business. Herb Scannell, former vice-chairman of MTV Networks, calls Miller "one of the smartest guys I have come across in the media world." After AOL, Jon co-founded Velocity Investment (later became Velocity Interactive Group), an investment firm focusing on digital media and consumer Internet. He was also highly sought after by **Wall Street** tycoon **Carl Icahn** and Yahoo!. In March 2009, Jon became the Chairman and CEO of **News Corporation's** digital media group and News Corporation's Chief Digital Officer overseeing the global strategy of digital initiatives for News Corp and directing the management of digital media, including **Fox Interactive Media** and **Hulu**. He is an invisible hand that shapes the global digital media landscape. Currently he also serves on the Board of the American Film Institute and is a Trustee of both Emerson College and WNYC public radio station in New York. According to *Bloomberg BusinessWeek's* database, he is connected to 123 board members in 13 different organizations across 27 different industries. He was honored with the Pioneer Prize at Mip TV in **Cannes** in 2006 and as a "Media

Visionary of 2011” at the inaugural Media Festival held in Montreux, Switzerland.

Mr. Miller and his family live in New York. But much of his business is in California. He travels almost every week there unless he goes to Europe, Asia or other continents to oversee existing or develop new businesses. When I met him in June during Kung Fu [Tai Chi](#) (KFTC) Magazine’s 20th Anniversary Gala in San Jose, California, he just finished a week of travel. But this 55-year executive looked extremely energetic. His eyes were shining with brilliance, gentleness and humility.

Jon’s passion for Chinese [Martial Arts](#), especially Tai Chi is not a secret. He started his Martial Arts journey at 21. First, he studied Wah Lum Preying Mantis from [Grandmaster Chan Pui](#). He was excited to reunite with Grandmaster Chan during the KFTC Magazine Gala. Later he was introduced to internal Chinese Martial Arts like Hsing I, Ba Gua and Tai Chi. Through rock music legend [Lou Reed](#) and colleague [Scott Richman’s](#) introduction, he met Chen Style Tai Chi lineage holder [Grandmaster Ren Guangyi](#) in 2003. He immediately decided to take private lessons from Ren. It wasn’t easy to convert from external martial arts to Tai Chi though. He jokingly said that “it hurts my ego” to become a beginner. In addition to a two-hour weekly lesson, he practices daily by himself even during his frequent business trips. He recalled the fun memory that he was the only “white guy” practicing Tai Chi in a Beijing park by himself.

Grandmaster Ren finds Jon very methodic in his learning approach that Jon only wants to learn a couple of new movements each time. Jon asks many questions about details. To him, quality is more important than quantity. In my interview with him, he mentioned that as he is aging and his goal for learning martial arts has changed. Now he tries to understand the art of Tai Chi and how to better express it. With diligence and thorough understanding, his learning progressed quickly. He has learned Chen Style forms 19, 21, 38, Lao Jia Yi Lu (Old Frame Routine One), Xin Jia Yi Lu (New Frame Routine One), Tai Chi Sword, Tai Chi Broad Sword (Dao), Push Hands and Chin Na (Joint Lock). During the Master Demonstration at KFTC Magazine Gala, Mr. Miller was the only performer who was not a professional martial artist. His performance interpreted Chen Style Tai Chi well. His movements were relaxed, extended, gentle, fluid, yet powerful. He moved slowly and smoothly without any pause but there was Zhong Ding (central equilibrium) in each and every movement.

Miller’s understanding of Tai Chi is not confined to practice. He thinks that some Tai Chi principles can be applied in business and life. In an interview with [Sifu Stephan Berwick](#) and published by KFTC Magazine in 2006, Jon was mentioned that Tai Chi principles hold a universal quality. He said that Chen Style Tai Chi and business emphasize precision. He thinks that the Peng energy, which combines both hardness and softness, is essential to Tai Chi, can be utilized in business negotiation. Miller has been described as relatively low-key when it comes to managing mega deals of merger or acquisition however he is extremely effective as a negotiator. You can read Miller’s other profound thoughts of Tai Chi on business by clicking a link [here](#).

Mr. Miller said that scientific research has proven that Tai Chi and [meditation](#) have positive impact on people's brain and body. To him, Chen Style Tai Chi provides the health benefits as well as the martial art functions. It is fun to learn and he also feels energized after practice. Tai Chi also helps him to focus on high-stress jobs he has had. Since he is so busy and he does not have time to do ten things (for fun and health), "I just do Tai Chi," said Jon. His 90-minute daily routine consists of Standing Post (Zhan Zhuang), Silk Reeling and form practice. As a media mogul, he thinks that media can help raise awareness of Tai Chi and help educate people on the art. He admitted that he has spent much time watching [Master Chen Bing's](#) Youtube clips. When asked whether there is a day that he does not feel like practicing because of time/schedule constraint or other conditions? He said that there was, but he urged others in the same situation, "don't make a decision and just practice it", because he always feels great afterwards.

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