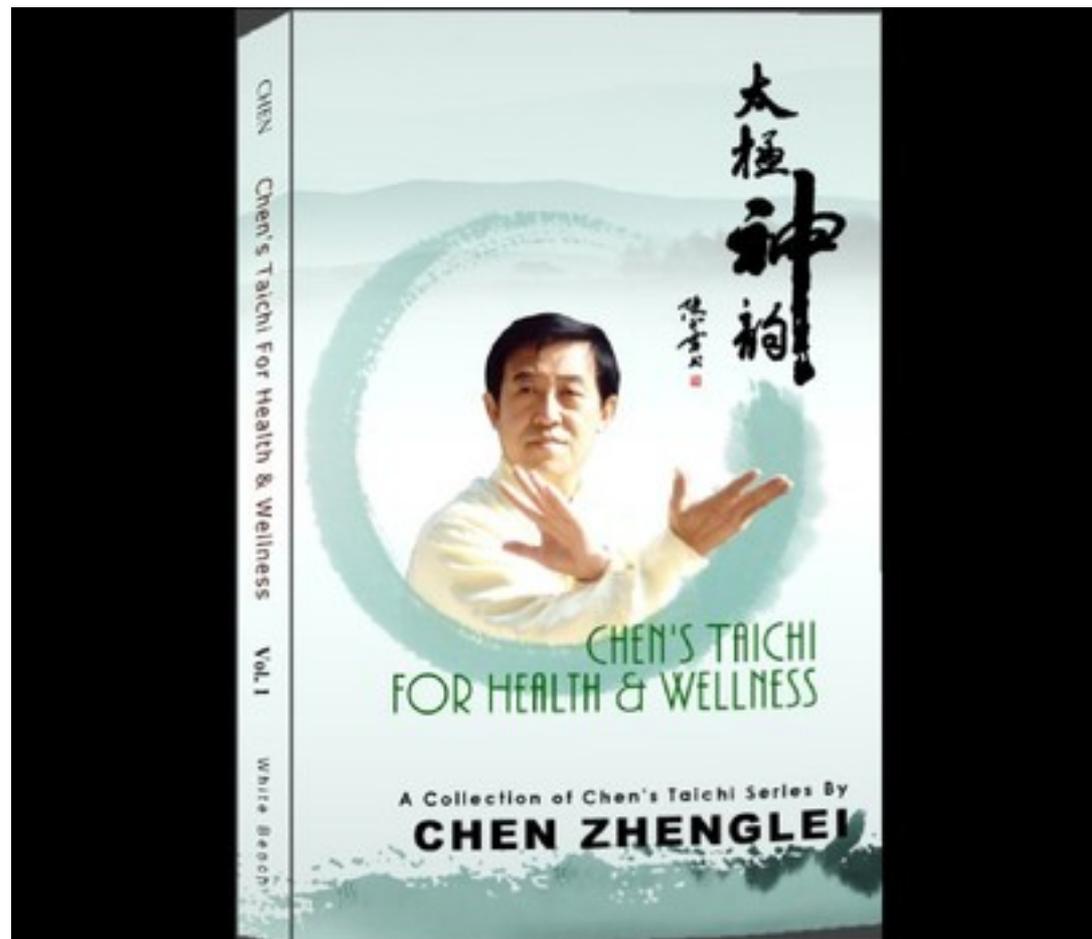


Chen's Taichi For Health & Wellness by Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei

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Book Cover
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Grandmaster [Chen Zhenglei](#) is a 19th generation Chen family descendent and lineage holder of the Chen Style Taichi. He is also one of the “Top Ten [Martial Arts](#) Masters” in China recognized by the Chinese Wushu Association not only because of his mastery in Tai Chi, but also his plethora of knowledge of Tai Chi theory and applications.

Since he was 8 years old, Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei studied with his uncle, Chen Zhao-Pi, to learn Tai Chi Quan Old Frame routines (*Lao Jia*), push-hands, and many Tai Chi weapons. Chen Zhao-Pi was a famous Tai Chi grandmaster in his time, an honorary professor of Nan Jing Central Wushu Institution, National Senior referee, and was selected as committee member of the National Wushu Association. Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei studied Tai Chi theory from him as well. After Chen Zhao-Pi passed away, he continued to pursue advanced study with another uncle and grandmaster [Chen Zhao-Kui](#), son of

Grandmaster Chen Fa-ke, on New Frame (*Xin Jia*) routines.

Chen Style Tai Chi is the origin of all modern Tai Chi styles. It is the most complex system and difficult to learn. Over three decades, Grandmaster Chen has taught over 40,000 students in China and overseas. He is fully aware of the challenge that the general population has to study Chen Style Tai Chi. To accommodate the busy lifestyle of the current generations and their needs for life-nurturing, Grandmaster Chen designed a complete system for health and wellness. This includes the basic drills, Qi nurturing methods, and **Chen Tai Chi's essential 18 Forms** (see the video on the left). The basic drills focus on joint flexion, spiral rotations (Silk Reeling), and footwork. The Qi nurturing consists of sitting **meditation** and a standing post. Chen's 18 Forms are distilled from Chen Style Old Frame (*Lao Jia*) Routine One (*Yi Lu*); they can be practiced either at a high stance or a medium stance. These forms are promoted by the Chinese government and are part of college physical education course selections. He wrote a book on this system and published it in Chinese first in the 1990's and received a great reception. Grandmaster Chen considers both Grandmasters Chen Zhao-Pi and Chen Zhao-Kui his Tai Chi teachers and mentors in life and dedicates the new book to them.

According to his biography (authored by Cui Chun Dong in Chinese), Grandmaster Chen's formal schooling was interrupted after grade school due to the political turmoil in China. However, the Tai Chi classics were all written in classic Chinese. With his unwavering determination to comprehend the complicated ideas and theory of Tai Chi, he spent many years studying late at night during his adult life learning classic Chinese, Chinese medicine, and Tai Chi classics. He also earned a college degree. He has written numerous articles and a few books with extensive references to Tai Chi classics. His writing style is formal and traditional. The content is massive and profound. Many advanced Tai Chi practitioners find them extremely valuable and read them year after year as their skill level and knowledge progresses. Grandmaster Chen's books have been translated into Japanese, English, Korean and other languages. However, sometimes things are lost in English translation as some of the content is not easily translatable.

Enter Master Jack Yan, who has earned a master degree in English from the Institute of International Relations in Beijing, China. As an In-Chamber disciple of Grandmaster Chen, a certified 7-Duan martial artist, and Ph.D candidate in Wushu, Jack Yan has also taught Tai Chi in Canada since 1988. At times, Jack still found it hard to articulate the appropriate expression in English for ancient artistic terms and expressions without writing another book to delineate it all. Overall, Jack's translation of Grandmaster's *Taichi For Health & Wellness* surpasses all previous efforts to translate Grandmaster's books.

During the translation process, Jack has made a bold decision and chosen the usage of "spiral rotation" instead of the commonly used Silk Reeling in the translation. This may raise a few eyebrows; Jack's explanation is that he has a bit of doubt over the literal translation of "silk reeling", though he has used it. He is not completely certain whether **Master Chen Xin** (author of *The Illustrated Canon of Chen Family Taijiquan*) who originally used the term was thinking of "rotating the body in a spiral" or

“moving the body like twines”. In the process of translating it to “silk reeling”, he found it necessary to qualify it with “spiral rotation” and it is almost impossible to add qualifiers such as *Shun Chan* “outward energy flow silk reeling while the right hand rotates clockwise and left hand rotates counter clockwise”, so he simply translates it as “opening rotation”. He has tested the term in his classes for years and found that it makes a huge difference. In this instance, he thinks Master Chen Xin was using part of the meaning in *Chan Si* which was “spiral rotation with thread (as that on a screw)”. He might be thinking of “silk reeling”, but the type of motion only uses part of the silk reeling process.

Another challenge of putting the book together is aligning photos with their corresponding (printed in black/white to be affordable) text. Jack and his team painstakingly created an elegant layout so the description of each movement is formatted side-by-side with the photos. The final version is beautiful and user-friendly.

Note: For more information, contact www.taichiplaza.com or jack.yan@jackyantaichi.com.

SUGGESTED LINKS

- **Updates on 2010 Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei Tai Chi Workshops in Americas**
- **Are you practicing Taichi Chuan or Taichi Cao?**



Violet Li

Tai Chi Examiner