

Jim's Motto: Tai Chi fundamentals cannot be practiced too much!

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Jim McClung
(courtesy of Jim McClung)

Jim McClung is a very diligent Tai Chi enthusiast whose work in studying Tai Chi has finally paid off. This year, he attended two tournaments held in St. Louis and won five titles including an Overall Grand Champion (see a list of Jim's awards at the end of the article). So, what is Jim's secret? According to his teacher [Sifu Herb Parran](#), Jim has a very sincere learning attitude and works very hard.

Jim started learning Tai Chi in 2002. He learned the [Yang Style](#) in the first year and switched to the Chen Style Hun Yuan with Sifu Parran. Normally he attends classes on Sundays. The interesting thing about Jim is that even though he is an advanced practitioner, he still attends the beginner class. Why? His answer is very simple: Tai Chi is about practice, and the fundamentals cannot be practiced too much. He also tries to set an example for the beginners by coming to the class on time and promoting the concept of Tai Chi family.

Tai Chi similar to other arts. It does not matter how many years one has studied it. What's important is how many total hours one has studied. Some people attend class once a week but do not practice in between. That's not Jim's case. He practices daily and sometimes twice a day. In general, he practices eight hours each week. Sifu Herb Parran is the major influence in Jim's Tai Chi education, especially

with form practice and Tai Chi applications. Jim has also read several books by [Doctor Yang Jwing-Ming](#) and [Grandmaster Liang Shu Yu](#) to deepen his understanding of Tai Chi and Qigong.

Jim's goals of practicing Tai Chi are for good health, long life, and a good range of motion. He used to get sick every winter and cough until spring. Since he started to practice Tai Chi, he has not been sick one day. He recovers more quickly from strenuous physical work. His joint pain is gradually diminishing. His sense of balance continues to improve.

He remembers that his friends and family have all had a little fun with his love for Tai Chi over the years. His children think it is so funny to watch him practice the forms. Sometimes they laugh out loud and point at his movements. One of his nephews is amused by his practice. He would make noises like Bruce Lee and try to emulate Jim's moves in a "threatening" manner. On one such occasion, Jim grabbed his hand and demonstrated a little Chin Na. Now he only mocks Jim from a distance. Despite the ribbing, they generally agree that it's a good hobby and support him.

Jim attended a Tai Chi tournament in 2004 as a beginner and finished 5th in Chen Style; that was the last tournament that he participated in until this year. Jim has several reasons for competing now. First, he wanted to represent his teacher, and his school. Secondly, he wanted to find out how he measures up when compared to others, and to earn credentials that demonstrate his knowledge of the sport. He appreciates the camaraderie that develops between classmates while preparing for the event. He also admits that seeing Sifu Herb tell how proud he is of their accomplishments is a great reward. Of course, the sensation and the feeling of stepping into the ring is an exhilarating experience for him.

2010 AAU National Kung Fu/ Tai Chi Championships:

2nd Place in Advanced Men Chen Style

Shorin Ryn Pro-Am Tournament:

Overall Grand Champion

3rd Place Chen Style Tai Chi Advanced Form (Men/Women)

1st Place Other Style Tai Chi Advanced Form (Men/Women)

1st Place Tai Chi Broad Sword Advanced (Men/Women)



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