



HOW TO BALANCE THE BUDGET

Reduced use of public health services
reported by
Taoist Tai Chi[®] arts practitioners



As governments struggle with mounting health costs, an ancient art is showing a way to improve health and cut bills.

Practitioners of *Taoist Tai Chi*[®] arts report reductions in their use of public health services and improvements in their health in key areas such as balance and bone density that would result in reduced future use of these services.

Our organization wanted to capture some of the specific ways in which our practice impacts the use of public health services. We conducted our survey with over 6,000 of our 12,000 participants across Canada responding. The questionnaire was completed anonymously and voluntarily by participants regardless of their duration of practice. This document contains the preliminary findings from the results of the questionnaire and some comments from participants.

The data provides a compelling snapshot of ways in which practice of *Taoist Tai Chi*[®] arts can improve individual health and, as a result, collectively reduce impact on public health services. The individual stories are powerful, but pulled together they provide a more complete picture of how *Taoist Tai Chi*[®] arts contribute to our communities.

“We knew anecdotally from classes that such benefits exist, but this unprecedented survey drew many responses and is very heartening and important for policy makers to contemplate,” says Marsha Eberhardt, President of Fung Loy Kok Institute of Taoism.

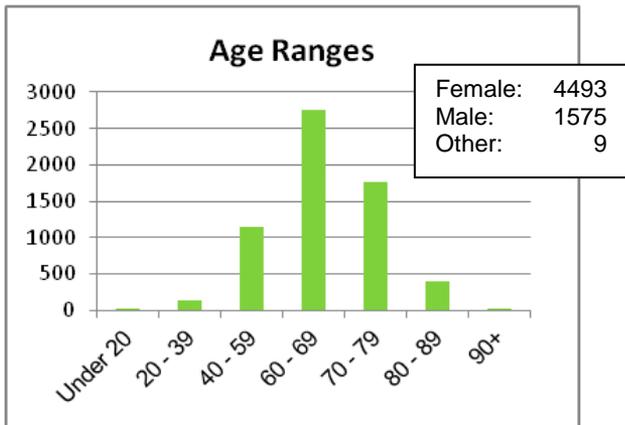
“While the survey results emphasise the usual health benefits of fitness, these are significant because *Taoist Tai Chi*[®] arts is a gentle form of training that can be done by anyone. While very helpful to young people, it has a significant appeal to elderly people who might not otherwise be exercising or moving much.”

Canada is the birthplace of *Taoist Tai Chi*[®] practice, thanks to Master Moy Lin Shin, a Taoist monk who began teaching in Toronto 46 years ago to promote the health and spiritual benefits of *Taoist Tai Chi*[®] arts. Now more than 40,000 participants in 25 countries feel the benefits of these internal arts of health that are taught by accredited volunteer instructors. Fung Loy Kok is a registered charitable organisation.

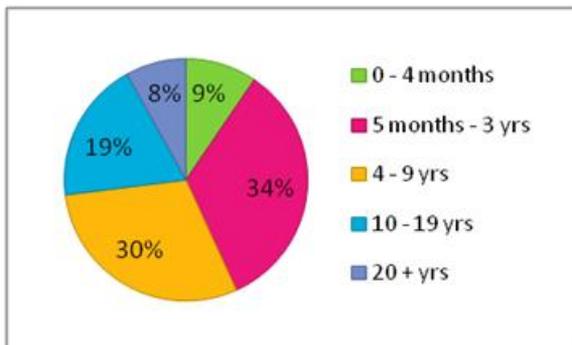
**For more information, visit taoist.org
call +1 (416) 656-2110, or,
email press@taoist.org**

Canada 2016 — Preliminary Findings

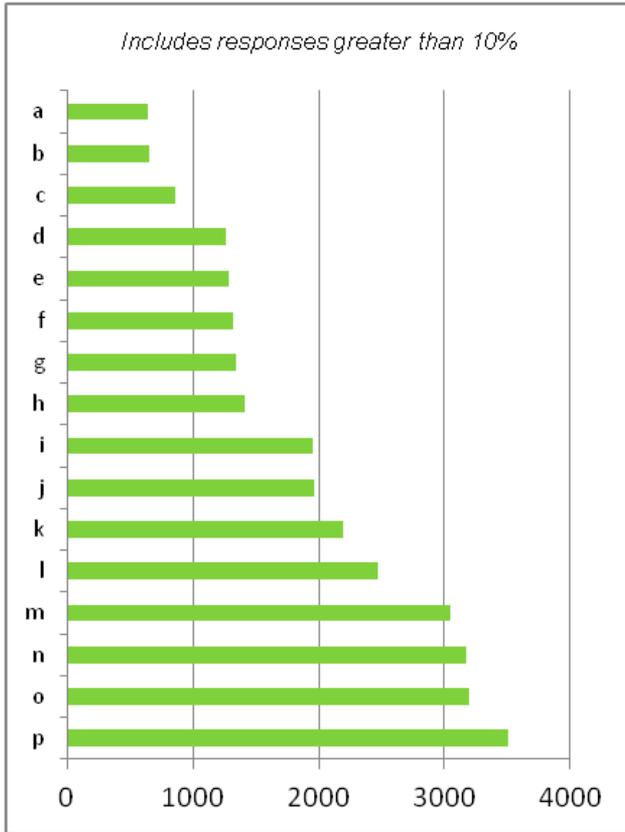
The questionnaire was designed to allow respondents to share as much of their experience of the practice of *Taoist Tai Chi*® arts as possible. Not all respondents answered all questions and many questions were designed to allow for multiple responses.



How long have you been practicing?



Would you say that your practice has had a positive impact on any of the following?



- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| a. Immune system | i. Depression / stress / anxiety |
| b. Digestive issues | j. Muscular issues |
| c. Relationships | k. Circulation |
| d. Body image/body acceptance | l. Emotional / spiritual wellbeing |
| e. Cognitive function | m. Energy/stamina/endurance |
| f. Blood pressure | n. Posture |
| g. Accident-related injuries | o. Coordination |
| h. Sleep quality | p. Aging |

Has your health been impacted by any of the following conditions?

	Number	Percentage
Accident-related injuries	1384	22.2
Arthritis	2613	41.9
Asthma / lung disorder	555	8.9
Back / spine issues	2537	40.7
Balance issues	2152	34.5
Brain injury / concussion	207	3.3
Cancer	487	7.8
Chronic pain	990	15.9
Depression / stress / anxiety	1667	26.8
Diabetes	403	6.5
Epilepsy	28	0.4
Foot issues / plantar fasciitis	1119	18.0
Fibromyalgia / chronic fatigue	320	5.1
Gastrointestinal disorders	752	12.1
Heart problems	516	8.3
High blood pressure	1443	23.2
Headaches / migraines	562	9.1
Joint problems / TMJ	1541	24.7
Mobility issues	691	11.1
Multiple Sclerosis	76	1.2
Osteoporosis	864	13.9
Parkinson's disease	90	1.4
Sleep disorders	767	12.3
Stroke / blood clots	148	2.4
Varicose veins	429	6.9
Prefer not to say	29	0.5
None of the above	404	6.5
Other	453	7.3

Has your condition required that you access therapeutic services such as physiotherapy and rehabilitation?

Responses	Percentage
Yes	58.4
No	41.6

"I see the chiropractor less often. Less physio. Shortened psychologist's therapy. Was having back issues, but have not had to seek physiotherapy since starting [Taoist] Tai Chi eight months ago." (*female, age range 40-59*)

"After I injured my shoulder and arm, my doctor referred me to a pain specialist and a physiologist ... Since starting [Taoist] Tai Chi, I have regained full range of motion and have had no need for medical treatment of this nature." (*male, age range 70-79*)

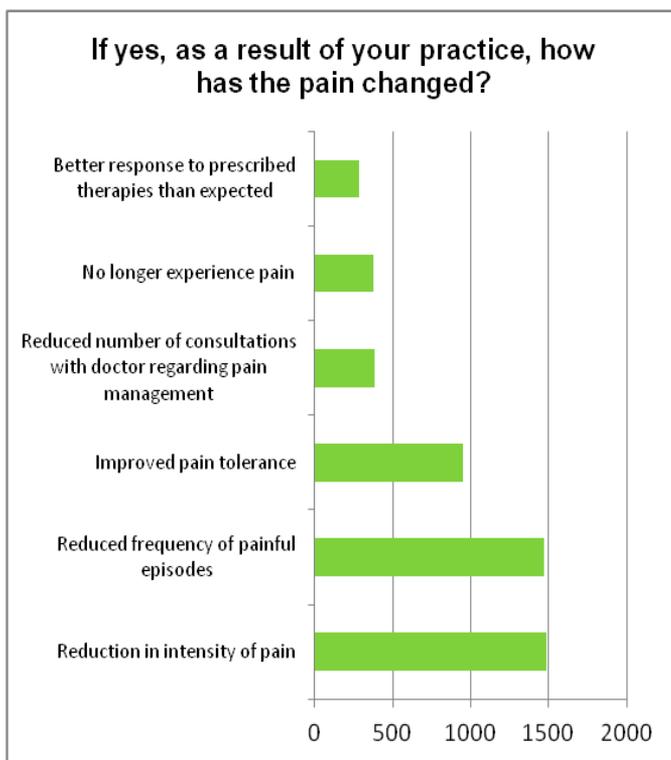
"Decreased visits to physiotherapist. Helped me with my stroke recovery." (*female, age range 60-69*)

"Rarely need "emergency" visits to the chiropractor. Still keep monthly routine visits. When first started [Taoist] Tai Chi, could not stand up straight when getting out of bed in morning - took 30 minutes before I could do so. No longer an issue." (*female, age range 40-59*)

"I received back, hip and knee injuries in a ski accident. Two years later, I was still going to physiotherapy. My physiotherapist recommended tai chi. Three months later, I stopped physio and manage the residual from my injuries with my [Taoist] Tai Chi practice." (*female, age range 60-69*)

Do you experience pain as part of your health condition(s)?

Responses	Number
Yes	3578
No	2248



“When I enrolled in Sept. 2008 I was experiencing twinges in my lower back and minor pain in my right hip and the side of my right knee. I attributed it to the onset of old age since I was 80 at the time and NEVER exercised. Within 6 weeks the pains and twinges were reduced - within 9 weeks they were gone totally.” (*male, age range 80-89*)

“Practicing [Taoist] Tai Chi gave me relief from back pain after years of different treatments. It has changed my life for the better in numerous ways.” (*no information provided*)

“I had tail bone injury 20 years ago. Since doing [Taoist] Tai Chi, restriction from the tail bone injury muscle pain reduced at least 90%. Amazing.” (*female, age range 40-59*)

“My back pain has gone with [Taoist] Tai Chi. I do not use analgesics or need to go to physio. I rarely need massage. [Taoist] Tai Chi strengthens and exercises the lower back, moving gently the spine, keeping it limber and strong. No other exercise can target this area like [Taoist] Tai Chi.” (*female, age range 60-69*)

“Yes...since starting to practice [Taoist] Tai Chi I have had a decreased amount of pain. I didn't realize the amount of pain, especially in my hips, that I've been living with since the motor vehicle collision that I was a passenger of the vehicle in, back in 1990. Just in June 2016 while walking down hill on my regular walk route I realized that my left hip (once fractured) was now moving smoothly as I moved from one step to the next - WOW!! I can walk again. Without pain, without my joints sticking together!! Yeah!” (*female, age range 40-59*)

Is medication normally required for your health condition(s)?

Responses	Percentage
Yes	56.1
No	43.9

“Significantly reduced medication for chronic asthma.” (*female, age range 80-89*)

“I have severe osteoarthritis in my left hip. I have been offered several cortisone shots and have declined. I am less of a burden on the acute care system because of [[Taoist] Tai Chi fewer GP visits.” (*female, age range 60-69*)

“Before Taoist Tai Chi [practice], I took Tylenol 5 nights per week due to neck and shoulder pain from computer use at work. Within the Health Recovery week at Orangeville/Mono, the pain stopped. No longer need to see GP for pain till now (2 years later).” (*female, age range 40-59*)

“I have been practicing Taoist Tai Chi for four years... The practice has slowed down the effect of point stiffness in my back (lower) and neck due to degenerative disc diseases and improved my balance to some degree. It also allowed me to reduce the amount of medication needed to relieve overall joint pain.” (*female, age range 60-69*)

As a result of your practice, have you avoided surgery (hips, knees, carpal tunnel...)?

Responses	Number
Yes	548

“I was diagnosed with “moderate to severe” osteoarthritis of the L4 and L5 vertebrae with surgery given as the only possible cure, but neutralized the symptoms by increasing participation in [Taoist] Tai Chi.” (*male age range 70-79*)

“My surgeon told me I would need a knee replacement in ten years. That was 30 years ago. I have never had one and my knees have improved.” (*female, age range 60-69*)

“Sports medicine wanted to do arthroscopic surgery on my knees but knee pain gone away. So happy.” (*female, age range 60-69*)

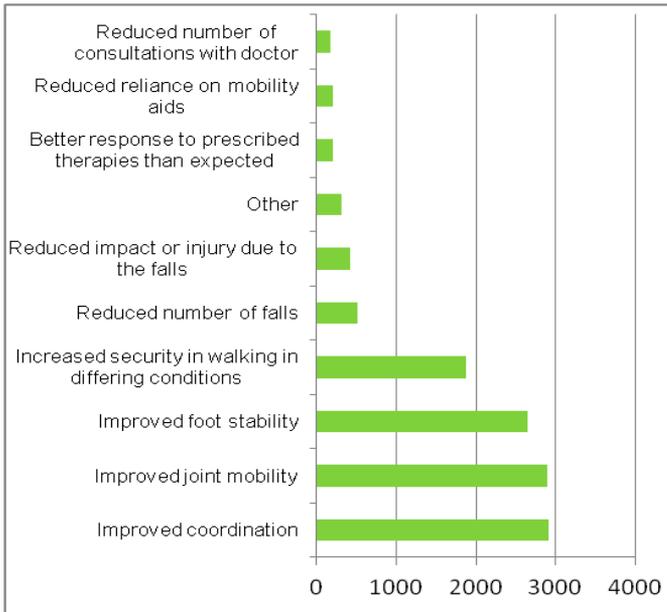
“Was looking at knee surgery for cartilage and possible eventual knee replacement, with [Taoist] Tai Chi practice knee pain reduced and stability increased so no surgery.” (*male, age range 40-59*)

“Hip—doctor advises not necessary for hip replacement and to keep up with tai chi.” (*male, age range 70-79*)

Types of avoided surgeries reported include: carpal tunnel release, knee replacements, rotator cuff repair, hip replacements, bladder tuck, hernia repair, and vertebral fusion.

Has your practice improved your balance?

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	5194	95.9
No	224	4.1



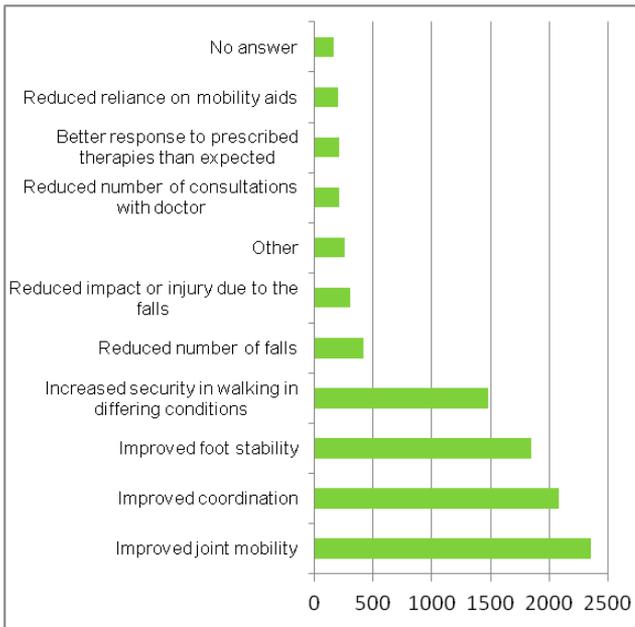
“[Taoist] Tai Chi has helped my balance a great deal. I have scoliosis and a recent x-ray showed it’s almost gone (curve of the spine is lessening)...” (*female, age range 20-39*)

“It’s helped my balance (which is symptomatic of hearing loss).” (*male, age range 40-59*)

“My feet were repaired within two months of practice, whereas before I had poor balance and chronic pain in my feet/calves.” (*male, age range 20-39*)

Has your practice improved your mobility?

Responses	Percentage
Yes	83.9
No	16.1

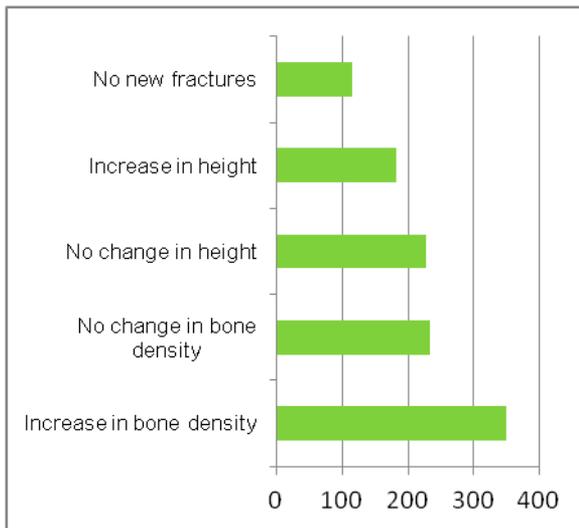


“Diagnosed with Parkinson’s three years ago. [Taoist] Tai Chi has returned my mobility and balance. Neurologists visits are now done quarterly via teleconference versus monthly visits when first diagnosed.” (*male, age range 40-59*)

Has your practice affected your bone density?

Number of respondents: 1563

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	959	61.4



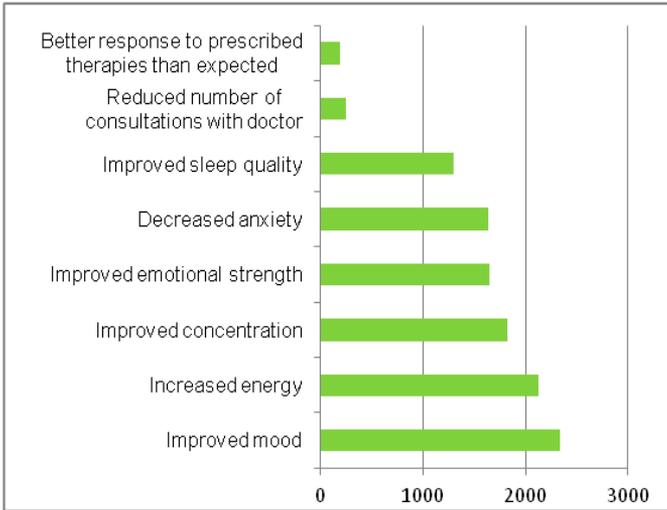
“Osteoporosis—what I lost I gained back and the bone density is increasing.” (*female, age range 60-69*)

“Blood pressure is lower, still on medication but lower dosage. Bone density is good. Helps arthritis, balance and memory.” (*female, age range 70-79*)

“My doctor is amazed due to my flexibility. Bone density is up by 10%. Calmness. I visit my doctor once a year for a complete check-up” (*female, age range 70-79*)

Has your practice affected your mental health?

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	4036	86.4



“The practice not only improves physical health but also creates sense of belonging and community that is wholesome that supports mental health.” (*female, age range 40-59*)

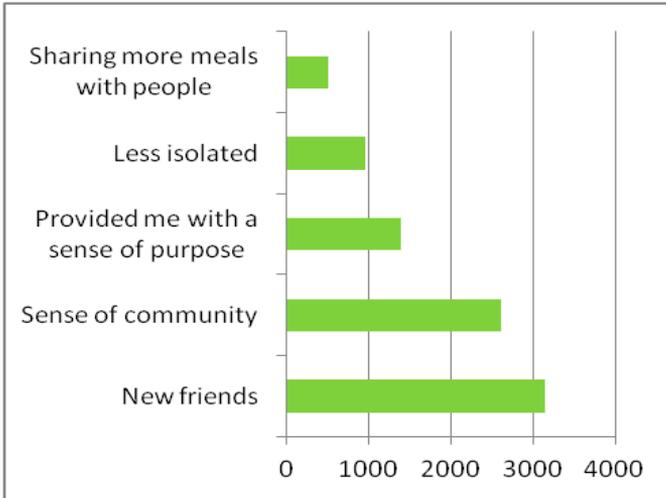
“Being recently widowed I don’t know how I would cope without my involvement and regular practice of [Taoist] Tai Chi.” (*female, age range 60-69*)

“I don’t have stress attacks like I used to.” (*male, age range 60-69*)

“I found after a stressful day if I attended [Taoist] Tai Chi I could reduce my stress and set it aside. It made it easier to sleep better at night. It has also improved my balance and I feel more confident walking.” (*female, age range 40-59*)

Has your practice impacted your social situation?

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	4120	80.5

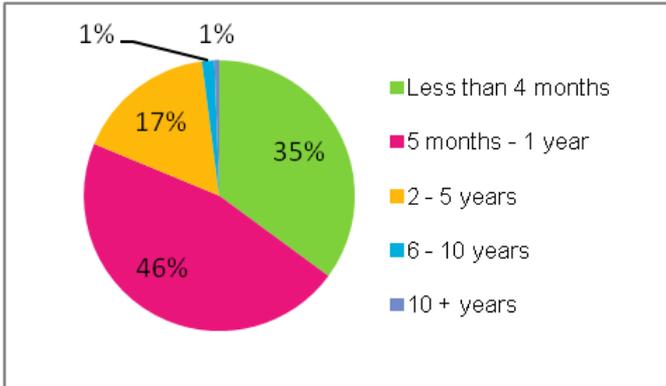


“Made new friends. More exercise. Good balance. More coordinated. Feel good.” (*female, age range 40-59*)

“I enjoy coming to classes. I feel part of the [Taoist] Tai Chi community, made new friends, feel happier and healthier in general.” (*female, age range 60-69*)

“I have practiced [Taoist] Tai Chi regularly for more than 20 years. In that time I've had a lot of different health issues that have come and gone. I've maintained that I would be in a lot worse physical and mental condition if it weren't for [Taoist] Tai Chi and the kind and thoughtful people who are part of the community.” (*female, age range 40-59*)

How soon after you started your practice did you experience any improvement in your health?

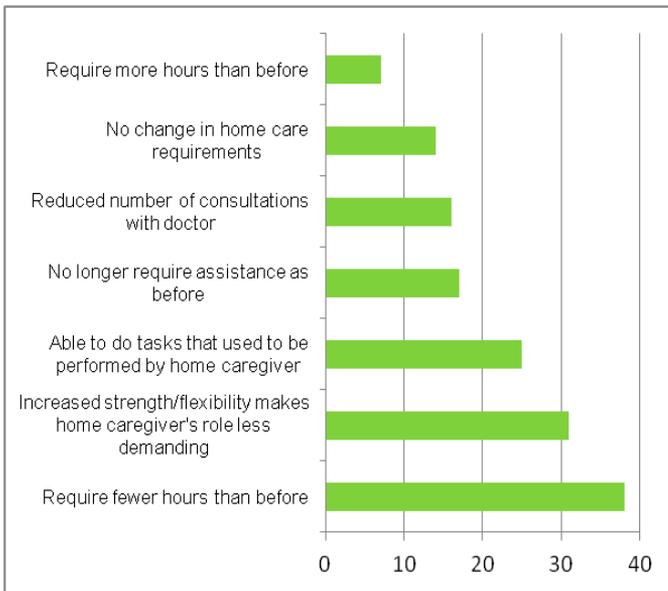


“Taoist Tai Chi [practice] has had a positive impact in almost every area of my life. Through diligent practice [Taoist] Tai Chi has improved my health both physically and mentally. It has improved my relationships with the people I care about and it has improved my relationship with the world as a whole.”
(male, age range 60-69)

“My original intention was to improve some back/spine problems. Over the years the more I undertake my practice sessions the better I feel. These practice sessions take place daily and at times more than once a day. I am so happy to have discovered [Taoist] Tai Chi.” (female, practiced 20+ years)

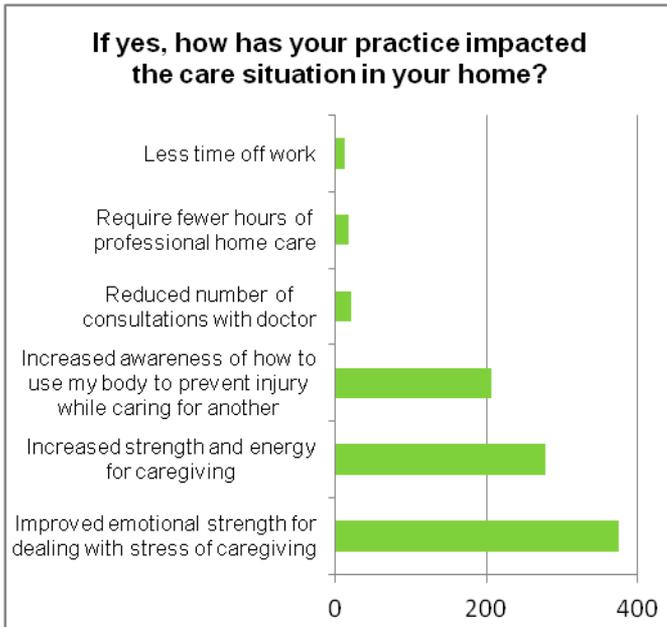
Questions related to Home Care:

	Yes Responses
Do you require professional home care?	120
Do you require a family member/friend to provide you with care?	162
As a result of your practice, have you experienced any changes in your home care needs?	117



Are you a caregiver for a loved one?

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	667	10.9
No	5468	89.1



“I joined a few months after my husband died. I had been worn out by his constant need for company (mine) and by home care workers coming early in the day and late at night to help him bath, dress, etc... Then daily hospital visits towards his end of life.” (*female, age range 80-89*)

“[Taoist] Tai Chi [practice] gives me a sense of joy. Joy in movement, joy in being with others. A movement meditation. Total person meditation. Joy in the silence of meeting together.”
(male, age range 70-79, under 4 months practice)