

Protocols for Working with a Training Partner

Partner practice of Taiji applications is a cooperative exercise in mutual learning, not a competition. Help each other learn by cooperating in resolving your partner's difficulties in execution.

Be attentive and considerate of your partners. Senior students must be particularly considerate when working with junior students and respect the obligation to share knowledge.

Be considerate of age and size differences.

Communicate with your training partner.

Let your partner know if he or she is being too fast or aggressive or if you have an injury he or she should be aware of.

If you want your partner to be more aggressive or less aggressive, make your wishes clear.

If your partner requests that you be less aggressive, do so. If your partner requests you to be more aggressive, but you are not comfortable with being more aggressive, you may decline.

When your partner is learning a technique, cooperate. Do not resist or counter inappropriately.

Immediately yield and tap out when your partner performs a technique correctly, but give honest feedback if the technique is not done correctly.

Do not resort to incorrect actions to avoid "defeat" in partner exercises. If you resort to improper means such as bending over backwards to avoid losing your root, you gain nothing and may ingrain a bad habit that would be dangerous in actual combat. The famous Taiji master Cheng Man Ching told his students to "invest in loss," to allow themselves to be bested so that they could learn from the experience and acquire the correct technique.