



THE

VITAL FORCE

Journal of T'AI CHI CHIH! Joy Through Movement

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**THERE IS WITHIN YOU THAT WHICH KNOWS...
THAT IS YOUR TEACHER.**

1992 CONFERENCE PRESENTATION BY JUSTIN STONE

So why do we act as though we are ignorant? Because that inner innate wisdom-called Prajna--P-R-A-J-N-A--is covered up. The Vashanas--habit energies--so cover the Prajna that it becomes impossible to shine thru to the conscious mind--but it is there.

All thru religious and spiritual literature we read "Know Thyself", "The Kingdom of Heaven is within", "The inner Guru", etc., but we don't believe this teaching and look outside ourselves, in the outer world we have created for ourselves to find someone to worship, someone to follow, and so forth. There are many teachers who use this fact to their own benefit, frequently financial in character. This is why Krishnamurti said the Guru system is 'an exploitation'.

I have frequently told you the story of the Sufi teacher who was approached by a seeker, who said:

"Teach me, Master!"

"Are you ready to learn?" was the reply.

"Teach me how to learn " earnestly implored the seeker.

"Are you ready to let me teach you how to learn?" was the cold water thrown on the seeker's aspirations.

When Paul Repts met someone, he said, "Thank you for your Life!" When people asked questions as to proper diet, whether to have sex or not, etc., Paul called these "Verbal delusionary". This has deep meaning, and relates closely to the reply of the Sufi master "Are you ready to learn?" Unless the delusionary way of thinking is changed, no teaching is possible and changing it can be painful. Giving up delusions, often recognized as neuroses, is not as easy as wallowing in them. (Cont. on p.4)

Justin Stone is the originator of T'ai Chi Chih! Joy Thru Movement.

Steve Ridley is the Spiritual Head of T'ai Chi Chih

This journal is dedicated to T'ai Chi Chih teachers and practitioners worldwide.

May it serve you in "Knowing the Real."

Reflections.....Along the Way

Justin said Teachers' Conference and The Vital Force are two very important sources to help teachers remain in touch. This issue will reflect some teacher experiences from this year's conference gathering and the Seijaku training. Those unable to attend may feel included by reading what participating teachers submitted and those of you who were there may re-live some of the events anew. Read on, for the sentiments of retreat and renewal prevail in the writings of teachers who came together once more. Also await announcement of next summer's 1993 conference so teachers and students may lay plans for the opportunity in advance.

In general, **Vital Force Journal** encourages you to use our services as a resource for your teaching and promotion of T'ai Chi Chih. Whether this is through listing events notices in our calendar or writing your news and impressions that develop from teaching and practicing T'ai Chi Chih. (Lois acknowledged--during the introductions at conference--just how many interesting things teachers are doing!) Please realize the significance of sharing through **The Vital Force**. Each of you contribute much through involvement in T'ai Chi Chih and voicing what you are receiving makes this publication a **more personal journal**. So thank you for your written contributions and please plan to continue sharing!

Congratulations and welcome to the 26 newly accredited TCC teachers from the two June trainings held in Bemidji, MN and Denver, CO! Note: The enclosed update page (to be added to the Teacher Directory) includes all new teachers' addresses and phone numbers. Some of you have already ordered the revised Teacher Directory scheduled for December completion. We encourage everyone to utilize this important resource for referrals and communication amongst teachers. Please use the VFJ subscription form to re-order your copy of the New Teacher Directory today, so we may estimate our printing for the end of the year mailing.

Thank you all for your continued support in the many creative ways you show your involvement through VFJ! From writing to compiling the VFJ mailing (as the northern CA association of teachers does each quarter; **we are grateful**. The donations by Bernice Playle, Adele Wenig, Pat Hill, Susan Hudgens, and Viola Moriarty, since our last mailing, are much appreciated too. Such funds, donated in addition to subscription renewals are used primarily for outreach and to answer inquiries about available classes/teachers. Telephone costs, postage, duplication, and envelopes are items that must be covered. So **Thanks!** to those who have been so thoughtful.

Personally, it has been especially endearing to celebrate the joy around a first birth with many of you. It reminds me again just how new T'ai Chi Chih is (and still developing in it's eight-teen years!) May we all continue to do the same...

...in loving joy!



Liz Salada for *The Vital Force*

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READER'S COMMENTARY

I really enjoy reading the "Force." Sorry I missed the conference, it sounded like a great experience. --**Gary Halden**, Two Harbors, MN

Pat Hill, Golden CO Enclosed is a check for my renewal and a donation with thanks for publishing the Vital Force and Membership List thus making it possible for all the teachers to keep in touch with each other.

I want to thank you for your work on the Vital Force. Each issue is getting better and better! I have gotten a lot from each issue. Thanks for sending copies to our training I hope everyone will subscribe.--**Viola Moriarty**, Denver, CO

Paula Arnold, Minneapolis, MN: Thank you for doing such a wonderful job on the Vital Force. I find so very many helpful items in it for myself and the people I share T'ai Chi Chih with. The June issue was especially resourceful for me. Sorry I couldn't make it to the Conference. My love went to all of you .

There is Within You that Which Knows (cont. from p. 1)

I have known people who had legs amputated because it was easier than stopping the tobacco habit. With such deep-seated habit energies, where is the possibility of shaking the delusionary way of thinking, the maker of suffering?

"Prajna", your great treasure, the innate wisdom that you are never without, is often personalized as "Prajna Paramita", the perfection of wisdom, and is thought of as a Female. In spiritual experiences I have been told: "She will take you where you are meant to be." In other words, you are being led.

One time I told a young yogi, who was actively seeking to be free from bondage, "The thing that binds you is the feeling that there is a goal to reach and you have not yet reached it. Actually, you are complete. If you have faith in Prajna, this inner wisdom, you will do and feel the right thing. It will almost do the right thing for you. Every word spoken to you will be a signpost to guide you, if you let it. But, can you have faith in this guidance instead of always trying to manipulate it?"

It means you must "Let go!" Every spiritual path simply asks you to "Let go!" But this means to ignore your habitual thought patterns, your ingrained energy patterns and that is difficult to consciously do. The circulation and balancing of these energy patterns in T'ai Chi Chih practice can do it for you effortlessly.

I remember one teachers' training course in which a fine young man, who had many terrible habits, made a real breakthrough. At the end of the six day course, he suddenly realized he had not indulged any of these habits during the week. I doubt that he subsequently indulged these habits, though it is not easy to break away from habitual thought patterns.

My advice is to trust your inherent, intuitive wisdom rather than the accumulated knowledge we all pile up. There is no end to adding facts and filling our heads with knowledge, which serves a very real purpose in its place. Whether you call it God, Prajna, your own true nature, or whatever--my advice is to know it and listen to it. This means to come to know "who" and "what" you are.

(Lotus Sutra--"From state of emptiness". Key is the "emptiness", like an empty cup that can hold tea.)

Da Hui is talking about Prajna as opposed to Knowledge when he says:

"The great teaching must flow out point by point from within your own breast to cover heaven and earth; only then will it be the action of a man of power." That which flows out from one's own breast, as he calls it, is one's own beginningless present awareness, fundamentally complete of itself. As soon as you arouse a second thought, you fall into comparative awareness. "Comparative awareness" is something gained from external refinements (that is, acquired knowledge). "Present awareness" is something from before your parents were born (now don't get hung up on "before"--don't be literal; just sense the meaning. I call this "present awareness", the real power, "Prajna" or "Prajna Paramita". The names we use are unimportant, yet wars are fought over them (Allah vs. Jehovah, Krishna and Jesus). How infantile!

Da Hui goes on to say: "With strong power one can enter both enlightenment and delusion. If one's power is weak, he can enter the realm of enlightenment, but not the realm of delusion." (I call this "merging sense with essence.") (Cont. on p. 5)

There is Within You that Which Knows (cont. from p.4)

I say to have faith in this power, this Prajna (which is certainly related to Prana or Chi) and to let it function for you. Don't let delusionary thinking dull or obliterate it for you. In an interesting book I've been reading, "Do You See What I See?", the author says to have faith in Life and let it function freely. Thus he equates "Life" with "God", "Truth", etc. and rightly points out it is all here now, not to screen it out.

It is easy to tell people that; that this very moment is the transcendental and equal to infinity. Here is Da Hui's answer to that: "In the conduct of their daily activities, sentient beings have no Illumination (that is, Prajna). If you go along with their ignorance, they're happy; if you oppose their ignorance, they're vexed."

So, I can make you happy by saying what you want to hear. But I'm unwilling to talk down to people. I won't use cliches like "All is One." Do you live as though All is One", or do you see others, some opposed to you? Do you live in the transcendental or do you have to pay the rent?

Zen Master Danxia said: "In the 'function which is identical to essence', holding still and letting go rest completely in one's self. In the "Essence which is identical to Function", bringing forth and throwing away depend on no one else."

He is saying that it is all there with you, in your actions and your thoughts. You are complete. T'ai Chi Chih is helping you uncover that completeness. I say "Learn to live with and in that completeness and have absolute faith in it."

do we turn on our

INLIGHT

as we turn on a

LIGHT

SUPPOSE

WE LIGHT A CANDLE

OR A SMALL STICK OF INCENSE

DEDICATING

THIS LIGHT TO THE

INLIGHT OF YOU

. an oriental custom of respect

COMMENTS FROM JUSTIN

Trying is not the Way
Not trying is not the Way
You say it must be one or the other,
But I say
Neither Nor

Also,

The Soul in (or as) the Breath.
The breath as fire.

Justin

gather
spirit
internally



Justin

CONFERENCE EVALUATION SUMMARY

Pam Towne

Justin said that our purpose in coming together for Conference is:

1. to RENEW ourselves in the ESSENCE of T'ai Chi Chih and go home in that dedication, and
2. to REFINE the MOVEMENTS of TCC so that we do it and pass it on correctly.

The majority of teachers attending the Conference felt the same. Of 57 participants, 39 (68%) returned evaluation forms afterward. (A special THANKS to each of you for your constructive feedback!) In response to the question: "What was your purpose in attending the Conference?", most of the answers were variations of one or more of the following:

1. being with and learning from Justin Stone
2. refining TCC movements
3. fellowship or networking with other teachers.

Nearly everyone received what they came for, and MORE! Most valuable experiences included the above plus doing TCC together, meditation after morning TCC practice, the 3 workshops (Family Matters, Meditation, Marketing), and the Tea Ceremony.

The majority want a Conference again next year, and Chicago teachers are exploring the possibility of hosting it. California teachers are willing to host it again in 1994 and the dates of August 12-14 have been reserved at Vallombrosa for 1994.

Suggestions for next year included:

1. Have Steve and Justin teach/correct/refine each of the movements (in order) several times (but not before breakfast), starting with our first session before dinner Friday.
2. Hear more from Justin on philosophy, principles and spiritual journey (also, many would like to have heard on Friday evening what he said on Sunday morning).
3. Do movements in small groups with specific, individualized coaching/correction for each teacher by Steve, Justin and most experienced teachers.
4. Use Friday evening for meditation and inspiration; first emptying our cup so it can be filled.
5. Do teacher introductions (Friday evening) in small groups; get to know fewer teachers more deeply.
6. Add a day to the conference for more time together, workshops and teacher sharing.
7. Send pre-conference forms to gather information on each participant and sign up for workshops.
8. Personally contact other teachers in your region, share what you got from this year's Conference and invite them to next year's.

THREE CHEERS!

A very special Thank You to Pam Towne for a job well done at putting the conference together. She lives the T'ai Chi Chih way and it showed through her patience and gentle guidance through the conference.

Susan Webster, El Cajon, CA.

PERSONAL SHARING

Pam Towne

As coordinator I had a very different experience than I've had as a conference participant. It was a very challenging, growth producing, sometimes joyful and sometimes painful experience! In many ways it was a process of giving birth to something new, and giving birth can be painful. I gently remind myself that the pain comes from holding on, not from letting go...so keep letting go!

Looking back I recall special memories...heart connections with so many teachers for months before we met...Seijaku, the perfect prelude to a Conference...greeting old and new friends with warm hugs...feeling the strength of so many years of cumulative Chi in our group practice...enjoying the Yin-Yang sounds of harp and keyboards, violin and gypsy dancing...being in the Presence with Justin and Steve...gracefully concluding with silent T'ai Chi practice Sunday afternoon What a wonderful experience!

I send a heartfelt THANK YOU to each person who contributed to the success of Conference...to **Justin** and **Steve**...to every teacher who volunteered their time, energy and talent...and to every person who attended...you are special, loved and appreciated! Thank you for the opportunity to be of service.

CONFERENCE EXPERIENCES

Lois Mahaney, VFJ Editor

About twenty of the fifty-three attendees at the T'ai Chi Chih Teachers' Conference at Vallombrosa, Menlo Park, CA in July returned a form (in time to meet the deadline) which asked for a biographical sketch, including the kinds of groups taught. In addition teachers were asked to write of their experience at the conference. We will attempt to give in a concise manner the information gleaned from the form beginning with name, then address, types of groups taught, followed by conference impressions.

Regina Horgan, Ridgecrest, CA; cancer patients: "It was a wonderful experience and a real renewal of 'being' T'ai Chi Chih."

Shoko S. Purdy, Albuquerque, NM; general groups: I came to get the essence of TCC back and refresh and revitalize my TCC integrity. Only thing I regret is that there wasn't enough time to hear more words of Justin's spiritual aspects of TCC. Special thanks to all who were in the Family Matters workshop--what a valuable time it was for me!

Ellen Greyson, Santa Barbara, CA; general: Joy, Joyous, and Joyfulness are my main feelings as the conference ends. Because I helped Pam "give birth" to this "child of a conference" and I'm quite aware of the many difficulties of the "labor", I think the Great Chi was flowing 'to pull it all together'.. I was glad I could add some of my talent in the form of "calligraphic-Chi" with the name tags and cards.

Jean Katus, Ft. Yates, ND, presentations, workshops for teacher prep: Very rejuvenating to connect with friends and share ourselves, our common and diverse TCC experience--Justin, Steve, other TCC teachers. Because of my GKP involvement, I have quite a lot of contact with Justin and Steve on a regular basis (as well as at the frequent accreditation courses I attend). Thus, I treasure the time when I can be with TCC teachers from all over the country and internationally.

MORE FEEDBACK FROM CONFERENCE:

Joy Carle Barbour, Bullhead City, AZ (now, but moving); Elderhostel, retirees: Renewing acquaintances and making new ones is always a highlight at TCC conferences. As Justin has told us we might experience, I had unusual physical feelings--sensation of a small insect or spider crawling on my face, sharp pains in formerly broken bone areas, awakefulness, renewed energy, feeling of timelessness, spacelessness. I realized I had become careless in some instances and appreciated Steve's patient re-enforcement of TCC movements. To date, I haven't missed a morning practice with John (my husband) doing both Seijaku and TCC.

Susan Webster, San Diego, CA; handicapped, hospital employees, M.S. group (practice in a swimming pool); As soon as I got off the plane and saw Sandy McAlister's smiling face and gentle energy, I began to feel more of a wholeness within me. There was such peace when entering Vallombrosa and the energy created by Seijaku was very evident. I could walk around the grounds and feel a gentle softness. Hearing stories from other teachers is always wonderful. Even though there are a lot of new faces, they are all a part of my T'ai Chi Chih family and are definitely not strangers. What a special connection occurs here! I wish every TCC teacher who has ever been accredited could experience this unity and could also enjoy seeing Justin and Steve perform musically together. No one can ever know the conference experience until they have been here. (I really missed Guadalupe.) I think the conference was very successful. It is always good and enlightening to work with Steve and Justin. Plus getting together and being able to pick up info from all of the other teachers is always truly helpful for me. I could sit and listen to Justin and Steve speak for hours. They both have what we are working toward and there is so much we have to gain from their teachings.

Karen Carrier, Roseville, MN; older adults and terminally ill support groups: T'ai Chi Chih is truly joy through movement. My body does not let me pull a "perfect" taffy when it's not joyful. I felt much healing energy and peace from all of you in our circle of T'ai Chi Chih friends. I thank you all. Forgive me for my early departure on Saturday evening (got the last plane seat at 1:30 am) I joined my husband (after 3 hrs sleep) in the Minnesota sunshine for a 22 mile bike ride. Could it be the Seijaku and maximum chi? Thanks Justin, and all of you beautiful people. I am joyfull!

Hope Burla, San Leandro (student of Linda Braga) Although I was somewhat uncomfortable because I was only a student, I felt so welcomed and accepted! Just connecting with such special talented people was a real joy! Thank you all so much for allowing me to be with you in this time. I shall treasure what I have learned and experienced this weekend. Peace, Light and Love to you all! And as a student, I thank you--and bow to you--for the special gift of yourselves that you give to your students!

Connie Hyde, Cedar Crest, NM: Our Seijaku class brought new understanding and awakening to my life...thanks to Justin, Pam and to all who were present. At last year's conference I was a new-comer, and this time there was a comfortable, here-we-go-again with new growth to share feeling. Yes, a pretty nice bunch of people. I heard how Justin wants the teachers to operate in the maximum of their ability. He advises that we see through to the intent of what we're doing. "There is within you that which knows," he reminds us.

"It's Got to be the Going, Not the Getting There That's Good."

Janet Yannacone

We had just a few hours between the end of Seijaku Teacher training and the beginning of the Conference and I was in the mood to play. San Francisco seemed so close and inviting. I found Lynne Blackford and Susan Webster who shared my sense of spontaneity and adventure and off we went to Menlo Park train station.

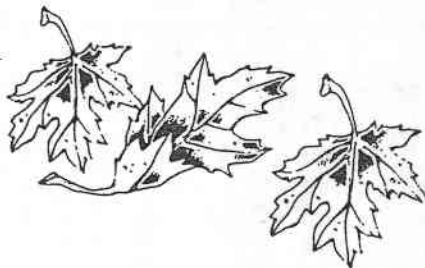
After some left brain schedule reading, a trip to the bus stop and some confusion about whether Friday was a holiday we finally boarded a very late train. I found immediate friendship and shared in the relaxed intimate fellowship these two women provided. We laughed, we talked, we shared.

When we arrived in San Francisco and read the return schedule we realized we had less than an hour for our afternoon adventure, but that didn't seem to dampen our spirits. We had just enough time to walk downtown, sample some Ghirardelli chocolate, browse through the magnificent FAO Schwartz toy store and take the bus back to the train station. We talked and laughed the entire time, so much so that a stranger had to tell us that the light had changed and we needed to cross the street. The train trip back provided the atmosphere for the continued fellowship. We arrived back at Vallombrosa with a few minutes to spare before the T'ai Chi Chih group practice.

Our short trip to San Francisco was a metaphor for the spiritual journey. It reminded me of the Harry Chapin song "It's Got to be the Going, Not the Getting There That's Good" that was popular about two decades ago. He sings about a miserable trip on a Greyhound bus that allowed him to see that the journey is as important if not more important than the destination.

This is true in my spiritual growth and unfoldment and also of my T'ai Chi Chih practice. (They are really one and the same.) Justin has said, and the T'ai Chi Chih movements have taught me, that we never really arrive. I can never be "finished" with my movements in the sense that I've learned all I can learn. I can never be finished with my spiritual journey, but I can enjoy, cherish, share and participate in the process. I can share and laugh and enjoy the friendship of others who are on the same journey.

It is each part of every movement that brings me "joy through movement". When my journey is fulfilling, joyous and meaningful each new moment will be an arrival and an awakening in and of itself.



Leaves aglow
it's Autumn
You know.

Carmen Brocklehurst

CONFERENCE COMMENTS CONTINUE:

Ursula Bridge, Victoria, BC, Canada; young and elderly: First of all, I was excited to be able to fly to San Francisco and be met by Vicki Brodie and transported to Vallombrosa Center--my room was great--the surroundings,...the overall atmosphere very much to my liking, not to forget to mention the excellent food. Meeting Justin Stone was definitely the highlight for me. Would we all have been there if it had not been for Justin? I was disappointed that Justin was not incorporated more into the schedule and did not lead a session or two alone or with Steve. I would suggest spending practice time on reviewing the movements every day, ..correct us on the spot at practice sessions ..then we can do our group TCC in Peace and Serenity without disturbance and "the Chi" will be able to travel and to accumulate amongst us.

Loretta Shiver, Albuquerque, NM; children: It is the most wonderful experience to come together and feel so close to all the teachers. The friendships that I have within this group are very strong. Practice with Steve deepens my awareness and personal practice. I am filled with Joy and Love.

Barbara Lefforge, Long Beach, CA; women of substance (size), abused and incest survivors, people in recovery from substance abuse: TCC has greatly helped me to stay grounded, to fully be present in my body, and to grow to love and appreciate my precious and powerful Chi. TCC is the tool that I use for myself and others to realize peace and serenity--a continual lifting of the clouds that sometimes hide the shining essence of our beingness. The conference is a time to experience and express the JOY--to meet and laugh and enjoy ourselves and each other--sharing our commonality--our lights!!

Linda Sanchez, Goleta, CA; elderly: I very much enjoyed the Conference--it is the first one I've attended. I would like to see more instruction from Justin and Steve on how to improve our movements. I would like to see us function more as a group instead of breaking down into smaller workshops and groups.

Meara Joy Rybczyk, Milton, VT; young adults, elderly, hearing impaired. (Special interest is in cross-cultural ceremonies that create sacred space for healing all our relations.): As one who lives and teaches so far away from the T'ai Chi Chih hub, I am so grateful for this opportunity to refine my practice with the master teachers, to share and be nourished by the other teachers who come to meet and connect on many levels. This year's conference was blessed with the serene and gracious guidance of Pam Towne, the coordinator, served as inspiration to us all in modeling how to bring together a diverse and rich community of dedicated individuals. I encourage us all to remember that we are growing and expanding as we continue to evolve our practice of the essence of T'ai Chi Chih.

Hope Ridley, San Mateo, CA; various people at recreation center: First Teachers' Conference for me--enjoyed every minute. Good fellowship. Learned more about TCC that I had known before. Beautiful location and good meals. Got better acquainted with other teachers and had interesting conversations about our respective interests and lives. Great to do TCC with a large group and continue to refine moves together. Good talks by Justin and Steve.