



THE VITAL FORCE

Journal of T'AI CHI CHIH! Joy Through Movement

Volume 13, No. 3

Fall Equinox and Conference Issue

September 1996

ONE MIND

Justin Stone

If one seeks enlightenment apart from the things of the world, that is mistaken. In truth, there is only enlightenment. Properly understood, even ignorance is enlightenment.

One time, living at an ashram in America, a very fine Nun spoke to me and said, "When I go down into the world to buy groceries, I can't wait to get back to this sanctuary." I answered that, unfortunately, she did not understand what she had been taught. Not by seeking escape from the world would she attain understanding. She was a very dedicated and faithful practitioner of the

Ramakrishna teaching, yet she suffered from this delusion.

For those on a path, or those who are true seekers, I have a question. In Zen it is said that there is nothing but this one Mind (which is no mind). Accordingly, I ask, "Does this one Mind manifest Consciousness, or does Consciousness manifest this one Mind?" This type of inquiry is not a waste of time, nor is it an intellectual exercise. It is a good way to arouse intuition of the Truth.

Source: *New Mexico TCC News*, Sept. 1996

OVERVIEW AND T'AI CHI CHIH PRACTICE

Steve Ridley

The great ocean of Consciousness-Energy pervades the countless wavelet expressions of Itself.

We are individualized energetic events participating in and supported by an infinitely larger energetic event; Life.

Our particular resonance is our contribution to the symphony of Life, and the character of our personalized resonance attracts appropriate relationships and experiences.

Self-transformation is based on altering our vibrational resonance.

The practice of T'ai Chi Chih constructively transforms our vibrational resonance toward fulfillment of being or enlightened living.

Each time we practice T'ai Chi Chih, whether sensing an immediate difference or not, we are constructively altering the quantity and quality of our vital force, accelerating this process of enlightened self-integration.

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

Steve Ridley is the Appointed 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

ACCOLADES

Many thanks to hosts and participants of the San Diego T'ai Chi Chih Teachers' Conference and Seijaku accreditation for creating a wonderful atmosphere for enrichment and spiritual growth at the 1996 teachers' conference. Organization, commitment, teamwork, spirit and integrity are the hallmarks of any such endeavor and were amply reflected in your efforts. Kudos!!!!

While enjoying reflections in this Conference issue, you can already begin planning for next year's conference events (see page 20). In the following pages, teachers share their thoughts, inspirations and experiences from the TCC annual teachers gathering.

VFJ INNER WORKINGS

Next VFJ Submission Deadline: November 1
Teachers' Directory Info. Deadline: December 1

Please continue to share your news, etc. with *VFJ* and keep us up to date on your T'ai Chi Chih (TCC) teaching. Read on for important directory news and other important announcements.

Congratulations to **Good Karma** for the new edition of *T'ai Chi Chih! Joy Thru Movement*. The latest TCC text revision by Justin Stone is indeed a long-awaited and welcome addition to their other useful teaching supports (see pages 5 and 37).

To Err is Human ...

In the last issue of *VFJ* (*summer*), an error occurred in the poem on page 19 the last line should read: inside and out. It was printed "inside out" changing the meaning and intent of the author. Our sincere apologies for this, calendar omissions and other errors in print.

VFJ Price Increase

As announced at the Summer Conference, the price of a yearly subscription to *VFJ* has now increased to defray additional costs of production and distribution. For teachers, the new price of **\$30** will also include a copy with their listing, in the annual TCC Teachers' Directory, in addition to quarterly *VFJ* issues. The

new student/interested person rate is **\$25** (not including a directory). The new rate for out of U.S. and others preferring first-class delivery rate is an addition **\$5** (\$35 per year).

Liability Insurance Coverage

Teachers interested in obtaining more information on membership requirements and liability coverage for teaching TCC, contact: IDEA Insurance Program, c/o Murria & Frick Insurance Agency, 380 Stevens Av., 1st Floor, #115, Solana Beach, CA 92075-2068 (619) 259-5800 -OR- for a list of licensed companies which provide liability coverage, contact your individual state's department of insurance.

New Zip Code Regulations

As of October 1, 1996 the Post Office has issued a regulatory procedure for all bulk-mailings which specifies that the four digit extension must be present after the five-digit zip code for your area in order to receive delivery of a mailing. *Please take the time to inform us of the four-digit extension to your zip code immediately.*

1997 T'ai Chi Chih Teachers' Directory

Important! Please use the subscription form on page 39 to inform us of your four-digit zip code extension and other changes to your teaching status (e.g., active or non-active and willing to travel); and to *provide us updated information* on your name, address and phone *as you would like it listed in the 1997 TCC Teachers' Directory*. Your listing and teaching status will be printed from the most current information we have in our database or reprinted as it was in the last referral directory unless we have *received new information by December 1st*.

The 1997 Directory is scheduled for completion at the beginning of the new year. TCC teachers should receive their new copy before January's end. A reminder, the purpose of the directory is to connect teachers and students in TCC. (The directory is not to be used or sold as a mailing list.) Thank you for your continued support to update this referral tool.

The Vital Force Staff

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Vital Force
Journal of T'ai Chi Chih

September 1996
 Fall Equinox Issue

Features by Justin Stone

One Mind	1
Samatha - Vipasyana.....	22
No-Pointed.....	23

Notes to Teachers

Reflections ... Along the Way (Salada)	2
Organizing T'ai Chi Chih (Ridley)	6
The Future of TCC (Ridley)	6
TCC Movement Differences (Ridley)	8-9
In Memoriam (Sr. Trinitas Bauereis)	32
Teacher Directory ,TCC Mat'Is Distributors	38
VFJ Journal Operations, Subscription Form	39

Teachers Write

Readers Commentary	4
Special Announcement (Katus)	5
Holding Fast - Letting Go (Brocklehurst)	23

Conference Feedback

Conference Impressions	10-13
Mission Statement (Bhatti)	14
Workshop Synopses/Comments	14
Presentation Summaries	15
Talent Night	16
Dance and Ceremony	17
From Me To You (Patterson).....	19
Seijaku Accreditation (Lestor)	24
Morning Practice	25

Events Feedback

Pre-Conference Inspiration (Patterson)	7
Written Expression of Gratitude (Walker)	28
Anaheim, Chicago Teacher Accreditation	28
Teacher Renewal, Meditative Ways Workshop ...	30

Calendar Notes

Next Conference Plans	20
1996/1997 TCC Events Calendar	21

Contemplations by Steve Ridley

Overview and T'ai Chi Chih Practice	1
Relationships, Energy Exchanges	26
Meditative Perspective on Addiction	26
Spiritual Path, Miracles and Blessings	27
Motivation to Practice, Chi	29
TCC Practice	29
The One and the Many	31
Meditation Practice, Contentment	31

Poetry and Perceptions

Mystery Writers Revealed! (Ridley)	4
I gather chrysanthemums (Zen classic)	7
Waiting in the food line (Harned)	10
Ripening, Gratitude (Box).....	11
Group Practice (Sky Woman)	13
The Merging of Difference and Unity	25
We are the dream pursuers ... (Ridley)	26
Romantic notions ... (Ridley)	26
Nothing to cling to (Ridley)	27
Meditation practice is ... (Ridley)	30
And (Miller)	32
We Can Never Be Apart (Fiore)	32
Meditation Practice is ... (Ridley)	30
Pointing West ... (Maloney)	36
The Upper Room (Garn)	36
T'ai Chi Chih (Barbour)	36

Inspirational Materials

Cosmic Rhythm Pamphlet (Stone)	22
Karmic Komments from GKP (Katus)	37

TCC Experiences

Sold on T'ai Chi Chih (Butler).....	35
-------------------------------------	----

Teacher News

AZ, CA	33
NY,NM	34
Abroad: France	34

READERS COMMENTARY

Honoring Justin Stone through presenting new T'ai Chi Chih text to students. We all look for ways to express our gratitude to Justin for his marvelous gift of T'ai Chi Chih. We know that the best way to do this is to develop ourselves as teachers by concentrating on our own practice. This is the way that we most effectively convey the essence of T'ai Chi Chih to our students -- one of Justin's clearest requests of us.

Now we have a wonderful new supporting tool in this task -- the new T'ai Chi Chih book that Justin and Good Karma have worked so hard on. As Jean Katus told us at the conference, the publication of the new book was a large commitment of both time and money. We teachers asked for this because we know what an excellent support it is for students. By making this book available to them, we support Good Karma's effort on our behalf and honor Justin by passing on T'ai Chi Chih clearly and effectively. So, don't be timid. Even if you don't see yourself as a salesperson, let your students know this book is available! They will certainly benefit from it.

Ellen Tatge, Albuquerque, NM

OPEN FORUM question for *VFJ* readers:

As a newly accredited teacher ... Please help me to clarify the following issue: During the San Diego Conference, both Steve and Justin spoke of the need for purity in practice and of the need to resist organization. Yet the T'ai Chi Chih Teachers Association exists in Albuquerque. Who, what and why is the association?

Penny Navis-Schmidt, Payson, AZ

Feedback, please: Open Forum c/o *VFJ*, 1477 - 155th Ave., San Leandro, CA 94578-1922.



Mystery Writers Revealed!

Dear T'ai Chi Chih Friends,

For the past few years I have submitted prose and poems to *Vital Force Journal* under various pseudonyms and have now decided to discontinue doing so.

The fictitious names: Yogi Pranananda, Ho Hu Tzu, M.

T. Kupper and T. Hart Guy allowed me to express inspired insights through a range of 'voices', authoritative, playful and subtle. I reasoned that some readers might better receive my messages if not labeled as "Ridley-isms" of which there are usually adequate doses in any particular issue.

Recently a friend pointed out that these alias' might deter readers from considering this written sharing to be valid and useful material for contemplation, because the 'authors' are unknown. So, beginning with this issue I'm taking credit and assuming responsibility for the various styles of inspired writing which express through me, always with the hope that they are somehow helpful and worthy of your consideration. In love, Steve

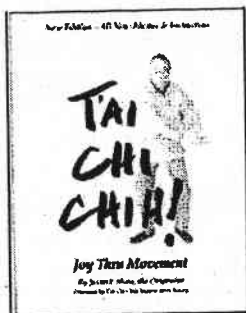


I am eager to hear of the Conference and sorry to have missed it all ... I was with you all in spirit. Thanks for the inspiration of each *VFJ*, the ministry you do for the TCC family. I read it from cover to cover on arrival. The feel of the paper, the typeset and entire layout has wonderful Chi!

Anita Germain, CSJ, White Bear Lake, MN

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT: NEW T'AI CHI CHIH BOOK

1996 EDITION OF T'AI CHI CHIH PHOTO-TEXT
Jean Katus, Publisher, Good Karma Publishing, Inc.



Cover of New TCC Book

Good Karma is pleased to let everyone know that we now have a completely new photo-text available. Some great changes are inside the slightly-altered blue-violet cover. (The “blue book” will now have to be referred to as the violet book!)

Four hundred sixty-eight new photos demonstrate a clear sequencing of each of the 20 movements, from start to finish. Justin Stone wrote all new instruction to go with the photos, printed in large enough type so the directions can be read with the book lying on a table or the floor. Each movement is displayed over a two-page spread so the photos are large enough to see well. A feature that allows the hands to be free to perform the movements while following the photos and instruction, even with the book lying on a table or the floor, is a lay-flat binding that keeps the book open at the page you place it.

Two new sections have been added. “Important Points on Moving Correctly” precedes the photo section and offers significant tips on the “musts” of T'ai Chi Chih. “Notes on Movements Just Learned” follows the photo section, sum-

marizing important aspects of each movement. The background and philosophy material in the original book have been retained and arranged in a more readable format. Instruction in the Great Circle Meditation and Ou Mie Shu's subtle drawings has also been kept in this new edition.

To be consistent in our aim of reducing waste and re-using where we can, we've had the new text printed on recycled paper, and the cover has a biodegradable scratch-resistant coating.

The retail price on the new photo-text is just \$14.95. The 40% certified T'ai Chi Chih teacher discount applies, of course, when one purchases 3 or more copies. We wanted to keep the price as reasonable as possible for our teachers and students, even though some feel the quality of the book merits a much higher price. Good Karma went to considerable expense to produce this fine edition, and we know you, as teachers, will be as proud to present it to your students as we have been in readying it for your use. If you have not yet ordered your own copy and some for your students, you will want to do so right away.

We'd like to repeat a comment from one of the teachers who saw the new book sample at the conference. She expresses a response similar to many who saw it: “I'm sure the new textbook represents hours and hours of time for everyone involved and I can't wait to really see it [the actual finished book as opposed to the proof sample - author's note]. I'm sure the new instructions and pictures will be much improved and I'll feel better about selling a truer positioning of the moves.”

ORGANIZING T'AI CHI CHIH

I don't understand why anyone would want to make an organization out of T'ai Chi Chih. Hundreds of chi kung sets are known in China and have persisted for centuries. These have been passed on through succeeding generations because of their usefulness in cultivating chi for health building and healing. To my knowledge, none have determined a need to build formal organizations around any of these practices.

What are we dealing with? We have 19 movement patterns and one standing posture. If these are practiced regularly, benefits are forthcoming. What need for additional stuff?

Organizing classes and practice groups is fine. Providing opportunities for teacher accreditation courses is fine. Networking through *Vital Force Journal* is fine. As for promoting TCC, it is spreading because people experience life

enhancing results. When I began teaching in Denver nearly 20 years ago no one in Colorado knew about it. I offered classes through community schools and have continued to do so. Now we have over 30 accredited teachers in the state and many classes offering instruction. How did this happen? Not through organization or extraordinary promotional efforts. Others have had similar experiences where they began sharing T'ai Chi Chih as the only teacher in their area and things built up naturally, primarily because individuals found the practice beneficial and informed others of their experience.

The most important thing is for each of us to practice regularly, toward mastery, and openly share T'ai Chi Chih with those attracted. Doing this, I believe everything will follow in a natural, constructive, realistic manner.



THE FUTURE OF TCC

At a recent retreat program, during an informal discussion, a participant remarked: "Justin Stone is the glue that holds T'ai Chi Chih together."

This teacher was obviously expressing his sense of loyalty and respect for Justin, which is admirable, yet the statement is incorrect and shows a misunderstanding of what we are involved with.

First of all, T'ai Chi Chih is not an organization to be upheld, and secondly, it is the practice itself and not a personality that will determine whether it is a life-enhancing involvement which will endure and serve increasing numbers in the future.

If a 'spiritual discipline' needs to be perpetuated by the assertion of a personality, it is doubtfully useful.

EVENTS FEEDBACK

PRE-CONFERENCE INSPIRATION Susan Patterson, San, Diego, CA

It was Thursday night before the start of the 11th Annual T'ai Chi Chih Teacher's Conference and already 44 teachers had arrived from all over the United States. It was a very special time for the San Diego teachers who had been preparing for this event since September 13, 1995. It was also a very special time because it would be the first time that Justin would be in the San Diego T'ai Chi Chih Center. We finally knew just how many people the Center could hold if all were seated.

[In his talk on "The Purpose of Spiritual Practice"] Justin shared with us many insights and stories of his journeys. It was a great beginning and as the weekend progressed, I know many teachers reflected back to words that Justin shared on Thursday night.

Thank you Justin for arriving early to share your thoughts with us.



Justin Stone speaks at San Diego TCC Center Thursday evening, August 25, prior to annual Teachers' Conference

Poetry

This oft quoted classic Zen poem was shared by Justin Stone at the Conference.

**I gather chrysanthemums at the eastern hedgerow,
And silently gaze at the southern mountains,
The mountain air is beautiful in the sunset,
And the birds, flocking together, return home.
Among all these things is a real meaning,
Yet, when I try to express it, I become lost in "no-words."**

NOTES TO TEACHERS

TCC MOVEMENT DIFFERENCES

Steve Ridley, Denver, CO

This summer at the T'ai Chi Chih Teacher Conference I was asked to explain why a few of my movements differ from Justin's. For those of you who weren't there I'll restate what was shared.

First, I want to emphasize: of primary importance in TCC practice is the functional flow of vital force, chi, directed through each movement.

If we are growing in this discipline, the ongoing refinement of our performance will access and accommodate chi's expression progressively. Each time we enter practice we endeavor to experience an improving generation and circulation of chi within each movement, by sensing then adjusting, to invite its enhanced, less inhibited expression. This means being sensitively, attentively attuned to what we're involved with and willing to be responsively flexible.

General Differences

The general, obvious differences between my movements and Justin's are: 1) My postures are more openly expressive (not exaggerated), supported by broader, lower stances. This derives from personal preference based on body type, age and what feels best and most natural. 2) My movements are more slowly paced and uniformly even because I choose to apply traditional chi kung breath synchronization with each pattern.

Personal Training

In T'ai Chi Chih I am primarily self-taught. I spent part of one weekend with Jim Burns, Justin's closest student at the time, after working with the T'ai Chi Chih textbook for several months. Jim helped clarify many movements I'd been unable to assimilate from the book. Next, I attended a teacher

training course with Justin, which allowed me to sharpen my performance (surprisingly without correction during our week together). Immediately following the course I began active sharing of T'ai Chi Chih through public classes which has continued for nearly 20 years.

During my first few years as a teacher I often visited Justin's teacher accreditation courses to renew and assist as a volunteer. Auditing these classes and working with new teachers was wonderful learning for which I'm most grateful. In '81 I was asked to conduct my first teacher training course, and have endeavored to honor this role and Justin's blessing by continually growing and serving as best I can.

In addition to my ongoing study of T'ai Chi Chih, I've been involved for periods with T'ai Chi Chuan and various chi kung sets, which share the same movement principles used in T'ai Chi Chih. Through substantive practice of Yang style T'ai Chi Ch'uan and my master's confirming request that I become a teacher (which I declined), plus the in depth study of moving and stationary chi kung forms, I know the proper articulation of yin-yang movement principles as delineated in the "T'ai Chi Classics" and other reliable sources. My book, Perspectives in Motion and Stillness, offers explanations of key movement principles derived from personal experience through practice and experimentation.

Movement Refinements

Modifications of certain T'ai Chi Chih movements have developed in my practice, improving their functional efficiency and potency. These I have shared for years and are represented in their initial form on my videotape, filmed in '87. Since then additional minor refinements have manifested, resulting in increased effectiveness, and of course this process continues.

NOTES TO TEACHERS

Movement Refinements (cont'd)

These modifications accord perfectly with the yin-yang movement principles and it would be senseless to breach them. Anyone with sufficient understanding of these important principles will recognize they are faithfully embodied in each movement pattern. With confident humility I invite any who may be doubtful about the few movement refinements I've made, to examine and test them by moving as indicated, for verification. Again, these modifications naturally evolved through diligent, conscientious practice to better accommodate the potential chi flow within the context of these movement patterns. This isn't only my testimony but the experiences of probably 90% of our teachers.

Movement Example

Pulling Taffy Variation "A":

The original way to begin this movement is to drop down slightly, then turn from the waist while swinging the left arm back into position for the forward pull. To me this is disjointed.

I find it more efficient to begin the movement by turning from the waist while sinking, creating a spiraling down motion which leads directly into the forward pull. In this there is no wasted motion or discontinuity.

Also, the original forward foot position creates a semi-pigeon-toed stance which is traditionally classified as "chi stagnating" and mis-aligns the posture for me. I prefer using the standard front-to-back foot positioning though shortened to accommodate the anchored rear heel while shifting weight forward.

This is one example of how slight modifications can help to better facilitate the chi flow. The minor alterations which have manifested through my practice have been 'suggested' by the circulating vital force endeavoring to express in a less inhibited manner. I have simply done my best to feel and adjust to honor this direction, supported by my knowledge of movement principles.


Additional Comments

All credit for any accomplishments I may realize in T'ai Chi Chih rightfully go to Justin Stone. I acknowledge him as the inspired developer of this modern, specialized chi kung set and the firm foundation upon which we all stand in carrying this extraordinary life gift into the world. Thank you Justin for the opportunity to serve usefully in this life.

In my experience and opinion, T'ai Chi Chih is an evolving quantity which will continue to undergo constructive though minor alterations in form. Personally, through 20 years of practice, this has been the case.

I differ with those who assert that T'ai Chi Chih is a fixed quantity to be carried forward in time rightly, as a structured set of inalterable movements which must be conformed to without any allowance for possible refinement or improvement.

Finally, I want to assure everyone that I have no intention or interest in changing Justin Stone's T'ai Chi Chih, though I do acknowledge that a few simple movement modifications have come through me to help enhance chi function. I am grateful for this and to Justin for trusting me to serve as his representative. Thank you for listening.

Love,  Steve

CONFERENCE IMPRESSIONS



The Conference was great! Susan (Patterson) worked so hard -- and thrived on it!

Justin Stone, Albuquerque, NM

The 1996 T'ai Chi Chih Teachers' Conference was well-run and held at a beautiful, full-of-chi location. The San Diego group, headed by Susan Patterson, was organized, energetic and committed to the task.

Noel Altman, Fairfax, CA

Conference Poetry

Waiting in the food line
How wondrous to see
The tides and the trees
in line with me.

Doug Harned, Sunnyvale, CA

Very good conference ... I would enjoy more group practice and sessions/workshops and less of more "social" type events.

Mark Jones, Denver, CO

The evolution of T'ai Chi Chih is certainly evident. The Chi is flowing so strong, I know it will bring peace to the world. Thank you Justin and Steve.

Don Fiore, Phoenix, AZ

Many thanks to the San Diego Teachers for helping to actualize the conference mission. It was a restorative and healing weekend ... Please let me know if you are interested in a tape that includes the song, "Gotta Get It Perfect." Your appreciation meant so much.

Joanne Sultar, Berkeley, CA

The conference was truly a gift of joy -- shown in every detail from the welcome of the committee the first night to the delightful hand-stamped bags to carry stuff! ... I came home both tired and deeply recharged.

Ellen Tatge, Albuquerque, NM

This was my first T'ai Chi Chih Conference... quite a wonderful experience to be with so many teacher/practitioners I've come away from the conference with a sense of renewed appreciation of the practice and a deeper relationship with it. I look forward to the effects it will have on my teaching and my personal practice.

Paul E. Ciske, Berkeley, CA

I watched different levels of consciousness interact at the conference. ... We all came from different places and blended into one. Thank you everyone ... to the San Diego teachers for their superior organization. ... Poetchi in motion!

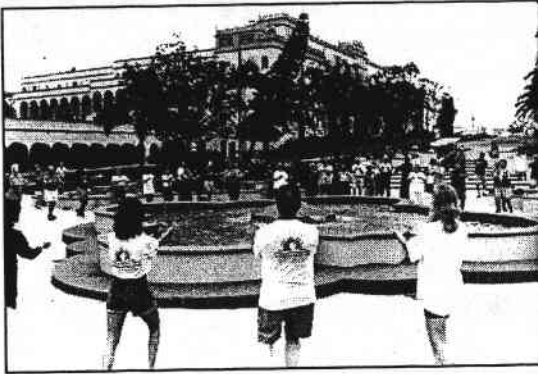
Holly Davis, Oak Park, IL

Personally, this was the most transformational conference ever. ... it felt like an evolutionary leap. ... Thanks to Justin and Steve for the movement refinements and gentle corrections.

Karen Scharf Morgan, Rio Rancho, NM

CONFERENCE FEEDBACK

MORNING PRACTICE LED BY STEVE RIDLEY



Conference Poetry
Eugene L. Box, Deming, NM

Ripening

Overcast
Morning meditation,
Group T'ai Chi Chih.
Practice deepens.
Fresh fruit.

Gratitude

Great Spirit.
With Gratitude I awaken,
Day by day,
To this Creation you are . . .
Unconditional Love.

"Sunday morning practice outdoors near the fountain accompanied by the delightful sounds of the moving water was one of those special times I will carry with me in my heart."

Vickie Brodie, Burlingame, CA

