

THE VITAL FORCE

Journal of T'AI CHI CHIH! Joy Through Movement

Volume 14, No. 2

Summer Solstice

June 1997



*Joy, Joy, Healing thru Joy! Joy, Joy, Healing thru Joy!
Joy in the Heart! Joy in the Mind! Joy in the Soul!
Joy, Joy, Healing thru Joy! Joy, Joy, Healing thru Joy!*

Justin Stone, A.S.C.A.P.

MOVING MEDITATION

Of all the meditations, it seems the ones most fitting for Westerners are the Moving Meditations. It is easier to move *joyously* than it is to sit quietly and attempt to control the mind. The latter effort demands a quiet place and considerable motivation on the part of the meditator. T'ai Chi Chih, the Moving Meditation, can be done by anyone anywhere. Moreover, it requires no space other than the one in which one stands, no special clothing, no

semi-dark sound-free location. It seems appropriate for any age at any time except directly after meals and just before going to bed. The effects are those of meditation, as well as an energizing exercise. The mind is stilled, and a joyous physical glow spreads over the body. The Chi flows, one feels good, and 100 chronic ailments seem to improve or disappear. This is a truly healing practice.

Meditation for Healing, Justin Stone, 1991



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

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



Summer Meditation

Tawny star-streams of sunlight
dance lightly on cool, dimpled ponds
as bamboo sways gently at sunrise
caressed by the rarefied air.

The cherry blooms long since departed
yield green leaves, then ripening fruit,
as fields tossed with summer's profusion
parade in dazzling array.

Stone Scheduled to Address UN

Justin Stone was to address the United Nations on either June 12 or June 13. *VFJ* looks forward to hearing about this event at Conference, and to reporting this event in the Fall Issue.

VFJ INNER WORKINGS

Submission Deadline for Fall *VFJ*: August 1

Send submissions to: *VFJ*/Liz Salada
1477 - 155th Ave., San Leandro, CA 94578-1922
FAX information is on page 39.

This pre-conference issue is dedicated to the healing of the T'ai Chi Chih community. May joy be your reflection as you read its pages.

VFJ is a forum for spiritual work based in the desire to share knowledge with TCC teachers and others for their information, instruction, and enrichment. *VFJ* will continue to reflect the positive and uplifting expressions of teachers/students in keeping with the original intent under which this vehicle was established many years ago.

Highlights of this Issue

The 1997 Teachers' Conference will be held in Orange, CA and hosted by Timothy Stuetz. It will be a time for teachers to connect, renew, and discuss the growth and change of TCC (see pages 5 and 20). This year's conference theme is: **GRatitude, Ecstasy, And Transformation!** Justin Stone will be facilitating a special presentation on '*jing*', so come, enhance your TCC practice, and have a **GREAT** time!

Notes to Teachers includes statements by both Justin and Steve on the evolving resolution of issues relating to TCC (pages 8 and 9) Information on the copyrighting of the TCC form and specifications for making a TCC video are on pages 10 and 37, respectively. There is also reminiscence by Lia Ridley as she reflects on love and mutual support, change and acceptance in her heartfelt article (page 9), and a memorial to Ken Ridley (page 6).

Under **Art of Teaching** several articles have been written on 'seated' TCC/Seijaku (see pages 16-17, 18-19, 22 and 24). Also, teachers and students alike have written about the healing properties of their practice -- from multiple sclerosis to migraines (page 23). **Events Feedback** features the Seijaku/Meditation Retreat held in April on the West Coast, as well as Teacher Trainings held in CA and OH. **Teacher News** in this issue includes articles on TCC in Italy and Hawaii.

Important articles regarding teacher-candidate preparation have been written by both Justin Stone and Ed Altman (see pages 11,12 and 13).

We hope this pre-conference issue inspires you to deepen your TCC practice and feel a sense of connectedness with your fellow TCC teachers.

As Springtime yields to Summer and the sun warms the seed-strewn earth, may the ripening fruit of the season bring a corresponding sweetness to your practice and meditation. See you at the Conference!

The Vital Force Staff

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READERS COMMENTARY

READERS WRITE

I've recently spiral-bound my *Vital Force* copies by year. Currently I'm re-reading 1996 issues, marking paragraphs and poems to incorporate into my classes. How wonderful to share other teachers' experiences, reflect on the deeper meanings of TCC practice, with Justin, Steve, and others, experience the last Teachers' Conference vicariously. Thanks to all who make this journal possible.

Jackie Kingsbury, Zephyrhills, FL

Thanks for promptly getting *The Vital Force* to me. I have devoured the December and March issues – good nourishment as I prepare for my Teacher Training sessions at Mahwah, NJ in July.

The growth and evolution of T'ai Chi Chih is a solid and lofty goal. Thanks for your great part in this endeavor. Sincerely,

Margaret O'Connor, Wayne, NJ

I truly enjoy reading all the interesting articles presented in it. I enjoy reading about and learning from other teachers in *The Vital Force*. Thank you, keep up the good job.

Ana E. Federspiel, Cincinnati, OH

I do appreciate all you do and are for TCC and *The Vital Force*. TCC continues to be special in my life. Its is such a joy to teach it to others! Some day I hope to take the Seijaku Accreditation Course.

I'm going to Ireland to be a full-time caregiver for my father. I may be able to teach TCC in Galway while I am there. With love and chi,

Mary Griffin, O.S.F., Prospect Park, PA

What timing on the 'seated' TCC! Last week I took an herb class, and I met a man I used to work with at the Post Office taking the same class. He quit working at the Post Office about 5 years ago because his Multiple Sclerosis (MS) was getting the better of him. He's in a motorized chair now, and said that he was fed up with traditional medicine and was looking for alternatives. I mentioned TCC to him and sent him some information via e-mail.

I asked Christeen [McLain-Hoperdahl, with whom I teach weekly] if she had [any] success with MS students, and she had, and recommended group practice (to get the group energy). She told me that Joe Apt, the teacher that was at [my] certification (May 1995) had MS in remission. I called Joe and asked permission to give his phone number to the man with MS. ...

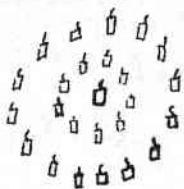
I think more discussion on 'seated' TCC would be valuable, such as what do you do with the feet? If the upper body is all that is mobile, does one and can one still concentrate on the soles of the feet? If there is no yinping and yangping of the legs, is it still effective?

Mike Wavra, Fargo, ND

Ed. Note: Bonnie McKenzie (San Jose, CA) contacted *VFJ* recently wanting to inform readers about the opportunities for teaching TCC through Adult Education Programs. She has been teaching through the Metropolitan Adult Education Program in the South Bay, and informs *VFJ* that Adult Education Programs are currently looking for qualified TCC instructors. If you would like more information, please contact Bonnie via your Teachers' Directory.

CONFERENCE CALL

REFLECTIONS OF YOU Terry Jennings, Honolulu, HI



On April 2, 1997 before I was to give a T'ai Chi Chih demonstration/presentation, I began a meditation and to my surprise a memory emerged of all the T'ai Chi Chih teachers. It was as if I was back at San Diego Conference and clearly remembered and felt all the teachers passing light to me during the candle lighting ceremony led by Sister Antonia Cooper. The teachers who taught the longest were in the center circle and they passed the light to the newer teachers who were on the exterior [circle]. At the time I didn't

realize the full impact of this experience. The love and support remembered are a treasure that I carry inside. Thank you all so much for sharing during the conference. I feel so blessed for getting to know each one of you and to Justin Stone for your gift to the world and my world, making a smaller circle within the larger circle and conversely a larger circle within. Let's hold the light for each other.

My full support goes to all who are planning the **GREAT**: gratitude, ecstasy and transformation conference 1997 in Orange, California. Breathe in a breath of aloha from Hawaii. I love you.

THE VALUE OF PRACTICE & TEACHERS' CONFERENCE

Corine Reeber, Port Hueneme, CA

Recently, I spent a week in Albuquerque during which time I visited the T'ai Chi Chih Center. (Every Tuesday they have a group practice at 9:30 a.m.) It was wonderful to join the group. What happened next was totally unexpected. Gently, I was made consciously aware that I was not bending my knees enough. My first reaction was, "Who me? No, it can't be! I'm the one who is constantly reminding my students to bend those knees!" We owe it to ourselves, to our students, and to T'ai Chi Chih (TCC) to root out any non-TCC movements and nuances that we have inadvertently attached to our TCC practice.

I am very grateful that this was brought to my conscious awareness. I thought of how fortunate the Albuquerque teachers are to have Justin, the originator of T'ai Chi Chih, with them. They have the opportunity to do TCC together,

working on the nuances of each movement that will bring about better results. Being at the Center was like attending a session at the TCC Teachers' Conference. There, we are surrounded by loving, conscientious teachers committed to serving the Universe by teaching TCC for the good of the world and humankind. Since we are not all so fortunate to live in Albuquerque and attend weekly practice with Justin and our dedicated peers, we must commit to do the next best thing. If possible, we must faithfully attend our yearly TCC Teachers' Conference. (This year it is in Orange, California from July 25th to 27th.) The conference provides us an opportunity to work with Justin, Ed, and one another to improve our practice. If we continue our practice with an open heart, we will continue to be worthy of the responsibility we share as teachers of TCC.

KEN RIDLEY



**Hope and Ken Ridley,
married 50 years**

Native Californian, Ken Ridley, recently passed away. Many of us in Northern California became used to seeing Ken in his wheelchair at 'Practice in the Park' in San Mateo. We will miss him. In his

honor, East Bay teachers planted a Japanese Maple in the Garden at Central Park in San Mateo. His quiet support of his son, Steve, and his wife, Hope [Ridley] from the sidelines told the world how he felt about T'ai Chi Chih.



**Steve and Hope Ridley beside Japanese Maple
planted in remembrance of Ken**

Ken was a student at Healds Business School, serving in the Navy in World War II. Afterward, he worked on the waterfront, as a Certified Service Contractor dealing with import/export. Family- and community-oriented, Ken participated in activities which supported these interests. Diagnosed with Muscular Dystrophy at 40, he was wheelchair bound by age 65.

He loved nature, comedy, old movies, and crossword puzzles; he wrote limericks and enjoyed reading modern authors. Memorial Services were held on April 1. Our TCC family expresses its condolences to the Ridley family and acknowledges the cycle of life (birth-death-rebirth) with the passing of Ken Ridley from this life to the next.



REMINISCENCE

Photo courtesy of Lia Ridley

ACCEPTING LIFE'S CHANGES

I would like to express my gratitude to all the T'ai Chi Chih teachers that I have had contact with in the last eleven years. I will miss your support and love you have bestowed upon me. Ours was a mutually supportive relationship, a dance, in which we allowed love to flow. I believe that we have been enriched through mutual respect and acceptance. I thank you for allowing me into your lives and opening to my various sharings through my workshops and performances.

I am sorry that Steve is no longer the spiritual head and T'ai Chi Chih trainer. He has the spiritual maturity and authority which made him the successful leader he was, is. Steve displayed and lived the integrity necessary for his position. As he continued to spiritually unfold over the years the T'ai Chi Chih community became a rich and more loving family.

I know that life is a process of change and our relationship with the T'ai Chi Chih community is no exception. Change occurs on many different levels and whatever needs to happen will! This may be a simplistic way of looking at life, but my experiences bear this out. As Justin said: "My only desire is for spring to follow winter."

I now accept what is unfolding though I could not have said this at the beginning of the change. I am at peace. Yes, I will miss our yearly or by-yearly interactions but life holds many open doors and possibilities.

Justin will always remain a special friend. We have had a long lasting and close relationship. I do not see this changing. Mutual trust and love are at the core of our relationship, perhaps going back lifetimes. The ups and downs of lights and shadows do not tarnish such friendship and love.

I salute all of my dear T'ai Chi Chih friends and hold you in my heart. Even if not in each others immediate company, we remain in harmonious closeness.

In Gratitude and Love, **Lia Ridley**

IN REMEMBRANCE OF HAPPIER TIMES

"A pose with all of us smiling"



**Steve, Justin and Lia about 18 years ago
in Albuquerque, NM**

For Justin from Lia

(We first met in December 1977)

***A familiar feeling
as your warm,
wise eyes look at me.
Recognition!***

***Sweet – warm sadness ...
A voice from the past.***

***Facing my inner self,
wherever you and I are.***

***The inner child . . .
A breath of fresh air!***

***A former teacher and friend.
Again.***

"We'll always be close," you say!

"TWO TCC'S" IS OVER

The "two T'ai Chi Chih" problem is over! An agreement has been signed that says only TCC, as originated and copyrighted, will be taught and performed and illegal books and tapes will not be produced or sold. This is big news for TCC and should set many minds at rest.

-- Submitted to *VFJ* 6/97 by Justin Stone

EXCERPTS FROM: SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT*

Justin Stone

At last year's Teachers Conference, the question was asked about the "two T'ai Chi Chih's" in effect at that time. Any thinking person would know that, if there could be two T'ai Chi Chih's, there could be ten or twenty ways to do it, which would spell the end of this wonderful discipline. The question was a logical one as it was on almost everybody's mind.

As soon as we returned home from the Conference, I called Steve Ridley a number of times and suggested that we get together to solve the problem. His answer was that there was no problem, and he refused to meet with me. Then I wrote a letter suggesting an agenda we could consider to do away with the problem (which he had created), and this was derided. Only then, for the first time, did I reluctantly come to believe that he did not want to do away with the problem!

Some time later Steve called me to ask what he should do about the upcoming Teachers' Courses in New Jersey and San Diego. I replied, "You are the Spiritual Head of T'ai Chi Chih. Go ahead and teach them!" I did not say a word about how they should be taught or what should be taught.

After returning from these Courses, Steve wrote a card demanding that I write a letter to *The Vital Force* saying that his was the proper way to do T'ai Chi Chih - in other words, renouncing what I had brought to the world in 1974. I replied that I could not do so, and that the new way of doing some of the movements was incorrect. I also wondered what right he had to deliver such an ultimatum to the originator of T'ai Chi Chih.

A few weeks later, on a Monday morning, Steve called me and said he was stepping down as Spiritual

Head of T'ai Chi Chih - NOW! I was greatly surprised as I had repeatedly assured Steve, and his wife, Lia, that he was the head of T'ai Chi Chih as long as he wanted to be.

This announcement called for quick action. We both faxed announcements to *The Vital Force*, and I first had to ask Ed Altman if he would take on such a responsibility on such short notice (with the financial sacrifice it would mean to him for taking time off from his job in the technology field in order to teach Courses). Fortunately he said, "Yes."

I had twice before talked Steve out of resigning, telling him I thought he would be making a big mistake. He explained that he would go back to being an ordinary teacher in Denver and would give up submitting articles to *The Vital Force* and conducting Teachers' Courses and accrediting teachers (as he stated in the resignation letter he later submitted to *The Vital Force*).

If Steve had been willing to sit down with me and work out the problem of "two T'ai Chi Chih's," I believe he would still be the head of T'ai Chi Chih. I think, from his standpoint, he made a great mistake in voluntarily stepping down. Those who say, or write, that he was "forced out" are misinformed.

My thanks to Ed Altman for taking on such a difficult task, under troublesome circumstances, on such short notice. ...

It is now up to all who are interested in TCC to band together to bring back the peaceful, joyous situation that was interrupted. If you are getting benefits from T'ai Chi Chih, then give something back to it.

NOTES TO TEACHERS



Dear Friends,
Wishing you well
in your TCC and
other endeavors.

Justin asked me to
write a piece for
VFJ explaining
how I left my
assignment as head
of TCC on a
voluntary basis. In
a resignation letter
which appeared in
the December '96
issue, I explained
why I felt the need
to make the choice

I did. I'll review and elaborate a bit on those thoughts
here to fulfill Justin's request.

My decision for resigning was based on Justin's
expressed discontent and unhappiness about my way
of conveying his TCC. He felt there were two TCC's
being taught, his and mine. I didn't agree, yet
expressed that "my TCC" was a slightly streamlined
version of his, which gave me better results. In good
conscience, I could only pass on the best TCC I knew

through 20+ years of practice. Justin could not except
this and said he would not attend the annual
conference until this matter was resolved.

I communicated at length, in detail with Justin,
primarily by writing, also over the phone, and in two
homemade videotapes showing and talking about our
slight movement differences as I perceived them and
modeled the full practice, moving naturally, for his
examination. None of these efforts resulted in
resolution.

Recognizing our impasse and that the situation could
only grow worse, I knew one of us had to make a
decision. I deferred to Justin twice, offering to leave
my post at his request, and he said that wasn't a good
resolution. Eventually, I called a third time and
resigned.

I regret not being able to welcome new teachers into
the fold and to interact in ways I became so grateful
for through my role, yet TCC has its certain destiny
which continues to unfold, now with new leadership.
Justin as "originator" is assured that his TCC will be
carried forward in the manner he prefers.

I am so thankful for those special years and continue
to be rewarded by new adventures of sharing 'ways'
along the way.

In Love, Your Friend,
Steve Ridley

Dear Justin,

*A free man is an endless gift
awakening others
to the treasure of themselves.
He gives without giving
and receives without expecting.
Abandoning hope
he is the embodiment of wholeness,
the inextinguishable flame
of eternal love.*

Loving You, Steve

NOTES TO TEACHERS

COPYRIGHT INFORMATION ON TCC

T'ai Chi Chih (TCC) is a copyrighted form. Certified teachers have permission to teach it to anyone they wish. Permission is required, however, to present it in video form. (See related article, "Teacher Made Videos" in "Karmic Komments" column on page 37.)

No permission has been or will be given by the copyright owner for anyone to write or sell written instruction in T'ai Chi Chih.

The recent completely-rewritten and re-photographed edition of Justin Stone's *T'ai Chi Chih/Joy thru Movement* is more than sufficient written instruction for anyone who has learned or who wants to learn TCC. If certain students are financially stressed and cannot afford the full price of the photo-textbook (very inexpensive for its quality, particularly in comparison with other such books), we will work out an arrangement with that person or his/her teacher.

Good Karma Publishing

PERSONAL MESSAGE TO TEACHERS

Jean Katus, Ft. Yates, ND

I want to step aside from my role as Good Karma Publisher to make a personal heart request. Justin Stone has most generously given us all an incredible gift that we know, from our own experience and for that of our students, continues to transform lives and to step up the global spiritual evolutionary process.

I believe all certified teachers are aware that he has never accepted even a penny in payment from teachers who may wish to give him a portion of their class income in gratitude for what he has created. (It is a requirement in some traditions that the originator receive a certain percentage of income brought in by those who

KATUS EXCERPT

The following is an excerpt from a letter written by Jean Katus (Ft. Yates, ND) in response to a flyer she received from a teacher sponsoring a TCC event:

"Justin originated the movements to be done in a particular way. They were not put together, willy-nilly so any teacher could change them as he or she sees fit. To use Justin's own analogy, when an artists plays Beethoven or Mozart, he or she plays the notes those composers wrote, even though his or her personal style may use the notes slightly differently.

The same is true of T'ai Chi Chih: as teachers and students, our task is to emulate the movements as closely to what the originator intended as we can, given the slight differences all of us have in body type, ability, and personal style. In other words, we are not to change the notes."

pass on that discipline.) Justin has, in fact, returned money to teachers who have "tithed" a portion of their T'ai Chi Chih income to him.

Justin's only income from T'ai Chi Chih is a very indirect one. He receives royalties on the sale of his books and tapes and a small portion of the Teacher Accreditation fee. It seems to me we can best honor him by making his books and tapes available to our students. The materials offer a terrific enhancement and a lifetime of wisdom to people who have been introduced to T'ai Chi Chih. We can all honor the originator of T'ai Chi Chih by sharing his words in this way.

REACHING THE ESSENCE OF T'AI CHI CHIH

A sincere teacher who does TCC properly and practices regularly will eventually reach a deep level, the Essence of T'ai Chi Chih. This is an ecstatic experience, almost like a Satori experience in Zen training. The teacher will be practicing one day and suddenly the realization will come that no-one is doing anything, that T'ai Chi Chih is doing T'ai Chi Chih. At that time the teacher will be filled with gratitude for what has been brought to him by the Originator. It will make him, or her, anxious to bring this level of proficiency to the student thru careful training.

It goes without saying that it is not possible to reach such a level unless TCC is performed properly and the attitude is correct. For example: one teacher I know was writing about the Chi before ever taking beginning lessons, a purely intellectual effort. I suggested that that person forget the writing of something that had never been experienced and begin lessons.

Subsequently, this person went to Teachers' Training and, incomprehensibly, was accredited without ever doing TCC properly. There is little yinping and yangping and no involvement of the knees at all. Now, it is all right for a student to just do the best he or she can, perhaps being handicapped physically, but it is obvious that a teacher must perform TCC well, and with the right attitude. This teacher, a nice person, seems to have no desire to improve and so is not at all capable of teaching nor of reaching deeper levels of TCC practice. T'ai Chi Chih is not a matter of opinion, or of political activity, but one of sincere spiritual involvement. With such a

know-it-all attitude this teacher should never have been recommended for Teachers' Training. It is not a case of being a 'nice guy', it is one of keeping TCC standards high. It is usually a strict teacher, who insists on good performance, who is looked back upon with gratitude when the aspirant becomes successful in practice and in teaching, in any discipline.

I want to urge teachers not to be shoddy or careless in their practice. The reward in reaching TCC Essence is potentially great and needs only TEH, inner sincerity, and regular practice to succeed. Do not be misled by those who want to become popular, and therefore, lower their standards. There is too much at stake.



*Nothing happens
without cause.
In each moment
we must speak or act
in such away
that the effect
will be desirable.
The potential must be
the seed of the
fruitful.
So we take care!*

*Abandon Hope, p. 49
Justin Stone, 1991*