



THE VITAL FORCE

Journal of T'AI CHI CHIH! Joy Through Movement

Volume 14, No. 4

Winter Solstice

December 1997

MANIFESTATION

Justin Stone

"Reverence for All Life"

Albert Schweitzer

Albert Schweitzer was one of the most remarkable men of the century. He had four doctorates, which I have never heard of before – he was a Doctor of Theology, a Doctor of Philosophy, a Doctor of Musicology (being one of the greatest organists of Europe), and a Medical Doctor. Though these are awe-inspiring, I believe it was as a human being that he manifested his greatness.

Schweitzer's creed was "Reverence for All Life." The church would not respect this in him and let him serve the church in Africa; on a matter of Doctrine, they would not let him represent the church in Africa, so he became a Medical Doctor so as to serve in a useful manner. A point of Doctrine kept the church from making use of his talents, hard to believe.

What does "Reverence for Life" mean? If one takes the Albuquerque tramway to the top of the mountain, it will pass an area where the altitude has made growth very sparse. Then one suddenly sees a rock, and from this surface, so barren, a small plant grows, sticking its head up against all odds. The Life Force has such a great will to manifest that it does so under these unpromising circumstances. This is real Love, not idle talk about Love. What do we know of Divinity? Nothing except that it manifests before our eyes (and, sometimes, in our hearts). When this happens, there is gratitude to Life, we know Love. We do not have to depend on Doctrine or Dogma, things that others tell us. We believe because belief manifests in us as the plant grows on the rock.

Source: *New Mexico TCC News*, August 1997



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

Ed Altman is the Appointed head of 'Tai Chi Chih.

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

May it serve you in "Knowing the Real".

VFJ HIGHLIGHTS



Mighty piney evergreens
spread needles to the sky.
Crystal jewels of rain and snow
bring moist abundance down.
Passing clouds drift crisply by,
signaling winter's hidden gift.
Cleansing forest depths,
the earth prepares for spring.

Dear Readers:

Each *VFJ* issue is made special because teachers and students take time to nourish, serve, and uplift each other by sending their contributions to share with the TCC community. This season, especially, the staff of *The Vital Force* would like to say thank you to each and every contributor. Your generosity of spirit is our reward as we compile each issue to bring you closer together in the spirit of community.

***VFJ* INNER WORKINGS**

Deadline for Spring *VFJ*: February 25

New Submissions Address:

1633 Via Amigos

San Lorenzo, CA 94580-2009

Spring Mailing: March 7th at Lois Mahaney's

Highlights of this Issue

This winter solstice issue overflows with teacher's stories, student expressions, anecdotes, spiritual experiences, and wise words from the ancients. Both Justin and Ed have written about the importance of personal practice and proper preparation for teacher accreditation (see pages 7

and 9, respectively). Of special note is a teaching story by Richard Brier on page 18, an article on TCC in the fitness world on page 16, ideas for reaching potential students on pages 22 and 23, a dateline of reference articles on page 35 and a teacher profile on page 36. Karmic Komments details changes occurring in current publications and videos (see page 37). Events Feedback features teacher trainings from CA, NM, PA, and NC and the Seijaku Accreditation as well as the Fall Meditation Retreat both held in Albuquerque, NM.

Beautiful brush paintings of pine trees and cones are interspersed with well written and heartfelt contributions from teachers and students, making this issue versatile and well-rounded.

As we move through seasonal shifts and the stillness of winter encroaches, may the solstice evergreens provide strength and steadfastness of spirit to you all as you reflect upon the events of the past year and make plans to begin anew in 1998.

Wishing you holiday blessings,

For *The Vital Force* staff,

**Roberta Taggart
Interim Editor**

***VFJ* Staff for this Issue**

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READER'S COMMENTARY

WITH THANKS AND DEEP GRATITUDE

I would like to express my gratitude to Liz Salada who has chosen to step down from her role with *The Vital Force*. She has had a dramatic impact on improving the format and presentation of this vital link of the T'ai Chi Chih community, and has left it in very capable hands. Thanks for all your efforts, and for those of the staff and volunteers of *The Vital Force*!

Ed Altman

I was sorry to read that Liz Salada has resigned *The Vital Force* job [Publisher-Editor]. I don't think we realize how much work Liz, and you [the staff] and so many others put into informing us about all the things that are going on. I would like to take this time to thank you for the many jobs you are doing and for making things go smoothly.

Marlene Brown, Cincinnati, OH

APOLOGY FOR A GRIEVOUS ERROR

In our last issue, we erroneously reported that Ira E. 'Bud' Kilmon of Owings, MD had died of Lou Gehrig's disease. Bud is 'alive and well' and living in Owings, MD with his wife, Rosemary, who does have Lou Gehrig's disease.

Bud reports that Rosemary, who was quite ill this summer, is now doing much better. Bud took the news that he had met an early demise with calmness and some humor. We appreciate his understanding.

The correct information [that Rosemary was ill with Lou Gehrig's disease] was given to us by Joanna Foltz of Davidsonville, MD at conference this summer. We apologize to all for the error!

Roberta Taggart, Interim Editor

CONFERENCE THANKS!

An excerpt from Tim Stuetz' Letter:

Dear Fellow TCC Teachers and Students,
With all my love and blessings, I want to thank each of you who sent me your love, gratitude, and support in all the beautiful cards, letters, postcards, and writings in *The Vital Force* for hosting last year's conference. It was a joy and honor to serve and be with each of you. I also want to thank those of you (and there were a lot) who stood by their inner knowing, didn't come to the conference and yet supported and inspired my hosting efforts with information, love, coordinating certain things, etc. . . .

Tim Stuetz, Anaheim, CA

Ed. Note: For full text of Tim's letter you may contact him through your TCC Teachers' Directory.

POSTAL HAZARDS

Kristina Newcomer writes: "As my previous check has never surfaced, it must be assumed that it is a victim of the postal "black hole" syndrome. I am enclosing another check for the renewal of my *VFJ* subscription. Sorry for the inconvenience." This note by Kristina reflects one of the problems we continue to have with postal delivery and bulk mailing of *VFJ*. This past issue was particularly distressing – innumerable phone calls and notes reflected the poor service. I talked with the newly appointed supervisor in Oakland and he assured us that he would look into this matter. We are contemplating a new way to get the newsletter to you more expeditiously. Until we can get things straightened out, please accept our apologies for any delay and frustration you may experience.

Lois Mahaney, *VFJ* Coordinator

READER'S COMMENTARY

READERS WRITE

Thank you [VFJ staff] for all of your work to put together such a great newsletter. We ... always enjoy reading it. Peace, Love and Joy,

Doug & Karin Harned, Sunnyvale, CA

I would like to send *The Vital Force* to Sr. Yolanda as a gift just so she can keep in touch with all of us. It would be nice to get Justin's video on a tape that plays in Europe; many speak English so there would be no change to the spoken part.

Marlene Brown, Cincinnati, OH

I am enclosing a subscription to *The Vital Force* since ours expires in September . . . Thank you very much for all the work you put into making this happen. It is most appreciated.

Alice Holden, San Antonio, TX

It was wonderful to meet everyone at the recent Teachers' Conference. Thanks for a terrific experience! And many thanks for *The Vital Force*. I always start on it immediately, finish it too quickly, and then re-read, re-read, re-read, etc. It's a real joy to have [VFJ] and to share with students. May the Chi be with you,

Gordon Dixon, Los Angeles, CA

Enclosed please find my cheque for 2 years of *VFJ* – Even though I have no time to contribute to the journal, I must tell you how much I enjoy reading it. Only one exception – the new year one [December '96 *VFJ*] which informed us about the split up [of] Justin and Steve. You did a great job, even so. I still can't get over it. I like both people and both ways of T'ai Chi Chih.

Ursula Bridge, Victoria, BC

TO OUR READERS

While the previous comments on this page are indicative of the mail regularly received from *VFJ* readers, it would be unfair to give the impression that all we receive is positive feedback. To date (since the Summer Conference) many subscribers have written to cancel their subscriptions – unhappy either with the coverage of issues and/or the politics occurring since Steve Ridley's resignation. Additionally, there are a number of subscribers who have neither written, nor renewed their subscriptions. Liz Salada worked very hard to be sure that *VFJ* did not become a forum for negative expression. This policy will continue. Read on for one reader's comments:

An excerpt from Ralph Garn's letter

I will stop reading or contributing to any/all causes that depress me or help 'bring me down'. This writer has gained much from the teachings and acquaintances of a wonderful movement regardless of where its name has come from or who/what brought it into being. What does any one person/group/side-taker really want?? Enough is enough!!!

Ralph Garn, Syracuse, NY



So be it!

TEACHERS' CORNER

Q&A TEACHING TIPS & TECHNIQUES

If you have a burning question about how to teach some aspect of TCC, then this column is the place for you. Each quarter, we will address a question submitted by TCC teachers or students about some aspect of teaching TCC. Answers will be printed in the next issue. Sandy McAlister of Hayward, CA poses this issue's question: *When teaching, what words or phrases do you use to convey the qualities of 'softness and continuity' to your students?*



Meditation

Each moment has glory.

Absorb it.

Feel it, take it in.

Breathe it into permanency.

Be renewed.

Erline Goodell
Danville, CA

VFJ POP QUIZ – WHO WROTE THESE QUOTES?

Answers on page 20.

- 1) "No body owns another body. No mind owns another mind."
- 2) "You should know by yourself what is holy and what is ordinary, what is wrong and what is right – don't be concerned with others' judgments. How many people have ever managed to find out every subtlety? People arbitrarily follow material senses, running like idiots."
- 3) "It is possible to do the hand movements ... sitting in an upright chair – we simply place the appropriate leg in a slightly outstretched position to simulate the correct stance. A definite flow of chi energy can be stimulated in this manner."

SHARED TEACHING EXPERIENCES

Carol Lesch from Milwaukee, WI writes:

Would you please ask in *The Vital Force* for teachers to share what experiences they've had with TCC and Parkinson patients. Have Parkinson patients spoken of any experienced benefits? Have TCC teachers any tips or learnings to share after teaching Parkinson patients? I've taught 2 groups of Parkinson patients. I'd be grateful [if you'd ask your readers].

Teachers are welcome to reply.

Teacher's responses to this issue's questions about teaching tips and techniques and teaching experiences will be printed in the next issue.



SPONSORING A TCC-RELATED EVENT?

The *VFJ* staff realizes the importance of communication between TCC teachers and students. With that view in mind, we would like to provide a voice for teachers who are planning an event and who, as requested by *VFJ*, do not use the Directory as a mailing list.

We would be willing to announce a TCC-related event, giving the name of the sponsoring teacher, the area in which it is being held, and including the request that a SASE (Self Addressed Stamped Envelope) be sent to the sponsor requesting further information. The announcement would be placed in the Teacher News section of *VFJ* and would look like this:

Host: Peter Pit **Event:** TCC Peach Festival
Area: Peach County **Location:** The Peach Pit
Dates: March 10-11, 1998 **SASE to:** Peter Pit,
1234 "Z" Ave., Peacharino, ZO 99999

NOTES TO TEACHERS

MINDFUL PRACTICE, CHI REFINEMENT, AND SELFLESSNESS

Ed Altman, San Rafael, CA

T'ai Chi Chih is a profound spiritual discipline because it not only teaches us how to move with the Chi, but it actually transforms us in the process. This is why the intent we apply to our practice and the way we use the resulting Chi are very important.

According to Yogi Bhasin, who is quoted in *Return to Shiva*, we are born in direct response to our karma, the ‘reminiscence of the prior acts of the body’. We are condemned to be reborn based on (the intent of) our past actions. These are the laws of cause and effect. Many of us work to “clear out” our karma so we will not need to be reborn again. But *who* is reborn?

The Chi determines who and what we are, and one may think of karma as a form of fixed “energy debt” which must eventually be paid. When “Jane Smith” dies, the residual karma necessitates the birth of another to cover the debt. But is it the same “Jane Smith” who is really reborn? It was the energy that created the personality traits and level of awareness that characterized “Jane Smith” in the first place. Unless that energy is transmuted by T'ai Chi Chih or another discipline, another being of similar traits will be created. The two beings who share this karma are not the same; they are simply products of it.

When we practice T'ai Chi Chih, we are really working for the benefit of others ...

T'ai Chi Chih is a profound spiritual discipline because it not only teaches us how to move with the Chi, but it actually transforms us in the process. This is why the intent we apply to our practice and the way we use the resulting Chi are very important. As mentioned above, it is the

intent, not just the action, which creates or dissolves karma. This is why Justin has instructed us to “never do T'ai Chi Chih carelessly”. There is too much at stake!

When we work selflessly for the benefit of others our ego is released, and the truth of our interconnectedness becomes clear.

When the Chi is flowing freely, one feels a sense of deep gratitude, and the natural tendency is to want to share this with others. When we practice T'ai Chi Chih, we are really working for the benefit of others ... even the being who receives benefits in a future life is really an “other”! What does this say about the self? Why not use the power of the Chi to spread healing and encouragement to the world rather than focusing solely on personal gain? This is not always easy to do, but it brings great rewards because it is fundamental to the laws of energy. My Zen teacher called this “putting energy back into the system.”

The phrase “All is one” is often heard, and although it is true, there are few humans who really embody this. When individuals work for their own selfish motives, they are doomed to remain unconscious and separate. Quoting words is not enough ... they must be embodied in action! When we work selflessly for the benefit of others our ego is released, and the truth of our interconnectedness becomes clear.

ART AND POETRY

Poetry by Erline Goodell, Danville, CA
Art: Cranes in a Pine Tree, The Solstice Evergreen, 1991, p. 36

Necessary Emptiness

*Possibilities
can not flow
into a crowded vessel.*

*Wishing to receive
one must stand still
in the void.*

*Emptying
and release
invites*



*Cranes in a Pine Tree
The Crane --
is a symbol for longevity*

Full

*Life wells up inside
churning, creating,
maturing
until a certain moment
when it floods up,
overflows
and pours itself out
onto all its scattered parts*

*effervescence
boils over
shimmering
all around*

PROPER PREPARATION IMPORTANT TO T'AI CHI CHIH

The objective of Teachers' Training Courses is to show students how to become teachers --- it is not to teach them T'ai Chi Chih. Supposedly, candidates' teachers have taught them how to do TCC well and have screened them for their potential capability to be teachers.

From this it is obvious that the candidates coming to a Course must do proper T'ai Chi Chih; to have various candidates doing different versions of the form would invalidate the Course. Not only are the correct movements all-important, but TEH (power of Inner Sincerity) must be stressed and this cannot be done where there is confusion and disagreement.

Today there are any number of different schools of T'ai Chi Ch'uan, which originally had 108 movements. There are teachers compressing this

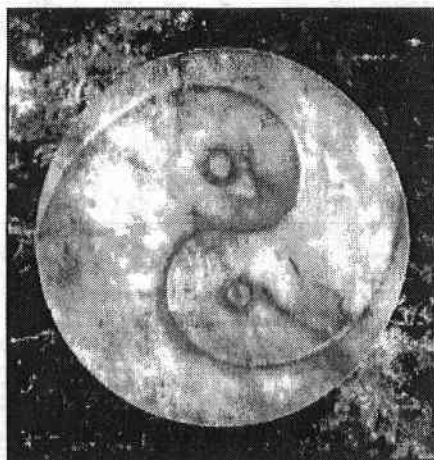
form into 37 movements, and others teaching 17 movements. This is one reason why T'ai Chi Ch'uan has made little progress in the West. Teaching it in different ways may make money, but it hardly benefits the beautiful Form and does not work for expanding its following -- there is no TEH and no uniformity.

Any thinking person will realize that those coming to Courses must be well-prepared. Politics and misplaced emotion (based on false information) have no part in preparing future teachers. Fortunately, on my June swing thru the East I was able to straighten matters out in several places, and graduates coming out of the nine Teachers' Courses since mid-March have been well-prepared to be good teachers. T'ai Chi Chih is on the upswing and will fulfill its destiny to help people.

The Way

To Confucius *tao* became the 'way' of moral rectitude – the way we do what we do. It was Lao-tzu who interpreted Tao as the law, or truth of the universe, the oneness from which sprang the ten thousand things, each of which contains within it the law or *tao* of its own being. In Taoism, to see not only things but the *tao* of things, is to follow the *Tao*.

From: The Spirit of the Chinese Character,
Barbara Aria, 1992, p. 19



The Tao -- The Way

NEW TEACHER WRITES

MY TCC JOURNEY Dale Buchanan, Great Falls, VA

After seeing Carmen on the TV program, I knew right away that I wanted to become a T'ai Chi Chih instructor. I had been teaching various martial arts including Tae Kwon Do and T'ai Chi Chuan for 10 years, and recently started a personal fitness training business. T'ai Chi Chih was something that I initially wanted to learn so I could teach it to my clients with medical and health conditions such as arthritis, fibromyalgia, and chronic fatigue. After studying with Christina Tillitson (who recently moved back to San Diego) for almost a year, I was ready for teacher's training – so I thought. **LITTLE DID I KNOW THE MANY LESSONS I WOULD LEARN OVER THE NEXT SIX MONTHS.**

In November 1996 I signed up for the teachers training to be held in April 1997 at Melbourne, KY. I assisted Christina, practiced regularly, and committed myself to completing this final step in my journey. The week before the training I wanted to back out. I was nervous, uncomfortable, and indecisive about going to Melbourne to study with 12 ladies (I was the only man except for Ed Altman). Not only that, I was asked to stay at a Convent, sleep in a little room, and eat all my meals at specific times with the other students (as well as all of the nuns). I called another instructor, Corrine Thomas, who assured me that everything would be fine and that I would actually enjoy the training and the people. Her talk convinced me to stay with my original plans and I was on my way to Kentucky.

I knew I was not thinking wisely. I was judging the entire situation, the people, and the location before actually knowing. When I arrived I was greeted with warmth and kindness by everyone. My fears and negative thoughts were starting to

diminish as the first night came to an end. It wasn't so bad after all and the people were just like me and there for the same reason.

I started out the week isolating myself from the rest of the group as I stayed in the nearby hotel and ate most of my meals alone. I was still thinking about work and personal situations back home. I knew I had to "let go" of those and be connected to the rest of the group in order to fully enjoy and experience the teachers training. By the middle of the week I had made a change. I ate with everyone, practiced with everyone and became spiritually connected with all of them. I never felt so much love come from one place before. I stopped judging, let go of my problems, and had the best experience of my life.

The 10 hour drive home was so peaceful and my mind was so empty that I had to turn the radio off (which I usually have on constantly) for the entire trip. Imagine driving alone with no sound except that which was created by your thoughts. This has never happened to me before and I knew my life was in for a big change.

After returning home I practiced every day for 2 months before my first presentation to let everything Ed and Noel taught me sink in. I started to feel the Chi guide and direct my life in a new way. For once in my life I had complete faith in my internal instincts. The T'ai Chi Chih was talking to me and I was listening. Ed says the Chi is intelligent energy and to let it guide us in every aspect of our lives. The teachers training helped me to "let go" and have the certainty that everything is happening for a reason. Needless to say, I learned a great deal more than a refinement of my movements. **I LEARNED ABOUT LIFE!**

TEACHER WRITES

Poetry: 20th Century Psalms, Justin Stone, 1988
Art: Chinese Painting Techniques,
Alison Stilwell Cameron, 1968

FIRST HAND EXPERIENCE Carmen Brocklehurst, Albuquerque, NM

Many present day students of ancient saints and wise men wish they had had the opportunity to study directly with the master. Such an opportunity is a treasure, but it is also a responsibility. The gift is meant to be passed on.

Justin has often said, "T'ai Chi Chih is for everyone." It is. Because of the T'ai Chi Chih TV program many more than our small community of 1500 - 2000 T'ai Chi Chih teachers have had the opportunity to experience the wisdom of Justin Stone. The letters and telephone conversations that I have had with these distant students of T'ai Chi Chih demonstrate that they recognize and appreciate the gift that Justin has given all of us to share.

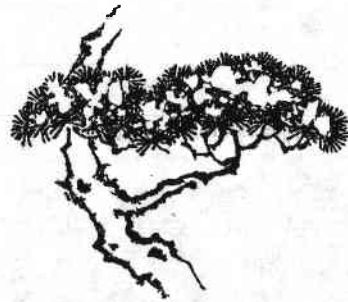
My heart overflows with joy when I have the opportunity to meet people who have seen the show. Some may never have ventured into a TCC class on their own. But because of the TV series, many have begun to practice with the guidance of an accredited teacher in their area or, if there is [no accredited teacher], with the assistance of a videotape.

Both here in New Mexico, and when I am away from home, people approach me and say, "We sure do enjoy the T'ai Chi Chih program. Thank You." If this happens when I am with Justin, I introduce them to him. For some it is so overwhelming that they don't know what to say. They smile and shake his hand and quickly leave. Others respond as if they are reuniting with a long lost friend. It is an honor to play a part in bringing T'ai Chi Chih to others.

Faithful T'ai Chi Chih practice reunites all of us, far and near.

*Does
anyone
own the
smell of
flowers?*

*How many
'hear'
the
falling
snow?*



*Only
the
human
heart
hears
the
falling
snow.*