



# THE VITAL FORCE

Journal of T'ai Chi Chih

Volume 15, No.3

Autumn Equinox

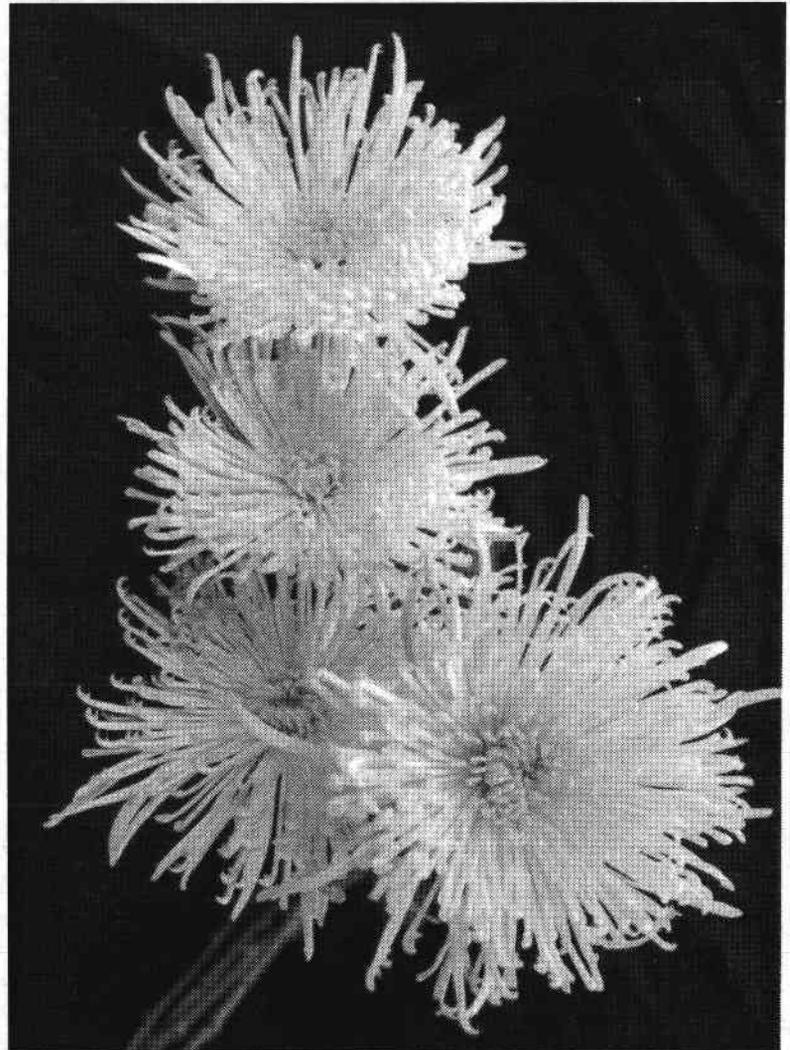
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## In This Issue

Feature by Justin Stone: 'The Meaning of Karma'      Ed Altman: 'Imagery Tools'

Highlights from the 1998 T'ai Chi Chih Teachers' Conference at Albuquerque

Tips From Long Time Teachers      First Time Teaching Experiences

Teaching Blind Students      Justin Stone on 'Getting Started'

And An Original TCC Cartoon!



# THE VITAL FORCE

## Journal of T'ai Chi Chih

Published Quarterly by THE VITAL FORCE Association

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### THE VITAL FORCE STAFF

Autumn, 1998 issue:

Carrie Kinsey  
Lois Mahaney  
Linda Meyer  
Barbara Riley

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*The Vital Force*, Journal of T'ai Chi Chih, is an unincorporated, non-profit association, serving T'ai Chi Chih practitioners worldwide. Membership in the Association includes four quarterly issues of *The Vital Force*, the annual Teacher's Directory, quarterly mailing parties and outreach activities, such as teacher referrals. The annual membership fee is \$30 for teachers (which includes listing in and receipt of the T'ai Chi Chih Teachers' Directory), \$25 for interested persons. Addresses outside of the United States require an additional \$10 per year. First class delivery within the United States is an additional \$5 per year.

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The purpose of *The Vital Force* is to provide a forum for teachers and students for the purposes of sharing, educating/informing and inspiration. Included are contributions of constructive and uplifting articles, poems, photographs and drawings, inquiries of other teachers, and announcements of future T'ai Chi Chih events, including T'ai Chi Chih and Seijaku teacher trainings.

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### SUBMISSIONS

Please send submissions (writings, photographs and drawings) to: *The Vital Force*, 1633 Via Amigos, San Lorenzo, CA 94580-2009. Phone 510-276-5718. Email: vjjournal@aol.com. FAX: 925-676-1858. Manuscripts should be typed and double spaced. *Please indicate "submission" or "manuscript" on the outside of the envelope.*

### Submission deadlines:

Winter	October 25th
Spring	January 25th
Summer	April 25th
Fall	July 31st

### MEMBERSHIPS

Changes of address and back issue requests (\$5) should be sent to Lois Mahaney: *The Vital Force*, 1633 Via Amigos, San Lorenzo, CA 94580-2009. Phone 510-276-5718. *Please indicate "membership" on the outside of the envelope.*

*The Vital Force* is published quarterly and bulk mailed to association members during the second weeks of March, June, September and December. If you do not receive your issue by the 30th of these months, contact Lois Mahaney. When moving, please allow six weeks notice and provide complete old and new addresses. The Post Office now charges \$1.33 for the return of undelivered issues. Please help us avoid this expense.

### TCC TEACHERS' DIRECTORY

The *T'ai Chi Chih Teachers' Directory* is for referral and communication among accredited T'ai Chi Chih teachers. It is not to be used or sold as a mailing list. Association members who are accredited teachers receive a copy of the Directory annually. Updates are published in each issue of *The Vital Force*. Send changes and additions to Lois Mahaney at the above address.



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**1998 International TCC Teachers' Conference, Albuquerque, NM**

See the Special "Pull Out" Section!

**Justin Stone is the Originator of T'ai Chi Chih  
Ed Altman is the Designated Head of T'ai Chi Chih**



In the softness of  
the garden,

In the stillness of  
the shade,

Serenity  
surrounds  
solitude

Jo Trautmann,  
Georgetown, TX



## THE MEANING OF KARMA

Justin Stone

These days it is considered smart to be "spiritual." Words such as "Karma" are bandied about, and people loosely say "Yes, I'm into Zen, I'm into Yoga," meaning they have read a book or two or attended some lectures when they had nothing better to do. People say they "teach" Raja Yoga, but do not insist their students obey the edicts of Yama and Niyama, the first two (of eight) parts of Raja Yoga. Nor do they have any idea what is meant by "Pratyahara," the fifth of the five preliminary steps of Raja Yoga. One teacher told me it meant "interiorization," or some such generality. So, if we leave out Yama, Niyama, and Pratyahara, we have eliminated three of the eight steps of Patanjali's great Raja Yoga (I do not know anybody teaching true "Pratyahara" in America, and I do not believe real Raja Yoga could be practised in our culture; it would require complete renunciation).

To go back to "Karma," most people believe that this is some sort of Blind Destiny. In one mid-Eastern religion it is believed that "it is written," and this is a perfectly viable belief in a great religion, but it is not Karma. Conversely, I have heard people, in India, say that "there is only Karma."

We build Karma thru our actions, the intent of those actions, and the Vashanas we build (Vashanas being "habit energies" that lead to "Samskaras," tendencies that may last thru many lifetimes).

In the Bible it states that "as we make our bed, so shall we lie in it," a perfect description of Karma (really, the fruits of Karma--Karma, itself, is a word meaning "action"). To feel that we can fool Karma of our action and intent is the height of childishness. Karma is inexorable. When one of his disciples came to the Buddha and asked if he knew that his father's kingdom would shortly be involved in a devastating war, the Buddha replied: "Yes, I know it, and Fixed Karma cannot be changed."

Meditation and T'ai Chi Chih (real meditation and correct TCC) are two ways that Vashanas can be weakened, and even eliminated, and these Vashanas are what make our future. Next time you are tempted to lie to gain an advantage, or because you believe it will help a friend, be kind to yourself and consider what the effect of such action will be on your future. "Hell is paved with good intentions" is one way to put it. Once we lie about something, or bear false witness, it becomes easier to do it a second time, and then we have to add to the untruths in order to cover up the first. We lower our own self-esteem (inwardly we know), and we build bad Karma for the future. I once wrote one teacher: "In this life it is better to do what is right than to try to get away with what is not." This is not moral preaching; it is simply saying "you make your own Karma."





## GREETINGS!

As we move out of Summer and toward Autumn, a few phrases come to mind: abundance/fullness, turning of the seasons, moving toward stillness/introspection. These are all good descriptions of the types of submissions that came to us for the Autumn issue of *The Vital Force*. We are happily overwhelmed with the volume of submissions we received this time, submissions specifically about the conference and also many others. They serve as a reminder that it is the contributors who make up the rich *Vital Force* issues we are able to send you each quarter. Keep those contributions coming!

For those of you who were able to attend the conference this year, and also for those of you who were not, we have compiled a special "pull-out" section in the center of this issue filled with photographs and comments about this year's conference in Albuquerque. What a lovely time it was!

We also have a page of pyramid poetry submitted by the Seijaku accreditation class in Kentucky this past May; and pages of comments from the teacher's accreditation classes in Minnesota in June and in New Jersey in July. Accompanying these we have new teacher experiences, tips from some long-time teachers, and tips from Justin on how to get started.

Noël Altman has shared her experience and impressions from the visit to Folsom prison this past May. Richard Brier sent in a page full of

### Our Apologies

In the June issue page 28 had two articles, both titled "Who is Justin?" and both attributed to Guy Kent. The second article was correctly titled and credited. The first article was written by Shirley Ownes, a student of Sharon Sirkis in Columbia, MD, describing her experiences in Sharon's class. We apologize for the error.

"Snippets" that can serve as teaching phrases, and Vic Vierck sent in an original T'ai Chi Chih cartoon. All this activity has been balanced with some poetry about stillness, and by Justin Stone's feature article "The Meaning of Karma" which inspires us to look deeply within and ask ourselves some of the hard questions about truth and our own intentions.

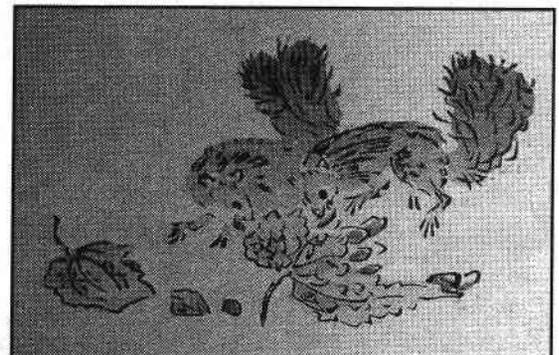
Throughout the issue you will find calligraphy and brush paintings from *A Haiku Menagerie* by Stephen Addiss, *Chinese Painting Techniques* by Alison Stilwell Cameron, and *The How and Why of Chinese Painting* by Diana Kan. Photographs from the conference were supplied by *Vital Force* events photographer Pat Huseby.

One thing that you may have noticed is missing from the second page is the name of long-time *Vital Force* editor, mentor, and friend, Roberta Taggart. Roberta has decided to step away from her work at *The Vital Force* (see her letter on page 7). We will miss her groundedness, clarity and solid commitment to putting together each issue with her trademark ability to find just the right stuff for just the right spaces. Thanks, dear friend, may your way be filled with joy and peace.

May we all enjoy this season of both fullness and turning toward stillness. We look forward to the materials you have yet to share with us!

Wishing you the abundance of the season,

The *Vital Force* staff



"Squirrels" by Kano Tan'yu, *Shuchin Gafu*



Dear *VFJ* Readers,

It has been nearly three years since I first joined the staff of *The Vital Force*. I have enjoyed working on a shared vision by *VFJ* staff for improving the format and the breadth of each quarterly issue -- first with Liz Salada and later with Lois Mahaney, Carrie Kinsey, Barbara Riley and Linda Meyer. Each one of these women has brought their constancy and dedication to T'ai Chi Chih and to *The Vital Force* as a vehicle to serve TCC practitioners.

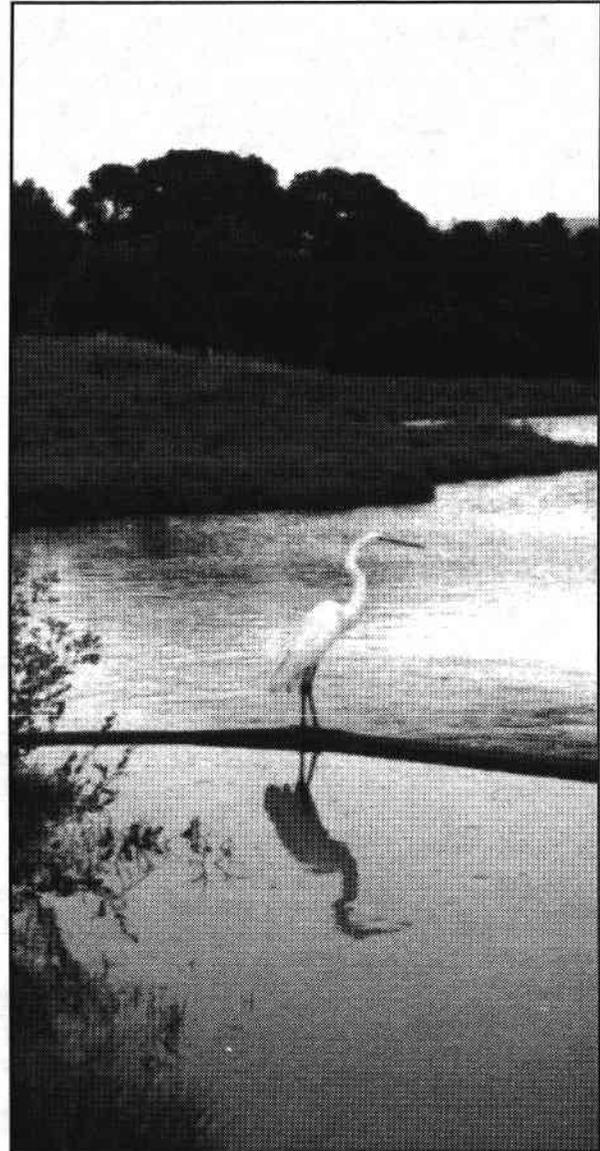
It is with the sense that the timing is right that I tender my resignation as editor. No one reason is solely responsible for my resignation -- very simply, the following have collectively contributed to the current redirection of my energies: my desire to step away from the demands required of my role as editor of *The Vital Force*, the need to spend time caring for a terminally ill parent, the desire to spend more time focusing on my own spiritual growth, and financial considerations.

To Justin -- I wish to express my gratitude for the gift of T'ai Chi Chih. I will bring it to others through my teaching and studies. A special and enduring thanks to the man responsible for my teacher training, Steven Ridley. To the many others who have woven themselves into the T'ai Chi Chih tapestry and the fabric of my life -- especially through the written expressions submitted to *The Vital Force* -- thank you for the reflections you have mirrored to me and all that I have learned from those reflections.

May the efforts of *The Vital Force* staff continue to be blessed as they serve the TCC community at large through this written medium.

From the Spirit-heart,

Roberta





## READERS COMMENTARY

Received *The Vital Force* today, Thursday, and found the appearance very aesthetically pleasing. The contents should be inspiring to any TCC teacher, and the idea of a listing of the contents on the front cover seemed to me to be a good one. So I congratulate you on a fine issue. . . . Congratulations and loving thoughts,

**Justin (Stone), Albuquerque, NM**

I have read and re-read the June issue of *The Vital Force*. It is forceful and flows smoothly. It must be an inspiration to teachers around the globe. The art and photos are particularly well placed and for me convey warmth and restful hesitations.

**Eugene Box, Seal Beach, CA**

I just love reading *The Vital Force*. I have saved them all since becoming a teacher 3 years ago.

Recently I was looking for information on teaching TCC to fibromyalgia sufferers. I found two articles in back issues of *The Vital Force*. One by Ray Watson in the December 1996 issue and the other by Pat Huseby in the June 1997 issue. While looking for these articles I kept re-reading other pieces that struck my fancy. Before I knew it, it was 2 hours later. What a wonderful way to spend a rainy afternoon!

Thanks,

**Ann Federspeil, Cincinnati, OH**

## LETTERS FROM STUDENTS

While I was working out the other day, [I] decided to walk on the treadmill. The treadmill has a pulse monitor. It will monitor your pulse while you walk or run and [you] try to keep your heart rate at what is the target. I was able to keep speed consistent so the machine would make the incline more or less so that my pulse would stay at 117 (my target heart rate).

So as I was walking my heart rate went up to 117 quickly at 1-2 degrees of incline. I got bored and began to think about what I was going to do next and that was T'ai Chi [Chih]. As I thought about deep breathing and the movements my pulse fell and the incline rose. When I stopped thinking about T'ai Chi [Chih] the incline fell and the pulse went up. I thought it was neat so I purposely went through the whole T'ai Chi [Chih] session in my mind as I walked. When I opened my eyes my pulse was 106 at the highest inclination--20.

I never knew that just thinking about the movements could be so relaxing, but this was really strong evidence.

**Kevin T. Seufert, El Cajon, CA**

Reading the last issue of *The Vital Force*, I thought perhaps *Vital Force* readers might be interested in how T'ai Chi Chih helped me.

I fell down two flights of stairs--22 cement steps! By some miracle, probably because I fell on the hardest part of my body, my head, I didn't break anything. For the first time, however, I understood what it meant to have your life force out of balance. I felt as if every nerve in my body jangled, as if I were shaking inside.

Although I had no broken bones, I did have some major aches and pains, so much that I couldn't exercise, do yoga, even swim. But I could do T'ai Chi Chih, and it stood in for everything else. I felt myself regain internal balance as I performed the movements morning and evening, and in three weeks I was back to normal. And I'm not young (60)!

I never realized the power of T'ai Chi Chih before. As an aside, I'd add that, curious about T'ai Chi Chuan, I took a class in the first 10 movements of the abbreviated form. It made me comprehend what a genius Justin Stone is to have captured its essence in T'ai Chi Chih.

I'm very grateful,

**R.M. Zurkan, Fairhope, AL**



## IMAGERY TOOLS

Ed Altman

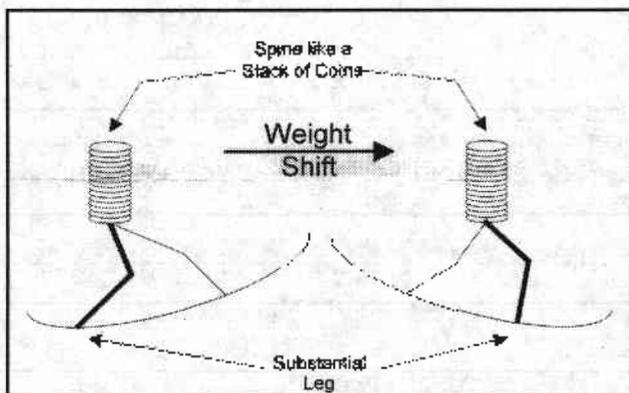
The shifting of the weight during T'ai Chi Chih is what causes the yin-chi and yang-chi to separate and circulate through the body. As a result, it is absolutely important that the weight shift be done very *gradually* or the chi will not flow smoothly. T'ai Chi Chih teachers often emphasize this point by telling students to move with "softness and continuity."

I often use the following two images to help students further understand how to move with softness and continuity by shifting the weight gradually from the center of the body. These examples involve the forward-and-backward motion of the legs, but they work equally well using the side-to-side leg movements.

### Rocking Chair

Have the student imagine they are standing on the rockers of a rocking chair while doing the forward-and-backward shifting of the weight -- legs connected to the rockers of the chair where they touch the ground. They can ignore the arm portion of the movement while they do this.

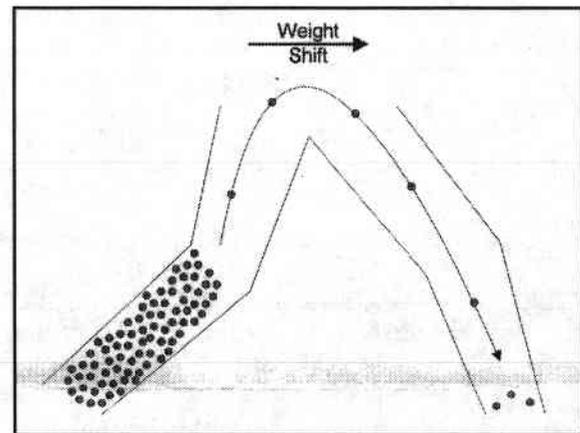
Now, when the student does a very small shift of the weight from the center of the body it will translate into the chair gradually rocking forward or back. However, if the student moves in a sudden, or jerky manner the chair will lurch quickly rather than rock slowly, and most likely the student will fall off.



### Hourglass

Have the student visualize an hourglass where the top chamber is full of sand (yang) and the bottom chamber is completely empty (yin). Gradually, as each grain of sand falls from the top chamber to the bottom, the character of the chi in each chamber shifts to its opposite. Now tell the student to imagine that each leg is a chamber of the hourglass.

When the weight is on the back leg it contains all the sand, and the forward leg is completely empty. Now, each grain of sand, one at a time, moves from the back leg to the front. During this time, the character of the chi in each leg shifts to the opposite as the yang leg empties, and the insubstantial leg fills with sand and becomes yang. The natural reaction to this change is that the body effortlessly glides forward or back.



These images should not be considered part of T'ai Chi Chih, but are tools that may help students understand *how to move*. Eventually, students come to realize the importance of shifting the weight very gradually from the center of the body and can then move with increased softness and continuity in their T'ai Chi Chih practice.



## JUSTIN STONE SPEAKS TO INMATES AT FOLSOM PRISON

Noël Altman, San Rafael, CA

"In my mind, every man in this room is my equal," Justin Stone stated to a packed room of about 75 inmates and other observers at Folsom Prison on Monday, May 4 during a talk he gave in conjunction with the first-ever T'ai Chi Chih teacher accreditation course given inside prison walls.

"I don't think you're better than I am, but I don't think I'm better than you are," he continued. "Every life is of equal value. We all, really, from the Eastern standpoint, have the same life...and that goes for an ant. It goes for a cat or dog. It goes for any of us...There isn't anybody who doesn't make mistakes, and there isn't anybody who (doesn't) look back and say, 'Well, I wish I had said something different to this person or to that person or done something different'..."he explained.

He described how one of his Indian teachers, Ramurti Mishra, once wanted him to give a lecture to the disciples and Justin responded that he had made so many mistakes that, "Why would you want somebody like me (to do it)?" The teacher's reply was, "Those were not your mistakes."

"Well, that felt good to hear, but it had a deep meaning to it, a very deep meaning to it...From his standpoint --- 'Those were not your mistakes; --- it's possible to leave it behind you, and that's important, and go on," he said.

What he is most grateful for in this life, he said, is "knowing the people that I have met." He mentioned that while in India the Zen writer Paul Reps once wrote to him that India was full of "saints and aints," with the implication being that there were more "aints" than "saints." Justin said that he met both while there. "I am grateful for what I learned with the Yogis, with the Zen monks, and so forth, and perhaps it gave me an outlook that enabled me to handle things as they came along," he explained. . . .

Turning to the topic of T'ai Chi Chih, Justin explained that Inmate James Hecker was going to be accredited that week by Ed Altman, the Appointed Head of T'ai Chi Chih, and would then be able to teach it to them. James had been prepared for accreditation by Accredited Instructor Tara Stiles who has been teaching at Folsom Prison.

Justin demonstrated a single repetition of a couple of the movements to give them an idea of what it looked like. He stated that he has no "angle" in encouraging them to learn T'ai Chi Chih. . .

"The only thing (about which) I've ever in my life said, 'You should do it' is T'ai Chi Chih," he stated, explaining, "I feel if enough people in the world learn it, we may have a peaceful world...But the main reason to do it, as far as I'm concerned, is the fact that it feels good."

"Yeah it does," agreed one of the inmates, smiling.

After Justin finished his talk, he offered to answer any questions or hear any statements that the inmates might have.

"How young has T'ai Chi (Chih) made you feel?" asked one inmate.

. . . "Well," Justin answered, "It is not always best to feel real young. Maybe it's good to feel a little mature at times." He continued, "There are times when we get at peace with ourselves and we feel mature. (We) say, 'I'm past 50 now and this is the best part of my life.' From my standpoint, my eighties are the best part of my life, but I look forward to later on being better."

. . . "What country did (T'ai Chi Chih) originate from?" asked another inmate.

"T'ai Chi Chih originated here," Justin said, pointing to his head. "In 1974, I originated it. . . .



After more questions and answers, Justin said, "I'll tell you what my definition of 'love' is." He then described that in Albuquerque there is an aerial tramway that ascends to 11,000 feet. As the tram ascends, the terrain below changes. As it approaches the top, there is really nothing but rock below ---no soil.

"But then suddenly I look and sprouting from a rock is a little plant," he described. The life force is so great that that plant has manifested, he explained, continuing. "This plant is manifesting life by coming out of the rock under all kinds of handicaps. To me, that is love, a great love. And I can feel for that little plant. I would like to help it in some way. And the reason that I feel it, and I know that you, inside, feel it is because we are sharing the same life. It has nothing to do with religion or doctrine or anything. The plant is alive and I am alive and we're sharing that same life. And when you look at things that way, I think you will have great feeling for all beings."

Justin said he would like to "go around and talk to each fella and get to know him a little bit," but that that wouldn't be possible because he would need to leave soon to catch his plane. "I would like to meet with all of you at some time...and get to know your life story. I've told you a little about my life, but you haven't told me about your lives, and some of you must have had very interesting lives...I sure wish the same thing to all of you that I wish to this little plant growing out of the rock and I think I can be a little help to you if I can get you to do T'ai Chi Chih," he concluded.

James Hecker announced that the inmates now had a 15-minute break to go outside, but would they please stay seated until Justin got to the back of the room.

As Justin made his way down one row, an inmate stood up as Justin approached. "Thank you for your time, sir," the man said, extending his hand. Justin stopped and put his hand on the man's

shoulder. "Thank you for your time," the inmate repeated, shaking Justin's hand.

"Thank YOU," Justin replied. "What's your name?" he asked.

"Juan. And I'm 73-years-old," the inmate answered.

... "Oh, that sounds young to me," Justin laughed.

As he made his way to the back of the room, inmate after inmate extended his hand to shake Justin's. At the back of the room, Justin was surrounded by inmates wanting to speak to him. There were two exits out of the room. Almost every inmate made his way to the back so he could thank Justin and shake his hand on the way out.

One inmate said he couldn't believe Justin's age. "You sure look powerful young," he said, shaking Justin's hand. Another tall, muscular man dropped to his knees when he shook Justin's hand, pretending he was forced to the floor.

"You're a very good actor!" Justin laughed, shaking his hand firmly. The man cracked a smile on his way out the door. . . .

When the inmates came back from their break, Ed Altman led the other accredited teachers in attendance in a short demonstration of T'ai Chi Chih. Tara Stiles, Doug Harned and I went to the front of the room and performed *Rocking Motion*, *Bass Drum*, *Pulling Taffy*, *Passing Clouds* and, at Tara's suggestion, *The Six Healing Sounds*.

Ed said later that the inmate seated in front of him looked like he was about to cry at the completion of *The Six Healing Sounds*.

Justin's talk was videotaped by prison employees and a copy was furnished to him for his archives.

*Note: The videotape of this talk is now being shown at Teachers' Trainings.*



## THE BLIND LEADING THE BLIND

Linda Braga, Castro Valley, CA

The conversation went something like this: "Your TCC students are all registered and ready for tomorrow. Oh, by the way, one of your students is a young man who is blind."

My heart skipped a beat. "What do you mean, Bev? Is he completely blind?" "Well, I guess so. He uses a white cane. But he also told me he'd be walking to your class Tuesday evening."

The next night Dennis arrived and so began a friendship with a student uniquely challenged to

learn T'ai Chi Chih. He told me he could "see shapes" and I trusted that the group and the process would support him. He stood quite close to me as we began in a circle doing *Rocking Motion*. Soon he was flowing along with the others with no problem.

Over the many weeks, I learned a lot from my new friend. Here are a few points that have made me a better teacher and helped him learn T'ai Chi Chih.

### Teaching the visually impaired (VI) student means:

- Be exact. Give clear verbal clues. We depend a great deal upon students watching us demonstrate and observing subtleties of movement, seeing when and how to begin. You need to say when to start, how high, how far forward to go (this helps everyone).
- Provide energetic/emotional support. Place continuing students who perform well on either side, so the VI student will feel the balance and flow of chi during practice.
- Give verbal feedback directly to the VI student. Use it as a way to correct others while they are moving. "Good Dennis, your balance is shifting smoothly from front to back without extending too far." Others will think, "If he can do this, then so can I."
- Use a variety of ways to communicate quality of movement. One way is using sound. "Dennis, it feels like this when I move forward, then back, "UMMMMMM/ummmmm." Sometimes the whole class makes the sound to feel the difference.
- Ask for feedback. Don't assume the VI student knows it all. Continue to ask, "Is there any way I can support your progress or make it easier?" (more demos, stand closer, stand side-by-side or in front, review).
- Encourage sharing with the group. VI students can help break the ice for others by telling how it is for them.
- Expect success. I was mentally prepared to teach Dennis the seated form of T'ai Chi Chih because it would be "easier." He wanted to do the standing form, and he was successful.

Dennis is returning for another session of classes this fall. His presence will be a positive influence on others who are new and on those who know him. It's a case of the blind leading the blind. Who knows? You might just luck out and have a VI student enroll in your class.



## GETTING STARTED

Justin Stone

When T'ai Chi Chih first began, I did four things to help build classes in what was then an unknown discipline:

1. Three times a week I ran a two-line provocative ad in the inexpensive Classified section of the local newspaper. It ran something like this: "Inner peace, better health, longevity thru simple movement. T'ai Chi Chih telephone number." That is all, and it got results.
2. I gave many presentations, and, because they were free, it was not hard to find acceptance.
3. Several appearances on talk radio brought big results. In Los Angeles they resulted in my teaching fifteen classes a week, but the presentation on radio must be good. Speaking about the teacher's own experience is important.
4. Posters placed in health food and book stores, as well as on bulletin boards, brought good results, but the posters must be attractive and to the point, not wordy. Lettering should be big, and a good picture of the teacher performing a movement will help.

Using these four suggestions, and showing a lot of energy and enthusiasm, it should not be hard to build classes. TCC has a message everybody wants to hear. And, important, keep up your own practice and try for improvement.

## CANDIDATE PREPARATION

Ed Altman

designated head of T'ai Chi Chih, Teacher Trainer

It is the responsibility of T'ai Chi Chih teachers to ensure that their students move well before recommending them to attend a teacher training course. The purpose of these courses is to instruct well-prepared candidates to teach T'ai Chi Chih. The first two days of the course are spent refining the movements, but it is too late at that point for students to be struggling to *learn* the movements in the first place.

If students think only of the placement of the arms and legs they do not understand the principle of *how to move*. T'ai Chi Chih must be done in a very soft, flowing manner with the movements originating from the center of the body. It is impossible to do the movements well without moving in this way from the t'an t'ien.

Students who do not shift the weight fully, who use their shoulders (muscular strength) or who lean in any direction need to work through these

issues before receiving a referral to enter the accreditation process. Otherwise they expend great effort to address these matters during the accreditation week, and cannot focus on the true objective: To sink into the essence of T'ai Chi Chih and learn how to teach this wonderful practice to their students.

I am very grateful to the many T'ai Chi Chih teachers who send well-prepared teacher candidates. It is always a pleasure to work with T'ai Chi Chih students who move well and are eager to learn how to teach. A simple recommendation is for teachers to send students who are better prepared than they were when they entered their teacher training process. If you have any questions about the preparation process, or would like a copy of the "T'ai Chi Chih Teacher Candidate Preparation Guidelines" please drop me a note at the address in the back of *The Vital Force Journal*.



## SEIJAKU ACCREDITATION COURSE MELBOURNE, KENTUCKY

May 29-31  
Host, Marlene Brown

It has been a good pleasure to have so many talented and great teachers attend the Seijaku certification. I would like to thank every one of them for coming and sharing all their different talents with us. Also thanks to Dale, Aida and Kathy for coming such a long way to audit the course. I would like to encourage any of you who might have played with the idea of sponsoring a Seijaku course to do it, it is well worth the effort.



This was my third audit and I finally feel the power of Seijaku! To me it does not feel like tension, it is more as if I'm flowing through an energy field, very refreshing but also quite humbling to feel such energy and joy with so little effort. Never thought it would be possible. Sometimes I get frustrated when Justin answers a question by telling you just to do TCC not to stand there and talk so much, well he is right--by practicing you will finally feel!

Thanks, Ed, for coming here and once again sharing and discovering with us all what TCC and Seijaku have to offer.

**Marlene Brown**

In a non-attached state, I'm wondering where the chi will go from here.

**Kathy Vieth**

Who needs sleep when we have Seijaku

**Ann Federspiel**

What fun we've had! Thanks, Ed (and Justin and Noël too--for they were both here too), for a magnificent weekend--mellow, exciting, loving, chifull

**Ann Perkins**

Each time I come together with other TCC people it always feels like everyone is

so connected to each other. Seijaku was no exception. Such a caring, compassionate, helpful, huggable group.

**Susan Evans**

I have been doing T'ai Chi Chih for 10 years now and I was so amazed at the flood of Chi I received in Seijaku. I never imagined it could be so much more. The 1st day, the 1st time I did the JING the room got dark and I knew I would faint if I didn't ground to the soles of my feet quickly. I did so and I could see everyone in the room again. I was sweaty and tingling from head to toe and rested so I could integrate this powerful new energy without blacking out, however I felt nauseated during the morning session. At lunch I walked in the woods and grounded some more, then took a nap. This took care of it and no more nausea or sweats took place. I am grateful to Ed and Justin for bringing this form of cultivating and circulating and storing more chi. I feel more at peace and joyful with who I am.

**Deborah Brown**

In Photograph (left to right): Back Row--Victor Vireck, Jewel Yates, Maryetta Young, Ed Altman, Joan Markey, Joan Brunzman. Middle--Anne Perkins, Charlotte McIntosh, Sharon Sirkis, Ann Federspiel, Phoenix Meridith Wilson, JoAnn Wheatstone. Front--Pat Herbig, Catherine Briussel, Deborah Wellborn, Deborah Brown, Marlene Brown, Susan Evans, Gregory Beale.



**PYRAMID POETRY**  
**From The May Seijaku Accreditation**

Start  
with one  
build up slow  
and then resist  
the softness  
comes easy  
now

Dale Buchanan

Time  
Be in  
the moment  
Time is so short  
Cherish it  
Enjoy  
Be

Jean A. Markey

Come  
to me  
Oh my tears...  
Stream down my face  
Help me feel  
At last  
Free

Anne Perkins

I  
thrive on  
difficult  
Looking forward  
to a new  
stillness  
shhh....

Sharon Sirkis

You  
guide me  
from outside  
the circle to  
the inside  
many  
thanks!

Sharon Sirkis

Talk  
Talk Talk  
Talk Talk Talk  
Talk Talk Talk Talk  
Talk Talk Talk  
Talk Talk  
What?

Deb Wellborn

Round  
Yin, Yang  
is complete  
hard, soft, black, white  
harmony  
oneness  
Love

Maryetta Young

Peace  
is like  
Happiness  
Feel it flow  
Enter  
Peace

Ann Federspiel

I  
am primed  
and ready  
for the next step  
Seijaku  
takes me  
there

Kathy Vieth

YES!  
enough  
is enough  
is enough, right?  
So enough!  
Balance.  
Yes.

Deb Wellborn

My  
Life is  
filled with joy  
By allowing  
the flow of  
chi and  
Love

Kathy Vieth



## TEACHERS' TRAINING, MINNEAPOLIS, MN

June 1-6, 1998

Welcome, with me, twenty new T'ai Chi Chih teachers, accredited by Ed Altman on June 6, 1998! Also I want to thank the twenty-five auditing teachers who made themselves available throughout the week to assist Ed, me and the candidates and to renew their own practice. A great and wonderful flow of Chi and serenity enveloped us all, even in the anxious times.

The week went slowly and yet too quickly and candidates corrected, refined and softened the movements they thought they knew when they came! Everyone -- candidates and auditors alike -- worked patiently, diligently and sincerely as they deepened their inner as well as their outer practice.

And we had fun, too, showing our joy through our movements, as well as through our assistance and interactions with each other.

At the final practice the soft flow of Chi was apparent in individuals and throughout the group. We were filled with joy as we prepared to go forth to deepen our own practices and share the Chi with others.

Thank you, Justin, for giving us this way to one of the great "secrets of life" -- the knowledge of how to balance and circulate the Chi. We are very grateful for your legacy to us and to the world. All you ask of us is that we do T'ai Chi Chih well. We will.

Along with other reminders, we learned again, but more deeply:

- shift our weight fully
- bend your knees before the weight shift
- let the upper body float, following the weight shift
- relax wrists and waist
- ground the Chi which always wants to rise
- Chi follows thought
- and remember, we are all students even and especially after we are accredited

Rita Foster, host

### The Twenty New Teachers are:

Jody Bechtold, Hanover, MN  
Viola Bens, Christopher Lake, SK  
Sandy Brintnall, St. Paul, MN  
Cathy Dalton, St. Paul, MN  
Joyce DeGidio, Chanhassen, MN  
Richard Detert, LaCrosse, WI  
Marie C. Dotts, St. Paul, MN  
Clarence Emon, Colombia Heights, MN  
Cary Fellman, Shawano, WI  
Chery Ann Hoffmeyer, Sherwood Park, AB

Carol Houtkooper, Yankton, SD  
Jan Johnson, Moundsview, MN  
Mary Pauletta Kane, SCN, Henderson, KY  
Lenore Listiak, Hopkins, MN  
Janet Marshall-Thoreen, Spearfish, SD  
Donna K. McElhose, Wildwood, IL  
Sandra Skach, St. Paul, MN  
Sharon Sloper, Colombia Heights, MN  
Jo Trautmann, Georgetown, TX  
Nancy Werner-Azarski, Minneapolis, MN



## COMMENTS FROM THE MINNEAPOLIS TEACHER'S TRAINING

This poem is dedicated to our mentor and friend, Ed Altman, and all the auditing teachers whose dedication helped us to flow with the Chi:

Energy flowing, it is chi  
Surrendering, allowing you and me  
The beginner's mind, it seems to be  
Learning moves, it can be free.  
T'an tien leading it is so.  
Shoulders even, to and fro'.  
Body upright, it's suspended.  
Gliding freely, never ending.  
Bubbling spring prints in the soles.  
Sinking further, ever goes.  
Softly, gently, shifting weight.  
Relax your shoulders, they are not freight.  
Smoothly, evenly, let it flow.  
Allowing graceful, it does show.  
Feeling gratitude when it comes  
To our teachers, we are one.  
Moving, flowing, you can see.  
T'ai Chi Chih moving, you and me.

Chery Ann Hoffmeyer

My experience at the Teacher Accreditation session has been one of my life highlights. What I particularly appreciated was getting to know Justin through Ed. For my practice the four principles have been most helpful. Thanks to all the participants, teacher auditors, Ed, and Rita our hostess. I feel so privileged to be part of this wonderful family.

Viola Bens

I've attended several annual T'ai Chi Chih conferences all of which were great experiences. I have been able to audit an accreditation course in the past for only one day. Being able to audit this course for four days was a very valuable experience. Thanks to everyone! I encourage auditing. It's great!

Marian Massman

Teachers, don't miss the opportunity to be an auditing teacher at the TCC accreditation course. It is a good chance to deepen your practice and give something back to the TCC community. Ed does a great job of filling the "empty cups" that we all have. Thank you Ed. The team of auditing teachers brought a great deal of wisdom and enthusiasm to the course. Thank you auditing teachers. A special thank you to Rita Foster our host who made it all possible.

Ron Barker



**ANNOUNCING:**

**THE 14<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL  
T'AI CHI CHIH TEACHERS' CONFERENCE**

**CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY  
ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA**

**AUGUST 6, 7 & 8, 1999**

**We invite you to the land of 10,000 lakes to celebrate the 14th annual  
international T'ai Chi Chih teachers' conference!**

**Celebrating 25 years of T'ai Chi Chih!**

Watch for further information in upcoming issues of *The Vital Force*



"Going to Conference"

Photograph by Carrie Kinsey



## 1998-99 T'AI CHI CHIH EVENTS CALENDAR

Events Led by Ed Altman

<b>September 26, 1998</b> 9 AM to 5 PM	<b>TCC Intensive</b> <b>Location:</b> Lake Street Church 607 Lake Street, Evanston, IL <b>Contact:</b> Amy Hackenberg 1003 Greenleaf #3E Evanston, IL 60202 <b>Ph:</b> 847-869-2187 <b>Fee:</b> \$20
<b>October 16, 1998</b> 9:00 AM to Noon	<b>TCC Teacher Renewal</b> <b>Location:</b> Occan Palace Hilton Long Branch, NJ <b>Coordinator:</b> Sr. Antonia Cooper <b>Contact:</b> Dan Pienciak P.O. Box 122 Ocean Grove, NJ 07756 <b>Ph:</b> 732-988-5865 <b>Renewal Fee:</b> \$25
<b>October 16 thru 18, 1998</b>	<b>Seijaku Accreditation Course</b> <b>Location:</b> Ocean Palace Hilton Long Branch, NJ <b>Coordinator:</b> Sr. Antonia Cooper <b>Contact:</b> Dan Pienciak P.O. Box 122 Ocean Grove, NJ 07756 <b>Ph:</b> 732-988-5865 <b>Accrediting Fee:</b> \$300 <b>Auditing Teachers:</b> \$20
<b>October 19 thru 24, 1998</b>	<b>TCC Teacher Training</b> <b>Location:</b> Great Falls, VA <b>Contact:</b> Dale Buchanan TCC Studio 776 Walker Rd., Box 40 Great Falls, VA 22066-0040 <b>Ph:</b> 703-759-1644 <b>Space Still Available</b>  <b>Teacher Training Fee:</b> \$450 <b>Deadline:</b> Sept. 1, 1998

**EVENT HOSTS:** If you are hosting a TCC/Seijaku accreditation, retreat, or other TCC event with Ed Altman and/or Justin Stone, please let us know so it can be included in the Events Calendar. Please include dates, deadlines, deposit, fees, phone, FAX or email, contact person(s) and mailing address. **THANKS!**

<b>November 14, 1998</b> 9 AM to 5 PM	<b>A Day of Deepening -- TCC</b> <b>Location:</b> Los Angeles Area <b>Contact:</b> Pam Towne 107 Calle Vista Camarillo, CA 93010-1711 <b>Ph:</b> 805-987-3607 <b>email:</b> ptowne@inreach.com <b>Teacher Fee:</b> \$20 <b>Student Fee:</b> \$40
<b>February 6, 1999</b>	<b>Day Long TCC Workshop</b> <b>Location:</b> S.F. Bay Area, CA <b>Contact:</b> Pat Huseby 1129 San Ramon Valley Blvd. Danville, CA 94526-4852 <b>Ph:</b> 925-838-9912 <b>Teacher Fee:</b> \$20 <b>Student Fee:</b> \$40
<b>February 22 thru 27, 1999</b>	<b>TCC Teacher Training</b> <b>Location:</b> Orlando, FL area <b>Contact:</b> Elissa Maguire P.O. Box 3695 Winter Park, FL 32790-3095 <b>Ph:</b> 407-699-5444 <b>Teacher Training Fee:</b> \$450 <b>Deadline:</b> Jan. 5, 1999
<b>May 23 thru 29, 1999</b>	<b>TCC Teacher Training</b> <b>Location:</b> Mercy Center St. Louis, MO <b>Contact:</b> Kathy Vieth 6014 A Kingsbury St. Louis, MO 63112-1304 <b>Ph:</b> 314-727-1983 <b>Teacher Training Fee:</b> \$450
<b>Spring 1999</b> (Details TBA)	<b>Seijaku Accreditation Course</b> <b>Location:</b> St. Paul, MN <b>Contact:</b> Paula Arnold <b>Ph:</b> 612-915-1880
<b>August 30 thru Sept 4, 1999</b>	<b>TCC Teacher Training</b> <b>Location:</b> New Jersey <b>Contact:</b> Sr Antonia Cooper <b>Ph:</b> 908-757-3050

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR THE WINTER ISSUE: OCTOBER 25TH!**



## TEACHERS' TRAINING, MAHWAH, NJ

July 27 - 31, 1998

Host, Sr. Antonia Cooper

The course was very spiritual and moving. Through Ed's teaching and Sister Antonia's beautiful presence. I stepped deeper into my T'ai Chi Chih practice and gained some insight into my own spiritual journey. Thank you both and my classmates for touching my life in such a special way.

**Sondra K. Young "Sky"**

From the Teacher Accreditation I became much more aware of the spiritual aspect of T'ai Chi Chih. It became much more interior for me for which I am deeply grateful.

**Wanda Wetli, CSJ, Tipton, IN**

An intense, but deeply spiritual and joy-filled experience.

I came thinking I knew T'ai Chi Chih rather well. Ed inspired me to ever deeper insights and refinements. I leave with a deeper awareness of what it means to let go -- to allow T'ai Chi Chih to do T'ai Chi Chih.

One of the highlights was viewing the video of Justin Stone at Folsom Prison. Seeing and listening to the originator of T'ai Chi Chih was a profound experience -- his gentleness and concern and warmth for ALL was so apparent.

Our group bonded on a deep level -- interiorly -- the flow of chi was profound and powerful.

**Virginia Ann Wolfzorn, CDP,  
Melbourne, KY**

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**"Going to the accreditation was such a wonderful experience. By Friday it felt like the whole world was moving in slow motion."**

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I learned many things during my T'ai Chi Chih Teacher Accreditation. I learned to refine my T'ai Chi Chih movements by focusing more on shifting my weight, moving with softness, moving from the T'ai T'ien, and letting go. The Chi became more real to me and more in balance. I learned that I must "let go" and let T'ai Chi Chih do T'ai Chi Chih. I have become accredited as a teacher of T'ai Chi Chih, but more importantly, I have gained much insight about myself and my journey. Letting go not only applies to my T'ai Chi Chih practice, but also to my life. I need to let go of my past hurts, frustrations and "baggage." To find true peace and tranquility, I must let go and let God move in me. I am not in control, but He is. I am thankful for the blessing of T'ai Chi Chih, the Accreditation course, and those in the T'ai Chi Chih community.

**Arthur Foo, Schenectady, NY**

### **Here are the names of the twelve new teachers:**

Carolyn Allenby, Annandale, NJ  
Judith Feltman, Clifton, NJ  
Arthur R. Foo, Schenectady, NY  
Dennis L. Price, Reading, PA  
Roberta Ruocco (Bobbie), Upper Montclair, NJ  
Linda Sercarz, Upper Montclair, NJ  
Ann Sherry, Accord, NY  
Viktoria, Vercelletto, Hightstown, NJ  
Fran Hensley Warren, Clifton, NJ  
Wanda Wetli, CSJ, Tipton, IN  
Virginia Ann Wolfzorn, CDP, Melbourne, KY  
Sondra K. Young "Sky", Chesapeake Beach, MD



## LETTING GO -- LIKE AUTUMN LEAVES

Dan Pienciak, Ocean Grove, NJ

This past July I had the pleasure to audit (for a day) the teacher accreditation in the mountains of northern New Jersey at Carmel Retreat. As I walked in for the morning session, I was struck by two very meaningful words which Ed Altman had written on the board. They were two words which I had *not* seen in this room when I attended this event for my own accreditation as a TCC teacher the summer before. These are two words which I often find myself repeating to my own students: "*Let Go!*"

When packing the night before, I had dropped my unopened mail into my travel bag. Arriving hours later at Carmel Retreat, I discovered among the contents a mail order catalogue featuring a theme of *leaves*. In my walk the next morning, I was touched by the tender rustle of the leaves moving freely in the breeze on the hillside. Then, when I walked into the conference room, Ed Altman was wearing a handsomely printed shirt of . . . yes, *leaves!*

We worked with Ed and Sister Antonia all day on moving from the waist with loose waist and loose wrists, letting the Chi circulate outward from the T'an T'ien, and not focusing on the hands. "Let the hands be like the *leaves* on a tree, which is rooted in the earth," Ed reminded us all. I remembered how a Polish nun once told me the translation of my last name "pien," means the part of a tree where the trunk joins the roots. I again learned to "let go" in the shoulders and upper arms, and bring my awareness to the soles of my feet. and I heard myself in my own classes urging my students over and over to "let go."

As I drove down the mountain after supper to begin my trip home I happily recalled the words of John Muir (which I had quoted in my accreditation presentation the year before):

*Climb the mountains and get their glad tidings.  
Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees.  
The winds will blow their own freshness into you  
and the storms their energy,  
while cares drop off like autumn leaves."*

I know that this Fall as I contemplate the softness of the colored leaves floating down, I will be reminded in my T'ai Chi Chih practice, as well as in my life, to surrender, release, and "let go."



LEAVES



## TEACHER NEWS

### T'AI CHI CHIH WITH CHILDREN Shirley Hall and Cheryl Hall, Portland, OR

We start them young in Oregon! We gave a T'ai Chi Chih demonstration at the Cannon Beach Children's Center in Cannon Beach, Oregon. This presentation was requested as part of their unit on China. Children, unlike most adults, couldn't get close enough to us as presenters. They enjoyed every movement and performed them with great enthusiasm.

We are both active instructors who have been teaching ever since we became accredited.



Shirley Hall demonstrating T'ai Chi Chih at the Cannon Beach Children's Center in Cannon Beach, Oregon. Daughter, Cheryl Hall, also performed movements for the center.

#### **From Sister Marie-Ann Main, O.P.:**

It's been a long and awaited wish and constant sending Chi across the ocean. I would like to send flowing gratitude to the whole T'ai Chi Chih family for their contribution in bringing me back to the States.

The whole time of my being in Albuquerque, after breaking through the tension and stress and being in the presence of those moving the Chi around and sharing it with me really brought an inner connected feeling within me. The course began and the Chi no doubt grew. The course was strenuous as the Chi in my body once again had to become connected to those around me. I needed to become more relaxed and had to let go and Ed and Carmen really helped me to do a lot of that. I firmly believe and know that the Chi was always flowing but that there were a few blockages that it had to break through. It was because I was able to accept this challenge that the time was ripe for those blockages to lessen.

I cannot let this not go by without mentioning a few very special names of those who started to make this whole thing happen and who had a lot of confidence in who I was. Thank you Sister Francis-A Kay, Justin Stone, and Sister Phyllis Ann Ries. You had the foresight of what lay across the ocean. I hope that I will always do gratitude and use that which I have received.

So once again, the whole T'ai Chi Chih family, may this special gift of love and Chi continue to grow and spread as it now is opened in another country, that of South Africa. Be assured that in the future you will be hearing from me, as the seed will be planted in this new land and knowing that the soil will be fertile and may it grow.

*Note: At the teacher's conference in Colorado in 1995 Sister Francis-A Kay started a fund to bring Sister Marie-Ann Main to the U.S. for teacher's accreditation.*



## MORE TEACHER NEWS...

### A note forwarded by Justin Stone:

You were my teacher--I learned from your video and with encouragement from Jean Katus, and I think you taught me well. I have presentations lined up and classes starting in July and I'm working with a dear friend who has Alzheimer's. I also work full time as a nurse so I do have to watch myself--there are just so many hours in a day--too bad we have to sleep--thanks again, Justin,

**Carol Houtkooper, Yankton, SD**

I am teaching five TCC classes a week--still doing Wellness Retreats & utilizing TCC with my healing work.

**Elizabeth Tyler, Oswego, OR**

### Oakland, CA



On Friday, June 12, some Bay Area teachers met with Barbara Riley's class to hear a presentation on posture and alignment by physiologist and T'ai Chi Chih instructor Paul Ciske. Paul provided many good tips and clues for watching and teaching about posture. Paul included this image of "ideal segmental alignment" in his materials, reminding us that the ear, shoulder, hips and middle of the feet should be aligned. This can be carried into

"yinning and yanging" by checking the alignment when fully forward and fully back. One memorable image that Paul shared was to imagine the rib cage as a bell--we want the clapper of that bell to hang straight down the center. Thanks, Barbara and Paul for this enlightening presentation!

### San Francisco, CA

Noël Altman has just contracted with Kaiser Permanente of San Francisco to teach three classes per week. This marks the sixth Kaiser facility in the San Francisco Bay Area to include T'ai Chi Chih in their Health Education program.

### Nepal

On a trip to Nepal in April/May, Sandy McAlister led some of her fellow travelers and Nepalese porters in morning T'ai Chi Chih. The movements were especially beneficial after days and miles of trekking to this lodge at about 11,000 feet in the Himalayas. The women hikers appreciated the calming and peaceful effects so appropriate in that rarified atmosphere steeped in spiritual traditions. The porters were enthusiastic and ready to try anything new. They adapted quickly to the movements and were ready for more!

**Linda Meyer, Oakland, CA**

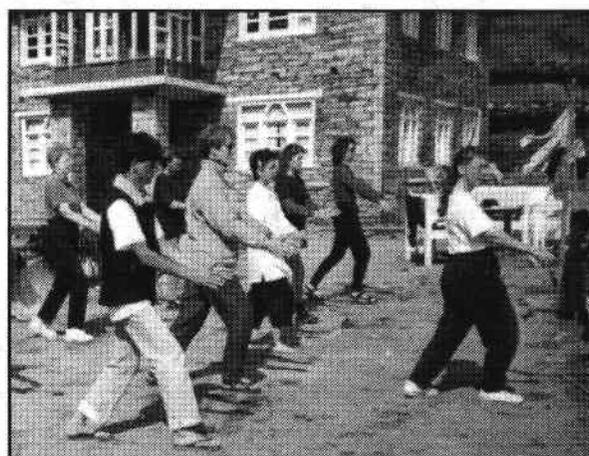


Photo by Linda Meyer

### Ocean Grove, NJ

Dan Pienciak is busily preparing for what may be the only Seijaku accreditation on the East Coast for a while. Check for details on the TCC Events Calendar, page 19.

### Teachers' Directory Updates:

- Be sure to let us know if you have area code changes! See insert this issue for recent area code changes.
- Email addresses will not be added to the directory this year as it would require major last-minute formatting. We encourage you to list your email address on the TCC website (see p 33).



## FLOWING TO THE GREAT SEA

Susan Evans, West Chester/Cincinnati, OH

As I was reading the June issue of *The Vital Force*, I was reminded of a story that Ed recently told at a Seijaku accreditation in Kentucky.

A gentleman was watching as a butterfly struggled to escape the bondage of its cocoon. He felt sorry for the butterfly and helped it free itself from the confines of the cocoon. As he released the butterfly he touched a wing. Later he noticed a butterfly having difficulty flying and when he looked closely he realized that it was the butterfly he had helped. One wing was malformed. Could it have been the wing he had touched?

The message I got from this is that all things, including struggles, are for a reason. And even though there may be a yearning to help, some things are just meant to be.

I felt prompted to respond to the June issue to address what I see as a recurrent theme. I am one of the people who spreads themselves too thin. Just some of the things I do are: T'ai Chi Chih, Seijaku, Tai Chi Chuan, Qigong, Reiki and pottery. (I really need to give up my day job!) I know others do Yoga, "formal meditation," etc. I do not feel that I am desperately searching for the meaning of life, these are just things from which I

get immense pleasure and enjoyment.

However I do believe that we are all on a quest to enlightenment in life's journey and each of us will complete this path in our own way. As I do not consider myself "enlightened" I realize I may be completely naive (and possibly wrong). T'ai Chi Chih may be the only or the fastest way to get there. But is this the issue? What I'm doing now is what I think is right for me at this time. When I need to change the way I believe, the chi will channel me into the correct current in the flow of life.

The way I look at it is: We are all streams, coming from all different directions, flowing to the ocean of chi. Some streams meander and dilly dally in the many eddies in and around the current along the way. But, eventually streams merge into rivers and so on to the Great Sea.

Some of us may take longer to reach "true enlightenment," but which way is the right way? I think they all are. If we listen with our whole being, we'll be guided to the right path. We each have our own path to follow. The route we take shouldn't matter as long as we reach the destination.



*Rio Grande Yields its Surplus to the Sea* Photograph by Laura Gilpin, 1947  
From: *An Enduring Grace* Amon Carter Museum Fort Worth, TX, 1986



## WITHOUT EFFORT

Doing the practice is truing one's self in the creation.  
It brightens one's center and through freedom,  
Allows choice to blossom.  
It sharpens responsibility to one's self,  
To fellow beings,  
And to every grain of sand.  
It opens creativity and self reliance.  
Seated in trust of the universe with no need for security.  
Each moment brings refreshing renewal,  
Just doing the practice.

Eugene L. Box, Seal Beach, CA



## WHY T'AI CHI CHIH? WHY NOT?

Henry Mattos, Dublin, CA

Although somewhat skeptical about a discipline that was neither physically exhausting or required a great deal of time, the class was available, I had the time and I had enjoyed the traditional movements of Judo when I was young ... so I decided to give T'ai Chi Chih a try.

I've never taken the "easy way." I had polio as a child and was told that I would never run and play like the other guys -- I didn't! By my senior year in high school I was running cross-country and was considered the seventh fastest man in the state in my age group.

At thirty-two, due to a job-related injury, I had back surgery and was told that my mobility would be limited, that I would never be free of pain, and that I had a strong possibility of being disabled.

Sheer determination and good hard work kept me going for almost three more decades and so I was pleasantly surprised to find that T'ai Chi Chih was "just what the doctor ordered." Not only did I find it to be an excellent "low-impact" physical workout, I was delighted to find it great at stress reduction -- a true "re-creational" activity for mind and body.

T'ai Chi Chih? Why not!!!

*Henry Mattos is a student of Virginia Cepeda*



## QUIET TIME

Just be quiet  
he said  
with a great smile  
that's all there is to it.  
That's the whole teaching  
and it begins  
on the other side of words.  
Just be quiet  
and watch what happens.  
All the energy  
then unifies  
and becomes  
a diamond  
of spiritual insight,  
explosive and totally present.

Just be quiet  
he said  
don't identify with anything.  
Be free as the  
vast heavens  
and watch what happens.  
Everything else has been written  
in the books,  
in the sutras,  
in the scriptures,  
but not this, not this,  
not this.  
Just be quiet and watch what happens,  
watch your screaming mind come to  
a screeching halt  
and try to look  
in all directions at once  
in a furious attempt  
to continue the tyranny against silence.  
All he really said was:  
just be quiet  
just be quiet  
just be quiet  
he said it three times  
for emphasis.  
And he smiled brilliantly as he  
reminded me,  
and it was the smile of freedom,  
wanting nothing.

Richard Brier, Tiburon, CA



## **"HELP, THE CHI IS KILLING ME!"**

### **A teacher's first teaching experiences**

Susan Evans, West Chester/Cincinnati, OH

Well, not really. Last April, one year after accreditation, I decided that I really must do something about starting to teach a class. I wrote to a few places and was really pleased when a sports center close to home was interested. I decided to set a maximum of 12 to a class. More than 20 people signed up for the class so I ended up splitting the class into two, one following the other, starting at 7pm.

I guess I really didn't think it out very well before hand. After classes that Thursday I did not get to sleep until after 3am and I get up at 6am! I was really worried as I can't function well with only that much sleep and was making plans to ask other instructors if they could take one of the classes for me. I thought I'd give it a few weeks to see if things settled down. Well they did. I can't say I slept well or even all night but my saving grace was that I only work 4 hours on Fridays, so I had an afternoon nap the following day.

The second week I brought a book that I call my Good Karma book (not very originally named, I know). I explained that I'd like it to be a book of students' positive thoughts, feelings, sensations, etc. They can write anything, maybe it's just a feeling of well being, tingling in their fingers, perhaps they feel that it's giving them more patience, or their health is improving. (They don't have to put their names.) I thought that they, as well as I, would enjoy reading each other's comments and the pleasant things that TCC is bringing to others.

I find that people are a little shy to write in it, but when someone comes up to me to say they think it's helped their Fibromyalgia, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome or back condition, I ask them to write it in the book.

I recall one student, who also happens to be a colleague, who has problems with her back (from time to time) that cause shooting pains down her legs. Anyone can see that the pain is really bad because she can hardly move. She knows the problem is stress related but that doesn't help the

pain. During the first class she tried very hard, she was in pain and had a lot of trouble balancing. The class was on a Thursday and I had agreed to practice with her during our lunch hours Mondays and Wednesdays. We met the first Monday and the change in her form was dramatic. I told her that I could tell she'd been practicing because she looked so good. She told me she practiced several times each day for the past three days and she said that her back was definitely better. Never one to miss an opportunity, I asked if she'd write about it in the book during the next class.

I really enjoyed teaching the classes. The students were so varied--wide ranges in age, health, occupation, personality, etc.

When I teach, I do not correct a particular student, but generalize to the whole group, a method I picked up from my teacher, Marlene Brown. She says that some people really hate to be corrected. Some students, though, would prefer me to tell them, "Jerry, try not to bob." So I compromised and said that at least during the first session I would do it my way, but if I saw anything they specifically needed to work on I would tell them after class. This I did. I also did the same thing for students that were doing really well so they too had something specific to work on.

Marlene's words rang very true, though. One of the other students cornered me later on just as I was leaving and said, "OK, there's no one around now. What do I need to work on?"

I have now started an intermediate class with these students. For this class I have come up with a system so I can correct the students that want to be corrected personally and not the ones that don't. I am providing some large sticky circles. If they want me to pick on them they have to put a circle on as they come into the room each week. They have to do this even after I know who does and does not want to be corrected. The reason I have done it this way is that even when someone who usually wants to be picked on may have a bad day and all they want to do is come to the class and relax into the moves.





## TOP TEN WORDS TO INCORPORATE INTO TEACHING

As inspired by Justin and Ed's conference presentations

- 10 **Float** (allow the upper body)
- 9 **Turn** (allow the waist)
- 8 **Bend** (allow the knee)
- 7 **Relax**
- 6 **Ground**
- 5 **Circular**
- 4 **Soft**
- 3 **Allow**
- 2 **Leisurely**
- 1 **Flow**



WATER

K'ai Shu (present-day writing)



Early Pictorial Writing

### A TEACHING TIP by Tara Stiles, Sacramento, Ca

Once my students have learned most of the movements, I introduce what I call "Chi Drawing." After a practice session I'll produce blank paper, dozens of crayons and ask them to use color to give form to their experience. I usually give them more time, but saying "just two minutes" makes it easier for them to get started and know they don't have to produce a masterpiece. I also give out a couple of cardboard folders for each person to lay their paper on. Usually I then like to give people the opportunity for show and tell. Often times this opens up wonderful conversations and affirmations about our inner experience of T'ai Chi Chih and who we are as Chi/energy beings. For myself, brief Chi drawings have given me many valuable insights and refined my understanding of Chi energy tremendously.



## T'AI CHI CHIH/T'AI CHI CHUAN: A COMPARISON

Donna McElhose, Wildwood, IL

*This article came in the form of a letter, forwarded by Justin Stone.*

Dear Justin,

For several years I have been a student of T'ai Chi Chuan. Even though our classes at the college are the 24 movements (simplified) form, students did not stay. To make it short--I am the only student from my first class and several others, and only one person is senior to me--from all the classes before. As I watched students drop out I kept thinking there must be something else. But in a year and a half (3-4 semesters) they are not through the complete set. Very hard. No Benefits--cost too much, takes too long. I know, you know this. A friend who stayed two years with me was only receiving stress from the class. Why stay? she said. All but three guys have dropped from the older group of classes.

When I started T'ai Chi Chuan I was getting very uncontrolled jolts of energy, my hands tingled so I couldn't sleep, I was shaking so that when it happened during the set I would get very dizzy and then the dizziness got very bad. I continued to practice and attend class as I didn't at first connect the dizziness with T'ai Chi Chuan (lasted a year and a half). I kept the practice up hoping things would smooth out and benefits would come.

So I was always searching, searching. And then several events took place and from one person and event to another, T'ai Chi Chih found me.

Justin, in two classes of T'ai Chi Chih I felt a huge shift of energy. It spread out, grew calmer, and gently stronger--in a different way--and the dizzies went away!

The first introduction to T'ai Chi Chih was at a Healing Touch weekend. The HT instructor said we could all do T'ai Chi Chih if we came early the two next mornings. For me that was going to be hard because of the long drive. First day I barely made it on time. The second day I was early-- wasn't going to miss this for anything. I was filled with joy! Thank you, thank you, for the time you took to create T'ai Chi Chih for people. The movements were so easy and felt so good (we only did 20-30 minutes those 2 days). I wondered who did this, where did it come from, and knew I wanted to teach this in my area. I want you to know, I was then and am now (as an accredited instructor) so deeply grateful and filled with great joy that you put T'ai Chi Chih together and shared it with all of us. Through you to others -- to me -- to others -- it will grow. (I have lots of old T'ai Chi Chuan students interested-ha)

At the teachers' accreditation week I felt like I was washed inside and all with little twinkles of energy (the stories others shared at the presentation were dramatic testimony to the energy).

Joyously, I thank you Justin. I do hope some day to meet you and share a time of doing T'ai Chi Chih, or let T'ai Chi Chih move me.

As a new instructor--next week I have 60 elder college students--they have a week of studies on China . . . T'ai Chi Chih will be included in the course.

Thank you,  
Donna



## LETTER FROM A NEW TEACHER

forwarded to *The Vital Force* by Justin Stone

One year ago this week, I became a teacher of T'ai Chi Chih. I moved to Bozeman in July and I have just completed my first 8-week class teaching T'ai Chi Chih! I had 10 students, most of whom had taken T'ai Chi Chuan and were very frustrated. What a wonderful time we had! Carmen always said we would learn and learn from our students and I can see how true that is. I will begin another class on July 2, and the art center where I teach has asked me to teach in the fall as well. My class wants me to set up a once a month group practice, which I will do . . .

I give my students a word to ponder for the week. One time the word was "joy." Two of the women in class said that word had no meaning whatsoever for them. They listened to what others had to say and were quiet. At the end of the 8 weeks, I could see them smiling and knew

that they were both finding a new gift in their lives-- joy. It was heartwarming to look out over the class and remember that 8 weeks past these folks were not connected to their bodies and nothing was synchronized or coordinated. 8 weeks later they were doing T'ai Chi Chih very well.

Anyway, I want you to know that I greatly appreciate you and the gift you have given to the world. T'ai Chi Chih is so "do-able." I think that's why my class liked it so much. They could do it! And, they could enjoy it. I am also grateful for the times you were in class and especially during our practice sessions and the times you came to teacher training. Meant so much to me; I get softer when I am around you doing TCC. And, always, I am learning, learning, learning -- with joy. Thank you, Justin

Shannon Cooley, Bozeman, MT  
June 24, 1998



"Seijaku is like being struck by lightning!"



"It's good to be grounded"

Original cartoon by Vic Viereck, Cedar Grove, NJ



## SNIPPETS

### *Little Wisdoms for Empowerment*

collected for your enjoyment by Richard Brier, Tiburon, CA

Be still and know.

To a still mind, the universe surrenders.

Breathe long, live long.

Balanced and abundant, chi is the key to a long and healthy life.

Circulation is health, stagnation is ill-health.

The chi is spontaneous wisdom.

T'ai Chi [Chih] is for entering paradise here and now.

Remember that *T'ai Chi Chih is Joy Through Movement*.

Focus on the joy of life, the miracle of existence.

Breathe in fresh chi, when exhaling relax and let go.

Breathe in joy, breathe out peace.

Breath is slow, even and smooth just like the movements.

Attitude is everything and joy is the greatest of all healers.

Have soft eyes, a calm mind and a happy heart.

Imagine every cell in the body filled with radiant, life-giving chi.

Chi is the vital energy, the animating principle.

Allow the movements to happen with effortless effort.

Witness your natural grace and let yourself be amazed.

It's all about attention and flowing softly.

Practice with an inner smile. Remember that joy is our true home.

Gratitude is the best attitude.

Practice is the best teacher.

Be still like a mountain, move like a great river. This is the essence of T'ai Chi.

The primary purpose of T'ai Chi [Chih] is rejuvenation of body, mind and spirit.

Give yourself permission to feel wonderful.

Say, "I am grateful, I give thanks" three times sincerely each morning and you will be happy.

Know yourself and also be free of yourself.

Good cheer is the best medicine.

Smile gently at the daily fortunes and misfortunes.

Know eternity while living in time.

Have a delicious attitude toward life's endless changes. Let go and walk on.

Pray for more wisdom, more patience, more love, more understanding. This alone is true prayer and has rich results.



## WEBSITE UPDATE

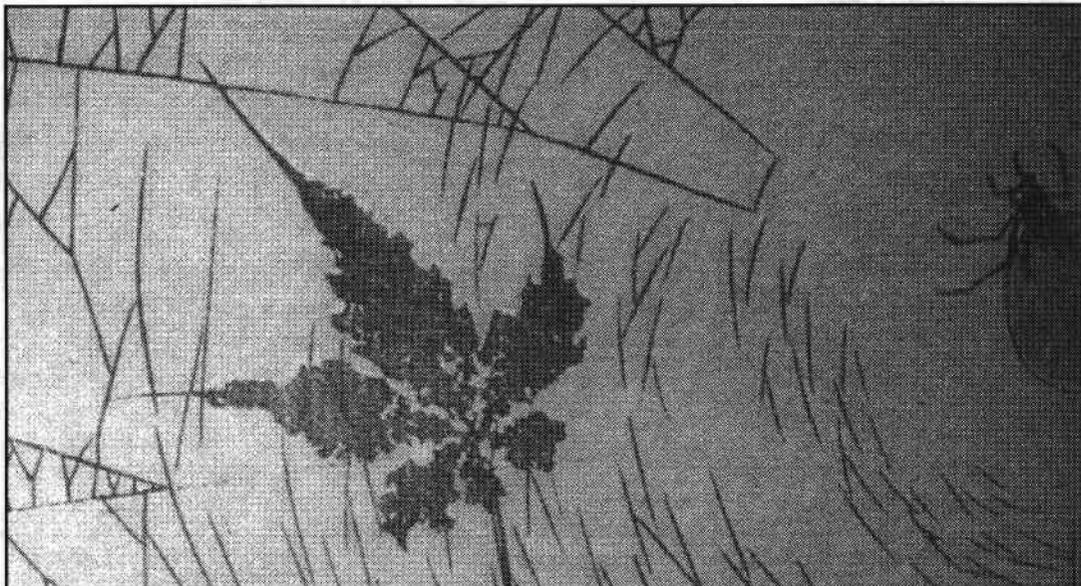
([www.taichichih.org](http://www.taichichih.org))

Guy Kent, Albuquerque, NM

Our website has been operational for over a year. Some statistics you might be interested in are: the number of visitors to the site has increased by about 40% per month; in July there were over 2500 visitors; about 30% of the visitors were from outside the United States - places like South Africa, Singapore, Czech Republic, Colombia, and Israel to name a few. It is exciting to have this mechanism to let people learn about T'ai Chi Chih!

The website is paid for by teachers who have asked to be listed in the online teacher directory. We ask for \$5 per listing per year. Our thanks to Christina Tillotson for paying for the first year's site hosting fees. This allowed us to pay for the domain names ([taichichih.org](http://taichichih.org) and [taichichih.com](http://taichichih.com)) and build a reserve to pay for ongoing hosting and future enhancements. Thank you, Christina, for your generosity and to all of the teachers that chip in to keep the site on-line. Many teachers renewed their annual contribution at the Conference. If you are listed and haven't renewed (or would like to be added) please contact Guy Kent ([gkent@usa.net](mailto:gkent@usa.net) or 2225 Dietz Place NW, Albuquerque, NM 87107).

This next year we hope to enhance the website with a couple of new features. We want to have photographs from the textbook digitized to give examples of some movements. Kim Grant, the photographer, has agreed to let us use her photographs for a nominal fee but we need to protect them from copying with a special program which we do not have. We will continue to pursue this software and hopefully get the photos online soon. We also want to have a section that lists some of the health benefits people have received from T'ai Chi Chih. If you have any examples, case histories, or personal experiences you can share we'd love to add them. We'll have the appropriate "your experiences may vary" disclaimer and not directly identify the contributor. Won't it be great when someone does an Internet search on an ailment like "osteoporosis" and reads about T'ai Chi Chih and how it has helped someone else? Send us your stories!



Katsushika Hokusai

*Fuji Hyakkei* (One Hundred Views of Fuji, 1834) Spider



**KARMIC KOMMENTS**  
 from Good Karma Publishing, Inc.  
 Jean Katus, Publisher

**In Appreciation**

A thank you to all who came to the Good Karma table at the conference, some to purchase materials, others to peruse, some to greet us. We truly appreciate your ongoing encouragement in our efforts to help teachers serve their students with books and tapes that can deepen all our understanding of T'ai Chi Chih, a positive adjunct to the practice itself. A special personal thanks to the teacher distributors who took orders and filled them at the Good Karma table!

**Frankfurt Book Fair**

An exciting first: Good Karma will be represented in Frankfurt at the largest international book fair in the world. In October the *T'ai Chi Chih/Joy thru Movement* photo-text, the video, and *Meditation for Healing* will be on display and will receive exposure to many international publishers and distributors. The opportunity could open doors even wider for the spread of T'ai Chi Chih in other countries. We already know that, through the work of teachers from outside the U.S. and U.S. teachers who teach internationally, this life-transforming discipline is spreading naturally.

Such inroads affirm Justin's declaration in the "New Introduction" to the photo-text, "If enough people do T'ai Chi Chih, we might even have peace and love in the world."

**Upcoming Price Changes**

Now is a good time to stock up on class materials because, as of January 1, 1999, most of the items Good Karma provides will have a slight price increase. We will keep the shipping chart as is for now. If you comparison shop in bookstores that sell books and tapes of the quality we produce, you will see that most of our books are very under-priced. We have deliberately kept prices as low as possible to accommodate T'ai Chi Chih teachers' and students' budgets. In addition, we see our materials as supporting a service that enhances teachers' and students' experience with T'ai Chi Chih. Price changes will be reflected in the new catalog we are preparing, which we plan to have available by the New Year. On any orders we receive before January 1, you will pay the current prices as listed in the price list/order form included in *The Vital Force Journal*.



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### T'AI CHI CHIH CONTACTS

**Justin Stone:** Originator of T'ai Chi Chih  
P.O. Box 23212  
Albuquerque, NM 87192-3212  
Conductor of Seijaku (Advanced T'ai Chi Chih)  
courses; Meditation Retreats and Lectures

**Ed Altman:** Designated Head of T'ai Chi  
Chih and Teacher Trainer  
840 Penny Royal Lane  
San Rafael, CA 94903-2330  
(415) 472-1207  
Conductor of T'ai Chi Chih Teachers' Training  
and Seijaku Accreditation courses.

**T'AI CHI CHIH WEBSITE:**  
[www.taichichih.org](http://www.taichichih.org)

### VITAL FORCE CONTACTS

**Lois Mahaney:** Vital Force Association  
Memberships, Teachers' Directory  
1633 Via Amigos  
San Lorenzo, CA 94580-2009  
(510) 276-5718

**Carrie Kinsey:** Vital Force Journal  
1738 B Sapling Ct.  
Concord, CA 94519-1522  
Phone and FAX (925) 676-1858

**Vital Force Journal Submissions:**  
1633 Via Amigos  
San Lorenzo, CA 94580-2009  
E-mail: [vfjournal@aol.com](mailto:vfjournal@aol.com)



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