

# The Vital Force

JOURNAL OF THE T'AI CHI CHIH® COMMUNITY

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for teachers & students

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## Justin's Words

### More 20th Century Psalms BY JUSTIN STONE

Words are used to cover feelings. Only actions explain feelings.

The whole ocean can be tasted in one drop of salt water.

.....

Frequently, followers of the Spiritual Path reach a joyous feeling of Unity – and then get hung up there. Unless they can come full circle, back to the ordinary life, it will be practically impossible for them to function in this world.

What do people mean when they say “all is one”? Do they act as though all is one?

Very few can speak in the abstract, or from an overall view; it must always be flavored by what is painful to me and what is pleasurable. When you find one who can observe impersonally, you have met a wise creature.

The memory of things future.

.....

Hearing the sound of tires on the pavement, we reconstruct the passing car. Detecting a distant high-pitched strident sound, we translate it as the dreaded ambulance or fire engine. We live in a world of our own



*Reprinted with permission from Good Karma Publishing. This title, 20th Century Psalms, is currently out-of-print.*

mental constructs. What need of future Hell when so many live in that state right here and now?

Life is Life. There is no “more important” and “less important,” least of all based on size.

“I” and “Mine” are the heavy baggage we carry on our backs. “Yours” brings other creatures into being. Does anyone possess the wind blowing over the water? Does this wind have a place of origin? When the wind has passed, the waves subside.

Contraction and expansion — a time for triumph and a time for great loss. If you miss the opportunity the first time around, it will come round again.

.....

No two live in the same world.

Our two tasks are to know Who and What we are and to understand Impermanence; without knowing the first, we can never accord with the second.

The teacher can only give what the pupil is ready to receive. You cannot force-feed the Truth.

Child of the sun, nourished by the passing clouds and earth, the tree grows to the sky.

Suffer the leaves to fall (in autumn).

## SOLICITING IDEAS

- We've almost worked our way through discussing the movements (even though articles have been dwindling for some time).
- We tried "Where in the World," which I'm hoping will be better received if you get to see yourselves practicing TCC on the new website. (Don't be shy; send photos to [tcc@kimgrant.com](mailto:tcc@kimgrant.com). Locations don't have to be "exotic" – just interesting and/or somehow attractive.)
- We organize layouts by geography when "enough" teachers respond to a solicitation.
- Hannah Hedrick has suggested a discussion theme/thread noted below for the January 1st deadline.
- What other ideas would you like to see addressed as themes for upcoming issues? Please email them to [tcc@kimgrant.com](mailto:tcc@kimgrant.com).

## READER VOICES: LAURIE JACOBI

I've been meaning to pass this story along to you for some time: Remember the story I submitted about my experience teaching TCC in Kazakhstan? Well, a while ago I got an email from my embassy contact there who said that the NGO person who organized the artists' workshops I was leading was at another gathering in the south of Kazakhstan recently and found the women doing TCC before their workshops began each day!! Someone who participated in my classes was passing it on to others as best she could. It was so heartening!

BY KIM GRANT, ALBUQUERQUE, NM



All of the Justin Stone paintings in this issue appear in the beautifully reproduced, four-color **Tentatively Forever** monograph, available through Good Karma Publishing.

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## Submission Guidelines

Please send articles as Word documents, electronically, to [tcc@kimgrant.com](mailto:tcc@kimgrant.com). If possible, please tailor your submission to a particular section; the newsletter will hang together better that way. A 1/4 page in this newsletter runs about 200 words; a 1/2 page is 400 words.

We are always in need of photos and artwork. Please send high resolution jpgs, which the Editor will crop and edit. If you have 10-12 pieces of related artwork – calligraphy, drawings, photographs, or something that will reproduce well in B/W – please submit them for consideration in an entire issue. *The Vital Force* reserves the right to edit submission for length and clarity.

## Web Site Updates

The on-line database (for [www.taichichih.org](http://www.taichichih.org)) will be updated within a week of the following deadlines: January 15, March 1, April 15, June 1, July 15, September 1, October 15, & December 1.

Editor: Kim Grant • Membership: Mary Ruiz • Submissions: Send articles, poetry and photos to Kim Grant at [tcc@kimgrant.com](mailto:tcc@kimgrant.com) or to The Vital Force, P.O. Box 92674, Albuquerque, NM 87199-2674 • Memberships: Send membership subscription requests, renewals, remittances and changes of address to The Vital Force, P.O. Box 92674, Albuquerque, NM 87199-2674. Memberships are \$40/year, \$50/year for international. Members receive four issues of The Vital Force. The printed annual Teachers Directory costs an additional \$15/year. It is also available for free at [www.taichichih.org](http://www.taichichih.org). If, for some reason, you do not receive an issue, send an e-mail to: [vfmembership@yahoo.com](mailto:vfmembership@yahoo.com). • Design: Amy K. Brown

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**Deadline: Oct 1**  
**Publication Date: Mid-Nov**  
 Musings on softness:  
 "Effortless flow from the substantial to the insubstantial and back is what causes the arms to move softly."  
*Six Healing Sounds*

**Deadline: Jan 1**  
**Publication Date: Mid-Feb**  
 Overcoming Obstacles to Preparing Teacher Candidates  
*Cosmic Consciousness Pose*

**Deadline: April 1**  
**Publication Date: Mid-May**  
 Musings on moving TBA  
*Movement TBA*

**Deadline: July 1**  
**Publication Date: Mid-Aug**  
 Musings on gratitude TBA  
*Movement TBA*

# New Website Launched

By KIM GRANT, ALBUQUERQUE, NM

Check out the new Tai Chi Chih website (www.taichichih.org) which was launched in mid-July. It aims to do quite a few things, among, but not limited to:

- The layout, design and presentation are more contemporary and accessible. (There have been a lot changes in the web world since the last new site was launched four years ago.)
- The Home Page has great visibility with/for => general info about TCC; its health benefits; press clippings and research studies; fun photos of TCC being done around the world; ordering from Good Karma; staying in touch with the community through *The Vital Force*; donating to spreading the word about TCC; staying connected easily through various social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube); a calendar of events which can be quickly updated; and a link to the Apple iTunes app store for our new app (see Karmic Comments).
- A high-level "Health Benefits" tab has pages dedicated to Arthritis, COPD, Depression & Anxiety, General Health, Healthy Aging, Healthy Weight, Immune System, Increased Energy, Joy, Pain

Relief, and Peace. (More can be added as information becomes available.)

Each page has student and teacher tes-



## WEBSITE FUNDING

Our website, taichichih.org, operates under the umbrella of *The Vital Force* and it does not have any source of funding. The recent overhaul was partially funded by a generous contribution, but not entirely. If you would like to make an outreach donation, please visit [www.taichichih.org/donate/](http://www.taichichih.org/donate/). You can see that your money is/will be/has been put to superb use already.

Thank you.

*(Your VF subscription only covers the operating expenses of the VF; there is nothing left over for the website, which is pure, free, added-value for all community members.)*

timonials (drawn from *The Vital Force* and *Blooming the Flower*, with permissions) specific to that health issue; links to articles about TCC for that particular health issue; and links to major outside resources where the potential practitioner can get more help with that health issue. Each health issue has its own URL so it makes spreading the word about how TCC can help quite easy.

• An "In The News" section has a complete list of all the articles and online media and research done about TCC, organized chronologically and hyperlinked back to the original. Screen shots and jpgs are posted for some. New media attention garnered can be posted almost immediately now.

• A blog consists of snippets from Justin's writings, mentions of new media placements, and other current goings on. Practitioners can post comments throughout the site on various writings. It's

an easy way to get a dialog going and keep Justin's writings relevant, which they are to all of us, I know.

• The bottom part of each page features an integrated "Facebook roll," which means that the conversation happening among the 750 or so Facebook users also appears at the bottom of each page. Photos of TCC practitioners and Justin also appear and are easily accessible through the Flickr feed. If you have photos you'd like posted, please send them to [tcc@kimgrant.com](mailto:tcc@kimgrant.com).



## Open To The Best Of The Best

BY RUTH DITTMAR, HILO, BIG ISLAND

Many years ago, I first did T'ai Chi Chih with Theda Gillespie at Rancho Rio Caliente, outside Guadalajara, Mexico. When I contacted Hannah about her classes in Hilo, Hawaii, we were amazed to learn that Theda was also her first teacher. I feel privileged to have studied with two women who share the sincerity, determination, and deep empathy that enhance and reflect the principles of TCC. I also had a class with Joanne Thomas in Vista, California, and she encouraged me to continue practicing.

Being present, and moving with softness and continuity, is a centering place that brings calmness. I hope to continue with the practice. Thank goodness for the generosity of my teachers that allows me to come back to something so beneficial. I am reminded that at any age, I can connect with these movements-to open to the best of the best inside myself, to the sounds and smells and beauty outside myself, and to the feeling that, all is well, in the push and pull of life. Thank you.

## Works with Natural Structure and Function

BY NORVY ESQUIVEL, HILO, BIG ISLAND

Having taken classes in T'ai Chi before, I find T'ai Chi Chih easier to do. The movements are simpler, without being dramatic such as "snake crawls on grass & crane strikes" movement from T'ai Chi Chu'an. In my experience, in addition to being easier for the average person to learn and do, TCC seems to be equally effective.

Throughout my adult life, I've endeavored to learn the most natural forms of dance, martial arts, exercise, and movement that work with the natural structure and function of the body and therefore have the least potential for injury. At this point, Rosen Method Movement, Han Shi Yiquan, Erick Hawkins Modern Dance Technique, Bartenieff Fundamentals and TCC are very therapeutic, simple, and elegant in how they work with the natural structure and movements of the body. I really appreciate that when I do TCC my body moves in a most natural way, efficient and without extraneous effort.

## A Trio Of Big Island Voices

I have received so many benefits from my T'ai Chi Chih practice of 16 years that my enthusiasm has carried over onto my classes. It's extremely rewarding to see students doing TCC, but also to hear how the practice has made a difference in their lives. As my husband says, "It works!" I will be forever grateful to my teacher, Victoria Townsend of San Luis Obispo, CA, and to Justin Stone. — SHARON CUSHMAN, TEACHER, HAWAIIAN PARADISE PARK, BIG ISLAND

TCC has played a significant role in my life, helping me achieve something I've sought for some time: balance *and* harmony. It has a powerful influence on my self-confidence, and complements other healing modalities that I practice. — DONNA FISCHER, STUDENT, PAUILLO, BIG ISLAND

It is amazing how quickly TCC helped me find my *Chi* and change my whole life in a short period. It has given me the energy to carry me through the day without drinking coffee anymore. I feel that I was destined to find this teacher, and this practice, at this time. — DAVE JOHNSON, STUDENT, PAHOA, BIG ISLAND



## TCC Is My Best Friend

BY TERRY JENNINGS, HONOLULU, OAHU, HI

Every morning I wake up and go out to my lanai to practice T'ai Chi Chih, and to look at the mountains and the trees, the clouds and the flowers. The movements never fail to fill me with awe and gratitude. I love my best friend TCC. Though I don't always wake up with a smile, by the time I've done the first movement the joy is overflowing. Just thinking of my best friend fills me with an inner smile. Thank you Justin for the most precious gift. My best friend TCC.

I like practicing at the ocean, or when hiking along a river, or at any moment when I want to feel a connection with the mystery, the magnificent, the Universal Life Energy, the *Chi*. Sending the fragrance of the islands to each one of you.

## Thrilled To Find TCC

BY JODY, VOLCANO, BIG ISLAND

I thought how wonderful if my husband and I could find a class that could help him with his chronic pain. When he suggested we try the T'ai Chi Chih class at the community center, I had no idea, but I found it was the perfect solution for me, too. (We had tried yoga and went to a T'ai Chi class once, but they just didn't fit.) When Hannah taught us TCC, it fit perfectly. Leaving the first class, I felt good; stronger, and much less stressed. I am just a beginner, but I am thrilled to have found TCC. And yes, my husband sleeps much better after a class, as it gives him some relief from his chronic pain.

## Three From One

By HANNAH HEDRICK, MOUNTAIN VIEW, BIG ISLAND

### TCC FOR DIABETES & CHRONIC CONDITIONS

After more than a decade of including T'ai Chi Chih in self-care programs across the nation for people with COPD, I moved to Hawaii in 2000. Several of my friends here with COPD also had diabetes, and I was fortunate to connect with Warriors Against Diabetes, a support group affiliated with Bay Clinic. After a few months of teaching some TCC movements at the monthly meeting and potluck, we added a weekly class on Banyan Drive, overlooking beautiful Japanese-style gardens and Hilo Bay.

We now promote the class to people with any chronic condition. Pearl Kadota, a "Warrior," and other continuing students keep the class going when I am on the mainland. On Memorial Day weekend, we had more than 20 people moving together, some from foreign countries. I recently added a *Seijaku* introduction after the regular class, and when I complete *Seijaku* after the conference (for the 4th time), I plan to teach a regular eight-week session.

### TCC TEACHING TOOLS FOR PEOPLE WITHOUT ARMS?

Marty Mimmack and I co-teach an "Adaptive Exercise" session the first and third Fridays in his home and independent living facility in Hawaiian Paradise Park to a cross-disability group of adults. We incorporate a TCC segment in the program. Because many of our participants are infirm or in wheelchairs, we use the guidelines for seated TCC. But since Marty was born without arms and an increasing number of returning veterans have lost limbs, we are looking for materials that adapt TCC for people without arms.

**2012 TCC ACCREDITATION IN A LOW-COST SETTING?** *Marty has a room in his home large enough to accommodate 16 people doing TCC. He also has two bedrooms, a covered lanai space, and plenty of yard space for pitching tents. I could accommodate two teacher candidates. Please let me know if you would be interested in attending a 2012 teacher accreditation with such simple accommodations. Bed and breakfast and hotel facilities would be 12 miles away for those wishing to rent a car.*



## Relaxing Into Heightened Awareness

By PEARL KADOTA, HILO, BIG ISLAND

I have come to the teahouse, to the Sumo Pavilion overlooking Hilo Bay, every Monday for nearly two years to study T'ai Chi Chih with Hannah and a diverse group of ever-changing students. I learned about the class at the monthly Warriors Against Diabetes educational and support group at Wailoa River State Park, where a then-70-year old woman would introduce a few TCC movements to the group. I was immediately attracted to the movements, so I agreed when Tom Whitney, another member of Warriors Against Diabetes, asked me to work with him, Hannah, the Marshalese interpreter, Bay Clinic staff, and others to develop a program we could extend to more people with diabetes.

Little did I know that when Hannah was late one day, they would ask me to show some TCC movements. Although I am naturally shy, I agreed and actually enjoyed sharing what I knew. With continued practice, I now feel comfortable leading a "peer practice" while Hannah is gone.

Today, as usual, TCC relaxes me, so I hear the birds singing, I see the branches of the trees – limbs dropping earthwards. I see the ripples on the green water in the ponds, and people walking by with their dogs. Feral mongooses and cats skitter about nearby. The huge stones do not move; the gigantic tree trunks do not move. The group doing TCC moves, 9 of them in unison, all seeming to flow softly and continuously from the center, the *tan t'ien*.

Herman and Shirley and Ruth, Gail and Wynne and Nory, Pearl and Mitzi and Hannah – the two first-time participants "move with the flow." All face the big trees, with the bamboo to the left. "Relax the mind; face, neck, throat and shoulders absolutely relaxed. This is our last one..."

## It Takes A Lot Of Effort To Get To No Effort

By Sr. Antonia Cooper, OSF, North Plainfield, NJ

This profound [title] statement came from a serious student who began to embody softness for the first time. It was her “ah ha moment” and was pivotal in her journey, no longer needing to continue to experience tension or effort in the way she moved... she was free. We, as teachers, talk a lot about letting go of tension in class, but we have no magical formula for such a process.

Justin often told the story of the teacher who kept saying “move with softness and continuity” in every class. By class number six a student suddenly said, “Oh, you want us to be soft... Why didn’t you say so?” Apparently, we will not “get” a teaching before we are ready to. Justin offers the *koan* in *Spiritual Odyssey* “Trying is not the Way - Not trying is not the Way - You say it must be one or the other - But I say - Neither Nor.” Throughout this book Justin sprinkles little gems of how to let go, by comparing hard and soft in nature... and that the soft outlasts the hard. He speaks of the pliability of bamboo in a storm in comparison to the strong, mighty oak tree.

There is a process of “maturing” in the T’ai Chi Chih form that has nothing to do with a certain time line because it is uniquely different for each practitioner. An experienced teacher can tell the moment this transition takes place. Two things that will greatly help this process are an attentive awareness of *how* one moves and *how* one “feels the form.” Developing an awareness and feel are closely related, yet different.

Justin speaks of awareness as being “the root of T’ai Chi Chih, which is essentially inner-oriented.” So the focus is inward. It is being aware of how one begins and ends each move as well as everything that happens in between... And how does it feel? Awareness of where and how one places the heel, what happens in the joints of the ankle, knee, hip, back, and this awareness will be as unique according to each body shape and bone structure... And again, how does that

feel? Awareness in how one stands in the Resting Pose, and in what movements does Justin refer to the “position of rest”... Is there a difference, and if so, what is it? Awareness from the soles of the feet to “being suspended from above” as well as being aware of each shift of weight, whether it is forward, backward, side to side, or up and down.



I’m sure your head is spinning right now with all this awareness and feeling that is an essential part of the TCC practice. Actually, it is quite simple: Know the form, be aware of how you move, and feel every part of it. Doing all of this will surely activate, circulate and balance the *yin* and *yang* *Chi*, and after all, isn’t that why we practice in the first place? The good news is that all this will change you, and being a “new you” will invite you to experience the TCC form in a new way, allowing for a greater circulation and balancing of the Vital Force, the Supreme Ultimate, the Life Force.

Where will that bring you? Back to the beginning so that your Knowledge (Chih) will transform and renew you down to the cellular level, besides teach you TCC movements with a new and fresh understanding. Can you see how circular this process is? And such circularity can last a life time.

With these words, I encourage you to go deeper into your practice to be more aware and to feel each movement. You will experience the *t’an tien* in a whole new way, not only in practice, but as you walk. Your body awareness will be heightened – balance on all levels will be renewed.

With all of this in process, I can’t wait to see you at the next retreat, intensive or teacher training. May each of us experience the effort of no effort in our TCC practice, teaching, learning and continual growth. It will show up in how we live our lives too. Effortless. Priceless. Wishing each of you peace and all good.

## Expansion & Contraction

By SANDY McALISTER, HAYWARD, CA

One of the things I love about T'ai Chi Chih is the opportunity for never ending exploration. While the movements are often touted as being "simple to learn," I find TCC is anything but simple should one choose to explore its depths. Once we have explored how the body and hands move, how the weight shift happens, the *tan t'ien* and how all parts of the body move together, there are ideas/concepts/feelings to explore. Take one concept and see how it is entwined in TCC, and how that awareness may apply to our everyday lives.

For example, explore patience. Many years ago there was a fine article written by Ed Altman regarding patience in our practice. Are we patient for the weight shift to complete before returning the other direction; for the wrists to move integrated with the arm movement and not independently; to *feel* our way through the practice rather than *doing* the movements? Do we allow the movements to unfold in their own timing? And are we patient in the rest? As we examine patience in our practice, connections cannot help but be seen in our everyday lives. Examining our practice is a way to examine ourselves.

A concept I am just beginning to explore is expansion and contraction. Where do I find expansion in the physical form? In the forward weight shift looking at the back leg, the back of the knee is expanding as we move forward and contracting as we move back. The front knee moves conversely. Awareness of this may help the back leg to straighten all the way as the weight is shifted forward. Pointing out contraction and especially the expansion of the front ankle in the front/back weight shift can bring awareness to someone who may be lifting their foot too high. Awareness of the expansion and contraction in the elbows may help someone to see if they are making movements too small. Contraction and expansion of the waist is small but very important during a weight shift if the body is to remain upright, with the shoulders in line over the hips.

What about the movements as a whole? When/where do they have a feeling of expansion and contraction? Do all movements have this? As we practice TCC how does the expansion and contraction express itself? If we are expanding our understanding of TCC, is there or where/what is the contraction?

At the end of a TCC practice focused on expansion and contraction, one student commented that she felt more fluid in her movements and more grounded, more sure of herself. I asked if there a contraction of something, and after some reflection she responded, fear. What discoveries await you from exploring expansion and contraction?

## TCC In 100 Years

By PAM TOWNE, OCEANSIDE, CA

It's fun to imagine what it would be like if we could come back 100 years from now and see what has become of T'ai Chi Chih. In my imagination, this uniquely American form is being widely practiced by millions of people in North America, where TCC is a common household term. It has also spread around the world, with great popularity especially in English-speaking countries and surprising pockets of interest in unexpected places.



The nineteen movements and one pose of the TCC form are readily recognizable, and are still being done with softness and continuity, as well as an emphasis on the importance of *how* to move. The practice still brings a wide range of

benefits, and is highly recommended by health care professionals and spiritual leaders.

Justin Stone is known as the originator of TCC. His writings are still widely read, and as pertinent to daily spiritual life as when they were written in the 20th century. His video teaching the movements is available in the latest media format and continues to be useful to students and teachers alike. *Seijaku* is considered a part of TCC, and is widely practiced, especially in conjunction with TCC. The *Jing* is especially popular, and well known for strengthening the bone marrow and immune system.

New technologies make remote teaching easier and make TCC available to people everywhere on the planet. When I began teaching TCC in 1984, I never dreamed of being able to see and talk with someone halfway around the world via Skype on the Internet. In 2111, I imagine teachers being able to be present as a holographic image in their student's living room, to see and talk with them remotely and give individual feedback as though they were physically in the same room.

The TCC Teachers Conference gathers 1000 or more teachers from around the globe. They still come together annually to deepen their practice, and to support each other in sharing TCC as a service to humanity. TCC remains a grassroots movement and operates as a community of teachers and students led by an appointed Guide. I hope these ideas stimulate you to think about and share *your* vision for TCC in a hundred years. Remember that every time you practice TCC or *Seijaku*, you are contributing not only to your own health, serenity and longevity, but also to the future of TCC and the well being of our planet. As Justin said, "If enough people do TCC, maybe we'll have peace on earth."

# Passing Clouds

BY PETE GREGORY, HIGHLAND, IN

**W**e set up Passing Clouds like every other movement in the practice:

- Bottom Up (awareness in the soles of the feet)
- Inside Out (capacity to see, think and feel from the *tan t'ien*)
- Not Within, Not Without (alert, quiet, empty)

Begin with the weight on the left leg, left arm up (forearm vertical/palm forward/ fingers to the sky.) Right arm is down along the leg, shoulders square, nose to the center.

Take a sideways “T'ai Chi step” to the right (lift the toes, sneak out, land on the heel and flatten), and initiate the weight shift strong across the heels.

The raised left hand, beautifully cupped, opens and arcs briefly outward, beginning a circle that sweeps the hand down and across to the right side. The tempo of the circle coordinates with the swiveling right hip. The palm moves through the *tan t'ien* area and ultimately faces the body.

As the weight begins to shift back, strong across the knees to the left, the right hand gets into the act. Briefly rising, it enters its own (counter) circle, down and across to the left, under the rising left hand.

Toward the end of the shift, as the left hand is reaching the top, allow a sufficient waist turn so the right fingers can pass by and tickle the left elbow. Lather, rinse, and repeat for 9 or 18 sets. Finish to the left, and return to the rest position to ground. Practice daily.



*Editor's Note: The most important resource for teaching tips is Justin Stone. Watch and listen to him on his instructional DVD. And read about and inspect his movements in the Photo Textbook. Both are available from Good Karma Publishing. His words are also available in the essential booklet, T'ai Chi Chih Teaching Tips, available through the New Mexico T'ai Chi Chih Association for a small fee ([www.taichichihassociation.org](http://www.taichichihassociation.org) and 505-299-2095.)*

BY PETE GREGORY, HIGHLAND, IN

clouds  
passing  
side to side  
oscillating  
hitchhiker  
wants a  
ride

spring  
bubbling  
strings on a  
marionette  
lively life  
holy  
whole

my  
teacher  
is like steel  
wrapped in cotton  
lessons in  
every  
thread

Really tragic that I will  
eventually have to fall asleep,  
and the wisdom coursing  
through me right now will  
start to fade.

## Musings On Gratitude

# The Stroke Recovery Process

BY MARTY BEERY, PLACENTIA, CA

**F**our months ago I was getting ready for bed and noticed that my right hand was numb. When the paramedics took me to the nearby ER, my concerns were confirmed: I'd had a stroke. Thus began a journey that I never imagined after retiring a few weeks prior. My immediate concern was about how serious the after-effects would be. But when my husband proposed that we could do T'ai Chi Chih together, I was flooded with a sense of hope and gratitude. With years as an accredited TCC instructor, this suggestion resonated soundly with me. I just knew that this beloved practice would be instrumental in my recovery. And it has been.

Fortunately, my stroke was not devastating, but I did need to retrain

my right hand for some of the movements. I was surprised to realize that I'd forgotten the names and details of some movements. But because of my body's memory from so many years of practice, the movements gradually came back.

This simple practice has helped me counteract the overwhelm that often accompanies the stroke recovery process. I focus on each nuance of each movement – being more present with a beginners mind. And my practice reflects this renewal. I am so touched with gratitude that I now experience TCC in a much more profound way than ever.

My friends cannot detect any signs that I had a stroke. But *I am* changed. I no longer try to multi-task. After all, I am retired now. I can slow down and allow to my inner guidance to direct this new phase of my life. What could have been a giant detour brings me greater sensitivity, awareness, and great gratitude for every experience of life. Even this one.

# Removing Roadblocks On The Way To Success

By CARMEN L. BROCKLEHURST, ALBUQUERQUE, NM

It's been a treasure working with the wonderful people of Atlanta, Georgia, who want to learn more about T'ai Chi Chih. Sheryl Adair made the impossible possible – through phone calls encouraging her students and other teachers to attend. She also sent emails to those within driving range, opening the way for sharing the *Chi* to a wider range of people. This work was done in the middle of an unusually busy schedule. TCC is our way of finding solutions to life's challenges.

The meeting time for some (starting on a Monday) was not convenient. There were several reasons not to attend the workshop – work, appointments, a touch of the flu, an unexpected funeral, no one to watch the children, and the distance. But these challenges made way for a higher purpose: the growing of TCC. Sixteen eager friends came together, many for a second time. (We'd had another workshop last year.)

Justin has often said that he is not too impressed with a beginning student's excitement about TCC. He often finds that this kind of excitement is usually short lived. Those committed to growing their TCC practices for many years – that is impressive. Justin's encouragement to us, "Do TCC practice on the days you feel like it, and on the days you don't feel like it." This is not always easy to do, but this is what being committed means. Remember, energy (*Chi*) follows attention. Love made manifest is always a worthy goal.

When the statement "T'ai Chi Chih has changed my life" is made, it is not taken lightly. And students and teachers step up to the challenge. For this reason we go beyond our roadblocks to attend classes, workshops, retreats, conferences and other gatherings. We touch a depth that reminds us of how serious and important TCC is in our lives. TCC came into to this world (thank you, Justin) to be of service, and to teach us a higher way to encounter life. We are all blessed when we remember how to love and share the *Chi*.

## Will TCC Be Ready? Overcoming Obstacles

By HANNAH HEDRICK, MOUNTAIN VIEW, BIG ISLAND

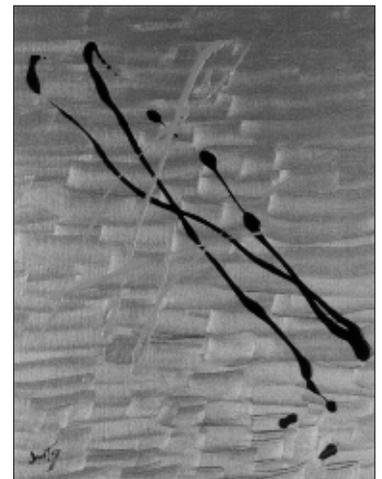
In the February 2011 issue of *The Vital Force*, Justin asked, "When the time comes, will T'ai Chi Chih be ready with enough teachers?" He further commented: "A good deal more is expected of TCC." In my opinion, to realize that expectation, a good deal more will be required of TCC teachers.

*The Vital Force* is full of inspirational and motivational articles about how instructors are sharing the *Chi* via TCC. Current teachers can also use the increased media support of TCC to "grow" their classes. I encourage the rest of us to follow the lead of the teachers who contribute articles to *The Vital Force* and who get media recognition to share information about the extra efforts we are making to prepare teacher candidates, to host teacher accreditation classes, and more.

I would like to acknowledge only two of the unsung heroines who have directly and indirectly supported my ongoing efforts to organize a teacher accreditation course here on the Big Island of Hawaii. The masterful *Vital Force* inspires me to recognize the value of TCC and the importance of using my various skills to share the gift of Joy Through Movement in more aspects of my life. Without this, few of us would be aware of the amazing contributions of our fellow teachers.

Donna McElhose's fidelity to TCC is manifested in her constant renewal through workshops and the annual conference, where she has generously shared various refinements that I in turn share with my students. Imagine their delight when Donna herself joined us for more than six hours of instruction and assistance during her "vacation" on the Big Island. She shared helpful tips and written handouts, which we continue to use. She exemplifies the integrity and generosity that, in my experience, are the hallmarks of TCC teachers who stay involved.

Preparing teacher candidates is increasingly difficult as gas prices and other considerations create obstacles to teacher/student interaction. How about a special or ongoing section in *The Vital Force* along the lines of "Overcoming Obstacles to Preparing Teacher Candidates"? [Editor's Note: articles welcome by January 1, 2012.] Without more accredited teachers, we will no have a positive answer to Justin's question: "When the time comes, will TCC be ready with enough teachers?"



## Pinyon Needle Scale Metaphor

By DANA DILLER, PRESCOTT, AZ

The pinyon pine has an insect pest, the pinyon needle scale. It's a tiny insect that hatches in the spring near the tree and moves to the previous year's new foliage where it inserts itself into the needle to feed, thus severely damage the needle and robbing the overall health and vigor of the tree. The most effective control for this insect is dormant oil, applied in early spring.

We live and convert food to energy just like the tree. Stresses reduce our potential. For me, T'ai Chi Chih is like the dormant oil, helping control my stresses, and helping me be healthier and live a more fulfilling life.

## Slow & Easy Wins The Race

By ANGELA DILEGAME, PRESCOTT, AZ

T'ai Chi Chih often makes me think of all the slow and underestimated animals and life forms on the planet. Where I once saw slow and sad, now I see creatures doing an intricate dance. They are savoring every moment and living longer, enhanced lives. When doing TCC I feel I am getting a taste of this other world, deeply rooted and engaged. It is truly amazing.

I took this TCC class to try something new and to stay active. I wanted a class that was meditative, as I rarely take time to fit it into my schedule. Sounds funny, but I was looking for teachings in slowing down. Learning TCC has had wonderful effects. Passing time seems richer and more in the moment. And applying my concentration into the soles of my feet, every movement has become more significant.

## TCC Dog Metaphor

By RUTH LILLIE, PRESCOTT, AZ

During this T'ai Chi Chih class, I have learned that there can be a reason for moving slowly. Before now I would not have given serious thought to an exercise class that had slow and purposeful movements. I would like to compare TCC movements with three pets that live at my house.

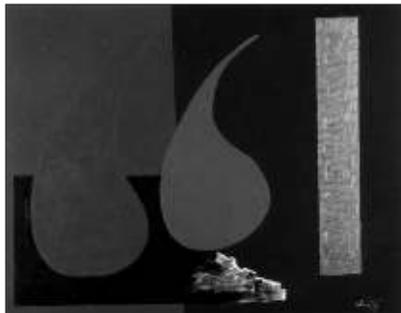
Stu is a dachshund with an attitude. From the moment we open his kennel in the morning to when we coax him back in at night, he is in perpetual motion. With an around the platter style, he races to the left and to the right. He does variations as well, including carrying the ball to the side and everything else. Stu races up and down the stairs looking for the daughter on the

mountaintop and in the valley. He pulls in the energy with his scraggly looking toys, then pushes and pulls them into the furniture cushions. It must all work for Stu because

he continually barks with joyous breaths.

Lewie is a brilliant hunter cat. He is fascinated with birds flapping their wings to which he responds with a rocking motion. Pulling Taffy is his favorite movement using toilet paper or paper towels. On the backs of furniture, Lewie attempts the bass drum and naps during the day in creative cosmic consciousness poses.

Jujube is my four-year old Sulcata tortoise. She is the *yin* to the other's *yang*. She will meander around for several hours like passing clouds. Jujube is well known in the Building 4 science area as she lives there during the colder months. She is known for her calmness, acceptance of everyone and her wise counsel.



## Freedom From Pain

By KAREN CARLISLE, PRESCOTT, AZ

I am a new practitioner of T'ai Chi Chih and had the good fortune to stumble upon Hope Spangler's class at Yavapai College, not knowing what I was beginning. But there are no coincidences, are there? I am 67 years old and have practiced many meditative and energy processes in my life such as yoga and Vipassana meditation. So, I was able to sink into the process quickly.

The best thing about TCC is its gentleness and its principle of constant movement. I work at a difficult education management job nine to ten hours a day, and have the full gambit of stress symptoms, and severe arthritis. Until 15 years ago, I always worked on my feet, but no more. I haven't been able to walk barefoot for five years, have had two foot surgeries during that time, and have used a cane for much of it. After a year of recovery, I could not walk without pain, nor hike, nor walk very far at all.

Hope reassured me I could do TCC, however modified. Immediately, I felt the energy move through my body, and it was hot and tingly. I didn't mind not being able to rock fully; beginner's mind is a beautiful place to be, and I had no expectations. Six months later, I have experienced profound changes, and nothing in my life has changed but taking up TCC. I can do TCC barefoot in the grass and on my carpet. I am able to walk miles at a time with minimal pain and without walking sticks; I walk an hour a day, and my hips swing.

I have much more energy. Often, the stress-induced chronic misalignment in my upper back, shoulders, and neck realigns itself during practice. I believe I will be able to practice TCC throughout my life. The best thing? I am happy.

# Final Report On The TCC Student Questionnaire

BY ANITA VESTAL, POINCIANA, FL

The T'ai Chi Chih study begun in 2007 has come to a conclusion. To live on, the study needs to be taken over by a research organization. While I am open to sharing the data I have, I cannot take it to the next level myself because the statistical software program is no longer compatible with my computers.

The teacher-administered study asked TCC students to rate their perceptions in categories of physical, mental and emotional/spiritual well being. Over 600 questionnaires provided by eleven TCC teachers from 2007 to 2010 were analyzed. We have reliable results from 363 student questionnaires taken on the first day of TCC class and 247 student questionnaires taken at the end of their TCC lessons.

The overall question asked by the study was: "Are changes in body, mind, spirit and well-being noticed by students new to TCC when they begin their first class and when they complete their last class?"

## BACKGROUND

A 2006 teacher accreditation class explored how to document changes that students attributed to TCC. Brainstorming sessions at the 2006 and 2007 conference determined how to study this. The TCC Outreach Coordinator, Lorraine Lepine, agreed to spearhead the project.

A "Student Reaction Questionnaire" was developed, field-tested, revised, and field tested again several times. Statistics show that the instrument (aka, the questionnaire) met statistical reliability tests, meaning the questionnaire was reliable.

In 2007, teachers voluntarily began using the questionnaire at the start and end of their courses, sending pre- and post-tests for analysis.

### The 12 Questions

1. Rate your energy level
2. Rate your frequency of headaches
3. Rate your creativity
4. Rate your level of back or joint pain
5. Rate your level of accomplishment

6. Rate how well you react to stress in your life

7. Rate your balance and coordination

8. Rate your level of physical discomfort

9. Rate the level of spirituality in your life

10. Rate your quality of sleep

11. Rate your mental clarity and focus

12. Rate your feeling of wellbeing and satisfaction with life

As of June 2009

(for classes given from February 2007 through June 2009), 11 teachers returned 610 surveys.

## PARTICIPATING TEACHERS

Viola Bens

Nancy Jo Blier

Julie Buffalo

Jerry Bumbalough

Caroline Guillot

Lorraine Lepine

(102 surveys submitted)

Donna McElhose (71 surveys submitted)

Judith Mirczak (78 surveys submitted)

Vickie Schroeder

(108 surveys submitted)

Anita Vestal

Claire Whalen

## RESULTS

All surveys were analyzed by Anita Vestal using SPSS statistical software. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) clearly shows that in all areas except creativity, there is significant improvement in how students rate themselves on changes they notice physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually that can be attributed to their T'ai Chi Chih lessons.

In the area of physical and mental aspects, at their final class compared to their first class, students rated themselves:

- higher in energy level, quality of sleep
- higher in mental clarity and focus
- higher in balance and coordination

ANOVA	Mean Square	F	Sig
Rate your energy level	288.842	64.894	.000
Rate your frequency of headaches	87.848	16.090	.000
Rate your creativity	20.956	3.451	.064
Rate your level of back or joint pain	138.277	18.243	.000
Rate your level of accomplishment	93.150	17.159	.000
Rate how well you react to stress in your life	269.471	30.130	.000
Rate your balance and coordination	179.333	35.142	.000
Rate your level of physical discomfort	103.232	16.615	.000
Rate the level of spirituality in your life	56.681	9.711	.002
Rate the quality of sleep	123.168	19.643	.000
Rate your mental clarity and focus	96.715	23.985	.000
Rate your feeling of well-being and satisfaction with life	140.834	33.927	.000

At their last class, student rated themselves:

- lower in frequency of headaches
- lower in level of back or joint pain

In the areas of emotional and spiritual qualities, students rated themselves at their final class compared to their first class as follows:

- higher in level of accomplishment
- higher in how well they react to stress
- higher in the level of spirituality in their lives
- higher in the feeling of well being and satisfaction
- higher in creativity (although the creativity category is the only one that did not show a statistically significant difference; nevertheless the mean score was higher in the last class compared to the first.)

The study had 105 male and 480 female students. Birth years ranged from 1929 to 1988 with the average birth year in 1950. The data was collected, analyzed and reported by Anita Vestal.

## Evolution Through Chi

BY JUSTIN STONE

[TRANSCRIBED FROM THE 1990 TCC TEACHER CONFERENCE AND © GOOD KARMA PUBLISHING 2009]

Zen training has a good deal in common with T'ai Chi Chih training because both Zen and TCC do not feel that words are important. Zen is a transmission without the benefit of words or doctrine, leading to seeing your own true nature. Of course, that could be said of TCC as well. It is true that you have to use words to communicate and you teach with words. But it is the circulation of the *Chi*, not the words, that brings about the changes.

We see the difficulty that's going on in the Middle East now. When there is enough evolutionary force put in motion with TCC, things will be quite different and I think you'll see the role that TCC is going to play.

Now Huang-Po was one of the greatest Zen teachers and he was the teacher of Rinzai, who was also known as Lin Chi. His Rinzai Zen is probably in ascendancy today, as the number one Zen sect or type of teaching in the world. Now Huang-Po said, "I would say that if you attain realization in the exercise of the *Chi* you will occupy the pinnacle of attainment and will allow not even the Holy Ones to spy on you." If you attain your *satori*, if you attain your *kensho*, your great realization, through the exercise of the *Chi*, you will occupy the pinnacle of attainment.

D. T. Suzuki, who recently made Zen popular in the West, said, "At the moment of enlightenment there is a complete revulsion of the *prana*." (*Prana* is Sanskrit for *Chi*.) That's a tremendous statement because you can work that backward: "With the moment of enlightenment there is a complete revulsion of the *Chi*." But how about saying: "Where there is a complete revulsion of the *Chi*, there is the moment of complete enlightenment?" I think that shows you where your practice takes you. ...

The great metaphysical mystery is that all the time that we are evolving, nothing is changing. At one level, there is no change. That's the level of the "un-carved block." But at the level that we

*it is the  
circulation  
of the Chi,  
not the words,  
that brings  
about the  
changes*

live everyday, we are changing, and we are changing rapidly. Some are changing more rapidly than others. We are all evolving, and we are all evolving, according to Gopi Krishna, to a very high spiritual state in which eventually this earth will be a paradise. Some of these statements of his are all leading in one direction. I picked them out for that reason: All have to do with TCC practice.

He says, "The religious impulse is an expression of the evolutionary force in human beings. Kundalini (*kundalini* and *Chi* are the same thing) is not a metaphysical force. It should be understood as a psycho-physiological operation of body." This corresponds very strongly to what my teacher in India used to say: "For every spiritual change there is a physical change. For every physical change there is a spiritual change." He said that, "The good (we use the words good and bad quite loosely) is that which aids evolution. That which forwards evolution is the good." ...

We are in a constant state of purification. This corresponds very closely to what happens in music. We have dissonance; we set up a dissonance and then we resolve the dissonance and there is a feeling of rest. It's also true in good painting and in all fields of the arts. Life is a matter of expansion/contraction, dissonance/consonance. Or if you prefer, a state of ill-ease, un-ease, dis-ease. This disease then becomes ease; it then comes back to a pure state.

Gopi Krishna says that "it is only when the brain is fed by this radiant psychic energy (psychic energy is what he calls *prana* or *Chi*) that the otherwise impenetrable realm of consciousness becomes perceptible to the inner vision." He is saying that one day we may view the entire realm of Consciousness! Many of the greatest thinkers have said, "There is nothing but consciousness." Yogacara Buddhism says

"Consciousness only." And Gopi Krishna says, "The world that we observe with our senses is very small, very limited. But the inner realm (which is not only inner) of consciousness is unlimited."

He had a feeling (all through the last forty years of his life) of swimming through this vast ocean of consciousness. So he says, "It is only when the brain is fed by this radiant psychic energy that the otherwise impenetrable realm of consciousness becomes perceptible to the inner vision." He says, "The human brain can rise to higher states of consciousness by certain biological readjustments in which the cerebral-spinal system plays a decisive part." You don't have to know all this in order to do TCC. But now you know what you are working with in TCC. ...



*Excerpted and reprinted with permission from Good Karma Publishing. Available as a booklet through the New Mexico T'ai Chi Chih Association for a small fee (tel 505-299-2095), or as a free e-book downloadable on <http://www.gkpub.com/talks.php>.*

# Gateway To Eastern Philosophy [as it relates to T'ai Chi Chih]

BY JUSTIN STONE

## KARMA AND THE CHI

India is entirely immersed in this thought of Karma, which is not exactly as we see it. Your Karma is based on the habit energies you have built, these *vashanas* mentioned earlier. What is it that helps build these *vashanas*, what is the means for building these *vashanas*? It is the *Chi*.

Those who have taken T'ai Chi Chih know what I'm talking about. The intrinsic energy, the vital force, is, if you want to put it into popularized terms, the means by which the absolute comes into the everyday world, comes into being. There has to be a force by which this comes into being and it is the *Chi* [that] does it. We are a product of the *Chi*. But it is the *Chi*, the force, which causes these *vrittis*, these mental disturbances, which become habit energies.

The tie between the *Chi* and the habit energies is a very close one and this is the basis for Karma. Most of the holy people in India feel that what you see, whether it's the world or people, is Karma, frozen Karma. You are seeing Karma. As I've said, I've been with many teachers who can read Karma from your face. Sai Baba said to those who came to him, "Now there's no sense in asking for my sympathy and pleading. I know what you've done in the past and I know what you're going to be doing in the future."

## GRACE VS. KARMA

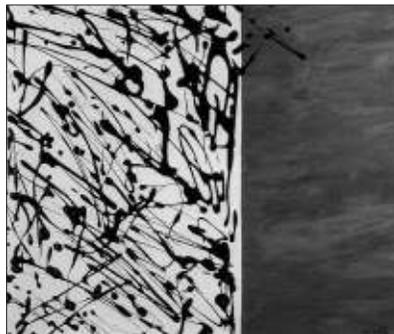
This observation opens the philosophical question of Grace versus Karma. Grace says, "Ok, I've been bad but through God's Grace, I'm going to be absolved of any punishment." And there's good reason to feel that Grace. Of course, you could also say, "The guy that works hard and is bright, gets ahead and is honest. It is God's Grace that he's successful because of these qualities." However, there's always been a dichotomy between Grace and Karma. Karma says, "Everything that happens must have a preceding cause and that cause is final." The Buddha said, "Set Karma cannot be overturned, cannot be changed." What is the answer to the role of Grace versus Karma? Does anybody have any comment on that at all? Do you understand what I mean by the disagreement between Grace, which says, "Well, you don't deserve it but we'll see that you get it," and Karma, which says, "If you have the preceding cause, then you will reap the effects. If you earned enough money, you can go out and buy a Mercedes." This is cause and effect. Karma almost implies, since there must be a preceding cause, that time is circular, cyclical. It should be obvious from everything in the universe, down to the smallest cells, that the universe is cyclical and circular. No beginning and no ending.

## FERRYING OTHERS

... This last statement I'm going to talk about concerns Zen Master

Hakuin and is very important for T'ai Chi Chih students and teachers. Hakuin says, "The essential of the molding of the outer forms consists mainly in allowing the inward spirit and vital force (that is, *Chi*) to penetrate into the space below the naval. When the inward spirit is concentrated, that is when the elixir of life is made; when this elixir is thus made, the outer form becomes firm, when the outer form becomes firm, the inner spirit becomes perfected. When the inner spirit becomes perfected, long life ensues. This is the secret. It is entirely a matter of the heart fire descending into the space below the naval." This understanding is completely lost in Japan. None of the Zen people in Japan know it. Yet, Hakuin wrote a book, *Yassenkana*, about the practice to power the heart fire into the space below the navel, which of course is the practice of T'ai Chi Chih. This is pure Taoism. Yet it's Zen!

*From the book, Gateway to Eastern Philosophy & Religion, excerpted and reprinted with permission from Good Karma Publishing, and available on www.gkpub.com.*



## YOUR TRUE HOME

.... The Taoists say that things are continually moving, restless, yet each is moving back to its origin. *Kui Chui*, time to return home. Ramana Maharshi said to go back from where you came. All of you have heard the word *Seijaku*, stillness in the midst of activity. The description the Taoists give of *Seijaku* is like a top rotating at high speed, appearing perfectly at rest. Have you ever spun a top? When it gets to top speed, it appears motionless. It isn't, it's going at a very fast pace. One of the deepest expressions I've heard is from Professor Huang when talking about the circulation and balancing of the *Chi* in T'ai Chi Chih and T'ai Chi Ch'uan. "In this way, the favorable chance, which is time, and the suitable position, which is space, can be grasped." That's one of the deepest passages I've ever heard. He also said, "That which is unfathomable in the movement of the yin/yang operations is the presence of spiritual power." Now you know why I'm sorry he is gone. Professor Huang is the one who responded, when someone asked, "What does a sage want?" "A sage wants spring to follow winter."

*circulating and balancing the Chi: in this way, the favorable chance, which is time, and the suitable position, which is space, can be grasped*

## Colorado Voices

By JUDY JACKSON, LAKEWOOD, CO

I teach in Wheat Ridge for Exempla Lutheran Medical Center, which has a division that bridges the gap between holistic healing and hospital medicine. It is like “Eastern medicine meets Western technologies.” I have taught there since I was accredited in 2005. Already this year I have taught three 6-week sessions. Considering the physical space available for teaching, the sessions are very well attended (with 8 to 13 students). Below are comments from recent students about their 6-week experience:

In response to “What were you hoping the class would accomplish for you?” they said: “I was looking forward to T'ai Chi Chih as a moving meditation. Maybe this will be an entree into sitting meditation some day.” ... “I improved my thinking and balance, and it has been good for my personal discipline.” ... “I expected to learn a moving meditation practice and I did.”

I also asked “Have you decided how to integrate this practice into your day to day life?” And students said that “I will try to practice in early mornings two to three times a week to start” and “I am planning to outside while it is nice weather.”

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## New York City Voices

By DIANA BAHN, NEW YORK CITY, NY

Today, one of my T'ai Chi Chih students who had just returned from a beach vacation to Florida's Panhandle shared with me that she not only loved her vacation but had been somewhat apprehensive about it. (She usually goes to the beach on Long Island.) She cited America's homogenization as the reason she had such a good time: Everything they have in New York City they found on their vacation.

I am a New Yorker and a TCC teacher, and when I hear the word homogenization I cringe. I am grateful for TCC because no matter how homogenized the world may seem, I suspect it really isn't that way. It couldn't be. Based on all the varied bodies, minds and spirits of the TCC practitioners, there is very little homogenization in the way we all move. Each of us, though certainly dedicated to Justin Stone and his teachings, must realize that we can never be a carbon copy of someone else – let alone replicate the session we had the day before. As Justin always says, “things change.” I am grateful for TCC in New York City because my practice acts like a knife through our outer differences and allows our shared inner sincerity to shine through.

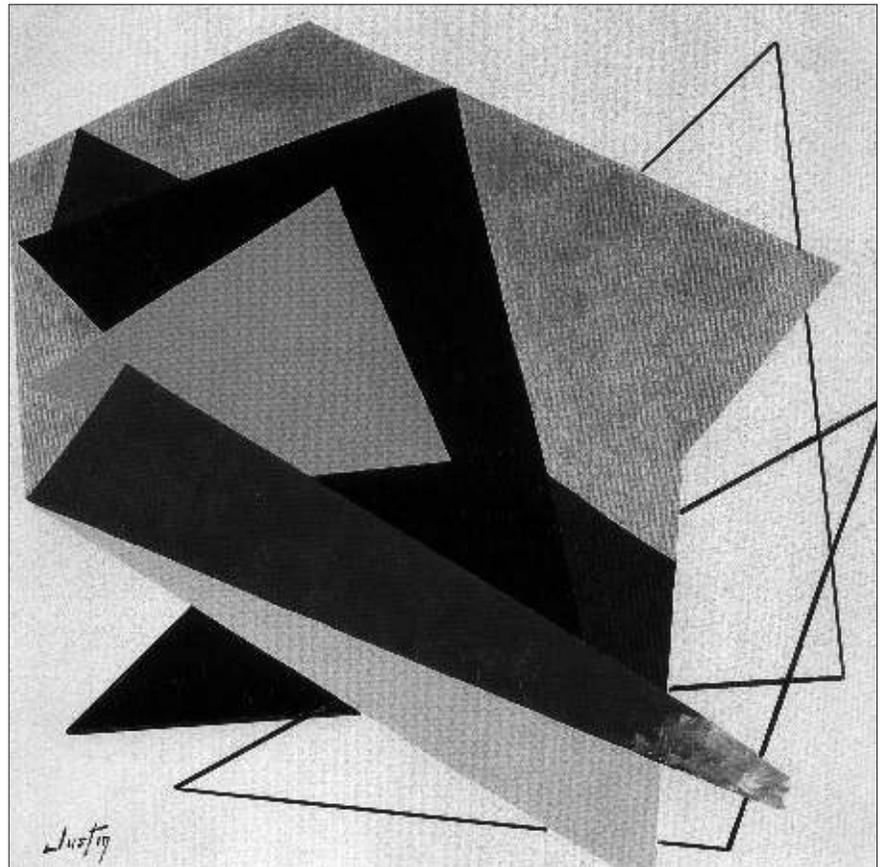
## Georgia Voices

By JUDY CHANCEY, ATLANTA, GA

One of my students, Marilyn Morrison (the owner of the yoga studio where I teach two T'ai Chi Chih classes), has a vast awareness of both the physical and spiritual bodies. In our Monday afternoon classes, she regularly synthesizes the two entities as she shares what she feels with our classmates. She has been practicing TCC regularly for almost a full year. She recently purchased *Spiritual Odyssey*, and I've asked her to share some of her favorite parts with our class. In the meantime, with Marilyn's permission, here are some of her wonderful reflections about what Justin's creation and writings have meant to her:

“I am grateful for Justin (also) because thanks to him you are here at Harmony teaching us this wonderful practice. If someone had asked me if there was a sweet and easy practice to take us where TCC takes us, I would have thought it not possible. My mindset was that hard work and diligence are the only things that can bring us where we need to be. Not so. You can relax into your life and really be in the power that the gift of consciousness brings.”

PS – It was very nice to have Carmen in Atlanta recently. And it was even more special when a student from her past showed up at the door. Who knew? Answer: the *Chi*.



## Activation, Two Ways

By JUDY TRETHERWAY, SACRAMENTO, CA

Wednesday's classes on C Yard CSP-SAC were special in what the men did to initiate their practice, and how that transformed my teaching on Thursdays at Old Folsom Prison in the Greystone Chapel. My son's friend's suicide had me deeply troubled and emotionally bound up. I thought of the men inside, and what they do when futility threatens, and how recent prayers about the inclusive presence of Grace would draw our silence deeper.

Still, I wasn't prepared to take energetic leadership in the moving meditation class. I chose to go with what was real. I asked the men to initiate their relationship with the *Chi*, and that of the group. The men arrived in four waves, and each wave settled faster and faster; it soon grew very palpable. Moving into our circle, the T'ai Chi Chih practice was straight forward, with minimal queuing and a deep trust in the *Chi*.

Lately, we've been working with activating compassion for each other by having someone come into the circle, while the rest begin movement on their behalf. I, too, felt moved to ask for support without explaining why. The group had grown so sincere and generous; I was engulfed in waves of penetrating *Chi*. I was fulfilled, melted by their gift.

We did Pulling in the Energy in silence. I was so blown away. After working in smaller groups, we discussed what had been so active in cultivating more energy this day: initiation, focus and sharing. The class had been a very powerful activation initiated by the men, my queuing was minimal and I trusted them with the energetic leadership. It was good to get out of the way, to do less.

On Thursday, walking into Old Folsom prison, I noticed an integration I could only contribute to yesterday's healing. The session was strong as we had the Hoberman ball to play with and talk about. After an opening meditation, the *Chi* field was strong in its guidance for me, and I responded with strong energetic guidance and many fresh and lively visualizations.

The early movements of the practice became a play of form and flow and formlessness. Before Bass Drum, we felt the *Chi* sensations grow from our mind's focus. At Daughter on the Mountaintop I had them visualize

the self they desired to be in two to five years. Then with Daughter in the Valley, five to ten years out. The field of *Chi* was sweeping us all up into our potential.

Our Carry the Ball to the Side took on whole new flow, too. As we placed our hands into position holding our *Chi* balls, we gazed into them, feeling the *Chi* between our hands, and intentionally amplifying it up double or triple and then began. We repeated this at the beginning of each set of three. Our pausing between each segment became a ground to dissolve into the infinite, and then reformulate ourselves anew, noticing the accumulating sensations with each set of circling.

After a healing session for two men with Push Pull, and then in Pulling in the Energy, left foot, we visualized Old and New Folsom prison grounds in the center of the circle receiving the *Chi*, and then on the right foot the earth. In guiding the earth blessing, I realized I was shrinking the earth down to the size of a ball in the center, the size of a globe, rather than enlarging myself. I had felt a fleeting swirl of "oh this is too much *Chi*" and wanted to open further. So in graceful conclusion we felt the enormity of the earth under our feet. We talked about relative size of humans and Doc shared about our blood vessels reaching the moon if end-to-end and more. Then I invited us to do this move again, this time leaving the earth that enormous size and expanding our sense of self to do the move over the earth. We grounded that expanded state for quite a while.

I jumped then to Working the Pulley. Noticing how many were out of rhythm, I asked them to synchronize with me. Yet I felt a different nudge: we were all flowing beautifully, just not synchronized. Why not embrace the variations? We continued to flow, each in our own authentic rhythm, with a unity that included all the differ-

ences. We tend to get our feathers ruffled when someone is unable or unaware of the benefits of flowing with the group. Today, however, the *Chi* was guiding us to include all the diversity as strength. Playing with opposites and the perennial truth of paradox, we come into wholeness. We stood in Cosmic Consciousness Pose for a long time, and felt its name.

Oh, my, I thought, it doesn't get any better than these two days, and my role had been so different each day. Taking strong energetic leadership at Old Folsom, and stepping back and trusting the students to initiate at New Folsom. The *Chi* field activated strongly fully either way. *Haola*. All is well, so be it.



## T'ai Chi What?

BY GLENN NORTHERN, NEWBURGH, NY

I was among the many people for whom the term, T'ai Chi, evoked images of venerable, ancient sages, who moved with the graceful agility of those much younger in years. The only true practitioners were from the remote villages of China, where the forms originated. Because I was waist high in this stereotype's quagmire, I was a little skeptical when I first heard about T'ai Chi Chih, created by Justin Stone, who obviously was not from the Eastern culture. I had, however, been seeking to study T'ai Chi for years and the only course that didn't require a lengthy commute was being taught by Sister Morales.

I had had meniscus surgery four years prior to enrolling in TCC, and even though I was doing physical therapy exercises daily, my knee still hurt going up or down stairs. By my sixth lesson with Sister Morales my knee hurt considerably less. By the time my ten sessions were completed, I had replaced the physical therapy regimen with an hour of TCC, and I felt absolutely no more pain. More than that, I no longer had to use the handrails to get up and down stairs. The improvement was so dramatic that when my daughter came to visit, she noted that I could put on my shoes without having to sit down or hold on to something to steady myself. By my second session of lessons I could skip down the stairs or go up them two at a time. My posture and my breathing had improved considerably. I was shifting from shallow breathing to the deep oxygenating breaths that fill the body with vitality.

It was then that I decided to examine TCC's nineteen movements more closely to see just how they measured up against the older forms. It was obvious that not only had Justin Stone studied and mastered traditional T'ai Chi; he understood it so thoroughly he could create another style, T'ai Chi Chih. It is tantamount to the old forms in its health benefits, and in its ability to restore both physical and cognitive vitality. Besides practicing daily, I also use some of the movements to warm up before playing tennis or gardening. It has improved my balance, the stride of my walk, my posture and my breathing capacity. In short, it has improved my general well being immeasurably.

## Canada Day & Health

BY CAROLYN O'DONNELL, ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND

*Editor's Note: The author works in a healthcare setting where the motto is "Healthy People: Healthy Communities," and she was asked to submit something for Canada Day about what she does to stay healthy.*

Just letting you know what I've been doing to get and stay healthy. Besides walking, and maybe even some running, I decided to take a look at where I could improve. In April 2010, the evening news showed "Places To Go With Sharon Snow" featuring T'ai Chi Chih. After hearing Sharon's questions to the instructor and doing some research, I knew I wanted to try this. I took an eight-week beginner's class with accredited instructor, Sheila Leonard, and the follow up class "Beyond Beginners." Sheila continues to show us refinements in the moves to increase the *Chi*, and enables us to practice within a group. The energy in the room is phenomenal.

What's TCC done for me? It makes me feel great. I get up in the morning, do the morning grooming, a TCC practice, eat breakfast, and head out the door. I find since starting TCC that when I practice I'm better able to choose my mood for the day; I'm calmer in my approach to difficult situations, and I'm better organized. Now when asked what I do for exercise and enjoyment I add TCC to the list. I'm now looking after the mind, body and spirit and feeling great doing it. TCC has certainly been a gift to me – one I give myself daily.

## Peace & Lightness

BY KOMPALYA THUNDERBIRD, SYRACUSE/CAMILLUS, NY

After learning T'ai Chi Chih's nineteen movements and one pose with Neena Mitchell, I felt an immediate sense of calm and renewal. My body relaxed and savored the stillness. After my first six-week course I experienced more peace than ever before. Prior to TCC, I was petulant and worried all the time, unable to feel balanced in the company of others. During the practice, I experience a peace through movement that has been unknown to me. I have practiced yoga for many years and received great results, but TCC has offered me harmony and clarity. I believe these powerful movements offer a clearing of the soul, a lightness in everyday circumstances, and a joy to share with others.



## The More Of TCC

By MARCY BURNS, OXNARD, CA

Now and then, I wake up in the early morning to an invasive gloom. I feel a vague heaviness challenge my intention to greet the day. I get up anyway because T'ai Chi Chih practice begins at 8:30, and I know my mood will lift when I see my teacher and friends. Somewhere during the practice, the amorphous despair will disappear, and by the end I will be alert, lighthearted and eager to continue my day.

I practice TCC six times a week, three in a class and three alone. It is an important part of all that sustains me. Amazingly, I have found for me there is *more*. I'm 83 years old, considered "old-old" by gerontologists, and this is relevant to my personal *more* of TCC. I walk regularly, swim, lift weights, and go to an occasional yoga class. I also walk at a brisk pace for an hour or more, at least five days a week; I try to reach 10,000 steps daily. Sometimes I can do it, other days I come up short. Sometimes I'm very tired, other times not. And that is the heart of the *more* of TCC.

I tend to either walk after group practices, or after being more sedentary at home. I observed some months ago that I was more susceptible to fatigue when I would walk after sitting at a desk or doing light chores. Walking after a full practice, I have more energy, I walk faster, and I experience significantly less fatigue than after ordinary daily activity. How miraculous is that? I accept this *more*, my personal miracle of energy and endurance, with gratitude. I leave the explanations to wiser teachers, and those who have practiced for years.



## Home Dialysis

By CAROLYN AND DENNIS, YORK COUNTY, PA

We would like to share our experience as new students of T'ai Chi Chih and how it has already helped us. Carolyn has been a dialysis patient for about two years and we recently went through an intense six-week training for home hemodialysis. This form of dialysis requires two large needle sticks for blood circulation through the dialysis machine, close monitoring, and various procedures.

We have been performing dialysis at home for about a month. The learning curve has been steep, and we're just beginning to master it. We started our TCC lessons just one week prior to starting dialysis at home, and we are already reaping the benefits. One day when things were not going so smoothly, we decided to put TCC to a test: we simply did a few TCC moves. It was amazing to feel all the nervousness and jitters we were experiencing just go away. Wow, we both noticed, this stuff really works!

## Depression Waxes & Wanes

By NADINE BURGE, WINTHROP HARBOR, IL

I took my first T'ai Chi Chih class in 2007, and a follow up one in 2008. My chiropractor and I found that TCC really helped with the terrible arthritis in my neck and back. In December 2009, I suffered a terrible loss when my 94-year-old mother suffered a stroke and died. (I always thought she would live to be 100, and her death threw me into a deep, horrible depression.) I stopped doing my TCC and just about everything else. The depression paralyzed me emotionally to the point where some days I couldn't even get dressed and leave the house. Even medication didn't help that well.

Fast forward to three weeks ago: my pain was so bad I was beside myself. I took multiple prescription pain relievers with little or no relief. I decided to try my TCC. What did I have to lose? Unless I was having a really poor mental health day, I started practicing my TCC again on a regular basis. About 15 minutes of movement was all it took and the pain was ninety-percent gone; my back and neck are now in good shape.

Finally, during a very depressed day recently, I forced myself to do my TCC practice. Surprisingly, I felt better mentally. It didn't last, but I did experience some relief. I have to say that TCC is a really valuable part of my life, and I will continue practicing.

### I Live In Faith

*Chi* bubbling up like a  
mountain spring  
sinking back into the earth  
ever flowing renewing  
moving living free  
— VALERIE SIEMER, CA

### Practice

settling,  
feel free, smooth *Chi*,  
source subtly shifting,  
lengthening leg lightens,  
expanding space supporting spine,  
arms float, glide,  
*tan t'ien* guides,  
the soft,  
centering,  
sincerity.  
— CAROL SPICER, FAIR LAWN, NJ

## How White Are Your Knuckles?

By APRIL LEFFLER, PROSPECT PARK, PA

**R**elaxletgoopenreceive. Relaxletgoopenreceive. Relax,let go,open,receive. R-e-l-a-x, l-e-t- g-o, o-p-e-n, r-e-c-e-i-v-e. Relax... Let go... Open... Receive...

As I say this mantra out loud in my car, I slowly begin to see, in my mind's eye, my fingers loosening their grip on the steering wheel of life. Why do I hold on so tightly in the first place? Fear, of course.

Fear of having another episode of vertigo. Fear of having to cancel yet another T'ai Chi Chih class because the room is spinning. Fear of having to pull off the road, again, because the road is spinning. Fear of the not-so-subtle and sometimes very subtle barometric pressure changes inside my head that often precede another vertigo attack. Fear of often having no warning before the vertigo hits. Fear of the steady stream of bills that come even when I am missing a lot of work.

How humbling to be brought to my knees, sometimes literally, with these debilitating occurrences. How embarrassing to be a TCC teacher who cannot regain her balance... To be teaching a moving meditation designed to circulate and balance the Intrinsic Energy.

Am I so connected to Mother Earth that my body begins to shake and quake soon after a devastating earthquake and tsunami hit halfway around the world? As much as my ego would like to entertain that idea, give me a friggin' break. Do I feel anger with having been diagnosed with Meniere's Disease? You bet. In fact, I'm moving through quite a few feeling

states – sadness, vulnerability, dependency, brokenness, emptiness.

Wait a minute...emptiness? Do I smell Zen? Justin was called to be the Big Hermit, to be able to find serenity on the corner of 42nd Street and Broadway. Any body can feel peaceful doing TCC in class or in a quiet room. Can I find and stay balanced in my center, when I can't even stand up? I have always believed that TCC is a metaphor for life. Perhaps it's time to put that theory to the test.

When I wake up at 3:00am to my room violently spinning and bouncing, I consciously drop my attention to the soles of my feet while I lay in bed. I wiggle my toes. I feel the sheets. I breathe. I focus. I actually begin to feel quiet in spite of the room continuing to bounce. I close my eyes, stay in my feet and begin to feel my center. The eye of the storm is calm.

Upon awakening, I realize just how much my thoughts rush forward, creating fearful images through much of my days and evenings. What if I can't drive? What if the vertigo strikes during class? What if I have to cancel appointments for work again? What if. And my knuckles begin to tighten their grip again.

Then, I am gently reminded to drop the attention to the soles of my feet and to deliberately bring my attention to the present moment. To accept "what is" in this moment... to breathe... to loosen my grip (again) and to let go of trying to control what happens.

Soon, I go through days, weeks, and months of this moment-to-moment mindfulness. I am learning to shrug my shoulders in response to the fearful "what ifs" that my mind tries to create. I realize that I am applying the principles of T'ai Chi Chih to my practice of life. And I am grateful. Thank you, Justin.

## Pyramid Poems

By JEFF HOEPNER, IL

when  
a frog  
croaks on for  
infinity  
sun and moon  
listen  
awed

you  
and I  
can speak of  
ancient wisdom  
but the words  
must be  
lived

watch  
lightning  
scare you while  
thunder rumbles  
in your soul  
let it  
go

a  
rocking  
a taffy  
insanity  
dissolves if  
you can  
flow

blah  
blah blah  
no one can  
elucidate  
the whole truth  
for me  
now

## It's Never Too Early: Conference 2012

By NEAL ROY, PORTLAND, OR

**N**ext year's Teacher Conference will be in Portland, Oregon. It's never too early to mark your calendars and start planning your trip to the beautiful Pacific Northwest. The conference will be held July 5th through 8th at the scenic Red Lion Hotel on the great Columbia River. It's just minutes from downtown Portland and only 15 minutes from the Portland International Airport via the complimentary on call airport transportation.

Spend a great weekend deepening your practice with our Bridges to Joy. (Portland has 10 bridges crossing the Willamette River connecting the east side to its west side.) July is a beautiful time to be in Oregon; summer daytime temperatures average 78 degrees and it's dry. You won't want to miss the 27th annual TCC Teacher Conference.

## Seijaku Teacher Accreditation

with Pam Towne in Fountain Valley, CA; April 29 – May 1

By COLLEEN CROSSEN, SEAL BEACH, CA

I had taken classes in *Seijaku* prior to becoming an accredited T'ai Chi Chih teacher, and knew that someday I would like to share this dynamic form too. Without a doubt, practicing *Seijaku* helped my TCC and better prepared me for teacher training. After a year of teaching TCC, eight TCC teachers came together for this accreditation adventure. The intense experience was filled with uncovering and pushing through many of life's hard obstacles while forging new connections.

*Seijaku* is playing with a different aspect of the Chi – contraction coupled with expansion. This door to expansion presents another opportunity to let go of all that hinders us, opening us to inherent wisdom and our full potential.

Why learn or teach *Seijaku* when you love the effortless movements of TCC practice? Well, sometimes we don't know what we don't know; sometimes something different can offer us a new awareness. When we practice *Seijaku*, we more fully know softness through hardness. Justin says that *Seijaku* greatly speeds up our spiritual evolution. We begin to welcome difficulties as blessings. Think of *yin* and *yang*. Is one better? So it is with hardness and softness.

Justin wrote, "When the vibratory rate is stepped up thru meditation, T'ai Chi, or heightened awareness seminars, as well as other disciplines, there may well be glimpses of other forms of life undreamed of in the everyday world." (From "Ultimate Truth," *The Vital Force*, Fall, 1988) So why not entertain new experiences that can afford us greater insight? There is incredible value in shifting our perspective and seeing through new eyes. *Seijaku* is not only a great tool for working through our challenges, it also offers us an additional view of the *Chi*. As the Chinese saying goes, "Why choose to walk on one leg when you have two?"

## Letting Go With Seijaku

By SANDY McALISTER, HAYWARD, CA

Letting go (to a deeper level of softness, of extraneous thoughts, of effort) can sometimes be a challenge while practicing T'ai Chi Chih. In exploring *Seijaku*, TCC practitioners are experiencing a deeper understanding of letting go. A group of 10 TCC teachers met for a day of *Seijaku* [in Orinda, California, in June] with Pam Towne. The small group and the comfort of meeting in a teacher's home lead to great discussions and sharing. Teachers who had learned *Seijaku* many years ago found the practice less about physical effort and more about awareness and letting go. Gifts of the day included:

"Being aware of the power of releasing and letting go; of the power of softness; of thinking about resistance and thus making it so." (JIM EAGLE) ... "I got a great distinction on releasing, simply letting go, at a visceral level." (RICHARD) ... "Resistance not muscular force; less than 50 percent resistance." (DAVID SCHULBERG) ... "I experienced a profound centered calm and quietness moving out of resistance several times." (DARLENE)

## Costa Rica Is Blooming

By ANITA VESTAL, POINCIANA, FL



We can add Costa Rica to the growing list of countries with T'ai Chi Chih practitioners. In May and June I led two, half-day introductory workshops in different parts of the country. (Both areas want another workshop in September.) Participants remarked that: "repetitive movements are very centering and comforting" ... "it got better with each round of practice" ... "loved the flow and increased suppleness of the body" ... "I felt energized and at the same time peaceful and calm" ... "really like that it's simple to learn, it feels do-able." Both groups plan to continue to practice together with the help of instructional DVDs, photo workbooks and YouTube clips. Costa Rica's beautiful flora, fauna and conducive temperatures offer a perfect scene for practicing in nature.

## TCC Teacher Accreditation

With Pam Towne in St. Paul, MN; May 9-14, 2011

By NANCY WERNER-AZARSKI, MINNEAPOLIS, MN

**N**ine candidates from Illinois, Virginia, North Dakota, United Kingdom and Minnesota came to the St. Benedictine Monastery to deepen their practice and become T'ai Chi Chih teachers. Led by host Sue Bitney and joined by several local auditing teachers (and one from Canada), this energetic and committed group experienced some tears, some frustrations, and lots of learning. Here's some of what we learned along the way:

- Hosting a training is a bit of work, but it really energizes the community.
- Thanks to the teachers who work diligently to prepare students. And to those that don't, please just think about your student candidates: Attend TCC events and be present as they journey to become teachers.
- If you audit a training, you'll get an updated version of the teachers' training manual.
- It is so glorious to see the changes in candidates as they move through their week. So much fun to witness the ah-ha moments. Teachers, how about your practice? Hit a plateau? Stuck in a rut?

Several new teachers commented on the impact of the week: "the hard work and enthusiasm of the teachers was overwhelming" and another shared about her "unexpected crisis when I learned... I needed a lot of corrections... the helpful auditors were very generous with their time, and I was able to make it through successfully..." And one described the week as hard work and "yet it wasn't work. It was opening up, letting go, receiving, giving, listening, contributing, growing, loving and self-reflecting."

One teacher remembered her teacher who had died recently: "I want to thank Joe Apt for always being there for me. His grace in his life and in his TCC teaching brought me to this place in my TCC journey. I hope to bring this same grace to my students. TCC has stirred my soul and filled me up in so many ways. I am so excited and honored to share this transformational practice." One new teacher described his feelings "on Wednesday during the group practice when tears welled up and I had this profound, transcendent sense that I was coming home."

And finally, an auditing teacher wrote: "We know the truth about you since we have done TCC with you. That is the only truth we need to know. We know that in your hearts you have received forgiveness for all perceived mistakes. In TCC, there is no perfect practice. In TCC, every practice is perfect. May you feel the healing of TCC. We know that you are loved since we have practiced TCC with you. For you, may you know joy and gratitude through moving in TCC."

Going to a teachers' training, you might not expect to learn truths about yourself, or to feel unconditional forgiveness, or to begin healing by resting in love, joy and gratitude. Pam quoted Justin saying, "*Chi* is the medium through which divinity works." And it works – for teacher candidates and teachers alike. Try it.

## Springtime Arrives Early

TCC Retreat with Antonia Cooper  
in Edmonton, Alberta; April 29 – May 1, 2011

By GAIL TERRIFF, EDMONTON, ALBERTA, CANADA

**W**ith private rooms, a huge auditorium, an outdoor labyrinth, and good food, the Providence Center was a beautiful home for our T'ai Chi Chih retreat. After settling in, we got into the theme of the weekend, that T'ai Chi Chih is a spiritual practice. Antonia began with Justin's essay, "The Essence of T'ai Chi Chih" (*Spiritual Odyssey*), and asked the group of 22 people: what about TCC appeals to us?



CONTINUED ON P. 21

## North Carolina Comes Alive

Retreat with Antonia Cooper in Hertford, NC; March 18, 2011

By HARRIET MARQUIT, HERTFORD, NC

When I invited Antonia to come to our tiny town, I had no idea that I would end up with 33 attendees. As this was my first time hosting such an event, I felt overwhelmed by the astonishing response. I thought back to my teacher training days, and felt the support and comfort of my fellow students all around me. I also had the quiet, solid support of Antonia, encouraging me all the way. The people who participated in this amazing, full-of-*Chi* weekend were delighted with the experience:

“I had no idea of what to expect, so when I felt so amazingly peaceful (and still do) after our weekend, I was happily surprised. Antonia is an excellent teacher, providing just enough instruction and practice to make it meaningful and effective. Meeting beforehand and culminating at the end of the retreat was a very nice touch. The documentary (‘On The Road Home’) really touched me.”

“I came with an open mind and a little bit of skepticism. I found two delightful teachers who soon made me feel comfortable with the concept of TCC. The teaching was thorough and precise, yet fun. The frequent repetition of the moves allowed me to rapidly learn them and execute them myself.”



CONTINUED FROM P. 20

Donna Aldous said that it was the grounding and joy she felt when doing her practice. She also thought the caliber of the people associated with the discipline proved fast and true friends for life.

When I do my TCC practice, I feel calm and peace in my body. I feel more grounded, strong and secure. Sometimes, I feel so joyous that a few tears come into my eyes and maybe a smile/feeling of pure joy appears. I am so grateful for this practice. When I do the movements, I know that feelings of love and joy will fill me, the room, and move out into the world. I am so grateful.

The weekend consisted of grouping the movements according to direction – up and down, side-to-side, or forward and backward. Antonia emphasized the importance of the “Bubbling Spring” in the soles of the feet, how the *tan t’ien* carries the whole movement, and an appreciation for details like, “How many wrist circles do you really do in Pulling Taffy, Variation Two, Wrist Circles?” She read each movement from Justin’s photo-textbook and answered questions throughout. Working in pairs offered a helpful perspective.

We would return to *Spiritual Odyssey* to inspire discussions about how “joy becomes our natural heritage,” and compassion, and spiritual evolution. We shared how the “spiritual is in accordance with reality.” Antonia explained her role as the Guide of TCC, and then the teachers and students separated for some group time, expressing their thoughts and hopes for the future. This was a good sharing time and was appreciated by all.

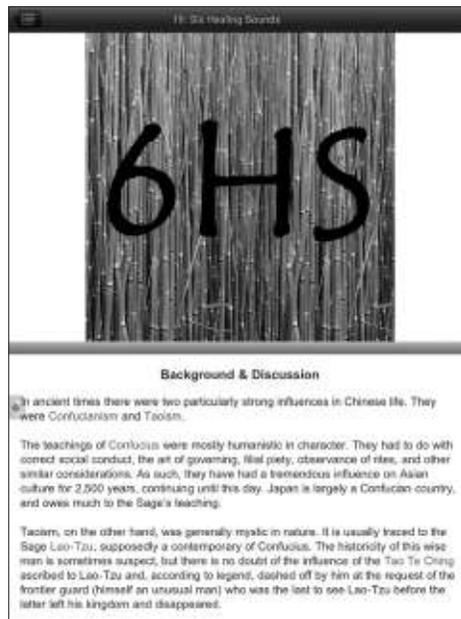
Many different people led practices over the weekend. They were powerful and healing and loving. The students, in particular, loved the double circle practice. We had several breaks for meals, and Mass was held throughout the weekend. After a great Indian-cuisine buffet on Saturday night, we came together for more soft discussion and a rededication ceremony/candlelight meditation. Thanks, Antonia for lugging all those candles and candle holders up to Edmonton and creating those beautiful candle cards.

## There's an app for that!

There will be within weeks, anyway... Justin Stone's instructional Photo Text will soon be available on iPhone, iPod Touch, and iPad. Click through on the home page of taichichih.org or find it on iTunes. Search any of these keywords on iTunes: tai chi chih, t'ai chi chih, Justin Stone, Good Karma Publishing, TCC. Price is \$9.99. (An Android version coming within a few months.) What are the benefits of having it on this platform?

- We can stay current and reach a younger market.
- ALL photos taken of Justin during the original photo session can now be seen, for greater fine-tuning of your movements. The print version (by the necessity of print economics) could only include a limited number of images per movement.
- The background text contains hyperlinks to Wikipedia to further illuminate Justin's references to Lao-Tzu, Karma, Taoism, and more.
- Movements are linked to one another (when referenced in the original text) with one click.
- It's easy to take with you on vacation and share movements with friends.

KIM GRANT, ALBUQUERQUE, NM



## The Lighter Side

At the beginning of my college class, I mention how former students have found TCC to be very useful for combating stress. The class and I were sitting on the gym floor. I rested my hand on the floor and told the class that that level represented 0 stress. Then I raised my hand high and told the class that that level represented maximum stress, or a 10. I then asked the students in the class to show me where their current stress levels were, by placing their hands in the 0-10 zone. The class erupted into laughter when one student actually jumped up and stretched his hand as high as he could. – Sharon Sirkis, Columbia, MD

At the MS Day Group, it is common to have interruptions when I teach my TCC class. I just go with the flow when the phone rings, or a member comes late, or when the intercom booms forth with the announcement for the day. And today was no different. Right in the middle of the class, two workmen opened the door to the class, apologized for the disturbance, and went to the front of the room. One of the guys climbed up a ladder, and proceeded to work on the ceiling. All I could do was laugh, and say, "Pay no attention to that man behind the curtain!" – Sharon Sirkis, Columbia, MD

The neighbor nearest to the retreat center bedroom has about a dozen roosters, and they cockadoodledoo about 20 hours a day. We groused about it and made jokes about it, but it wasn't until I got home that I realized what they were saying: "Wake up, wake up, sunrise is not the only time of day to wake up." – PETE GREGORY, HIGHLAND, IN

## T'ai Chi Chih Community Calendar

DATE	WHAT & WHO	WHERE	CONTACT
September 8-11	Prajna Retreat w/ Sandy (Aston), PA	Philadelphia area	April Leffler / 610-532-6753 lirpaleff@rcn.com
September 16	TCC Teacher Workshop w/ Sandy	Grayslake, IL	Donna McElhose / 847-223-6065 dmcelhose2@gmail.com
September 17	TCC Student Workshop w/ Sandy	Grayslake, IL	Donna McElhose / 847-223-6065 dmcelhose2@gmail.com
September 18-20	TCC Retreat w/ Pam	Prescott, AZ	Hope Spangler / 928-775-2010 tcc4hope@Q.com
Late September or early October	TCC Workshop	St. John's, Newfoundland	Sheila Leonard / 709-579-7863 sheilaleonard@nf.sympatico.ca
October 7-9	Seijaku Renewal w/ Pam	St Paul, MN	Sue Bitney / 612-353-4968 smbitney@gmail.com
October 28 - November 3	TCC Teacher Accreditation w/ Pam	Philadelphia area (Aston), PA	Daniel Pienciak / 732-988-5573 wakeupdaniel@aol.com
November 4-6	Seijaku Teacher Accreditation w/ Pam	Philadelphia area (Aston), PA	Daniel Pienciak / 732-988-5573 wakeupdaniel@aol.com
November 14-19	TCC Teacher Accreditation w/ Sandy	Albuquerque, NM	Ann Rutherford / 505-292-5114 ruthergary@aol.com
<b>~ 2012 ~</b>			
February 3-5	Seijaku Teacher Accreditation w/ Pam	Albuquerque, NM	Ann Rutherford / 505-292-5114 ruthergary@aol.com
Spring; date TBD	TCC Intensive w/ Pam	New Jersey/ Pennsylvania Area	Daniel Pienciak / 732-988-5573 wakeupdaniel@aol.com
May 3-6	TCC Retreat w/ Antonia	Pecos, NM	Ann Rutherford / 505-292-5114 ruthergary@aol.com
July 5-8	TCC Teacher Conference	Portland, OR	Neal Roy / 503-970-4740 goodhairdaze@comcast.net
Date TBD Pending Sufficient Interest	TCC Teacher Accreditation	Big Island, HI	Hannah Hedrick / 808-968-7013 hedrickhneca@aol.com

**MORE WORKSHOPS & RETREATS**

(Postings here are open to all teachers offering events wholly devoted to TCC.)

August 13	Seijaku Workshop w/ Carmen Brocklehurst	Albuquerque, NM	Judy Hendricks / 505-897-3810 judyhendricks@me.com
October 20-23	TCC Retreat w/ Carmen Brocklehurst	Albuquerque, NM	Judy Hendricks / 505-897-3810 judyhendricks@me.com

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**Mark Your Calendars!**  
**TCC Teacher Conference**  
**July 5-8, 2012 in Portland, Oregon**

SEE P. 18 FOR DETAILS

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### TEACHER RESOURCES

Contact [changes@taichichih.org](mailto:changes@taichichih.org) to receive the hidden url with information specific to teachers.

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If you have questions, please contact Mary Ruiz at [vfjmembership@yahoo.com](mailto:vfjmembership@yahoo.com) or P.O. Box 92674, Albuquerque, NM 87199-2674.

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Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

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Date you were accredited as a Seijaku teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the teacher who taught you T'ai Chi Chih \_\_\_\_\_

Name of "second signature" \_\_\_\_\_

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