

# 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

### 20th Century Psalms: Reflections On This Life

BY JUSTIN STONE

We cannot picture a beginning or an ending to this inscrutable energy – the *Chi* (*Prana*). There is no sense of individuality to it. Perhaps it is only the sense of individuality, that which separates, that dies.

Does anyone own the smell of flowers? How many “hear” the falling snow? To live each day as the last on earth is to appreciate life. Only when we can do without can we possess.

If man should go the way of the dinosaur, the Life Force would not disappear – it would continue to manifest in millions of ways on countless planes of existence. There is only transformation – no creation or destruction. Nothing comes into being; it is simply a transformation. People think the Life Force manifests only in the forms with which they are familiar! What conceit!



Is there an Unchanging behind the ever-changing swirl of phenomena? The Indians call it “Turiya,” the 4th and underlying state of consciousness.

Could anything as complex and ingenious as the human body happen by accident?

Behind the tears and regrets, all are singing the Glory of Creation.

I was struck by the assertion of a profound teacher in India that great Yogis often come back as trees to watch the “Leela” (“Play of the Lord”). When I meditate under Redwood trees, the oldest living creatures, I do not find this hard to believe.

Humility that is the result of conscious effort is egotism. Constant concern with self and failure to accept impermanence are the causes of suffering.

Truth does not come from outside and it does not come from words. Please read this sentence carefully.

Ambition and competition, so revered, are responsible for much of the misery of the world. Envy is a natural concomitant.

The one who is not ready never knows he is not ready. We can see below but we can never see above (higher vibration).

[Reprinted with permission from Good Karma Publishing. This title is currently out-of-print.]

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“T'AI CHI CHIH IS A SERVICE TO HUMANITY. IT IS A FORM OF LOVE.” JUSTIN STONE, ORIGINATOR

••••

# May The Vital Force Be With You

## - READER VOICES: CHRIS NORKUS -

I have ongoing T'ai Chi Chih sessions two days per week and will teach a new round of classes for beginners soon, but recently I had more students than ever attend. I even extended the classes so we could listen to *Spiritual Stories from the East* and the *KNME Justin Stone-Carmen Brocklehurst Interview DVD*.

While I have kept many older issues of *The Vital Force*, I have also cut up some and given away others. Recently, I started looking through the older saved editions again. I always see something in them that makes me want to hang on to them. But today, I just decided to let them go. I took a big stack to my big class and asked every student to take one *Vital Force*, read it, and come back to the next session with an article, paragraph, or sentence that resonates with them and that they want to share. I also asked them to return *The Vital Force* issues so that we could continue circulating them until the issues (perhaps) don't show up anymore. Maybe this process will generate some new subscriptions. Every copy I brought in disappeared. Circulation.

One of my students who took lessons a couple years ago, and has been a regular attendee all year, did not take a copy today. I asked her why before she left. She said she had taken one a couple of years ago when I offered and had not returned it yet, but she would do in an upcoming session. Circulation.

I do hope that somewhere there are copies of all the back issues of *The Vital Force*. They could be of future interest as a reference for documenting the growth and evolution of TCC. Maybe knowing that there is such a stash would make it easier for others to let go of their copies.

*Editor's Note: There is a stash of back issues, which will be archived on [www.taichichih.org](http://www.taichichih.org).*

## -PHOTOS NEEDED -

*The Vital Force* is publishing springtime flowers in this May issue because it's Spring, but also because there is a dearth of high quality and high-resolution images of people practicing T'ai Chi Chih (and practicing correctly). Please send some along when you get a chance. You will be credited and the whole community will benefit.

COMPILED BY KIM GRANT, ALBUQUERQUE, NM

**WEBSITE FUNDING**  
Your *The Vital Force* subscription fee not only pays for the publication to reach you via First Class, but it also goes towards maintaining and improving [www.taichichih.org](http://www.taichichih.org) – with valuable information that reaches around the globe. Please remind teachers you know, who do not subscribe to *The Vital Force* but who enjoy the reach and influence of [www.taichichih.org](http://www.taichichih.org), about this service and benefit.  
Thanks for helping.

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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 calendar and 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.

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**Deadline: July 1**  
**Publication Date: Mid-Aug**  
Musings on gratitude:  
"The great secret in T'ai Chi Chih is what happens to the Vital Force. We should be grateful for it."  
*Passing Clouds*

**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**  
Musings on the importance of practice: "TBD."  
*Cosmic Consciousness Pose*

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

## Dissolving Language Barriers

BY LINDA BRAGA, CASTRO VALLEY, CA

In Spring 2009, as the U.S. economy worsened, many adults found T'ai Chi Chih classes as a way of coping with stress. One such class in south Hayward, CA, became so crowded that another class was added, and within two weeks, 17 more people had enrolled. This class was unique: half the students spoke English and half spoke only Chinese. The latter were invited to continue in class, even if they could not speak English. Smiles and nods from go a long way in communicating the essentials. Having a calendar also helped, since it was not clear if they could read English.

I hoped that the non-English-speaking students would follow and imitate what I did. To support them, I began to use more gestures and facial expressions, and different sounds to convey meaning as we practiced. We began to communicate through the flow of *Chi* and simple body language. On week three, Robert, a gentleman with both Chinese and English language skills, arrived. Now we could really have an exchange.

There is something wonderful about teaching TCC to non-English-speaking students. They observed and adjusted their movements more quickly and precisely. They picked up nuances of the movements: softness, slowness, and circularity. They observed every small detail of movement, foot position, and posture. They progressed quickly; motivation to learn and their innate respect for their teacher helped.

When one of the Chinese students needed additional help, I would pause between movements and stand in front of each student in class, demonstrating the movement. They would imitate the movement and make adjustments. I would smile and move to the next student. (All students were treated equally.) During this time, students were watching how quickly the Chinese students caught on. I had not used this technique before, but found it powerful. Everyone seemed to improve from this individual brief time of demonstration with *no words*.

Together, we discovered that many TCC movements are about letting the arms bend at the elbows as the hands comes back toward the body. Soon after, I just needed to point to my elbow, and they got it that we let the arm fold back or rise naturally. All the extra effort of circular patterns that were too large just seemed to disappear. The Six Healing Sounds were a real joy. After all, we were all speaking the same sounds, the same language. All the students enjoyed this newfound unity of movement and sound. The barrier of language dissolved. Joy thru movement was the fruit of our practice in class, and I shall treasure the memory of these students trusting their new teacher to guide them gently.

## Translating Into Mandarin & Cantonese

BY JUDY HUBBELL, SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Teaching in the city always offers the opportunity to work with diverse age and cultural populations. I use large laminated signs in English for the 19 movements and one pose, and a separate poster for the Six Healing Sounds. Pointing to where we are helps with the beginners.

In San Francisco I teach two outreach programs through City College. Since the Excelsior District has an older Asian population, we need a Mandarin and Cantonese translator for about eight regular students. I am surprised at how diverse the group is, and their love for T'ai Chi Chih seems universal. Many of them have a T'ai Chi Ch'uan background from growing up in China, but they are relieved by the simplicity of TCC and the effects of the *Chi*.

Mentors from the college come over to the Community Center to help with the seniors. As I teach TCC, the need

for demonstration is more important than the use of words. When I do use words like softness, continuity, circularity, and weight shift, Janet Yeong (our mentor/student translator) is quick to describe what I am saying while I keep moving. We move in a circle most of the time, and it is exciting that after a year, we are now moving as one.

The Excelsior class is the high point of my week. Although I teach TCC after having taught six hours of music that day, I leave the class with new energy. We sit with our feet on the floor and focus on the soles of the feet after the practice, and students leave with big smiles on their faces. Soon we will need no words.



## New Teacher Works In Rehab Unit

By CYNTHIA MADONNA, SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Working at Laguna Honda Hospital, I have practiced T'ai Chi Chih with people in the psycho-social and rehabilitation units, with auto immune deficiency patients, with dementia residents, within the hospice unit, and now in the brand new Wellness Center. Most residents at Laguna Honda need to practice from a seated position. Some are not able to communicate verbally, or if they can, English is not their first language. But they all marvel at this moving meditation. Many initiate the moves as best they can, while others (especially those with severe behavioral issues) become relaxed while simply watching the practice demonstrated.

Residents feel calmer, their minds settle down, and they notice that environmental noises decrease. Some insomniacs seated nearby our class would fall into a deep sleep as the practice progressed. Others who had only practiced from a chair notice they are able to stand better and have more stamina for walking longer distances. A recent stroke resident, after practicing TCC from a seated position, informed his social worker that he "left his anger down in the Wellness Center."

After becoming accredited, I look forward to working with individuals from our rehab unit directly. Many of them arrive in wheelchairs but have the capacity to walk out on their own. I wish to support their transition from chair to weight-bearing by introducing them to TCC basics – awareness of the *tan t'ien*, forward-and-back and side-to-side movements, weight shifting. My hope is that by the time they get to stand, they will be ready to flow freely into the movement.

This is actually how I learned TCC long ago when I incurred a back injury and was not able to stand. While following those orders and lying in bed watching television, I came upon a PBS broadcast featuring Carmen Brocklehurst demonstrating TCC and having a conversation with Justin Stone. I sat up and started moving my arms and rocking from a seated position. I didn't experience any pain so I kept up with her 30-minute sessions. Within three weeks, I was able to stand and do the movements. My doctor and physical therapist were amazed. I am so grateful for my TCC family – and my residents are too.



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## Teaching On A Zen Hospice Floor

By JUDITH SCHWARTZ, BERKELEY, CA

I've been working at City College for seven years, teaching T'ai Chi Chih to many people from diverse backgrounds and at various places throughout the city. At Laguna Honda Hospital and Rehabilitation Center, a therapeutic community providing skilled nursing and rehabilitation services to 780 seniors and adults, I teach three different TCC classes. One population has Aids/HIV, another has chronic pain; and people in the last group are close to the end of their lives.

Doing TCC on the Zen Hospice Floor has been quite an experience. When I come into the room, I ring my small singing bowl invoking presence. Then I put on music – perhaps Gentle Landscapes, Hein Braat, a German monk chanting words written by the Dalai Lama; a Mbira CD, which is the thumb piano from Zimbabwe; and Acupuncture for the Mind, a Chinese music CD calibrated to the various acupuncture points.

I begin with Rocking Motion and proceed through the whole

practice, while assistants bring patients in wheel chairs to the class. One very old and frail Asian lady sits in front of me, and very softly and gracefully, moves her hands and arms as if she had been doing TCC for years. Another stern looking woman with grey hair pulled tightly back, and a lovely quilt on her lap, visibly softens as she watches me and gently moves her hands to follow mine. One of the Zen hospice volunteers comes and sits with a patient, and holds her hand while moving in harmony. Staff, nurses, and activity therapists oftentimes join in for a movement or two or three.

Charge Nurse Donna reports, "Thank you for helping Mrs. Marcus today. She was anxious but began to relax when we brought her to class. And when your class was over she continued to remain calm. The energy in the room changes during class and becomes more tranquil." TCC creates peace for those most vulnerable. Through class, we touch each other in a profound and indelible way, deep into the unknown and the ineffable, our bodies and souls present with the Practice. Is this not the *Chi* and the *Shen*?

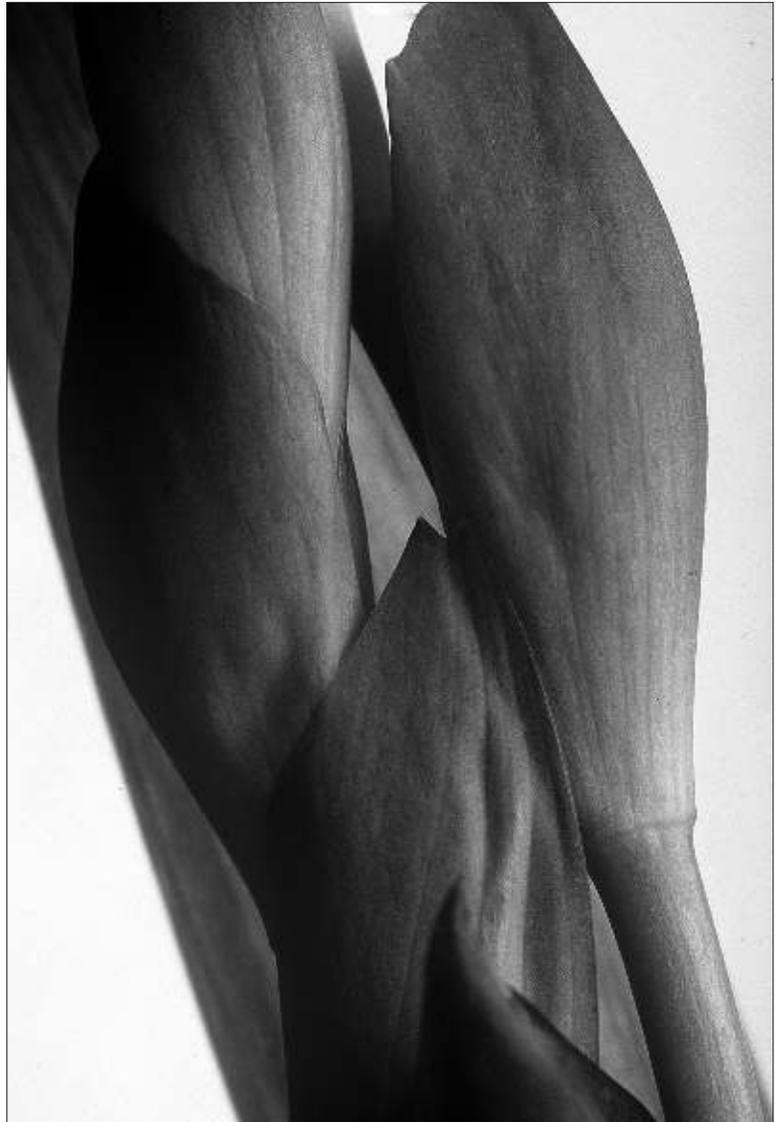
# Teaching To The Hearing Impaired

By MARY CASE, DANVILLE, CA

If I asked what the number one disability in the world was, would you know it is hearing loss? Ten years ago I noticed a sudden hearing loss myself, and this made me want to know more. As we grow older a loss of hearing is inevitable. In fact, nearly 90% of people over age 80 have hearing loss. Teaching T'ai Chi Chih to students who have a hearing loss can be challenging, and only one out of five people who could benefit from a hearing aid actually wears one. So, even though a person is not wearing a hearing aid, it's not an indicator they can actually hear what you are saying in class.

How would this affect your teaching style? Asking students once in a while if they are able to hear you is a good start. Ask if they read lips. Face your students when you talk to them. Moving your head abruptly is not recommended. If a student indicates they have a hearing loss, ask them to stand or sit closer to the front of the room, but do this discreetly. Most people with a hearing loss don't like to share it with the world. You want them to come back to your class. If you use music in your classes, refrain from playing it too loudly. And if there is an important announcement, consider turning the music off entirely. Speaking loudly while teaching does take its toll on your throat. Using an amplifier can really help. I use a battery-powered one worn around my your waist.

My last bit of advice is for you: When was the last time you had your hearing checked? Most of us have our eyesight checked often but we neglect our hearing. It's probably time for you to make an appointment.



## Pyramid Poems

think  
before  
you speak out  
and boldly state  
something so  
very  
dumb  
- LOUIS WEBB

we  
went to  
newfoundland  
for t'ai chi chih  
made friends there  
got chi  
teach  
- BENITA (N.L.)

Chi  
ever  
a student  
open, learning  
growing still  
always  
fresh  
- SHEILA (N.L.)

sleep  
dreaming  
unreal mind  
begin at dawn  
dreamless now  
awake  
yes  
- GARY SWANSON

move  
thinking  
mind alive  
can't stop the flow  
carry on  
slow down  
stop  
- CHRISTINA WILSON

smoke  
and fire  
blazing high  
burns everything  
9-1-1  
water  
gone  
- CHELSEA MEH

love  
flows out  
from my heart  
and gives me more  
to share with  
all my  
friends  
- BARBARA (N.L.)

eyes  
filled with  
joy, giving  
each what he she  
needs. justin  
graces our  
lives  
- MARY R

be  
here now  
breathe in and  
breathe out. feeling  
timelessness  
connect  
now  
- MARY PURNELL

mind  
body  
and spirit  
combine to make  
one complete  
in this  
world  
- MARY MEIER

# Preparing Serious Students For Teacher Training

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

Many articles have been written about how T'ai Chi Chih teachers can best help their students prepare for teacher accreditation. Of course the student can only move as well as his or her teacher, so there are programs to assist in this process. Retreats and intensives are essential elements in preparing the teacher candidate. Justin always says, it is not what you move, but how you move that is important. In his writings he has also given us the "how" through what we have come to know as the "Six Principles of Movement" that helps the practitioner to more fully understand the elements important in each of the 19 movements and one posture that make up the T'ai Chi Chih form.

When working with a serious student, it is important for the teacher to observe how the individual is moving, and this can only be evaluated on an individual basis. Having the student attend a regular class may only deepen misconceptions as many imagine themselves moving exactly as the teacher moves. Meeting for a couple hours over a period of time allows the teacher candidate time to integrate particular suggestions into his or her practice and thereby begin to increase his or her understanding. Understanding is then embodied according to the principles of movement: (1) flowing from the center – the *tan t'ien*; (2) focusing the soles of the feet – the "bubbling spring"; (3) *yinning* and *yanging* – full weight shift; (4) softness and continuity – "the essence of TCC" in moving the body as one integrated whole; (5) polarity - in those movements where the palms are facing each other; (6) circularity "which is the fundamental" energy moving in circles. Since TCC practice must be done with "awareness, which is the root," "is essentially inner oriented."

Encouraging the student to "feel" the form will allow for this embodiment to take place. The form will then move from an outer experience to a deeper, interior experience that will enable the student to be more grounded, more soft, flow more gently from the center, transform their understanding to the feeling level, freely open waist and wrists and experience a deeper awareness.

In the process of this kind of preparation, the teacher's own understanding of the form will transform as his or her communication of ideas broadens. Students will arrive at intensives and accreditation on a higher level, and the entire community will benefit.

Many teachers tell me how impressed they are at the quality of movement that is displayed at our annual conferences, right from the first practice session. Any one who has attended in the past ten years or so knows what I am referring to. This gives us great joy knowing that the TCC form is in alignment with Justin's teachings and directives. Our community has a bright future. This "quality of movement" is the result of so many serious teachers who embody *teh* – inner sincerity. They are in alignment with Justin's teachings

with a desire to continue their own interior growth and transformation, which is due, in great part, to their regular practice.

In going over the movements with those preparing for a training, it is also good to ask the teacher candidate, "What are the three most important points that are unique to each movement?" In becoming familiar with the unique parts of each movement,

new teachers will be better equipped to communicate each movement in their classes.

It is also a good practice to invite the teacher candidate to lead a few movements in front of the class, just to get the feel of it. They may actually lead a full practice as the teacher circulates around the room to give some individual help and refinement. A teacher candidate, however, is not a "substitute teacher" or someone who can teach when a teacher is not present. I say this because Justin has asked that TCC be taught only by accredited teachers.

All of this is written with a desire for us to deepen our "inner sincerity" in preparing our best students for teacher training, and for honoring Justin's desire and his legacy in the teacher accreditation process. The bar has been raised many times, and all of you have stepped up to the plate. Let's continue to be all we are called to be. Blessings with peace and all good.



## Individual Focus, Collective Intention

By SANDY McALISTER, HAYWARD, CA

One of the of the beautiful attributes of the movement Pulling in the Energy is that each person will have his or her own focus, his or her own way of feeling and visualizing “energy from the most distant star coming in through the fingertips” (pg. 56 of the photo text). It is the only movement that can be individualize in each person’s own way.

Years ago when teaching this movement I could not relate to “the most distant start” and figured others may have trouble too, so I gave a long list of what people might visualize – connecting with God’s healing love and light; if you are a moon or earth worshiper connecting with that energy; connecting with the collective consciousness of mankind; feeling a healing life force; or whatever had meaning for them. One day talking to Justin, I, in my thinking that I’m cool way, told him what I said when teaching the movement. After listening patiently he looked at me quite nonplused and said with no emotion “I don’t know why you have to make it so complicated; it’s just pulling in energy from the most distant star.” I laugh at myself with a little “duh” every time I recall this conversation.

How simple it is and yet how powerful. Often new students find this to be the first movement where they feel a tingling in the fingers for the first time. And consider how much more powerful this movement is when doing it in a group. We are all doing the same movement using our individual focus, yet we are all moving with the same collective intent. The power of the collective intention intensifies the results.

I see this as a metaphor for our T’ai Chi Chih Community. Over the past month I have been involved in several conversations discussing how teachers can contribute to the growth of TCC and the wellbeing of the community. We each have different talents, skills, knowledge, and wisdom to offer. But talking is not enough. We must each step forward and offer what we can. Speak out with suggestions. We are a grass-roots community and responsible for ourselves. No group or organization is going to take charge. Gratefully we have Antonia to guide us should our ideas not be in alignment with Justin’s wishes. In the true spirit of community we each can contribute our talents so that the TCC community is truly run by the collective and not a few hard workers. With our individual gifts to give, and working with a collective intention for a vibrant TCC community, we cannot fail to propel TCC into future.

## Pyramid Poetry

By PAM TOWNE, OCEANSIDE, CA

on  
retreat  
time stands still  
inner silence  
now prevails  
being  
peace

pure  
stillness  
within me  
serenity  
in motion  
and at  
rest

all  
moving  
together  
we catch the wave  
of freely  
flowing  
*Chi*

sweet  
softness  
t’ai chi chih  
faithful practice  
“love energy  
is the  
fruit”

## Pyramid Poems Inspired by a Retreat Visit From Justin in Albuquerque

stone  
master  
softening  
the essence thru  
t’ai chi chih  
master  
stone  
– ROBERT M

zen  
teacher  
t’ai chi chih  
meditation  
seijaku  
awake!  
stone  
– DORA D

eyes  
filled with  
joy, giving  
each what he she  
needs. justin  
graces our  
lives  
– MARY R

be  
one with  
justin’s chi  
freely flowing  
t’ai chi chih  
inside  
now  
– TUDOR O

will  
justin  
share insight?  
rest in essence  
listen deep  
share the  
*Chi*  
– CAROLINE G

art  
done by  
justin stone  
bright colors flow  
demonstrate  
all the  
*Chi*  
– CHARLOTTE L

see  
listen  
to justin  
hear all the words  
with your heart  
listen  
now  
– JUDY H

stone  
just-in  
blessed us now  
like rain in may.  
parched we were  
and drank  
well  
– CARMEN B

joy  
healing  
gratitude  
serenity  
presents from  
justin  
stone  
– JOYCE V

## Light At The Top Of The Head/Light At The Temple

By KYRITA SHANNON, VERSAILLES, KY

In October 2000 I traveled to Albuquerque from Seattle on a shoestring budget to meet with Justin Stone and the vibrant T'ai Chi Chih community for the very first time. My intent: to receive accreditation to teach TCC. Although I had taken a beginner's course back in 1981, I was in truth very much a beginner with many refinements and lessons still in need of. I also lacked confidence in achieving my goal of accreditation.

I practiced with a wonderful Seattle teacher, Linda Robinson, to prepare for my accreditation and, although uncertain of receiving accreditation, was very happy to be on my way to New Mexico to see what I might achieve. I trusted that all was well.

Soon it was my time to lead one movement and stand in front of Justin Stone, the powerful teachers, and other candidates there to acquire accreditation. We did not know which movement we would be asked to lead until the time arrived. My movement was "Light at the Top of the Head/Light at the Temple. I did, with great joy and relief, reach my goal and was accredited to teach TCC. Ever since I have called this particular movement "My Happy Happy Joy Joy Movement."

May we all be blessed with the light and love of our Vital Force as we gently move through our moments – sharing the joy and peace that grows within us as we practice, remaining anchored in the soles of our feet and in our *tan t'ien*.



## Pulling In The Energy: A Lesson In Sharing & Caring

By CLEO ROEMELE, YORK, PA

The act of giving and/or receiving may sound like a simple concept, but for many it can be a challenge. There's a lot of effort involved in determining whether to buy or make a gift and how much to spend, especially after some of the commercial trappings associated with holidays. Yet in reality, the *Chi* that shows us the way. The best example of this is Pulling In The Energy, where there is a give and take of the universal *Chi* that connects each of us. This communal process with other T'ai Chi Chih practitioners, our fellow beings and the world at large is both awe-inspiring and rejuvenating. But anyone reading these pages

is already aware of such principles.

How then can we relay this message of generosity in a broader format?

Many early cultures have practiced, out of necessity, a form of community service where everyone looks out for one other. One of the best examples might be that of the American Indian tradition known as *Potlatch* where the host of a ceremony would give away material wealth (food, clothing, weaponry, etc.) to guests, knowing by the end of the event their home could be bare. But this same person could regain important necessities or prized possessions the next time he was the guest at a similar event.

Potlatch is more than karma or religious dogma ("do unto others as you'd like done to yourself.") At its core is the belief that each of us is responsible for creating a generous, caring connection with those around us. This in turn allows an entire community to have a collective sense of wellbeing and support – where we are more focused on the whole than the one.

So the question might be: how best can the TCC community carry out this concept? The obvious answer is discussing it in our individual classes. Perhaps the better alternative is looking closer to home by either hosting our own Potlatch-type events where we give gifts to guests or even money. But creativity and gratitude could lead to infinite possibilities even for those not actively involved with our pursuits. Let's make generous acts of giving and receiving our collective goal for the New Year. Cheers to paying it forward.

## Joyous Breath, Joyous Elixir

By AMY TYKSINSKI, ALBUQUERQUE, NM

*Editor's Note: Amy attended a recent TCC retreat given by Carmen Brocklehurst and has written up what Carmen taught for each movement in the hope that others may benefit.*

Bring the heart fire down and the yin of the kidneys up. The mix is the elixir of life.

## Justin's Path To The Answer

By CARMEN BROCKLEHURST, ALBUQUERQUE, NM

One of the big questions that some of us ask is, "What is my purpose? Why am I here?" If we could have been aware enough at a young and innocent age, we would have noticed that we were being shown the answer. So here we are many years later, and we are now asking the important questions. Do we feel any closer to the answer? For those of us who do T'ai Chi Chih, in our time of quiet, the answer seems very simple and clear. The very words that describe our discipline hold the key: Chih means "knowledge of," and T'ai Chi means "the Supreme Ultimate." That is our purpose: to have knowledge of the Supreme Ultimate. When we are quiet, we come into that harmony within ourselves. The simple movements that Justin Stone originated lead us to our question's answer.

There is a wonderful Sutra that begins, "From the state of emptiness..." It clearly states that we must have that as a beginning point if we are going to know or do anything meaningful. For most of our lives we take precious little time to experience that "state of emptiness." We are usually busy with an inordinate number of things, just busy enough to stay off balance. And yet, that state of emptiness is what we want. Somehow we don't know how to find it. Justin's gift to us, of TCC, allows us to experience the state of emptiness. We have a way to come into knowing everything important to us. The movements, in their simplicity, bring us gently into the experience of emptiness. We find it is our natural state, and we have to be as simple as children to know it.

Remember being in awe of everything (as opposed to bothered by everything)? When we do our TCC practice we are at peace with life, knowing that all is in order. TCC allows us to breathe and be in that moment of peace. Now is a good time to do some TCC. Watch the breath; stay in the flow of it. In that moment of doing TCC, we remember watching Justin do TCC, if only on a DVD, and we feel peace and wellbeing. We are mesmerized because life becomes easy in that moment, and Justin shares it with us. All we have to do is allow ourselves to follow him. This invitation allows us to breathe as if we have never breathed before, as if we have never experienced life before this moment. Because of his deep caring, Justin loves and shares the *Chi*.

## Joyous Breath & Vital Capacity

By LARRY BLOOM, SANDY SPRINGS, GA

Reading *The Vital Force* has provided much appreciated insight on various movements, but there has been little on Joyous Breath. Maybe it is because most other movements are similarly focused on circular motions emphasizing the hands to balance the substantial or insubstantial position of the legs. We do not focus on breathing, rather just let it happen naturally as our legs *yin* and *yang*.

Early on I did not notice the circularity in Joyous Breath. Eventually, with my lungs filling and emptying like the forceful ebb and flow of the tide, it became beautifully apparent: my breathing itself that was circular. My lungs went through a circular motion, "*yinning*" and "*yanging*," as they expanded and contracted. Intrigued because 40 years as a scuba and free diver has led to learning plenty about breathing, I thought about some relevant connections. Perhaps they also suggest why I had such an immediate smile when my instructor, Sheryl Adair, first taught this to me.

In practicing Joyous Breath, Justin advises that "this is the only movement that has some force to it...pulling breath in, in a very strong manner...letting the breath out slowly and after the fourth time you should be out of breath." Justin prompts us to have maximum inhalation and also maximum exhalation. Doctors and scientists call this our vital capacity, the maximum amount of air we can breathe in and out, and they often measure this to diagnose underlying lung diseases. But we only a small amount of our vital capacity during normal breathing (also known as tidal breathing). In the average adult, tidal breathing uses only 10 percent of our vital capacity; the remaining 90% of the air in our lungs is somewhat stagnant and laden with carbon dioxide.

When we practice Joyous Breath, we exchange stagnant air for fresh air and immediately help our respiratory process in increasing the flow of oxygen to our tissues. Oxygen builds the energy molecule adenosine triphosphate (ATP), which some enlightened scientists speculate is related

to storing *Chi*. So with Joyous Breath we help our body accumulate more energy – internal energy we call *Chi* – which in turn betters our health and wellbeing.

In one online T'ai Chi Chih video snippet (uploaded by GKP on their YouTube channel), Justin states that some people like to practice Joyous Breath as the initial movement, and that is fine with him. I personally like to do this. My vital capacity is full of sweet fresh air for the rest of the movements, and I have an immediate smile on my face. It is indeed a Joyous Breath.



## Pills Be Gone

By RACHEL V. ALVARADO, CROWN POINT, IN

For over a year, I've been taking T'ai Chi Chih classes with an admirable and dedicated teacher who has taught me a gentle, calming mix of meditation and movement. I was diagnosed 43 years ago with an autoimmune disease called Lupus. But now with a daily regimen of TCC, I have less stress in my joints and muscles; I have less soreness because of improved joint flexibility. In fact, my rheumatologist has gradually reduced my medicine, Methotreate, so much that I'm no longer taking it. TCC has helped improve my balance and reduced the risk of falling; I'm more stable in my feet.

My rheumatologist also diagnosed me with osteoporosis. (I fell and fractured my lower back 17 years ago.) Since taking TCC, my bone density numbers have improved; my doctor has taken me off Fosomax and stopped my water pill, Furosemide. In short, TCC has been a blessing. I'm so filled and fulfilled with all its benefits.

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## Anxiety Be Gone

By LARRY AND PEGGY KOCH, NORTHWESTERN, IN

Larry and I might have the distinction of being the only husband and wife team practicing T'ai Chi Chih in Northwest Indiana. It started in February 2010 when our local newspaper ran an article on TCC. I had never heard of TCC and was intrigued by the concept of circulation and balancing *Chi* energy as a way to achieve inner calm. Yes, I definitely felt the need for inner calm. So I began my first class the following month and shortly thereafter realized: this was just what I needed.

In the beginning I found it difficult to stay focused in class. But the more I practiced, my concentration improved. I have also realized that trying to control everything is exhausting. I've started to let go of some of that anxious energy and it feels great.

My husband watched me practice for about six months and thought it looked "cool" and viewed it as something we could do together. So in January 2011 he took the beginning class and soon found out that TCC was more than "cool." After dealing with anxiety attacks for a couple years, Larry discovered that doing TCC movements amazingly stopped those anxious feelings. Oh yea, that's all it took, and now he's hooked. The road to inner calm is called TCC. We've found it, and we plan to travel this road for a long time.

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## Seek – Pray – Love

By ARDI BAKER, SCHERERVILLE, IN

A few years ago in Florida, I was introduced to T'ai Chi, but since I was too lazy to get up for early morning lessons, I let go of the passing interest. Then, after an illness left me rather depressed and listless a year ago, I sought out healing aids. Achieving a better quality of life becomes a serious goal as we age, and upon entering my 70's, I took this to heart. A T'ai Chi Chih article in our local newspaper caught my eye. After a phone call to my soon-to-be-teacher, I received the gift of TCC. This past year has shown me that my choice of aids has had many benefits. My energy level is better, and my flexibility and physical condition remain stable. Focusing on the movements of TCC has moved me to use my practice time as a prayerful time as well. This leads to calmness, a peace, a healing of spirit – along with a healing of the body. TCC has also gifted me with new friends. Good people seeking a better quality of life. God commands: Love one another. Justin says that "TCC is a service to humanity. It is a form of Love." Isn't that what the world needs now?

## A Change In You

By BARBARA PENCE, NORTHWESTERN, IN

Although I realize that T'ai Chi Chih is a serious practice with serious benefits, I thought this little poem might be fun.

Northwest Indiana is not JUST about cows and corn.

A new phenomenon has just been born.

TCC is here! Please DON'T say ... What?

Just listen now and get out of your rut.

Are you short on balance? Joints feel tight?

Your lack of energy is out of sight?

There is one thing I suggest you can do ...

Join TCC ... there will be a change in you.



## A Change In Me

By THERESA BROWN, CROWN POINT, IN

Seeking positive energy,  
Tai Chi Chih came to mind.  
What did I have to lose?  
What could I find?

Eight weeks of classes,  
I felt so graceless.  
Nine months later,  
I find the Chih is endless.

Weekly classes,  
Practices in the park.  
Without a great instructor  
It would all be for naught.

Kudos to my instructor,  
Pete Gregory is his name.  
Through instruction, patience and time,  
T'ai Chi Chih is his game.

# Results In Wisconsin

By MARIAN MASSMAN, LaCROSSE, WI

Throughout years of teaching T'ai Chi Chih in classes and retreats, I have always ended the last class by inviting students to write down how TCC has helped them. The following quotations indicate, once more, that the benefits of practice speak for themselves. I share these quotations with gratitude for *Chi*, for the Source of the *Chi*, and for Justin in giving us a way to move and balance the *Chi* through the gentle movements of TCC.

Already I feel an improvement in my posture, balance, and overall physical wellbeing. When I practice I feel more centered and relaxed. TCC has been an excellent warm-up and cool-down for some other exercises. But mostly what I like is what it is teaching me about my body and how it contributes to my serenity. – V.K.

I have found TCC very helpful in different ways and notice the change when I don't do it for a couple of days. The other day I was visiting someone in our infirmary and walked up to the fourth floor. I'm the one with a tracheotomy, and ordinarily I have to stop several times to catch my breath before I reach the top floor. I was surprised to find myself continuing up without stopping. – M.W.

Since doing TCC I have experienced a quiet joy. I look forward to the centering movements. When I do TCC late in the afternoon it revitalizes me for the evening. As a person still recovering from the effects of a stroke, the gentle movements have allowed me to continue working on my balance, but more than that, they have allowed me to experience grace in my body again. – J.G.

It was amazing how my shoulder and neck tension disappeared after starting TCC classes. Nothing else had helped. I also have MS (Multiple Sclerosis) and have found that TCC helps with my balance. – L.P.



TCC has lowered my blood sugar and my blood pressure. – M.V.

My mind is very active and is always racing ahead. But by the fourth TCC movement, my mind and my body come into harmony and I feel more integrated. – R.D.

I feel a sense of completeness doing TCC. I find it relaxing because it slows down my natural momentum and sense of constant urgency. I especially like the flowing sensation of the movements, which is a tension reliever. – J.G.

I can do my range of motion exercises more easily when I practice TCC first. – S.H.

I slept through the night for the first time in a long time after my second TCC class. – M.B.

My arthritis doesn't bother me as long as I practice TCC regularly. – T.H.

I use TCC during the day to relax, clear my mind, and focus. – J.C.

I feel stronger and do not tire as easily when I practice TCC. – P.H.

TCC has increased a sense of relaxation, wellbeing and connect- edness (to myself and the earth). – M.L.

I get such a sense of peace and tranquility whenever I practice TCC. – E.W.

TCC helped me to relax and relieve stress after long days of work. – K.N.

TCC is great for my running. I breathe much better and am more relaxed. – M.S.

When I do TCC, I feel more centered emotionally and physically. I had a headache when I came to one TCC session, and by the end of that session, my headache was gone. – Anon

be  
yourself  
around them.  
if they don't like  
who you are  
forget  
them  
– LOUIS WEBB

horse  
running  
galloping  
through grassy fields  
beautiful  
blissful  
grace  
– CHELSEA MEH

pain  
constant  
avoided  
tingling and heat  
better now  
almost  
gone  
– AMANDA LOWTHER

each  
coming  
sharing chi  
all together  
evolving  
into  
one  
– ALLAN (N.L.)

oh  
justin  
did you know  
when you began  
what great gifts  
you had  
birthed  
– SHEILA (N.L.)

## The Spiritual Life By JUSTIN STONE

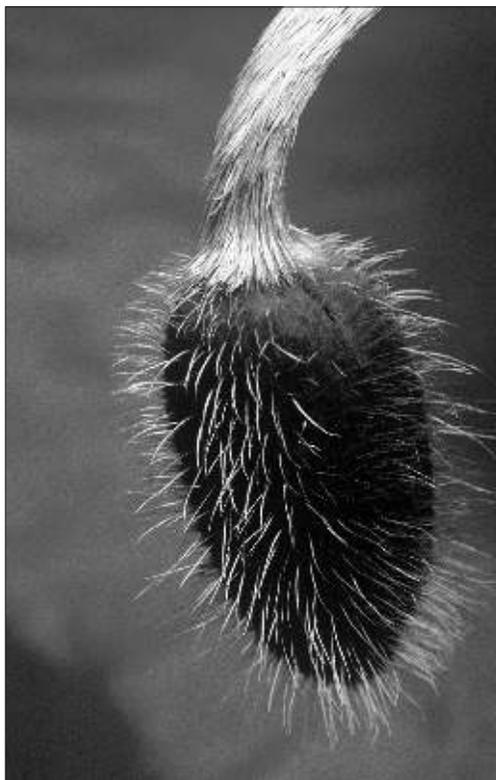
[TRANSCRIBED FROM A 1991 TALK GIVEN IN ALBUQUERQUE, NM AND © GOOD KARMA PUBLISHING 2009]

Let me tell you a little story about what I mean by nonattachment, not being attached to things. It doesn't mean not caring and it doesn't mean indifference. There was a great Zen master who was dying. He was lying in bed and sitting next to him was his great disciple, the one who would be his successor when he died. And the disciple said to the master, "Get well quickly because we want you to give a talk on the Buddha's birthday." The master said, "Supposing I don't get well?" And the disciple said, "Well then we'll get somebody else." The master said, "Supposing you can't get someone else?" And the disciple countered, "Don't talk a lot of nonsense. Just turn around and go to sleep." Now, that may seem like a very callous conversation but underneath is a great love, a

*unless one recognizes impermanence and accords with it, there can be no happiness in this life*

key feature in defining a spiritual life and bringing it in into your own everyday life without having to get away to the Himalayan foothills.

Unless one recognizes impermanence and accords with it, there can be no happiness in this life. You know, "I have a beautiful wife, I am doing very well in business, I have a swimming pool, two lovely obedient children. Will my wife always be lovely, and will the children always be obedient, and will I always have the swimming pool and will I always be prosperous?" Life doesn't work like that.



great love between these two, maybe greater than any other relationship could be. But, there was no attachment with it. When the master said, "Supposing I don't get well," and the disciple responded, "Then we'll get somebody else," it was a simple factual statement recognizing that people do pass on. But life goes on and there will be somebody else. This seems to me to be the

And yet, people tend to feel that if they can acquire a certain status, a certain way of life, that it will be permanent. Most people live as though they never expect to die. They live as though they are immortal, while knowing that they are not immortal. We talk about fifteen years from now, and yet I might not wake up tomorrow morning. If I don't wake up tomorrow morning, that'll be no great loss. I had a good life, we'd say. But if you can recognize the impermanence and recognize that there is this possibility and not fight with it, then you can live every day as though it's your last day. And if you live every day as though it's your last day, it's going to be a very happy life. If someone told you that you have fifteen days to live, you'd probably make them fifteen very full days, unless you were worried about the stock market going down. So, this is the way we have to do it.

So the key to a happy life, it

seems to me, is to recognize impermanence and to accord with it. And this is analogous to a situation very often described: You are a traveler who comes to an inn, and you settle down comfortably for the night. You have a good meal; you go to bed in a comfortable bed. But you know you are going to travel on the next morning. You don't get confused and feel that you're always going to be at the inn. Truthfully we are all travelers at an inn, ready to pass on, in one sense, the following day. Unless that impermanence is recognized, there's going to be suffering. A wife has a husband, and the husband becomes ill, and there's the threat that the husband might not live, and she is frantic. We have to ask from a psychological point of view: Is she frantic for him or is she frantic because of what she faces after he passes on (which is a different question that we won't deal with.) But she is distraught because he may pass on, yet it is in the nature of things to pass on.

*truthfully we are all travelers at an inn, ready to pass on, in one sense, the following day*

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# Prajna

By JUSTIN STONE

[TRANSCRIBED FROM THE 1992 T'AI CHI CHIH TEACHER CONFERENCE AND © GOOD KARMA PUBLISHING 2009]

There is within you *That Which Knows* and that is your teacher. That is the true teacher. Most people have read that, but they don't believe that. So they want to worship somebody who is alive; they want to have someone else do it for them. But within you is that which knows.

Then why do we act as though we are ignorant? Because that inner, innate wisdom – called *prajna* – is covered up by the *vashanas*. *Vashanas* are the habit energies, and they so cover the *prajna* that it becomes impossible for it to shine through to the conscious mind. But it is there. It is always there. But you don't know it's there if it doesn't come through to your conscious mind and to where you can act in the wisdom of *prajna*.

Now, all through religious and spiritual literature, we read “Know thyself.” “The kingdom of heaven is within.” “The Inner Guru...” But we don't believe this teaching and we look outside ourselves in the outer world. We have created for ourselves this world and we try to find someone to worship, someone to follow, and so forth. There are many teachers who use this fact to their own benefit – what some writers call “spiritual materialism.” And the benefit is frequently financial in character. This is why Krishnamurti said the guru system is “an exploitation.” Not always, but very frequently.

I have often told you the story of the Sufi teacher who was approached by a seeker who said, “Teach me, master.” “Are you ready to learn?” was the reply. “Teach me how to learn,” earnestly implored the seeker. “Are you ready to let me teach you how to learn?” was the cold water thrown on the seeker's aspirations. You can't just teach anybody you pick up. That one has to be ready to be taught at a level where he or she can absorb what you're teaching. And there must be a proper attitude. If the cup is full, you can't pour any more tea in it; the cup has to be empty.

*so they want  
to worship  
somebody who  
is alive;  
they want to  
have someone  
else do it for  
them*

When Paul Reps met somebody, he didn't say, “How do you do?” which is meaningless. He said, “Thank you for your life.” And that has deep meaning. When people asked Paul questions as to proper diet, whether they should have sex or not, Paul called these questions, “verbal delusionary.” This also has deep meaning, and relates closely to the reply of the Sufi master, “Are you ready to learn?” Unless the delusionary way of thinking is changed, no teaching is possible, and changing it can be painful. Giving up delusions, often recognized as neuroses, is not as easy as wallowing in them.

*Prajna*, p-r-a-j-n-a, your great treasure, the innate Wisdom that you are never without, is often personalized as *Prajna Paramita*, translated as “the perfection of wisdom.” It is thought of in many places as a female. In spiritual experiences, I have been told, “She will take you where you are meant to be.” In other words, you are being led. Also, that lets you off the hook. “She will lead you to where you are meant to be.” You'll go there because you choose to go there and if you don't you'll be taken there anyhow. This is why the monk, Senzaki says, “It is better to discipline yourself than to have life do it for you.”

One time, I told a young Yogi who was actively seeking to be free from bondage, “The thing that binds you is the feeling that there is a goal to reach and you have not yet reached it.” Actually, you are complete. If you have faith in *prajna*, this inner wisdom, you will do and feel the right thing. It will almost do the right thing for you. Every word spoken to you will be a signpost to guide you, if you let it. But can you have faith in this guidance, instead of always trying to manipulate it?



... So my advice is to trust your inherent, intuitive wisdom – these are just words – rather than the accumulated knowledge that we all pile up. People read Lao Tzu who says, “Lose a little each day,” and then they think that wisdom consists in being a computer and piling up facts as you go along. All you have to do is go out in the forest, which we're going to do this afternoon, or live somewhere where you are closely in touch with nature, and you'll realize how false that is. There is no end to adding facts and filling our heads with knowledge, and that serves a very real purpose in its place. Whether you call it God, *prajna*, your own true nature, my advice is to know it and listen to it. This means to come to know who and what you are.

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## Joys Of Conference (Or Event) Hosting

By SKY YOUNG-WICK, PARKVILLE, MO

I was honored to serve as the coordinator for our T'ai Chi Chih Teacher Conference in 2010. When I agreed to do it, I had some trepidation though. I had never even helped coordinate a TCC event (so there was some fear of the unknown), I didn't have time, and organization and details are not my natural strengths. I remember thinking, "I don't even know what I don't know!" Perhaps you can identify with some element of this? If so, fear not. Supporting a conference or TCC event is not a daunting burden. On the contrary, it's an amazing opportunity.

One benefit is receiving. One does not coordinate a conference alone: you have a team working with you and other experts who have come before you. You are supported throughout the process. More than 40 people helped pull the 2010 conference together; teachers offered their services in any way needed. I'll never forget experiencing the *teh* (sincerity) of our teachers.

Relationships also develop. The conference team became closer the longer as we served, and my interactions with individual teachers deepened during the conference itself. There was an underlying feeling of care and gratitude that was almost moment-to-moment. Angels were everywhere.

We come to conference for many reasons, including deepening our practice. Perhaps you fear if you're coordinating the conference there won't be the opportunity to actually enjoy it. Fear not. Even with my few extra duties, I deepened my TCC practice and experienced the unexpected. Yes, there will likely be a couple of glitches, offering the opportunity to maintain a sense of humor, and that's always a good thing. I encourage you to give yourself this special opportunity. Only joy awaits you!

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## Consider Post-Conference *Seijaku*

By SHEILA LEONARD, PBVM, NL, CANADA

I was accredited as a Seijaku teacher in 2004 and taught it the following Spring to eager students well-seasoned in T'ai Chi Chih practice. One student said it offered the missing piece she had long been in search of. Since her experience had obviously taken her deeper than my own had, I kept going back for more Seijaku. After the 2010 Nebraska conference I stayed on (again) to audit the Seijaku teacher accreditation. It was another stepping stone on my journey towards a slowly deepening experience of "Oh, that's what Seijaku is all about." I was eager for Seijaku to percolate into a richer, more mature, more grounded practice.

Somehow, when I'm not even looking, Seijaku seems to be happening – when I give up trying so hard or trying at all. Meanwhile, I now incorporate some Seijaku into every TCC practice, and some days I do a lot and it feels great. The more I move through and befriend the resistance in my Seijaku practice, the more easily I move through and befriend the resistance in other areas of my life. It's freeing and energizing.

## Conference 2011

By ROSEANN HEINRICH, PARMA, OH

Here in the Cleveland area, our three-person committee has been meeting monthly to work out the details of the upcoming conference. Oh my goodness, are we grateful for the T'ai Chi Chih community volunteers who have taken some of the workload off of our shoulders. It is interesting how things that seem so simple can become complex and things that should be complex end up feeling easy. When the *Chi* flows through the entire body, blockages breakdown nicely. What works on the inside expresses on the outside. We are learning to allow and let go, using what we know from practice as we prepare for the conference. We are so very grateful to Justin for this practice in our lives, but also as an instrument to be used in the creation of what we hope will be a memorable weekend.

If you have not already made your plans to join us on the shores of Lake Erie, please consider it now. When you perform your next practice allow the *Chi* to help create the plan that will bring you into alignment with the conference. If you run into any blocks, breathe deeply and know there is an answer coming. Allow it to open to you. Know that there are many people to help and trust; the help is available to you and others.

The committee acknowledges the depth of the work by Lucinda Kutsko, who has only been a teacher for a few years. She has taken on registration and the task of creating spreadsheets that assist everyone else with their assigned tasks. With an amazing amount of gratitude, we again invite you participate in the conference. Recommit yourself to your TCC practice and have fun doing it. There are nearby areas for strolling and hiking, being near the water or in the sun. Share a few days with us. You will be glad you did.

To register, go to [www.taichichih.org/conference.php](http://www.taichichih.org/conference.php) where you will find the Registration Form, Particulars Information, Vendor Application Form, Scholarship Application Form, and Seijaku Registration Information. If you do not have access to a computer, please contact Lucinda Kutsko, 330-538-2292, who will mail forms to you.

Many generous people have made contributions to the conference scholarship fund – to help as many teachers as possible to attend the conference. Don't be shy about applying for a scholarship. It is important for you to be there.

## TCC Travels With You

By MARIANN JACOBSON, EDISON, NJ

For the last 18 months, I have been fortunate to take a weekly T'ai Chi Chih class at my local wellness community center with Janet Oussaty. I enjoy and benefit so much from them that I was terribly disappointed when rough winter weather here on the East Coast meant the cancelation of four classes in a row. I am not accomplished enough to do TCC on my own, and I need the energy of a group practice. So when I travel and will be somewhere longer than two weeks, I look to practice with others. I've found wonderful classes in California and Texas.

First, it was heartening to know that I could practice outside of my comfort class and do well. I had no idea if my arms would get tangled up, if I would trip over my own feet, or if I would forget movements. Secondly, the generosity with which instructors and practitioners gave of their time was phenomenal.

In California, teacher Carol Wong invited my whole family to participate. Her openness and willingness to teach three novices (my family members) was lovely. The experience had me going back for more. In Texas, Alice Holden helped me reach teacher Carla Grant of Richardson, who allowed me to practice in her home. What I found most comforting was the privilege of practicing with three different instructors. I felt the movement's uniformity and integrity mixed with the each instructor's personality and style. I didn't feel lost or out of place.

TCC has helped during my journey as a cancer survivor by allowing me to help myself. This form of meditation allows me a way to be introspective and aware. I gain so much insight into what I do (and can do) from my sessions that I just don't want to stop taking them. Hence my eagerness to seek out practices when I travel. Thanks to all those who have helped.



## My Own Song

By DORENE KRAUSE, RINGWOOD, NJ

I used to sing so rarely, and certainly off key, my world a cacophony of sound. Nothing played in harmony. Life pulled me in and spun me round and round. One day my body screamed at me – “Slow down! And breathe in deep. Listen to life’s melody. Let your inner music speak.” At first I could not hear it, being silenced for so long. But when, at last, I heard its whisper, I listened to its song. Unaware I owned (and wrote) this music deep within my soul. Just a simple, quiet ballad – not exactly rock and roll. The music played on. It drew me in. A smile emerged on my face. How long had it been sleeping...waiting...In my quiet inner space. The rhythm of this music has really settled in. I feel MY soulful notes being played, emanate from within. I FEEL it when I simply breathe and when I walk about. Now joyous songs, I write myself, have turned MY inside out. The “who I am” changed because I stopped and listened just by chance. Now I sing, right from my heart. I may even learn to dance.

## Silent Group Practice

By CAROL SPICER, NORTHEASTERN, NJ

During a recent silent group practice led by Antonia in Ringwood, New Jersey, I reached a deeper level of softness and enjoyment during my T'ai Chi Chih practice than usual. Pairing silence with group *Chi* was special. The quiet both allows and challenges me to stay with the feeling of the movement. Since then, during my individual practices, I've drawn upon the feeling and longed to experience it together with all my regular classmates.

My two teachers often ask for student requests, and as a result, the teachers often lead silent group practices with just music. My fellow students and I enjoy an enhanced flow of *Chi* and ease of movement. When I know verbal instruction will be coming, I maintain more of an outer focus, alert to hear and follow verbal corrections. With only music, I'm more deeply relaxed and centered, and I follow my teachers by simply watching and modeling their movements and timing. Combining the peacefulness of silence and group *Chi* helps me incorporate the learning even better. It's also improved my recollection of the order of movements, which aids my home practice. A classmate who is very directionally challenged (and thus was given additional verbal guidance during practice) finds that her practice flows more naturally during the silence. When Phyllis Segal and Dorene Krause lead silent group practices, they give instruction beforehand so that we still benefit from their critique and verbal guidance. I'm elated that co-students (both in my small and large group classes) have requested more silent practice.

## TCC & Leadership

BY CHARLES GRANTHAM, PRESCOTT VALLEY, AZ

While I have just begun my practice of T'ai Chi Chih, I have been a student and teacher of leadership development for two decades. Recently I've been exploring how leaders grow: A transformation is needed in keeping with the massive, swift and unending changes in the world. Events have accelerated; something that happens half a world away impacts us the next day. In my experience most leaders do not know how to slow down, reflect, and observe. So, I was struck between the parallels in TCC and leadership qualities for the future.

First is that things move in circles – like the movement of hands in Bass Drum. But today's leaders assume (usually) that everything moves in straight lines forever. Markets expand on and on; things always get bigger, faster, and less costly. Leaders of the future need to understand that the world moves in circles. Always moving back and forth, up and down.

The central purpose of TCC is to develop, circulate, and balance the *Chi*. I think the central purpose of effective leadership is to develop, circulate, and balance the life force of human organizations (human knowledge and wisdom). More so now than ever before, brute force, control of assets, and artificial manipulations of things like money don't build true sustainability.

The practice of TCC helps unify mental and physical energy. The meditative state that results show us the power of living in the moment. There is no past, no future; there is just now. This is what I call "leadership presence." Being keenly focused on what needs to happen now, and observing the current state of one's self, is a talent future leaders will need.

I am keenly interested in transformation. What is the process? What does it look and feel like? From my study of leadership development I have come to appreciate the spiritual nature of transformation. It's not just physical (although it can be). It's not just psychological (although it can be). It changes the way we see and experience the world, and what we believe.

And even as a novice TCC practitioner, I can sense this transformation. People around me observe someone more peaceful, moving at a slower pace and becoming detached from the swirl of everyday activity. I finally "got it" when I read about *Seijaku*: serenity in the midst of activity. Strangely enough this leads to an even deeper level of engagement with the world – but one that separates purposeful action from mere motion. So my task is twofold. Learn and practice TCC more deeply. And try to communicate that learning into a language and conscious practice for future leaders.

## Connections & Impressions

BY DONNA ALDOUS, SASKATOON, CANADA

What follows are student impressions from the end of a series of T'ai Chi Chih classes. By the way, I still use Justin's photo textbook in all of my classes. I read from it (Carmen's foreword included) almost every class and always sell a couple of them. I feel it's a way for my students to know Justin. I also bring back copies of *The Vital Force*, and I know that some enthusiast students have subscribed. It's a way to show them that TCC is not just my little program – it is international in scope and very much alive. As Justin has said, "We have so much to offer the world." We are the full meal deal.

I like Justin's quote: "Words will not do it. It takes actual practice. You must do it yourself." – CATHY MESSIER

Push Pull is my favorite movement. Nature is my partner as I look at the trees from my living room or deck. The energy goes back and forth; there's a sharing of connectedness. – ANON

The energy exchange creates a beautiful connection to the Divine that dwells within all. A smile always spreads across my face and my heart, flowing forth in abundance and joy. – ANON

What I experience with TCC is not so much about being energized as it is about feeling whole. Going through the movements centers my being. And as I proceed I feel a deeper and deeper connectedness to the creator of Life. Serenity comes when falling into that presence. I feel less need for words and less pulled into worrisome thoughts. – KATHY HETCHINGS

I am getting more out of the experience than I expected and am very pleased. – SHARON YOUNG

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## Hooked

BY DONNA DITTMER, FORT MYERS, FL

When I signed up to take T'ai Chi Chih lessons I didn't have a clue as to what to expect. I have watched Asian people doing movements like this on television, and I always thought them to be so graceful. I can't tell you what a thrill it was for me to actually feel the energy generated by the first few movements we learned. I was hooked.

I am 73 years old and attended TCC classes for health purposes. I had had serious surgery and needed something that wasn't too stressful, but would help with my recuperation and problematic breathing. I am slowly incorporating TCC into my daily routine and can notice a real difference.

On our last day of class and accompanied by a woman playing a Native American wood flute, the whole class felt very well coordinated. You could feel the energy all around us, and our instructor, Bev Chandley, encouraged us to "keep on keeping on" even though the lessons were over.

## Losing Weight, Gaining More

By REBECCA LAUGHUNN, RAPID CITY, SD

**T**hank you, Justin Stone, for the creation of T'ai Chi Chih. I am a believer. I took a TCC course in Spring 2010 with Jean Katus and I enjoyed it so much that I ordered the DVD and practiced everyday over the summer. I had read that it may be beneficial with weight issues, and I have struggled for years with my weight. No matter what exercise regimen or dieting changes I made, I simply was not losing weight and any minor success was short lived. So I decided to try something different. I found that after adding TCC to my daily routine that I just felt better, happier, and more balanced overall – which led to my continued daily practice. By Fall 2010 I found I had lost a modest 10 pounds, which translated into a full clothing size. I am ecstatic about this and have maintained this loss.

It was not until I introduced TCC to my daily life that any of the lifestyle changes I had previously made seemed to bear fruit. I believe this is as good as vigorous exercise because it does take effort and concentration to remain graceful and to move slowly and gently in this way. And yet it is effortless. The more I try to perfect my movements and the more slowly I try to move, the more benefits I seem to gain. It is easy to maintain my practice because practicing does not create pain, but rather it reduces bodily discomforts.

I have more energy than I've ever had in the past, as if this has given my metabolism a boost, which has led to increased activity in other areas of my life. I went into TCC without any expectations. If it simply helped me feel healthier and have some peace, that would have been good enough. But I have gotten much more out of it. Since I am achieving my overall goals, this contributes to my desire to continue daily practice, which is important to achieving lasting change.



## The Traveling Student

By DEANNA SHAPIRO, FERRISBURGH, VT

**I** learned T'ai Chi Chih three years ago at our local senior center in Charlotte, Vermont. Prior to that I had benefitted from meditation. And through the years I loved and participated in various forms of movement, including informal dance, authentic movement and walking. But after learning TCC I knew I had found something special that I wanted to pursue because it combines both meditation and movement.

There is something innate and eternal in the feeling I get from doing TCC practice – a core solidity. I find the gentle rocking motions to be calming and quieting. I feel in sync with the universe as my body repeats circular motions that are part of the culture of every ethnic and religious group.

I hadn't realized I needed to be gentler with myself but TCC taught me that. My husband says I have changed. I am more available and patient – less prone to push myself to achieve. I walk more slowly and take my time with daily affairs. I am more accepting of time constraints, have a broader perception, and a more relaxed view to bring to life's adversities as they appear and disappear.

There are currently no TCC teachers in my home state of Vermont. It's uncanny and synchronistic, though, that Justin Stone and an active TCC Center should be located in Albuquerque, which we visit twice a year because our daughter lives there. My first contact there was with the helpful Ginny Morgan who invited me to join her intermediate class. Now each time I go to Albuquerque I always get my TCC fix – whether it's a retreat with Antonia or a review class with Carmen Brocklehurst. Thank you, Justin, and all you inspiring teachers. I surely benefit from my daily practice and so do the people who come in contact with me.

## A TCC Metaphor

By RUTH ALSOBROOK-HURICH,  
PRESCOTT VALLEY, AZ

me  
open  
wonderful  
flying above  
innocence  
freedom  
me

I can remember as a child  
How it felt to be free  
It's been many years since I was there  
But I am still me

Life moves on as I stand still  
Even though I seem motionless  
Days continue like the spinning of  
the wheel

I touch the new day with softness  
It seems so fragile  
The child in me returns  
I hope it will be here for a while

All the memories unwind  
Spinning thoughts move in and out  
A new innocence is what I find

The days continue to come  
As I move with the flow  
The child in me is free once again  
This is what I know

## Immersion Effects On Beginners

By ANN RUTHERFORD, ALBUQUERQUE, NM

I will share my experience of teaching all 19 T'ai Chi Chih movements to a beginning level class in six days in December. At the end of the last class, I handed out a three-question survey form, which asked: 1.) What one thing did you learn about TCC; 2.) Did TCC bring benefit to any aspect of your life (physical, mental, emotional); 3.) Would you have preferred a traditional, once-a-week, eight-week class?

Taking a TCC class for two-hours, six days in a row is a very intense experience, and the first few days brought sore muscles to the students as well as vivid dreams to many. The class included two teenage girls, one woman in her 20s, another in her 30s, and a couple in their 50s. One of the girls suffered from a variety of physical and emotional imbalances, and she had the most difficulty with the coordination required in TCC practice.

One of the biggest benefits to giving a consecutive six-day class is that the student does not have the opportunity to forget the movements since they come back the very next day to practice with an instructor. The entire class grasped the basics for the four Pulling Taffy movements in the first lesson, and the girls pronounced them their favorites. I have never seen this happen before, and I was elated. The downside of the format is that the instructor must make an extraordinary effort to ground the class since they are moving so much *Chi* for such a long time. I forever reminded them to "keep the mind in the soles of the feet" and explained the reason many times.

The survey results astounded me. They all said they preferred the six-day experience to an eight-week class. Their responses about benefits were unanimously positive: "I learned to center myself in the soles of my feet, and I already notice a great change in my mood and lowered stress." One of the teenagers said, "It brought me emotional centeredness and helped physically with my tennis." I deem the experiment a success and would offer the format again, but only during a holiday break when I was not working since it requires the teacher's full energetic concentration to ground the Beginner's Mind.

## Stability Through Counseling Dust-up

By MARK MOLONEY, ST. LOUIS, MS

A young woman who works in a children's psychiatric inpatient facility here had a particularly intense family conference immediately after our weekly T'ai Chi Chih session. The meeting became quite heated with shouted threats and some aggressive body language. The young caseworker wondered why not one of her coworkers intervened. But they told her (later) that she looked in perfect control of the volatile situation. In fact, the blowup did diffuse itself eventually, and, in retrospect, the woman realized she had remained absolutely centered throughout the encounter. And it made her curious. What had given her this extra stability and calm... The only thing she'd done differently that morning was the addition – in that very meeting room – of a 40-minute TCC class. Somewhat amazed, she had to give credit where credit was due.



## A Summer Day In The Park

By JULIE BUFFALO, ATHENS, GA

For the second year, I was fortunate to offer a well-attended T'ai Chi Chih class in a beautiful park on the hospital campus where I work. Practicing TCC in a serenely green outdoor spot is to really become aware of the *Chi* surrounding us. The living energy is readily felt and energizes the diverse group as we move together. The earth seems to rise up to meet our feet. I smile softly as we come to our graceful conclusions, and I smile at the altered *Chi* we share.

## Sisters United

BY SR. PATTY CAMPBELL, OLDENBURG, IN

Over the past year, I have invited many Sisters, age 80 to 93, to practice T'ai Chi Chih with me at our Motherhouse. Their comments about practice include:

"When I'm uptight or anxious about something, TCC calms me down. It makes me very aware how important breathing is to our bodies." – SR. RUTH BREIG

"TCC helps me tune into a rhythm of life, attune to the flow of Nature in a breeze, to feel the flowing of natural movements throughout the day's activities." – SR. HELEN ECKSTEIN

"TCC is a prayerful way of focusing on God, uniting me with all creation. It gives me inner peace and outer composure."

– SR. IRENE HOFF

"Why have I continued with an almost-daily TCC practice for more than 10 years? My arthritic joints are eased, and it keeps me alert and balanced. These gentle movements are ideal for older people who can no longer do strenuous exercises. Try it, you might like it." – SR. CONSOLATA KUHN

"Daily use of the principles and the awareness of body/soul/spirit helps me move from being a wooden soldier to being more like Raggedy Ann. My self-image is more in tune with Earth movements. I respond to, rather than force the Energy."

– SR. CLAVER EHREN



## An Expression Of Gratitude

BY ROBERT MONTES DE OCA,  
ALBUQUERQUE, NM

When the Spiritual Renewal Center (in the South Valley of Albuquerque) had its recent silent auction, I attended it and noticed the artwork by Ou Mie Shu. Justin held many retreats here over the years, and the spiritual connection with the Dominican sisters continued as TCC classes and retreats were offered to the community. The Ou Mie Shu artwork had a spiritual home with the Dominican Sisters and it now has a new spiritual home at the TCC Association. I offer it as an expression of gratitude to Justin and to TCC for changing my life because: Ou Mie Shu was Justin's friend; sharing it brings joy; the cranes we use as our TCC logo were done by Ou Mie Shu; and it will be a companion to another Ou Mie Shu piece at the center.

## Events

## Attending Is Inspirational Intensive with Sandy McAlister in New Jersey; March 24-27, 2011

BY DANIEL PIENCIAK, HOWELL, NJ

Probably the biggest reason folks come to intensives is to focus on how to move in T'ai Chi Chih, and how to better and more fluidly integrate those principles in our practice. With that comes more relaxation and more enjoyment (and more benefit). But if you're looking for simple how to's or why's or what's in this article, you won't find them. What you will find, this writer hopes, is reasons why it behooves you to look at the event calendar now, find an intensive that you can plan to attend, save up some funds, and schedule yourself to just do it. I have been hosting intensives for the last eight or nine years, and it is impossible to pass on this kind of learning in a written article, but I can share some sources of inspiration for sure.

Sandy led the group in some very valuable discussions and sharing such as: "How do we let go?" "How can we learn to be softer in our practice?" "How do we find the Joy in T'ai Chi Chih?" "How

do we ground?" "How do we feel the *tan t'ien*?" "What is the *Nei Kung* and how can we use it effectively?"

Other helpful explorations evolved: "How do we know how far (forward or to the side) to place the heel?" "How does our wording/language in our teaching and in our understanding help or hinder us in our practice?" "What are some specific aspects of moving we can explore on our own to discover more about how to flow from the center?"

And from the participants themselves: "I came unaware of the many questions I have about my TCC practice, and I have gratefully found just the place for exploring those questions" ... "It's been transformational. Having been a corporate human resources manager for decades, this workshop was beyond professional and given with honesty and love; it all seemed so effortless" ... "The time spent on proper weight shift is leading me to greater softness" ... "I came to be a part of a community whose interests and direction are the same as mine" ... "Being here presented me with new direction and new eyes for the future in my practice" ... "Attending was magical in the breaking down and putting back together in harmony."

# Workshops with Antonia Cooper

## Santa Barbara area, CA; February 15-18 and February 22-25, 2011

### It's All About The Principles

BY SUZANNE ROADY-ROSS, SEAL BEACH, CA

Antonia continues to enhance her teaching with her own insights and whatever she learns from other teachers. At this annual retreat, a congenial group took advantage of her newly simplified instruction to improve their own flow of *Chi*. Antonia's message was straightforward: moving well was all about the principles. The group learned the importance of fine tuning the movements as Antonia echoed two answers to nearly every question we asked: let the elbows stay close to the ribs, and feel the *tan t'ien* move the hands. She stressed that whatever is done below the waist is mirrored by what happens above the waist, and she demonstrated that fact again and again with each movement. For example, the wind-up in Carry the Ball to the Side and the conclusion of Working the Pulley made sense to us as never before; the *tan t'ien* begins to move and the hands mirror that motion.

We came to recognize that we learn the lesson when we are ready to learn it. Newbies grasped ideas as basic as bending the knees to fully shift the weight, while those more seasoned learned that the hands don't pull the "taffy" far past the sides of the body – but only as far as the hands can move while the *tan t'ien* turns. Repeat attendees agreed: "I gain more and more as I repeat the retreat." One student even used a Biblical allusion: "The scales fell away from my eyes." It seems that our little universe aligned with some perfect one where movement is easy and insight is deep. We all improved and deepened our practice.

Everyone seemed to enjoy the small group work where we could act as both observers and coaches. Putting observations into words is difficult, but much learning happens when we do so. Specific, individual corrections netted wonderful results for more fluid movements and less effort. Local teacher Tony Johansen led the morning practices with grace and wonderful new insights about the elemental nature of *Chi* and balance. The love, acceptance, and support the group generated helped on our spiritual journey. And as always, Casa's good food helped our physical one.



### Perspectives

COMPILED BY JOCELYN SAMSON  
(OF SURPRISE, AZ & KENORA, ON, CANADA)

Antonia's theme for the retreat – Awareness – resonated with many. Jan came to the retreat asking a big question: "If I know how much T'ai Chi Chih benefits me, why am I not making it a priority and practicing more often?" She received her answer as Antonia

reviewed movements in the context of Justin's book, *Spiritual Odyssey*. "TCC is a physical way to circulate and balance the *Chi* and this, in turn, has an effect on the thinking process and helps us change our habit patterns." Jan recognized that "TCC is a way through joy to new life habit patterns" and that she can actually "begin to change the old mind grooves that create life's problems." Harry Dieckmann reflected that, "The 'Why Are We Attending' question was not simply answered but the question created a 'Why Be Aware' reflection." Only in retrospect could I answer. I wanted to experience a direct awareness of the transcending mystery and joy that engenders a renewal of the spirit and openness to the forces that create and uphold life. That awareness could only be experienced in the moment.

With so many learned ones in attendance, there was ample opportunity to improve one's personal practice. Partner practice at this level offers fresh and meaningful insight into the movements. Tony Johansen spoke of "the well spring of trust that enabled us to help each other." As the expanded consciousness refined our movements, the joy of movement grew accordingly.

Pam's *Seijaku* lesson was transformative in substituting mental intention for physical force. Frank Taylor, a long time teacher, experienced his first exposure to *Seijaku* at the retreat and was impressed by the technique of sandwiching three *Seijaku* movements before and after three TCC movements. He resolved to continue studying *Seijaku* using the DVD since "when the session was over, I was filled with joy and elation. The aftereffects lasted for quite some time. This is another wonderful gift Justin has given to the TCC community."

For those who continue to struggle with the hip swivel, Sandy's two comments on Carry The Ball to the Side were helpful. As we move across to the left, we do so on weighted heel and as we come back, we do so with the weight on the ball of the foot. And if it can be seen by the observer, it is too much. On the macro level, we continued to vision the future of TCC in the world. Frank offered concrete suggestions as to how this process should be conducted. The various visions included utilizing the latest social networking media. This process will continue through the summer conference.

Antonia's candle ceremony kindled expressions of gratitude. Diana Wright recalled the gratitude and peace she felt throughout the retreat and as she participated in a final sing-along with Tony. Harry found that "the candle ceremony encouraged us to be present. Being present must come before 'to love, to care, and to nurture.' Being present is the wellspring for all awareness."

## Workshops with Antonia Cooper Bay Area, CA; February 26 and 27, 2011

### Attention To Soles

BY JEFF STAUFFER, SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Arriving at my first TCC workshop, the first day of class jitters brought up some anxiety. But the calmness of the participants already in the room felt grounding, reassuring. Many old and new friends were coming together to enjoy a day of Joy through Movement. With a long day ahead of us, Sister Antonia started with a relaxing seated practice of Rocking Motion, with the reassurance that if one got too tired standing, the practice is also vital when done seated. Everyone had come to experience Antonia, practice the form, and learn from her. We were given one caveat: pay attention to the soles of the feet as we moved through the 19 movements. The large group was broken into smaller groups and led by the attending teachers. Each teacher has his or her own style, which makes the learning process more organic.

*the ebb and flow  
of a tidal pool ...  
reminded me  
of the sea urchin  
and seaweed  
undulating  
with each  
wave surge*

The culmination was a group practice in concentric circles, with teachers in the middle moving out to the beginners on the outer circle, practicing the whole form in unison with Antonia leading. The view and experience from my perspective was of the ebb and flow of a tidal pool. *Yinning* and *yanging* reminded me of the sea urchin and seaweed undulating with each wave surge. The energy flowed into the center of the circles and then flowed outward, and was then recaptured again in the center. I could sense most people using the same breath cycle, and it was exhilarating. Then a calm energy came with the Cosmic Consciousness Pose, a stillness of peace and harmony with the heavy but calm breath of exertion of the practice.



### Springtime Comes To Northern California

BY JUDY HUBBELL, SAN FRANCISCO, CA

The weekend was a joyful occasion, full of learning and new insights on how to better teach and model the T'ai Chi Chih form for our students. We hope it will happen each year, as this workshop brings us all together in community over two days. By bringing Northern California teachers together under the guidance of the Guide herself, and with the additional presence of our Northern California Teacher Trainer, Sandy McAlister, we all gain so much for our practice. Thank you, Antonia, for all you taught us over two long days, being able to draw together all levels, through the gift of this powerful physical and meditative practice.

The growing numbers were an indicator of the success of this workshop. The first day Antonia instructed 18 teachers and 51 of our students. On Sunday we met as teachers in the lovely Oakland Hills to refine our practice and ask teaching-related questions. Both days were filled with moving slowly and a palpable feeling of being in the flow. We were moving from the center and also in the sharing of ideas, we were one.

Opening Justin's *Tai Chi Chih! Joy through Movement* photo textbook on the first day, Antonia pointed to the *ying-yang* symbol. She pointed out that the light part (the *yang* force or the "heat, expansion, creative, masculine, positive") and the dark part (the *yin* force or the "cold, contraction, the receptive, feminine, negative") have a dot of each other in them. As she demonstrated and taught the movements, her energy reflected the balance within and was reflected back by the group. At the close of Saturday's practice those who had taught 10 years or more were in the inner circle; those newer to teaching formed a middle circle; and new students formed an outer circle. No matter what level of practice, we seemed to flow as one sea of energy, moving from the *tan t'ien* and in circles within circles. The weekend was a powerful experience, renewing our practice as teachers, and opening the door for our students to get excited about becoming teachers.

Congratulations to the new teachers who were accredited in March in Burlingame, California.

*we seemed to flow as  
one sea of energy*

## Anatomy Of A New York Times Article

The *New York Times* health blogger, Tara Parker-Pope, wrote an article in March about T'ai Chi Chih. It was based on recent UCLA research studying the effects of TCC on easing depression (among other things) in the elderly (among other populations.) There have been grumblings that there was only one mention of TCC in the article, and that it didn't even get *that* one mention right: "The study used a form of tai chi called T'ai Chi Chih that uses 20 simple exercises that are nonstrenuous and easy enough to be performed by older adults." But if you're not aware of how the media world works, this can seem insignificant and disappointing. But it's quite the opposite.

I've been working with a media specialist since early 2011 to leverage the exposure that Roselee Blooston secured in the November-December 2010 *AARP* magazine. *The Vital Force* was given an outreach donation a few years ago, and it was set aside until the "right time" – and the *AARP* article offered the perfect opportunistic springboard.

Our media specialist contacted Ms Parker-Pope a few times in early 2011, seemingly to no avail. But then the UCLA results were published in mid-March, and we sent another press release to Ms Parker-Pope (among other outlets), and she, having been introduced to *T'ai Chi Chih* twice over two months prior, picked up the significance of *T'ai Chi Chih* in the UCLA study. (The UCLA press release from 16 March 2011, by the way, only once mentioned *T'ai Chi Chih* – as opposed to *T'ai Chi*. It also inaccurately describes *T'ai Chi Chih* as "a gentle, Westernized version of 'tai chi,' a 2,000-year-old Chinese martial art." Further, the official bio for researcher Helen Lavretsky, MD, on the UCLA website, says her research is being conducted on "*tai chi*." Is it any wonder why *other* media outlets are getting it wrong?

Thus the assertion that it's a significant victory that *The New York Times* got it right. *Time* magazine picked up UCLA research, too, but it would not issue a correction when we contacted the reporter.

The other major point is that **the article directly hyperlinks** to <http://www.taichichih.org/overview.php> – which simply does not get any better. Period. If the article offered nothing else, this would be a huge win.

As a result of the NYT article, an alternative health editor at *Metro International* (circulation of 17 million in over 60 online editions worldwide), who thought she'd heard of every practice under the sun, was intrigued by the word *Chih* tacked onto *T'ai Chi* and contacted us. She'd found a new hook, and she needed an interview and photos within 24 hours. Although I spent a few hours gathering high resolution scans from my files, she still ran stock T'ai Chi photos that were more glossy. Since then I've asked teacher and photographer Andrea Cole to build a portfolio that we can have available for these purposes. Andrea has generously offered to donate her time to this cause.

There have been other placements, too, like:

- A feature recommending Justin's instructional DVD in *Community Health* magazine (readership of 500,000 in the Midwest and South) as one of the five best "workout" DVDs for the new year;
- An article featuring teacher Maya Caudill, discussing how TCC relieves her arthritis symptoms, in the *San Jose Mercury News* (circulation of 575,000 in the Bay Area and syndicated). Maya graciously met a typically-intense reporter's deadline around New Year's Day.
- Syndications of (or variations on) the NYT article in dozens of other media outlets;

And at least two more high quality placements – places we pitched, and again leveraged from the NYT article – will unfold over the next few months. Stay tuned.

KIM GRANT, ALBUQUERQUE, NM

## The Lighter Side

During my T'ai Chi Chih workshop at Bon Secours Spiritual Center, one participant named Laurel said, "I feel like my organs are having a conversation with each other." – SHARON SIRKIS, COLUMBIA, MD

I just finished teaching the hand positions in how to "pet the cat" during Pulling Taffy. After I mentioned petting the top of the cat's head and then down to the tail, one participant in the workshop told me she had a cat named Taffy. – SHARON SIRKIS, COLUMBIA, MD

I was doing my T'ai Chi Chih practice outside and my six-year old neighbor saw me. Since his mother would not let him interrupt, he later asked what I had been doing. When I told him it was TCC, he excitedly exclaimed, "Oh, wait, I know, it's like yogurt!" – TRISH WINGER, CHATTANOOGA, TN

I spent some retreat time in Ireland, where the Sisters have two young and frisky donkeys that I named *Chi* and *Chih*. The first morning as I was doing my T'ai Chi Chih practice at the edge of their pasture, they came over and halted their play, gazing as if bewitched by my practice. Meanwhile, I had been obsessing somewhat about an earlier situation that I had overreacted to inside instead of letting it go. As the donkeys turned to leave, I could almost hear a chuckle from their direction, as if saying, "It's okay, there's a little bit of a jackass in all of us." – SHEILA LEONARD, NL CANADA

come  
to me  
dear daughter  
I need you now  
as I leave  
this world  
soon  
– LAUREL SANFORD

spring  
blossoms  
beautiful  
reach for the sky  
just like me  
stretching  
high  
– SHARON SIRKIS

## T'ai Chi Chih Community Calendar

DATE	WHAT & WHO	WHERE	CONTACT
June 5	Seijaku Renewal w/ Pam	Orinda, CA	Sandy McAlister / 510-582-2238 mcalister19@comcast.net
July 21-24	Teacher Conference	Huron, OH (Lake Erie)	Linda Kutsko / 330-727-4477 healingjourneys9@aol.com
July 24-26	Seijaku Teacher Accreditation w/ Pam	Huron, OH (Lake Erie)	Daniel Pienciak / 732-988-5573 wakeupdaniel@aol.com
September 8-11	Prajna Retreat w/ Sandy	Philadelphia area (Aston), PA	April Leffler / 610-532-6753 lirpaleff@rcn.com
September 18-20	Retreat w/ Pam	Prescott, AZ	Hope Spangler / 928-775-2010 tcc4hope@Q.com
October 28- November 3	Teacher Accreditation w/ Pam	Philadelphia area (Aston), PA	Dan 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	Albuquerque, NM	Ann Rutherford ruthergary@aol.com

## MORE WORKSHOPS &amp; RETREATS

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

July 4-6	Workshop w/ Dan Pienciak	St John's, NL Canada	Sheila Leonard / 709-579-7863 sheilaleonard@nf.sympatico.ca
July 7-8	Seijaku Workshop w/ Dan Pienciak	St John's, NL Canada	Sheila Leonard / 709-579-7863 sheilaleonard@nf.sympatico.ca
August 13	Seijaku Workshop w/ Carmen Brocklehurst	Albuquerque, NM	Judy Hendricks / 505-897-3810 judyhendricks@me.com
October 20-23	Retreat w/ Carmen Brocklehurst	Albuquerque, NM	Judy Hendricks / 505-897-3810 judyhendricks@me.com

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The 2011 Teacher Conference will be held July 21 to July 24 in Ohio at Sawmill Creek Resort, [www.sawmillcreek.com](http://www.sawmillcreek.com), on the shores of Lake Erie. Visit [www.taichichih.org](http://www.taichichih.org) for conference particulars and registration. Or you can contact Lucinda Kutsko by phone at 330-727-4477.

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

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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