

Reflections & Observations On The Adaptation Of TCC To Aging

By Lorraine Lepine, Prairie Village, Kansas

I've had the privilege of working with two groups of ongoing T'ai Chi Chih students for the past seven years. Different from beginner's classes, these ongoing classes and the trust we developed together through the cultivation of the *Chi* allowed powerful mutual enfoldment.

Who we are is always transforming since birth, and throughout our growing up. The only constant is our witnessing of the changes that occur in our body and all around us throughout our life, according to Zen.

When we witness changes in our body, we create a distance, an objective perception, and it becomes easier to accept what is because we realize that yesterday, what was, is no longer. As we move and circulate the *Chi*, we are changing, witnessing the pain go away, witnessing ourselves moving through stiffness. We witness ourselves experiencing wholeness, the bubbling life force within. This is the wonderful power of the present moment which is unfolding in front of our eyes.

How do we perceive the changes that occur?

I had an interesting talk with my 92-year-old student, who said that the physical body goes through many changes in the course of a lifetime. This has an effect on our identity as self and in the world. I am here right now, with the way I am right now. Accepting where we are means that we may have to adapt temporarily, never believe that this is it, that I am limited. No, it means you need to explore options that will help you to keep moving, maybe doing less for now, getting the help you need and slowly progressing.

In light of physical limitations, Justin used to say: "Just do TCC the best you can." We have to face the fact that we are going to die one day and that we are going through changes in the course of a lifetime. It could be in the form of a loss, a body transformation because of an accident, a trauma, or an illness.

How does the Chi circulation help us face the changes?

Listen to what you need to heal within you. It is important to seek help right away. If at a physical level, you need to take advantage of all the complementary treatment available. Each time you do that, your body's capacity to absorb the chi, to increase the vibrational level of energy, becomes more refined, your nerves can more easily sustain the increased vibration of the Chi.

Community Benefits

As we age the sense of community is most important. The people who come to our classes, they are transformed by the practice of the TCC movements. It does not matter if the movements are done correctly or not, all that is important is moving through heavy air, relaxing the brain, the body through softness, letting go.

Connecting with one another helps release the pain of loneliness, or any type of pain. This brings healing at so many levels.

If they keep coming back, maybe the chi is circulating, maybe they are getting a comforting feeling, maybe they are experiencing peace within, even if it is only for a little while. If they are not practicing in their own life, we are not going to see much change. Perhaps, in the midst of all the chaos around. it is a time to relax, and to really be with themselves, a time to go within. Let's give them what their souls need to feel nourished through the CHI.

Rejuvenation

Circulating the Chi, the vital life force energy, is certainly one of the best ways to cultivate rejuvenation, according to Justin. This, combined with meditation, yoga, and exercises, helps overcome specific ailments and keeps us fresh. It is an ongoing transformation at a physical, mental, spiritual level. This is not only Prana (intrinsic energy); it is also Prajna (wisdom, intuitive knowing). P. 120, Meditation for Healing.

Justin wrote in Meditation for Healing: The mind is stilled, and a joyous physical glow spreads over the body. As the Chi flows, one feels good, and 100 chronic ailments seem to improve or disappear. This is truly a healing practice. (P.119)

How does TCC help rejuvenation?

Last year a conversation with Laurie talking about her physical problem at the time. She underwent treatment and is feeling so much better. What is important is that Laurie took action towards healing. It is important to insist that taking action is an ongoing choice because things change constantly.

Our students grow with us, evolve with us.

So we have the responsibility of not only teaching our students. We have the responsibility of taking care of ourselves because we are all unified and in caring for ourselves we care for our students.

We are in a partnership with our students to co-create health, wellness, inner peace, and healing at all level through TCC.

Remember how Justin liked to brag in his 80's saying: "I have the bones of a 30 year.

I will encourage you to share with your students what you learn, your own experience of growth as you go along and heal from layers of what happens to you. To let them believe that we are actually protected from any type of injury, or loss, or trauma of any kind because we do TCC is an illusion. Our students need to see us as real, as dealing with challenges. The sharing of how we deal with challenges becomes a part of growth for our community.

Go deeper within rather than go out, ignoring your emotions, your reaction, go deeper in your body and listen, give it space, perhaps this will bring you to another layer, the layer of the mental body, of trying to see what is attached to this ailment in terms of beliefs, thoughts, ways you were taught to live, you allow yourself to heal that particular way of being that no longer serves you, you become aware of what is as it is.

So, we are not talking about age, we are talking about living, learning through TCC a mindful way to live the present moment, the eternal now and appreciate it in the here and now. Knowing that we have answers within us. We know what to do, what to say because all the answers are within the center of our being and it's called our inner wisdom: prajna. So observation, paying attention to themselves their reactions, their emotions, their feelings is a continuous activity to align the body-mind-heart and spirit. Now they realize that they have a tool they can use to find calm, peace and joy. This is empowering.

From the Akashic Records

Aging is a term created by man, as you move through the veil of death, a whole new life opens up. The spirit life flows. Your connection with the Chi spirit that moves through all dimensions bring you back to that pearl that you were at birth. The union of 2 cells that created you embodying your Soul-spirit with all your potential. Yes, human beings are created to grow from complete dependence to independence. Your cells regenerate constantly, so your transformation is constant, you just do not see it. One day, you look in the mirror and see your face, you see you who have changed and you call that getting older. Truly, that transformation from birth, to maturity, to death is a fact of humanness.

We want to say to you that the dance of life is so beautiful, so rich, you simply need to live it from day to day, allowing your spirit to nourish you. Your spirit is connected with all that is, so your little mind may see limits, but your higher self-inner self sees the unlimited possibilities. That is the secret of staying young, of rejuvenation. As your cells constantly regenerate, you have the power to create new messages in your being to allow you to expand with time and space and unfold like the magnificent flower that you are.

The Chi, the vital life energy feeds your entire body and being, so that little by little, you grow your Soul.

Thanks

I would like to thank Justin Stone for co-creating TCC. I also thank my teachers. I thank the CHI that leads me to learn this beautiful practice, to circulate and balance the chi. I am a better person for it.