

The Vital Force

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for teachers & students

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Justin Stone: In His Words

The Physical And The Spiritual In TCC

FALL 1987, © THE VITAL FORCE

Most people who come for T'ai Chi Chih lessons do it for physical reasons, either because of ailments or because they feel it will help them in the areas of energy, hypertension, etc. Thus they think of TCC practice as a form of therapy, which it undoubtedly is. However, they may later find that they have derived much deeper – spiritual – benefits, which they did not expect.

How do these come about? How does TCC affect our Karma?

We are the products of our habit energies (*vashana* in Sanskrit), and we in turn have built these habit energies. Thus it can be a vicious circle. When these energies grow too strong they become tendencies (*samskara* in Sanskrit), and these may last through many lifetimes. These tendencies are some of the reasons people have uncontrollable drinking problems – which they don't understand – explosive temper outbursts, fits of despondency, etc. It is hard to fight against such things when you don't know what you're fighting.

How does all this begin? When there is a release of energy, accompanied by the mental stimulus associated with it, a *vritti* (Sanskrit) or shallow groove is formed on the brain. Repeated release of the same energy – as when one finds solace in drink and therefore imbibes each time a disappointment is encountered – develops the shallow groove into a deeper habit energy. This in turn takes over our lives. If you will introspect, you will find that most of our actions are habitual. We practice piano to develop these habit energies so our playing becomes muscle memory. We learn languages this way. Some actions become so habitual, such as shaving in the morning, that we often don't remember whether we performed them or not.

So we are a product of these vashanas, which we ourselves built. We are, in a sense, our own creators. We build our own Karma.

*we are,
in a sense,
our own
creators*



I have often spoken of the “Reciprocal Character of Mind and *Chi*” (*Prana* in Sanskrit). The character of the *Chi* greatly influences our state of mind, and our state of mind greatly influences “our” *Chi*.

How can we break into that circle to change influences for a more desirable effect? We do T'ai Chi Chih, circulating and balancing the *Chi*. As the yin-yang elements are brought into better balance, this not only balances the *Chi* but it also influences how we think. Ultimately we are what we think; this creates our Karma.

The state of someone's *Chi* creates vibes, as we all know. Sometimes we meet someone and get “bad vibes” when that person's *Chi* is out of balance. We can't explain it – and we often ignore it – but we are reacting to that individual's energy field. Such reactions are usually reliable.

By changing the quality of the *Chi* (through TCC practice) we are actually performing the deepest Yoga, going back to the cause and erasing it so the affect will be improved or will disappear. This is, in a sense, de-hypnotization.

In this respect TCC has the same deep purpose as Yoga and Zen, but it is a much easier practice. Few are capable of following either Zen or yogic life to its deepest levels, particularly in our busy society. But we can practice TCC and have the deepest spiritual effect on ourselves.

May The Vital Force Be With You

~ Contributions ~

The quality of, and participation by, a wide range of students and teachers continues to be inspirational. May *The Vital Force* remain a safe and independent harbor for expression.

~ Albuquerque Teacher Training ~

I was fortunate to speak about *The Vital Force* at the recent teacher training, where I also sought and received feedback and input about what was working (or not). A challenge was also extended to each candidate to write about their accreditation experience, why they chose to become a teacher or to offer their oral presentation as an article. As a result, this issue contains six training-related articles. It's my hope that future candidates will pick up that mantle and that the community will hear even more reflections from

our newest members. You inspire us.

~ Movement Articles ~

Teachers and students continue to say that movement articles are helpful in teaching and learning. But I can't print them if I don't have them.

~ Art Submissions: Sculpture Photos ~

The issue is peppered with images taken by Rebecca Paulson, who writes: "The northern Colorado T'ai Chi Chih community is doing outreach practices in one of Loveland's parks, a sculpture garden. Last month while strolling through, I spotted one delightful sculpture that is all giant feet, with a vanishing point perspective up to a tinier waist. I squealed with delight: Grounding in the soles of the feet! I hope you have enough

pictures from this collection for *The Vital Force*."

~ Media Rate ~

To save money, beginning with the May issue, *The Vital Force* will be shipped media rate rather than first class.

~ An Anecdote ~

"As a first time mother-to-be, there were times, especially during the later months, when I couldn't sleep at night. Baby was keeping us both up. So I would wander through the house. I found that if I did some T'ai Chi Chih moves, these would calm the baby and me and we could return to sleep."

- STEPHANIE, ELBRIDGE, NY

~ WITH GRATITUDE. KIM GRANT, ALBUQUERQUE, NM

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ARTWORK & PHOTO CREDITS

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The Vital Force

~ WEB SITE UPDATES ~

The on-line database (for 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.

~ SUBMISSION DEADLINES ~

January 1 for the February issue
April 1 for the May issue
July 1 for the August issue
October 1 for the November issue

~ SUBMISSION GUIDELINES ~

Please send articles as Word documents, electronically, to tcc@kimgrant.com. 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.

~ GIVING ~

Please consider a tax-deductible contribution to support *The Vital Force's* essential and vast outreach. Membership fees cover the journal; our other activities continue through the discretion and generous support of our giving base. They allow us to effectively reach hundreds of thousands of practitioners around the globe. Thanks to our supporters who:

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Shift Beyond Your Comfort Zone (In Life)

By APRIL LEFFLER, PROSPECT PARK, PENNSYLVANIA

Justin has said that if we do T'ai Chi Chih regularly, we will begin to enter into the Cosmic Rhythm. In fact we are all *already* in the Cosmic Rhythm, however practicing TCC consistently enables us to be *consciously aware* of being in the Rhythm. It's been said that when a person becomes one with that Rhythm, things flow smoothly. How do we become one with the Cosmic Rhythm? Simply by letting go (i.e. of tension, of effort and of resistance to *what is*.)

This also requires letting go of the attachment to the outcome of plans, letting go of logical and rational thoughts and trusting in *prajna**. Let go of *figuring-it-out* and embrace *feeling-it-out*, which requires an aware presence, moment to moment. Interestingly, we do this with every mindful TCC practice. When we are not practicing carelessly, we are feeling, in the moment, moment to moment.

I've always believed that the practice of TCC is analogous to the practice of life. Mindful TCC practices are preparing us to live life mindfully and in accord with the Cosmic Rhythm. While the *tan t'ien* knows the truth of this, the ego has other thoughts on the subject.

This year new TCC opportunities beyond my comfort zone have come to me. I was invited (by a student preparing for accreditation) to teach 20 hours worth of TCC over a weekend to a disciplined group of 17 meditators. Gulp. My student was the only one with any TCC experience. I also had the opportunity to facilitate a full day program on "TCC and Heightened Awareness" at a local spiritual center. Within the group, individual experiences of TCC ranged from brand new students to accredited teachers.

The *tan t'ien* was thrilled with these prospects but my head was saying, "Who me?" I knew in my gut that both opportunities *felt right*, however, the ego was quick to point out several things about which to worry. Witness "the conversation":

Ego: You've never taught anything beyond a typical class, much less

teaching 20 hours over a weekend. You've never done a full day program before and certainly not on heightened awareness. And now you've agreed to teach both? Are you friggin' kidding me?

Prajna: Thank you for sharing; it'll be fine.

Ego: Why not just stay with what you know (e.g., eight-to-ten week classes, ongoing hour-long classes at the "Y," teaching your college students about the importance of grounding, hosting TCC events)?

Prajna: Thanks again for sharing; we're doing this.

Ego: How the heck do I convey heightened awareness to people? What will I say? What will we do? Twenty hours of TCC? I don't know if I'm ready for this. You're friggin' crazy!

Prajna: Now hear this: You (and everyone else) are being guided; just listen. Ground yourself; trust the process and breathe.

Ego: Sigh. Gulp. Be-Here-Now. Be-Here-Now. Be-Here-Now.

So I ventured into unknown waters in facilitating both of these TCC events with some mental trepidation. My *tan t'ien* ironically was very reassuring, especially during the actual programs. I had the humbling experience of feeling *prajna* guiding me – in the moment – to say and do certain things. I actually felt *comforted* in the silences and, unbelievably to the ego, found myself simply waiting, listening and feeling for *prajna* to guide the direction of each TCC group in both class experiences. *Prajna* knew what to do, and my job was to listen, trust it and follow it humbly as its servant.

*are you flowing
with [prajna]
or swimming
against
the current
in resistance*



What is your relationship to the Cosmic Rhythm? Are you flowing with it or swimming against the current in resistance? *Prajna* can expertly guide you if you allow it to and you most assuredly will feel the flow (although the ego doesn't believe this). Have you been thinking of trying something outside of your TCC comfort zone? Have you been invited to try something new? Since TCC is a service to humanity, wouldn't it be nice to shift beyond your comfort zone and see where the Cosmic Rhythm takes you?

* Editor's note: *Prajna* is a Sanskrit word Justin often used, meaning inherent wisdom.

Knowing & Feeling The TCC Movements

BY CARMEN L. BROCKLEHURST, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Justin was watching a very sincere T'ai Chi Chih teacher at an annual TCC conference a few years ago. He went over to her and said, "You are not turning your waist." She was very surprised and said to him, "But I always tell my students to turn their waist." I'm sure she had told them. But telling someone to turn his or her waist is very different from turning it on our own. She wasn't trying to make excuses; she honestly felt that she had been turning her waist. She knew the correct verbiage for what she was doing, but for whatever reason she was not able to feel what the movement was doing inside of her.

I, too, had a similar waist turning problem that affected all my "taffy movements" and the side-to-side movements. Justin would often say to me, "Turn your waist." I told him that I was. He said, "The movement is not a shoulder turn." Regardless of how much I practiced turning my waist, I never seemed to get it right. Finally, he started to help me by asking me not to turn my head. A couple of weeks later he said to keep my nose to the front. Still later he added that I needed to swivel the hips. After many years of doing it incorrectly, my body felt stiff and uncomfortable with each correction. I kept *trying* to do what he asked. **Trying is not always feeling.**

My biggest problem was that I wasn't feeling the movements. Some of you may be asking, "How could you not feel your body moving?" Like I said, I knew the verbiage but not the feeling. I didn't understand that each correction that he made naturally led to the next. The hip swivel took much practice. He kept showing me the oval that the hips were making. I tried many movements that I *thought* were the hip swivel. I turned my hips by turning my shoulders (not a hip swivel); by turning my head (not a hip swivel); by turning my nose (not a hip swivel); by sitting on the piano bench and going straight across (still no hip swivel). Justin naturally kept demonstrating the hip swivel to me. I noticed that his movements were soft and gentle and mine were not. He kept talking about the oval that the hips were making, and he would show the curve with his forefinger.

One day with much determination, I tried to make the curve with my hips without moving my shoulders. Justin had already told me that the shoulders did have a little give, but they did not move very much. I held on to a chair and moved my hips, but each time I let go of the chair the shoulders went into a bigger turn. I started to notice that when I held on to the chair, as my waist turned from side-to-side, my belly button moved, but the rest of me felt very stiff. I started to say to myself all the things that Justin was saying, one after the other: don't turn your head, keep your nose to the front, try to keep your shoulders from turning too much, feel the curve of the hip swivel to the back ("sit in the little chair"), and then to the front. I felt the energy move from knee to knee as I shifted my weight and made the curve. My knees let go and the waist followed. **I felt a rush of energy.**

It was all worth it. The roundness and softness came the more I practiced. Of course, I then had to admit to the students that there was more to the side-to-side movements than I had shown them. **An infinite practice is always that way.** It is the way we learn to love and share the *Chi*.



Grace, Play & Effortless Effort

A TCC Workshop with Amy Tyksinski
October 10-11, 2015, Loveland, Colorado

BY MARIE DOTTS, HOST, LOVELAND, COLORADO

The first seed of inspiration was to invite teachers to share their gifts with the growing Northern Colorado community. Amy Tyksinski came to mind as a teacher I wanted to come and share. In my “Continuing” classes when I wanted to delve deeper into a movement, I would look at past issues of *The Vital Force* for articles Amy wrote about each movement (between May 2007 and February 2012). The issues are a great resource and had multiple articles from different teachers on each movement. Amy’s articles are mostly write-ups from her attendance at a TCC retreat given by Carmen Brocklehurst. Her articles always invited me and my students to go deeper and feel more.

Amy also inspired me when she did the TEDx ABQED talk on the “Benefits of TCC with High School Students.” I was touched by how effortlessly her students moved on stage. You can view this on YouTube. In the February 2015 issue of *The Vital Force*, Amy gives an interview in which she shares, “what compels me most recently is how to help students access the principle of ‘effort of no effort’ through their *tan t’ien*.” My students and I were ready to explore and play with this principle and Amy was the perfect teacher.

I have noticed recently that **new students unfold in three stages**. The first stage is just learning the movements and acquainting the body in the principles of how to move. What helps a student the most at this stage is a lot of repetition. The turning point is when a student no longer has to think about a movement. The body just knows it. New students really look forward to the day that they do not have to think and they can just feel.

A turning point is when students are able to do a practice at home by themselves with confidence. I remember the retreat last fall with Teacher Trainer, Pam Towne. Students got to be immersed in the form for a whole weekend. Pam had them repeat the movements over and over. The comment I got the most from the retreat participants was that they had greater confidence in doing their practice.

The second stage for new students seems to be a call to ground and deepen

into their weight shifts. The *Chi* calls them to bring more presence and awareness to their lower body. It is time to explore and play with their weight shifts. Are they shifting their weight fully, softly and gradually from one foot to the other? Are they in alignment moving from the center of their body? Are they allowing the waist to turn in the side-to-side movements? When the first wave of students was in this stage, I knew the teacher for them was Judy George. Her enthusiasm for grounding and alignment helped everyone sink into their bodies a little more. They got to feel and live in their feet in ways they may never have before.

The third stage is all about letting go and allowing the *Chi* to move you. With the deepening into their weight shifts, students now have a greater capacity to be present and surrender to the loving movement within them. This sounds easy but to the ego it can feel like you are jumping off of a cliff to your death.

The practice is asking us to let go of a lifelong habit of keeping safe by controlling life. The students need to drop out of the false safety of their minds and drop into inner stillness, their true safety. It is only in stillness that we can feel and surrender to the movement of the *Chi* within us. The *Chi* is now calling students to trust their bodies and trust what they feel. It is the moment-to-moment presence in their weight shifts that helps give them the inner strength needed to take this next leap.

Amy Tyksinski’s workshop encouraged students to take that leap. To get in touch with the *Chi* we played with bubbles and touched a cloth that held the properties of both strength and softness. The phrases that continually flowed out of Amy like mantras were “What did you feel?” and “It is trustworthy.” She did not answer every question students had. Instead she had them explore the movement themselves and then share. She helped all of us trust in ourselves a little bit more. It was her own trust and openness to the *Chi* in her practice that touched us the most though. She showed us the potential for grace and effortless effort in all of us.

We know **our journey in TCC is unending**. The *Chi* continues to grow and unfold us. The end of stage three is really the beginning of our journey: A journey where the *Chi* is our true teacher. We now have much greater trust in ourselves, and in the flow of the *Chi* within us.

Outer teachers do not go away. The *Chi* will use and bring them into our lives to help us receive a particular lesson it wants for us. The gifts of these lessons are always greater love, joy and capacity to receive the fullness and goodness of life.

Thank you Pam Towne, Judy George and Amy Tyksinski for sharing your love and light with Northern Colorado.



From Individual Outlook To Global Outlook

BY SANDY McALISTER, HAYWARD, CALIFORNIA

When I first began teaching T'ai Chi Chih, eleven years after it was developed, rarely would I meet anyone who had heard of it. I recall one time being completely dumbfounded when during breakfast at a bed-and-breakfast in a small town in Newfoundland several years ago, TCC was mentioned and two of the three women at the table had taken a class in their hometown of Montreal. Now it doesn't surprise me when TCC comes up in conversation that someone has heard of it or tried it.

Most people who have become teachers have done so for one reason, because they experienced the value of the practice and want to share it, giving others the opportunity to receive the benefits. TCC has grown mainly through word of mouth rather than through mass marketing. Those who experience the benefits of the practice tell others and teachers promoting their classes advertise the benefits that may be received through practice: People grow stronger, healthier, emotionally stable and more aware of an inner life and who they are.

We have an opportunity to take this practice from the individual outlook, what can it do for me, to the global outlook, how can I use the power of this practice to benefit the earth and everyone on this planet. Seventeen years ago World T'ai Chi Qigong Day began. That has blossomed into World Healing Day. On the last Saturday of April practitioners of T'ai Chi, Qigong, yoga, meditation, prayer, sacred dance, chanting and other such practices gather at 10 a.m. in a spirit of unity to create a vibration of peace and compassion around the world, to surround the world with a flowing web of positive energy.

I would like to encourage everyone who practices TCC to set aside 10 a.m. on April 30 and enter into the Cosmic Rhythm, as Justin might call it, by doing TCC. Approach your practice unemotionally, with the intention to be open, alive, vibrant, grounded and filled with compassion. Do not direct or selectively send the energy or compassion but

allow that feeling of compassion to flow from you. Let go of self and be the infinite.

The Global Consciousness Project is a research project with specially designed computers positioned around the world that show when human consciousness focuses collectively on a massive scale, it actually has a physical impact in the world. In their research the strongest emotion registering was compassion.

"Compassion is not religious business, it is human business, it is not luxury, it is essential for our own peace and mental stability, it is essential for human survival." – DALAI LAMA XIV

Compassion is showing concern, or a *feeling* of wanting to help someone who is sick, hungry, in trouble. What is the feeling of compassion, goodwill, love, acceptance, non-judgment? On April 30 prepare before you practice and connect with how and when you heard those words; what is the feeling behind them not the action. Allow that feeling to permeate your practice and flow through you. Maintain your focus on feeling awareness rather than engaging the mind. Allow the wisdom of the Chi to manifest in its own way without being directed by the mind. As you practice you are

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See www.taichichih.org/conference-2016



creating a positive atmosphere that is a good counterbalance to lessening fear and anger in the world.

For several years there have been TCC groups meeting in parks and public places to be

part of World T'ai Chi Qigong Day. As the focus has broadened into World Healing Day I feel TCC has a role to play, a responsibility even to contribute its beauty, its essence, its joy, its power to join other healing practices around the world on this day.

Whether you practice individually or form a group of 5 or 25 and meet in private or public, it does not matter. If you make it a well-advertised event for the public to watch or join in, providing an opportunity to advertise classes, it doesn't matter. How you approach the practice and set the intention is what is important. Provide an opportunity on April 30 for TCC to take its place alongside other beneficial practices and lend its power to benefit the world and mankind.

Intentions For 2016

By Pam Towne, Oceanside, California

I've given up making New Year's resolutions. Instead, I set intentions and goals for the next year. But before getting to those, on New Year's Eve I release things (experiences, emotions) from the past year that I don't care to perpetuate in the new year. After writing down all that come to mind, I burn that paper in a releasing ceremony, knowing that they are not the truth of who I am and letting them go.

This releasing of the old creates space for the new. Nature abhors a vacuum, so the next step is to envision what I'd like to be, do, have and experience in the new year.

Intentions lie in the realm of being, whereas most resolutions lie in the realm of doing. So I begin by asking myself the question, "Who do I intend to be in the new year?" Sometimes the answer has been as simple as: "I intend to be healthy and happy" or "I intend to be a presence of peace." Simple or complex, general or specific, isn't as important as feeling authentic and uplifting for me.

Once clear on my intentions, setting goals naturally flows out of those intentions. This year one of my intentions is to be healthier. I think of myself as a healthy person, yet I am affirming that I grow healthier every year. A goal that supports that intention is to get seven to eight hours of sleep a night. There's a big difference between knowing that this is one of the best things I can do to support my body in living a long, healthy life, and actually doing it consistently. I am committed to doing this for myself this year.

Another intention for 2016 is to be of greater service to T'ai Chi Chih. A goal that supports that intention is to lead more retreats, including one in Hawaii. TCC retreats are a great way to build local TCC communities, inspire students to become accredited teachers, and deepen both teachers' and students' personal practice of TCC. If you would like a retreat in your area, please contact me.

Another TCC goal this year that supports me being of greater service is to audit a teacher accreditation and attend a Seijaku course led by another teacher. Usually I'm leading these courses, so it's time for some advanced training for the trainer. What are your intentions and goals for this year?

TCC & The New Year

By Daniel Pienciak, Howell, New Jersey

The passing of holidays and coming of a new year evoke varying reactions and moods. We can be excited about a fresh new year or fearful of the future. We can feel relief that "I made it through another holiday." Or we might feel a lowness of mood, as if special joy has come and gone, leaving a kind of emptiness.

The title of one of Justin Stone's books puzzled me for several years. Why (so I asked myself) would anyone want to read a book called, *Abandon Hope*? Indeed, Justin often orally quoted from Lewis Carroll: "Always jam tomorrow, never jam today."

There are no doubt many worthy resolutions one can make for a New Year. Practicing T'ai Chi Chih or Seijaku more regularly, or planning to attend an Intensive or teacher conference or TCC retreat surely would be good resolutions.

One of the most helpful teachings that I have absorbed through TCC practice is the profoundness of the ever-present *now* moment. We can spend years wanting to do something better, improving our lives in some way and so on. But what about today?

The coming of the New Year can inspire us to be or do something better, and that's a great goal. But the "hope" of the coming of that day can distract us from the state of be-ing and instead keep us immersed in do-ing. The mind and energy can always be focused on something yet-to-be or yet-to-do.

I am still discovering the value, when in the stillness between sets of TCC movements, of no thought of the movement that just was, or of the movement coming next. I invite myself and my students to just breathe and be in the soles of the feet *now*.

The letdown feeling of a past holiday or of an exciting event that is now over invites us into the state of emptiness. For in nothingness there is all that is. This is where beauty and inspiration and truth lie, often seemingly dormant because we are all filled up with looking to the future.

The invitation into emptiness in our practice invites us to let go of ego (i.e. my way is the right way to do this movement), while the void leaves space for learning something new, or for feeling an increased softness or even stronger circulation of *Chi*. Emptiness is a worthy goal for sure.



Why I Practice

By SUE BITNEY, RICHFIELD, MINNESOTA

Grief is a journey with many layers. Sometimes it feels manageable and then there is sudden and surprising pain that takes your breath away. My T'ai Chi Chih practice has helped to carry me through it all. I have experienced so many deaths since my beloved Jim died on March 16, 2013. My mother-in-law is in the doorway ready to transition into her next journey reuniting her with her husband, sons, great-granddaughter, parents and siblings. TCC helps me remain grounded and not slip into depression or despair. I am able to assist other members of the family cope with the losses.

It is difficult to remember life before TCC. I have been asked so many times, "How can you be so calm?" My answer is always the same: TCC. It anchors me to the earth. It keeps my emotions in check. It gives me space to breathe before I respond to a situation or person. I am so very grateful for this wonderful gift. I am equally grateful for the TCC community of both teachers and students who have surrounded me during times of struggle and who have allowed me to be a support to other members of the community.

In this new year I acknowledge the deep debt I owe to TCC. It is a gift worth preserving and promoting. I give thanks to Justin for originating this beautiful practice and to all the teachers who have passed it forward and are keeping the practice alive and well.

Wondering Into The Miracles

By ROSEANN HEINRICH, PARMA, OHIO

Last night as I did my T'ai Chi Chih practice, I experienced a life review. I brought my thoughts into the now, focused on the soles of my feet and the movement of my body, and before I knew it was transported to an earlier time in my life. I remembered the good times with such love and the not-so-good-times (surprisingly) with great compassion for myself and my experiences. There were things I remembered that made me grateful of angels in my life, as I knew they were the reason everything turned out all right.

I always brought myself back to the present and back to the soles of the feet. I imagine that is what the holiday season is about: remembering, being grateful for the wonder and being grateful that the harder parts are now part of the past.

Moving into the second half of my practice, I wondered about the future. Earlier that day I listened to a podcast about the planetary alignment for 2016 and the potential for changes in the new year. I reminded myself to let go of the concern, to let the *Chi* guide me. I reminded myself to breathe and flow with the movement. That is what this practice is all about, learning to flow with life, allowing grace to move us easily, which it does if we don't try to control outcomes. **What might appear negative could be the most positive blessing.** We just cannot see it until we look back upon it.

There is so much awaiting us in 2016. I believe it is going to be a very blessed year. My plan is to continue my daily practice and allow the flow. My plan is to teach my students to practice more and focus on letting go – so that the *Chi* can move them to a vibration of so much freedom and ease that they will feel the flow in practice and in life. As in the past 16 years, I am grateful for my TCC practice and looking forward to the wonders of 2016. Namaste.



An Evening Of Gratitude

BY DORENE KRAUSE, MIDLAND PARK, NEW JERSEY

A couple of months ago I had an idea: why not invite all my intermediate T'ai Chi Chih students from three different classes to an open practice one evening? The week before Thanksgiving seemed perfect, and the space where I teach many classes each week was available. As I began to plan and prepare for the evening, I inwardly referred to the night as an "Evening of Gratitude" – which indeed it turned out to be. I wanted to gift my students with this experience, but I did not know (nor did I expect) the gifts I was to receive that evening.

All went according to plan, and I realized after the evening was over that it was I who received so much: the gifts of collective energy, community, inner Joy and a sense of wellbeing. Returning home and reflecting on the evening, many thoughts and emotions were coursing through my mind. What follows is the letter I sent to each of those in attendance.

Reflections On An Evening Of Gratitude

How wonderful for me to share Wednesday evening with each of you. Sharing your TCC and life experiences made me realize how diverse we are, and yet we all gather together as one with TCC, sharing in the universal energy. The practice itself was pure poetry. To quote Justin Stone: "Doing TCC, there is a timeless moment as we flow effortlessly."

My eyes filled up a few times during the practice when I glanced around the circle knowing how each of you has touched me. I felt surrounded by the gift of you. I did not know while planning this evening what a wonderful gift I was going to receive.

TCC has been a real journey of discovery for me and has opened my eyes more fully. What pure joy it is for me to share what I have learned with you each week. I am sure you do not realize that you too have taught ME with your questions, your challenges, your "aha!" moments, your insights and your sense of humor.

TCC is truly a journey, and we must remember that the journey IS the goal. It really is not about perfection but about deepening our understanding of the practice and ourselves as well. We travel together on this pathway helping each other along the way.

TCC is an ongoing learning experience indeed. It is a privilege for me to be your teacher.

We call TCC "Joy thru Movement" but I truly believe it is also joy through giving, sharing, laughter and caring. Thank you, from the bottom of my heart (and the soles of my feet).

*Wishing you all a beautiful Thanksgiving.
With love and deepest gratitude,
Dorene*

A Deeper Practice Is A Gift We Can't Force

BY CAROL NELSON-SELBY, SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA

After many years of enjoying learning, practicing and teaching T'ai Chi Chih, I am amazed that I continue to experience so many joyous epiphanies, moments when the ways in which my body and mind are *feeling* TCC suddenly change and I know that the *Chi* and *Chih* have come into better balance. This insight isn't unique, it is simply **what Justin Stone called "letting T'ai Chi Chih do T'ai Chi Chih,"** which for me, as a former attorney, is always going to be a lifelong journey, as opposed to a lesson learned.

The core instruction becomes that most basic one: Settle into the soles of your feet. Now, begin to *feel* the weight pouring ounce by ounce from the donating foot, until it has all been given effortlessly to the receiving foot.

Being able to share this perspective with students for whom this form of movement is initially awkward gives them the gift of knowing that they are setting out on an endless path of self-knowledge – not learning a dance, perfecting a performance, working on an exercise regime, or doing anything that does not come from within themselves.



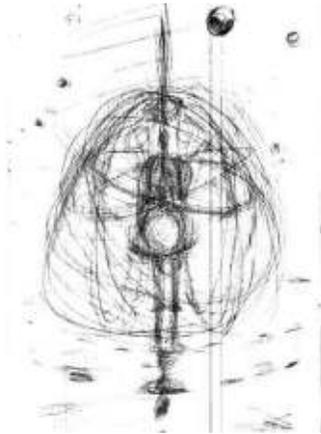
The Joy of Movement

BY ART LOCHE, KANSAS CITY, KANSAS

I sought to reacquaint myself with Justin Stone's T'ai Chi Chih. It's a mental moving meditation, a means to de-stress and relax my consciousness on everyday matters of existence, of life. The movements require minimal physical energy but concentrating on the internal subtlety requires mental focus.

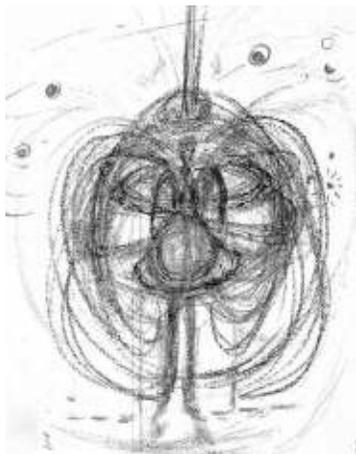
The circularity of movements like Pulling in the Energy aligns the body's substance and links it with the cosmos, in rhythm with the rotation of the earth, energy driven/given by the sun, along with the ebb and flow of the ocean. Knowing that life depends on factors beyond my control is quite humbling.

My sketches [published here] were imagined by the circularity of TCC movements. Thought brought and focused attention in the *tan t'ien*, the bubbling spring and the upright posture, suspended at the ceiling from the top of my head.



My mind's eye focused on the horizon and subtle thinking on the ebb and flow of the ocean's calming motion. My mind's eye concentrated on the respiration, relaxed the skeletal muscularity. Being aware of my internal physiology awakens my intuition, intellect and

yokes body to my environment and surroundings.



Knowing that my being was not causal (on account of my energy but through this moving meditation), I know that I can affect my energy through my intention.

My Story: From Worst To Best

BY DAVID FRYD, MINNESOTA

I started T'ai Chi Chih about three years ago for my balance. I must have been the worst student ever. I had trouble with balance, left-right orientation, knowing where my hands were, lifting my body – to name a few things. But with persistence (I kept coming back), lots of constructive critique, a sense of humor and lots of practice, I got to be pretty good. And my balance is much better. **But I gained a lot more than that.**

I have lifted weights, figure-skated, biked and used aerobic exercise machines for many years. I have stretched before and after exercising. But these things didn't prepare me for my loss of balance and the frustration accompanying the loss of activities. Nor did they help with TCC. I am a Type A personality and I only knew one speed: fast. But when several friends recommended TCC I decided to give it a try.

I attended lessons offered by the YMCA Shoreview and taught by Judy George. A lot of students were crammed into a small room. I took a cautious spot in the back and was ready to give it a whirl. I couldn't really see the instructor but I listened and tried to follow along. Put the left foot forward. Okay, I thought, this is a stretching warm-up. Shift the body weight forward and then back. My left foot was so far ahead of my right foot that there was no way I could keep my balance. So I lost it repeatedly. But somehow I always smiled as I stumbled. I tried but failed with many of the first five movements. I was equally miserable with the next session's movements.

But the smile on my face made me come back. I think Judy was as surprised as I that I returned. This time I took a spot in the front of the class. I wasn't much better but at least I knew what I couldn't do. So Mr. Persistent kept coming back. I still had a long way to go. After class, Judy helped me understand Perpetual Motion, Passing Clouds and others. I didn't know how to shift my weight from side-to-side (or front-to-back). I didn't know what my arms and hands were supposed to do, but there was always a smile on my face as I screwed up and I got better with practice. I used a DVD and websites to practice by myself. Finally, I got the nerve to try a practice on my own. It confirmed what I already knew: I was pathetic.

But I kept coming back to class; each time I picked up a little more. As the years passed I got better and better. My balance got better and better. I learned a new speed: slow. I didn't realize how much "slow" would relax and calm me. It made a big difference in my life. Now when someone calls me slow I thank them for the compliment.

I am far from perfect but I'm no longer the worst. With Judy's tutelage I've come a long way. Now when new students are having trouble, Judy says, "If you can't see me, follow Dave." Imagine that.

Spiritual Benefits Of TCC's ABCs

By Jeff Hoepner, Illinois

My topic is the spiritual benefits of accumulation, balance and circulation of the Chi. I'm supposed to say they are peace, wisdom and enlightenment. But there are no spiritual benefits. Maybe I should explain... A benefit is an advantage gained from an activity. So benefits are of this world, the world of transactions, subject/object, pleasure/pain, good/bad, the world of ego, the world of habit energies and karma.

Justin says T'ai Chi Chih gets rid of ego and karma. So any spiritual benefits would seem to contradict the aim of TCC. But Justin also says that getting rid of the ego is spiritual, and that spiritual evolution is a result of TCC. I can think of one way out of this conflict.

Justin lists six aspects of spiritual practice and spirituality: **detachment; nonviolence; inherent wisdom; recognizing, feeling and according with impermanence; finding out Who and What you are; and working with people.** TCC has many of these same attributes.

Justin says that TCC should be done in a leisurely way, almost as if you are an onlooker. This is detachment. Justin says that TCC should be done softly with the effort of no effort, so that TCC does TCC. This is nonviolence. TCC is a meditation, and within it lies an uncovering of inherent wisdom and enlightenment: the discovery of "Who and What we are."

TCC consists of movements and a posture; each one begins and ends; each practice begins and ends; each relationship with a teacher begins and ends. Recently, I have experimented with doing TCC as if it were my last practice. This is recognizing, feeling and according with impermanence. Justin also says that feeling the flow of the *Chi* is according with the Real.

TCC is 'Joy Thru Movement', and joy is outside the pain/pleasure continuum beloved by the ego.

So it might be accurate to say that TCC is a spiritual practice, and its benefits are inherent in the practice itself. The spiritual benefits are already within us, covered up. The accumulation, balance and circulation of the *Chi* brings them out.

After trying to confuse you, I'd like to read a quotation from *Spiritual Odyssey*: "Most students come to [TCC] feeling, 'I am going to do a beneficial exercise.' Eventually they find it is beneficial – and joyous – but they still think of it as exercise, and still put the 'I' in there. As they proceed farther, they begin to slowly realize the Essence of [TCC] and one day they have the experience that 'no one is doing it. [TCC] is doing [TCC].' Now they have the 'I' out of the way. Their practice is done without thought, concentrating on the soles of the feet. This 'non-ego' state is greatly beneficial; it is what makes [TCC] more than exercise and has a deeply spiritual benefit."

TCC Improves Our Inner State Of Being

By Tracy Immordino, Illinois

(ALL QUOTATIONS FROM *SPIRITUAL ODYSSEY* BY JUSTIN STONE)

The Buddha said, "All that you are, all that you ever have been, and all that you ever will be is the result of what you have thought." To which Justin adds, "If we are not content with our lives, we might take a look in the direction of these habit patterns."

Practicing T'ai Chi Chih affects our thoughts, which affects our emotions, which affects our perceptions of our world, which affects our reality. Justin writes, "Our attitudes change and we become more like the bamboo, rather than the oak. Then the outer world reflects this inner serenity... For each frame of mind there is a corresponding *Chi*. Our thinking cultures our Vital Force. Thus we can influence what we are and what we become by what we think."

The most common response I hear about how TCC has benefited people is a feeling of inner peace. The mindfulness we employ while practicing TCC, and the circulating and balancing of the *Chi*, helps lead people to a more peaceful state of being and helps them be less reactive to the world around them.

Along these lines Justin also states, "[TCC] ... permeates the lifestyle of the practitioner. We do not all see the same world, which is a reflection of ourselves. With the accumulation of the *Chi* (Vital Force) through [TCC] practice, permanent changes in metabolism and the thinking process take place and, renewed energy conditions the whole way of life."

I want to be in this peaceful, joyful state more often than not, and TCC helps me accomplish this. The more often that I practice, the easier it is for me to maintain a sense of calm and to respond to situations rather than to react.

As Justin says, "When this *Chi* is circulated and the positive and negative aspects (the Yin and the Yang) are brought into balance, not only does health improve, but an inner serenity seems to follow naturally. The increased energy (because *Chi* is energy) brings vast changes in the practitioner's life, both inner and outer..."

Editor's Note: These two offerings are from presentations given by students of Donna McElhose, Wildwood, Illinois, utilizing the writings of Justin Stone.



20th Century Psalms: The Impersonal

BY JUSTIN F. STONE

“

If you hate anything, you cannot love.

~ The Zen Master, Chao Chou, being asked what one should say to a traveler carrying nothing, answered: “Tell him to throw it out!” When the asker protested that, carrying nothing, he could throw nothing out, he received the reply: “Then let him carry it out!”

~ We see matters through a veil of self-interest.

~ So who's doing the playing? The performer is just a listener. “Did I do that?” he wonders. Can we be so guided in everything?

~ Indian Philosophy traces everything back to an Uncaused Cause, but Buddhism says nothing happens without a prior cause. And then we have the Chinese Un-carved Block. In most cases we believe what we want to believe.

~ Why the urge to personalize and worship this great Life Force in the form of a man?



From the out-of-print book, *20th Century Psalms*, excerpted and reprinted with permission from Good Karma Publishing.

“

Some men hear music as noise, some do not see colors.
Most do not feel the Essence that pulses through them.

~ If we have constant clamor, the tiny voice inside is drowned out.

“

In a drop of salt water we can sense the ocean; in one action we can feel a person's character.

~ Envy of others keeps us from realizing our own true value.

~ There is tremendous energy in clouds – even more so when they hang over mountains. We can absorb this energy.

~ Nature is without sentiment. That must be realized.

~ People rush to grasp the ersatz while ignoring the real.



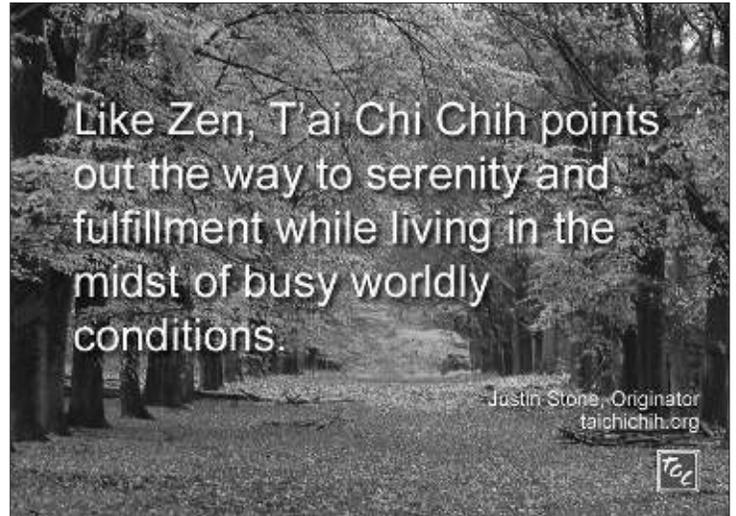
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To be devious is to lose your own respect. Better to try to see things from the overall view.

~ The leaves that fall in Autumn will be back next Spring. They will not be the same leaves, you say? Why identify with the leaves; why not identify with the tree?

~ A man who speaks Truth is often thought to be humorous. Otherwise, he might be crucified.

~ To shut out echoes from the past, to attenuate the pleasure principle, these are the hardest tasks.



“

The great wisdom is to trust the voice within. “Did I say that?” one wonders, knowing the hand at the throttle is Wisdom. The good jazz musician hears, in wonder, the music he is spontaneously playing.

~ What good to relieve a child of stresses and then send it back to the same environment that caused those stresses?

~ Rhythm is the essence of Being (hence the cyclical nature of things). Without time there can be no rhythm.

~ The Self is realized by forgetting the self. “I, John Jones, am trying hard to achieve Enlightenment” makes it impossible. Enlightenment is always there, but it cannot be the reward of an individual ego.



“

The pleasure-seekers (and finders) are often the suicides. Living the “good life” can be boring.

~ To write with erudition about painting and music makes me smile. Better one performer than one thousand critics. The critic, seeing a man standing on his head on a bicycle balanced on a tightrope – with a violin held upside down – playing Zigeunerweisen says causitically, “Heifetz he’s not.” I heard this story a long time ago.

~ The ego does not die. It grows to embrace all.

~ If you dislike people, how can you love God?

My Own Spiritual Odyssey

BY CHRISTINE MOORE, FRIDLEY, MINNESOTA

I am a lover of books, though I am not your average reader. Rather than novels I am often drawn to books about theology and spirituality. I've been that way since I was a child, with this unexplainable, inner need to unwrap that which was felt deep inside me. It has been a journey, or as Justin Stone writes, a "spiritual odyssey." I set about the task of discovering this feeling of Life Force by reading scriptures, both Jewish and Christian, when I was only twelve. Ecumenical principles were never in question when I was a youngster as my family had friends of many faiths whose truths I recognized to be the same as our own. This love of spirituality led me to a degree in theology and a career in ministry and education. I had this wonderfully strong foundation that served me well ... for a while.

Each one of us has a time in our life that becomes a Dark Night of the Soul, a time for awakening (or for some, a time of falling deeper asleep). My dark night arrived in my early forties amidst a divorce, an illness and a sense of meaninglessness in my own career. I tried talking to old friends and family, none of whom understood my emptiness, so I returned to books. This time, I sought out books from Zen, Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, Pagan and Egyptian spiritual teachers. I didn't discover anything new, but I did find a renewed quest for the journey I started as a child. This renewed awareness of knowing, or Source, was steeped in a Unity that often produced an unexplainable feeling and brought me to tears.

After a year of immersing myself in books, **I found myself needing to get out of my mind and into my body**. I needed physical activity, something I was never good at. I decided to try T'ai Chi. I bought a video and tried and tried to learn, but I am not one that has ever been comfortable in my own body, and I failed miserably. I needed a real, live instructor. Reluctantly, I signed up for a spring community education class called T'ai Chi Chih.

My instructor was Ron Barker. Ron was patient and wise. I sensed that he was a deeply spiritual being, but he dodged every spiritual question I had and insisted I practice moving and let TCC teach me itself. I was very disappointed to learn that the class was not going to continue into the summer, but I did continue to fumble through the practice every day on my porch. I wanted to feel this thing called *Chi* and I was determined to be comfortable in my body.

In the fall, I returned to Ron's class and he handed me a book by Justin Stone, *Spiritual Odyssey*. Of course, I took it home and read it almost overnight. Immediately, I felt the unexplainable but familiar tingling in my head (right around my temple) and in my chest (right around my heart) that I always got from reading those books that have spoken to me for years. It was then that I discovered that I came to know *Chi* a bit differently than others who first started practicing TCC. I know now that in order to be well grounded, I have to move this *Chi* into the soles of my feet. I have to allow it to flow through me. This is always a challenge for me, but as Michelangelo said, "I am still learning."

My TCC practice has helped me to discover that **the emptiness I encountered was because I didn't know how to integrate my mind and my spirit with my body**. I still don't know how, but TCC does. When I activate, circulate, and balance the *Chi* something miraculous occurs. As Justin says in *Spiritual Odyssey*: "Prana (or *Chi*) is what pulls together the seeming-spiritual and the physical."

Justin teaches us in *Spiritual Odyssey* that the task of a TCC teacher is to teach people how to do TCC. Period. It is not to ally TCC with any spiritual or religious movement. I am filled with such gratitude to my teacher, Ron, for knowing that I needed to learn to be in my body. It is an integral part of understanding oneself. He introduced Justin's words to me at the perfect time, and Justin's words taught me how to let T'ai Chi Chih do T'ai Chi Chih.

As a new teacher, I am mindful of the fact that we all bring a different set of strengths and a different set of experiences to our own spiritual odyssey. Trust your inner journey. It is perfect for you.

The Gift

BY MARY TAFOYA

This quiet time
is a gift
I give myself.
The sound of my
breath easing
in and out,
hands facing forward
at my side,
I begin to practice
T'ai Chi Chih.
No strain, no tension.
I move softly
and gently
throughout my
practice.
This is my time,
my space,
and my gift.



The Joyous Mountain

BY HOLLY UEDA, PRESCOTT, ARIZONA

My path to accreditation felt like climbing a mountain at times. I trained, I studied, I practiced. There were various crises. Almost at the very last minute, I made myself apply for the November accreditation in Albuquerque. One mountain down. Anxiety arrived at accreditation: was I really ready? There was so much to learn, so much room for improvement. We all worried. It was another mountain.

I got through. We all got through. Now I'm facing the next mountain: forming and teaching classes. **All these mountains reminded me of a song my dad used to sing when I was a child,** "The bear went over the mountain ... to see what he could see. What did he see ... he saw another mountain." My teacher, Hope, assured me that this time I'm climbing the joyous mountain. She's right.

stars
burning
far away
the ultimate
energy
shared with
us

Accreditation

BY SHARRON CLARK, QUARTZ HILL, CALIFORNIA

T'ai Chi Chih accreditation was an amazing experience in the flow of intelligent Chi. Our group evolved with a sense of ever-expanding energy circles. It began with awareness of the process of Justin Stone originating this new form; lead us through doing and understanding the movements and teaching the movements and their subtleties; and ended in overflowing, joyous gratitude for TCC.

Each teacher gave us unique insights into the practice of TCC and all shared a heartfelt love that allowed us to understand **sincerity in action**. Each lesson, practice session and presentation was insightful and paved a path of points to pass on to our future students.

I left Albuquerque not only an accredited teacher of the movements of TCC, but also as a vessel of understanding of the gifts and joys TCC brings. To all who were involved, many thanks are sent, especially to the Albuquerque TCC Center and teacher Daniel Pienciak for this life-changing experience. It will flow from my heart to many hearts.

Accreditation

BY ELAINE WAGNER, ARVADA, COLORADO

Going to Albuquerque to work on my T'ai Chi Chih accreditation turned out to be far more than I expected. Being greeted by smiling faces at the T'ai Chi Chih Center was just the beginning of an incredible journey. What a nice mix of personalities, offering quite an opportunity to be our own unique selves. There were also visiting teachers and many Albuquerque teachers helping out with the practices. And last but not least was Daniel Pienciak. His kindness, sincerity, caring and dedication made the experience one that I will never forget.

The first day I was so nervous about making a mistake or forgetting something that I knew. When we started practicing, I felt the stabbing pain of plantar fasciitis. Could this really be happening? I felt like Peyton Manning, but I couldn't sit on the sidelines. I would do the practice anyway. The more I tried to relax, the more I tensed up. Doing Rocking Motion 36 times became unbearable, my legs just freezing up and shaking with anxiety. Should I quit or walk out? I decided to keep going no matter the outcome.

Daniel and everyone were very kind. For relief some offered balls, a rolling pin and other remedies. The memory of their caring eyes will always be with me. As the week unfolded, a bond developed between all of us; we were in it together whether we passed or failed. You could hear the sigh of relief when Daniel announced that we all passed.



Privilege To Be Recipient & Witness At Accreditation

By BARB SHAMBACH, BATTLE CREEK, MICHIGAN (AND SEDONA, ARIZONA)

When I signed up to audit the November 2015 Albuquerque teacher accreditation, I had no idea about the incredible teaching and learning about to unfold. My motivation for attending was twofold: 1) I wanted to encourage the students seeking accreditation, and 2) I needed to fine-tune my own T'ai Chi Chih movements to be a better practitioner and teacher.

I was privileged to be present for trainer Dan Pienciak (and top-of-the-line teaching) and for Carmen Brocklehurst and Dora Wiemann. All of them added insights and instruction about movement nuances to maximize the flow of *Chi*, and spoke of how important it is to be aware of what we are feeling while doing the movements.

I witnessed an exceptionally talented and diverse group of teacher candidates, all of whom passed. I learned something from each one of them during our six days. A common element shone during their presentations and persistent work to improve their movements. It was transformative to recognize that driving force as *teh*, the inner light of integrity motivating us to find, and be, the very best within us.

Three highlights demonstrate the caliber of the teacher candidates. **The first and most touching** was when one candidate, during his presentation, began to share what TCC meant to him. An emotional nerve was touched, his lip trembled ever so slightly and his jaw clenched. Then he closed his eyes and moved directly into Bass Drum. Without one word spoken and with a minimal recovery time, we experienced the immense value of TCC to calm and re-center. The candidate went on to finish his presentation without pause. It was a powerful lesson about TCC I will not forget.

The second highlight involved a likeable and sincere candidate who, with great enthusiasm, brought up the subject of “random sacks,” and what a great way it was to reach out to others. The problem? Most of us thought he was saying “random sex.” Once he spelled “s-a-c-k-s” and explained it was related to “random acts” of kindness, and involved packing healthy lunches to give to homeless individuals, we aligned with his enthusiasm. And in the process we had a good laugh.

The third highlight involved a candidate reading “Shadows” from *Spiritual Odyssey* by Justin Stone. We followed the words: “You can chase your shadow all day long and not catch it. Stand still at noon and it will merge with your body ... with no effort.” I was inspired. The *Chi* will come to us by inviting it, not by trying harder through effort. It will come when we get out of our own way and simply allow it to come, with no effort.



The Lighter Side

COMPILED BY SHARON SIRKIS, COLUMBIA, MARYLAND

1. On the last day of my college class we always play show and tell. I ask students to think about the best thing they got out of the class. Then they bring in an item that represents that and connects the dots to their experiences in class.

One student brought in exercise resistance bands and said she used to be resistant, and now she's more flexible. Another student brought in a check. He said when he has money in the bank, he's happy, and when he does his T'ai Chi Chih, it makes him happy.

One student emailed that he wouldn't be at the last class. I asked him to email me what his show and tell item would have been. “I would've brought my fiancée. She is the only thing that keeps me

grounded most of the time. My head is always up in the sky and she brings me back down.”

2. At the end of my TCC workshop, I asked the eight women to share the most helpful or most valuable thing they got out of the class. Most said things like, “I was able to relax” ... “I feel more calm” ... “the grounding.” The last woman said, “I loved watching you.” I thanked her and added, “But how was it for you? I'd like to know how it made you feel.” She smiled, “Well, I really didn't feel anything because I was too tense.” I was a bit puzzled, and then she continued, “I kept having gas.” The class giggled, and fortunately I was quick enough to say enthusiastically, “You were just letting go!” Everyone was laughing, but one woman was really cracking up, sliding down in her chair, that's how funny she thought it was. Which made me laugh even more.

TCC Workshop Illinois, November 2015

BY DONNA McELHOSE, WILDWOOD, ILLINOIS

Each year we have a workshop with many of the same teachers and students. This year we had several beginners in our midst, and this year I was honored to have my T'ai Chi Chih "grandmother" (Daryl Isenberg) attend. Daniel Pieniac's presentations, suggestions, teaching tips and tidbits offered something for everyone. Sometimes very tall students have difficulty getting some movements; Daniel helped with specific solutions. Some students were mine; I was grateful Daniel could help them. What follows are some student comments:

"Dan gives TCC instruction more as suggestions from his practice than as written in stone. It is a gift to accept his demonstrations and analogies. He is flexible when other opinions are offered."

– DARYL

"I especially enjoyed when Daniel talked about thinking out of the box with your practice, letting the body tell you what it needs in the way of movements and pace. Give yourself permission to break out of a rigid routine. Daniel talked about experimenting, trusting your intuition, and after training in *Seijaku*, taking it into your practice to deepen your TCC practice. Dan's stories about Justin were fun and intriguing." – DOTTY HOEPNER

"We learned more about how to keep the mind from wandering by focusing on the soles of the feet, and how to get out of the way so the *Chi* can circulate. I liked tips like, "SSHH: Sink, Shift, Hands, Heel" when setting up a movement." – ANON.

"Dan is a gentle teacher who moves very well for a man. He clarifies points for seasoned practitioners and new students; everyone gets to take home a few nuggets to play with. I appreciate that Donna continues to strive for and encourages a very strong TCC community in my own backyard." – ANDIE SKILLMAN

"No matter how long I've been practicing TCC, there is always something new to learn." – Cathy Fedewa

"Day was long, pace a bit slow. Would have preferred a more condensed session. Getting a different presentation of the movements will provide much food for thought during practices in the coming days. Enjoyed the Justin Stone anecdotes." – ANON.



TCC Intensive Philadelphia, October 2015

~ Reflections from Fran Alexander ~

Under Sandy McAlister and April Leffler's calm and expert guidance at this Intensive, I grew in my practice in many ways. I learned the importance of softening the wrists and using them in a flexible way so as to improve the flow of *Chi*. The teachers also worked a great deal on improving moving from the *tan t'ien*, and to my surprise I learned more techniques, even though I have been teaching a few years.

The most important thing I learned was that the body holds tension related to past experience, and the mind reinforces these patterns which restricts the flow of *Chi*. When one moves according to the principles of TCC, these structures break up, freeing up the body and the mind. Insight occurs, and there is a joyful, free feeling of moving smoothly, with circularity, unobstructed by thoughts that may keep one from being present with the moment, grounding in the reality of what is right now without identification with any past experience. By changing the way you move you become free to grow and free to be the evolution of being.

~ Reflections from Cindy Ketchbaw ~

I started with no expectations and tried to stay open to whatever the experience offered. April really helped me connect to my *tan t'ien*. She also talked about the body being like a stack of coins. You want to keep them as straight as possible. My favorite "April saying" is to "high-five" the earth when you close. The most helpful was to luxuriate when the feet are flat on the floor during the weight shifts.

Sandy really knows how to break down movements. She helped with my most challenging movement, Working the Pulley. She recommended imaging that there is a cord going from the palms to the hips. The hand movement is in the shape of a horse race track. Also, imagine that the hands are carrying a feather that is dropped off behind.

By the last day I felt very full and more grounded than ever. But I needed time to process my experience. The connection with participants is one I will cherish and never forget. The perfect ending? After our last practice (outside) we did a group hug.

Some of my health benefits include no more chronic back pain and no neuropathy in my feet. Also, I noticed an increase in my taste bud sensitivity.

TCC Is Everywhere

By SHERYL ADAIR, ATLANTA, GEORGIA

With unseasonably warm weather for December in Atlanta, the pull of the woods and Chattahoochee River is strong. So off I go to join some hikers before a must-be-on-time appointment (Push Pull). As is often the case, I do not have time to do it all. I start the hike and realize I must find my way back out alone, hopefully the way I went in. Locating the river and walking along its banks would be the best plan. Soon I come upon an outcrop-ping of rock just as the river bends.

I see a flat spot among the roots that have grown around the rock (the rooted symbol not lost on me) and begin Rocking Motion. Who could resist a T'ai Chi Chih moment to enjoy this view? The river is calm at the bend and gets quite active with white water after (Yin, Yang). Two Canada geese come floating down (the effort of no effort) enjoying the calm, moving water. No sooner do they turn the bend than they seem to realize the water is no longer just-float-along-friendly. The geese look serene above the water line but I know they are paddling with great effort below. They find temporary respite (coming to rest) in a small inlet. It appears they look at each other and say, "What just happened?" (Life.) Af-ter a few minutes they muster up some nerve and go for it, paddling furiously through the rapids to calm water.

For me, TCC is everywhere. All I have to do is stay in my feet and be aware. It seems all I see, feel and do reminds me of the **TCC principles and life lessons that Justin taught** us through the movements, his writings and how he lived his life. They are gentle reminders that fill me with gratitude. All that, and I even made it to my appointment on time.

Anchored

By DONNA DEFFENBAUGH,
PRESCOTT, ARIZONA

A beautiful Caribbean island, Bonaire, is protecting its valuable coral reef. The popular scuba diving, snorkeling, and tourism destination has banned the use of boat anchors on the reef. Instead, there are dozens of strategically placed moorings where boats can tie up while divers go down.

Anchors. Moorings. Tai' Chi Chih. Our feet anchor us to the earth. **Our feet are our moor-ings.** To tie up to these moorings, we place our concentration on the soles of our feet.

Stay out of our heads and on our moorings. Moorings that protect the valuable landscape of our lives. Protect our relationships from flighty decisions. Protect our conversations from hurtful words. Protect our bodies with healing energy drawn down to the bubbling springs – the soles of our feet – then back up again.

Compassion. Peace. Strength. Anchors. Moorings. Tai' Chi Chih.

"The soles of the feet are very important in the study of [TCC]. They are called "Hsueh" ("Bubbling Spring"); I think of them as the "Fountain of Youth." – from Teaching Tips for Teachers, by Justin Stone

Just Imagine

By MARCY BURNS, OXNARD, CALIFORNIA

I imagine a large room, dim and beautiful in the glow of many candles. *Imagine* that the room is utterly silent until the silence gives way to gentle melodies. *See* now that the room is filled with women and men moving and flowing in unison in a circle within another circle within yet another circle. Ah, yes. Now you really *do* see. *Rocking Motion, Bird Flaps Its Wings, Around the Platter...* it is a silent candlelit T'ai Chi Chih practice. And how lovely it is.

It's the annual TCC holiday practice and party in Ventura, California. It is a special evening that is both serene and festive. It brings TCC practitioners from throughout the county to the Unitarian Universalist Church of Ventura where there has been a TCC class for many years. The teacher of that class is Lisa Otero, and it is she who began and sustains this event. It is her gift to the local TCC community.

This practice and party has achieved the status of a tradition. Thirty-eight students and seven teachers gathered for the 2015 holiday practice. They represent several ongoing classes, taught by Lisa or our other local teachers, Corine Reeber (Lisa's mother), Jeneth Rundle, Dixie Adeniran, Denise Emanuel Clemen and Tish Jaramillo, who co-hosted the event. Also, in attendance was the newest addition to our local TCC teacher community – long-time teacher Pete Gregory, who has relocated from Northwest Indiana and has started teaching locally.

Some people attending have been practicing for years, some for just months or weeks. Some are young and some are seniors, and all are serious TCC students. It is a peaceful time, a meditative respite, and the tradition will continue for years to come. When lost in the joy of it, one might wish the evening could go on and on, but too soon the nineteen movements and one pose have been done.

Then ... party time. Food and beverages are abundant (and delicious, of course). There is conversation, laughter, warmth. The bonds of these TCC practitioners are strong, and **strangers from different classes are strangers no more.** It is a joyful time of sharing enthusiasm for and commitment to TCC and our local community.



Gratitude

BY JULIE HERYET, EL DORADO, CALIFORNIA

It's plain and simple: T'ai Chi Chih fills me with gratitude. I am grateful for the ways it has healed me, from helping with my Fibromyalgia to my PTSD. I am grateful for its teachings: that I can speak in public without dying, that I can receive. And I am grateful for the wonderful teachers, mentors and students I have met.

I am especially grateful to teach at Folsom State Prison in Northern California. In fact, I said those very words to my students there upon finishing our practice on January 7th. It had been over a month since we'd last met, due to some prison construction. During this long lapse, I reached out to many in the TCC community, asking you to include the Folsom men in your practice, while we could not practice together. Thank you.

The Folsom class is no stranger to support from our community. In the late 1990's Justin Stone went to the prison to meet with the men and offer his encouragement. (A video of this event is shown at teacher trainings.) Over the years many of you have sent me photo textbooks, *Spiritual Odyssey* and other books by Justin. For the past two years you have sent contributions to our annual banquet and retreat, an event during which the men get to spend a whole day doing TCC with guests like Sandy or Antonia. At last year's first annual "Circles of Light," we supported former inmate Franky Carrillo, who served twenty years for a wrongful conviction, in rejoining his old TCC classmates at Folsom. Many joined us in our synchronized, global practice.

Getting back to that last class at Folsom, we started as we always do, seated in a circle of chairs. The men shared about their practice. One had become overwhelmed by the amount of college schoolwork he had to complete. Anxious, tense and unable to think, he turned to what he knew would help. He did 45 minutes of TCC; he is fortunate to have a single cell with a bit more room to practice. Afterwards he not only completed his schoolwork, he did two weeks' worth in advance. Another student shared that he floated back to his cell on his usual "pink TCC cloud" only to find the cell torn apart from an unscheduled search. His practice helped him keep his cool, and he ended up getting a single cell where he can meditate and practice in relative peace.

At the end of Cosmic Consciousness Pose, I shared, "I am overwhelmed with gratitude for the opportunity to share this practice with such an amazing group of individuals." They returned my thankfulness tenfold. It had been one of those powerful classes where we all moved together in harmony, floating on the Qi. While that is not that unusual at Folsom, it was more beautiful and impressive considering they hadn't had access to class for a month.

We all have students and classes we are grateful for, and that are very special to us. In many ways the men at Folsom are just like your students. They work and they have families. They've felt life's triumphs and suffered losses. They come to class to heal their pain, whether it's physical, emotional or spiritual. They stay because it is where they find peace and serenity. And yet, for obvious reasons, this class is different. And it is because of those differences that the Qi flows so strongly there. Nothing is taken for granted; life is truly precious.

Now that I'm a teacher, I understand why Judy Tretheway taught at Folsom for thirteen years, and why other TCC teachers have taught for so long. We do it because it is rewarding beyond words. Because it awakens inner qualities that we wish we had more of, more often. Because it helps us know who we are and who we can be. It reinforces the idea that material things do not matter; that it is the inner world and the spiritual realm that feed our souls. No words can express my gratitude for Justin and the form, for the opportunity to share it, and for my class at Folsom Prison. It's plain and simple.

We will be holding our 4th Annual Banquet and Retreat at Folsom this spring.



Untitled

By H.B., MARYLAND

It's easier to write my story than to speak it, not because I am ashamed but rather because every time I speak of it I remember all that I have lost. Ten days before my seventeenth birthday I was assaulted by a man I barely knew. I had been teaching dance lessons and when they ended, he followed me to my car and attacked me. He left me with bruises, a dislocated shoulder and unimaginable pain, both physical and emotional.

I spent my birthday party hiding in the bathroom because I couldn't stop my heart from racing. Although the party consisted of old friends, I didn't feel safe. The person they knew was no longer alive. The assailant took my sense of security and my personality. I was once someone who would laugh to the point of tears; I volunteered often and looked for the good in every situation; I taught dance to special needs children and adults as a small way to help them to express creativity.

After the rape the creativity had left. The dancing (that I could bring myself to do) was hollow and unemotional. I will never know if the performances were for the audience or for myself. I did my best to keep emotions buried where they could not escape because, when they did surface, I was unable to catch my breath, to forget his face.

It took about a year and a half before I told anyone and agreed to see a therapist. It took three years before I understood the damage that this man, this animal, had caused. And I have now spent more than two years in physical therapy for the involuntary muscle contractions that will remain for the rest of my life.

Or so I thought.

I signed up for T'ai Chi Chih to help with chronic back pain that began after the attack. I wasn't expecting anything to happen; I figured I might as well give it a shot and get the credits. I introduced myself to Instructor Sirkis and explained the back pain, and at some point she asked if she could place her hands on my back to try and help. I am not a "touchy-feely" person but I agreed and could immediately feel the heat pulsing through my back. I thought it was fluff but said thank you and went home. I slept for six hours and woke up feeling as if I hadn't in a very long time. That's when I knew that TCC wasn't fluff.

I continued going to classes and admitted feeling tingling in my fingers, arms and toes. But none of that helped balance me. I figured I was simply too broken to be healed in a summer session – just like I had been too broken to be fixed during years of therapy.



I have to tell you: I no longer feel broken. I haven't had any muscle spasms since we did Six Healing Sounds. It is truly amazing. I sat down in the middle of the circle feeling awkward and looked Instructor Sirkis in the eyes to keep myself from laughing. But within moments the awkwardness was gone and I felt I was about to explode into a waterfall of tears. It felt as if someone had unplugged the bathtub of my own emotional drowning. The entire attack played out before my eyes but this time I felt in control. I didn't feel like the room was closing in on me. I left that circle feeling free and like myself for the first time in years.

Sharon Sirkis and TCC gave me back something I thought I had lost for good: myself. For that, I am eternally grateful. With all my heart.

Pyramid Poems

feel
the warmth
T'ai Chi Chih
meditation
you know it
simply
love
– JUDY

breathe
again
let it go
yes it's time for
me to know
feel good
now
– PBG

go
into
the quiet
feel the stillness
return to
see the
light
– MAGGIE S

sun
vibrant
galactic
supernova
it's too hot
sunburn
ouch
– MILES LIGHT

quiet
inside
flows rivers
of joy and love
gratitude
endless
gifts
– MW

sun
burning
bright behind
clouds of my own
sad design
lost my
fire
– JAMES BERBERT

Chi
vibrant
existence
moving through me
vital force
feeling
joy
– ROBERT M

sun
does not
always light
up the things we
would like to
see the
most
– ARIEL BYRD

calm
quiet
patiently
watching, waiting
change happens
ease and
flow
– PBQ

praise
because
the love of
T'ai Chi Chih does
energize
and calm
one
– DONNA BELL

the
past is
there but just
remember now
be present
practice
it
– JUDY

oh
being
T'ai Chi Chih
doing no-thing
am happy
moving
slow
– ANON

deep
within
Seijaku
takes us sinking
in oneness
we now
live
– MR

sun
blazing
beautifully
we are out doors
enjoying
practice
shine
– JUDI LANE

My Vitamin, Not My Coffee

By MATTHEW SHIN, MARYLAND

At the beginning of T'ai Chi Chih, I was looking for a quick fix to my back pain and to regain the ability to focus for long periods of time. I didn't know much about the class and was under the impression that it was a martial art. It has given me what I was looking for and much more.

The first few classes were unbelievably challenging – in terms of focusing and keeping an open mind; I was a bit of a skeptic. I couldn't feel the energy flow described by the instructor, so I soon became frustrated with myself.

This spiral of doubt continued until I began to practice at home and at work. During this period, the reasons the instructor told us to practice became evident. I felt energy flowing through my body and a heightened awareness during my day-to-day activities. Excited, I scheduled daily activities around my TCC practice.

Before taking this course, I was a slave to my schedule. My planned activities pulled me left and right, spreading me thin. When I reflected on my priorities, I realized I was involved in many activities but not getting much satisfaction or enjoyment out of them. In fact, I was moving so quickly that I wasn't devoting enough energy or thought to the task at hand because I was already thinking about the next thing.

A turning point was when we talked about being both a flexible bamboo and solid oak. I was spread so thin because I had a hard time saying no. My growth and development in TCC was a microcosm of my engagement in fewer, more meaningful commitments.

Since then I have noticed major changes in my organizational and time management skills. I have more energy because I get more and better quality sleep. TCC movements helped me realize that my habits were all connected. My caffeine addiction was linked to my lack of sleep, which was linked to too many commitments. It helped me tackle the root of my problem; I no longer drink coffee.

I now practice daily for an hour, and my schedule accommodates my central emphasis on TCC time. This past weekend I went camping with friends. Even though everyone was still asleep after a long night, I woke early because TCC was a priority, and I didn't want to miss a day of practice.

One might say that TCC has become my new cup of coffee or my caffeine fix. But it's more like my daily vitamin. It provides the essential daily nutrients and reminds me to take care of my mind and body. It is much more than feeling or moving energy. It is a lifestyle of meaningful movements and decisions.

fog
misty
in my head
do T'ai Chi Chih
clarity
ideas
fog



Never Mind Cold Feet. Focus On The Bubbling Springs

BY STELLA AND IMRAN

It all started with the idea of going to Costa Rica for our wedding. Imran and I met while traveling in Thailand in 2010 and have never looked back. Imran is South African and I am Canadian; we consider ourselves very blessed to have found each other.

The universe provided when we chose to live with Anita Vestal for a month in her beautiful and mountainous setting in Costa Rica. This lush environment seemed like the perfect destination to enjoy peace and tranquility prior to our wedding. Little did we know, our journey would be much-enriched thanks to Anita's introduction and teachings of T'ai Chi Chih.

Imran and I have always been spiritual. TCC was new to us, but we were open and excited to learn this calming practice. Anita kindly worked with us every morning and led a beautiful TCC practice. We discovered great benefits in this moving meditation during our morning routine. It offered the chance to further discover our inner selves and strengthen our bond as a couple. We are grateful that Anita and TCC have found us at this time, before embarking on a new life partnership together.

We intend to continue our TCC journey and will use it as a source of strength, peace and balance throughout our lives. Thank you Anita and TCC for this enlightening experience.



Post-Intensive Musings

BY ANNETTE McNEIL

To say my recent experience at a TCC Intensive was illuminating would be an understatement. I am not much for hyperbole but the notion of being able to totally immerse oneself in TCC for several days was a pure gift. Initially, I prepared myself for some criticisms of my movements and coached my inner critic not to take it personally. While corrections were given, they were gentle and helpful which made my learning curve soar. I have been practicing TCC for several years and had a tendency to lean back during yinping and yangping movements. My back leg was not folding properly. The feedback I received continues to benefit my practice immensely and feels so right. Other corrections included some hand movements, which have also been helpful to bring home.

Beyond the mechanics of refining my practice, the impact of meeting with other TCC practitioners in such an intimate manner speaks volumes to my renewal and love of TCC. The simplicity yet complexity of the movements, and what they evoke for each of us individually, never ceases to amaze me. The meaning of TCC for each of us was unveiled as participants listened attentively to understand each other.

The notion of one's practice taking different turns over the years also helped me realize our similarities. If I suddenly struggle to perform one movement and shy away from it for a period of time, I know this is okay. The concepts of the "bubbling spring" and tan t'ien were renewed for me. While one may argue these are the basic principles of the practice, we must remember we are human and tend to stray in our thoughts. This is analogous to the concept of mindfulness during my TCC practice. The mind will wander and we can gently realign. That TCC is a moving meditation is so aptly defined. I feel it deep within my bones and psyche when I miss a day of practice. This experience will remain within my fibers and guide me as I let go and move effortlessly through air.

Post-Intensive Observations

BY DAVID PARRISH

On the final day of a recent Intensive it was obvious that what attracts me to TCC is the fact that it's a transformational practice. As Sandy McAlister broke down each movement and invited us to discover the beauty of flowing with the *Chi*, I noticed the difference between trying to do TCC right and letting TCC happen. Again and again I noticed thoughts arising about doing TCC. And again and again upon letting go, and simply letting the intention and attention dance with the *Chi*, the practice unfolded like a song being sung through me. When I practice TCC all the difficulties of life and its drama dissolve. The simple moment-to-moment joy of being springs forward. Conversations between movements revealed how the experience of transformation is unique for each person, and yet involves the same principles: letting go, balance, alignment, circularity, softness and polarity. I am more excited than ever to be a part of the TCC community and I look forward to joining the teaching circle soon.

A TCC Interview

By SHEILA LEONARD, ST. JOHN'S, NL CANADA

~ Teaching TCC ~

Why do you teach TCC? What personal, spiritual, political or other reasons compel you?

In 1989 out of the blue a barrage of environmental and autoimmune factors turned my life upside down. At my rope's end and looking for "a missing piece in my puzzle" I met Maureen, a T'ai Chi Chih teacher. It was clearly a big piece of what I was seeking. I was hooked and dreamed of teaching it so that others might experience the renewed life I had experienced ... with a tool to help sustain it.

What does it mean to you to teach TCC? What do you think you're giving to others and what do you get?

"Sometimes to keep something, you simply have to give it away." I present TCC as a tool to help one feel better using one's own natural resources. It has an appealing way of opening up a whole new world of energy as foundational to healing, and wholeness.

Sometimes the best way to learn something is to teach it. My teaching has indeed deepened my TCC practice and its benefits, and indeed my students have taught me so much.

What have you found to be the most effective ways (for you personally) to keep spreading the word, interesting new students, keeping current students engaged?

I advertise extensively through class flyers, community newsletters, cable stations, newspapers and church bulletins, local healthy living events to stir interest and curiosity. One couple finally came after having my flyer on their fridge for three years. The *Chi's* timing, not mine. Offering more focused "Beyond Beginners" classes for returning students as well as retreat days for practice and reflection keeps students engaged.

A general brochure lists class options as well as options for special presentations with community groups/staffs, many of which happen at the initiative of members

who had taken one of my classes.

Maintaining an extensive e-mail list of previous and interested students, as well as a website, all help. Often my students themselves tend to be my best advertisers, simply by word of mouth. Dabbling tenuously in Facebook.

~ Training the next generations of TCC teachers ~

Do you think moving more qualified students toward becoming TCC teachers is an important part of building the future of TCC? Why or why not? Is this a focus of your teaching? Why or why not?

Absolutely. We could then offer a much broader spectrum of classes in our area if other teachers were more readily available. We have had one accreditation here in Newfoundland with new interest sprouting. We continue to dream.

What are the best ways (that you've found, for you personally) to move qualified students toward teacher accreditation?

I am always quick to invite more serious students early on to consider the possibility of teaching TCC. In sharing some of my personal story, I present TCC as an option simply for personal wellness as well as an option for would-be teachers. Other active and inactive teachers in turn share their stories and encourage others.

Access to our lending library of all of Justin's materials, copies of *The Vital Force*, as well as Pam and Sandy's DVDs, further stirs and deepens interest.

What are the barriers or stumbling blocks in trying to move qualified students toward teacher accreditation?



Life itself can deter students, with its multiple demands of time and energy. Economics, too, is increasingly an issue in these tight times.

Lacking recommended numbers here for intensives and accreditations is also a deterrent, given the expenses inherent in travel to the U.S., given our drastically low Canadian dollar these days.

~ Connecting with other TCC teachers ~

Is connecting with other TCC teachers important to you? Why or why not?

Again, absolutely. Connecting with other teachers provides mutual support, renews each others' energies, and keeps one's personal practice and teaching fresh and current. Always a student.

If it is, what are the main ways you connect with them? Are these effective and enough? Do you wish there were other ways?

One other teacher in my area and I connect a lot, sometimes co-teaching or sharing a presentation. Others, less so. Mutual feedback and encouragement are invaluable. Would love to have more of that but life is what it is.

When first accredited, I attended a lot of TCC events in the Jersey Shore area, which is closest to me. Conference is now my most valuable connection, with an occasional other event away. Dan, Antonia, Pam and Sandy have also graced us here in Newfoundland, Dan numerous times, along with other teachers who came to audit our Intensive. I especially cherish these local events since they bring our teachers together province-wide, a challenge with our geography.

The Vital Force also proves a wonderful way to keep connected. Browsing our official site and via e-mail are others.

Is there anything else you'd like the readers to know?

TCC is an amazing teacher and gift that deepens exponentially in direct proportion to my fidelity to my personal daily practice. It feels like one of these "set for life" lottery wins: every time I show up to practice, I buy a winning ticket.

Contacts

ORIGINATOR: Justin Stone

GUIDE & TEACHER TRAINER:
Sandy McAlister
24835 Second St, Hayward, CA 94541
510-582-2238 / mcalister19@comcast.net

TEACHER TRAINER:
Pam Towne Duncan
234 Hoover St, Oceanside, CA 92054
442-222-8332 / pamtowne@gmail.com

TEACHER TRAINER:
Daniel Pienciak
PO Box 231, Bradley Beach, NJ 07720
732-988-5573 / wakeupdaniel@aol.com

THE VITAL FORCE:
P.O. Box 92426, Albuquerque, NM 87199
kim.grant@taichichih.org / 617-901-9628

GOOD KARMA PUBLISHING, INC.:
sales@gkpub.com

T'AI CHI CHIH FOUNDATION
PO Box 517
Midland, NJ 07432

WEB SITE CHANGES:
changes@taichichih.org

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Community Calendar

For the most up-to-date info and event PDFs, see www.taichichih.org/events

DATE / WHAT & WHERE / CONTACT

Feb 24-28, 2016 | TCC Intensive w/Sandy | Littleton, CO | Marie Dotts | 970-412-9955
Mar 4-6 | TCC Workshop w/ Dan | Jersey Shore, NJ | Sioban Hutchinson | 609-752-1048
Mar 10-13 | TCC Teacher Retreat w/Pam | Santa Barbara, CA | Pam Towne | 442-222-8332
Mar 15-18 | TCC Retreat w/Pam | Santa Barbara, CA | Pam Towne | 442-222-8332
Apr 10-13 | TCC Teacher Symposium w/Sandy | Aston, PA | April Leffler | 610-532-6753
May 4-7 | TCC Retreat w/Pam | Prescott, AZ | Dana Diller | 928-848-0824
May 7-9 | Introduction to Seijaku Retreat w/Pam | Prescott, AZ | Dana Diller | 928-848-0824
May 13-15 | TCC Teachers Retreat w/ Dan | Jersey Shore, NJ | Sioban Hutchinson | 609-752-1048
May 27-29 | Seijaku Accreditation w/Pam | Mendham, NJ | Bill Moore | 862-668-5753
May 29-Jun 4 | TCC Accreditation w/TBA | Aston, PA | April Leffler | 610-532-6753
June 19-25 | TCC Accreditation w/ Dan | Littleton, CO | Marie Dotts | 970-412-9955
Sep 16-18 | Seijaku/Meditation Retreat w/ Dan | Jersey Shore, NJ | Sioban Hutchinson | 609-752-1048
Oct 9-13 | TCC Intensive w/TBA | Aston, PA | Host: TBA
Oct 16-19 | TCC Prajna Retreat w/Sandy | Aston, PA | April Leffler | 610-532-6753
Oct 21-24 | TCC Silent Retreat w/Pam | Winter Park, FL | Susan Quinn | 863-393-8197
Nov 4-6 | TCC Retreat w/ Dan | Jersey Shore, NJ | Sioban Hutchinson | 609-752-1048
Nov 17-19 | Seijaku Accreditation w/Pam | Albuquerque, NM | Robert Montes de Oca | 505-999-1247

- MORE WORKSHOPS & RETREATS -

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

Mar 12 | TCC Workshop w/ Sharon Sirkis | Marriottsville, MD | Sharon Sirkis | 410-730-1986
Apr 2-3 | Seijaku Retreat w/Bill Moore | Mendham, NJ | Bill Moore | 862-668-5753
Apr 9 | TCC Workshop w/ Sharon Sirkis | Marriottsville, MD | Sharon Sirkis | 410-730-1986
Apr 21-24 | Learn Seijaku Retreat w/ Carmen Brocklehurst | Albuquerque, NM | Judy Hendricks
 | 505-573-0820
May 14 | TCC Workshop w/ Sharon Sirkis | Marriottsville, MD | Sharon Sirkis | 410-730-1986
Jun 11 | TCC Workshop w/ Sharon Sirkis | Marriottsville, MD | Sharon Sirkis | 410-730-1986
Aug 6 | TCC Workshop w/ Sharon Sirkis | Marriottsville, MD | Sharon Sirkis | 410-730-1986

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Date you were accredited as a T'ai Chi Chih teacher _____

Date you were accredited as a Seijaku teacher _____

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

Name of "second signature" _____

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