

# T'ai Chi Chih Teacher Preparation Guidelines

## **Overview**

Justin Stone, the originator of T'ai Chi Chih, asked that it only be taught by accredited T'ai Chi Chih teachers, so accreditation is a requirement before teaching.

These guidelines are intended to help serious students who wish to attend a T'ai Chi Chih Teacher Accreditation course, as well as the teachers who prepare them.

Although the T'ai Chi Chih movements are easy to learn, the Teacher Accreditation course is rigorous. In order to attend Accreditation, every candidate must attend a T'ai Chi Chih Intensive AND receive a referral from two active, accredited T'ai Chi Chih teachers with whom they have worked in depth. This preparation process may last for months, or even years, depending on the maturity and ability of the student. If the teachers decide a student is capable and ready to proceed with Teacher Accreditation, a referral will be made.

An accreditation to teach T'ai Chi Chih must be earned, and attendance at a Teacher Accreditation course does not guarantee accreditation. This is why there is so much emphasis placed on proper preparation before attending the course.

## **Preparing for Accreditation**

Practice T'ai Chi Chih regularly for at least 12 to 24 months, continuing to attend classes. Allow time for your T'ai Chi Chih practice and understanding to mature. It generally takes at least two years of consistent practice and refinement before being ready for the process of accreditation.

## **Attending an Intensive**

A T'ai Chi Chih Intensive led by a teacher trainer is required, preferably 3 to 6 months before accreditation. The Intensive helps candidates discover what refinements they need to make in how they move, and gives them several months to integrate that learning into their practice before attending Teacher Accreditation.

For teachers, attending a TCC Intensive is beneficial and highly recommended for you to be current with what is expected of your candidate at Accreditation and to know how to prepare them effectively.

## **Working with Referring Teachers**

As a candidate, you will need to receive personal coaching from two active, accredited T'ai Chi Chih teachers with the purpose of deepening and refining your TCC movements, especially HOW you move.

It is highly recommended that at least one of your referring teachers has attended an Intensive or audited a Teacher Accreditation recently and understands what is currently expected of them in preparing you for accreditation. If there are no teachers in your

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area, Zooming online or traveling in order to work with experienced teachers are options.

Only those who have received a signed referral from two accredited teachers are eligible to attend a T'ai Chi Chih Teacher Accreditation course. The referral will be valid for six months from the date of the second signature. You can download the two-page Referral Form and condensed Guidelines as a PDF from the bottom of this page.

### **Registering for an Accreditation Course**

Your referring teachers will work with you to determine when you are likely to be ready to attend Accreditation. It is important that a candidate let the Accreditation course host know well in advance that you are preparing for a particular course. Sending in your registration and deposit will reserve your space pending receipt of your two teacher referrals, which can be sent later.

### **Knowing the T'ai Chi Chih Movements**

A candidate must demonstrate the T'ai Chi Chih movements properly, and might wish to check their form against Justin Stone's [T'ai Chi Chih instructional DVDs or streaming service](#) to make any necessary corrections. [Watch a few videos here](#). Attend as many ongoing classes, workshops, retreats and Intensives as possible to sink deeper into the practice. Also, a Teacher Prep course by an experienced teacher, current on what is required for accreditation, is invaluable.

These events are shown in:

- The [Calendar of Events](#) on the T'ai Chi Chih website ([www.taichichih.org](http://www.taichichih.org))
- The TCC Guide's monthly newsletter ([www.TCCcommunity.net](http://www.TCCcommunity.net)) as well as the resource page (<https://tcccommunity.net/resources-1>)
- [The Vital Force](#), Journal of the T'ai Chi Chih Community.

In particular, the candidate must:

- Know how to do each T'ai Chi Chih movement correctly.
- Know the correct way to begin and conclude each T'ai Chi Chih movement.
- Know the **correct** names of all [T'ai Chi Chih movements](#) and their order.
- Use the words "T'ai Chi Chih" rather than "T'ai Chi" when referring to the practice.

### **Moving Correctly**

It is important to understand and embody the Principles of How to Move so that you move correctly. In particular:

- Flowing from the center of the body (from the Tan T'ien)
- Moving with softness and continuity as if "flowing through very heavy air" (Softness is the ESSENCE of T'ai Chi Chih)

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- Yinning and Yanging (shifting the weight correctly while maintaining an upright posture without leaning)
- Focusing in the soles of the feet
- Circularity
- Polarity between the palms

### **Familiarity With Underlying Philosophy**

A candidate will find it helpful to have a basic understanding of Chi and be familiar with the underlying yin-yang philosophy of the T'ai Chi Chih movements prior to attending a Teacher Accreditation course. Many T'ai Chi Chih teachers use this information to help describe the practice during free presentations to attract new students.

Numerous sources of information are available on the subject, including:

- Justin Stone's photo text, [T'ai Chi Chih! Joy Thru Movement](#)
- Justin Stone's instructional DVDs, [T'ai Chi Chih! Joy Thru Movement](#)
- Justin Stone's [Streaming Service](#)
- Justin Stone's CD, "[Justin Stone Speaks on T'ai Chi Chih](#)"
- Justin Stone's book, [Spiritual Odyssey](#)

If you aren't already subscribed, consider subscribing to the quarterly [Vital Force Journal](#).

### **Maturity of Practice**

After a student first learns the T'ai Chi Chih movements, it is necessary to allow time for his/her practice to grow deeper before attending a Teacher Accreditation course. A serious candidate will not be dissuaded from becoming accredited even if asked to wait and continue to practice. In fact, any candidate who does not see the merit in this maturation period probably lacks the proper respect to be a good teacher.

It is recommended that a candidate practice the T'ai Chi Chih movements consistently for a significant amount of time before attending a Teacher Accreditation course. This maturation period will vary from student to student, but it generally takes about two years of consistent practice. Some students will require longer, and others may never be ready to become a teacher. If there is any doubt about how well a candidate moves it is best for them to wait and continue to practice for a few more months. The value of the maturation process cannot be overstated.

### **Appropriate Attitude**

The most important thing which cannot be taught is the proper attitude of a T'ai Chi Chih teacher. T'ai Chi Chih, Joy Thru Movement is a transformational spiritual discipline, and the teaching process deserves great respect. With the appropriate attitude, the accreditation process and beginning to teach the T'ai Chi Chih movements to others will be a very rewarding experience. Candidates will benefit from:

- A sincere interest in learning, practicing, and conveying the T'ai Chi Chih movements properly.

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- Openness to receive constructive feedback and ability to incorporate it in how you move.
- A patient and caring manner that encourages others to learn and practice T'ai Chi Chih.
- A Cooperative attitude and willingness to work with other teachers to build the T'ai Chi Chih Community.
- Appropriate respect for the T'ai Chi Chih practice, and a commitment to keep it pure.

### **Teacher Candidate Referral Form & Preparation Guidelines**

Download the 2-page Referral Form and condensed Guidelines as a PDF.

[Download them here.](#)