

# Growing Your Local TCC Community via Facebook

By Lisa Otero (lisa.otero@post.harvard.edu)

[The information below is adapted and expanded from an article originally published in *the Vital Force Journal*, February 2015. It is just one example of the helpful information you have access to as a subscriber/supporter of *The Vital Force*. Please subscribe or renew your membership today at [www.taichichih.org/subscribe](http://www.taichichih.org/subscribe).]

**Here are some things to consider when establishing your local TCC Facebook (fb) page:**

**Before you start, check out the already established, local Facebook pages:** Type “Tai Chi Chih” into the Facebook search engine and up they will come. Two pages I recommend you start with are: “Tai Chi Chih Ventura County CA” and “Tai Chi Chih Northern Colorado.” Study these pages—what do you like about them? Make notes so you can replicate the things you like when designing your own page.

**Think Future, Think Big:** Determine whether your page is just for *your* classes or whether it will include all classes and events in your geographic area (an area can be a neighborhood in a large city or an entire town, city, county or state). Envision a time with lots of accredited TCC teachers *everywhere*. Laying the groundwork for the growth means being as inclusive as possible. Please do not stake a general claim on a large region unless you plan to invite other area teachers to administer the page with you. (Or designate your page for just your classes by naming it “Tai Chi Chih with [your name].”)

**Working with other local teachers:** Invite local teachers in your geographic area to administer the page with you. If you are the lone teacher in your area, administer the page as if there might someday be other accredited teachers offering classes in your area and sharing the page.

**Naming your page:** Although we *always* use an apostrophe and the trademark symbol when referring to “T’ai Chi Chih®” in print, **we do not use these symbols in website names or fb page names**, in accordance with the generally accepted Internet naming conventions. This is important: we want people to find both the official page and *all* of our local pages when they type the words “tai chi chih” or “taichichih” into a search engine. Start your page name with the three words “Tai Chi Chih” (rather than your geographic area) in order to ensure that it will show up along with all the other TCC fb pages.

**Include your Community Location:** I suggest naming (or renaming) your fb page to identify it specifically with your geographic location: city or town (or even a neighborhood within a metropolis), county, region, state... For example, I teach in two contiguous cities with active TCC teachers, so I named my page broadly: “Tai Chi Chih Ventura County CA.” Please include the state postal abbreviation in the name (*i.e.*, Houston TX; Lake Charles LA; Ventura County CA). If you live in a small state or a large state with a small population, you may decide to name your page using only the name of the state (see, *e.g.*, Tai Chi Chih New Hampshire).

**Stick to TCC:** Following Justin’s directive, please don’t mix information about other practices with TCC, even if you teach/do other wonderful practices. (For example, although I teach yoga, I do not discuss yoga or advertise my yoga classes on my community’s fb page.)

**Designating your Page; Defining your Audience:** I suggest you designate your page a “community” page administered jointly by you and any local TCC teacher who wants to help. Invite all local teachers to post their own class information. Another option is to designate your page as a “public group” where teachers and students can chat with each other without an administrative intermediary. This allows them to use the page to set up informal practice sessions and get together outside of class, but leaves you no administrative control of the page, for better or worse.

**Post Daily:** This is important. You can post original content (class announcements, local teacher bios, photos, practice tips) and you can share content from other TCC pages, including the official T’ai Chi Chih page. It takes about five minutes each day to keep your page current, fresh and interesting. Photographic posts attract more eyeballs; inviting questions encourages engagement.

**Clarity in Speaking:** FB allows the page administrator(s) to post and/or comment as him or herself or as the administrator. When expressing an opinion or a personal experience, please post as yourself. Post as the administrator when you are posting info of general interest to all.

### **Actual Steps to Create a Local TCC Page on Facebook:**

First, Relax: Everything you do in setting up your page can be changed later (name, description, audience, images, etc.). You can skip steps and put up a barebones page to be fleshed-out later. Since you have your own personal Facebook page, you are presumably comfortable with clicking tabs and filling in boxes necessary to set up your own page. If you are not, please invite a friend who is more tech-savvy to sit and guide you through the process.

At the top of your own personal facebook page is a blue banner. At the far right on the banner is a down arrow, which yields a dropdown menu that includes the option to “create a page.” Click there and up will come your options.

Choose “Cause or Community”. (You can designate your page a “Group” instead, but you will have no administrative control over what is posted on the page.)

Name your community (see above for considerations re naming your community) and click on “Get Started” button (thereby accepting accept fb’s terms).

You will need to enter a short, pithy description of what you page is about. (Check out the brief description on the already existing local Facebook pages for inspiration.)

You will need two images to represent your page (a profile image that represents T’ai Chi Chih and another image that represents your geographic area. Upload these images to your computer ahead of time so you have easy access to them. (Tip: I keep a file on my computer desktop entitled “TCC images” where I have downloaded various publicly available images that are good representations of T’ai Chi Chih so I have them for later use.)

Next you will need to designate an audience (folks you want to connect with). Be as inclusive as possible—generally you want to reach both young and older folks interested in physical fitness, spirituality, meditation, yoga, health & wellness, etc.

Now start posting! Keep posting. Commit to it. Check daily to see if anyone has posted a question or sent you a message you need to answer. Stay on it. Have fun. Contact me if you need support. Thank you for all you do to share T’ai Chi Chih with the world!