

THE VITAL FORCE

Journal of T'AI CHI CHIH! Joy Through Movement

Volume 13, No. 3

Fall Equinox and Conference Issue

September 1996

ONE MIND

Justin Stone

If one seeks enlightenment apart from the things of the world, that is mistaken. In truth, there is only enlightenment. Properly understood, even ignorance is enlightenment.

One time, living at an ashram in America, a very fine Nun spoke to me and said, "When I go down into the world to buy groceries, I can't wait to get back to this sanctuary." I answered that, unfortunately, she did not understand what she had been taught. Not by seeking escape from the world would she attain understanding. She was a very dedicated and faithful practitioner of the

Ramakrishna teaching, yet she suffered from this delusion.

For those on a path, or those who are true seekers, I have a question. In Zen it is said that there is nothing but this one Mind (which is no mind). Accordingly, I ask, "Does this one Mind manifest Consciousness, or does Consciousness manifest this one Mind?" This type of inquiry is not a waste of time, nor is it an intellectual exercise. It is a good way to arouse intuition of the Truth.

Source: *New Mexico TCC News*, Sept. 1996

OVERVIEW AND T'AI CHI CHIH PRACTICE

Steve Ridley

The great ocean of Consciousness-Energy pervades the countless wavelet expressions of Itself.

We are individualized energetic events participating in and supported by an infinitely larger energetic event; Life.

Our particular resonance is our contribution to the symphony of Life, and the character of our personalized resonance attracts appropriate relationships and experiences.

Self-transformation is based on altering our vibrational resonance.

The practice of T'ai Chi Chih constructively transforms our vibrational resonance toward fulfillment of being or enlightened living.

Each time we practice T'ai Chi Chih, whether sensing an immediate difference or not, we are constructively altering the quantity and quality of our vital force, accelerating this process of enlightened self-integration.

Justin Stone is the Originator of T'ai Chi Chih! Joy Thru Movement.

Steve Ridley is the Appointed Head of T'ai Chi Chih.

*This journal is dedicated to T'ai Chi Chih teachers and practitioners worldwide.
May it serve you in "Knowing the Real".*

REFLECTIONS . . . ALONG THE WAY

ACCOLADES

Many thanks to hosts and participants of the San Diego T'ai Chi Chih Teachers' Conference and Seijaku accreditation for creating a wonderful atmosphere for enrichment and spiritual growth at the 1996 teachers' conference. Organization, commitment, teamwork, spirit and integrity are the hallmarks of any such endeavor and were amply reflected in your efforts. Kudos!!!!

While enjoying reflections in this Conference issue, you can already begin planning for next year's conference events (see page 20). In the following pages, teachers share their thoughts, inspirations and experiences from the TCC annual teachers gathering.

VFJ INNER WORKINGS

Next VFJ Submission Deadline: November 1
Teachers' Directory Info. Deadline: December 1

Please continue to share your news, etc. with *VFJ* and keep us up to date on your T'ai Chi Chih (TCC) teaching. Read on for important directory news and other important announcements.

Congratulations to **Good Karma** for the new edition of *T'ai Chi Chih! Joy Thru Movement*. The latest TCC text revision by Justin Stone is indeed a long-awaited and welcome addition to their other useful teaching supports (see pages 5 and 37).

To Err is Human ...

In the last issue of *VFJ* (*summer*), an error occurred in the poem on page 19 the last line should read: inside and out. It was printed "inside out" changing the meaning and intent of the author. Our sincere apologies for this, calendar omissions and other errors in print.

VFJ Price Increase

As announced at the Summer Conference, the price of a yearly subscription to *VFJ* has now increased to defray additional costs of production and distribution. For teachers, the new price of **\$30** will also include a copy with their listing, in the annual TCC Teachers' Directory, in addition to quarterly *VFJ* issues. The

new student/interested person rate is **\$25** (not including a directory). The new rate for out of U.S. and others preferring first-class delivery rate is an addition **\$5** (\$35 per year).

Liability Insurance Coverage

Teachers interested in obtaining more information on membership requirements and liability coverage for teaching TCC, contact: IDEA Insurance Program, c/o Murria & Frick Insurance Agency, 380 Stevens Av., 1st Floor, #115, Solana Beach, CA 92075-2068 (619) 259-5800 -OR- for a list of licensed companies which provide liability coverage, contact your individual state's department of insurance.

New Zip Code Regulations

As of October 1, 1996 the Post Office has issued a regulatory procedure for all bulk-mailings which specifies that the four digit extension must be present after the five-digit zip code for your area in order to receive delivery of a mailing. ***Please take the time to inform us of the four-digit extension to your zip code immediately.***

1997 T'ai Chi Chih Teachers' Directory

Important! Please use the subscription form on page 39 to inform us of your four-digit zip code extension and other changes to your teaching status (e.g., active or non-active and willing to travel); and to ***provide us updated information*** on your name, address and phone ***as you would like it listed in the 1997 TCC Teachers' Directory.*** Your listing and teaching status will be printed from the most current information we have in our database or reprinted as it was in the last referral directory unless we have ***received new information by December 1st.***

The 1997 Directory is scheduled for completion at the beginning of the new year. TCC teachers should receive their new copy before January's end. A reminder, the purpose of the directory is to connect teachers and students in TCC. (The directory is not to be used or sold as a mailing list.) Thank you for your continued support to update this referral tool.

The Vital Force Staff

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READERS COMMENTARY

Honoring Justin Stone through presenting new T'ai Chi Chih text to students. We all look for ways to express our gratitude to Justin for his marvelous gift of T'ai Chi Chih. We know that the best way to do this is to develop ourselves as teachers by concentrating on our own practice. This is the way that we most effectively convey the essence of T'ai Chi Chih to our students -- one of Justin's clearest requests of us.

Now we have a wonderful new supporting tool in this task -- the new T'ai Chi Chih book that Justin and Good Karma have worked so hard on. As Jean Katus told us at the conference, the publication of the new book was a large commitment of both time and money. We teachers asked for this because we know what an excellent support it is for students. By making this book available to them, we support Good Karma's effort on our behalf and honor Justin by passing on T'ai Chi Chih clearly and effectively. So, don't be timid. Even if you don't see yourself as a salesperson, let your students know this book is available! They will certainly benefit from it.

Ellen Tatge, Albuquerque, NM

OPEN FORUM question for *VFJ* readers:

As a newly accredited teacher ... Please help me to clarify the following issue: During the San Diego Conference, both Steve and Justin spoke of the need for purity in practice and of the need to resist organization. Yet the T'ai Chi Chih Teachers Association exists in Albuquerque. Who, what and why is the association?

Penny Navis-Schmidt, Payson, AZ

Feedback, please: Open Forum c/o *VFJ*, 1477 - 155th Ave., San Leandro, CA 94578-1922.



Mystery Writers Revealed!

Dear T'ai Chi Chih Friends,

For the past few years I have submitted prose and poems to *Vital Force Journal* under various pseudonyms and have now decided to discontinue doing so.

The fictitious names: Yogi Pranananda, Ho Hu Tzu, M.

T. Kupper and T. Hart Guy allowed me to express inspired insights through a range of 'voices', authoritative, playful and subtle. I reasoned that some readers might better receive my messages if not labeled as "Ridley-isms" of which there are usually adequate doses in any particular issue.

Recently a friend pointed out that these alias' might deter readers from considering this written sharing to be valid and useful material for contemplation, because the 'authors' are unknown. So, beginning with this issue I'm taking credit and assuming responsibility for the various styles of inspired writing which express through me, always with the hope that they are somehow helpful and worthy of your consideration. In love, Steve

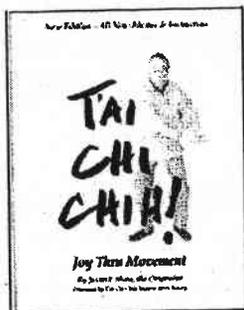


I am eager to hear of the Conference and sorry to have missed it all ... I was with you all in spirit. Thanks for the inspiration of each *VFJ*, the ministry you do for the TCC family. I read it from cover to cover on arrival. The feel of the paper, the typeset and entire layout has wonderful Chi!

Anita Germain, CSJ, White Bear Lake, MN

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT: NEW T'AI CHI CHIH BOOK

1996 EDITION OF T'AI CHI CHIH PHOTO-TEXT
Jean Katus, Publisher, Good Karma Publishing, Inc.



Cover of New TCC Book

Good Karma is pleased to let everyone know that we now have a completely new photo-text available. Some great changes are inside the slightly-altered blue-violet cover. (The “blue book” will now have to be referred to as the violet book!)

Four hundred sixty-eight new photos demonstrate a clear sequencing of each of the 20 movements, from start to finish. Justin Stone wrote all new instruction to go with the photos, printed in large enough type so the directions can be read with the book lying on a table or the floor. Each movement is displayed over a two-page spread so the photos are large enough to see well. A feature that allows the hands to be free to perform the movements while following the photos and instruction, even with the book lying on a table or the floor, is a lay-flat binding that keeps the book open at the page you place it.

Two new sections have been added. “Important Points on Moving Correctly” precedes the photo section and offers significant tips on the “musts” of T'ai Chi Chih. “Notes on Movements Just Learned” follows the photo section, sum-

marizing important aspects of each movement. The background and philosophy material in the original book have been retained and arranged in a more readable format. Instruction in the Great Circle Meditation and Ou Mie Shu's subtle drawings has also been kept in this new edition.

To be consistent in our aim of reducing waste and re-using where we can, we've had the new text printed on recycled paper, and the cover has a biodegradable scratch-resistant coating.

The retail price on the new photo-text is just \$14.95. The 40% certified T'ai Chi Chih teacher discount applies, of course, when one purchases 3 or more copies. We wanted to keep the price as reasonable as possible for our teachers and students, even though some feel the quality of the book merits a much higher price. Good Karma went to considerable expense to produce this fine edition, and we know you, as teachers, will be as proud to present it to your students as we have been in readying it for your use. If you have not yet ordered your own copy and some for your students, you will want to do so right away.

We'd like to repeat a comment from one of the teachers who saw the new book sample at the conference. She expresses a response similar to many who saw it: “I'm sure the new textbook represents hours and hours of time for everyone involved and I can't wait to really see it [the actual finished book as opposed to the proof sample - author's note]. I'm sure the new instructions and pictures will be much improved and I'll feel better about selling a truer positioning of the moves.”

ORGANIZING T'AI CHI CHIH

I don't understand why anyone would want to make an organization out of T'ai Chi Chih. Hundreds of chi kung sets are known in China and have persisted for centuries. These have been passed on through succeeding generations because of their usefulness in cultivating chi for health building and healing. To my knowledge, none have determined a need to build formal organizations around any of these practices.

What are we dealing with? We have 19 movement patterns and one standing posture. If these are practiced regularly, benefits are forthcoming. What need for additional stuff?

Organizing classes and practice groups is fine. Providing opportunities for teacher accreditation courses is fine. Networking through *Vital Force Journal* is fine. As for promoting TCC, it is spreading because people experience life

enhancing results. When I began teaching in Denver nearly 20 years ago no one in Colorado knew about it. I offered classes through community schools and have continued to do so. Now we have over 30 accredited teachers in the state and many classes offering instruction. How did this happen? Not through organization or extraordinary promotional efforts. Others have had similar experiences where they began sharing T'ai Chi Chih as the only teacher in their area and things built up naturally, primarily because individuals found the practice beneficial and informed others of their experience.

The most important thing is for each of us to practice regularly, toward mastery, and openly share T'ai Chi Chih with those attracted. Doing this, I believe everything will follow in a natural, constructive, realistic manner.



THE FUTURE OF TCC

At a recent retreat program, during an informal discussion, a participant remarked: "Justin Stone is the glue that holds T'ai Chi Chih together."

This teacher was obviously expressing his sense of loyalty and respect for Justin, which is admirable, yet the statement is incorrect and shows a misunderstanding of what we are involved with.

First of all, T'ai Chi Chih is not an organization to be upheld, and secondly, it is the practice itself and not a personality that will determine whether it is a life-enhancing involvement which will endure and serve increasing numbers in the future.

If a 'spiritual discipline' needs to be perpetuated by the assertion of a personality, it is doubtfully useful.

EVENTS FEEDBACK

PRE-CONFERENCE INSPIRATION Susan Patterson, San, Diego, CA

It was Thursday night before the start of the 11th Annual T'ai Chi Chih Teacher's Conference and already 44 teachers had arrived from all over the United States. It was a very special time for the San Diego teachers who had been preparing for this event since September 13, 1995. It was also a very special time because it would be the first time that Justin would be in the San Diego T'ai Chi Chih Center. We finally knew just how many people the Center could hold if all were seated.

[In his talk on "The Purpose of Spiritual Practice"] Justin shared with us many insights and stories of his journeys. It was a great beginning and as the weekend progressed, I know many teachers reflected back to words that Justin shared on Thursday night.

Thank you Justin for arriving early to share your thoughts with us.



Justin Stone speaks at San Diego TCC Center Thursday evening, August 25, prior to annual Teachers' Conference

Poetry

This oft quoted classic Zen poem was shared by Justin Stone at the Conference.

**I gather chrysanthemums at the eastern hedgerow,
And silently gaze at the southern mountains,
The mountain air is beautiful in the sunset,
And the birds, flocking together, return home.
Among all these things is a real meaning,
Yet, when I try to express it, I become lost in "no-words."**

NOTES TO TEACHERS

TCC MOVEMENT DIFFERENCES

Steve Ridley, Denver, CO

This summer at the T'ai Chi Chih Teacher Conference I was asked to explain why a few of my movements differ from Justin's. For those of you who weren't there I'll restate what was shared.

First, I want to emphasize: of primary importance in TCC practice is the functional flow of vital force, chi, directed through each movement.

If we are growing in this discipline, the ongoing refinement of our performance will access and accommodate chi's expression progressively. Each time we enter practice we endeavor to experience an improving generation and circulation of chi within each movement, by sensing then adjusting, to invite its enhanced, less inhibited expression. This means being sensitively, attentively attuned to what we're involved with and willing to be responsively flexible.

General Differences

The general, obvious differences between my movements and Justin's are: 1) My postures are more openly expressive (not exaggerated), supported by broader, lower stances. This derives from personal preference based on body type, age and what feels best and most natural. 2) My movements are more slowly paced and uniformly even because I choose to apply traditional chi kung breath synchronization with each pattern.

Personal Training

In T'ai Chi Chih I am primarily self-taught. I spent part of one weekend with Jim Burns, Justin's closest student at the time, after working with the T'ai Chi Chih textbook for several months. Jim helped clarify many movements I'd been unable to assimilate from the book. Next, I attended a teacher

training course with Justin, which allowed me to sharpen my performance (surprisingly without correction during our week together). Immediately following the course I began active sharing of T'ai Chi Chih through public classes which has continued for nearly 20 years.

During my first few years as a teacher I often visited Justin's teacher accreditation courses to renew and assist as a volunteer. Auditing these classes and working with new teachers was wonderful learning for which I'm most grateful. In '81 I was asked to conduct my first teacher training course, and have endeavored to honor this role and Justin's blessing by continually growing and serving as best I can.

In addition to my ongoing study of T'ai Chi Chih, I've been involved for periods with T'ai Chi Chuan and various chi kung sets, which share the same movement principles used in T'ai Chi Chih. Through substantive practice of Yang style T'ai Chi Ch'uan and my master's confirming request that I become a teacher (which I declined), plus the in depth study of moving and stationary chi kung forms, I know the proper articulation of yin-yang movement principles as delineated in the "T'ai Chi Classics" and other reliable sources. My book, Perspectives in Motion and Stillness, offers explanations of key movement principles derived from personal experience through practice and experimentation.

Movement Refinements

Modifications of certain T'ai Chi Chih movements have developed in my practice, improving their functional efficiency and potency. These I have shared for years and are represented in their initial form on my videotape, filmed in '87. Since then additional minor refinements have manifested, resulting in increased effectiveness, and of course this process continues.

NOTES TO TEACHERS

Movement Refinements (cont'd)

These modifications accord perfectly with the yin-yang movement principles and it would be senseless to breach them. Anyone with sufficient understanding of these important principles will recognize they are faithfully embodied in each movement pattern. With confident humility I invite any who may be doubtful about the few movement refinements I've made, to examine and test them by moving as indicated, for verification. Again, these modifications naturally evolved through diligent, conscientious practice to better accommodate the potential chi flow within the context of these movement patterns. This isn't only my testimony but the experiences of probably 90% of our teachers.

Movement Example

Pulling Taffy Variation "A":

The original way to begin this movement is to drop down slightly, then turn from the waist while swinging the left arm back into position for the forward pull. To me this is disjointed.

I find it more efficient to begin the movement by turning from the waist while sinking, creating a spiraling down motion which leads directly into the forward pull. In this there is no wasted motion or discontinuity.

Also, the original forward foot position creates a semi-pigeon-toed stance which is traditionally classified as "chi stagnating" and mis-aligns the posture for me. I prefer using the standard front-to-back foot positioning though shortened to accommodate the anchored rear heel while shifting weight forward.

This is one example of how slight modifications can help to better facilitate the chi flow. The minor alterations which have manifested through my practice have been 'suggested' by the circulating vital force endeavoring to express in a less inhibited manner. I have simply done my best to feel and adjust to honor this direction, supported by my knowledge of movement principles.

Additional Comments

All credit for any accomplishments I may realize in T'ai Chi Chih rightfully go to Justin Stone. I acknowledge him as the inspired developer of this modern, specialized chi kung set and the firm foundation upon which we all stand in carrying this extraordinary life gift into the world. Thank you Justin for the opportunity to serve usefully in this life.

In my experience and opinion, T'ai Chi Chih is an evolving quantity which will continue to undergo constructive though minor alterations in form. Personally, through 20 years of practice, this has been the case.

I differ with those who assert that T'ai Chi Chih is a fixed quantity to be carried forward in time rightly, as a structured set of inalterable movements which must be conformed to without any allowance for possible refinement or improvement.

Finally, I want to assure everyone that I have no intention or interest in changing Justin Stone's T'ai Chi Chih, though I do acknowledge that a few simple movement modifications have come through me to help enhance chi function. I am grateful for this and to Justin for trusting me to serve as his representative. Thank you for listening.

Love,  Steve

CONFERENCE IMPRESSIONS



The Conference was great! Susan (Patterson) worked so hard -- and thrived on it!

Justin Stone, Albuquerque, NM

The 1996 T'ai Chi Chih Teachers' Conference was well-run and held at a beautiful, full-of-chi location. The San Diego group, headed by Susan Patterson, was organized, energetic and committed to the task.

Noel Altman, Fairfax, CA

Conference Poetry

Waiting in the food line
How wondrous to see
The tides and the trees
in line with me.

Doug Harned, Sunnyvale, CA

Very good conference ... I would enjoy more group practice and sessions/workshops and less of more "social" type events.

Mark Jones, Denver, CO

The evolution of T'ai Chi Chih is certainly evident. The Chi is flowing so strong, I know it will bring peace to the world. Thank you Justin and Steve.

Don Fiore, Phoenix, AZ

Many thanks to the San Diego Teachers for helping to actualize the conference mission. It was a restorative and healing weekend ... Please let me know if you are interested in a tape that includes the song, "Gotta Get It Perfect." Your appreciation meant so much.

Joanne Sultar, Berkeley, CA

The conference was truly a gift of joy -- shown in every detail from the welcome of the committee the first night to the delightful hand-stamped bags to carry stuff! ... I came home both tired and deeply recharged.

Ellen Tatge, Albuquerque, NM

This was my first T'ai Chi Chih Conference... quite a wonderful experience to be with so many teacher/practitioners I've come away from the conference with a sense of renewed appreciation of the practice and a deeper relationship with it. I look forward to the effects it will have on my teaching and my personal practice.

Paul E. Ciske, Berkeley, CA

I watched different levels of consciousness interact at the conference. ... We all came from different places and blended into one. Thank you everyone ... to the San Diego teachers for their superior organization. ... Poetchi in motion!

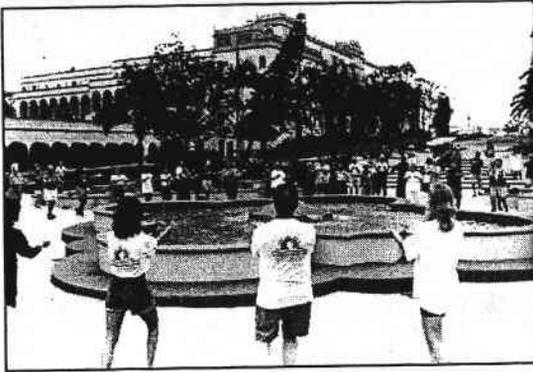
Holly Davis, Oak Park, IL

Personally, this was the most transformational conference ever. ... it felt like an evolutionary leap. ... Thanks to Justin and Steve for the movement refinements and gentle corrections.

Karen Scharf Morgan, Rio Rancho, NM

CONFERENCE FEEDBACK

MORNING PRACTICE LED BY STEVE RIDLEY



Conference Poetry
Eugene L. Box, Deming, NM

Ripening

Overcast
Morning meditation,
Group T'ai Chi Chih.
Practice deepens.
Fresh fruit.

Gratitude

Great Spirit.
With Gratitude I awaken,
Day by day,
To this Creation you are . . .
Unconditional Love.

"Sunday morning practice outdoors near the fountain accompanied by the delightful sounds of the moving water was one of those special times I will carry with me in my heart."

Vickie Brodie, Burlingame, CA



CONFERENCE IMPRESSIONS

Dear T'ai Chi Chih teachers, You stole my heart or rather I gave it away over and over. The free spirit in you propelled and awakened the young, the lively, the giving in me! We danced together, alone and together, again ...

I bathed in your embrace smiled and cried and Marcia the Gypsy moves on to grow and develop ... I thank you for your love, enthusiasm and support. Each one of you was needed to make the conference what it was -- a growth promoting experience.

Lia Ridley, Denver, CO

Thank you, San Diego Committee, for an extraordinary conference. Joy Through Motion by the Ocean more than met my highest expectations. A very special thanks to Tahir Bhati for preparing me to approach the medical community in my community. ...

Justin ... again thank you for sharing this practice. And my heart felt gratitude, Steve, for your unassuming, heartfelt leadership. I'm looking forward to seeing you all at the '97 conference. Be Chi-ing you.

Penny Navis-Schmidt, Payson, AZ

What a great job the San Diego committee did for the Teachers' Conference! A lot of planning went into the banner and other sign, packets, workshops, housing, meals and related materials for sale.

The setting was lovely. The entertainment provided a break in a very intensive weekend of opportunities for learning from Justin Stone and Steve Ridley. Networking worked. New friends, old friends. 145 satisfied customers. Good job!

Hope Ridley, San Mateo, CA

The San Diego T'ai Chi Chih Teachers' Conference was very good. I felt it was run smoothly and well. The group T'ai Chi Chih practices were super. Always it is a pleasure to see Friends to blend our hearts and souls. We are one with all life and each other. Justin often reminds us of this so now we remind him how special it is to greet him each year to share his Wisdom and Love.

Theda W. Gillespie, Medford OK

The Conference was great ... the Committee did an excellent job ... Friday night was interesting ... everyone sitting [in groups] and listening to all tell their name, number of years teaching, etc.

Steve's workshop in which he discussed the moves using controlled breathing techniques was very helpful... students ... have asked me about doing T'ai Chi Chih with controlled breathing.

Many people appreciated Justin sharing "sole breathing" ... it would be great in the future for Justin to share his knowledge about such things.

The candlelight ceremony led by Sister Antonia ... outside was really special ... a conference tradition? ... Watching Lia dance accompanied by Steve ... and having the privilege of dancing with Lia [Dance Workshop] is one of those special things ...

Seeing Justin and Steve on the stage together leading us in song while those of us below held hands and sang "Healing Thru Joy" was a much more meaningful way to close the conference.

Vickie Brodie, Burlingame, CA



CONFERENCE IMPRESSIONS

Thank you Justin and all the teachers who shared their joy, wisdom and humor; this includes everyone at the conference. Mahalo!

Terry Jennings, Honolulu, HI

Sharing group energy is a vital link for me to renew my T'ai Chi Chih batteries. I am so grateful to everyone for sharing ideas for classroom presentation, reminding me of habits I pick up in my solitary practice I need to lose and keeping me mindful of my place in this growing TCC family!

Kate Turpin, Yuma, AZ

I would like to again thank all the people who helped organize the Teachers' Convention and the Sejjaku Accreditation. You have done the world a service.

Doug Harned, Sunnyvale, CA

Our San Diego conference was a blessing ... I cherish the chance to move together and review and refine my movements with my T'ai Chi Chih family ... My tears came back and my joy returned! ... I gained so many experiences and ideas to ponder and integrate. Thank you Justin for T'ai Chi Chih. Thank you, Steve, for your joy in being the head of T'ai Chi Chih. I have come home feeling renewed in my mission to deepen my practice and to share T'ai Chi Chih.

Judy Jones, Redmond, WA

Many thanks to the San Diego teachers for all their hard work and planning in hosting the teachers' conference this year. ... It is always wonderful to reconnect with old friends and meet new ones. One thing I especially enjoyed was the small group "get to know each other" activity [Friday night]. It really gave us the opportunity to think and share what our

feelings and experiences related to T'ai Chi Chih are. ... We spoke at length about our dreams for the future of T'ai Chi Chih. My own dream is for each one of us to manifest TRUST. Trust and surrender to the love and wisdom of the Chi. ... to clear the path and show us the way. No need for ambition or striving, only deep practice and an open heart so we can recognize truth and surrender to it.

Group practice is always so powerful. There is so much strength in our uplifted hands. The workshops were informative and afforded many of us additional practice with Steve. This is really the heart of any conference -- the opportunity for deep and meaningful practice.

Thank you to Justin and Steve for giving us this love that we can find such joy and peace in. Thank you for continuing to share yourselves with us and devoting your time and effort to helping us grow and become more of what we truly are each day.

Loretta Shiver, Albuquerque, NM



Group Practice

We stand in a circle together, not touching but very, very close. We lift our arms and the Chi flows, connecting us all to the same thread. We are the same wave in an endless ocean. We are the giant flower opening to the morning sun. The soles of our feet are drinking in the breath of the Earth, our mother as we flow in the movements; rising and falling as one. Gathering in and letting go, even our breath is one and we are together. This is wholeness.

Sky Woman

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the 1996 Annual Teacher's Conference in San Diego is to unite the family of T'ai Chi Chih teachers and experience the flow, joy and love generated from circulating our vital force - CHI. We desire to refine our movements and increase our knowledge of T'ai Chi Chih by experiencing the wisdom and grace of other teachers. It is our hope that we might uplift and inspire one another and enhance a sense of support and connection with fellow teachers.

We desire to deepen our experience of wholeness with ourselves and all others. We dedicate our time and energy spent together at this conference to creating a sense of renewal which will increase our enthusiasm and commitment to T'ai Chi Chih as well as empower us to move forward in the world as sensitive, skilled and ethical teachers.

Conference Mission Statement: Thank you Chris Enders for the idea and Sajila Bhatti for the words!



WORKSHOP SYNOPSES/COMMENTS

Refining Moves (with Steve Ridley) An opportunity to move with Steve collectively and discuss refinements in movement and movement principles. *Treasured time for refining moves.*

TCC and Jungian Psychology (with Joseph Pagano) An insightful presentation on the corollaries between TCC and Jungian Psychology with a noted authority. *Interesting perspective and food for thought!*

Vietnamese Tea Ceremony (with Jean Katus) One of the few quiet times in the busy conference schedule offering a time to commune, refresh and revitalize with an old tradition. *Very popular!!*

TCC in the Medical Community (With Tahir Bhatti) An invitation to spiritualize the medical community by bringing TCC into the HMO system. *Informative and motivating!*

Taking TCC Into the Corporate World (with Carmen Brocklehurst) An invigorating view of the application of TCC in the corporate community. Of special importance -- insurance liability -- see details on page 2. *Crucial information for TCC teachers instructing in the corporate setting.*

Posture, Principles and Pulling Taffy (with Corinn Coyde) Taffy moves -- teaching them with regard to body alignment and movement principles. Participants faced each other in pairs to do taffies, experiencing a different perspective and feeling for the moves. *Excellent teaching tips!*

Dancing from the Heart (with Lia Ridley) Free-flowing and high-spirited dance movements helped participants to 'let go' and get grounded for the end of the conference. *This was the highest rated workshop.*

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

PRESENTATION SUMMARIES

How to Move

Justin Stone commented as six teachers (Ed and Noel Altman, Sandy McAlister, Doug Harned, Pam Towne, and Connie Hyde) demonstrated T'ai Chi Chih moves. Key points: loose wrists, arms at chest height, elbows close to the body. Smoothness, softness, and continuity cause the energy to flow.

Stretch Break

Elissa Maguire, T'ai Chi Chih teacher and yoga instructor, presented posture and stretching for T'ai Chi Chih including stretches for: the hamstrings, calves, and achilles tendons, the front of the thighs, and the shoulders. *Conf. questionnaire feedback requested a repeat of this presentation at the next conference.*

Sole Breathing With Justin Stone

This meditative technique was presented to all conference attendees and is often featured at Justin's Meditation Retreats.

Remember, it's not 'soul' breathing!

Informal Chat

Justin moderated a panel of four TCC teachers who shared their teaching techniques and experiences. See photo below.

Inspirational Closing

Steve and Justin close the conference on stage leading conference attendees in "Healing Thru Joy".

(Photo Courtesy of Pat Huseby)



Carmen Brocklehurst, Pam Towne, Justin Stone, and Sandy McAlister
Informal Chat about teaching tips and T'ai Chi Chih experiences

CONFERENCE TALENT NIGHT



Gene Box sang:
"What I want from you:
It is that you remember...
forever, that I love you."

What Else?

Carol Glinski sang
"Ordinary Miracles"
accompanied
by the Rockettes

and

Opera singing ...
piano playing ...
poetry reading ...
and more!



Darrel Astin had us laughing in the aisles with his presentation of Tao humor. Pictured above, he illustrates the Tao for the Hollywood stars.



Joanne Sultar amused us singing "Gotta Get It Perfect" when she forgot the words.



Jan Arrott sang from the heart to conference attendees: "You are so beautiful to me..." as one of her selections.

'I gotta dance now and sing,
shed old skins -- grow new wings'
-- "Gotta Get It Perfect"

Thank you one and all!

Many others contributed their talents to the evening -- but, alas, there were but a few pictures submitted.

(Photos courtesy of Pat Huseby)
VFJ Photographer-at-Large

CONFERENCE CEREMONIES

The Dance
Step Lightly!
Do what gives
You
Joy!
Madly dancing in this
Simple
Sea
of
Consciousness.

Mark Jones,
Denver, CO



Conference attendees danced hand in hand with **Lia Ridley** (Marcia the Gypsy) after she danced and told her story at Conference Talent Night

Native Indian Ceremonial Blessing

Tori Fiori lead a Native American Indian blessing (derived from the end portion of the four-hour Eagle Ceremony) using chant, tone, and pointing of the Eagle feather to prepare the open hearts of conference attendees prior candlelight dance ritual.

Message of the Eagle feather:

"What you give is what you receive."



Lichter Tanz (Light Dance) -- A Rededication

Sister Antonia, who introduced the Ritual Dance for T'ai Chi Chih at last year's conference, conducted the rededication ceremony for the second year, as attendees formed circles within circles and lit candles in the moonlight, passing the flame from those teachers who have been who have been teaching T'ai Chi Chih the longest (the inner circle) outward to two larger circles to those teachers who have been teaching the shortest amount of time.

After all candles were lit, with right hand upon the next person's shoulder, conference participants danced in a circular pattern, while rededicating themselves to their individual T'ai Chi Chih goals and the mission of the T'ai Chi Chih community at large.

We dance around in a ring and suppose,
but the secret sits in the middle and knows.

Submitted by **Ilse Meyer**, Hayward, CA

CONFERENCE INSPIRATION

A NEW HOME; A NEW LIFE

Stan Ousley, Jr, Santa Fe, NM

Growing up as an abused child in an alcoholic home, I had "disassociated" my mind from my body. The first gift of T'ai Chi Chih was getting me back in touch with my body as a step toward wholeness. The second gift was experiencing total love and support from Steve and from those at his 1995 San Jose meditation retreat. And now, I've been so blessed by the San Diego conference!

Although I have Master's degrees in counseling and psychology, I'd become a "pack rat" and my home environment was a mess. Not feeling I deserved a nice home and figuring a messy one would keep others away, I lived a double life.

Now I've initiated the process of buying a new mobile home for my three cats and myself. It will be an open place to match my new openness! I decided to do this the day after I returned from San Diego and know T'ai Chi Chih and the ambiance at the conference helped heal me!

I also want to commend the San Diego group for their example to us all of love in action. It was inspiring to see the high regard they have for each other and their selflessness. Thanks for the reminder of what it's all about -- "joy thru motion" with open heart and open mind!



YOU NEVER KNOW

Susan Patterson, San Diego, CA

A woman came into the Expo during the conference. She and her husband were attending another conference on campus and noticed us doing the movements. They were very interested in what it was we were doing. The husband, I was told is very skeptical about "things like T'ai Chi and yoga, etc.". However, the wife said that her husband walked past the door, then told his wife that she needed to find out what we were doing in there because

whatever it was, he felt it as he walked by. The wife said it was a **big stretch** for her husband to even comment about it. She lives in Lancaster, CA and wants to find a teacher near her. Anyone in that area want to teach a class there? Her name is Peggy Scanlan, 44239 165 St., East Lancaster, CA 93535. I did send her the map of California from the Teachers' Directory. We certainly do have an effect on people!!!

CONFERENCE NOTES



From Me To You

I want to personally thank each and every one of you who responded to the evaluation form from the conference. More than half of you responded and many of the forms had comments that will be very helpful for those who coordinate the conferences in the future. It was great to know what you liked and what you didn't. It was our hope that the evaluation form will make future conference agenda exactly what you, the participant, want. It will enable the future committees to make the conference schedules adhere to your needs and expectations. *Thanks a million for the information!!*

With Love and Chi,

-- Susan Patterson
Conference Chairperson

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE PHOTOGRAPHS



Conference Committee Members -- Calm in the middle of the Conference, Saturday night dinner hour: From Left, Arturo and Lois Banta, Robin Dohrn-Simpson, Leslie Johnson-Leech, Kathy Edwards, Katye Bartley, Chris Enders, Sajila Bhatti, Tahir Bhatti and Bill Givens. Not pictured: Susan Patterson, Vi Williams, Jim Lestor



Conference Committee on stage in the Forum with MC Leslie Johnson-Leech receives accolades for their outstanding organization and spirit.

CALENDAR NOTES

NEXT CONFERENCE PLANS

1997 Conference and Seijaku Dates

July 23 through 25

Seijaku Accreditation

July 25 through 27

TCC Teachers' Conference

The 12th annual T'ai Chi Chih Teachers' Conference will be held at Chapman College in Orange, California on July 25 through July 27, 1997. Seijaku accreditation will precede the conference next year and is scheduled for July 23 through July 25. Mark your calendar now with this important date and look for details in the December issue of *VFJ*.

Conference Theme for 1997
Timothy Steutz, Anaheim, CA

The theme I'm working with for next year's conference is **GREAT!**

GRatitude Ecstasy And Transformation!

It will not be the conference attendees who suffer because another teacher doesn't come, it will be the teacher who doesn't come. The teacher who doesn't put themselves in the environment of unity and love that will be the hallmark of his and future conferences. The teacher who doesn't constantly renew their commitment and love of T'ai Chi Chih and stay current with its ever evolving nature! I even hope to be able to provide some scholarship money for a few teachers who wouldn't otherwise be able to come because of financial difficulties.

I look forward to seeing you at next year's conference. I look forward to an even more dynamic conference and a truly en "joy" able experience for everyone in attendance.

I look forward to continuing to experience the incredible gifts T'ai Chi Chih has given me through Justin Stone. The gift of Steve Ridley. The gift of Pamela Towne. The gift of Ed Altman. The gift of my entire T'ai Chi Chih family. The gift of being able to live in my feet and see the blue lights of consciousness constantly twinkling before my amazed eyes, hear the sounds of thunder rumbling within my being whenever I want to experience this amazing orchestra, feel the Chi continuously pulsating in my body like a refreshing waterfall--not to mention patience, gratitude, understanding, and an ever unfolding experience of oneness. Then there's the gift of being able to be with people in the loving atmosphere of T'ai Chi Chih. I look forward to meeting teachers who haven't come to conferences in years ... and the pleasure of seeing returning teachers again.

1996/1997 T'AI CHI CHIH EVENTS CALENDAR

TCC ACCREDITATION COURSES

Sept. 30 thru Oct. 5, 1996	TCC Teacher Training Location: San Diego, CA Contact: Susan Patterson, 733 S Lincoln Ave., El Cajon, CA 92020 Ph. 619/441-1165	\$380.00
Oct. 21 - 26 1996	TCC Teacher Training Location: St. Paul, MN Contact: Rita Foster, 2216 Portland Ave., S. #4 Minneapolis, MN 55404-3718 Ph. 612/872-8624	\$380.00
Mar. 23 thru 29., 1997	TCC Teacher Training Location: Berkeley, CA Contact: Sandy McAlister, 24835 Second St., Hayward, CA 94541 Ph. 510/582-2238	tba
Apr. 14-19, 1997	TCC Teacher Training Location: Melborne, Ky Contact: Marlene Brown 653 Cranford Drive Cincinnati, OH 95240 Ph. 513/742-1866	\$380.00
Apr. 28 thru May 3, 1997	TCC Teacher Training Location; Portland, OR Contacts: Judy Jones, Ph. 206/861-8987 6916 132nd Place NE Redmond, WA 98052 <i>or</i> Jan Martindale, Ph. 503/557-4853 1610 N.E. 238th Drive Wood Village, OR 97060	tba
May, 1997	TCC Teacher Training Location: St. Louis, MO Contact: Kathy Vieth, 2426 Sims Ave., St.Louis, MO 63114 Ph. 314/727-1983	tba

TCC EVENTS

Oct. 12 1996	Exploring Meditative Ways Location: Denver, CO Contact: Steve Bradley, 1031 Xenophon St., Golden, CO 80401 Ph. h: 303/237-6645; w: 232-0252	\$ 50.00
Oct. 31 thru Nov. 3 1996	Meditation Retreat/Justin Stone Location: Albuquerque, NM Contact: Noel Altman, 1 Aloma Way, Fairfax, CA 94930 Ph. 415/457-3858	\$147.50 <i>Full - waiting list only</i>
Nov. 8 - 10 1996	Exploring Meditative Ways Location: San Diego, CA Contact: Susan Patterson, 733 S. Lincoln Ave., El Cajon, CA 92020 Ph. 619/441-1165 *\$275. single; \$235. dbl; \$185. commuter	tba
Mar. 22, 1997	TCC Teacher Renewal Location: Cupertino, CA Contact: Roberta Taggart, 10145 Parkwood Dr., #3 Cupertino, CA 95014-1562 Ph. 408/252-5406	tba
Aug. 29-30 Aug 30, 31 & Sept. 1, 1997	TCC Teacher Renewal Location: Burlington, VT (<i>for both</i>) Exploring Meditative Ways Contact: Meara Joy Norice, P. O. Box 64686, Burlington, VT 05406-4683 Ph. 802/872-0747	tba
Apr. 25 thru 28, 1997	Meditation Retreat With Justin Stone and Ed Altman Location: San Rafael, CA (bay area) Contact: Noel Altman, 1 Aloma Way, Fairfax, CA 94930 Ph. 415/457-3858	tba <i>\$100 non-refundable Deposit</i>

PUBLICATION DEADLINE:	Nov 1:	Submissions for <i>VFJ</i> Winter Issue
MAILING DATE:	Dec 7:	<i>VFJ</i> Mailing, Lois Mahaney's, San Lorenzo; 510/276-5718

Editor's Note: If you are hosting a training or retreat with Steve Ridley or Justin Stone in your area, please let us know so that it can be included in the Calendar. Be sure to include date(s), any deadlines and the phone/FAX number(s) address of the person to contact. Other events conducted by accredited teachers may be mentioned in Teacher News. Send your articles, comments, pictures, etc. to: *VFJ*, 1477 - 155th Avenue, San Leandro, CA 94578.

**SAMATHA - VIPASYANA
HOLDING FAST - LETTING GO**

Carmen Brocklehurst has a fine article in this issue, relating "Holding Fast and Letting Go" to everyday, ordinary life. There is much depth in this subject. T'ien t'ai Buddhism (Tendai in Japanese) uses this in their simple but profound meditation, as those who have taken Meditation Retreats with me know. The purpose, of course, is to stop the conceptualizing mind, and prevent the paralyzing Habit Energies that govern our lives. T'ien t'ai has found that such meditation contributes a good deal to healing activities. Many of the T'ien t'ai teachers also discuss the philosophical aspect of this activity.

Zen Buddhism, in its practical way, uses the holding fast and letting go in dealing with serious students and aspirants. I have seen Zen Masters using this technique very effectively. Unexpectedly, they may go along with the thought pattern of the monk or student, then suddenly stop "letting go" in order to pull the rug out from under the conceptualizer's feet. Particularly with scholars, who deal in concepts, does this shake the very foundation of thinking -- which is what the teacher is aiming for. Only serious aspirants will stand still for this; most feel affronted and lose their urge for "enlightenment." If one is not serious to the point of being willing to accept great change, one should not practice true Zen.

One time I took a Latvian woman to see a Zen Master who was in this country. In typical sentimental (emotional) style she asked why there were different nationalities, why they

fought and made wars. He answered by holding up his hand and spreading five fingers. "Why do I have five fingers?" he asked. I rushed over to count his five fingers, and sure enough, there were five!

After the meeting, the Latvian lady asked me, "Why didn't he answer my question?"

"He gave you the only possible answer," I replied. Holding fast had not agreed with her, she wanted some sort of useless conceptual answer. Few will understand this.



COSMIC RHYTHM PAMPHLET

Justin Stone has written a new pamphlet called "Cosmic Rhythm". It is available to teachers at no charge. Copies were distributed to teachers attending the Teachers' Conference. If you have not yet received a pamphlet, you may request your free copy by mail. Please send your request and \$1. (to cover the cost of postage and handling) to the address below. Other requests from non-teachers: \$1.00 per booklet plus postage (\$.55 per booklet).

T'ai Chi Chih Center
3107 Eubank, NE, #19
Albuquerque, NM 87111
Attn: Booklet Request

FEATURES

NO-POINTED

Justin Stone

Few people think about the deeper aspects of their life, marvelous though they may be (healing, nourishing, functioning, etc.) Nothing, of course, is more important than Breath. My inner experience is that breath is fire. The beginning of breathing is closely harmonized with the beginning of thought. When one concentrates on a problem, the breathing slows down as the mind becomes one-pointed. This is even more pronounced in deep meditation. As thought becomes one-pointed, and then no-pointed, to the observer breath seems to have stopped. This is why, in coming out of deep immersion, one must consciously reconstruct his or her surroundings, indeed, the world around us (as thought begins again). People who have not

experienced this will not understand. It is my feeling that most of those who come to the Meditation Retreats and attend the monthly meetings in Albuquerque, NM have experienced this deep immersion. If they meditate regularly at home, they will have inner experiences. ...

I have never suggested to anyone that he or she "should" do Meditation. If you desire to meditate, I am glad to assist you, but you must do the work (practice). On the other hand, I am willing to suggest to anyone that he or she should do T'ai Chi Chih.

Source: *New Mexico TCC News*, Sept. '96

HOLDING FAST - LETTING GO

Carmen Brocklehurst, Albuquerque, NM

There have been many times in my life when I felt that I was trying to let go, but it also seemed that the more I tried, the tighter my grip held on to the situation. It reminds me of the story of the greatest swordsman of Japan when he asked the Master, "How long will it take me to learn?" The Master, seeing that he was in earnest, said, "About ten years." The student, feeling panicked, said, "But what if I work really hard at it?" The Master answered, "Then it will take you twenty years."

It seems that the essential teaching comes back to what Justin says about T'ai Chi Chih: "It must be done with the effort of no effort." Often when we start a class, we find the students overextending, stiff as a board, tight in the shoulders. Regardless of how many times we

say, "There is no strain to the movements, they are easy to do, let it flow (in other words, 'Let Go')," the student continues to hold on to "trying to do the movements."

Our talking to the students is helpful; it encourages them. But one day, through the movements themselves, the CHI is felt and then that which we needed to let go of is no longer there. How clear, how easy, how simple. ("When the water is clear the moon disappears.") We might never have said, "Let Go," but that is what has happened. We sometimes take it for granted, that the letting go has actually happened, but it really is a miracle. Thank you T'ai Chi Chih for a gentle way to "Let Go."

Source: *New Mexico TCC News*, July '96

SEIJAKU



Ed Altman, accrediting instructor, and Jim Lestor, Seijaku coordinator, welcome participants



Ed Altman instructs participants in the principle of "Holding Fast and Letting Go"



Seijaku participants enjoy mealtime in real time

SEIJAKU TRAINING Jim Lestor, Santee, CA

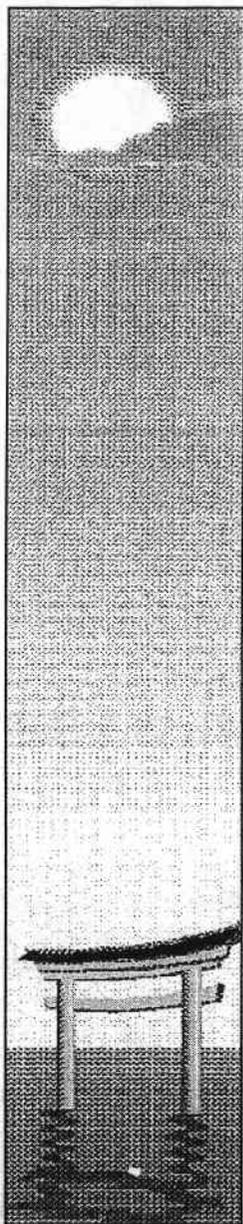
The post-conference Seijaku training was one very happy event. Ed and Noel Altman guided us through the opposing forces of resistance and softness as we reached an even greater understanding of this vital force called Chi.

As coordinator I received many comments about the amount of effort I put forward prior to and during the event. My answer was always, "I'm just having a great time; it's not work!" This is a true statement (still is) based on a lesson I learned from my original Seijaku training. I heard Ed continually say don't anticipate the resistance; accept it when it appears, then move through it. That's a life lesson! Be optimistic but when challenges happen, deal with them, then move on.

If you haven't learned Seijaku, do it!
The rewards are handsome!

seijaku
静寂

THE MERGING OF DIFFERENCE AND UNITY



The mind of the great sage of India
Is intimately communicated
between east and west.

People's faculties may be keen or
dull

But in the path there are no
"southern" or "northern"
ancestors.

The spiritual source shines clearly
in the light;

The branching streams flow in the
darkness.

Grasping things is basically
delusion;

Merging with principle is still not
enlightenment.

Each sense and every field
interact and do not
interact;

When interacting, they also merge -
Otherwise, they remain in their
own states.

Forms are basically different in
material and appearance.

Sounds are fundamentally different
in pleasant or harsh
quality.

"Darkness" is a word for merging
upper and lower;

"Light" is an expression for
distinguishing pure and
defiled.

The four gross elements return to
their own natures

Like a baby taking to its mother;

fire heats, wind moves,

Water wets, earth is solid.

Eye and form, ear and sound;

Nose and smell, tongue and taste --

Thus in all things

The leaves spread from the root;

The whole process must return
to the source;

"Noble" and "base" are only
manners of speaking.

Right in light there is darkness,
but don't confront it
as darkness;

Right in darkness there is light,
but don't see it as
light.

Light and dark are relative to one
another

Like forward and backward steps.
All things have their function --

It is a matter of use in the
appropriate situation.

Phenomena exist like box and
cover joining;

Principle accords like arrow
points meeting.

Hearing words, you should
understand the source;

Don't make up standards on your
own.

If you don't understand the path
as it meets your eyes,

How can you know the way as
you walk?

Progress is not a matter of far or
near,

But if you are confused,
mountains and rivers
block the way.

I humbly say to those who study
the mystery,

Don't waste time.

Ed. Note: This Buddhist writing was shared in part by Patty Jomyo McGowan of Fargo, ND at Seijaku training. She submitted the full text for us to reprint in The Vital Force Journal as Seijaku participants requested.

CONTEMPLATIONS by Steve Ridley

We are the dream pursuers
within a larger dream
individually dreaming
the illusion of fulfillment pursuit.

Romantic notions can temporarily
captivate and distract us
from the fullness of our infinite Self
which is Love.

RELATIONSHIPS

Coming into right relationship with ourselves,
all relationships become right.



True love is never binding
but always freeing.

MEDITATIVE PERSPECTIVE ON ADDICTION

Of the potential addictions that exist to bind us, to limit our life experience, the root addiction fostering all others is the habitual fixation to the illusionary assumption: I am an exclusive mind-body-personality centered being.

Transcending the hemmed in orientation of this construct even to a minor degree is vitally liberating toward restoration in wholeness of being, and this automatically helps weaken one's attachment to non life enhancing addictions.

ENERGY EXCHANGES

In the interest of balance and constructive expression, we must be able to recognize the involvements and relationships that nourish us and also those that tend to devitalize us.

The appearance of a person or situation can deceive us, but if adequately centered and tuned in, we can sense the true 'energy content' being created through the interaction. This enables us to choose how we might best support balance and positive outcomes on behalf of those involved.

We may need to withdraw from the involvement or somehow contribute more of ourselves to it, but we must have enough trust and detachment to move one hundred percent in the discerned direction, which can differ radically from our preference.

Being aware enough at any particular stage in our ongoing development to know what feeds us versus what eats us out, regardless of packaging, is empowering and supportive of efficient growth.

SPIRITUAL PATH

A continual state of surrender is cultivated by one intent on the path of spiritual remembrance, regardless of what is encountered externally and internally. From the egoic perspective this is hard training, but helps free one progressively.

When spiritually awake one is naturally dispassionate, because every arising thing is recognized as a transitioning expression of one's own Self - the Self of all.



Nothing
to cling to

Nothing
to avoid

Changing events
to be enjoyed

**MIRACLES AND BLESSINGS**

When one is restored to authentic (innate; conditionless) fulfillment, all desires lose their seductive appeal and are recognized as illusory pursuits.

Being so restored, one is free enough to perceive the obvious process of "miracles" continually unfolding and becomes capable of openly responding to the "blessing power" ("grace") which flows omnipresently through life-processes.

EVENTS FEEDBACK



Anaheim, CA Accreditation hosted by Timothy Stutz May 27 - June 1, 1996

WRITTEN EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE

Dear Vital Force: Allow me to express my deep appreciation to Timothy Stutz who developed and presented the teacher training course in Anaheim. I graduated from the class in San Diego last October and was thrilled with the marvelous instruction I had received. Since then I have taught a few classes. I was amazed at

how much more I grew as a new teacher participant in the Anaheim class. With the teaching experience I had a wonderful new perspective of Steve [Ridley] and the more senior teachers. My personal practice and teaching ability absolutely leaped forward. Warmly,

Don Walker, Huntington Beach, CA



CHICAGO TEACHERS' ACCREDITATION

Pictured at left are participants of the T'ai Chi Chih Teacher Accreditation held in Chicago, on April 29 - May 4, 1996.

MOTIVATION TO PRACTICE

Each time you practice T'ai Chi Chih, whether you feel an immediate difference or not, know that you are constructively altering the quantity and quality of your vital force, speeding up the process of self-transformation.

Practice each new day.

**CHI**

The creative energy flowing omnipresently through our universe is pure and unlimited. Moving through individualized mind and body it becomes uniquely qualified in character.

Filtered through humility and a surrendered heart its expression becomes useful.

**TCC PRACTICE**

T'ai Chi Chih practice teaches us to relate with and value the fullness of now in fresh minded openness - to move freely in the arising present with unclouded mind.

EVENTS FEEDBACK

TEACHER RENEWAL AND EXPLORING MEDITATIVE WAYS WORKSHOP

Ralph Garn, Syracuse, NY

Sr. Antonia Cooper hosted 'Teacher renewal' and 'Exploring Meditative Ways with Steve Ridley' at Carmel Retreat in Mahwah, New Jersey on June 20-23, 1996. 22 'openhearted' participants got the 'best' of Steve -- his energy, guidance and encouragement being 'outstanding'!

The weather was summery and sunny ... the grounds being visited by 'cicadas' whirring in the trees, part of their 17 year cycled presence. The grounds were excellent with ... a walking trail along a cascading stream ...

Morning T'ai Chi Chih was done outside ... absorbing the sounds of nature and the beautiful Carmel setting.

Sr. Antonia led her spirit stimulating 'Candlelight Ceremony' on the last evening and those who 'absorbed' the charge of the entire weekend left with enhanced energy and technique that keep the 'open-heart' so important for T'ai Chi Chih teachers/students. The CHI deposited by Steve and his 'CHI belly out to the infinite' left a lot of reserve to draw upon until his next, looked-forward-to return.

Meditation practice is a purely conscious, intentional act; a beautiful, sacred event where a human being attempts to wholly relate with her/his Creative Source.

- Steve Ridley



Mealtime photo of participants attending Teachers' Renewal and Exploring Meditative Ways Workshop in New Jersey on June 20-23, 1996

THE ONE AND THE MANY

All images carry the perfection of the Real,
yet are imperfect.



MEDITATION PRACTICE

When sensory input, mental fluctuations and emotional
surges no longer dominate our awareness, Reality revelation
is possible.



CONTENTMENT

Without openhearted trust
in the Spiritual Foundation,
structures of expectancy arise
from roots of discontent

Wherever we happen to be, under whatever prevailing
conditions, when Reality centered we find ultimate contentment
here and now.

IN MEMORIAM

The T'ai Chi Chih community mourns the death of **Sister Trinitas Bauereis**. She suffered a stroke in April and while undergoing testing in the hospital, it was discovered that she had pancreatic cancer. Two weeks later she died.

Died

Sister Trinitas Bauereis
Saint Anne Convent
Melborne, KY
April 26, 1966



AND

And the light shown down on us
And the light enveloped our every move
And the blueness was so rich
it could be tasted with every move
And the openness tells all is as it has been.
All is as it should be.
All is as it will be. We are cared for,
we are protected,
And we are all one.

A. Rae Miller, Albuq., NM

WE CAN NEVER BE APART

One day comes as another day goes,
Darkness is no longer when the first light shows.

On into eternity, each moment passes by.
Out of our sight does not mean life has died.

The seed becomes a tree, then withers down away
To nourish all the soil and blossom another day.

When one door closes, another opens wide,
While looking at the closed door, we miss what's at our side.

Life is all around us. Love is here to share.
The ones who goes before us, whisper that they care.

They send their thoughts inside us, and guide us every day.
They see the broader picture, and point us out the way.

"Remember all we learned together in our life;
Then share those gifts with others, to quiet all their strife."

"The moments were so brief, and memories last so long,
Share our precious moments by giving life a song."

"From here, I know I'm with you,. From there we seem apart.
All souls are inner-woven. They've been so from the start."

"My outward breath goes in you, Your outward breath in me.
The veil of light between us, permits you not to see."

"But as you calm your mind, and listen through your heart,
You'll finally understand - WE CAN NEVER BE APART."

Submitted by **Tori Fiore**, Payson, AZ

TEACHER NEWS



Fourth graders doing T'ai Chi Chih at Charter Public School System in Phoenix, AZ

ARIZONA

Don Fiore, Phoenix, AZ, volunteered his services with an exceptional group of fourth graders at Charter Public School System in Phoenix, AZ. during the past school year. Both students and teacher want to continue with the weekly T'ai Chi Chih sessions in the fifth grade.

Several students enjoy doing the movements at home daily. Their school teacher, **Laura Wanstreet**, has noticed not only a calming effect for herself, but also better study habits and attitudes in the children from their practice of T'ai Chi Chih.

CALIFORNIA

Marianne Merritt, Galt, CA, is now teaching T'ai Chi Chih to the staff as well as prisoners at the California prison where she works. "Students are very honest about their results," which surprised me, said Merritt. The Warden has instituted no smoking now as T'ai Chi Chih is offered for relaxation. Ten signed up for classes on the first day it was announced. "Even the supervising psychologist called and requested to take the first class." Merritt remarked, then added, "It is rewarding to come upon prisoners practicing out in the yard -- singly and in groups."

Paul Ciske, Ph.D., certified TCC instructor and Personal Fitness Trainer, is sponsoring a TCC Retreat on the Island of Hawaii November 4-10. The retreat will be held at Kalani Oceanside Eco-Resort located within Hawaii's largest conservation area.

Joanne Sultar, Oakland, CA, gave a T'ai Chi Chih demonstration at the Harbor Bay Athletic Club on September 1. She has been teaching at Alameda Parks and Recreation for more than four years, the Mastic Senior Center in Alameda, and Kaiser-Permanente in Oakland.

TEACHER NEWS

NEW MEXICO

Caroline Chavez and Ann Doering of Albuquerque, NM were invited to demonstrate T'ai Chi Chih to forty Navajo elders during the afternoon of the Elderly Falls Prevention Project Fair. With simple English instructions, they showed how the movements are performed without tension and with respect for their physical limitations. Their goal was to convey how T'ai Chi Chih can reduce falls among the elderly by strengthening their muscles and confidence, and how to rotate the body slowly while maintaining their balance.

Crowpoint is the second Indian community to invite the University of New Mexico's School of Medicine, Center for Health Promotion in American Indian Communities to demonstrate T'ai Chi Chih. Ann and Caroline visited Jemez Pueblo last fall. Possible future grants will allow them to return to both groups to teach complete classes.



NEW YORK

Ralph Garn, Syracuse, NY is teaching a class that turned out to be a 'sit-down' group. So he sat down! Part of his self-practice has been in the sitting position to get the 'hands on' experience to be able to empathize with all participating. He would love to hear from other teachers about their 'sit-down' teaching techniques.

FROM ABROAD: FRANCE

by Sr. Anita Germain, CSJ, Melborne, KY

Perhaps some of you will remember Florence Okie from W.B.L. (originally from Cognac, France) who was accredited as a T'ai Chi Chih teacher in May 1993 at the first East Coast accreditation session in New Jersey. Or you may have been at Maryvale in North Dakota where she and her family stopped enroute to Montana to participate in T'ai Chi Chih during a July accreditation. August of 1994 found the Okie family traveling to France to spend a year at the International college in LeChambon where Florence taught T'ai Chi Chih to the people of the villages of Le Chambon and Tence. It was rewarding for her to teach in her native language!

I was delighted to go to France this June to visit these villages and meet so many of the Okie's friends. Each day we gathered to share T'ai Chi Chih and bit by bit we began to refine the movements. One couple and another woman expressed interest in coming to the states to be accredited to teach. All are quite fluent in English and would be eager to return to their homes in Southern France to teach. The mountains did indeed lend themselves to the flow of Chi amongst us and the "Daughters" seems so real in that beautiful nature setting.

I hope their dream to become accredited does come true. Florence continues to be in Mazet St. Vay until mid-September as their friend, coach and inspiration. It was a gift for me to spend seven days in these mountain villages as their guest. T'ai Chi Chih has no bounds!!

TCC EXPERIENCES

SOLD ON T'AI CHI CHIH

Pamela Butler, Manlius, NY

When my director from Loretto approached me last month about conducting a T'ai Chi class for the residents of Liberty Commons, I was immediately skeptical. Knowing little about this Chinese exercise, I was plagued by visions of seniors with walkers and wheelchairs fruitlessly attempting something akin to karate kicks and judo chops. No, this was definitely not something I wanted to add to next month's recreation calendar.

Being left with no choice in the matter, I phoned instructor Ralph Garn who was currently teaching a group at the Manlius Senior Centre. "Hey," I figured, "If the seniors up the street can do it, maybe ours can, too." Ralph stressed that the best way to develop an interest in T'ai Chi is to watch a group of students in action. He extended an invitation for me to view his next class and I promptly accepted.

At the Centre, I observed Ralph [Garn] as he led the group through a series of fluid, graceful, dancelike postures known as "forms," while gentle music played in the background. The participants appeared to be swimming through heavy air in slow motion, and it seemed as though time had stood still. Although I did not actively take part in this class, I was amazed at how relaxed I felt simply from watching them. I could see why this exercise was called "moving meditation".

I scheduled Ralph to teach an eight-week course of 5 to 10 residents here at the Commons, but still I was skeptical. Since some of our residents

were confined to the use of wheelchairs and walkers, would they be able to "keep up" with the rest of the group? By the end of our first class, many of the benefits of doing T'ai Chi Chih were already evident.

Although T'ai Chi Chih movements are slow, we noticed that they can provide a fairly intense workout; improving flexibility, muscle toning, posture, balance and relaxation. One resident with Parkinson's Disease even commented that her hands had stopped shaking mid-way through the program! What's more, T'ai Chi Chih can easily be modified to be practiced from either a standing or sitting position. It is easy to see why its rituals have been practiced for several centuries in China by people of all ages!

... T'ai Chi Chih
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or standing position.

I am now in training via books and videos to lead our own T'ai Chi Chih classes at Liberty in the coming months. Having been rather clumsy and awkward myself most of my life, I am grateful for having found an exercise that even the frailest individuals can excel at!

Note: Pamela Butler is the Activities Director at a newly opened adult care facility in Manlius, NY, a suburb of Syracuse. This article was sent by her to the Manlius newspaper.

POETRY

UNTITLED

*Pointing west
above tender needles of pine
a flock of swallows
wings breathless to the source of all secrets.
The steady heartbeat of the waves
quiets every nocturnal bell and murmur
and the earth beneath my feet
becomes a carpet to the stars descending.
Holy ground, lost then conquered,
Your spirit yearns to be remembered
and touched again by those
whose orbs once spun here,
Dancing the rhythms
of a million days and a million nights.
Unclouded, my gaze can see
what is there and what is not,
but my tongue though fearless
is dumb to say exactly how
the land came to marry the wind
or hold every loving thing - including me -
in its gentle and ancient regard.*

Mark Maloney, St. Louis, MO



THE UPPER ROOM

*Into the chamber of oneness ...
Right and left become intertwined ...
Separation ceases.
The observer seates inself,
Centered in the ALL surrounding
Yang feeds Yin and interchange begins ...
The cyclone builds, energy stepped down,
Showering all that's below ...
Cleansing along the way.
"Ride it out, the calm will come" (I hear)
And it does.
Stillness begins ...
Uprooted cobwebs long buried
Rest in the healing Sun.*

Ralph Garn, Syracuse, NY



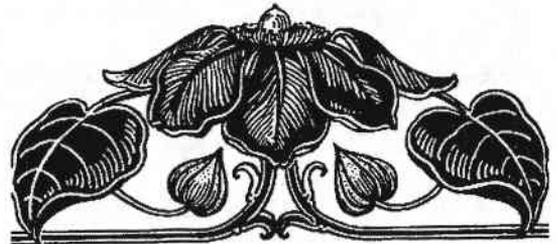
T'AI CHI CHIH

*I stretch and touch the ends
the beginnings of the universe
softly my feet sink into the heart
of the planet . . . my arms are branches
of every tree . . . swaying rhythmic
to the beat of life's song
. . . . every flower am I . . the colors
of light and darkness . . . a rainbow
of music - chiming brooks- . .
drumming rivers, the song of every bird
I fly thru many skies. . . effortlessly infinite . . .
joyous I watch life flow . . . touch it with my
love and watch it go . .
transformed transforming
. now am I within a cloud
endless energy - total rest . .
motionless -- bliss
the center of the center of all*

. THAT IS.

John J. Barbour

*In memory of John J. Barbour, this poem was
included on the bookmark in the conference packet.*





All New T'ai Chi Chih Book



Jean Katus presents the new 1996 edition of *T'ai Chi Chih Photo-Textbook* at Conference

We are very happy to announce that there is now a new T'ai Chi Chih photo-text (manual) available. Those who were at the conference got a sneak preview of the proof sample (See article page 7). "Good Karma has produced an altogether new book that is more "user-friendly" than the present photo-text. Both teachers and students will be very pleased with the efforts of the creative people who put together this fine book"

I would like to personally thank those involved in the production of the book: to Justin Stone for performing the movements before a camera and for creating T'ai Chi Chih in the first place; to Kimberly Grant for her professional photography; to Deb Jaeger of Graphic Communications and Dave Miranda for text design and consulting; to Kathy Grassel for type style advice; to Justin Stone, Connie Hyde, DeLaine Hayes and Doug Shilson for proofreading and for stylistic suggestions; to Carmen and Brock Brocklehurst for cover comments and other assistance; to Corrin Coyde for initial photo design ideas; to Sandra Walberg for preliminary editorial help; to Jack Barden for on-going support during my times of high frustration with this project; to all of you teachers (and your students) who continued encouraging Good Karma to put out a new text and to support it now that it's a reality. Many, many thanks!

Conference Thank You

We greatly appreciate the many orders we received at the conference. Thanks for making these supportive materials available to your students. It was also fun to meet recently-accredited teachers and to visit with familiar folks at the Good Karma table.

Shipping Chart

There have been some questions about using the shopping chart on the order form we provide. We list the weights for all items in ounces. To figure the total weight, add up all the ounces, divide by 16, then refer to the chart to see which fee category the weight comes under.

Current Price List

Some teachers prefer to make the price list/order form available to their students so the students can order directly from Good Karma. If you choose to do this, please be sure the students are using a current price list. Some prices change occasionally. If you're not certain you have a current price list, we would be happy to mail you one. In fact, with this issue of *The Vital Force*, we are enclosing new price information. Please discard any former lists you have and use the new one instead.

To Place Orders: PH 701/854-7459; FAX 701/854-2004

CONTACTS FOR TCC

Justin Stone: Originator of T'ai Chi Chih.
12440 Chelwood Trail, NE, Albuquerque, NM 87112
Conductor of Seijaku (Advanced TCC) Courses;
Meditation Retreats and Lectures.

Jean Katus: Publisher, Good Karma Publishing, Inc. P.O. Box 511, Ft. Yates, ND 58538; (701/854-7459); FAX 701/854-2004. Distributor of TCC instructional materials and others related to spiritual practice.

Lois Mahaney: TCC Resource Correspondent for *The Vital Force* and Teacher Directory. Phone contact for database updates, teacher referrals, and *VFJ* information: (510/276-5718).

Steve Ridley: Appointed Head of T'ai Chi Chih.
1921 Jasmine Street, Denver, CO 80220 (303/322-7717). Conductor of TCC Teacher Accreditation Courses, TCC Renewal and Meditation workshops. Contact for his creative works and material.

Roberta Taggart: *VFJ* Production. Phone contact for *VFJ* calendar items: 408/252-5406.

Liz Salada: Publishing-Editor for *The Vital Force* and Teacher Directory. Mail contact for journal subscriptions and written submittals for publication. *VFJ*, 1477 - 155th Avenue, San Leandro, CA 94578-1922.

MAIN DISTRIBUTORS OF T'AI CHI CHIH MATERIALS

Published by Good Karma Publishing, Inc., Box 511, Ft. Yates, ND 58538

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TEACHER DIRECTORY REFERRALS

Copies of the updated T'ai Chi Chih Teachers' Directory will be available January 1997. The Directory is to be used for referral purposes and communications among accredited T'ai Chi Chih instructors. **It is not to be used or sold as a mailing list.** Teachers will receive a copy as part of their subscription (new rates reflect this) available January 1997. Updates to the Teachers' Directory

will be published quarterly with each issue of *VFJ* and will include updated listings of recently accredited teachers, changes of names, addresses, and phone numbers. Please keep us up to date on any changes to your listing by sending all new information to our address above. This T'ai Chi Chih Teachers' Directory is a wonderful referral tool to support the wide-spread teaching of T'ai Chi Chih, "Joy Thru Movement!"

THE VITAL FORCE

JOURNAL OPERATIONS

The Vital Force, Journal of T'ai Chi Chih, is published quarterly by *The Vital Force*, 1477 - 155th Avenue, San Leandro, CA 94578-1922. Yearly subscription: \$20.00; \$25.00 outside of U.S. and first class mailing option (See below.) If teachers would like extra copies of **THE VITAL FORCE** for their students, please send \$2.50 for each copy desired. Some back issues are available for 1991, 1992, 1993 and 1994 at \$10.00 per year or \$2.50 each issue.

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SUBMITTING INFORMATION: Deadlines are now by the 1st of the preceding month of issue (i.e., February, May, August, and November), unless indicated otherwise. Lengthy articles should be typed and double-spaced to be considered for print. FAX service is available if you are in need of fast delivery of your *VFJ* submittal. Our FAX is 510/276-5541. You will also be responsible for covering our expense for receiving your FAX. Cost: \$2.75 for the first page, \$1. each additional page plus 25 cents for cover letter which should be addressed to *VFJ/Liz Salada* and include our phone number 510/278-3263 to inform us when your communication arrives. Thank you.



Fall

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