

The Vital Force

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for teachers & students

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Justin's Words

Impatience BY JUSTIN STONE

Impatience is one of the man's great faults, and it is responsible for much suffering. People who live in the country, close to nature, do not suffer as much from it as city dwellers rushing to fulfill their mistaken desires for better, but otherwise empty lives. In other words, they're trying to buy time. It is essentially an ego problem, although this may not be readily understandable to the impatient. It is in traffic that the drivers suffer most from impatience, making driving a very dangerous undertaking. Impatience also makes being alone a definite trial, though it should be the other way around. Peace and quiet, true stillness, can be rewarding, giving one a chance to look within.

*the
time
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I was raised in New York City, the standard by which we judge impatience (along with Tokyo and a few other over-sized cities). Automobile horns were made for the impatient.

How many can sit at home and look out the window? My friend from India, Sri Dadubhai, tells me he spends a good deal of time staring into the distance, thus performing meditation without knowing it.

Watch car drivers stopped by a red light as they twitch and squirm, eager to be off on a race to nowhere. Is the

reader one of these people? If so, he or she is a menace, sometimes a nail biter. Contemplate *why* we are in a rush and so often late for appointments. The time barrier is one of the great mysteries.

Asked to look within and to understand ourselves, we find it too difficult and time-consuming – thus painful.

Impatience can be understood, thus avoiding accidents. Both T'ai Chi Chih and meditation can help.



~ SOLICITING EXPERIENCES ~

Articles do not pour into *The Vital Force* in numbers great enough to sustain a quality publication without solicitations from the Editor. We know from feedback that you are quite appreciative of *The Vital Force* and look forward to reading it cover-to-cover upon arrival. So please consider adding your voice to this chorus by writing. If you don't, who will? Well, perhaps the people that the Editor calls and emails ... perhaps. As the deadline approaches each quarter, when not enough submissions have been received, active teachers around the country are contacted and asked write. Most do. (And we are grateful.) But what happens if the Editor does not know you or if you aren't as active as others? Does that not mean you do not have anything to contribute? No. Every single teacher and student of TCC has a story worth sharing. Ideally we'd like a more organic process of submissions, with readers taking responsibility for their publication. The Editor is often asked, "What would you like me to write about 'X'?" The answer is always the same, "I wouldn't for a second imagine that I could know what you should write. I am continually surprised and impressed at the breadth of what people express. Your consciousness is your only limit (or not)." Please carve out some time to give back, to put your thoughts and experiences on paper. Take a little risk by writing. You might be pleasantly surprised at what comes out. That's the feedback so often heard. If not you, then who?

~ NEW THEMES ~

This is the seventh issue of the new incarnation of *The Vital Force*, where we have suggested a theme around which to help practitioners organize their thoughts. Going forward, we hope to pose a different question for each issue and have teachers and students respond. The November 2009 issue will be the first with this new format. Please email us your suggestions for questions.

~ TIME IS RUNNING OUT ~

With its new appearance, *The Vital Force* costs more to produce and mail than it receives in subscription fees. If this situation does not change within the next six months (or two issues), modifications will have to be instituted. Please encourage your fellow teachers and students to subscribe to *The Vital Force*. We only need 100 new subscribers. Make a phone call and ask your TCC friends if they subscribe; show them a recent issue. Tell them that they can download a free sample from www.taichichih.org/vital_force.php. Thank you.

KIM GRANT, ALBUQUERQUE, NM

Table of Contents

Justin Stone	1
From The Editor	2
Teaching Tips:	
Daughter in the Valley	3-5
Guiding Thoughts:	
Sr. Antonia	6
Sandy Says / Pam Says	7
Freedom	8-11
Folsom Prison	10-11
Using Justin Stone Materials	12-13
Conference 2008 - Essence	14-18
Events	19
By Students / For All	20-21
Karmic Comments	22
In Memoriam: Lois Mahaney	22
Community Calendar	23
Contacts / Subscribe	24

Submission Guidelines

Please send articles as Word documents, electronically, to tcc@kimgrant.com. If possible, please tailor your submission to a particular section; the newsletter will hang together better that way. A 1/4 page in this newsletter runs about 200 words; a 1/2 page is 400 words. We are always in need of photos and artwork. Please send high resolution jpgs, which the Editor will crop and edit. If you have 10-12 pieces of related artwork – calligraphy, drawings, photographs, or something that will reproduce well in B/W – please submit them for consideration in an entire issue.

The Vital Force reserves the right to edit submission for length and clarity.

Deadlines & Ideas

SUBMISSION DEADLINE	PUBLICATION DATE	THEME	MOVEMENT (TEACHING TIPS)
Jan 1	Early Feb	Sharing	Carry The Ball To The Side
April 1	Early May	Clarity	Push Pull
July 1	Early August	Awareness	Pulling in the Energy
Oct 1	Early November	TBA	Pulling Taffy

Web Site updates

The on-line calendar and database (for www.taichichih.org) will be updated within a week of the following deadlines:

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Eloquence With Substance

BY PETE GREGORY, CROWN POINT, IN

Whenever I attend a gathering of T'ai Chi Chih practitioners, I'm always curious what the lasting impression(s) might be. Will I get what I'm doing? Will I do what I'm getting? Will one word, or one person, or one momentary interface in the center of a labyrinth encapsulate what I bring home? The benefits and lessons learned accrue in the aftermath; the "event" continues.

One recurring impression for me is Justin's presence in every group, even when he's physically not there. It surfaces in two ways. One, we reach for his books and reflect on an abundant life, a vibratory genius. The breadth of his intelligence is prolific, and it renders us humble and grateful. The other way is when we do TCC and another Justin emerges. Going back to the beginning, Justin's body of commentary explaining the moves is measured, practical, and plain-spoken. He gives a brief description of the pattern. He may point out a salient principle about the move, or caution us how *not* to do it. Then he reminds us the best way to learn it is to practice, practice, practice.

To wit: Daughter in the Valley (DITV) is the complement to Daughter on the Mountain-top (DOTM). We are not "done" until we do both. The hands begin high, palms forward. As we shift forward, they curve downward to the bottom, close to the body. We are still shifting forward as the hands rise upward from the bottom, close and parallel, full of polarity. When the hands reach the top of the arc and begin to separate, the weight shifts back, bringing us to the beginning of the next downward arc.

acceptance
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As it were, this movement was passed along incorrectly for a few years, but Justin's teaching has never wavered. We are welcome to disagree with Justin's take on this or any movement. We are *not* welcome, though, to still call that difference T'ai Chi Chih.

Justin's advice to "practice, practice, practice" is not the least bit redundant. One is to practice TCC because therein lies the best teacher. (While many great teachers can lead us to the Gates of Merging, regular practice opens the gates wider.) Another is to practice with those who have gleaned the most from Justin because, as often as we may think about TCC without Justin, we should be careful for future generations of trainers who will never have met or moved alongside Justin. It is vital we stay connected to the best teachers and listen to their direct transmission.

Lastly, we take our practice and put it into practice. The substance within the softness of the moves becomes more apparent in everything else we do. Acceptance and awe rule the day. We begin to bridge the difference, and the "event" continues.

Unleashing The Power

BY CAROLINE GUILLOTT, LAKE CHARLES, LA

It didn't start this way. While remembering my T'ai Chi Chih training, an episode of complete puzzlement comes to mind. Having learned Daughter in the Valley (DITV) the wrong way (i.e. when the weight was shifted completely to the front, the hands were in the valley), I couldn't understand what Victor Berg was telling me the morning before the training started. After what seemed like an eternity spent practicing this move, he finally threw his hands up in the air, and I felt like I would never get it. Years have passed since that day, and of course, some big and small improvements have happened along the way.

The most amazing thing happened a few years ago at one of the conference practices. Carmen Brocklehurst was nearby, so I asked her to watch how I was moving. And that's when she gave me the subtle correction on the forward shift in DITV. She told me to keep the hands closer to the body, not to extend the arms so far out and away from the body. During this movement, I used to feel energy at the point in the valley and at the top. In that instant, though, everything changed. A tower of energy rushed between my hands. A pulsating force gushed from the base all the way up, before fading away when the palms opened. The connection was

there. It was so powerful, so liberating. Then I remembered a drawing that Justin had done in the booklet, *Teaching Tips For TCC Teachers (Also Valuable For Others)*. When I saw the drawing of two back-to-back Js, it all made sense.

So here is DITV. Get ready, bend, bring the hands up with the palms facing forward, and step out. Shift the weight forward, let your hands go down, let your palms turn to face each other as they anticipate the valley (from the bottom of the J). Get ready to feel the energy between the hands all the way up. As you shift back, the back knee is allowed to bend, the hands open up to the world, letting go and enjoying the release. Relax the wrists, the hands, and the fingers. The circular motion is not way out there. The upper arms stay fairly close to the body, and the movement of the hands is to the inside of the side of the body until the palms turn and connect to the power – just before entering the valley and all the way up. Going up, the palms face each other, and the hands pass close by your body. On the last shift back, your hands open up (the fingertips come close to the shoulder area), and you step back to a graceful conclusion. Bring the hands down (palms face the earth) to the side of the body by the hips and at the *T'an T'ien* level. Enjoy. Feel it all the way. Feel the power, the connection.



Between Descending & Ascending

By JUDITH SCHWARTZ, BERKELEY, CA

When teaching Daughter in the Valley (DITV), I always introduce it as the companion to Daughter on the Mountaintop (DOTM), both favorites from the beginning. DITV begins with the arms lifted at the elbows and with the hands a little lower than shoulder height. Palms face forward. As the weight shifts forward, the arms slowly descend until they are straightened out ninety percent and hanging down in front, nice and relaxed, with the palms about six to eight inches apart and the fingertips pointing down. At this point, both feet should be flat on the ground, and both knees should be bent, with the upper body nice and vertical. As we continue to shift the weight forward, we lift the arms – parallel in front of the body, with the elbows slightly bent and the back heel lifting from the ground, softly and gently. We now have our weight on the forward foot, as the back heel is lifted and the arms are in front, parallel to each other and the ground. Then, as we slowly begin to shift the weight back, the elbows carry the arms, whose hands gently rotate at the wrists so that the fingers point upward and arms are bending. At this point both feet are flat on the ground, both knees are bent, and the weight is evenly distributed between the two feet. *This in-between stage is very important for a flowing movement.* I find many people do not give enough time to having both feet flat, with the weight on both feet and both knees bent. They tend to lift the toe or the heel too quickly. As we continue to flow back, palms are open about eight inches in front of the shoulders, out to the sides from the elbow. The front toe lifts, the weight is on the back foot, and we are in the position to begin the movement again.

This “daughter” descends into the valley with effortless effort, like moving in slow motion through heavy air, and then, gently and softly, ascends to the mountaintop. If students focus their attention on the soles of their feet, they are actually giving themselves a wonderful foot massage with their own body weight. Repeat nine times on each side.

Making Me Happy

By TERRIE DENISEN, ROCHESTER, MN

When I do Daughter in the Valley (DITV), I’m thinking about zipping up, feeling, and strengthening the *Chi* in my body. Since *Chi* follows thought, by visualizing it, I can really feel it, and it makes me smile. A few key points here include: polarity (it’s very powerful in DITV and felt in different ways); softness (in the shoulders, arms, wrists, and fingers); elbows do not rise (everything with the arms is done from the elbows down so that the elbows rest by our sides); and arms and hands are in front of the body throughout. I mention this because many people bring their hands too far back and then extend their circle backward to the sides too far, breaking the flow of *Chi* with tension. This can be a difficult movement to get the flow right, but once you do, it’s a beautiful thing.

We begin by sinking and getting our weight on the right leg while bringing the hands up. Once in position, the left leg steps forward (straightening) and the heel softly touches down as we shift our weight. The whole thing here is continuity, moving and flowing as one unit. As we shift our weight forward, the arms circle out and extend downward, letting go into the valley where the palms meet and face each other with the fingers pointing toward the earth. For me, this happens just as my foot flattens out. The palms are close but not touching. Feel the polarity. Our wrists are soft and relaxed. As we begin the journey up the center of the mountain, we continue shifting our weight forward. The

wrists rotate upward, following that weight shift. When we are all the way forward, the wrists are in front of us and starting to round up with fingers rising towards the sky. As we shift backward, the wrists follow, moving towards our body in unison. Feel the polarity. Just before our weight is all the way back on the right leg, our palms begin to separate and move straight outward following the collarbone and shoulders. Fingers are still aimed at the sky. Enjoy the polarity, being aware of when it begins to dissipate. (For me this is when my hands are about a shoulder width apart.)

When it’s time to come back to a graceful conclusion, we shift our weight backwards, enjoying the powerful *Chi* and polarity between our palms. We shift until

our weight is completely on the back leg and our hands are nearly shoulder width apart. Moving as one unit, the back leg begins to straighten as the palms turn outward and simultaneously float straight down at our sides – all while our left leg comes back to join the right and we sink to conclusion.



Editor's Note: The most important resource for T'ai Chi Chih teaching tips comes straight from Justin Stone. Period. Watch and listen to him on his instructional DVD. And read about and inspect his movements in the Photo Textbook. Both are available from Good Karma Publishing.

His words are also available in the essential booklet, Teaching Tips For TCC Teachers (Also Valuable For Others), available through the New Mexico T'ai Chi Chih Association for a small fee (www.taichichihassociation.org and 505-299-2095.)

Complementary “Daughters”

BY LYNNE ROBERTS, MISSOULA, MT

My mind wasn't still while doing my practice. It was filled with thoughts about writing: How could I write about Daughter in the Valley (DITV) without writing about its complement, Daughter on the Mountaintop (DOTM)? That's the way I was taught, the way I practice, and the way I teach: to practice both together. I see them as a whole and one, flowing together yet separately, as individual as daughters can be.

These movements bring me the most peace. When I'm down in the valley, the “daughters” lift me up, moving me through troubled waters. They embody freedom from stress. With them I do not feel alone. The whole universe is on my side, directing my feet and guiding my hands as I shift my weight in the way I move. As Martha Lynn Armstrong says in her poem, *Universal Movement*, “I, as daughter, soar above the highest mountain as my feet sink into the deepest valley ... coming unto myself, coming home.”

Students sometimes ask how they can distinguish which “daughter” starts low or high. Mountaintop begins with “M” and many people walk the switchbacks of the “M.” So for DITV, I invite them to recall standing at the top of the “M” where they will begin going down into the valley. This helps them remember that the hands begin high as they move down into the valley.



Going Within & Moving Outward

BY NORMA JENNINGS, FAIR OAKS, CA

At Justin's birthday celebration in 2007, he said that if everyone in the world practiced T'ai Chi Chih there would be world peace. So it's up to TCC teachers and students to spread this practice. Daughter in the Valley (DITV) suggests this message of peace. Last month I taught TCC at a week-long retreat in Santa Cruz, California, to about 30 Salvadorian brothers, priests, sisters, and lay people. One of the sisters shared that, while doing DITV, she felt that her life energy (Vital Force) was coming from within and moving outward to be shared.

DITV is a softly flowing, continuous movement – as we shift our weight forward and backward like the ocean waves continually rolling in and out. There is no beginning or ending. It's important to do our movements with good intentions, keeping our bodies soft and relaxed so that the *Chi* (both *yin* and *yang*) can flow freely without being stopped by tension or tightness. If you feel tightness or tension, let it float away and bring your focus to the soles of your feet or to the center of your being (to the *T'an T'ien*, about two inches below the navel).

As your weight shifts forward to the front foot, your hands start high to go low. The hands are at shoulder height with the palms facing forward and gradually come down the body facing towards each other as your arms are at the side. The palms continue facing each other as they come to the center and are held about four inches apart to feel a channel of energy as you carry them up past the *T'an T'ien* and continue up the center of your body. Feel the polarity between

the hands as you bring that life energy up to about breast height. As you start shifting your weight back to the back foot (eventually making a complete weight shift), your hands open up and palms face forward as the movement continues in the soft flowing manner it began. Let your arms and hands float through very heavy air – without using any muscular power. Use the effort of no effort. Remember, it's the shifting of the weight that circulates *Chi*. That is the most important part; the arm and hand movements are secondary.

When you open your hands and bring them back towards your body with the palms facing outward in front of you, it's like you're sharing yourself – your life energy – with the world. This brings a wonderful feeling of peace to me. My wish is that you also experience this peace coming from within and going outward to others.

Don't Imagine It; Feel It

BY AMY TYKSINSKI, ALBUQUERQUE, NM

Editor's Note: Amy attended a recent TCC retreat given by Carmen Brocklehurst and has written up what Carmen taught for each movement in the hope that others may benefit.

Put substance between your hands. How do you do that? Through the palms. Is there a swirling between the hands? Don't imagine it; feel it. The body is involved in this *Chi*. Fingers point down and gradually point up (when the hands are moving up from the front center of the body.) Elbows are not forward from the body. Hands stay under the chin at the highest point. When you turn your hands out at the top, it is a light. Open your hands and be willing to share. What do you feel in your left eyebrow? Now bring it over to your right eyebrow. Feel it for yourself. Make it Real. Find out!

Variation For Teaching & Learning By SR. ANTONIA COOPER, OSF, NORTH PLAINFIELD, NJ

I've had some enlightening conversations* about teaching styles over the last couple of years. It's not surprising that our different personalities and styles emerge as we present the T'ai Chi Chih form.

This past August I conducted a three-day teaching and movement retreat near South Philadelphia. It was here that a different concept of teaching TCC was presented to help simplify learning. We had 18 open and receptive participants: two teachers, two teacher candidates, four students with no prior knowledge of TCC, and 10 others who had attended more than one TCC event.

From this experience it became clear how important it is that we help students understand the movements in light of the six principles described in Justin's teachings – through the DVD, *Photo Text*, *Spiritual Odyssey*, *Teaching Tips for TCC Teachers (Also Valuable For Students)*, and other writings.

There are three basic directions of movement: up-down (Rocking Motion, Bird Flaps its Wings, Light at the Top of the Head/Light at the Temple, and Joyous Breath); side-to-side (Carry the Ball to the Side, Pulling Taffy and its three variations, and Passing Clouds); and forward-backward (Around the Platter, Around the Platter Variation, Bass Drum, Daughter on the Mountaintop, Daughter in the Valley, Push Pull, Pulling in the Energy, and Working the Pulley). Six Healing Sounds is a combination of side-to-side and forward-backward. We finish with Cosmic Consciousness Pose. When introducing each of these directions, leg positions, and movements (with an emphasis on the full weight shift while adding the secondary, circular wrist movements), students discover the relationships between movements in each grouping. This is described under "Leg Motions" in the *Photo Text* (pg. 18). So from the beginning, students understand the importance of the flow of energy from below the waist to the soles of the feet (the bubbling spring) – feeling the body filling and emptying, substantial and insubstantial, through each leg. "We are balancing this Vital Force as it flows" (cf pg. 7). "The practice of T'ai Chi Chih is designed to activate, circulate and balance the Divine Energy (*Chi*) lying dormant in each one of us" (cf pg. 6). "Concentrating on the *T'an T'ien* (two inches below the navel) will cause a good deal of *Chi* to be stored there, the seat of heaven" (cf pg. 7).

Dividing TCC's 19 flowing movements into three basic categories adds to the simplicity of the form. Over the years I have been frustrated with the timing of TCC courses when teaching the form in order, because the second half of the form doesn't receive as much practice time as the first half.

In grouping movements as described above, more time is given to experiencing flowing from the center, while adding the swivel in the

side-to-side movements. Beginning with Carry the Ball to the Side followed by "the Taffies" and ending with Passing Clouds, a natural flow and rhythm develops in the discovery of *how* to move.

After each teaching session, the newly learned movements are integrated in the suggested order (as per the Table of Contents from the *Photo Text*).

Students are also reminded to "practice, practice, practice" and "practice the movements you enjoy doing." Justin suggests a variety of ways in which students may make those choices. (See pgs. 5, 12, 13, and 18 of the *Photo Text*.) TCC brings about unlimited interior freedom, and it begins with the choices of which movements to practice on a daily basis. "Actually the practice of any ten of the 20 movements and postures, if repeated regularly, should be enough to bring great results, but of course, it is more advantageous to learn *all* the movements and get the benefits from each" (pg. 18).

So, you are invited to try it and see if it could be a way for you to teach and learn. In reading the references within this article, are you surprised to discover the teaching wisdom contained within the *Photo Text*? To teach well, you must understand TCC well – not only in your mind but, more importantly, in your felt experience. The deeper you go, the more you will truly discover Joy thru Movement.

*Sandy McAlister first spoke about the relationship of the groupings, followed by Lorraine Lepine's successful classes in this format. Several others have similar experience.



Anchored In Awareness

By SANDY McALISTER, HAYWARD, CA

In our TCC practice it's important to balance the softness of the practice with focused attention. If the mind is allowed to wander, the *Chi* may rise, giving way to ungrounded movements. I've experienced this when doing a lot of TCC at workshops or annual conferences, where I have been distracted and not kept my attention fully present and inwardly focused. It results in headaches, lightheadedness, giddiness, and unwise decision-making. When our attention is focused below the waist, it draws the energy downward and promotes grounding.

Softness is not completely limp and without form. A certain amount of effort is used to shape the movements. And if the legs were completely soft we could not stand. So it is with our mental attention. We do not rigidly fix our attention on one spot, working to have no thoughts or trying to empty our minds. We work with our concentration to keep the mind inwardly focused, attentive but not grasping. The mind is alert, fully present, but it is not a calculating, judging, or questioning mind. It is a feeling, aware, and observant mind.

It takes effort and dedication to delve deep into the heart of TCC. When first learning the practice we are mostly concerned about how to physically do the moves: Are we soft; do we flow; are we doing the movements correctly; are we completing the weight shift? After learning the outer form, so to speak, our attention is free to move inward. We begin to work with concentration and the mind.

At this point we need to do very little. The body remains soft and undemanding, responsive to the mind. Through awareness, our body is reminded to stay soft and open. Through awareness, we maintain our grounding connection, feeling rooted in the soles of our feet. The body has already been taught these lessons. Our focused attention gives reminders to the body to respond. We do not have to *do* anything. Just allow.

Training the mind to keep it focused and not let it wander in a hundred directions is part of the practice of TCC. Sometimes we might want to drift off into nothingness, leaving behind our worries, but we always have to come back to here-and-now. Nothing will be changed; we will have only escaped from our problems for a short time. But if we do TCC with full awareness, staying grounded, then the *Chi* has a chance to flow, balance, and begin to bring change into our lives. Justin Stone has often mentioned about the many letters he has received from TCC practitioners stating that TCC has changed their lives.

TCC is a soft and yielding practice. Yielding the mind to stillness rather than chatter. Yielding to inwardly listening. Allowing the body to be moved by the flow of the *Chi* rather than trying to do it right. But the practice is anchored through grounding and awareness. Delve deeper. There is always more to learn. There is always less to *do*.

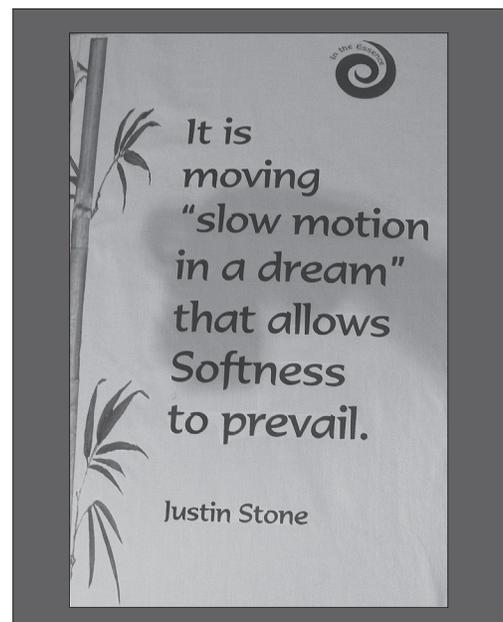
Is *Seijaku* For You?

By PAM TOWNE, OCEANSIDE, CA

Seijaku is a Japanese word that means "stillness (or serenity) in the midst of activity." Justin Stone uses it to describe that quietness cultivated by the practice of T'ai Chi Chih. It is also the name of the advanced form of TCC. In this evolutionary practice, one simple yet powerful principle is added internally as we do the movements, and it greatly strengthens the flow of *Chi*. *Seijaku* also improves our TCC practice. It was from *Seijaku* that I learned to keep my back heel low in TCC's forward weight shift. It was also where I learned what "moving with softness" really means.

Justin originated *Seijaku* for teachers' own evolution and for them to share with advanced students. He said, "For those who've experienced the power of TCC, *Seijaku* has many times the power." I was fortunate to be among those whom Justin first taught in Menlo Park, California, in November 1986.

If you are a TCC student who has been practicing for a year and want to learn *Seijaku*, ask your instructor if he or she is accredited to teach it. If not, he or she can refer you to someone who is certified (through the online teacher directory.) If you are a TCC teacher who's been teaching at least one year and want to be accredited to teach *Seijaku*, you must practice *Seijaku* (with an accredited *Seijaku* teacher or with Justin's DVD, available from teachers and Good Karma Publishing) for at least six months before attending a *Seijaku* teacher training. If you are an accredited *Seijaku* teacher, renew your practice and share it with your best students and local teachers in preparation for the next accreditation – following the July 2009 Conference.



Grass Beneath My Feet

By LINDA BRAUSE, SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA

This word, freedom, has always been very important to me – as a goal and a way to be. I was raised in a rural setting far from the city and had the opportunity to play outside and to run like the wind with grass beneath my feet. It seemed as if life could be lived freely. Along the way, I also learned that it wasn't that easy. One must control the tongue; our freedom of speech isn't always rewarded, appreciated, or tolerated. My freedoms seemed to be corralled, blocked, or punished. I never gave up on the feeling or concept though; I simply began to hold it closer and protect it.

Then along came T'ai Chi Chih, a class I took with my own free will, just for me. I felt this tingling in my hands. I had the freedom to let go of worldly thoughts and duties. The freedom to be. To feel life within. To feel the grass beneath my feet once more and the wind on my face.

I read these words by Justin recently and hold them close to my heart: "T'ai Chi Chih is joyous / not work / but joyous play."

TCC is many things to many people. To me it's the free and honest part of my true being. It's somewhere I can go with comfort and total freedom. It is something that cannot be taken away. Perhaps this is why I am so comfortable and so free within the practice. Life is not easy, yet going within and finding our sweet spots of freedom makes it worthy. I hope that more people can find this place within their own being. This is why I teach the gift of TCC.

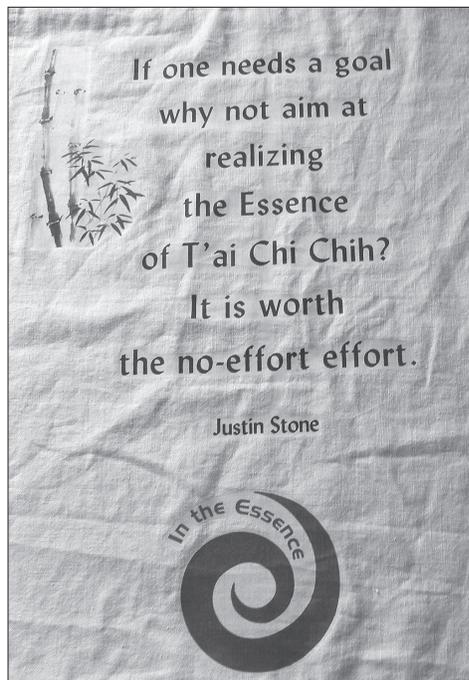
Free To Embrace *Chi*

By MARY J. CASE, DANVILLE, CA

This has been an important year of changes and accomplishments in my study of T'ai Chi Chih. In April I became an accredited teacher; in June I taught my first classes; in July I attended my first conference. Through participating in Carmen Brocklehurst's September retreat, I began to embrace the *Chi*. What I had learned prior to that weekend was definitely useful and certainly gave me a sense of movement, but now it's safe for me to *feel* the *Chi*. Although I had been getting a lot from my TCC practice, something was missing; I needed more softness and continuity. That was the main reason to attend the retreat. I was also fortunate to attend with one of my students – my husband. It was a true learning experience for both of us, and we were both very surprised by the newly discovered flow of the *Chi*.

The discovery between balancing responsibility and freedom was very insightful. A teacher needs to understand the responsibility of refining

the moves and teaching them correctly. And then there's the balance of embracing the *Chi*. I look forward to attending more retreats and intensives with this in mind. Studying and practicing TCC is a joy.



Free From The Inside Out

By SUZANNE ROADY-ROSS, SEAL BEACH, CA

At a recent high school reunion, a classmate reminded me of a line I used in my commencement speech: "We stand today at the threshold of our minds." I was leaving home for college, anything was possible, and I was crossing the threshold into exciting realms of knowledge that I had barely heard of. Freedom was mine. Little did I know that I would become a prisoner of my own intellect. After teaching English for years, I came to live almost entirely in my head. Somehow, I recognized at my first introduction to T'ai Chi Chih that TCC could open a door to a new way of being alive.

*stop
thinking;
start
feeling*

During an intensive and teacher training, my instructors (especially Athene Mantle) told me again and again to "Stop thinking. Start feeling." It took many months of practice before this advice seeped into my soul. Slowly, the essence of the movements became part of my muscle memory. I did not have to think about moving; I simply surrendered to the flow of the *Chi*.

While I am in the flow, my mind shuts off. Problems and concerns fall away. I am free to simply *be*. I feel my muscles move, my breath deepen, the blood pump from my heart, the *Chi* circulate and balance; I am beyond thought. I don't concentrate on the *T'an T'ien*; I just feel it sway back and forth as I *yin* and *yang*. I feel one with the movement of the universe. From the inside out, I am free.

Freedom: An Inside Job

By CARMEN L. BROCKLEHURST, ALBUQUERQUE, NM

TCC brings us back to ourselves, and that is the beginning of the road to freedom

It's my belief that everyone seeks freedom. At the end of every conversation I hear, that's the one constant: If I do this, it will free me from ignorance, hard work, boredom, or pain. In a hopeful way, it tells us that most people believe that freedom is possible. I believe that most things a person attempts will give them a certain amount of freedom. But on close examination, each step usually leads to more bond-

age. As an example, you would like financial freedom so you get a better paying job to pay off your car and other debts. But now you find yourself in bondage to the good paying job. How many people beginning with a goal of financial freedom find themselves more entrenched in debt? The new job may require more time at work and require higher expenses (in order to appear "right" for the job.)

What I have seen in over 30 years of doing T'ai Chi Chih is that TCC doesn't have the drawbacks of most other methods that people choose to get unstuck. This is because TCC isn't based on any outward orientation. Rather it brings us back to ourselves, and that is the beginning of the road to freedom. I hear people say, "There are many ways to go inward. Why should I choose TCC?" That's a good question. As we go inside we find that we awaken a power, a desire to know more about ourselves. It's not just about becoming quiet and feeling peaceful. It's about finding out that life is about more than worry and busyness.

TCC not only takes us inside of ourselves, it also helps our outsides. Many of us have heard about the UCLA study on shingles, which shows that people who do TCC are half as less susceptible to getting shingles as people who don't do TCC. Justin Stone has said, "You can't appease the hunger by reading the menu." Why not try TCC or practice what you have come to value and see what it does for you? Find freedom. Learn to love and share the *Chi*.

Freedom Equals Free From

By MARGERY ERICKSON, HANOVER, PA

Are all you people always so happy?" ... "Don't you ever experience things that make you unhappy?" Have you ever heard people say this about those who practice T'ai Chi Chih? I thought about this and remembered...

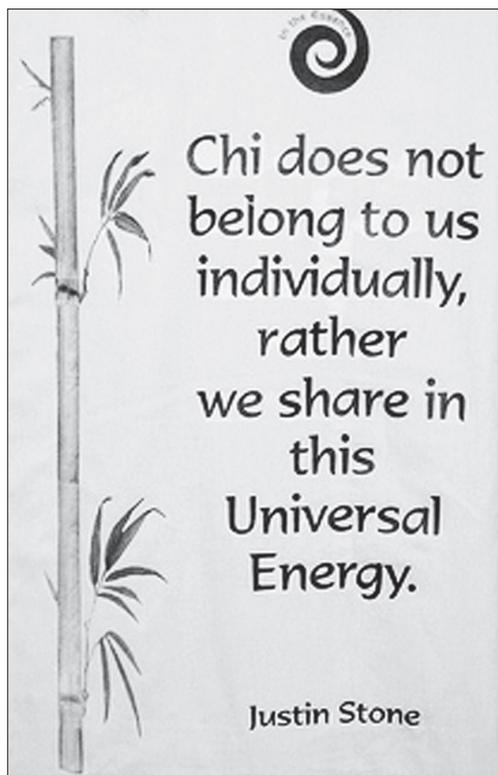
By the age of 26, I'd stuffed away the death of my father when I was age 18; being in an abusive relationship during my college years; being a single mother of handicapped daughter; marrying a drug addict; deciding to turn off life support after a severe seizure left my daughter in a coma; and becoming a widow after nine months of marriage.

Many positive, special things have happened since. Immediately following the emotional roller coaster ride of my early life, I returned to graduate school to earn a degree in special education in 1980. I

wasn't interested in a serious relationship, and when meeting men who were interested, I would briefly describe my recent life. Usually this was enough for them to turn and run but not for all. After telling my story one time, a young man said, "It's as if God came down, wiped your slate clean, and you got to start all over again."

Each day I try to live by these words and start each day with a clean slate, free from yesterday's negative interruptions. A few years after becoming a teacher in 1997, I began feeling the benefits of daily TCC practice. Not only was I physically healthier, I was also able to free myself from past emotional scars and begin to move on. The past was still past, but it did not cloud the present. I was lighter, freer. Daily TCC practice could be viewed as the eraser clearing the way for a fresh start each day. By the way, the young man who made the enlightening observation and I have been married for over 24 years.

TCC practice could be viewed as the eraser clearing the way for a fresh start each day



The Pull-Push Of A Prison Calling

By JUDY TRETHEWAY, SACRAMENTO, CA

Often I am asked, "Why do you go inside? Why is this so important to you?" I have answered in many ways that only scratch the surface over these last 10 years. A student of considerable integrity asked recently, and the answer that stumbled out felt closer than I have ever come to putting it into words – this *pull* and *push* that drives and sustains me as I offer four to seven classes on two or three days per week.

*nothing
seems
to get
in the
way*

Men's souls pulled me in. Jim Hecker (the original inmate teacher) visualized a class while practicing for a year before it manifested. It took only a simple invitation before "yes" spilled out of my mouth and before my mind had a chance to ask any questions.

When there is a deep sincere hunger, the Holy responds with food. I have been pushed by spiritual forces that have visited me in my dreams and humbled me with the honor of carrying healing love inside. Other activities have played supporting roles to enable this call; nothing seems to get in the way.

Once inside the chapel sanctuaries, the men's sincerity pulls the teachings out. The moves, words, and stillness always are fresh and vital. The patterns of movement and stillness, the love of the universe pushes through. I feel so very much in the middle of these two powerful currents of *Chi*: all that seeks to bring harmony inside a place defined by its lack of harmony; and all the hunger for harmony from those who seek refuge from the label of prisoner. Through grace I have a roll in the expressions of this powerful flow of *Chi*. "May I stay grounded, sincere, and open to ever expanding flows" is my prayer as I enter. I leave, spent and grateful, in awe of the magnitude of blessings I have received and witnessed.

Here (teaching inside the prison chapel), I am who I am meant to be. I invite the flowering love that yearns to be expressed, shared, and released. I am the gift God means us to be to one another. I have no doubts of the goodness inherent within each. I am guided to see beyond betrayal, domination, posturing, and other manifestations of fear. Inside all the contrasts is the expression of harmony, an alignment with love energy, an internal cultivation of peace inside me, inside the men, inside the prison. Here, I have found my place in a community of souls eager to seek together and be called forth by harmony.

The Quaker author, Parker J. Palmer, wrote that "Before you tell your life what you intend to do with it, listen for what it intends to do with you." It is a good thing to be acting out the divine blueprint for my life. Yet over the years my sense of self-importance, my pride in "going inside," and of being their spiritual teacher (the ugly savior energy has caused me much consternation), sent me on sabbaticals and into therapy. Over and over I have been returned and humbled, seeing a little more clearly, allowing my life to do what it intends to do with me: push and pull forth harmony, until the foundation of all life becomes my life.

Freedom 2

By JUDY TRETHEWAY, SACRAMENTO, CA

Freedom is illusive
always out of reach
Till you look inside your hand
Find it, and release.

Is it freedom for your body
that you suffer and seek?
Or dreams of new songs to sing?
Freedom to fly on the wings of your soul?
Freedom to be anything?

I am free to go and sit by the river
watching it flow and dance.
They sit behind bars
watching, waiting, for one more chance.

If I rely upon the river, to make my pen
flow
Is my freedom any closer than theirs?

Author's Note: This poem explores what opens me up into a full expression of freedom, the free flow of a poem. Is that something, in my case here being next to a sweetly flowing river, liberating us, or am I dependent upon it for inspiration?



Mental Freedom At Folsom State Prison

By HARVEY BARRY JACOBS, M.D., REPRESA, CA

I am a 66-year-young medical doctor and general surgeon who has survived almost a decade of a wrongful, life-sentence conviction. I am a survivor because of T'ai Chi Chih and having discovered a meaningful purpose to this chapter of my life. TCC has enabled me to face the chaos and indignities of prison life with courage and dignity. In order to survive this stress, I exercised daily, took multivitamins and nutritional supplements, used acupressure and massage, and wrote books on various subjects. Those benefited me physically and mentally, but they did not quiet my mind.

a meaningful purpose to this chapter of my life

After arriving at the R.J. Donovan Correctional Facility (a medium-high level security prison near San Diego), I wanted to teach a healthy living class. The associate warden, an overweight and unhealthy-looking man, refused to allow this by stating, "They are not ready for this. We have

a 150 year tradition in the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR)." Four months later, he suddenly died from a heart attack. He needed that class.

After "living" in Donovan for almost seven years, I'd begun to feel safe there, but I was transferred to Folsom State Prison, about which I'd heard many negative stories. The 12-hour, non-stop bus trip wearing handcuffs and chains was beyond uncomfortable. The failure to receive all my personal property for more than a month, and being moved from one cell to another, was very traumatic. However, after arriving at Folsom two special things happened.

I discovered a TCC course. I knew nothing of this practice, other than hearing that it was a strange exercise that old men and women did with slow, hand waving movements in Chinese parks. I signed up for a two-hour class held in the chapel and led by volunteer instructor, Judy Tretheway. It was excellent. Judy was very patient and emphasized the basic body motions before moving on to more complex exercises.

After a few weeks, I performed these movements fluidly and somewhat automatically. I then discovered the power of TCC: this moving meditation quieted my mind as it relaxed my body. It gave me a strong sense of mental freedom from much of the chaos in my life and all the on-going problems associated with CDCR and Folsom.

At this time, I also met Dr. Harvey Shrum, the education director of Folsom's re-entry (pre-release) program. I worked as his clerk so that I could teach "Healthy Living Through Self-Responsibility: How Not to

Get Sick and How Not to Die Young." In addition to teaching this class to more than 600 inmates in one year, I also wrote a book of the same name, which Dr. Shrum edited and illustrated and includes a special section on TCC and meditation.

Dr. Shrum arranged that 500 copies be printed for free distribution to interested inmates at Folsom. He also sent the computer disc to all 33 state prisons so that they could offer it freely to all 179,000 inmates in California. Judy's two hour class will also be videotaped soon and shown on the educational TV channel in all CDCD prisons.

Teacher & Students Collaborate

By BARBARA RILEY, ORINDA, CA

From the Editor: Much to Barbara's surprise, it was fun to elicit ideas from her students and think a little deeper about freedom. One of her students, Allan, a poet, read her submission and offered some revisions, while asking forgiveness for "taking the freedom" to rephrase here and there.

Does freedom exist within the T'ai Chi Chih practice? Pondering this question, I first thought, No! The movements are so well designed that there's not much room for freedom within them. We can only hope to perform them as correctly as possible in order to receive the maximum benefits. Digging a little more deeply and opening up a discussion with my students, I was led down a variety of paths to affirmative conclusions.

This beautiful practice frees us from the always-thinking, chattering-monkey mind. As we sink into the movements, the consuming thoughts that usually monopolize our attention quiet down. We feel the stillness, the essence of the practice. TCC practice teaches us freedom from effort as we discover *wu-wei* – the effort of no-effort. Through these simple movements, we find the freely flowing energy to heal ourselves from suffering on many levels of the mind/body continuum.

*TCC
frees us
from the
jailhouse
of our
habitual
selves*

Inmates of Folsom Prison report that they feel free from their oppressive circumstances only in their TCC classes and practice. Aren't we all, in a sense, prisoners incarcerated by our habits, by our thoughts, by our own bodies and minds? Doing TCC frees us from the jailhouse of our habitual selves, for over time we learn to surrender the impediments to touching the deepest aspects of who we are. From that freedom, being at peace with ourselves, we can relate to the world in which we live – with love.

Worth The Read

BY DAN PIENCIAK, HOWELL, NJ

T'ai Chi Chih has changed my life. Justin Stone has told us again and again that of all the benefits reported to him, this is what he has heard the most. And so it has been for me. In 1999 at the 25th anniversary of TCC in Minnesota, I wondered who that depressed and hopeless person was – me before taking my first TCC class! I can't imagine my life without TCC. Along the way, I've been fortunate in being exposed to very dedicated trainers and teachers. In hosting TCC area events for ten years, I've been enriched with continual learning. Our Guide and all three trainers (with whom I've worked as event host) use Justin Stone's writings as an integral part of their programs and teachings. This inspired me to read many of Justin's books over and over again, and to at least familiarize myself with the others.

Recently, I have begun reading from Justin's books in my classes. (I used to think that this was only appropriate for more experienced, serious students attending trainings and workshops.) Not only has this enhanced my classes and motivated my students, it's resulted in more and more students wanting to own and read Justin's books themselves.

It's unlikely in my life, and in most of my student's lives, that we'll experience firsthand the things that Justin has, stories that he so generously shares. The knowledge and understanding of *Chi* and Eastern philosophy have been a vital part of my TCC and in my teaching. I don't "sell" Justin's books: When I share a meaningful passage from his writings in class, students approach me afterward, inquire about the source, and often buy it. (It's good to always have at least one copy of each book with you.)

If you're a serious practitioner and you don't own or read Justin's books, you are really missing out. Teachers might very well be passing up a way of drawing students more deeply into their study of TCC. Students familiar with Justin's writings (as well as being faithful to their practice) are often drawn to becoming teachers.

Start with the *Photo Text* – and not just for the pictures – and then add *Spiritual Odyssey* and gradually expand from there. You'll give yourselves and your students an invaluable gift. Thank you, Justin.



Editor's Note: Vicki, Sheila, and Dan sell more of Justin's materials than any other teachers -- besides GKP's distributors. So they were asked to share how and why they are so successful in getting their students to use Justin's materials. To all teachers and students, we hope you find something applicable for your classes.

Relating My Journey To What Justin Writes

BY VICKI SCHROEDER, TRAVELERS REST, SC

I began my T'ai Chi Chih journey six years ago by taking classes with Bonnie Sokolov, who is a wonderful inspiration to me, and I became accredited in May 2006. When I moved to North Carolina after a few months, I remembered Pam Towne saying at accreditation, "Just get out there and teach and the rest will take care of itself." I brought a few of Justin's *Photo Text* and DVDs to my first class in case anyone wanted to purchase them. Since I was concerned about appearing to push students into purchasing materials, I used Justin's materials in my classes so they could see them for themselves. As students came into class, Justin's instructional DVD was playing. (I still do for all my beginning classes.) If the place I'm teaching doesn't have the proper equipment, I play the DVD on my laptop. This usually sparks conversations as students become aware that materials are available to help them with their practice. I always start

my first beginning class with a personal story of how and why I found TCC. And I begin and end each class (beginning and intermediate classes) with a reading from *The Vital Force*, *Photo Text*, or another applicable book. As the beginning classes progress, I insert personal short stories about troubles I may have had with a particular

movement or the progress I've made with some TCC issue.

Students have been interested in Justin's materials from the very first class that I taught. The DVD sells itself partly because I show it; students realize how much easier it will be for them to learn TCC with this DVD at home. Because I incorporate *Photo Text*, *The Vital Force*, and other books into *all* of my classes, these items become part of my student's TCC journey. I also include information about the DVD,

Photo Text, and *The Vital Force* in the syllabus that I give out during the first class. (The syllabus also includes the T'ai Chi Chih and Good Karma Publishing websites.)

CONTINUED ON P. 13

Students Advertise For Me

By SHEILA LEONARD, PBVM, NEWFOUNDLAND, CANADA

I was so surprised to hear that my students' purchases of Justin's materials rank in the top three among our T'ai Chi Chih community. While I do play an important role as a teacher, my students are perhaps my best advertisements.

The biggest seller is Justin's 2000 DVD/video. I was privileged to meet Justin at the last Albuquerque conference, and since my students can't go to Albuquerque, Albuquerque comes to them. I invite students "to meet Justin" via video during the second class. I primarily use his introduction, focusing on the key principles, but I also follow with a brief taste of his teaching and end with a few clips from the teacher practice. It always seems to whet appetites for more, leading many students to purchase their own copy, which I strongly encourage using for review purposes between classes.

Once they've used it for a while, students generally encourage each other to purchase it. Justin's teaching is short and succinct, allowing



students to experience TCC directly with Justin – which is key. The silent teacher practice at the end supplements his teaching and facilitates learning. The DVD/video has been a daily companion for many students since the beginning; many students continue to revisit it years later.

Students find the silent teacher practice especially helpful in

allowing
students to
experience
TCC
directly
with Justin
is key

the beginning. It's like having four other people in the room to practice with – on an energetic level, too, since energy transcends time and space. We usually do a brief walkthrough of some of the more obvious refinements made since the DVD was filmed, so that students can comfortably incorporate them as they follow the teachers' lead.

With returning students, I regularly use the *KNME-TV Interviews* between Carmen and Justin that were collected from the PBS television show. Without exception, students repeatedly enjoy watching the interviews and listening to Justin in person. There is always something new that strikes them or something old that strikes them in a new way. Some students purchase their own copy.

Serious students tend to buy Justin's *Photo Text* and *Spiritual Odyssey* as well, and a few purchase the CD, *Justin Stone Speaks on T'ai Chi Chih*. I share from all of these and refer to them in class. Sometimes I'm reading from one as students arrive, which triggers conversation. Copies of those and *The Vital Force* are always on my table for browsing, and students can borrow any of them. Some students are new subscribers of *The Vital Force* now that it is more student-friendly.

All of these primary resources allow students to get to know Justin more intimately and to have a better grasp and appreciation of the essence of TCC. What entices student's interest initially may simply be our own fidelity to using the materials as teachers. That interest has assuredly been further enhanced for my students and myself when Dan, Sandy, and Antonia have done workshops here, when they see the value in deepening their TCC practice.

In my experience, Justin's DVD and books have sold themselves because I use them in front of students in every single class. They see what he has to say; they see that my books are well-used; and they find that they want to deepen their journey. I talk about how my journey continues to change and deepen, and I relate my journey to what Justin says in his books. I also find after a class or two listening to me, many students start opening up and sharing their experiences regarding their inner selves. I'm sure I learn more from my students than they'll ever learn from me. Because I incorporate Justin's materials, it does take time to prepare for each class. But in preparing, I learn and explore so much more about my interior life.

CONTINUED FROM P. 12

As students progress in their journey and practice and return for more classes, I incorporate Justin's other books such *Spiritual Odyssey*, *Abandon Hope*, *Heightened Awareness*, and *Gateway to Eastern Philosophy & Religion* (along with his meditation books). I stress that TCC is not just a movement exercise; it is also a living art. And part of the TCC journey is to focus on TCC's interior aspects. This often takes awhile to sink in, but once it does, Justin's books become very interesting to them and they begin exploring them. I bring my copies of all of his books, DVDs, and CDs to classes for students to look at. The fact that my copies are well-worn seems to spark their interest. I love this aspect to teaching TCC – watching students begin to go within and find their wonderful, limitless aspects.

Best Aspects Of The Conference

“Beginning each session with a quote from Justin ... Being able to do T'ai Chi Chih under the guide and trainers; refining movements and making necessary corrections; dividing teachers into groups and letting the trainers make corrections by showing us how to move ... Connecting to essence ... Sandy's talk on mindfulness was the meat of the conference; the gift of TCC was tied with a gracious, secure bow and anchor ... Interacting with all the teachers; I enjoyed seeing so many different beings come together for a common cause – TCC practice ... Teaching tips ... Refining moves; sessions when people gave their perspective from personal experience ... Group break-



out sessions with Sandy, Pam and Antonia when they guided us through specific movements ... The positive attitude ... A heartfelt experience ... Picking up new teaching ideas and sharing ideas with other teachers.”

Why Others Should Attend Conference

“It demonstrates through action our devotion to the community ... To feel and learn from our community ... If we want to grow as a group, we need to be connected with each other ... It's the place to learn more about teaching; the more teachers that attend, the more the community can grow and sustain itself ... For the strong connection; having so many people flow as one is truly wondrous ... We need the wisdom and energy of *all* teachers ... The bigger the pot we stir, the more energy we create that percolates in the world ... To improve their TCC practice and get teaching tips from others in breakout groups ... To be humbled.”

“It's amazing how much we teachers have in common. We are cut from the same piece of cloth. You don't realize (or you forget) until a conference experience brings it all back to you. We need each other.”



What You'll Remember Most About Conference

“Group *Chi* and the individual flow of ideas and warmth ... The session on mindfulness; the idea that the restful pose is a time for sinking into silence and being mindful of the ever increasing stillness within and then bringing that stillness and silence into the next moment ... Connection with other teachers ... Glow and enthusiasm of new teachers ... How courteous the organizers were; the entire atmosphere was conducive to concentrating on deepening into the essence of TCC ... Some activities are good for the body, some for the mind, and some for the soul; TCC nourishes all three ... I've sunk deeper into my personal practice and am able honor my limitless essence ... Hearing that stillness is part of the movement – the stillness of 'stopping' ever so slightly ... Reaching within allows softness ... Openness ... The best information often is shared after the formal discussion is over, and we've had the chance to digest the ideas; these hallway seminars stay in the mind ... Sr. Antonia's sharing of her experience on the N.J. highway and her



recognition of perhaps her own dark side peeping out; she clearly stayed grounded in her meeting with her angry driving neighbor ... Carmen explained the oval *T'an T'ien* very well during a breakout session ... The camaraderie ... Jean Katus' poem ... We moved together like wind through the South Dakota prairie.”

What You'll Take Away From Conference For Your Classes

“The silence after each movement; finding the *T'an T'ien* more; really appreciating where I am in the movement ... More confidence and self-worth as a teacher; I have something to share for those ready to take it in ... Work in class with fewer words ... Softness, continuity, stronger sense of purpose ... The essence of TCC; to remind my students to move from the center, swivel the hips, turn the waist, *yin* and *yang*; remembering softness and continuity ... Turning the wrists which Carmen so clearly explained in a session ... Face your students when you speak, as some may be hard of hearing ... If many students wore TCC shirts, the awareness of TCC may explode ... Community flowed like a river ... Keep thoughts that should be treasured; let go of those that need to be buried.”

What Does Essence Mean?

By DARLENE KARASIK, SARATOGA, CA

Luminescent jellyfish pulsed their way effortlessly across the movie screen at the front of the conference room and demonstrated their mastery of softness. With this backdrop, the discussion moderator, Ursula Smith, posed the question, "What does essence mean to you?" Teachers chimed in with answers to "Where do you find examples of essence?" and "How do you communicate essence to your students?" One hundred fifteen teachers shared a kaleidoscope of thoughts, clearly indicating that they find essence in everything. Looking inward, they found that the concepts not easy to express though. Nonetheless, they said "being at peace," "the still point within,"

when things in nature are distilled, and all the superfluous parts are pulled away, what remains is its essence

— ANITA VESTAL

and "a deep love based in silence." There was remarkable agreement in how to communicate TCC's essence to students. Roberta Taggart said simply, "We sink deeply into our own practice so that we become the essence of softness and continuity."



Teaching Styles

By ELISSA MAGUIRE, BOISE, ID

David Schulberg led a lively discussion about teaching styles that engaged both experienced and new instructors. The consensus? What works for one group will not necessarily work for another. It was agreed that teachers take responsibility to change the ambience of a classroom from that of the outside world to the essence of an empty mind. Suggestions included emptying from ear to ear, substituting pleasant thoughts at the beginning of class for harried or worried ones, and/or using flowing music. Teacher softness is necessary from the first moment, and beginning in silence sets the tone for learning. Do a quick scan of the body-mind at the beginning of class (breath rhythm, state of mind, body comfort) and then throughout class to notice changes. Clearly T'ai Chi Chih is being ably, intuitively, and creatively taught to many types of populations, including children, elderly, ethnic groups, and disabled.

Conference Comments

It's evident how the conference provides an opportunity to share as a community of teachers. Intensives and retreats provide time to focus on improving and refining our personal practice. Both are distinct and worthwhile goals.

— LINDA WILLIAMS



We'll leave our hearts in San Francisco, but we'll take Chi home to spread around.

— RODNEY ANDERSON

Settling into a room full of like-minded travelers takes me to a pool of joyous silence and depth. Together we move; together we ground; together we heal ourselves and the world with light, softness, and expanding energy. I have gratitude for Justin Stone's unfolding wisdom and to all my teachers opening the way.

— LINDA ROBINSON

There are conference times for movement together but also blocks of time dedicated to improvement of specific moves. This has helped me become a better teacher. There are also opportunities at meals, between sessions, and at evening socials to meet other teachers and establish lasting friendships. The final ceremony always gives me a sense of belonging to something much greater than myself. And it is true: I belong to the TCC community of certified teachers.

— ALICE HOLDEN



Homecoming

By LUCY HOCKING, WEST ALLIS, WI

Although Thomas Wolfe said, "You can't go home again," he'd obviously never been to an International T'ai Chi Chih Teacher Conference. My long overdue homecoming this year was especially warm and welcoming; only Justin's physical presence was missing. The *teh* (or power of inner sincerity and integrity) that Justin so often describes was palpable, especially in our guide, Sr. Antonia.

Although I was recognized as one of the "old" TCC teachers (certified in the 1980's), I came to this conference as a humble beginner again, open and eager for corrections which were gently given. It was so powerful and peaceful to move as one with other teachers and to renew my practice and commitment to teaching. Peace was ever-present in the joyful faces of other teachers. The Saturday evening renewal was profoundly elegant, and I was heartened to find myself at home again – within my practice and within the teacher community. My only regret? "What took me so long?"

I was also surprised by, but appreciative of, the public acknowledgement of my role as one of several who organized the First International TCC Teacher Conference at Asilomar, held in 1985 on California's Monterey Peninsula. It was gratifying when Carmen Brocklehurst told me that Justin still remembered my role in organizing that first conference. If that memory has given him any pleasure over the years, the effort was worthwhile.

As I reflect upon that first conference, there are many wonderful, California-dreaming kind of memories. The most vivid one took place at twilight on the beach at Asilomar. Teachers began to move silently, barefoot on the sand, allowing TCC to do TCC. As the sun was setting, seagulls circled overhead while frothy, translucent waves crashed upon the beach. In that breathtaking setting, in the TCC experience of awareness and relaxation, I faintly heard the wind carrying the haunting sounds of ... bagpipe music. A lone Scottish piper on a distant dune plaintively accompanied our practice with the song, "Amazing Grace."

I encourage you, whether old or new to teaching TCC, to make plans to travel home again to our next family reunion in July 2009 in Nebraska City.



Conference Comments

By the wintertime, I tend to forget the importance and fun of the conference, and I think, "Why attend conference when we practice together weekly in Albuquerque?" Yet converging and conferring is vital to the well being of TCC.

– CONNIE HYDE



I wait, holding my flute, until my heart and breath and fingers feel connected to essence. What happens then? What music flows through? I never know beforehand. The magic of the moment creates the melody. Listen. Listen. What do you hear?

– JOANNA WOODROW

I came not knowing what to expect but bringing as open a mind as possible. I wanted to learn from others, especially how to schedule classes, charge for services, and market classes. And I received great input and insight in those areas. I also discovered that I belong to a unique association. I was greatly strengthened and impressed by the dedication to purpose, originality, and the power of so many wonderful people. I waited too long to attend my first conference. I'll be back. I leave the conference with greater understanding of TCC and my potential for service.

– CHRIS NORKUS

How can you honestly say you practice the best possible TCC and not go to the conference? That's like saying you want to be the best possible nurse or engineer and never going to seminars to fine tune your skills. We need to require some form of CEU's to keep up our accreditation: workshops, conferences, or retreats.

– ANN RUTHERFORD

Each of my classes has a theme like softness and continuity

or Chi, circularity, and polarity. And at the end of each class, when resting in the Chi, I read something from Justin's Spiritual Odyssey. In that way, my students get to know Justin and often ask for his books and DVDs.

– STAN CORWIN



Conference Fun

By DONNA McELHOSE, WILDWOOD, IL

My idea of F-U-N at a conference is resting in a refreshed essence created by our focus of who and what we are:

- F** – Friends: From afar, coming together, strengthening fragile bonds, budding new ones, knowing we are blessed by deep ones.
- U** – Uniting: Unifying movements with unbelievable grace.
- N** – Not Trying: Doing and being in the movement.

Conference Comments

Essence holds limitless freedom. Attending conference is the icing on the cake of our practice. Feeling the group energy, sharing ideas, and contributing to community is vital. Re-spirit-ing will carry us further, giving us courage, affirming that we are in the right place to share with others.

– TERRY SLANEY

Several teachers agreed at the conference to promote outreach to inactive teachers. Our powerful TCC family would be immeasurably strengthened if each Vital Force subscriber reached out to one former teacher, teacher candidate, or beloved TCC practitioner. Meet with them locally, or even better, come together at the 2009 conference in Nebraska.

– HANNAH HEDRICK

The conference has always been revitalizing since I'm the only teacher in my area. I appreciate hearing different ideas and catching everyone's enthusiasm. It's important to have this tangible community experience, to more viscerally experience the widespread movement. This year I also had the chance to interact with teachers who have drop-in groups and teach cancer patients, two new forthcoming areas for me.

– CATHERINE FEDEWA

I've been accredited for eight years and this was my eighth conference. Just as my TCC practice deepens each year, so do my connections with other teachers. The relationships widen to encompass more people and deepen with those I already know.

– APRIL LEFFLER



Teaching Mindfulness

By LARRY SAVA, LUBBOCK, TX

Several techniques can help students experience mindfulness more fully. Have them focus on the soles of their feet, so that they are grounded and connected with the earth. They can also focus on stepping forward or backward; in other words, ask them to feel their feet from the heel all the way to the ball of the foot. Or have them divide the foot into four parts (big toe/instep, little toe/outstep, inside heel, and outside heel), feeling each part individually. One teacher suggested that instructors might use the eight coins approach; let there be four points of emphasis on each foot. Another technique distinguishes between the external and internal: Although teachers know that students are connected to divine energy, some students have difficulty being mindful of their movements as their energy focuses on watching and listening to their teacher. Therefore, teachers must diminish themselves so that students can excel. Finally, the best standard for mindfulness is to have students focus on the principals of T'ai Chi Chih (circularity, continuity, polarity, *yinging* and *yanging*, etc.)



T'ai Chi Chih (Set In Motion In 1974 By Justin Stone)

By LINDA BRAGA, CASTRO VALLEY, CA

It relaxes the mind, renews the body, and refreshes the spirit.

It brings communication with the transcendent.

It circulates the *Chi* and removes habit energies.

It enhances mindfulness and expands awareness.

It balances the forces of *yin* and *yang*.

It teaches us how to live in stillness.

In the midst of daily life, it brings us solitude and peace.

Used every day, the benefits continue to deepen.

Longevity and serenity are the fruits of regular practice.

As a physical, mental, and spiritual practice,
it has unlimited potential.

Teacher Resources Update

By LORRAINE LEPINE, PRAIRIE VILLAGE, KS

Teachers can access the online T'ai Chi Chih Teacher Resource list through the hidden link on the TCC community website. (Please contact me if you don't have the url.) The resources were updated with information gathered during the conference. Many thanks to Susan Weber for her tireless data entry and compilation. If you missed getting involved this year, contact us at the 2009 conference, when we will update the information again.



"Guidelines for Teaching Students with COPD" was written by Hannah Hedrick and is posted on the web site's hidden url. The pamphlet is useful for teaching students suffering from respiratory difficulties, as well those older than age 65. The document provides important information on adaptations and modifications specific to COPD and how to teach that population safely.

This is the first of many guidelines being prepared by willing TCC Resource Teachers. These guidelines are simply that - guidelines for teaching TCC safely and successfully. They do not constitute a new way to move, but rather, they take into account necessary precautions, restrictions, and adaptations for each specific population. As Sr. Antonia wrote, "TCC is a discipline that addresses the whole person. The movements are pure and simple and can be easily adapted for any population while still respecting the purity of the principles in how to move."

Again, if you need the hidden url web address, please contact me or a teacher in your area.



First Results: July, 2008

By ANITA VESTAL, KISSIMMEE, FL

Are changes in the body, mind, spirit, and well being noticed by students new to T'ai Chi Chih - and are they noticeably different from the time they begin their first class to the time they complete their last class? This is what the TCC Student Reaction Questionnaire measures.

A group of teachers and teacher candidates began to explore how to document the anecdotal changes we regularly hear from students when they start practicing TCC. During a 2006 teacher accreditation class we talked about ways to document changes that students reported were attributed to TCC. We continued brainstorming during the 2006 and 2007 teacher conferences, and Lorraine Lepine agreed to carry the project forward.

With input from Pam, Antonia, and several teachers, the questionnaire was developed, field-tested, revised, and field-tested again. Teachers voluntarily began using it at the start and finish of their courses, and then they sent their pre- and post-tests to us for analysis. Early participating teachers include Viola Bens, Nancy Jo Bleier, Julie Buffalo, Jerry Bumbalough, Caroline Guillot, Donna McElhose, Judith Mirczak, Vicki Schroeder, and Anita Vestal. All teachers are invited to use it.

The survey consists of 12 questions with a nine-point rating scale. Students are asked to rate various physical conditions: energy level, frequency of headaches, back or joint pain, balance and coordination, physical discomfort, and quality of sleep. One question addresses TCC's mental aspects, asking students to rate their focus and clarity. Spiritual aspects are probed with questions about creativity and the level of spirituality in the student's life. Students are also asked to rate their level of accomplishment, reaction to stress, feelings of well-being, and satisfaction with life.

Classes were conducted throughout North America between February 2007 and May 2008, and we received 298 surveys for analysis through the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Services.) We analyzed 173 pre-TCC and 116 post-TCC questionnaires. Nine of the 298 surveys came from repeating students. Early results are promising. Comparing means of the scores that students rated themselves from 1 (low) to 9 (high), we found a significant difference when comparing means of positive aspects from the first versus last class. We'd hope to see high ratings for the positive aspect questions, such as creativity or energy level, and we did. There was also a significant difference in pain levels comparing means from the first versus last class. Students rated themselves lower on the pain and discomfort questions for the last class than for the first. The next question we hope to answer is: can we confirm the validity of these feelings of improved aspects? Stay tuned.

Experiencing Justin

Retreat with Carmen Brocklehurst
in Albuquerque, NM; September 18-21, 2008

COMPILED BY SHERYL ADAIR, ATLANTA, GA

How fortunate for us that Justin spent time at Carmen's retreat. He spoke, demonstrated movements, offered corrections, and joined us for lunch. Some participants were meeting him for the first time; others knew him well. All felt something quite special. During the evening session we shared these experiences of our time with Justin:

"I had a heightened awareness of all my movements when Justin was here. It kicked things up another notch ... I am always delighted to be in his presence; it changes me ... No matter what Justin talks about, he's always teaching ... Meeting Justin feels like a fantastic, 10,000 calorie dessert without the calories ... Each time I see Justin it's like meeting him for the first time. It brings me to my essence. I recognize limitless beauty, love, and possibility ... Every time Justin comes to a retreat it's pure joy, like your heart opening to a light with all its wondrous colors ... There was only excitement as I waited for him. His presence is palpable even before he arrives ... I always feel changed after I'm with Justin. The meeting was so strong, so precious, so delicious ... Every time I see Justin I feel so much love in my heart that I could dance ... Justin demonstrates a loving fierceness that seems to come from deep compassion ... I appreciate his sense of humor and his joy. His light was so bright today ... I will be a better student because of today's experience ... Being with Justin is like being at a point in time with nothing having come before and without knowing if anything will come after. It is only the present ... Before Justin walked in you could feel him coming. He is so humble and respectful ... I am not quick to cry, but I teared up in his presence because I felt so grateful ... I had an overwhelming desire to look into his eyes to make a connection. I could see real peace in his eyes ... With Justin there is really no past or future, only the present. That is such a relief."



Significant Shifting

Workshop with Dan Pienciak & Antonia Cooper
in St. John's, NL; August 8-10, 2008

BY SHEILA LEONARD, HOST

As the hosting teacher, I must say that this workshop was very moving. Seeing students continue to more deeply embody T'ai Chi Chih was sheer music to my soul. Facilitators Dan and Antonia shared my delight and readily affirmed that the students were on their journey, whether towards accreditation or a deeper personal practice. Gratitude for the opportunity to work with Dan and Antonia came easily for students refining their practices. It would be an understatement to say anything less than: We were privileged and inspired by the students' dedication to and embodiment of TCC's essence. Dan and Antonia's keen observations and warmly delivered corrections helped everyone focus on the subtle and not so subtle movement changes that were needed.

Key again was how to truly flow from the center. All participants experienced significant shifts (no pun intended) with the basic forward and sideways movements. Communicating perhaps for all participants in some respects, one student was speechless. Another commented, "Movements certainly feel a lot softer and more free flowing." All are now enjoying TCC more because they are concentrating less on the mechanics. They are feeling it more

deeply and letting it flow more smoothly.

There were also quiet opportunities for reflection and sharing stories and hopes for the future, although we were always eager to get moving again. It was impressive watching Dan and Antonia work with students who aspired to the teachers' continuity, lightness, and gentleness of movement. Students departed with more commitment to their own daily practice. We continue to be awed by TCC, a precious gift that enriches life immensely and enables new perspectives on life's journey.

Write About My Experience?

By BO WADDELL, ATLANTA, GA

*the Chi
has been
waiting
all these
years
for me
to recognize
it*

Write about my experience? I'm a new student of T'ai Chi Chih; what do I know? It soon became obvious, as my mind moved closer to understanding *what* to share, that it was important to find the words – to express my joy in finding TCC and it finding me! After only five months of practice, my being feels so different that it's obvious that my journey has just begun, that there are wonderful surprises that await, and that there will be work to do. Along the way in life, spirit has

tapped my shoulder and said, "Look, listen, trust." For short intervals I would do so. At other times spirit would say, "Play," and as a five year old, it was a joy to have spiritual energy to play with. Now at age 63, many signs remind me to "Trust, listen, and look" again. Hopefully this time around, I will spend more time trying to apply these lessons than I have in the past.

Imagine my surprise when I learned in my TCC class today that *Chi* likes to play. My old friend, the one I enjoyed the most as a small child, has returned and is once again beckoning me to play. TCC has arrived in my life to help me grow and learn. I can only imagine its depths. I am prepared and willing to engage this practice with enthusiasm and a determination to understand its teachings.

Through it the essence of my real identity will be shown to me in different ways. I know that the *Chi* has been waiting all these years for me to recognize it. I entered the journey through the practice of TCC and expected spiritual lessons. What a joy it is to *also* learn that my childhood playmate is anxiously waiting to once again play.

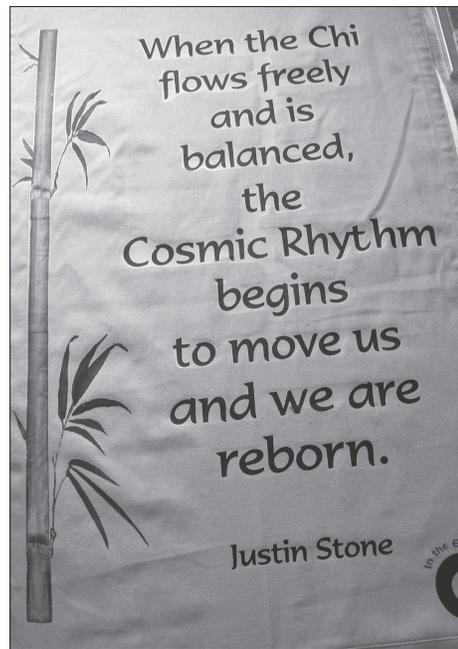
As I sit here writing, I have been forced to reflect on my self and my life's journey. Over the course of this three-day retreat, since I began thinking about writing, I learned I had something to say. Thank you for the opportunity to write and express it.

Uncovering Meditation

By CAROL E. LIEBERMAN, MONTEREY, CA

Visiting San Francisco often means walking through parks near the bay, and for years I've watched the silent ladies who appear to be meditating while moving their arms and legs in a set pattern. I found out recently that they were practicing T'ai Chi Chih. Watching is one thing but I didn't contemplate taking a class until a good friend, Jim Eagle, became a TCC teacher. I didn't know what I was getting into, which made it even more interesting, as everything was totally new. It's been nine months since the first class, and with each class I know there is far more to learn. As we review movements that I *thought* I knew and understood, there is always more to uncover. When I began, I wasn't looking to meditate; I just wanted to learn the movements.

Our class meets in a Unitarian Church with windows opening onto a forest over which the sun slowly sets. The room itself is filled with an ever-changing selection of paintings by congregants. Slowly relaxing as the class starts, I gaze at the forest or a lovely painting. As I concentrate on the movements, the bottoms of my feet, and my breathing, my mind lets go of problems. I know that one doesn't have to be in a beautiful setting to practice TCC, but for me, it helps, as does music from the Far East. Although I have much to learn, I'm surprised by what I have learned from TCC already. At the end of each class, we often sit silently on the edge of our chairs for 10 minutes, with our hands on our knees. The simple fact that I can now do that – without moving or talking and actually enjoy the peace – is lovely.



Open Letter To Dorene

By KATHLEEN BENTE, WESTWOOD, NJ

After doing T'ai Chi Chih for the past four months, I have realized so many benefits, and I enjoy sharing those benefits with my patients (who have also experienced them and enjoy learning TCC). A number of new patients will be joining your beginner's class. Since everyone has different reasons for doing TCC, everyone experiences different positive changes. I look forward to our next class and have purchased the *Seijaku* DVD. I'm very excited to incorporate this and the *Jing* with TCC. It's been a great journey so far, and I've experienced many changes in what Justin would call "habit energies." I'm more joyful and I experience more "effort without effort" in my everyday life. Thank you.

The No-Effort Finger Flutter

By RICHARD CASE, DANVILLE, CA

As a new student of T'ai Chi Chih, I have a concern that many new students seem to have: Why don't my fingers flutter with the *Chi* as Justin's and my teacher's fingers do when practicing? I believe there are three possibilities: fear of palsy, faking it, and iron control.

When I first watched Justin's newer DVD and saw his left hand flutter, I thought, "Oh, he has early stage Parkinson's." I did not know about the power of *Chi* to move fingers without conscious thought. I am 62 years old and have a fear of dementia; involuntary hand shaking is a sign. Students may suppress finger flutters because of this fear. It took time for me to realize that *Chi* is a natural and healthy force not to be feared. Anyone who has met Justin knows that he does not have Parkinson's and does not have involuntary movements. Quite the reverse, every movement has great meaning and intent.

let go
of the
control
and
enjoy

When students see their teacher's and other students' fingers flutter, they might be tempted to fake it by deliberately moving their fingers to send the message, "See, I get it." I believe this is self-defeating and dishonest but understandable when you seek the approval of others. So rather than faking it, students may exert iron control over their fingers because they want to be honest.

As a student with just a few month's experience, I began exerting iron control – not not just over my fingers but over every part of myself. I wanted my *T'an T'ien*, hands, legs, feet, everything to move correctly. My fingers didn't move an inch. I thought maybe I just didn't get it, that I just didn't feel the *Chi*. I was concerned.

During Carmen's retreat in September I began to believe in myself, to believe that I was doing the movements reasonably correctly. I began to relax and enjoy each movement. As I stopped thinking about iron control, I focused on the soles of my feet as Carmen, Justin, and my teacher suggested. And lo and behold, my fingers started to move on their own!

The key is using no effort. Don't try to move your fingers or stop them from moving. Let go of the control and enjoy the movement. Focus on the soles of your feet and enjoy. Your fingers will take care of themselves. The *Chi* will move you.



~ CONFERENCE PRESENTATION ~

At the July teacher conference, GKP reported its year-to-date activities, including the fact that:

- Justin's *Climb the Joyous Mountain, Second Edition* was just published – note the cover painting by Justin, entitled “From the Mountain to the Ocean,” which is a self-portrait of him looking down from the top of a snow-covered mountain;
- Justin's *Spiritual Stories of the East* was published as a 2-disc CD;
- Justin's 1994 instructional video was converted to a DVD – we refer to it as “Justin Stone Unplugged” since its production values are simpler than the 2000 filming and since Justin himself is the one who conducts the practice after the instruction;
- We switched to daily shipments using UPS in order to provide speedier and more reliable service;
- We printed a new 2008 catalog with lots of new information – so please throw out all prior catalogs.

~ SLIP-SLIDING AWAY ~

GKP also presented the sales figures (from 2007 through year-to-date 2008) for each of Justin's books, instructional DVDs, and CDs. Although we hesitated to bring it up, since we prefer to affirm the

highest, we thought it necessary to reinforce the truth: If things continue the way they are going, Justin's words will soon be lost. In short, Justin's materials are not being utilized by teachers and students as well as they could and, dare we say, should. It was not a sugarcoated presentation; the transparency and numbers shocked most teachers in the room – if post-presentation comments were any gauge. More and more T'ai Chi Chih practitioners (teachers and students) are losing their connection with the originator of T'ai Chi Chih because fewer and fewer of them purchase, read, use, and understand his materials.

~ A NEW PERSPECTIVE ~

That is why GKP asked three teachers (Sheila Leonard, Vicki Schroeder, and Dan Pienciak), who sell more of Justin's materials than anyone else besides the GKP teacher distributors (Carmen Brocklehurst, Sandy McAlister, Pam Towne, Sue Bitney, and Chery Ann Hoffmeyer), to write about how and why they are so successful in reaching out to their students with Justin's materials. (See pgs. 12-13.) Please consider their words carefully. The connection to our originator depends on it – and you. Thank you.

KIM GRANT, ALBUQUERQUE, NM

In Memoriam

In Memoriam: Lois Mahaney

Lois Mahaney, at the age of 91, passed away on October 7, 2008 after being hospitalized with a massive heart attack on October 6. While she was aware of having had the attack (she originally thought it was heartburn), she didn't seem to feel any pain. Although it is *The Vital Force's* policy not to print obituaries, we take exception through this edited article, “Living Legend Retires From Active Teaching,” about Lois's dedicated service that was originally published in 2004 and written by Linda Braga of Castro Valley, CA:

There are many ways that T'ai Chi Chih can promote peace – through teaching, contributing to *The Vital Force*, being active at the local and national levels, and offering free practices. Working behind the scenes for countless hours, days, and years had been a labor of love for Lois Mahaney, who did all this and more. She taught TCC at the San Lorenzo Adult School; she edited *The Vital Force* with Liz Salada for 15 years (without the aid of computers), during which time she also single-handedly maintained the TCC database and teacher directory (with only a typewriter); she hosted

teachers at her home to prepare and mail the newsletter; she attended teacher accreditations to present *The Vital Force* to new teachers; she supported Bay Area teachers by hosting many early conferences. To spread the word about TCC, at conferences she designed and sold TCC apparel featuring Ou Mie Shu's

birds. Although Lois retired from active teaching in Spring 2002 when she reached her mid-eighties, she attended meetings and promoted TCC as a way of life. Once when Lois was hospitalized, she fretted that she hadn't done TCC for four days. At her request, we did TCC in her room so that she could watch. Doctors and nurses later reported that Lois's blood pressure dropped and her heart rhythm stabilized while watching TCC being performed.

Lois was a tireless worker for and promoter of TCC. We honor her generous contributions and service to TCC and to her community.



T'ai Chi Chih Community Calendar

DATE	WHAT & WHO	WHERE	CONTACT
<i>2008</i>			
Nov. 21-24	Intensive w/ Pam	Albuquerque, NM TCC Center	Ann Rutherford ruthergary@aol.com 505-292-5114
<i>2009</i>			
Feb. 3-6	Retreat w/ Antonia	Santa Barbara, CA Mt. Calvary Retreat	Pam Towne pamtowne@sbcglobal.net 877-982-4244
Feb. 14	Workshop w/Antonia	Portland, OR	Jim Shorr and Roberta Taggart taggart1@earthlink.net 541-654-0566
Mar. 27-28	Workshop w/ Sandy	West Sussex, UK	Ev Hanson-Florin ev.florin@gmail.com (00) 44 (0) 1243 641-465
Apr. 2-5	Retreat w/ Antonia	Albuquerque, NM Spiritual Renewal Ctr	Carol Roeske roeskescands@msn.com 505-275-5935
Apr. 13-18	Teacher Training w/ Sandy	Grand Falls-Windsor Newfoundland, Canada	Sheila Leonard sheilaleonard@nf.sympatico.ca
Apr. 20-21	Retreat w/ Antonia	St. Louis, MO	Susan Kissinger joythrumovement@sbcglobal.net 314-647-7832
Spring	Teacher Training	TBA	TBA
June 23-26	Intensive w/ Sandy	Santa Barbara, CA Mt. Calvary Retreat	Tony Johansen trjohansen@msn.com 805-687-1045
July 16-19	Teacher Conference	Nebraska City, NE Lied Lodge	John & Roberta Taggart taggartjl@earthlink.net 541-654-0566
July 19-21	Seijaku Accreditation w/ Pam	Nebraska City, NE Lied Lodge	Dan Pienciak wakeupdaniel@aol.com 732-988-5573
July 27- Aug. 1	Teacher Training w/ Sandy	Grand Falls-Windsor NL, Canada	Sheila Leonard sheilaleonard@nf.sympatico.ca 709-579-7863/727-7863

MORE WORKSHOPS & RETREATS

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

<i>2008</i>			
Nov. 8-10	Workshop w/ Dan Pienciak	St. John's, NL Canada	Sheila Leonard sheilaleonard@nf.sympatico.ca 709-579-7863/727-7863
<i>2009</i>			
March 19-22	Workshop w/ Carmen Brocklehurst	Albuquerque, NM Spiritual Renewal Ctr	Judy Hendricks judyhendricks@comcast.net 505-897-3810 (after 5pm)
Apr. 17-19	Workshop w/ Dan Pienciak	St. John's, NL Canada	Sheila Leonard sheilaleonard@nf.sympatico.ca 709-579-7863/727-7863
Apr. 17-19	Retreat w/ Carmen Brocklehurst	Edmonton, AB Canada	Gail Terriff tai_chi_chih_edmonton@hotmail.com 780-430-6594

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