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Subject: Sandy's March 2015 Newsletter
Date: March 7, 2015 at 4:01 PM
To: Stephen Thompson stephen2816@mac.com

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Harmony and T'ai Chi Chih

When asked to do a T'ai Chi Chih retreat this past January in Rochester MN, I was given the theme of Moving in Harmony. I began to consider the various ways that T'ai Chi Chih and Harmony are connected. Take a moment and see what you come up with before reading on.

I started with the movements themselves. When all parts of a movement -- the weight shift, the flow of movement coming from the tan t'ien, and the arm/hand pattern -- are in sync, there is harmony in the movement. There

arm/hand pattern -- are in sync, there is harmony in the movement. There are no splashes of movement or discontinuities.

When the focus is grounded and present the whole practice flows in harmonious continuity, from stillness to movement to stillness, until completion with the Cosmic Consciousness Pose.

Often at the end of a practice there is a feeling of peacefulness, and contentment. We are more open to those around us and may interact in a more attentive way. We respond in harmony with our surroundings as our senses are more acute and we feel more connected.

When the mind is not disturbed by outside distractions or thoughts we are able to act from a place of inner being rather than a self-center calculating judgmental mind. Our actions are less likely to hurt or be unkind, and there is no need for self-aggrandizement. We are in harmony within our self.

As the practice of T'ai Chi Chih affects us, bringing balance or harmony to the life force (chi,) flowing through us, we are more in tune with the world around us. We are more aware of our place in this world and our impact upon our planet. If a survey were taken of T'ai Chi Chih practitioners, I bet the vast majority would be recyclers and active caretakers of our planet.

When we have the feeling of being in tune or on the same wave length with someone or a situation there is a current of underlying harmony flowing.

There is the sense that things are as they are meant to be.

The feeling of the word harmony has a sense of solid powerfulness balanced with light, joyful softness. Sounds a lot like T'ai Chi Chih!

Sandy McAlister in Hayward, California

Announcing the 3rd Annual T'ai Chi Chih Retreat & Banquet at Folsom State Prison, March 31, 2015

For the past two years T'ai Chi Chih teacher, Julie Heryet, has provided a day of personal enrichment for her T'ai Chi Chih students at Folsom Prison. This year they are including an event called, CIRCLES OF LIGHT. As the inmates practice T'ai Chi Chih at 2:00 p.m. a group will gather on the hillside outside the prison.

How you can participate:

Join the T'ai Chi Chih circle outside of the prison

Create a circle and practice with us from wherever you are and/or Donate funds to help purchase food for the banquet.

Your support connects the prison class to our larger community. We hope you will join us! For more information contact Julie Heryet, julie@chihealsyou.com; (530) 363-5336. Please send donations to: Julie Heryet, P.O. Box 442, El

Dorado, CA 95623- 0442

Personal note from Sandy McAlister:

Last year I attend this event and I was very touched by the men I met and their openness to exploring T'ai Chi Chih. They were moved by the thought of the greater T'ai Chi Chih community supporting them that day through well-wishes and donations which provided a much appreciated expression of humanity. I would encourage you to be a part of this day.

2015 International Teachers Conference Highlight

At the 2013 International Teachers Conference, our community presented a vision as to how the world will see us in the next 5 years that includes the following statement:

“We are seen as a thriving, welcoming Community that attracts people of diverse ages, gender and ethnicity.”

We began a conversation about diversity in our community during the 2014 conference in a segment entitled, “Men in T'ai Chi Chih”, seeking insights from all teachers.

Please join us at the 2015 International Teachers Conference in Black Mountain, North Carolina where we will continue the conversation at our FORUM ON AGE, GENDER, RACE & CULTURE IN THE T'AI CHI CHIH COMMUNITY. A panel of three teachers will present on each of these topics and then open it up for community discussion to see where we are now. Are we attracting and welcoming a diverse group of people to our classes, so that all can derive the myriad benefits of this wonderful practice of T'ai Chi Chih? Come and share your insights...!

Justin's Insights

Merging Sense with Essence

The high plateaus do not produce the lotus flowers; it is the mire of the low swamplands.

If you consider quietude right...it is just the time to apply effort by a million times.

The sun shines on everybody—pure and unpure.

You do not have to give up the ordinary life. What is given up is greed, anger and delusion. Love and do as you please.

When active you are revealing the function.

It is better to discipline yourself than have life do it for you.

VFJ September 1991

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Chi Reflections

Harmony — Outside Ourselves as Within

In “The Essence of T’ai Chi Chih” Justin has said, “Tai Chi Chih becomes a Way of Life that effects changes in our everyday existence as we circulate and balance the vital force throughout the total system. Spiritual, mental, physical, and psychological changes subtly begin to take place.” Justin continues: “As these changes occur we get in touch with ourselves and the world we see begins to change.” One of the changes a regular practitioner of T’ai Chi Chih may notice is a beginning of a kind of harmony in one’s outer life, the face we show the world, so to speak, as a reflection of what is going on inside.

What also quickly becomes apparent is that the outer self does not always mirror that inner ideal which has been established through much practice. Perhaps some of the wisdom behind T’ai Chi Chih comes in being able to see this discrepancy and to work with it, without judgment. For me, this has been an ongoing lesson. When my outer life seems to be in a state of great turmoil and confusion, I know that my inner being is calm and unchanging, stable and grounded. Why then, is it so difficult sometimes to simply allow the inner peace and joy to take over and pour out to the world? Why do I seem to have this struggle to truly bring into harmony the outer with the inner?

Through the insights provided me by regular T’ai Chi Chih practice, I have found for myself that it is, indeed, a natural outgrowth of the human character to not always be “together,” to not always be able to show my most likable face to the world, to not always be able to control my anger in a positive way, to not always be capable of treating others in the way I would like to be treated. These are facts of being human, facts that show we are physical as well as mental as well as spiritual as well as psychological beings. How we handle those not-so-good times when the outer person seems to be at tremendous odds with the inner one is probably a measure of how much we are learning. A lesson for me seems to be to not judge myself so harshly for those very human setbacks but to try and realize that every day is a new day, and that it’s possible to start over every day. That doesn’t mean I am allowed to make excuses for negative behaviors and feelings: it just means I accept my failings in a bit kinder way, with a little more humor and love—and then go on! We all are, not doubt, our own worst judges, and we certainly need to view how we relate to the world, but

we also need to forgive ourselves. We need to be aware that that inner spirit of calm and centeredness will harmonize with the parts of ourselves we show the world —if we but let it.

~Jean Katus VFJ Summer 1986

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Flow in Harmony

Flow with the energy of the universe. Being in harmony with this flow is a powerful, transformative experience. The body moves with little or no effort. Breath changes and regulates with no forethought. Time is fluid. Our bodies perform softly at their highest levels of efficiency while our minds are freed to plumb ever deeper into the depths of awareness. Our internal pulse balances with the external. In single-pointed mindfulness we momentarily forget everything else, including self-being. Awareness moves into a meta-state, a place of no-time, no-body, no-mind ... only oneness.

Being in the flow is liberating and authentic. And Joy of Joy! this T'ai Chi Chih practice is immanently teachable! Beginner's awkwardness yields to familiarity; familiarity leads to calm centeredness; moving while being calmly centered delivers us to that primal source of all energy – Chi; and through the heart of Chi, we are transformed into moving instruments of love.

~Stephen Thompson

Events lead by the T'ai Chi Chih Guide and Teacher Trainers

March 19-22 Teachers Retreat with Sandy McAlister Santa Barbara Host: Pam Towne
Email: pamtowne@gmail.com

March 24-27 T'ai Chi Chih Retreat with Sandy McAlister Santa Barbara Host: Pam Towne
Email: pamtowne@gmail.com

April 19-25 T'ai Chi Chih Teacher Accreditation with Pam Towne
Aston, PA Host: Stacey Moore
Email: slsmot35@gmail.com

April 25-26 + May 9 + June 13 Seijaku/Turiya Meditation Retreats

with Daniel Pienciak

Fair Lawn, NJ Host: Phyllis Segal

Email: posmsw@aol.com (to register and for cost information) Email:
wakeupdaniel@aol.com (for course information and content)

May 7-10 T'ai Chi Chih Retreat with Pam Towne Prescott, AZ Host: Dana
Diller danadillertcc@gmail.com

Aug. 6-9 T'ai Chi Chih Teacher Conference Black Mountain, NC
<http://www.taichichih.org/conference-2015>

Aug. 9-11 Two Seijaku Courses

Following the T'ai Chi Chih Teacher Conference in Black Mountain, NC

Seijaku Introductory Course with Dan Pienciak Hosting/Registrar Daniel
Pienciak

Email: wakeupdaniel@aol.com

<http://www.taichichih.org/events/2015/8/9/north-carolina-introductory-basics-course>

And

Seijaku Teacher Accreditation with Pam Towne

<http://www.taichichih.org/events/2015/8/9/north-carolina-seijaku-accreditation>

Hosting/Registrar Daniel Pienciak

Email: wakeupdaniel@aol.com

More T'ai Chi Chih Events

<http://www.taichichih.org/events>

Attending T'ai Chi Chih events is an excellent way for you to receive helpful feedback, improve your practice, and to be with other T'ai Chi Chih practitioners.

Resources & Materials

The Good Karma Publishing operations and website are temporarily unavailable.

We apologize for the inconvenience.

~GKP Materials

T'ai Chi Chih Photo Textbook Phone Apps

For both iPhone & Android phones can be downloaded and purchased online for only \$9.95.

Get the Android application: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.sutromedia.android.guide.tai.chi.chih>

Get the Apple app: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/tai-chi-chih/id464154293?mt=8>

Justin Stone's: DVDs/Videos, Books, CDs/Audios - www.gkpub.com

Sandy McAlister's Seated T'ai Chi Chih DVD -
<http://www.sandymcalister.com/Order.html>

Pam Towne's Serenity in the Midst of Activity DVD-
<http://taichi9.com/Order.html>

Skype Lessons with Pam: <http://www.taichi9.com/Classes.html>

Web Resources:

Official website: <http://www.taichichih.org>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/taichichih>

Pinterest Justin's Quotes:
<http://www.pinterest.com/taichichih/inspiration/>

Pinterest: <http://www.pinterest.com/taichichih/>

Instagram: <http://instagram.com/taichichih>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/taichichih>

Flickr: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/taichichih/>

Youtube: www.youtube.com/channel/UCOWK4qcdJ78AKkD7BI73- -w

T'ai Chi Chih Community: www.tcccommunity.net

T'ai Chi Chih International Foundation:

A 501(c)3 nonprofit agency which:

Sponsors our annual Teachers Conferences;

Provides scholarship funds for Teacher Accreditation and Continuing

Education;

Tax deductible donations can be made out to and send to: T'ai Chi Chih International Foundation, PO Box 517, Midland Park, NJ, 07432

T'ai Chi Chih Association: www.taichichihassociation.org

Produces a monthly publication - T'ai Chi Chih News. Sells books from Justin Stone's Recommended Reading List.

Hosts Workshops, Intensives and Teacher Accreditations.

The Vital Force newsletter: <http://www.taichichih.org/subscribe>

The Vital Force Archives: <http://www.taichichih.org/free-archived-past-issues>

T'ai Chi Chih Guides' Archived

newsletters: http://tcccommunity.net/Newsletter_Archive.html

Mission Statement

The International T'ai Chi Chih Community of students and accredited teachers is dedicated to the personal practice of T'ai Chi Chih and to sharing with the world this form of moving meditation and its benefits affecting body, mind, and spirit.

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