

**From:** Stephen Thompson newsletter@TCCcommunity.net  
**Subject:** Sandy's May 2019 T'ai Chi Chih Newsletter  
**Date:** May 1, 2019 at 3:00 AM  
**To:** stephen2816@comcast.net

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## **Contents:**

**Sandy McAlister's Message: Heads or Tails? You Don't Have to Choose**

**Circles Of Light - Building Bridges Not Walls**

**2019 Teacher Conference News - It Takes A Community**

**Justin's Insights & Chi Reflections**

**Events led by the Guide and Teacher Trainers**

**More T'ai Chi Chih Events**

**Links to Resources & Materials**

**Mission Statement**

## **Sandy's Message: Heads or Tails? You Don't Have to Choose**

*As we practice the movements of T'ai Chi Chih the energy of the body is stimulated and begins to circulate. We are told right from the beginning by our teachers that we want to energy to be drawn in a downward direction. We don't have to be skilled at directing the energy, we only have to focus our attention downward and the energy will follow.*

*It can be helpful to focus on specific parts of the body to keep the mind from wandering and the attention low. Last week in class before beginning our practice I had the students do Bass Drum. For several repetitions I had them focus on the back leg and to **feel** the opening and closing of the back of the knee. Then we did several more repetitions focusing on the front leg **feeling** the knee coming forward and slowly bending and then slowly straightening on the back weight shift. Then we switched sides and for several repetitions focused on only **feeling** the weight arrive fully into the front foot then arrive fully into the back foot.*

*There were several other focus points we played with but the idea was to give the students several choices of places they could rest their attention during the practice.*

*And while we are supposed to keep our attention low, I find great value in occasionally having students, and myself, focus on feeling the **WHOLE** of the body. As the weight is shifting I have students place their attention from the top of their **head, down their spine to their tail bone** and feel the **WHOLE** of their body moving forward and back or side to side – feel the body from top to bottom coming over the front leg then returning over the back leg or in a side to side movement coming over atop each leg. This exercise can help students discover if they are leaning, and/or bring attention to a full weight shift or lack thereof. Students may feel more how the weight shift of the legs is bringing the body and arms along for the ride so there is less upper body “doing.”*

*To bring fresh perspective or insight to our practice we need to do our practice occasionally in an exploring and inviting way.*

*T'ai Chi Chih Guide, Sandy McAlister*

## **Circles Of Light - Building Bridges Not Walls**

In 1999, Justin Stone gave a deeply moving talk to the inmates in the T'ai Chi Chih class at Folsom Prison. That very same class is now THE longest running program in the prison's history (except for A.A.).



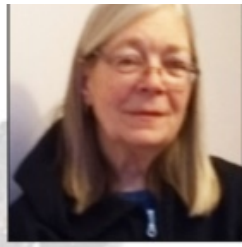
Every year the T'ai Chi Chih Community and others celebrate and support the Folsom class by joining together for the annual, international, synchronized, CIRCLES OF LIGHT event, which surrounds the class with a web of Love Energy and creates a beautiful connection between the men at Folsom Prison and the greater T'ai Chi Chih community.

Please join us again this year! On Thursday, May 23rd at exactly 1:45 p.m. Pacific Time the Folsom Prison class, the T'ai Chi Chih group on the hill over-looking the prison, and practitioners from all over the world will begin a T'ai Chi Chih practice at precisely the same time, surrounding the prison class in CIRCLES OF LIGHT!

Your donations\* provide the class with textbooks, music, a lending library, T'ai Chi Chih DVDs, Certificates of Achievement, and paper and ink for handouts. Last year we were able to purchase industrial sized fans for the prison Chapel, enabling us to practice in 90+ heat. Recently I was able to purchase a new DVD player for our class. And of course, your donations pay for the Annual Banquet, which was shown 2 years ago at Teacher's Conference. The men at Folsom Prison thank you for your support!

\*TO DONATE TO SUPPORT THE PRISON CLASS, Make checks payable to Julie Heryet, and send to P.O. Box 763, El Dorado, CA 95623 THANK YOU!

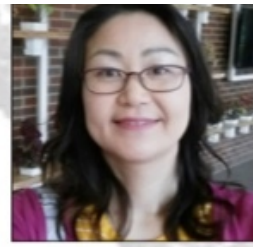




EV HANSON-FLORJN



LINDA ZELIG



JUNGMIN LEE



DEB BERTELSEN

## RETURN TO THE CIRCLE

20  
19



SUE BITNEY



LOREL MAPLE



JIM MAPLE



LAURIE JACOBI

IT TAKES A COMMUNITY

Conference is only two months away. Please register today! We look forward to welcoming ALL to Return to the Circle in Minnesota!  
(not pictured: Bonnie Sokolov)

## 2019 Teacher Conference Update

**June 27-30, 2019 Minneapolis Marriott Southwest**

In addition to the wonderful speakers below we will also have lots of opportunities for movement and refinement with our guides, Pam, Dan and Sandy.

Two interesting panel discussions are also on the program as well as break out sessions on three specific topics of interest.

We ask all participants to bring their one Burning Question about T'ai Chi Chih (movements or other topics) to conference so that we can present those to our three guides for answers and discussion.

We have a special Minnesota entertainment experience for you on Friday night and some unique Minnesota conference take-aways for each of you!

This is just a taste of what you can look forward to when you come to the 34th Annual T'ai Chi Chih Teachers' Conference. There's lots more! Don't miss out on any of it! Register by May 30 to get the hotel discount.

## **T'ai Chi Chih**

### **The Brain and Beyond**

#### **Dr. David Parrish**

David Parrish has worked in the field of Psychology for forty years. He holds two masters degrees, in Education and Psychology, and a doctorate degree in Psychology. David published his first book, "*Enlightenment Made Easy*" three years ago and is preparing the release of his second book, "*Dying to Live.*"

According to current science the brain is constantly changing, and mindfulness practices change the brain in positive ways. Dr. Parrish will present some of the recent research on Qigong practices and emphasize that it is just a matter of time before TCC is well known enough to have specific literature on this form. He will also focus on the evolution of consciousness as an essential aspect of the practice of TCC, something that Justin addressed in his spiritual talks.

His intention is for teachers to consistently share that this practice is an evidence-based practice that changes the brain which has a positive effect of patterns of negative thoughts, emotions, and behaviors.

### **Awakening the Energy Within: Making Connections Inside and Out**

#### **Sheila Leonard**

Teacher Sheila Leonard says, "Energy is alive, energy wants to move, energy wants to connect, to return us to the Circle of Oneness". This session will be a balance of movement and visualization going inside to awaken and move the abundant energy already there as we come back, come home, to our bodies!

### **The Grounding-Healing Effect of T'ai Chi Chih: Applications to PTSD**

## **and Working with Veterans**

### **Bruce Eisenmenger, ABD, MA, LP**

Eisenmenger is Owner/Psychologist and Tai Chi Chih/Seijaku Instructor at the Center for Integrative Therapies, Roseville, MN

Bruce will share his experience teaching T'ai Chi Chih to veterans.

He will discuss how T'ai Chi Chih affects the brain and central nervous system.

Learn how to utilize three specific movement

interventions for calming the nervous system as well as

modifications/adaptations in working with veterans and in rehabilitation settings.

## **The Importance of Community**

### **Dr. Ehlinger**

Dr. Ehlinger will discuss the importance of community in creating health and highlight the role that Tai Chi Chih can play in building community and impacting the health and well-being of a community.

Dr. Edward Ehlinger is a public health metaphysician who has spent his professional career working in various settings to advance health equity and optimal health for all. His work integrates the values, practices, and approaches of medical care, public health and community building. He is the chair of the U.S. Secretary of Health's Advisory Committee on Infant Mortality, a coach for the National Leadership Academy for Public Health, and consults and speaks on public health and community-building issues. Dr. Ehlinger served as Minnesota Commissioner of Health and Director of Boynton Health Service at the University of Minnesota. He has been involved in the Minnesota T'ai Chi Chih community for many years as his wife, Sally, was a T'ai Chi Chih teacher.

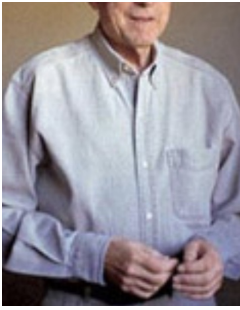
~ Laurie Jacobi, Co-Coordinator with Linda Zelig

***2019 Teacher Conference materials, conference information, and hotel information are available through either of these two links:***

**[Click here to register online . . .](#) OR . . . [Click here to register by mail](#)**



**Justin's Insights**



## Softness and Continuity

\_"Softness and continuity" are necessary. Nice and even, like the chewing of food.

It is vital that we bend the knees and shift our weight. \_

~ Justin Stone, T'AI CHI CHIH Joy Thru Movement (Photo Text) 3rd edition

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## Chi Reflections

### Stepping Like a Cat

In the T'ai-Chi Classics, Wu Yu-hsiang (1812–1880) says, "*When changing position, you should move like a cat.*" That admonition implies that you should step naturally, as a cat would. When stalking a bird or a mouse, a cat does not commit any weight onto a stepping paw before it is already touching the ground. Committing its weight prematurely would produce a discontinuity in motion that would alert its prey...

Moreover, a cat would not stiffen its joints while walking. However, many T'ai-Chi practitioners stiffen their knee joints while stepping and literally fall onto a stepping foot. Stepping in this manner is unnatural, breaks the balance and continuity of yin and yang, and increases vulnerability to falling in daily life...

To be in accordance with the T'ai-Chi principles of the balance and continuity of yin and yang, the stepping foot, which is yang (active, upward, outward), must continuously evolve into yin (earthy, supportive, inactive) as it blends with the ground.

*Strength and Range of Movement of Legs* - In order to "step like a cat," it is necessary that the stepping foot be low enough to blend with the ground so continuously that there is almost no perception of the foot contacting the ground. That condition requires the rooted leg to have (a) sufficient strength to stably support the full weight of the body and (b) a sufficient range of motion to bend enough for the stepping foot to easily reach the ground without losing stability.

~ Robert Chuckrow, Ph.D. [Click here to read more](#)



## T'ai Chi Chih Events

### Led by the Guide and Teacher Trainers

#### 2019 Events

**May 9-12, 2019, Prescott, AZ TCC Retreat** with Pam Towne

Contact: Pam Towne [pamtowne@gmail.com](mailto:pamtowne@gmail.com)

**May 31-June 6, 2019 Aston, PA TCC Teacher Accreditation** with Sandy McAlister

Contact: April Leffler [lirpaleff@rcn.com](mailto:lirpaleff@rcn.com)

**June 8, 2019, Broomall, PA Working Together Workshop for Students and Teachers** with Sandy McAlister.

Contact: Kathleen Mcallister [TccTeacher555@gmail.com](mailto:TccTeacher555@gmail.com) or 610-308-4846

**June 14-16, 2019 NJ Shore TCC Retreat** with Daniel Pienciak

Contact Daniel Pienciak [wakeupdaniel@aol.com](mailto:wakeupdaniel@aol.com) or 732 988 5573

**June 27-30, 2019 Teacher Conference, Minnetonka, MN.**

Contact Co-Hosts:

Laurie Jacobi [LaurieJacobi@msn.com](mailto:LaurieJacobi@msn.com)

Linda Zelig [lmzelig@comcast.net](mailto:lmzelig@comcast.net)

**June 30-July 2, 2019 Post Conference Seijaku, Minnetonka, MN.**

Contact: Bonnie Sokolov [[bonnietaichi5@gmail.com](mailto:bonnietaichi5@gmail.com)]

(<mailto:bonnietaichi5@gmail.com> or 507-250-3360)

**July 3-7, 2019, Santa Barbara, CA TCC Intensive** with Daniel Pienciak

Contact: Marie Dotts [mcdotts@hotmail.com](mailto:mcdotts@hotmail.com) or 970-412-9955

**Jul 29 - Aug 1, 2019, Aston, PA Seijaku Meditation Retreat** with Daniel Pienciak

Contact Daniel Pienciak [wakeupdaniel@aol.com](mailto:wakeupdaniel@aol.com) or 732 988 5573

**Aug. 20-23, 2019, Aston PA T'ai Chi Chih Teacher's Symposium** with Sandy McAlister

Contact: April Leffler [lirpaleff@rcn.com](mailto:lirpaleff@rcn.com) or call at 610-809-7523 (C)



**Sep. 24-27, 2019, Santa Barbara, CA TCC Retreat** with Pam Towne  
Contact: Pam Towne [pamtowne@gmail.com](mailto:pamtowne@gmail.com)

**Oct. 4-6 NJ Shore TCC Retreat** with Daniel Pienciak  
Contact Daniel Pienciak [wakeupdaniel@aol.com](mailto:wakeupdaniel@aol.com) or 732 988 5573

**Oct. 6-10, 2019 Aston, PA TCC Intensive** with Pam Towne  
Contact: April Leffler [lirpaleff@rcn.com](mailto:lirpaleff@rcn.com) or call at 610-809-7523 (C)

**Nov. 19-24, 2019, Santa Barbara TCC Teacher Accreditation** with Pam Towne  
Contact: Marie Dotts [mcdotts@hotmail.com](mailto:mcdotts@hotmail.com) or 970-412-9955

*By retreating from the activities of daily life to recharge your physical, mental & spiritual "batteries", you can gain a new perspective and move forward with greater ease and joy in your TCC practice and in your life . ~Pam Towne*

## More T'ai Chi Chih Events

**Click here for additional events including those led by dedicated Teachers, as well as the Guide and Teacher Trainers.** 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.



## Links to Resources & Materials

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Justin Stone's Materials [click here](#)

Sandy McAlister's Seated T'ai Chi Chih DVD: [click here](#)

Pam Towne's Serenity in the Midst of Activity DVD or Digital Download: [click here](#)

Skype Lessons with Pam: [click here](#)

Inquires: [pamtowne@gmail.com](mailto:pamtowne@gmail.com)

**Seijaku Booklet:**

\$3/copy + \$1.20 (1st Class)

~~\$20/copy + \$1.20 (1st Class)~~

\$20/ 10 copies + \$3.60 (1st Class) or \$2.70 media rate

\$35/ 20 copies + \$6.00 (1st Class) or \$3.20 media rate

*Make checks payable to:* T'ai Chi Chih International Foundation

*Send checks to:* Ann Rutherford, 1534 Wagon Train SE, Albuquerque, NM  
87123

## **Web Resources:**

**T'ai Chi Chih's website:** [click here](#)

**T'ai Chi Chih Community website:** [click here](#)

**Tai Chi Chih Facebook:** [click here](#)

**Tai Chi Chih Teacher Circle Facebook:** [click here](#)

**Pinterest Justin's Quotes:**[click here](#)

**Pinterest:** [click here](#)

**Instagram:** [click here](#)

**Twitter:** [click here](#)

**Flickr:** [click here](#)

**Youtube:** [click here](#)

**T'ai Chi Chih International Foundation:** [click here](#)

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 11, Norwood, PA 19074

**T'ai Chi Chih Association:** [click here](#)

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

The Vital Force Journal quarterly newsletter: [click here to subscribe](#)

The Vital Force Archives: [click here](#)

T'ai Chi Chih Guides' free monthly newsletter -- Sign-Up link: [click here](#)

Past issues of the Guide's newsletters (thru Aug. 2017): [click here](#)

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## 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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