

**From:** Stephen Thompson newsletter@TCCcommunity.net  
**Subject:** Sandy's May 2020 Tai Chi Chih Newsletter  
**Date:** May 1, 2020 at 3:01 AM  
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## Sandy McAlister's Message: Opposites Create Balance

### Solid Yet Soft

Before beginning TCC practice we prepare ourselves. It may be as simple as taking a few slow deep breaths, or it may be 5 minutes of settling into the moment, sharpening our awareness, bringing our full senses on line. In that time of preparation, here is a thought you might want to play with:

*"I feel solid from the top of my head to the bottom of my feet and through to the core of my being; while at the same time, I feel soft, open, and spacious."*

How do we feel solid and soft at the same time?

### Focus and Let Go

This is another pair of opposites to explore at the beginning and throughout a practice.

*"I bring my attention to the present moment, engaging my mind in a sensing feeling mode, not a thinking conceptual way. Yet, at the same time, letting go -*

*letting go of effort, trying, and doing.”*

How do we mentally stay engaged, present, and focused, and at the same time, let go?

I encourage you to play with these two ideas of “Solid Yet Soft” and “Focus and Let Go”. How do you feel them, how do you state them, or how do you redefine them? These might be ideas to discuss when classes resume. Teachers, maybe you could write something for the VFJ or have a few thoughts to share at our next Tuesday Teachers’ Zoom practice.

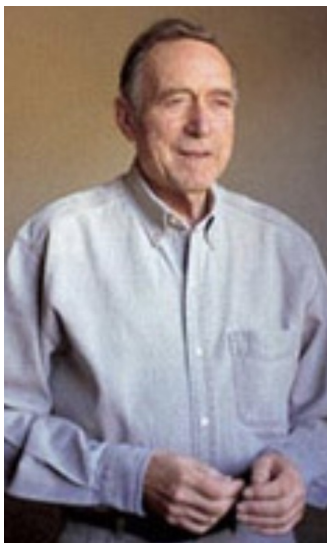
Enjoy the journey....

*~ T’ai Chi Chih Guide, Sandy McAlister*

**Editor's note: There are two new additions to the newsletter this month.**

**(1) Justin's Teaching videos are available digitally. Thank you Kim for this astounding resource! See the information by Justin's picture on how to have your own personal copy.**

**(2) The newsletter section headed by the Zoom logo lists Teacher lead Classes available on Zoom.**



## **SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT**

Justin Stone’s T’ai Chi Chih individual movement instruction and 30- and 45-minute practices are now available to stream. In response to the COVID-19 cancelation of classes around the world and requests by homebound practitioners, we may move with Justin. We may easily compare our movements with Justin’s and receive transmissions that come simply by being in his virtual presence.

Visit <https://justinstonetcc.com/jstcc-video-subscription/> and get 25% off using these promo codes:

**Teachers (lifetime access): ljrxebvd**

Students (recurring annual access): osmmigkm

*100% of your subscription allows Justinstonetcc.com to remain available online.*

## Justin's Insights

### Let Go!

The idea of attaining enlightenment by trying harder has *always* seemed to me to be ludicrous. Realizing enlightenment is not a matter of making a breakthrough, after great effort, and finding something new; it's simply a matter of recognizing what is. Yet Zen teachers continually implore their monks or students to "try harder." My teacher told me to "take this more seriously," though the objective is to banish the vashanas (habit energies), not make new ones – in Buddhist terms, to clean out the Eighth Consciousness, the *Maya Vienna* (receptacle of consciousness). Similarly, in T'ai Chi Chih, the most important thing is softness, the effort of no effort. This isn't accomplished by trying hard but by *letting go*. Trying hard implies effort, great effort, but we are not exercising in doing T'ai Chi Chih; we are swimming through very heavy air without effort.

Enlightenment is not the product of dualistic thinking; its very nature is unity. This is beyond the power of ordinary conceptual thinking. It means *letting go* of habitual patterns of thought; if necessary, stopping thinking. Patanjli, called the Father of Yoga, gave as his first aphorism the "suppression of mental modification." This can hardly be accomplished by forming new modifications.

In conclusion, to achieve enlightenment, to practice T'ai Chi Chih (these can be the same), *LET GO!*

~ Justin Stone, *Spiritual Odyssey: 1985-1997* Reprinted with permission from the copyright holder (K Grant)

## Chi Reflections

### Focus And Let Go

T'ai Chi Chih is a wonderful spiritual practice because it requires each practitioner to discover his or her own way within the guidelines of the principles. As teachers, we must help out students learn how to move properly, and encourage them to continually examine the movements for new insights. I often tell students that it is impossible to think your way through the movements. You must feel your way along, as if searching in the dark for some unknown thing. There is no way to describe what you're looking for, so any advice you receive from the outside is of little help. Just keep *focused* on alignment and flowing from the center, be willing to try different approaches, and feel your way along. Eventually, you'll discover it,

and then you'll know.

When teaching, I note which students are struggling and which ones are complacent. The latter ones are the most concerning because they rarely break through to the deeper levels in their T'ai Chi Chih practice. The struggle is a necessary part of the growth process, and a good teacher will respect and assist the student in every way possible without getting in the way. I encourage students to use unwavering attention during their practice, and to *focus* on the feeling rather than trying to remember every important point. Just let T'ai Chi Chih do T'ai Chi Chih and get out of the way. This can only be accomplished by *letting go*.

When a problem area is discovered in the T'ai Chi Chih movements, it is an invitation to deepen the practice, and this is something a serious student will not ignore. At times, the self-discovery process can be awkward, or even emotionally painful. This release is necessary to allow the Chi to flow more freely, and until that happens, it may feel like every way is blocked with no escape. If we stick to the principles we will make progress. Gradually, inevitably, a way through the barrier will be discovered, and a whole new world opens up in the practice, and in our lives.

~ Ed Altman December 2000 Vital Force Journal  
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## T'AI CHI CHIH PRACTICES LED BY ACCREDITED TEACHERS ON ZOOM

### MONDAYS

**Margery Erikson** Open to all students who know all the moves and teachers. This is not a silent practice. There will be minimal comments and reminders throughout the practice. We will end with a brief reading.

3:30PM to 4:30PM EST TCC Practice

Meeting ID 880-9185-3484 Password TCC2020 Case Sensitive

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88091853484?  
pwd=cmVGV2hBTy9TRHNEN01rU3Q3NEM3QT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88091853484?pwd=cmVGV2hBTy9TRHNEN01rU3Q3NEM3QT09)

**Lisa Stroyan** Free "deepening" class/practice on zoom, all levels welcome

9:30am MST Practice at 10am

Link info at:<https://taichichih.org/teacher/lisa-stroyan/>

**Anita Vestal** taught in English and Spanish

11:10 -11:50 am Costa Rica (mountain time)

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/706536173>

Meeting ID: 706 536 173

**Janet Starr** TCC Guided Practice

2 pm CST (3 pm EST)

Meeting ID: 667 787 120

Password: TCC4JOY

<https://zoom.us/j/667787120?pwd=Z0svdnRJWdVnUFlFbjlXWTlYTHExZz09>

## TUESDAYS

**Anita Vestal** taught in English and Spanish

9:10-9:50 am Costa Rica (mountain time)

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/495075796>

Meeting ID: 495 075 796

**Jessica Lewis** TCC Guided Practice for experienced students: FREE for Accredited TCC Teachers, others pay with credit card. Email [Jessica Lewis](#) for cost.

3 pm EST (3-4:30 pm EST)

Meeting ID: 370 255 139

Password: 519307

<https://zoom.us/j/370255139?pwd=Wjh0N3RsNzlrRms2ZjJxbWNYbEZvdz09>

## WEDNESDAYS

**Jessica Lewis** T'ai Chi for Veterans FREE for US Veterans & Accredited TCC Teachers, others pay with credit card. Email [Jessica Lewis](#) for cost.

2:45-4:15 pm EST (2:45 pm EST)

Meeting ID: 171 422 068

Password: TC4V

<https://zoom.us/j/171422068?pwd=ZkVLQ25pVFNFRTRpE9GULJMS3ZJdz09>

**Janet Starr** TCC Guided Practice

2 pm CST (3 pm EST)

Meeting ID: 667 787 120

Password: TCC4JOY

<https://zoom.us/j/667787120?pwd=Z0svdnRJWdVnUFlFbjlXWTlYTHExZz09>

## THURSDAYS

**Jessica Lewis** T'ai Chi for Veterans FREE for US Veterans & Accredited TCC Teachers, others pay with credit card. Email [Jessica Lewis](#) for cost.

12:30-2 pm EST (12:30 EST)

Meeting ID: 526 878 693

Meeting ID: 526 878 693

Password: TC4V

<https://zoom.us/j/526878693?pwd=WE5xZ1NibmMyM2krY0ZDYVJwN255QT09>

**Lisa Stroyan** Free all-levels class/guided practice on zoom, beginners welcome

1-2 pm MST (3 pm EST)

Link info at:<https://taichichih.org/teacher/lisa-stroyan/>

## FRIDAYS

**Margery Erickson** For teachers and students preparing to become a teacher. This will be a silent practice. Each move will be named and participants will be told when we are doing the last move. We may end with a brief reading.

11:00AM to 12noon EST TCC

Meeting ID 394-729-865 Password WEAVE Case Sensitive

<https://zoom.us/j/526878693?pwd=WE5xZ1NibmMyM2krY0ZDYVJwN255QT09>

**Janet Starr** TCC Guided Practice

2 pm CST (3 pm EST)

Meeting ID: 667 787 120

Password: TCC4JOY

<https://zoom.us/j/667787120?pwd=Z0svdnRJWdVnUFlFbjlXWTlYTHExZz09>

## SATURDAYS

**Lisa Stroyan** Free teacher/serious student practice (teacher leading will vary)

11 am MST/12 pm CST (1 pm EST)

Link info at:<https://taichichih.org/teacher/lisa-stroyan/>



## T'ai Chi Chih Events

Led by the Guide and Teacher Trainers

**COVID-19 MIGHT POSTPONE OR CANCEL EVENTS.**

**CHECK CONTACT PERSON FOR UPDATES**

May 7-10, 2020, Prescott, AZ TCC Changed to a Virtual Retreat via ZOOM with Pam Towne

Further info at [taichichih.org's calendar](https://taichichih.org's%20calendar)

Or

Contact: Pam Towne [pamtowne@gmail.com](mailto:pamtowne@gmail.com) or call: 760-421-7589

July 2-5, 2020, Santa Barbara, CA, TCC Teachers Retreat with Sandy McAlister  
(Rescheduled from March 19-22)

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

July 17 - 19, 2020, St. John's, NL , Canada T'ai Chi Chih /Seijaku Weekend  
Workshops with Dan Pienciak

Contact: Sheila Leonard [sheilaleonard@nf.sympatico.ca](mailto:sheilaleonard@nf.sympatico.ca) or 709-727-7863

July 18-20, 2020, Oceanside, CA, Seijaku Teacher Accreditation with Pam Towne

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

August 3 - 6 Aston, PA Seijaku Meditation Retreat with Daniel Pienciak

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

Sept. 8-11, T'ai Chi Chih Retreat in Santa Barbara with Sandy McAlister  
(Rescheduled from March 24-27)

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

September 13-17Aston, PA Intensive with TBA

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

Sept. 22-25, T'ai Chi Chih Retreat in Santa Barbara with Pam Towne

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

*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 T'ai Chi Chih individual movement instruction (30- and 45-minute practices) streamed digitally. Visit <https://justinstonetcc.com/jstcc-video-subscription/> and get 25% off using promo codes:



Teachers lifetime access: [ljrxebvd](#)

Students (recurring annual access): [osmmigkm](#)

Justin Stone's Other 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:**

\$4.00 per copy +\$1.20 (first class)

\$30 for 10 copies +\$8.60 (priority mail) or \$2.75 (media rate)

\$50 for 20 copies +\$9.45 (priority mail) or \$3.27 (media rate)

Make checks payable to:

Ann Rutherford

1534 Wagon Train Dr. SE

ABQ, NM 87123

**Web Resources:**

T'ai Chi Chih's originator Justin Stone's website: [click here](#)

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](#)



**Mission Statement**

The mission of the Tai Chi Chih movement is to promote the health and well-being of all people through the practice of Tai Chi Chih.

*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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