

Air Date: Oct. 2016  
Guest: Jessica Lewis  
Host: Kelly Waldeyer  
Topic: T'ai Chi Chih  
Length: 15 Minutes

1. Tell us a little bit about yourself and how you became involved with T'ai Chi Chih?

I actually have a lot more in common with most folks than one would think...  
etc

2. What is T'ai Chi Chih?

In layman's terms, T'ai Chi Chih is simply a completely user-friendly moving meditation

3. Is it related to what people refer to as T'ai Chi?

Yes, T'ai Chi Chih is one of the two "T'ai Chi Practices" available in the western hemisphere...I suppose you could call T'ai Chi Chih and T'ai Chi brothers because they are both derived from Qigong and they both activate, circulate and balance your Chi

4. If not, how does it differ? Is it a form of martial arts or yoga, or do they differ as well?

When most people say "T'ai Chi" they often don't realize they are abbreviating the phrase "T'ai Chi Ch'uan," which literally means "Supreme Ultimate Fist." Although it's very graceful and slow, T'ai Chi Ch'uan is also very powerful... I've heard many Accredited T'ai Chi Chih Instructors and even Justin Stone, the Originator of T'ai Chi Chih, describe an incident only a couple of decades ago in which a number of Japanese T'ai Chi Ch'uan Masters surrounded a building in Tokyo and leveled it with their Chi...no wrecking ball required whatsoever!

The literal translation of the phrase "T'ai Chi Chih," however, means "Knowledge of the Supreme Ultimate"...most everybody understands the distinction once they hear that!

TRUE yoga, by the way, is considered a preliminary to deep meditation...in this country I'm sorry to say there really aren't a lot of authentic yoga instructors anymore...as with most things in the US we seem to have turned yoga class into just another physical challenge...I'm often surprised no one's come up with a "Yoga Bootcamp Challenge" (YET!!!)

5. When and how was T'ai Chi Chih developed?

TCC was developed by an American named Justin Stone after living and studying for close to 2 decades all over China, Japan, India, and the Himalayas studying with this century's most well respected gurus and sages.

When he returned to the US he was one of the first Caucasian T'ai Chi Ch'uan Masters as well as a University Professor in Meditation and Eastern Studies. Justin was feeling frustrated that it takes most T'ai Chi Ch'uan students in excess of 5 years to realize any health benefits much less a sense of mastery over the very complicated 108 movements and few students were willing to make that kind of commitment. So he literally dreamed up what he thought was a series of WARMUP EXERCISES designed to speed the T'ai Chi Ch'uan learning curve but when he showed his students the new movements they felt such an IMMEDIATE effect he realized he'd inadvertently stumbled upon an entirely new "T'ai Chi Practice"

6. What is the primary goal of T'ai Chi Chih?

The purpose of T'ai Chi Chih is to activate, circulate, and balance our "Chi." Westerners generally think the concept of "Chi" is pretty "woo woo" but we actually have more proof that Chi exists than most of us realize...Physics teaches us that EVERYTHING when you boil it down to its most basic state is nothing more than energy. But in all ancient cultures it's not only universally accepted that Chi is the intrinsic energy residing in every living thing but balancing Chi has always been considered the great secret of a long, healthy, happy life.

7. What is "moving meditation"?

There are HUNDREDS of types of meditation, some are seated, some involve standing absolutely motionless, and some are moving...T'ai Chi Chih is not only a moving meditation I happen to think it's the EASIEST meditation (perhaps of ANY kind!) because no special equipment, clothing, or even fitness level is required and even folks who are chair bound can do it with just a few modifications. Advanced practitioners are even capable of achieving the same effects by visualizing the movements in their heads

8. Does one have to practice a specific religion in order to benefit from T'ai Chi Chih? How does the spiritual element come into play?

T'ai Chi Chih is NOT a religion although it is deeply spiritual...TCC attracts a HUGE audience of all different spiritual and ethnic backgrounds. I think one of the most dramatic examples of it's non-denominational, yet universally spiritual aspect is that longtime practitioners often experience a heightened ability to empathize...an ability ALL ancient cultures and religions consider an enlightened state or even saintly attribute

9. What about age? Is there an age range of who can or should practice T'ai Chi Chih?

OK it's true that TCC seems to attract mostly an older audience primarily because there's no fitness requirement and a number of high quality Medical Studies have linked TCC directly to increased peace and joy as well as improvements in general immunity plus Arthritis, COPD, depression, anxiety, balance, pain, and weightloss specifically. But there's no reason why

ANYONE can't practice TCC...I've personally taught folks from ages 8 through 92. I've taught folks with Parkinson's, Dementia, MS...I've been doing Personal Training with a blind client for about 8 years now and in the last year or so I've begin discussing why he'd really benefit from TCC and I think he may try it too one of these days.

10. What are some the benefits for a practitioner?

YOU NAME IT!!! In the Community we often say "the Chi will take you further than you ever imagined"...even if all you ever get is a few minutes a day break from this MONKEY MIND up here (tap my head)...I mean most of us even have thoughts about OUR THOUGHTS!!! Wouldn't that be an amazing thing???

11. Discuss the impact of T'ai Chi Chih on de-stressing, and the impact that can have on overall health.

It would be unethical for me to promise anyone SPECIFIC health improvements because everyone's experience is unique. But it's COMPLETELY ethical for me to promise SOME health improvement because again, even if all it ever amounts to is a few minutes a day out of our heads, over the course of time that can go a LONG way towards improving our health. I've had folks sign up for class because of chronic migraines or intolerable stress at work tell me that by the end of their 8-week course they suddenly have the ability to nip that headache right in the bud or just hit the reset button before stress that would normally send them right over the edge even begins to build up

12. Can this help with weight loss?

As a matter of fact, it typically does! Again it's unethical for me to promise anyone SPECIFIC health improvements because everyone's experience is unique. But by getting out of our heads during practice we're also bringing the Fire of the Heart (or Yang) down rather than letting the Water of the Kidneys (or Yin) rise...again I know this sounds pretty "woo woo" but this is actually a really important aspect of Chinese medicine and anyone who's ever used Acupuncture for pain relief or Menopausal hot flashes (I HAVE!!!) knows that all this Yin/Yang mixing really does work!!! In any case, bringing the Heart Fire down over the course of time begins to dry up "aqueous excess" (or excess fluid) in the body...and if you think about it cellulite (excess body fat) is nothing more than fluid and toxic waste trapped in fibrous tissue so it actually makes sense that folks might lose weight over time!

13. Are there any other medical conditions that can be alleviated by T'ai Chi Chih?

Again, you name it! Justin Stone used to say "you can't appease the appetite by reading the menu...just do T'ai Chi Chih and let your own experience convince you!"

14. Describe for us a typical "session" of T'ai Chi Chih, or what you lead clients through.

I teach a 9 week beginner's class...the 1<sup>st</sup> week is free so that gives folks a chance to say "Uh uh...this ain't for me!" or stay for the remaining 8 weeks. Classes typically cost about \$15 a piece. Each class I go over a couple of movements...there are only 19 movements plus one pose so you can imagine why it's not hard at all to learn the entire practice in just a few weeks!

I also do private training...folks tend to learn MUCH faster that way so sometimes only 4-6 one-hour sessions are required for a client to learn the entire practice.

I also offer an "Open Practice" style class for folks who've learned all the movements in which we simply deepen our understanding of the movements and allow ourselves to experience ever increasing benefits.

15. If our viewers have any more questions, where can they go for more information?  
I have a lot of info on my website: [www.SculptUrLife.com](http://www.SculptUrLife.com)

Or folks can visit [www.taichichih.org](http://www.taichichih.org) and [www.tcccommunity.net](http://www.tcccommunity.net) for more information on all the current Medical Studies