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Subject: Sandy's February 2019 T'ai Chi Chih Newsletter
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Mission Statement

Sandy's Message:

Unclutter Your Practice, Unclutter Your Teaching

Uncluttering our lives is often a theme of intention at the beginning of a new year.

Consider applying that intention to our T'ai Chi Chih practice. There are two avenues to explore. One is the practice itself and the other is in the teaching of the form.

As a practitioner of T'ai Chi Chih, often in refining the movements, it is generally a matter of removing “extra” rather than adding something more. Simplify — always look for the cleanest, most direct, smoothest way to perform a movement.

One of the most common places to look for “extra” is as we come into a graceful conclusion at the end of a set of repetitions. Discerning a clear path at the end of a movement pattern and flowing into the conclusion without extra movement of the arms/hands or making extra flourishes is sometimes hard to determine. Explore the endings of movements and see if there is a little extra than can be pared away.

As a teacher I continually try different ways to give the same direction. I watch the students to see if they react quickly to my instructions. Is what I have said simple, direct and accurate, or is there a hesitation as they take time to process my words? There are many ways to say the same thing. Here is an example: After stating the name of a movement we are about to begin, I might say, 'Left foot forward," or “Extend left heel forward," or “Left heel touches down." I usually say “heel” rather than “foot” because it reminds students the heel touches down first rather than the whole foot. I refrain from saying “Begin left side” as using the word “side” may take the listener’s brain a moment to realize we are going to be moving forward and not sideways.

When instructing students, do our words really mean what we want to convey. A good gauge of this would be to imagine you are teaching someone who is blind and cannot rely on visual cues; then choose words that accurately describe what you would like them to do.

Also, give students time to feel the movements. Continually talking as you teach, giving reminders and suggestions, keeps students in their heads. During practice I might begin the next movement with lots of reminders but as the repetitions continue I taper off my talking so they can feel rather than think their way through the practice. For example, on Perpetual Motion: With the first rep I might say, “Sweep left hand under elbow, left foot to the side,” on the second rep say, “Left hand sweep, left foot side,” and on the third rep, “Left hand, foot.”

We unclutter our practice by removing what is “extra.” We unclutter our teaching by saying exactly what we mean in as few words as possible. We unclutter our teaching of the form by guiding students to feel the form rather than to overthink their way through it ... Simplify and enjoy.



RETURN TO THE CIRCLE

20
19

2019 Teacher Conference News

June 27-30, 2019 — Minneapolis Marriott Southwest — Minnetonka, Minnesota

Winter greetings from Minnesota!

The 2019 T'ai Chi Chih Teachers' Conference is only 5 months away! Despite wanting to hibernate this frigidly cold time of year we are busy planning a conference that will make you feel warm and welcomed.

We invite you to Return to the Circle. That can mean many things, but one meaning is that the circle represents community. Our intention is to gather us all together as a T'ai Chi Chih Teachers community, to recognize the importance of that community to us as teachers and to our students.

I had to take some time off from teaching for most of last year for health reasons and too many other obligations. I recently returned to my class that had faithfully continued to meet without me (!) and realized how much I missed the group. They welcomed me back with open arms-and I felt embraced with love. I was reminded of how powerful this energy is that we are working with and how it creates such a connection between us all. Isn't that a very important part of what we do as teachers? I think so.

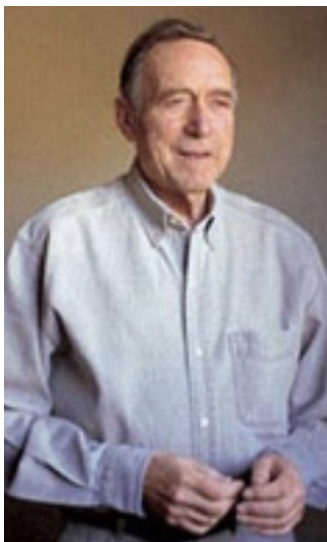
As teachers we need each other. We inform and support each other. We care about each other. We inspire each other. We remind each other why we teach this beautiful practice called T'ai Chi Chih.

My hope is that you will feel embraced by community as you Return to The Circle in Minnesota June 27-30, 2019!

Laurie Jacobi
Co-chair 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

Rest in the Essence

Spiritually-minded people follow many paths toward the goal of a one-pointed mind resting in Emptiness (the Fullness of Emptiness). Their problem is that they divide life into two parts: five hours of mundane thought and financial struggle, five minutes of spiritual practice. In other words, they see life as a struggle to make a living, to raise the children, and to let the habit energies drag them around. Then a brief oasis is reached and there is time to briefly contemplate enlightenment (whatever that is).

Such division is not the way. Properly seen, every incident in life points to the unseen Essence. Right in the midst of the turmoil one must rest in the Essence, making the effortless effort while shouting, crying, and feeling bitter and joyous in alternate periods.

~ Justin Stone
Vital Force June 1991
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To download older issues of The Vital Force for free [CLICK HERE](#)

Chi Reflections

An Unclouded Mind

*Ten thousand flowers in spring, the moon in autumn,
a cool breeze in summer, snow in winter.*

*If your mind isn't clouded by unnecessary things,
this is the best season of your life.*

~ Wu Men

Perfection

No snowflake ever falls in the wrong place.

~ Zen Proverb

Passing Thoughts

Silently, like thoughts that come and go, the snowflakes fall, each one a gem.

~ William Hamilton Gibson

Beginner's Mind

The mind of the beginner is empty, free of the habits of the expert, ready to accept, to doubt, and open to all the possibilities. ... The goal of practice is always to keep our beginner's mind.

~ Shunryu Suzuki



T'ai Chi Chih Events

Led by the Guide and Teacher Trainers

2019 Events

Mar. 21-24, 2019, Santa Barbara, CA TCC Teachers Retreat with Sandy McAlister

Contact: Pam Towne pamtowne@gmail.com

Mar. 26-29, 2019, Santa Barbara, CA TCC Retreat with Sandy McAlister

Contact: Pam Towne pamtowne@gmail.com

March 30-April 5, 2019, Colorado Springs, CO TCC Teacher Training (Accreditation) with Daniel Pieniac

Contact: Marie Dotts mcdotts@hotmail.com or 970-412-9955

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

Contact: Pam Towne pamtowne@gmail.com

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

Contact: April Leffler lirpaleff@rcn.com

June 14-16, 2019 NJ Shore TCC Retreat with Daniel Pienciak
Contact Daniel Pienciak wakeupdaniel@aol.com or 732 988 5573

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

Contact Co-Hosts:

Laurie Jacobi LaurieJacobi@msn.com

Linda Zelig lmzelig@comcast.net

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

Contact: Bonnie Sokolov [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 or 970-412-9955

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

Contact Daniel Pienciak 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 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

Oct. 4-6 NJ Shore TCC Retreat with Daniel Pienciak

Contact Daniel Pienciak wakeupdaniel@aol.com or 732 988 5573

Nov. 19-24, 2019, Santa Barbara TCC Teacher Accreditation with Pam Towne

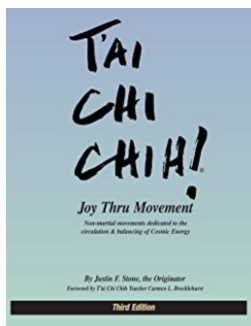
Contact: Marie Dotts mcdotts@hotmail.com or 970-412-9955

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

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

Seijaku Booklet:

\$3/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](#)



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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