

From: Stephen Thompson stephen2816@mac.com
Subject: Sandy's March 2017 T'ai Chi Chih Newsletter
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Mission Statement

Sandy's Message:

Ahhh, That Sinking Feeling!

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Last week one of my students asked if he could share with the other students in class something that he had learned from another teacher. He wanted to give them the opportunity to experience other words and another way of explaining weight shift and balance that had made a difference to him in his understanding. He shared centering on the tan t'ien – it's relationship to the weight in his feet and feeling the tan t'ien as his balance point.

It was such a good reminder to me, as a teacher, about the importance of varying the words and the phrases I use in teaching – in how many ways can I say the same thing.

Also, on the opposite end of the spectrum it is important to know when to minimize words by using words that are filled with multiple meanings. For example, the phrase “let go” used during a practice could mean, let go of thoughts, tension, muscles, effort, judging, shoulds, or anticipation.

In my classes, we have discussed the concept of “letting go” and the many ways it can be applied during our practice (and not only during TCC practice). When I murmur “let go” during practice it triggers for each person whatever they need to let go of at that point in time.

So besides having several ways to explain one idea, I find it valuable to explore one word or phrase to get across multiple concepts.

Consider the word, sinking. At the beginning of each movement set we are:

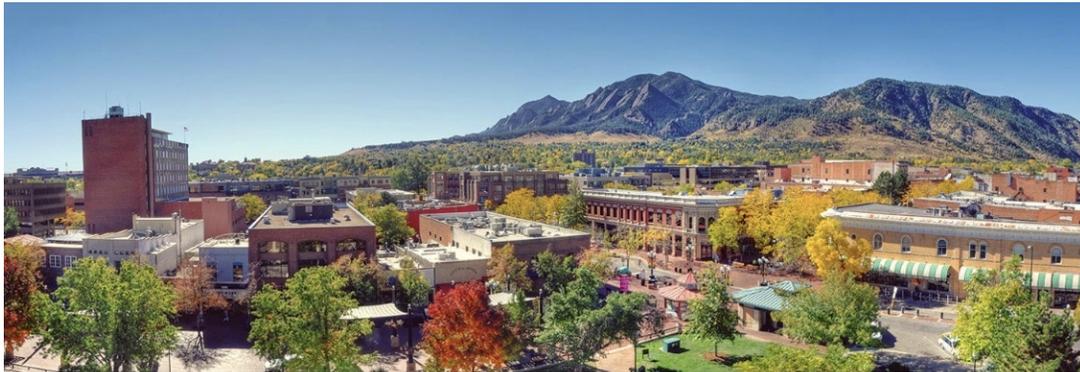
- * physically sinking, to varying degrees, lower from our rest or still position*
- * sinking the weight into the yang leg and foot freeing the other to move forward or to the side; or, aware of sinking the weight evenly into both feet in an up and down weight shift movement*
- * sinking the breath deep into the lungs*
- * sinking the shoulders downward*
- * sinking the attention downward*

As we begin a new set of repetitions, uttering one word, “sinking”, the whole body responds. And as a side benefit there may be some letting go as the sinking happens. Letting go and sinking can go hand-in-hand.

Sinking is such a wonderful feel word. One word, many responses. Ahhh, enjoy that sinking feeling.

*Sandy McAlister
Hayward CA*

[Click here to read past issues of the Guide's newsletters](#)



Update: 2017 Teacher Conference

Report from the Conference Committee:

We hope you are making your plans to join us for the 2017 Teacher Conference in lovely Boulder, Colorado, June 15-18.

Our conference theme this year is **Feel the Chi ~ Share the Chi**. We will deepen our personal practice and explore ways to share the *Chi* with others through teaching T'ai Chi Chih, spreading the word about the benefits of our practice, and in volunteering service to our community.

Our program will feature dynamic speakers, panel presentations, large and small group discussions, and lots of opportunities for silent and guided practice. We'll refine our movements with input from our Guide, Teacher Trainers and experienced teachers, who will offer tried and true practice and teaching tips.

On the first full day we will explore our own practice as we *Feel the Chi*. Are we still actively engaged and exploring and deepening our own practice? Are we open to the *Chi*? Have we fallen into unconscious habits that restrict the flow of the *Chi*? Are we following the instructions Justin gave us? Are we moving the way we encourage our students to move? Are we grounded? All of our activities on the first day will help you self-assess and recommit to grow your own practice.

On the second full day we will focus on various ways to *Share the Chi*, whether through teaching, doing outreach at community events and via social media, writing articles for publication about T'ai Chi Chih, or volunteering our time and talents to support the T'ai Chi Chih community. We will have opportunities to

talents to support the T'ai Chi Chih community. We will have opportunities to learn and exchange teaching techniques and innovative ways to structure our classes. We will also consider how we present the practice to others, whether as an opportunity to improve health and well-being or as a catalyst for spiritual growth, or both.

You'll reconnect with old friends and also make new connections — there'll be lots of opportunities to mentor and to be mentored. In the evenings, we'll relax together and share talents and stories. There will be ample time for casual discussions over meals and after-hours socializing in the lovely Millennium Harvest House Hotel. Our annual rededication ceremony will rekindle your connection to your practice and to our community. You'll meet the teachers who volunteer their time to run our community support services. And, of course, as always, there will be the unique joy of large group practices with people who love T'ai Chi Chih and devote their energies to sharing it with others.

The conference committee has reserved a block of rooms at a reduced conference rate. Once those rooms are gone, we will attempt to gain access to more rooms at this bargain rate, but it is not guaranteed that we will be able to do so. So, if you want to be assured of the best room rate, please reserve your room ASAP. If you want help finding a roommate, you can reserve a double and then contact Caroline Guillott, who has volunteered to help match people up. If you get matched up with someone who has already reserved a double room, it is not a problem; just cancel the second reservation right away so that room will be available to others T'ai Chi Chih teachers. There won't be a penalty since we are within the cancellation period.

We would like to announce a second "travel partner meal plan" in addition to the one on the registration forms. Your travel partners now have an option to purchase a meal plan that includes only breakfast and dinner for \$140. This will allow them to hike or sightsee during the day. The original plan, which includes all meals for \$190, is still available.

Complete information and registration forms and a list of those currently registered for the conference are available at the official [T'ai Chi Chih website](#). Register and reserve your room asap to get you name on the list and let others know you are coming. If you don't see a friend on that list, please call them and share that you are attending. A prize will be awarded to the person who influences the most people to attend.

See you in Boulder!

Lisa O. Marie Love and Lisa M.

Lisa U, Marie, Leya, and Lisa V.

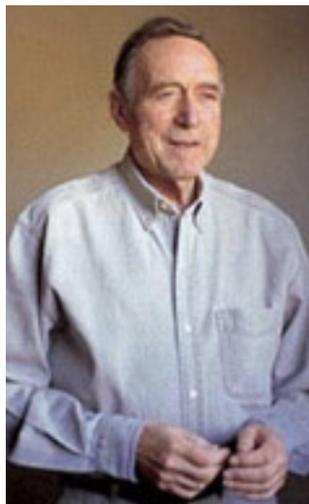
Your 2017 Teacher Conference Committee

Conference Coordinator: Marie Dotts mcdotts@hotmail.com

Venue and Hospitality: Lisa VV tccbuckinghorse@yahoo.com

Registration and Scholarship: Leya Cragin l.cragin@comcast.net

Program and Outreach: Lisa Otero lisa.otero@post.harvard.edu



Justin's Insights

Perspective

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* (receptical 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*

[Good Karma Publishing, Inc.](#)

Chi Reflections

Let-Go

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*"Meditation is a surrender, it is not a demand.
It is not forcing existence your way,
It is relaxing into the way
Existence wants you to be.
It is a Let-Go."*

~ Osho

Simple Reminder

*"Sometimes Letting Go
Is an act of far greater power
Than defending or holding on."*

~ Eckhart Tolle

Strength

*"Some of us think holding on makes us strong,
But sometimes it is letting go."*

~ Hermann Hesse

The Best Cure

*_"The best cure for the body
Is a quiet mind."*

~ Napoleon Bonaparte

Tools of Truth"_

*"Relaxing, embracing, surrendering, trusting –
These are the only tools of a lover of truth.
So, turn from warrior into a lover."*

~ Brandon Bays

Relief

*"Sometimes you don't realize the weight of something you've been carrying until
you feel the weight of its release."*

~ Unknown

Live in the Moment

*"When you try to control Everything, you enjoy Nothing. Sometimes you just
need to Relax, Breathe, Let go and live in the Moment."*

~ www.wisdomquotesandstories.com



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

2017 Events

Mar 2-5 Littleton, CO TCC Retreat with Pam Towne
Contact: Marie Dotts mcdotts@hotmail.com

Mar 23-26 Santa Barbara Teachers Retreat with Sandy McAlister
Contact: Pam Towne pamtowne@gmail.com

Mar. 28-31 Santa Barbara TCC Retreat with Sandy McAlister
Contact: Pam Towne pamtowne@gmail.com

April 1-7, 2017 Aston, PA Teacher Training with Sandy McAlister
Contact: April Leffler lirpaleff@rcn.com

April 20-23 Rochester, MN TCC Retreat with Pam Towne
Contact: Judy Trousdell jtrous1a@charter.net

May 5-7, 2017 TCC Teachers NJ Shore Retreat with Daniel Pienciak
Contact: Daniel Pienciak wakeupdaniel@aol.com

May 11-14 Prescott, AZ TCC Retreat with Pam Towne
Contact: Pam Towne pamtowne@gmail.com

May 17-21 Buffalo, MN TCC Intensive with Sandy McAlister
Contact: Ev Hanson-Florin (event registrar) ev.hanson.florin@gmail.com or
Nancy Werner-Azarski (host) (nancyjanwa@aol.com)
(<mailto:nancyjanwa@aol.com>)

June 15-18 2017 Teacher Conference Boulder, Colorado — [Click here for: Registration forms, Information, Conference Shirts, Transportation, Scholarships, Etc.:](#)

Conference Coordinator: Marie Dotts mcdotts@hotmail.com

Venue and Hospitality: Lisa VV tccbuckinghorse@yahoo.com

Registration and Scholarship: Leya Cragin l.cragin@comcast.net

Program and Outreach: Lisa Otero lisa.otero@post.harvard.edu

June 18-20 Boulder CO, Seijaku Teacher Accreditation with Pam Towne
Contact: Daniel Pienciak wakeupdaniel@aol.com

June 18-20 Boulder CO, Seijaku Basics Course: Intro or Review with Daniel Pienciak - Contact: Daniel Pienciak wakeupdaniel@aol.com

Aug 21-25 Aston, PA Seijaku Meditation Retreat with Daniel Pienciak
Contact: Daniel Pienciak wakeupdaniel@aol.com

Sept 14-18 Aston, PA TCC Intensive with Daniel Pienciak
Contact: April Leffler lirpaleff@rcn.com

Sept 24-27 Aston, PA Teacher Symposium with Sandy McAlister
Contact: April Leffler lirpaleff@rcn.com

Sept 26-29 Santa Barbara TCC Retreat with Pam Towne
Contact: Pam Towne pamtowne@gmail.com

Oct 13-15 Rochester, MN Seijaku Accreditation with Pam Towne
Contact: Bonnie Sokolov bonnietaichi@q.com

Oct 15-21 Rochester, MN Teacher Training (Accreditation) with Pam Towne
Contact: Bonnie Sokolov bonnietaichi@q.com

Nov 16 - 19, 2017 Albuquerque, NM TCC Intensive w/Daniel Pienciak
Contact: Marc Kwasman marcabq@gmail.com

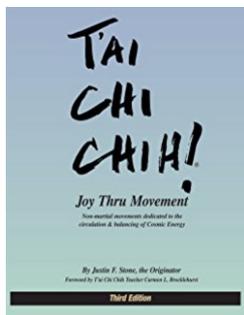
A TCC Retreat offers a wonderful way to:

- *Deepen our experience and understanding of TCC*
- *Refine our movements, and especially HOW TO MOVE for a greater flow of Chi*
- *Give oneself a time of deep relaxation and personal renewal of body, mind and spirit*
- *Connect with others in the TCC Community.*

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 DVDs/Videos, Books, CDs/Audios: [click here](#)

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

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

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

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](#)

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:

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: [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: [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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