



CELESTIAL TAI CHI COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

Term 2

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April 2015

Tel: (03)9840 2855



Brighton Centre

Park Lessons

Saturday 2nd May

Time: 10:00am to noon

Malvern

Central Park Malvern

Cnr Burke & Wattletree Rds
(Melway 59 G10)

Sunday 10th May

Time: 10:00am to noon

Fairfield

Fairfield Park

Cnr Heidelberg Rd & Fairfield Park
Dr (Melway 30 J12)

Don't forget that the park lessons also offer a free introductory lesson for anyone who is interested so tell a friend, bring your family

Other Dates

- April 25th World Tai Chi and Qigong Day
- May 17th Tai Chi Workshop with Snr Master Chin Min
- Remember to keep November 21st free for our 25th Anniversary Tai Chi Banquet

Park Lessons:

A fantastic way to further your Tai Chi Chuan skills is to regularly attend the free park lessons conducted by the College towards the end of every term.

Two invaluable hours with students from various centres in a wonderful environment.

These lessons dovetail into your class lessons and enable you, as a student, to solidify your knowledge and skills. The park lessons are also wonderfully informal, enabling you to engage with the instructors.

Park lessons – a **'do not miss' event!**

Wally Wilkinson – Senior Instructor Brighton



Grand Master Eng Chor with students

Tai Chi Training improves renal and cardiac function in kidney and heart disease patients

From the Journal of Chinese Medicine Number 107 February 2015

Tai Chi training can improve renal and cardiac functions in patients with chronic kidney disease (CKD) and cardiovascular disease (CVD).

Chinese researchers randomly divided 21 patients with CKD and CVD into exercise and control groups.

The exercise group performed Tai Chi for 30 minutes, three to five times a week for 12 weeks, while the control group did not.

Patients' renal and cardiac functions and blood lipid parameters were measured at baseline and after 12 weeks.

After 12 weeks of Tai Chi, increases were observed in the estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR, a marker of kidney function), left ventricular ejection fraction (LVEF, a marker of heart function) and in serum levels of high density lipoprotein (HDL, 'good' cholesterol) level.

Decreases were seen in heart rate (HR), systolic blood pressure (SBP), diastolic blood pressure (DBP) and in serum levels of creatinine (Scr), total cholesterol (CH), triglycerides (TG) and low density lipoprotein (LDL, 'bad' cholesterol).

The change in eGFR correlated negatively with the changes in CH, TG and LDL, and positively with the change in HDL.

In addition, the change in SBP correlated positively with the changes in CH, TG and LDL, and negatively with the change in HDL.

The authors conclude that Tai Chi training may improve renal and cardiac functions in CKD and CVK patients via improved regulation of lipid metabolism.

(The effects of Tai Chi on the renal and cardiac functions of patients with chronic kidney ad cardiovascular diseases. J Phys Ther Sci. 2014 Nov;26(11):1733-6).

Simply translated - "Isn't Tai Chi Chuan great!!!!!!!"

What is Tai Chi?

It is an instruction manual to the understanding of the “laws of nature” manifested in moves culminating in the form known as the Yang style. By incorporating your life into the universe of Tai Chi you will then appreciate the appropriate use of both body and mind, therefore being in harmony with the natural order of things.

What does Tai Chi Require from You?

Simply to do it! The dangerous temptation when first developing a relationship with Tai Chi is to get into the habit of practicing (playing) Tai Chi only when you attend the lesson.

After a few lessons you wonder why the relationship never progresses i.e. struggle to remember the moves from the previous lessons! If you continue this habit inevitably it will lead to thoughts convincing you that you’re not capable of doing it and you become self-conscious in front of the instructor and the other students. You find it all too difficult and you convince yourself that “this is just not for me”.

To me, that seems like a waste of time and energy. You must hold on to the reason you elected to engage in Tai Chi in the first place, and practise a little between lessons.

The solution to maintaining engagement with Tai Chi is: when attending lessons, yield. Just surrender to Tai Chi. Empty your mind, allow Tai Chi to gradually rebuild pathways of self-awareness. You will feel good in yourself and be motivated by the anticipation of more elements to discover in this ever-engrossing voyage of discovery and self-awareness.

The more you do Tai Chi every week the more this will assist the brain in understanding this information when going to sleep each night and therefore more will be remembered. The more you do will also lead to better muscle memory.

The strength of a solid and harmonious relationship is to give and take. Tai Chi gives, but if you only take but do not use it, you will lose it!

By Chris Cain – Assistant Instructor Brighton and South Yarra

Tai Chi and strength training improve balance and aerobic capacity in osteoarthritis patients

From the Journal of Chinese Medicine Number 107 February 2015

A 12-week balance training program combining Tai Chi and strength training (TCST) can effectively improve balance and aerobic capacity in patients with end-stage osteoarthritis who are awaiting hip surgery.

A total of 81 patients aged from 60 to 69 years old were randomly divided into two groups; a training group (TG) and a control group (CG). Participants in TG performed TCST at home under their family's supervision for 12 weeks.

After 12 weeks of training, the mean distance travelled in a six-minute walk was found to have increased from 409 metres to 478 metres in the TG, and the mean 'Timed Up and Go' test score had also significantly improved from 18.53 to 14.61.

Self-reported functional status scores were also reported to have improved from 40.79 to 36.28, although there were no significant changes in pain or hip motion scores, meaning that hip surgery was still necessary.

(A randomized controlled trial: Preoperative home-based Tai Chi and Strength Training (TCST) to improve balance and aerobic capacity in patients with total hip arthroplasty (THA). Arch Gerontol Geriatr. 2014 Dec 13. Pii:S0167-4943(14)00221-0).

Thanks to Dr Carl Muller (Brighton Senior Student) for the two Journal articles included in this newsletter.

There was an old man from Brighton
Who didn't set out to frighten
When he jumped up and down
And looked like a clown
Teaching the Tai Chi Class to Enlighten.

By 'Anon' of the Brighton Class.

STOP BEING A SQUARE

Who me? Yes it is easy to slip into square habits. You have no doubt been told on numerous occasions that one major principle of the Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan is circular movements. This exhibits on many levels, most of which are clearly apparent.

Why is this principle so important?

It harks back to Yang Cheng Fu's second point from his 10 essential points for Tai Chi Chuan.

“Lower the Chest, Raise the Back”

This essential point is often ignored and so the clavicle remains engaged (White Crane Spreads its Wings) or is misunderstood and the student stoops with unnaturally rounded shoulders and a compressed chest.

The best way to approach this point is to practice holding the ball in front of the chest. In Tai Chi Chuan the clavicle must be disengaged and the scapula must be engaged.

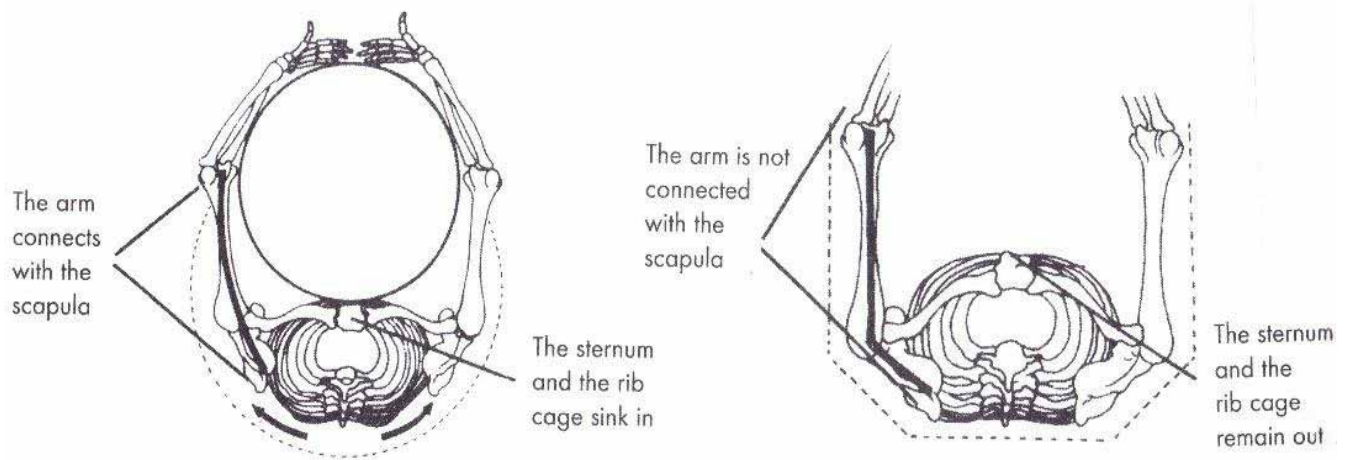
This ensures the correct function of the thymus gland. It also correctly positions the sternum within the rib cage.

This correct posturing allows energy to flow unimpeded through several meridian channels, aiding well-being.

Sometimes you find it difficult to establish the correct upper body posture. Look towards your groin area and check that your sacrum has articulated from the hip bones enough for the coccyx to sit correctly.

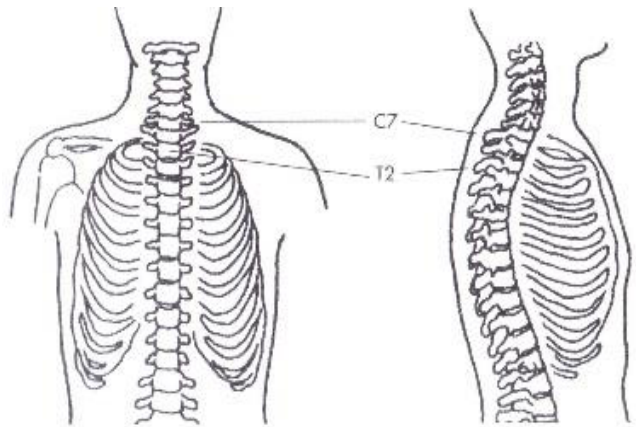
Check that your weight is evenly distributed on both legs and that your thighs are holding the weight of the upper body. The groin area (The sacrum, groin, hip joints and flexors – known collectively as ‘the kua’), should sink. Once the lower body is seated properly then holding the ball correctly feels natural.

Study the two diagrams below:



You can see in the above left diagram a continuum from the arm through the shoulder and continuing through the scapula. Note also that the chest is naturally sunk. Energy flows up to the T2/C7 point and then is transmitted through the scapula to the arms.

The top right diagram shows a 'squaring off'. The sternum is no longer engaged. The force that is generated in your form cannot exit through the arms. The sternum and the rib cage are protruding outwards. Energy will be blocked and the form becomes hollow.



A classic move where this issue is likely to present itself is "Cloud Hands". Practise this movement outside of your regular lessons to ensure that you do not square off, but remain connected. Use the lower body and the hip.

Wally Wilkinson – Senior Instructor Brighton

Pictures from: The Inner Structure of Tai Chi – Mastering the Classic Forms of Tai Chi Chi Kung by Mantak Chia and Juan Li.

College Dates 2015

April 25	World Tai Chi and Qigong Day
May 2	Park Lesson Malvern (10am to noon)
May10	Park Lesson Fairfield (10am to noon)

May 11 to June 28: **Term 3**

May 17	Tai Chi Workshop with Snr Master Chin Min
June 14	Philosophy Lesson
June 20	Park Lesson Malvern (10am to noon)
June 28	Park Lesson Fairfield (10am to noon)
June 29 to July 5	College Break

July 6 to August 23: **Term 4**

August 15	Park Lesson Malvern (10am to noon)
August 23	Park Lesson Fairfield (10am to noon)

August 24 to October 18: **Term 5**

August 30	WTPA Wushu & Taijiquan Competition
September 13	Tai Chi Workshop
Sept 28 to Oct 4	College break
October 10	Park Lesson Malvern (10am to noon)
October 18	Park Lesson Fairfield (10am to noon)

October 19 to December 6: **Term 6**

November 21	College 25th Anniversary Dinner
November 28	Park Lesson Malvern (10am to noon)
December 6	Park Lesson Fairfield (10am to noon)
December 7	IMAG Games - India