



CELESTIAL TAI CHI COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

Term 3

P.O. Box 1135, Box Hill, 3128

www.celestialtaichi.com.au

www.facebook.com/CelestialTaiChi

May 2017

Tel: (03)9840 2855

Fax: (03)9077 7896



Qigong Seminar 1st Series on Ba Duan Jin

Park Lessons

Saturday 17th June

Time: 10:00am to noon

Malvern

Central Park Malvern

Cnr Burke & Wattle tree Rds

Sunday 25th June

Time: 10:00am to noon

Fairfield

Fairfield Park

Cnr Heidelberg Rd & Fairfield Park Dr

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

- June 24th - Philosophy Lesson (3 pm – 5 pm)
- July 29 - 2nd Series Qigong Seminar (2 pm – 6 pm)

Please refer to the calendar on the back page for other dates

SPECIAL QIGONG SEMINAR SERIES – PART 1: BA DUAN JIN ***Grand Master Eng Chor and Master Tong Low***

A long-awaited series of seminars on "the art of breathing or energy flow", in Grand Master's words, commenced on a glorious autumn Sunday afternoon with 25 participants, keen to fathom and learn the wisdom of Qigong. Many had previously learned different newer forms of Qigong, such as *Shibashi*, *Lotus*, *Lohan* and *Dayan* in classes across our College, but the purpose of this series was to introduce the four major original forms that are recognised by The Chinese Health Qigong Association: *Ba Duan Jin*, *Yi Jin Jing*, *Wu Qin Xi* and *Lui Zi Jue*.

This first seminar was very well structured with the Masters collaborating skilfully, moving through theoretical and practical principles and examples mindfully and with ease. At the beginning, GM Eng Chor set the context for the series, pointing out how each form of Qigong deserves in-depth understanding and practice and for that reason each seminar would be covering one form in detail. That decision was welcomed by the participants as we all wanted to learn in a relaxed manner, at our own pace, under the watchful eyes of the masters and their advice.

The Grand Master painted a picture of Chinese history of Qigong with a few masterful strokes in his engaging manner, throwing questions at us to keep us at our toes, no doubt. He spoke of Hua Tuo, the first physician in ancient China to use Qigong exercise for healing purposes. The first versions of Qigong originated over 2000 years ago during the reign of the Han Dynasty. Eng Chor explained the meaning of names of each form, in Mandarin pronunciation – always a challenge and delight to learn a little bit of the Chinese language and culture from the expert. He answered our questions and prompted us to think inquisitively.

Following such an informative introduction, the Master Tong Low, a highly qualified graduate from Chinese Wushu Association (6th Dan in Wushu and Tai Chi), and Chinese Qigong Association (3rd Dan in Qigong), switched to group practice. At first, he explained and demonstrated Qigong etiquette and then moved to *Ba Duan Jin*, the first form in the seminar series program. It is interesting to note that the translation in English, "Eight section brocade" or "Eight pieces of brocade", refers to the cloth, silk or brocade, on which the movements were discovered, rather than the content and meaning of the actual exercise.

Our learning of all eight Qigong movements was relaxing yet highly focused, interactive and fun. Master Tong Low asked Instructor Bruce Ellis to assist with demonstrating the movements, which was helpful as we had a simultaneous front and back view of each exercise. Repetitions, suggestions, corrections and clarifying questions allowed us to learn the movements step by step, move deeper to correct breathing technique for each movement and even deeper to how some internal organs move during exercise. The learners appreciated the Masters' insightful knowledge and skill in Qigong.



At the end of the day, I believe we accomplished a huge task and promised to keep practising, as the Masters meandered through the complexity of a truly profound *Ba Duan Jin* form of Qigong. I can hardly wait for the next seminar – especially one where we are going to use secret sounds to stimulate energy! Also, for Zenaida's welcoming smile and scrumptious snacks. A big thank you to the Masters and all their assistants!

Snezana Dabic
Senior Instructor Box Hill Centre

Live Long Live Well
– Teachings from the Chinese Nourishment of Life Tradition –
by Peter Deadman.

If someone ever asks you what are the proven benefits of regular Tai Chi Chuan or Qigong practice maybe you could try the following sentence ;)

“Either Tai Chi or Qigong have been shown to improve renal and cardiac function in kidney and heart disease patients, improve lung function, reduce blood pressure, reduce inflammatory markers in the blood, benefit metabolic syndrome, help diabetic neuropathy, improve the symptoms of multiple sclerosis, improve chronic fatigue, reduce fatigue in cancer sufferers, reduce cancer therapy side-effects, increase testosterone, improve sleep, reduce prenatal depression, reduce stress, improve attention in young adults and cognitive function in elders, restructure the brain, delay cognitive decline help overcome addiction to substance abuse, improve exercise capacity, help Parkinson’s disease patients to improve balance and reduce falling, benefit knee arthritis, improve rheumatoid arthritis, promote arterial flexibility and muscle strength, reduce lower back pain and disability, improve ankylosing spondylitis, and much more.”

Or, if that is too much of a mouthful, maybe you could just say that it makes you feel good, and you practice it regardless of the benefits. (I got stuck on the words “and much more”)

For those who are curious and interested, Peter’s book is a good read. Thanks to Dr Carl Muller for pointing me in this direction ;)

A more detailed review of tai chi research and some of the science behind its benefits can be found in The Harvard Medical School Guide to Tai Chi

Wally Wilkinson

Tai Chi and You (Why do we do what we do?)

By Chris Cain – Assistant Instructor Brighton and South Yarra

“What improvements to your health have you noticed since you started doing Tai Chi?” An obvious question that the interested and curious person asks of someone that has been involved in Tai Chi for some time. In this newsletter there is an article listing many demonstrable benefits that can be achieved in the course of practicing Tai Chi.

Why do these improvements manifest after doing Tai Chi for a period of time? A clue may not only be in what we learn, but the way we appropriate that knowledge. In other words how we can relate it to our own specific needs and organic requirements.

It required us to consider the relationship between mind and body and then as a consequence the way we express this integration in the Tai Chi Form. Let's consider the way in which we were introduced and guided through the 108 movements of what is called Tai Chi Yang Style. The very first movement of stepping out to the left entices us to contemplate, to meditate on the way we cultivate the harmonious unity of the mind and the body. This we take for granted in our daily lives, but may not necessarily make for a harmonious relationship. Tai Chi requires us to wonder, and allow ourselves to be totally enthralled by the potential of the mechanisms of our being. As we are gradually introduced to new and various movements, our mind transfers from one arrested experience to the next in a fluid and controlled manner. Guided through level one and onwards, by our instructor, it becomes apparent that the credo of the designed teaching program is we must “crawl before we walk” i.e. turning in level one, then walking in level two. With this you begin to develop an awareness of weight distribution in conjunction with fundamental lower and upper body co-ordination. In time we allow ourselves to be immersed in the rhythm of our movements. As we progress from level to level the teaching structure allows for the student to achieve a sense of fulfilment, by incorporating the familiar in conjunction with the new. In time the benefits materialise with the understanding of the rhythmic relationship between movement and transition to the next movement. It is a “Moving Meditation”.

Tai Chi is not a mysterious Chinese modality; it is a universal understanding and cultivation of the mind/body relationship – “The rhythm of life”.



Ba Duan Jin.

The following excerpts are from a paper written in 2012 on the benefits of Qigong. It specifically targeted exercise Qigong, excluding internal qigong, yoga and meditation.

The paper itself is somewhat academic and so I have included the highlights.

If you want to read the full article then you can find it at:
<https://www.hindawi.com/journals/ecam/2013/152738/> –

Evidence-Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine
Volume 2013 (2013), Article ID 152738, 16 pages.

Review Article

The Effects of Qigong on Anxiety, Depression, and Psychological Well-Being: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis

. . .according to the selection criteria, interventions were restricted to Qigong. The primary outcomes evaluated were psychological, with particular emphasis on mood, anxiety, depression, self-efficacy, and quality of life.

Among the Qigong intervention studies, the most popular form was the “**Eight Section Brocade Exercise.**” (Ba Duan Jin)

The most frequently reported psychological benefits were decreased depressive symptoms and improved mood. Depression was shown to improve significantly in studies comparing Qigong to an inactive control, newspaper reading, usual care, psychosocial support, or stretching/education controls. General measures of mood improved significantly for those practicing Qigong compared to a wait-list control group. In two studies, depressive symptoms improved.

Participants in the intervention groups also demonstrated reduced anxiety.

Three studies reported statistically significant improvements in somatic symptoms among the intervention group . . . In these studies, participants also reported lower perceived stress and intensity of pain compared with the control group.

Some studies employed measures of physical health and biomarkers, including blood pressure, cholesterol levels, fasting blood sugar, and triglycerides. In one study examining biomarkers related to stress response, norepinephrine, epinephrine, and blood cortisol levels were significantly decreased in response to Qigong compared to a wait-list control group.

Improvement of overall quality of life (QOL) was the second most frequently mentioned benefit reported in six studies. In studies with heterogeneous participants (including healthy adults, patients with cancer, post-stroke, arthritis, etc.), at least one of the components of QOL was reported to be significantly improved by Qigong compared to newspaper reading or traditional remedial rehabilitation. In one study, Qigong showed improvements in QOL compared to an exercise intervention, but the results did not reach statistical significance. With a few exceptions, the majority of studies indicate that Qigong holds great potential for improving QOL in both healthy and chronically ill patients.

The perceived ability to handle stress or novel experiences and exercise self-efficacy were found to be enhanced in the Qigong intervention groups relative to control groups.”

Refer to the Seminar notes in this newsletter and remember to look out for when exercise Chi Kung (Qigong) is being taught at either one of our Centres or at our specialised workshops.

Wally Wilkinson

College Dates 2017

May 8 to June 25: Term 3

June 17	Park Lesson Malvern (10am to noon)
June 24	Philosophy Lesson
June 25	Park Lesson Fairfield (10am to noon)
June 26 to July 2	College Break

July 3 to August 20: Term 4

July 29	2 nd Series Qigong Seminar
August 12	Park Lesson Malvern (10am to noon)
August 20	Park Lesson Fairfield (10am to noon)

August 21 to October 15: Term 5

August 27	WTQA Wushu & Taijiquan Competition
September 10	Tai Chi Workshop with Snr Master Chin Min
Sept 25 to 30	College break
October 7	Park Lesson Malvern (10am to noon)
October 15	Park Lesson Fairfield (10am to noon)

October 16 to December 3: Term 6

November 25	Park Lesson Malvern (10am to noon)
December 3	Park Lesson Fairfield (10am to noon)
Nov 21 – Dec 4	Belarus & Russia Tour incorporating the International Martial Arts Games in Minsk, Belarus.