



Painting the Rainbow Newsletter

<http://www.paintingtherainbow.co.uk>

Community Based Tai Chi & Chi-Kung for everyone

Improvement cannot always be measured, it is something you feel

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A STEP TOO FAR

Some months ago whilst at home, I made the mistake of trying to go down the stairs too quickly.

The result of this was I lost my footing when my heels slipped of the edge of the treads, and my whole body weight went downwards.

Luckily I was holding on with my right hand to the newel timber upright at the top of the stairs, and as I dropped downwards I gripped tightly to this and held on. The effect of this was a huge painful stretching of my right arm and shoulder.

A visit to the Doctors then followed as my shoulder had begun to intermittently "lock" up.

Then a subsequent ultrasound scan reported a 23mm tear in the muscle, tendonitis, teno-synovitis, bursitis, oedema, and changes in the ACJ joint (Acromioclavicular joint) which is at the top of the shoulder.

A later x-ray showed a small amount of arthritis. This had been requested when an appointment was made to see a physiotherapist.

At my first visit to her I explained the incident, and an examination was made of my arm and shoulder to determine the range, and strength within the movement of it.

Whilst chatting the physio asked me how I spent my time now I was retired. I explained I was a member of Kaiming Tai Chi Association, and attended 3 classes a week including a Painting the Rainbow daytime class because I have hip joint movement limitations and can spend more time focusing on this during this class.

Once a month I also train with the instructors and more advanced students when Mark Peters Principal Instructor holds a more in depth morning training session.

She was very interested in the class exercise details and said she was going to take a look at the website. When I first injured my shoulder I was advised to rest it for a few weeks and then after this I decided to resume my Tai Chi classes as with all the range of movements in warm up, chi kung, and form we are allowed to work within our own limitations, and do as much or as little as we are comfortable with, depending on our state of health at the time, and in my case the level of healing that was taking place.

From the time of my injury and during the months that followed while the healing process was taking place I had declined pain killers and steroid injections into my shoulder joint.

I wanted to feel the process of the bodies gradual healing aided by gentle

exercise appropriate to the stage of recovery. Injections etc would have concealed this.

This was a personal choice and some injuries may need people to follow medical advice depending on the severity of the condition.

On my last visit to the physio to assess my recovery she was very impressed how my range of movement and strength had improved so since my last visit, and felt the Tai Chi exercises had played a significant part in this. I now have full range of movement back in shoulder and arm and am very thankful to my Kai Ming Instructor Neil Rankin for all his attention and help.

By Terry Lalley - tai chi student for life

WE NEED YOU!



Yes, we need you. The demand for Tai Chi instructors is on the increase and especially to give access to people that wouldn't normally feel able, from hospitals, special needs groups etc. etc. The regular route to train as a full tai chi instructor with us is get the support of your instructor and attend the monthly advanced Sunday classes, followed by a grading. This is still the route for anyone wanting to learn and advance in the whole art of tai chi, but nearly 10 years ago jenny and I formed Painting the Rainbow (PtR). Its aim is to make tai chi and chi-kung more accessible to people

who can benefit from the health and well-being benefits of tai chi (physical and social). Mark trains staff in hospitals and they then refer patients to PtR groups in the community.

See www.paintingtherainbow.co.uk

Over the last few years PtR has expanded to include ‘**Tai Chi in the Park**’ and is currently working towards ‘**exercise on prescription**’. We have actually started our first tai chi class in a doctors surgery. This means the demand for PtR instructors is outstripping supply and we need you... Speak to your instructor to get more details, or call Jenny & mark on 0121 251 6172 to discuss.

Please start to attend a few PtR classes to get a feel for it and attend the PtR training sessions (ask for details). In addition to this Marks ‘**tai chi rehab**’ program can be seen at

www.midlandstaichirehab.com

and for 2017 we may have a few sponsored places on the course that are available following an interview.

Obviously you can book on and opt to pay monthly yourself as the course is spread over the year in four blocks of two days. You will learn both seated and standing tai chi and chi-kung, plus aspects of CBT, mindfulness, relaxation, Alexander technique and more to enable you to work with a mind-body approach to well-being.

The aim with PtR is to make classes social and inclusive to enable as wide a selection of people as possible to take part. The research shows the benefits of tai chi for patient rehabilitation and the only limiters in the past have been “it’s difficult” or “it’s boring and slow” which is addressed in the delivery style of PtR classes. People’s motivation to attend ‘**social tai chi**’ classes is generally different than the motivation to attend a Kai Ming class where students aim to learn all aspects of tai chi as a martial art. They are not mutually exclusive but they do offer that different perspective which gives a clearer focus.

Maybe you are retired or just have some free time and would like to get more involved. We look forward to hearing

from you and hopefully setting you up in your first PtR class. Many of the classes are sponsored and you can be paid for the classes you teach; getting paid for something you really enjoy a nice bonus we feel. Above all you must be motive by the enjoyment of working with the different groups; it’s not about being perfect at tai chi, a lot of it is about having a caring personality and sense of humour. You do need to understand the principles of tai chi and we’re always happy to discuss this with you. We look forward to hearing from you.

Regards,
Jenny & Mark Peters
0121 251 6172



PRESS PAUSE.. LEARNING TO RELAX

Relaxation can be thought of in many ways to many people

Rest, refreshment, recreation, chilling out, switching off, talking five, or maybe hanging loose.

In other words taking a break from an activity that requires concentration or hard physical effort, and doing something enjoyable or nothing at all.

Giving yourself time and space to recover physically and mentally from situations that cause stress and anxiety. Clearing the mind of unhelpful thoughts, giving it time to “re-group” and reassess what’s going on.

So how about at these times pressing the pause button in your head?

When people feel pressure they may also feel mentally and physically threatened. Our instincts are to resort to our inbuilt “fight or flight” response for survival.

When the perceived threat/pressure diminishes the body tries to restore order. So often the body is not allowed to do this. You may feel and be exhausted but you keep pushing yourself harder and then wonder why you always feel “one degree under” and seem to acquire illnesses more frequently.

Research seems to show that many people no longer know how to switch off. The good news is even just 5 minutes a day of relaxation can make a difference to how you feel and behave.

It will help stop the flow of stress hormones and eventually strengthen the immune system.

Are your muscles relaxed or taut? How much physical tension do you have in your body?

Try this little relaxation technique to start. You can do this every day and it can be as short or as long as you want. When you first start find a place that is relatively quiet and where you won’t be interrupted.

Darken the room.
Light a candle
Get comfortable
Gaze at the flame.
If your mind wanders, bring your focus BACK to the flame.
Do this for as long as you wish

Your mind will feel calmer now and thus so will your body. It has taken its “time out”.

Initially, you may feel uncomfortable about practising relaxation. Or maybe your busy mind won’t allow you sufficient time and space to relax. This is not unusual.

If you find this happening to you try pausing a few times during your day to encourage your mind to stop thinking about anything in particular-and simply slow down.

Many opportunities occur naturally throughout the day that enable you to do this, such as when you are—

Cleaning your teeth
Waiting for the kettle to boil
Waiting for your toast to cook
Waiting at traffic lights
Waiting for the train/bus
Standing in a queue
Booting up your computer.

Try and slow down the pace at which you do everything too, Eat and drink more slowly, walk more slowly feeling your feet connect with the floor, take in more of your surroundings and savour moments. Don’t make your life a race to beat self-imposed and often unachievable targets.

Start the day with a cup of lemon and ginger tea (lemon to uplift you and ginger to settle the stomach) and maybe end the day with a cup of chamomile tea to promote calm and soothe you to sleep.

Whatever age you are sometimes all you need to feel better about life is to just press that pause button once a day and take a deep breath in and a slow exhale. You know it makes sense so why not give it a go?

Oh I nearly forgot I have been told TAI CHI is a great pause button !!!!!!!!