



# Painting the Rainbow Newsletter

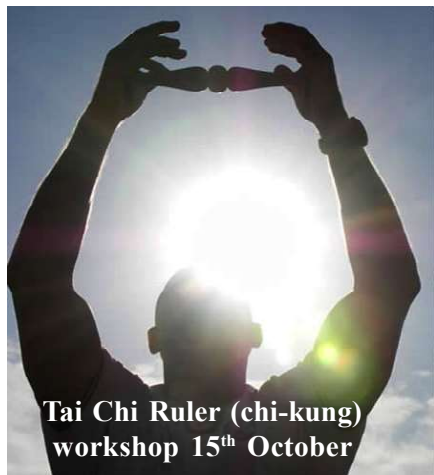
<http://www.paintingtherainbow.co.uk>

## Community Based Tai Chi & Chi-Kung for everyone

*Improvement cannot always be measured, it is something you feel*

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**Tai Chi Ruler (chi-kung)  
workshop 15<sup>th</sup> October**

The Chi-kung set is designed to improve co-ordination and strengthen the body. The tai chi ruler comprises of relaxed, fluid, circular fluid movements synchronising the whole body, and they require a calm, quiet and meditative state of mind. The main difference is that the ruler is ideal for beginners as the movements are fewer and much easier to learn; less space is also required to practice.

The sets are practice holding a carved wood ruler, measuring approx 10 ½ inches, between the palms. The shape is designed to encourage connection and energy flow. Tai Chi ruler is a natural Chi-kung set. FREE cardboard tubes will be given out on day if you don't have a ruler

### Cost and Location

The day will be 1pm to 4.00pm at Weoley Hill Village Hall, Bournville.

The cost for the day will be £25



Jenny recently read this and we thought we'd share it with you.

### A.A.A.D.D. - Age Activated Attention Deficit Disorder (joke)

I've recently been diagnosed with A.A.A.D.D. (Age Activated Attention Deficit Disorder) It manifests itself this way...

Last Saturday I decided to wash my car. As I pick up my car keys and start toward the garage I notice there is mail on the hall table. I decide to go through the mail before I wash the car.

I lay my car keys down on the table, separate the junk mail from the bills, and put the junk mail in the trash can under the table. I see the trash can is full.

I decide to put the bills back on the table and take out the trash but then I think, since I'm going to be near the mailbox when I take out the trash, I may as well go ahead and pay the bills now.

I pick my check book up off the table, and see that there is only one check left. My extra checks are in my desk in the study, so I go to my desk where I find the can of Coke that I had been drinking earlier.

I pick up the Coke to move it aside so I don't accidentally knock it over and notice that it's getting warm, so I decide to put it in the refrigerator.

As I head toward the kitchen with the Coke a vase of flowers on the bookcase catches my eye—they need to be watered. I set the Coke down on the bookcase, and I discover my reading glasses that I've been searching for all morning.

I decide I better put them back on my desk, but first I'm going to water the flowers.

I set my glasses back down on the bookcase, fill a small watering can with water, and suddenly I spot the TV remote. Someone left it on the kitchen table. I realize that tonight when we go to watch TV, we will be looking for the remote but nobody will remember that it's on the

kitchen table, so I decide to put it back in the den where it belongs. But first I'll water the flowers.

As I go to water the flowers, I bump the bookcase and spill water on the floor. So, I set the remote back down on the table, the watering can on the floor, and go get some paper towels and wipe up the spill.

Then I head down the hall to the trash can trying to remember what I was planning to do.

At the end of the day; the car isn't washed, the bills aren't paid, there is a warm can of Coke sitting on the counter, the flowers aren't watered, there is still only one check in my check book, I can't find the remote, I can't find my glasses, I don't remember what I did with the car keys, and there's a small watering can sitting in the middle of the floor. Then when I try to figure out why nothing got done today, I'm really baffled because I know I was busy all day long, and I'm really tired...

The solution of course.... Daily mindful practice of tai chi



Tai Chi in the Park is spreading like wildfire. These wonderful ladies at Cotteridge Park are even wearing their Painting the Rainbow Tai Chi t-shirts

**Learning the Tai Chi Form - taken from a different perspective**  
**OR**

**There are no 'Reversing' Monkeys before you Cross Your Hands, and remember.....**

**You need a pound of Haddock before you deal with the Monkeys anyway!**

Learning something new is a challenge at any age - and it becomes progressively harder as we get older. When you add having to move both arms and one of your legs at the same time, and become aware of whether you commit your weight to your front or back leg - as well as remember the order in which these moves are to be done, you can begin to wander what exactly you are trying to do.



What you are doing, of course, is beginning to learn Tai Chi, the gentle Chinese art known to improve balance and co-ordination, and to reduce stress and anxiety. For

many Beginners none of these benefits seem attainable..... and certainly not in the short term. To discover that Tai Chi Chuan is also an internal martial art, for some it can often be a challenge too far ! Just hang in there, though ..... you can do this !

We all have our own particular learning style, and we learn at different rates. For some, achieving the sequence of movements that make up the Tai Chi 'Form' comes easily; for others remembering what comes next, let alone the actual execution of the 'move', is something that continues to allude them. In the beginning, watching and just trying to make your limbs do what your Instructor 'appears' to be doing, and 'following' their verbal guidance, while at the same time managing to keep one's balance, can seem an impossible task.

After a few weeks, you are more 'settled' in your class, and you start feeling more 'relaxed' about things. Co-ordinating your limbs seems a bit easier.....but you still can't consistently remember what comes next ! You begin to 'Grasp the Sparrow's Tail' by 'stroking' rather than 'plucking' the poor bird, and you know what it feels like when your weight is mainly on your left or right side.



Time goes by .... you persevere and begin to make progress. You enjoy your Tai Chi sessions, even

though they still challenge your memory - left, right, front, back ...land on your heel, try to relax and to 'flow' from one move into the next, .... the sequence. Ah yes, how to remember the sequence...!

There is one thing that you will come to realise while you are coming to terms with co-ordination, and all the other bits that enable you to 'do' Tai Chi - your mind gets a complete rest from the stresses and strains that normally fill your day. You become so engrossed concentrating on whatever it is you are trying to learn that everything else is 'out of mind'.

Students have been heard to say "I can definitely tell when I have been to my Tai Chi session - my mind feels 'easier', not so 'full' of everything". You may notice other things - your lower back was feeling stiff beforehand but now it feels fine; you may have been feeling really tired due to the pressures of your day...and you were thinking of giving Tai Chi a miss, but you didn't, and now your deep tiredness seems to have gone.

As you slowly progress through 'the Form' your Instructor encourages you to try to 'remember' each move, rather than relying on following by 'copying' them. After your first hesitant weeks, this begins to go well. You feel you have really 'achieved' something when you can carry out a few moves independently....! Even better when you return from two weeks on holiday, and you can still remember the first six moves of 'the Form'.

Eventually - you manage to achieve the sequence up to 'Cross Hands' - a major milestone in your Tai Chi journey.



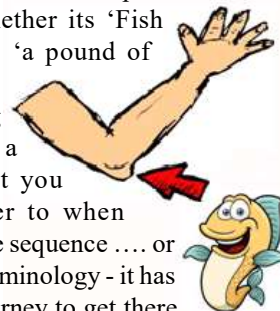
At last you can 'Carry' your 'Tiger to the Mountain'....

.....'Fist under Elbow', 'Repulse Monkey'....'Hands Waving like Clouds', 'Fair Lady Weaves Shuttles'..... 'Sweep the Lotus'.... All of them conjuring up pictures in your imagination....pictures specific to you, that your memory uses to go through the sequence.

You may test your own accuracy by attaching the correct position for a 'move' to a geographical landmark in

whatever place you carry out your practices.... You know you are correct when performing 'Bend Bow' then 'Shoot Tiger' if you are first facing the kitchen window for 'Bend Bow', and then turn your hips/groin to be facing the wall cupboard to 'Shoot Tiger' !

Whatever method you adopt to be able to memorise the sequence of moves, you finally reach the end of the Form, with certain names staying in your memory more than others. You can use the correct names handed down by the Masters, and used by your Instructor .....but secretly, in your head, you may still need to hang on to one or two of those special prompts. Whether its 'Fish under Elbow', 'a pound of Haddock', or 'Reversing Monkeys' as a 'picture' that you secretly refer to when sorting out the sequence .... or the correct terminology - it has been your journey to get there, so well done !



You have learnt 'the sequence', and the names of each move! You can 'do' the Form!

Is that it, then?!

The answer relies on the inclusion, or not, of one small word that has a big meaning - the word 'can'. Do you say 'I do Tai Chi'...or do you say 'I can do Tai Chi'...?

It is at this point that you start to realise that although you can go through the full set of moves of the Form without a hitch, your Tai Chi journey has only just begun.....

Enjoy the trip !

by Heather Lomas

**You know you're getting old when...**

- It takes a couple of tries to get over a speed bump.
- You find yourself beginning to like accordion music.
- At parties you attend, the prime topic of choice is "regularity."
- You can live without sex but not your glasses.
- When you get the same sensation from a rocking chair that you once got from a roller coaster.