



Kai Ming Association Newsletter

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There Is No Transition

Do you remember those pre Tai Chi days when you used to get in your car or walk down the high street, and all of a sudden you were at your destination! The transition (or as I prefer to call it – the Journey) was ‘lost’. You missed the whole journey, experience, that’s part of your valuable life – your mind was ‘somewhere else’, or ‘a blank’, or focused on the end of the journey.

Whatever ‘valid’ reason you came up with – you missed the journey – you were basically not in full control, not with it, not consciously aware, not mindful, and not living in the second.

The same can be said (sometimes) of the macro level too – “don’t the weeks, year’s wiz by”.

With Tai Chi we have all learned to be present, mindful and aware.

So when doing the form (say) I now never think/feel I am moving from one ‘position’ to another. As every second, every sub-second, of that journey is a unique flow. Sometimes both feet are on the ground – but always feeling the ground more with one foot than the other, always moving, sometimes one foot on the ground and the other off the ground, always feeling aligned with gravity.

But never stagnate, never stuck, never not moving - however slowly, however little the move. So I try and feel every sub-second as its own unique movement along that 5, 10, 15 minute continually following journey.

There is no transition – it is all a continual journey to be enjoyed.

Getting it right

Recently at a class somebody made a comment about getting the level of instruction correct for the people in the group and it made me consider what is it that draws people to learning tai chi and what is it that makes a good teacher?

You may think on the face of it that a good tai chi has to have an in-depth knowledge of the art, an ability to answer virtually all questions without hesitation, to be able to spot the errors and quickly make corrections, to be beyond reproach in the quality of their own tai chi and so on...

From my perspective, I have not found this to be true; for me a good teacher: inspires you to want to learn, they don’t teach answer but lead a student to discover their own answers, they identify expectations in both the student and themselves and understands that it can be those expectations that hold us back. If you are a teacher for a moment, ask yourself what are you teaching by your actions? Compliance, art-by-rote, that learning is difficult or are you teaching constant curiosity, learning can be fun, for what purpose? As a student what is your inner teacher (you) teaching you as the same rules apply.

I love the term ‘**spacing expectations**’ as for me it means ‘getting in step with’ the expectations of myself and whoever I am working with. I always ask myself “**For what purpose?**” this ensures the training has an intention even if the intention is **HAVE FUN**.



Energy Forward Corresponding Movement Backward

Boats do not have brakes so as they move towards the dock they have to put their engines into reverse to slow it down; push-hands applies same principle and only comes with practice yet it is often overlooked.

I hope you all remember the 5 steps of “left to go right, right to go left, up to go down, down to go up and centre”. Let’s consider them with a new perspective of working together rather than ‘this then that’ or backwards to go forwards. When I was first taught the concept of the 5 steps I was told “if you want to uproot somebody then as they push you, let go then push them – backwards to go forwards”. This works fine on beginners over over-enthusiastic combatants (oops partners) but rarely on anyone with any sensitivity. Next you can play with the idea of making space to re-attack or “get out of the way so you can have another go” – left to go right – step off to the left and re-enter to attack after they’ve missed.

I’d like to take it further, as the example given by the boat coming into port, and consider both directions working together as in ‘step back to repulse the monkey’ or rollback with forward intention/expansion. When pushing to uproot somebody, if your push is only in one direction, forwards, then it is easy to overrun and be uprooted yourself; this reverse movement is experienced in Huang’s 5th loosening exercise.

When moving left to go right, or right to go left, both directions work together not separately to sever the root of your opponent/partner; this action is referred to as ‘split’ (Li) and is one of the 8 energies. Applying split prevents your partner from connecting to your single direction of energy by not having a single direction of energy; this is yin-yang in action as the interaction is always flowing. Next time you practice ward-off left look for the flow of ‘left to go right’

then start to look to each posture to find the flow of corresponding movements before applying it in the live field we call push-hands.



Become a Painting the Rainbow Tai Chi Qigong Instructor

Have you ever thought you'd like to help out at your tai chi class? Have you ever wondered what is needed to start the journey of becoming an instructor? Would you like to help other people, maybe even have your own class?

Maybe 2020 is your year to get involved... We're always looking for keen personable people as there are so many people out there that can benefit from attending classes but we need more people to make that possible.

If you are interested, please contact Jenny or Mark on 0121 251 6172 or maybe speak to your instructor as they will have a list of the requirements.

This is the story of how the fir tree became the Christmas tree.

At the time when the Christ Child was born all the people, the animals, and the trees, and plants were very happy. The Child was born to bring peace and happiness to the whole world. People came daily to see the little One, and they always brought gifts with them.

There were three trees standing near the crypt which saw the people, and they wished that they, too, might give presents to the Christ Child.

The Palm said: "I will choose my most beautiful leaf, and place it as a fan over the Child."

"And I," said the Olive, "will sprinkle sweet-smelling oil upon His head."
"What can I give to the Child?" asked the Fir, who stood near.

"You!" cried the others. "You have nothing to offer Him. Your needles would prick Him, and your tears are sticky."

So the poor little Fir tree was very unhappy, and it said: "Yes, you are right. I have nothing to offer the Christ Child."

Now, quite near the trees stood the Christmas Angel, who had heard all that the trees had said. The Angel was sorry for the Fir tree who was so lowly and without envy of the other trees. So, when it was dark, and the stars came out, he begged a few of the little stars to come down and rest upon the branches of the Fir tree. They did as the Christmas Angel asked, and the Fir tree shone suddenly with a beautiful light.

And, at that very moment, the Christ Child opened His eyes—for He had been asleep—and as the lovely light fell upon Him He smiled.

Every year people keep the dear Christmas Child's birthday by giving gifts to each other, and every year, in remembrance of His first birthday, the Christmas Angel places in every house a fir tree, also. Covered with starry candles it shines for the children as the stars shone for the Christ Child. The Fir tree was rewarded for its meekness, for to no other tree is it given to shine upon so many happy faces.



PLEASE NOTE:
Please send your Newsletter contributions for future issues to markpeters@kaiming.co.uk

Advanced classes / instructor training

Venue: Weoley Hill Village Hall, Weoley Hill, Bournville.

Sunday: 9.30-12.30 advanced classes (£30)

Dec. 8th - includes grading

2020 dates

Jan. 12th

Feb. 16th

March 1st

April 19th

May 10th

If I Had My Life Over - I'd Pick More Daisies

If I had my life to live over, I'd dare to make more mistakes next time. I'd relax, I would limber up. I would be sillier than I have been this trip. I would take fewer things seriously. I would take more chances. I would climb more mountains and swim more rivers. I would eat more ice cream and less beans. I would perhaps have more actual troubles, but I'd have fewer imaginary ones.

You see, I'm one of those people who lived sensibly and sanely, hour after hour, day after day. Oh, I've had my moments, and if I had to do it over again, I'd have more of them. In fact, I'd try to have nothing else. Just moments, one after another, instead of living so many years ahead of each day. I've been one of those persons who never goes anywhere without a thermometer, a hot water bottle, a raincoat and a parachute. If I had to do it again, I would travel lighter than I have. If I had my life to live over, I would start barefoot earlier in the spring and stay that way later in the fall. I would go to more dances. I would ride more merry-go-rounds. I would pick more daisies.

By Nadine Stair