



Tai Chi Newsletter

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Community Based Tai Chi & Chi-Kung for everyone

Improvement cannot always be measured, it is something you feel

call: 0121 251 6172

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It's so nice to get back to classes and training in tai chi & qigong. The comments from students has been excellent for both physical and mental health; the social aspects of attending classes are just as important as the physical aspects of practice.

The image above is from our new club t-shirt and combines the themes of tai chi and Norther Soul music ☺

They are navy blue with white print and £10 each (members) or £12.50 (non-members). Please ask your instructor or email markpeters@kaiming.co.uk



MEMORIES OF UNSTONE

As we start thinking of our clubs Legacy Weekend in October, where we gather to train together as an association and dedicate it each year to Cheng Man Ching and the Legacy he left us, I cannot help taking a fond trip

down memory lane to the days when the weekend camp first began, UNSTONE GRANGE in Derbyshire.

I think it was the idea of “getting away from it all”, the not worrying about travelling home each night, phones on silent for most of the time, spending time together focused on improving our Tai Chi and of course (let's get our priorities right) the fabulous, dare I say infamous, Saturday night parties, when we let our hair down drank ate and made merry, without any thought of Sunday mornings early start to the day with a Chi Kung session. I will not name the ones who didn't make it.!

There are so many moments from those weekends that I can recall, like the Sumo wrestling suits we hired, and had a “bounce off” fight competition, and Ben one of our instructors who always ended his evening after the party in the “dressing up” cupboard slightly inebriated, or the weekend when the vegetarians had to use their Tai Chi defensive skills to “fight” off the carnivores who became partial to the tasty vegetarian dishes the caterer had provided to the point that to prevent any “further skirmishes” the years following we had a wonderful cook from Birmingham come with us and went totally veggie, and I think our systems were totally cleansed and we felt better for it, but I am going to focus on the 10th Anniversary weekend there which I think will never be forgotten.

It was always a little chaotic on arrival, sorting out people who had all been allocated a dorm or a twin room, but the 10th anniversary weekend was I think the worse, probably because we had decided on a fancy dress party on the Saturday night, and we were struggling to fit students in because of people being able to come after all at the last minute. At one point, I remember having one lady with a unisex name being allocated a bed in the men's dormitory (not that the men complained!!!) luckily I managed a re-

shuffle and it was a bit like musical chairs. When you found your bed, you stayed by it !!!! till all sorted out.

Friday night training went well, people got to work with old friends they had not seen for a while, and players from other clubs also.

Saturday started with the early morning Chi Kung session led by an instructor, (Sunday session had another Instructor and different set) which really set us all up for the day ahead.

At the end of training we had a shower and made a rush for the dining room, the buffet dishes were fab as usual and we also had another “chomp down” ahead at the party.

We had John Jenkins and his beautiful assistant Lynne manning the disco decks for the party with style as always, and after” filling our boots” as they say we all went off to hope we could still fit into our fancy dress !!!

As each person came into the large hall, where the disco had been set up it was jaw dropping to say the least. We had cowboys mingling with “men in black”, A couple paired up to cleverly represent Yin & Yang, Arabian nights, naughty school boys and St Tinian’s girls, Indian drummers, Darth Vader! Pimps and a Dominatrix! Not saying who she was, but I still have the costume, oops, I mean they have the costume, not that it fits now.! Yin & Yang actually won the prize for best costume as it was very simple but striking.



Then the evening began in earnest.

Over the next few hours, until well after 1am we made shapes on the dance floor, realising that even the tai chi form and da lu could be adapted to dance to! we had Bhangra dancing with Raj, an instructor at the time, up on someone's shoulders, two other Instructors, Hunt and Ian taking the floor, and my admiration, with their Northern Soul dancing, and an “Egyptian Princess” riding around on

the back of a naughty school boy on all fours. They will remain nameless, but you know who you are !!!!!

I have to add, all this fun was not alcohol induced (well maybe a little) we were all high on the atmosphere. Before we went to bed we had to retrieve Ben (Darth Vader) from the dressing up cupboard, and take the lampshade off his head, which he had found in there, this was alcohol related.



Surprisingly most were up bright and early for the chi kung (not sure some ever went to bed) after which we had a lovely breakfast and then as it was a fine day we were able to train outside in the grounds of this lovely old house, before having lunch, after which the camp came to a close, and reluctantly we had to leave

Each year there was a programme for each day with choices of form improvement, push hands, weapons forms e.g. straight sword, broadsword, staff, fan and practice of these forms. So you could gain a flavour of each if you wanted, and dip in and out on different days. We even had a commemorative t-shirt designed by Hunt Emmerson, a wonderful artist and tai chi teacher, to celebrate these memorable days. The design is the image at the start of this article; a few of us have kept them safe for posterity ☺

By Jenny Peters



This year's training weekend will be 2nd & 3rd October in Bournville. Details below.



Weoley Hill Village Hall, Weoley Hill, Bournville. B29 4AR

Each year we have a focus for the weekend camp and this year's theme is "**Breathing life into your tai chi**"

Saturday 2nd will include tai chi form work in the morning - Breath, intention, and expansion. The afternoon will focus on martial application without effort - sensitivity training, Sung, flow, and root.

Sunday 3rd Will focus on partner work with weapons, to create and control space. In the afternoon you will learn Ba Duan Jin qigong (eight strands of the brocade)

Weather permitting, training will be outdoors.

Cost

The cost per day will be £40 per person (Kai-Ming members) £60 (non-members)

This includes refreshments. Please provide your own lunch.

Payment options

You can pay £40/£60 per day by cash or cheque to 'Kai Ming Tai Chi' and post to Mark Peters, 3 Middleton Hall road, Birmingham B30 1AB. Or you can pay by card online at <https://bit.ly/3ld0yUw> or email if you want to bank transfer or need more information to markpeters@kaiming.co.uk



MY BEST FRIEND

I know a man, and still know him to this day. I have just got to know him more as the months have gone by.

I noticed a change in my friend months ago. People that also know him also saw this change a long time before he actually did.

When you are on the outside looking in. you get to know more about people and start to understand them. in their feelings, interactions and general wellbeing.

Christmas day of 2019 my friend got himself into a dark place and everything around him started to crumble. He didn't want to see his grandchildren, family, and friends.

I saw him a few days after Christmas. and he tried to express his feelings emotions etc.... and tried to explain himself.

I knew there was something that wasn't right and I suggested he got some help. A few days later along with his wife they went to the doctors. After 2 visits to the doctors on the same day. It was apparent that my friend had a breakdown. And was prescribed antidepressants, and later my friend had several sessions of counselling. A week or 2 went by, I saw him every day and told him that he needs to help himself. And maybe try going out for walks and listen to audio books.

It was on this day when i saw him that he mentioned, he was on the internet, the topic and subject of Tai Chi appeared. It was as though Tai Chi had found my friend rather than the other way around. He started to watch YouTube videos. And began by breathing exercises. He found that it was helping his mental health and wanted to delve a little deeper into the art of Tai Chi. and came across this exercise called Shibashi.

weeks went by and he made the choice to come off antidepressants and is still off them to this day. He actually found something that was helping him. And I encouraged him along with his family to keep it going, as people around him saw a slight change in his personality for the better I am glad to say. He as now started Tai Chi classes and he tells me he is enjoying it. Because the benefits of Tai Chi were helping on this dark journey.

He decided to look at courses and he found Mark Peters who held courses for rehabilitation for health.

My friend enrolled on the course in May of 2020 and completed the course and passed in November 2020. My friend tells me it's been an awesome journey and as now made it his mission to help others in the community with mental health issues. And as subsequently joined up with 2 charities called nature in mind, and Bright. Another nationwide charity called Mind have also shown interest.

Already my friend has 2 Tai Chi sessions booked in August and Sept with a view to doing Tai chi in the parks where my friend lives. My friend knew nothing about Tai Chi and as learnt the Cheng Man Ching 37 form, The Wu Hao 24 form, and the Wu 27 form. My friend keeps in touch with Mark on a regular basis, and sends Videos of himself doing Tai Chi which has a funny twist and brings my friend back to his childhood. of Big trouble in little China and enter the Dragon. I am sure everybody reading this will remember those films.

My friend would like to share his journey with you all. there is light at the end of the tunnel. And would like to share his video to those that are, or thinking of taking up Tai Chi.

<https://u.pcloud.link/publink/show?code=XZCm5nXZjcsD75LLIS0iADyIx3JWSGxsjPV>

The ending to my friend's story is that he does Tai Chi everyday he still listens to audio book still goes out every day for walks and as started seeing his grandchildren, and his family again. He does not take any more anti-depressants. That man I refer to as my friend is ME, the Me I thought I'd lost in difficult times. You just never know when something is going to happen that effects yourself and your family. I have made the decision to help others and pass it on and share my journey to help others. it takes time to heal one step at a time but if you keep going

eventually you will see start to see light at the end of that dark place. As somebody once told me The Ox is slow but the earth is patient, meaning eventually no matter how long it takes your family and friends will still be there. My name is Kev and I live in Nottingham.

By Kevin Dalziel - Nottingham

In Sarah Bakewell's book, *How To Live: A Life of Montaigne in One Question and Twenty Attempts at an Answer*, I came across the following:

"A Stoic behaves like a man who tenses his stomach muscles and invites an opponent to punch them. An Epicurean prefers to invite no punches and, when bad things happen, simply to step out of the way."

Perhaps Epicurus was an early, Ancient Greek practitioner of tai chi chuan?

Walter's Ditty to Tai Chi

Come to 'the Rainbow', someone said,
See what you can do!
Paint the Sky with glee,
For all to see.
Strange moves abound,
Accompanied with strange sound.

Come and try some moves
Suggested a voice to me.
Come, look and see,
Even with a dodgy knee.

With others 'do some Form',
Exercise and shape
This will soon be the norm.

Now, I must agree
That overall I can see
Tai Chi is good for me.

By Walter Shabotenko - Lichfield Student, June 2021

Advanced monthly training sessions.

Sessions are held each month for 3 hours at [Weoley Hill Village Hall, Bournville](#), to enable instructors time for their own training and for more advanced students to gain the time to develop a deeper understanding of the application of tai chi.

Sessions are 9.30-12.30 at £30 per person.

- Weekend Camp 2nd & 3rd October
- Sunday 21st November