



# 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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### Life's Little Lessons

So often, it is those apparently insignificant things that can be important—like a smile from a stranger or compliment from a friend—that little ingredient that can brighten a day. In the same vein, it is often the seemingly little lessons that can be gained from the study of Tai Chi that makes all the difference to how one views the world, and more importantly to how one responds to it. With this in mind, I'd like to share some of the little, but fundamentally important, lessons that I have learned from my journey along the Tai Chi path.

Don't be taken in by appearances-look beneath the surface:

Probably the first lesson we learn from Tai Chi is not to take things at face value; we learn to look beneath the surface.

This lesson is learned through a simple examination of the yin and yang nature of Tai Chi. By embracing and understanding its fundamental underlying concept of duality—that Tai Chi is both for health and relaxation and for self-defence; both passive and violent.

How many people are initially surprised, if not disappointed to discover that the root and function of these slow, flowing, gentle movements of relaxation are deeply grounded in civil combat and self-protection? I have had prospective students walk out of a trial class in total

disgust at being told that part of the Brush Knee involved a strike to the face.. Who would suspect that the graceful dance-like movements, both aesthetically pleasing and calming, could be a devastating code of self-defence moves-in effect a long graceful kata?

By accepting that Tai Chi is outwardly apparently very yin but contains the possibility of extreme yang, we learn to see a deeper significance in Tai Chi-and by extrapolation, we can learn to see a deeper significance in the world around us.

We learn not to assess people by outward appearances-their physical appearance, their clothes, or even what they have to say. We learn to look deeper, into the heart and soul of the person; and if we choose to judge at all, we judge them by their actions. What they do to make the world a better place. Clothing and fashion statements are irrelevant. We learn to look past that outward protection of 'self' until that projection becomes like emperor's new clothes. We learn that a fancy car is nice, but not important. That a smart new suit looks good, but holds no more promise or honesty or reliable service than a well worn, outmoded suit.

We learn, quite simply, to see beneath the carefully created image that people choose to project and to tell the difference between people who merely talk the talk ( or dress the talk ) and those who truly walk the talk.

We become discerning when listening to conversation: Aware of the nuances below the surface; reading the unconscious signs of body language; aware of the verbiage and political expediencies so easily so easily promised-and forgotten just as fast. We learn to listen for the truth.

We learn to look within ourselves too. We see through the constant interplay of emotions and fleeting thoughts and learn to get to know our true selves through quiet introspection and contemplation. We look below our own projected image of self and get to know our true inner nature, enabling us to act in accord with our deepest principles and beliefs.

While we learn to look beneath the surface on an individual and group level we can also learn to look beneath the apparent chaos ( wu-chi ) the world around us, and slowly discover a cyclical orderliness of some personal change-cycle of growth, death, and re-birth. As we see the greater picture of Tai Chi and understand its form, so we can gain an understanding of the natural pattern of the world around us and learn to live in harmony with man and the world around us.

#### LESSONS TO FOLLOW:

Be present in the now - the only moment in time that exists is the present.

The earth experience is one of duality - of good and bad; yin and yang.

Going with the flow - be flexible, yet centred.

There is power in softness - yielding.

Fast does not mean better - avoiding the rat race .

Embrace Tiger - facing your fears.

Never be double-weighted - the intelligence of not opposing force with force.

Ride the Tiger - embracing a weakness and turning it into a strength.

Meditation in motion—mindful movement and body awareness.

Non-confrontational, yet effective - using your adversary's force against him.

The stillness at the centre of the circle

Wu-Wei - not doing, but being done.

Monkey mind - quieting the chatter.

Maintaining balance and perspective.

Breathe deeply.

Poise and posture - avoiding unnecessary strain and fatigue.

The cyclical nature of life.



### EVERYTHING IN MODERATION?

Think you deserve a good rest after your daily exercise?

According to new research in Canada every 30 minutes you need to get up and walk around.

The research team followed the activity levels of 278 patients with Coronary heart disease who had been through a cardiac rehabilitation programme that had taught them to improve their fitness by engaging in 24 minutes of moderate -to-vigorous exercise daily.

The patients in the study wore activity monitors that measured how long they were active or sedentary during the day. Unexpectedly, the detrimental effects of sitting were apparent regardless of how much time the volunteers who took part in the trial spent exercising.

On average, eight hours each day were spent sedentary—either sitting or reclining. Regardless of how long the patients might have spent exercising, the researchers found that higher BMI and lower fitness levels were directly associated with the time they spent sitting.

The less time the patients spent sedentary, the better their markers of health.

These relationships remained even when they controlled for an individual's age, gender, or physical activity levels.

Even just standing up and stretching to break up the sitting is beneficial.

Although the research was focused at Cardiac Rehab patients it can be applied to us all especially after a busy lifestyle has become retirement (*unless like me you are busier than when you worked!!! LOL*)



### Symptoms of Fibromyalgia Improve with Tai Chi

A recent study suggests that practicing Tai Chi reduces fibromyalgia symptoms. The study, published in Complementary Therapies in Clinical Practice, regards the exercise as a “multi-component intervention, integrating physical, psychosocial, emotional, spiritual, and behavioural elements and promoting the mind-body interaction”.

Drug therapies for fibromyalgia are often ineffective and may cause abuse and dependence. But lately, Tai Chi and relaxation techniques, in combination with cognitive behavioural therapies, are increasingly considered as positive options for non-pharmacological interventions that lessen the impact of chronic pain diseases.

Previous research showed that practicing Tai Chi benefits fibromyalgia patients by improving measurable effects of chronic pain disease such as level of disability, quality of life, sleep, pain levels, psychological distress, and functional mobility and capacity

### Mindfulness is not Madness

An Elementary School Has Kids Meditate Instead Of Punishing Them and the Results are Profound

Robert W. Coleman Elementary in West Baltimore will be taking a new and holistic approach to disciplining students. Instead of punishing them or sending

them to the principal's office, administrators will now be sending children to “the mindful moment room” where they will be able to meditate and wind down.

The new policy has been in place for over a year, and in the time that the meditation room has been set up, there have actually been no suspensions throughout the entire year.

There are many advantages to meditation, which are now being confirmed by scientific studies. We have learned through scientific research that meditation can relieve pain, enhance creativity, relieve stress and boost immune systems. Tai Chi in mindful movement

### Amusing facts about the difference between the sexes.

Women gauge directions by landmarks eg lake, hill, oak tree, bank Pink building.

If given motorway exits, kilometres, drive north, they probably would never be seen again!

Men don't get lost, they simply discover new destinations!!!!

When she wants him to show empathy, he thinks she's asking for a solution. A woman usually wants to be heard. NOT FIXED!

In the 50s people talked to each other, they didn't need books or tapes to help them identify how they felt.



They didn't have money for lavish living, or driving in air conditioned cars to work, listening to their MP3 player, but they engaged with their surroundings and said hello to the neighbours that they passed on the way.

THEY LIVED A LIFE OF SCARCITY, BUT HAD INNER ABUNDANCE.

WE LIVE A LIFE OF ABUNDANCE, BUT TOO MANY OF US LIVE WITH INNER SCARCITY