

Wudang

A MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER

Twin Cities T'ai Chi



5/17



From Sifu Paul

Greetings, everyone,

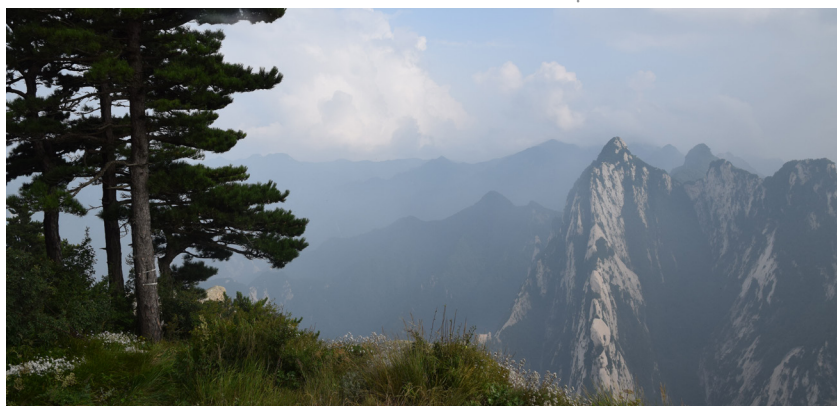
Spring is a beautiful season of intense growth and emergence, and it's in full swing now despite the recent cold spell. With a steady flow of generating, rising, and expanding energy, springtime pulls us away from the gathering force of winter and out into nature. Our bodies are energized to move. The studio has a full schedule of classes for spring that are guaranteed to get us tuned up for the season. Check the schedule accompanying this newsletter, on the website, or posted at the studio.

Learning T'ai Chi More Efficiently

"It is impossible for a man to learn what he thinks he already knows."—Epictetus

A goal is something we hope or intend to accomplish. Realizing our goals can be a deeply satisfying experience and failure to reach them a source of frustration. Anyone who begins the study of T'ai Chi is committing to the goal of learning the Solo Form—the foundation practice of the art. To embrace the challenge of learning the Solo Form requires commitment but also strategy. I have found, in my many years of learning and practicing T'ai Chi, ways to make my learning process more efficient, enjoyable, and successful in achieving my goals. I would like to share three of these that I find especially useful.

1. Don't focus on goals, focus on the process of practice.
Goals define an endpoint and can actually be a source of anxiety when that endpoint seems far away, as in learning a 150-posture



T'ai Chi form. Let go of the need for immediate results and focus instead on creating a consistent and enjoyable practice.

2. Divide something large into something small. The 150-posture T'ai Chi Solo Form is called the Long Form for good reason. It has a lot of movements in it and can take awhile to learn. Although it's divided into three sections, dividing it up into even smaller, bite-size sequences makes it easier to learn, less intimidating, and more enjoyable.
3. Measure and record your progress. The brain loves to receive feedback, and measurement provides evidence that you're making progress. The key is to use measurement to discover, develop, and understand your process of learning and not be overly fixated on a result.

The Studio's New Method of Learning the Solo Form

I have integrated these strategies into one simple, easy-to-use system of learning and tracking your progress. As you begin to learn the T'ai Chi Solo Form, each section of the form has its own tracking sheet (available in

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A view from the
Golden Heaven
Monastery, China

Photo by
Sifu Paul Abdella

the office) that divides the section into smaller “mini sections,” with names such as Ward Off Section or Single Whip Section, that are small and simple to practice. As each small section is learned, a member would demonstrate that section for their tutor, who would either sign off on that section, allowing the next section to be learned, or make corrections and recommendations for improvement. This process builds a foundation of correctness into the form that deepens with each new section learned.

If you are currently learning the Solo Form, simply begin using one of the tracking sheets for the section you are learning and begin tracking your improvement.

Goals can provide motivation and a direction for your aspirations, but having a well-designed system of practice and committing to the process is what creates real progress.

A Wish for the Studio

Another affirmation/intention from the Golden Rooster celebration:

May many students find instruction, mastery and peace in their practice here.

Graduation News

Congratulations to Austen Barranco for completing the T'ai Chi Solo Form.

Congratulations

Congratulations to studio alumni Jasmine Tang and Darren Lee on the birth of their daughter Melody Tang Dare Lee.



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A 600-year-old Nine
Dragon Juniper tree near
the Temple of Heaven,
China

Photo by
Sifu Paul Abella



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A view from the top of
Hua Shan

Photo by
Sifu Paul Abella

Launching Our Marketing Campaign

The studio will run its first ad in *Sprout*, the newspaper for Seward Community Coop, one of the largest and best-established (1972) cooperative groceries in the Twin Cities. Look for the ad if you're a member/shopper there and let us know what you think.

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Congratulations,
Austen!

Contact Us

For timely updates, follow Twin Cities T'ai Chi Ch'uan on **Facebook**.

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Welcome, Melody
Tang Dare Lee