



# Wudang



07/22



TEACHING THE ART, SCIENCE, AND SPIRIT OF T'AI CHI

## From Sifu Paul

Greetings, everyone,

The summer solstice has ushered in the new season, and the heat is on. Long days, long walks, digging in gardens, and just moving outdoors in the sunlight are invigorating, healthful, and joyful. May the beautiful weather endure!

In this issue: the start of a new quarter, T'ai Chi in the Park, our Summer Social get-together, Professor Cheng's advice on practice, upcoming classes, a glimpse of China's Terra-Cotta Warriors, and more.

I'll see you in the park.

## Summertime Is Q3 Time

July is the month that kicks off the summer season. It's also the start of the third quarter—a time that can be fiscally slow for the studio as people travel and take time off for the summer. We're grateful to those of you who have paid third-quarter dues already.

Paying dues is easy and just a click away on [Thanks for staying current and supporting the studio.](http://our website (tctaichi.org) using PayPal or Stripe, or send a check to 2242 University Ave. St. Paul, MN 55114.</a></p>
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## New Studio Computer

The studio has purchased a new laptop computer, monitor, and power station with funds from our Fall Fundraiser. The new computer will be used for our Zoom classes, database, and more.



## Twin Cities T'ai Chi Summer Social

Join studio members and their families and friends on Saturday, Aug. 6, from 4 to 7 p.m. at Wabun Picnic Area, 4655 46TH Ave. S., located in Minnehaha Regional Park.

We will enjoy catered food, connect with our community, meet our newest members, do a little T'ai Chi, and have fun. There will also be a short demonstration to showcase what's currently being taught at the studio.

There's a sign-up sheet at the studio, or send us an email at [tctaichi.org](mailto:tctaichi.org) with your name and the number of people that will be attending. Please RSVP by July 20.

## Graduation News

Congratulations to Jim Dahl, Lisa DeNicola, Jeffery Donahay, and Emily Goldberg for learning the entire Yang-Style Long Form.

Now the fun begins!

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### Studio Summer Social

- When: Aug. 6, 4–7 p.m.
- Where: Wabun Picnic Area in Minnehaha Regional Park, 4655 46th Ave S.
- What: Friends, food, forms, fun

## Under the Linden Tree

Every Wednesday evening during the summer months, our T'ai Chi class moves outdoors to Hampden Park (993 Hampden Ave., St. Paul, MN 55114) under the large linden tree at the southeast end of the park. The 5:00 hour is reserved for those who haven't finished learning the Solo Form, so come at that time if you'd like to get corrections and learn some new movements.

- The T'ai Chi class begins at 6:00 with a short lesson or movement practice.
- That's followed by warm-ups and Qigong.
- Then we do a full Solo Form together, finishing around 7:15.
- A 20- to 30-minute weapons review follows before we head home.

So far, the weather has been beautiful. Please join us for T'ai Chi in the Park. See you there.

### When the Weather Is Uncertain

*"The Mayfly only lives for one day,  
and sometimes it rains."*

—George Carlin

In Minnesota, we know it does more than rain. If there is severe weather happening or in the forecast, or if driving conditions aren't safe, you have three sources to check to see whether a class or classes are cancelled at the studio.

1. Go to [the studio website, tctaichi.org](http://the.studio.website.tctaichi.org), and there will be a red banner at the top of the landing page displaying a notice about a cancellation.



2. Go to our Facebook page.
3. Eventually, there will be an email sent to our current members list announcing the cancellation.

### Class Schedule

Our **Beginning Solo Form** class is on Saturdays at 11:00 a.m. Sign up online.

The **Saturday Advanced Solo Form** class begins at 12:30 p.m.

**Evening Solo Form** classes begin at 6:00 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday. All form classes are simulcast on Zoom except the beginning class and the Wednesday class in the park. No sign-up is needed for Wednesdays.

New: The Tuesday **Level 1 Symmetries** class will begin learning Symmetry 2 starting in July. The **Level 2 Symmetries** class will begin Symmetry 3.

### Contact Us

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

**Email:** [mail@tctaichi.org](mailto:mail@tctaichi.org)

**Website:** [tctaichi.org](http://tctaichi.org)

**Phone:** 651.767.0267

*All articles and other content written by Paul Abdella unless otherwise noted.*

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This linden tree shades our practice area in Hampden Park.



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T'ai Chi in the Park  
Photo by Dan Polsfus

# How Many People Does It Take to Run a T'ai Chi Studio?

Quite a few, actually, many of whom are volunteers quietly doing their parts in the background. But there are those whose roles are somewhat more visible. Those six individuals form the board, which is made up of three officers (chair, treasurer, and secretary) and three at-large members. They meet for an hour each month on a Saturday afternoon to discuss issues from the simple (Should we plan a party for the studio?) to the more challenging (Is there anything we can do about the parking situation?).

Each year, we look for two new board members to replace those whose three-year terms are ending, usually one officer and one at-large member. This year, we are seeking a secretary and an at-large member. The secretary's duties basically are to take notes at the monthly meeting, prepare the minutes, and send out reminders of the next meeting. While this is normally a three-year term, this year, we are looking to fill only one year (2023) to finish an extended term. The following year (2024) will start a standard three-year term, so you have the opportunity to try it for a year and see if you wish to make a longer commitment.

We are also seeking an at-large member. The at-large members bring their own insights and input to the meetings and may help with modest tasks (such as scouting park locations for that studio party).

Altogether, the board, in consultation with the executive director (Sifu Paul), makes decisions for the basic operations of the studio. It is a necessary and rewarding opportunity to contribute to the growth and stability of the studio. If you think you would like to help in this way or know someone you think would be interested, please talk to Paul, send us an email, or talk to any of the current Board members—Libby Frost, Tom Hautman, Stephen May, Ed Phillips, Dave Sagisser, and Morgan Willow.

## Eliminating Three Faults

by Cheng Man-ching

There are three basic faults you must eliminate before you begin to practice tai chi on your own. My experience from over 40 years of teaching tai chi has shown me that all successful students have eliminated these three faults, but only after constant practice and faithful devotion. If it is your fate to be a little dull, just work 10 times harder than anyone else. The method to rid yourself of these faults is simple and accessible, but most people cling tenaciously to their bad habits and fail to take decisive, corrective action. As a young man, I too had these faults and so can

discuss them with some degree of familiarity.

The first fault is lack of perseverance. Confucius once said that even the unorthodox arts of a sorceress required perseverance. How much more important is it in tai chi, which encompasses the principles of philosophy and science! Tai chi's philosophy of the soft overcoming the hard and concentrating your ch'i for softness is based on the *I Ching*, the *Nei Ching*, and the *Tao Te Ching*. Even the idea of moving a thousand pounds with four ounces of strength is simply an extension of the fulcrum principle as explained in science and the returning force of resistance as illustrated in dynamics. Tai chi is the crystallization of philosophy and science and can

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Professor Cheng's  
Three Faults:

1. Lack of perseverance
2. Greed
3. Impatience

bridge the gap separating the East from the West—bringing intercultural exchanges that benefit far more than merely the form and application of tai chi alone. Studying tai chi without perseverance will have you not only constantly grappling over the same problems, you will eventually exit this treasure trove empty-handed.

I always regret my lack of perseverance when young. I began to practice martial arts to strengthen my frail body but would invariably stop as soon as I felt the slightest bit better. Finally, 39 years ago, bedridden with tuberculosis, I resolved to begin practicing and never stop again. At the time, I practiced the long tai chi form and discovered that by hurrying I could whittle away six or seven minutes from the overall performance. I practiced every morning and night to ensure continuity and perseverance—though I was busy with teaching commitments and extracurricular activities. Every morning I practiced the form before I washed or ate; at night I went through one round before I slept. I made good progress and this routine soon developed into a daily habit. My philosophy of life was to joyfully assist others regardless of the

personal sacrifice involved. How could I expect to benefit humanity if I lacked the perseverance to practice a few minutes every day to remain healthy? I despised my ignorance and was painfully determined to correct my error.



The second fault is greed. Do not bite off more than you can chew. Lao Tzu certainly understood this when he said, “Small amounts are understandable, too much is confusing.” When I was young, my friend Lu Chien once came to visit me. As he prepared to leave he said, “Ancient nobleman parted with gifts of words, and so I leave you with



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Professor Cheng  
Man-ching demon-  
strates Squatting  
Single Whip.

some parting advice. By continuing the tradition of your ancestral namesake, Cheng Ch'ien, Master of Three Excellences, your talents may one day be equally acknowledged—but your obsession for learning may limit any future success. Heed my words! Concentrate on your efforts on poetry, calligraphy, and painting.” Today I owe every accomplishment to this beneficial friend and his kind advice.

The I Ching said that what is easy will be easily understood; what is simple will be easily followed—and it is the same in tai chi. Quietly practice and memorize a few postures each session to avoid confusion.

The third fault is impatience. Confucius once said that rushing forward obscures the goal—true words of wisdom! Emulate the stream that gradually forms its own watercourse rather than brutishly forging ahead. The ancients approached the literary arts in this manner.

*Immersed and steeped in the lush riches of words.*

*Savor their beauty, Relish their glory.*

And:

*Scattered throughout the breaking frost. Contented with my flowing thoughts.*

I will venture to say that the same holds true for tai chi. This art does not merely combine form with application or focus on mind/hand coordination. We must comprehend its philosophical basis and understand the practical application of its scientific principles—only then will its benefits be limitless. By following my ideas for eliminating these three faults, you can progress smoothly, quickly, and unimpeded.

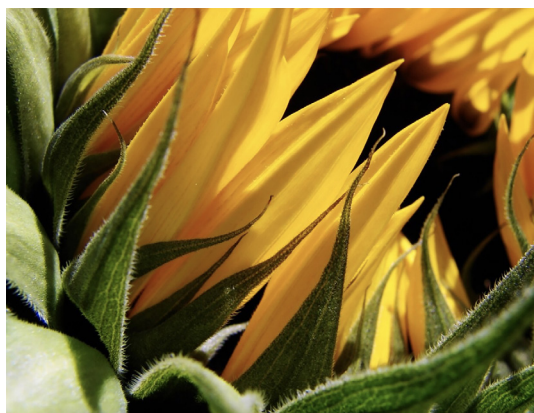
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*“If you add only a little to a little  
and do this often, soon that little will  
become great.”*  
—Hesiod, ancient Greek poet

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## The Enigma of the Terra-Cotta Warriors

In 2016, I traveled to China for the first time, then again in 2019, fulfilling a dream to journey there and experience the land, sacred sites, and the art and culture of one of the world’s most ancient civilizations. I encountered the Terra-Cotta Warriors while visiting the city of Xian. I had seen many photos of the site prior to my visit. Despite waiting in lines and navigating through crowds of people to see them, viewing the figures firsthand was an unexpected visual and visceral experience.



For 1,200 years, the walled city of Xian was the capital of China before being replaced by Beijing in the 15<sup>TH</sup> century. There is much to see and do in this enduring city, including a visit to a well-preserved, accessible section of the Great Wall. Without a doubt, the most famous and popular attraction in Xian—indeed, in all of China—is the Terra-Cotta Warriors.

In 1974, Chinese laborers unearthed peculiar terra-cotta fragments while digging a well just outside the city. Government officials were notified, and a team of archeologists was sent to examine the site and embark upon what would turn out to be one of the most extraordinary archeological discoveries of the 20<sup>TH</sup> century. After more than 40 years of excavation, there have been more than three thousand soldiers, 96 horses, 11 chariots, miscellaneous officials, servants, and entertainers unearthed, with thousands more expected to be discovered. Early in the dig, the question arose—who were these figures and why were they here?

China has a long history of innovation and development in art, philosophy, agriculture, astronomy, science, military arts, medicine, writing and literature, and much more. Yet for much of its early history there was never a unified China under a single ruler. Between the fifth and third centuries B.C., various states had emerged and battled for dominance in east-central China during a time known as the Warring States period. The state of Qin emerged victorious in 221 B.C. led by the brutal King Zheng, who pronounced himself Qin Shi Huangdi—First Qin Emperor.

Shi Huangdi forged the states into a single Chinese empire with an iron will.

He divided the territories and assigned a political and military leader to control each of them under his command. Weapons were confiscated and melted down; weights and measures and the written language were standardized. A new imperial currency was issued. Hundreds of thousands of men were conscripted into the Qin army. Hundreds of thousands more labored to build palaces, roads, and canals. More than 3,000 miles of border defenses along the Yellow River were built, laying the foundation for one of the monumental feats of engineering in the ancient world: the Great Wall.



The Emperor brutally extinguished dissent in his kingdom and was the target of several assassination attempts. Shi Huangdi became obsessed with the idea of immortality and launched a monolithic project that matched the size of this obsession and of his vanity—his imperial tomb. Just 1,500 meters away were his terra-cotta imperial guards, surrounding the tomb and ready to stand guard during the emperor's afterlife. Arranged in military formation, the archers, infantrymen, horses and chariots, officials and servants, and even a



few musicians to keep the emperor entertained in the afterlife were all hand-painted, so no two figures looked exactly alike.

The enormous cost and construction of the project by 700,000 forced laborers was still in progress at the time of the emperor's death in 210 B.C. Shi Huangdi, ironically, died from ingesting mercury pills made by his alchemists and court physicians, who believed it to be an elixir of immortality.

Today, three buildings have been erected so far to house the Terra-Cotta Warriors: the main building, where the majority of the statues have been fully excavated; a second, with grounds in the early stages of excavation; and a third museum building with select figures and artifacts on display, a theater, shop, and other educational areas. I took many photographs, hoping some would turn out in the low-light conditions.

A favorite, taken in the museum, features an archer on bended knee, posed without his bow, freed from his earthen necropolis, and now enshrined in a glass case for all to see. To his rear, an adult woman ponders the figure in front of her, while three children on the other side gaze in wonder and contemplation at the specter of their own history. A reflection envelops the girl on the left as the archer's hand gently pulls at her museum headset, hoping to listen in or prevent her from hearing a story that only he should tell.

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**Kneeling Warrior**

**Photo by Paul Abdella**