



# Lake Norman Tai Chi Times

For A Healthy Body, Focused Mind and Positive Spirit

**"We are kept from our goal, not by obstacles, but by a clear path to a lesser goal."**

~Robert Brault

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## Message From Sifu

### The Eight Truths of Tai Chi: Truth #1

In Waysun Liao's T'ai Chi Classics, he translated Eight Tai Chi Truths from early manuscripts from unknown Masters. This month, we'll take a look at the first truth. In future newsletters, we'll discuss the other seven truths.

**Truth #1: Do not be concerned with form. Do not be concerned with the ways in which form manifests. It is best to forget your own existence.**

We are taught all forms one movement at a time. Whether you're learning Push The Mountain Move The Sea, Chang's Tai Chi Solo Form, or a weapon or partner form, it doesn't matter. You learn a movement or two. Practice it until you have a basic understanding of it. Then you're taught the next move. The next move. And the next. Until finally you've completed the learning of the postures. You continue to work the form smoothing out the transitions between movements while applying the Tai Chi principles and understanding the movements.

We must remember what Forms are. Form is short for Formula. These Forms are formulas for movement. In Martial Arts, they teach us how to move in a certain way in a certain situation. They teach us what to do if someone throws a left punch, a right hook, a kick to the knee, or whatever.

In our Qigong practice, these forms help to stretch the muscles, ligaments, and fascia to promote energy flow and condition the body to improve movement, balance, and strength.

For the first few years of our training, that is all we need to focus on. Learn the postures and movements as they are given and strive to smooth the transitions between them. At some point in our training, our attention turns away from the form itself and towards the movements and reasons why we move certain ways in certain situations. Every move in our Tai Chi solo form is a strike, block, or throw. Some movements are better suited than others as strikes, blocks, or throws. Each individual tends toward certain movements based on their size, mobility, and ability.

Let's break down this truth to understand what it's telling us:

**Do not be concerned with form.**

The reality is, at the beginning, we need to. Forms teach us how to move. The sequence of the form gets the mind and body to work as a single entity.

**Do not be concerned with the ways in which form manifests.**

Once we learn the form, then we strive to understand the form and what it's teaching us. How to move, defensively and offensively, naturally, effortlessly, and instinctively.

**It is best to forget your own existence.**

Once we learn the meaning behind the movements, then we can shed the form and it's meaning and move in accordance with external energies, forgetting who we are and just being in the moment.

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## Welcome New Students

It's always a pleasure to welcome new students into our family. Please welcome these new students who joined recently. If you haven't already, say hello.

### ***Tai Chi Chuan Program***

Kathy Olesen

### ***Tai Chi Qigong Program***

Grace Howes

## Upcoming Events

### ***Tan Tui (Spring Legs) Two-Person Form***

**Saturday, August 16 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM at The Peaceful Dragon**

This workshop is one in a series of four fundraising workshops for The Peaceful Dragon to help provide funds for qualified Leadership and Mastery students in need of scholarship assistance.

Led by Master Eric Sbarge, in this workshop you'll learn the popular two-person application form of the "12 Roads of Tan Tui." This foundational Northern Shaolin form has been passed on for centuries and provides strength, flexibility and coordination for stylists of all Chinese martial arts, and can be especially valuable for Tai Chi and Pakua students. This set shows many of the striking and kicking applications that complement the throwing applications common to Tan Tui.

The suggested donation for this fundraiser event is just \$29, but you can pay more or less as you wish based on your personal budget.

### ***Mountain Tai Chi and Pakua Retreat with Master Eric Sbarge***

**Friday October 17 – Sunday, October 19**

Relax and rejuvenate yourself while enjoying intensive instruction and practice in the Chinese arts of tai chi and pakua, complemented with sessions of qigong, Zen meditation and yoga.

Led by Master Eric Sbarge, director and head instructor of The Peaceful Dragon in Charlotte, NC, the retreat will be held at the beautiful YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly in Black Mountain, NC, just 10 minutes from Asheville.

Suited for beginners or advanced practitioners, from teens to senior citizens, the retreat includes comfortable lodging, meals, plus free time on Saturday evening to explore downtown Asheville or simply relax on your own in the wooded mountains.

For more information, checkout the website: <http://www.thepeacefuldragon.com/specialevents.shtml#mountain>



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## Celebrations

### August Holidays and Observances

American Adventures Month  
Happiness Happens Month  
National Goat Cheese Month  
What Will Be Your Legacy Month

International Tree Climbing Days: 1-5  
Simplify Your Life Week: 1-7  
Exercise With Your Child Week: 3-9  
National Farmers' Market Week: 3-9  
Single Working Women's Week: 3-9

India Pale Ale Beer Day: 1  
Respect For Parents: 1  
International Beer Day: 1  
Army Day (China): 1  
National Mustard Day: 2

Double Seven Festival (China): 2  
Watermelon Day: 3  
National Chocolate Chip Day: 4  
National Root Beer Float Day: 6  
Dalek Day: 8  
Sneak Some Zucchini Onto Your Neighbor's Porch Night: 8  
Spirit Festival (China): 10  
National Relaxation Day: 15  
Cupcake Day: 18  
National Spumoni Day: 21  
Ninoy Aquino Day (Philippines): 21  
Hug Your Boss Day: 22  
National Waffle Iron Day: 24  
National Heroes Day (Philippines): 24  
More Herbs, Less Salt Day: 29

## Refer-A-Friend Program



### Refer A Friend. Get Prizes. A Bribe? Maybe!

Introduce your friends, family, and co-workers to the benefits of Tai Chi and Qigong! For every friend that attends one class and their consultation, you will be entered in a raffle. There is no limit to the number of entries you can have. We will also have prizes when your friends enroll. Visit our Refer-A-Friend website at [LakeNormanTaiChi.com/raf.php](http://LakeNormanTaiChi.com/raf.php) for a complete set of rules and prizes. That's all there is.

## Spread The Word



### Health, Wellness, and Fitness Fares a Perfect Fit

Tai Chi and Qigong rejuvenate the mind, body, and spirit. What better place to tell people about the benefits of these arts than at a Wellness Fair or Expo. It's a great combination of people interested in health, and us interested in getting people healthy! Is your company, church, community center, or favorite business having a Health, Wellness, or Fitness event? Let Sifu know about. The more that we can get the word out about us and what we can do, the more good we can do for people in our community.



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## Tai Chi in the News

From **Supreme Chi Living** the newsletter of the **American Tai Chi and Qigong Association**

### Tai Chi Helps Maintaining Cognitive Abilities

**July 15, 2014** - With increasing longevity, dementia care has become a major public health concern. At present, there is no drug therapy proven to delay preclinical cognitive deterioration. Practicing Tai Chi has been demonstrated to result in better cognitive function and less decline with age. A Hong Kong study compared the effectiveness of Tai Chi with stretching-and-toning exercise in the preservation of cognitive and functional decline in Chinese older persons at risk of cognitive decline.

Subjects over 65 years old were recruited from social and residential homes for the elderly. They were considered at risk of cognitive decline if they had mild cognitive impairment or amnesic mild cognitive impairment. Each participating center was considered as one unit. All subjects in a given center were randomized to the intervention or control group, so as to avoid biases due to communication between subjects within the center.

The intervention group received training on *24-style Tai Chi* by a certified Tai Chi master. The complex patterns of movements entail higher cognitive demands in addition to physical exercise. The control group was trained with stretching and relaxation exercises developed by physiotherapists and conducted by an occupational therapist. The assessors were blinded to the randomization status. Comprehensive cognitive, functional, and neuropsychiatric assessments were conducted at baseline, 2, 6, and 12 months.

Of 548 participants in the 38 centers screened, 171 were randomized into the intervention and 218 in the control groups. At 1 year, 4 (4.3%) and 28 (16.6%) of the respective participants were rated as dementia. Multilevel logistic regression (controlled for baseline differences in education) revealed that the intervention group had a lower risk of developing dementia at 1 year. The change of CDR sum of boxes scores showed that the intervention group on average had a 21% better preservation (lower scores) than controls. Postural balance was measured by BBS. The intervention group had borderline better performance with time. There were no significant changes in NPI scores across time, with a trend for lower CSDD scores from baseline to the third follow-up in both groups. The intervention group had 23% lower scores than the control group, but the difference was not significant.

**Conclusions:** In older adults at risk of cognitive decline, combined cognitive motor stimulation and balance training may help preserve global functioning. Further research is needed to substantiate the cognitive reserve hypothesis and its role in modifying clinical impairment in dementia.

## Training Tip

### Tip: If you stand like a duck and walk like a duck, you're not doing Tai Chi

A great posture starts with your feet. Our Ready Stance has us stand with our feet shoulder width and toes straight ahead. As we move, our focus tends to shift towards what our hands and arms are doing and away from our feet and stance. Because of this, your feet will have a tendency to splay out or not be in the correct position. This makes our movements inefficient at best and could potentially put undue stress on our knees.

To correct this, as you're doing your Tai Chi forms or any Qigong, look at your feet. If you find your toes spread out when they should be straight ahead, or your feet are out of position, correct it immediately. The sooner you get your feet back in proper alignment, the more natural it will feel over time.

And if you ever hear a "quack" coming from behind you during class ... check your feet.



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## Ask Sifu

### Is Work/Life balance a myth?

It certainly seems like that sometimes, doesn't it. Work/Life balance is possible as long as you keep in mind that being in balance doesn't mean spending equal time in each area of your life, you need to spend the correct proportions of time in each area. There will also be times where you will spend a disproportionate amount of time in a certain area (i.e., a big project for work). That's OK as long as you come back towards an ideal balance in your life.

## Classifieds



Need an extra class t-shirt?

How about a pair of Tai Chi pants?

No problem! Shirts, pants and sashes are always available.

**T-Shirt \$15**

**Pants \$35**

**Sash \$10**

20% discount for Tai Chi Chuan students - 10% discount for Tai Chi Qigong students

custom luxury menswear without breaking the bank

**J. HILBURN**

704.400.8179

**B. Dale Saufley**  
Independent Style Consultant  
Dale.Saufley@JHilburnpartner.com

Have something to sell or trade? Have a service you'd like everyone to know about? Advertise it here! Lake Norman Tai Chi Center members get an incredible discount. Send your ad to [contact@lakenormantaichi.com](mailto:contact@lakenormantaichi.com) and put **Newsletter Ad** in the subject.

"A rule of thumb for a warrior is that he makes his decisions so carefully that nothing that may happen as a result of them can surprise him, much less drain his power."

~ Carlos Castaneda

