

# Lake Norman Tai Chi Times

For A Healthy Body, Focused Mind and Positive Spirit

“Iron is full of impurities that weaken it; through forging, it becomes steel and is transformed into a razor-sharp sword. Human beings develop in the same fashion.”

- Morihei Ueshiba

May, 2015

LakeNormanTaiChi.com

Vol 6 Number 5

## Message From Sifu

### Wu Chi: The Grand Ultimate in Stillness

The first Tai Chi Masters took their teachings and observations, and condensed them down into poetic turns of phrases that describe and guide our every movement in Tai Chi. These principles were gathered together into Treatises which later became the Tai Chi Classics. A typical principle is:

*“All movements are performed in a smooth manner, with no unevenness, and continuous, allowing no interruptions.”*

This principle is telling us never to speed up or slow down during our movements. The pace of our form should be the same at the beginning as it is at the end. These principles fall into several categories, such as body alignment, energy, intent, and breath.

Of all the principles that govern our forms, there is only one that gives us a hint as to the very beginning of our form:

*“T'ai Chi comes from Wu Chi  
and is the mother of yin and yang.  
In motion T'ai Chi separates;  
in stillness yin and yang fuse and return to Wu Chi.”*

Wu Chi is the opening and closing stance of all our Tai Chi forms. It is that space where nothing exists, yet the potential for everything arises. At the beginning, it is the meditative state of stillness where we form our intent of movement, relax our body, sink our chi and prepare for the flowing tide of yin and yang. At the end, it is the return to stillness as yin and yang fuse back into Wu Chi, the chi is condensed into the dan tien, and our intent is focused inward as we internalize the peace, serenity, and wisdom we glimpsed from the Tao.

As we form our intent in Wu Chi, we need to decide how we are going to practice the form. If we focus on relaxation, then our pace may be slower than usual. If our focus is on application, then each move needs to be performed with an opponent in mind. If our goal is to improve our lower body, then our stances will be longer and lower throughout the form. There are limitless ways we can practice our form. What we decide happens in those few moments before we begin.

Wu Chi is a miniscule part of the form, but influences every aspect of what we do. It also impacts the effect Tai Chi has on us. The more preparation we take while in Wu Chi, the more relaxed we get, the more freely the energy flows, which deepens our knowledge of Tai Chi and gives us insight into our mind, body, and spirit.

The next time you practice your form, take an extra moment or two before and after the form, and embrace the concept of Wu Chi and see how it affects your practice.

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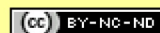
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## Student Promotions



### **Block Promotions**

Congratulations to these students for being promoted to **Low Block B, Beginner** level:

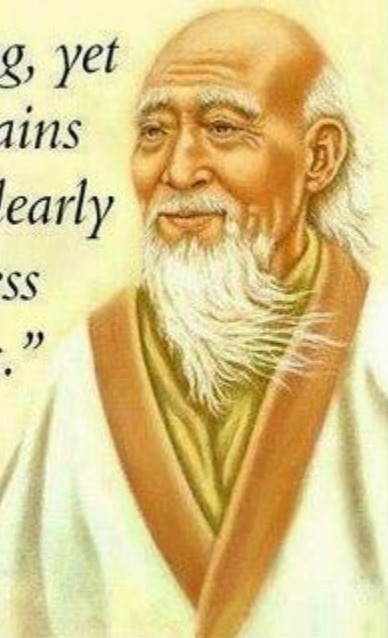
**Kathy Elderidge**

**Leann Wheeler**

Way to go everyone! Keep up the hard work.

*“Water is the softest thing, yet  
it can penetrate mountains  
and earth. This shows clearly  
the principle of softness  
overcoming hardness.”*

**Lao Tzu**





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## Join us for The Peaceful Dragon's **China/Taiwan Tour!**



**October 15-27, 2015 - Reserve Your Spot Now!**

Experience many of the greatest cultural and natural wonders of China and Taiwan – including the world-famous Shaolin Temple, Taroko Gorge, Guilin River cruise, Panda Research Center and more – plus learn tai chi, Zen meditation and kung fu both at local temples and schools, and with our own instructors.

This all-inclusive tour includes all transportation, 4-and-5-star hotels, English-speaking tour guides, local cuisine at a variety of top restaurants, and numerous cultural excursions to monasteries, historic sites, scenic spots, modern technological wonders, and more. Students, family and friends of The Peaceful Dragon and affiliate schools are encouraged to join us for this once-in-a-lifetime trip!

For the complete itinerary, pricing and reservations visit our  
[China/Taiwan Tour Page at ThePeacefulDragon.com](http://ThePeacefulDragon.com)



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## Celebrations

### May Holidays and Observances

Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month  
EcoDriving Month  
Family Wellness Month  
Fibromyalgia Education and Awareness Month  
Get Caught Reading Month  
Global Health and Fitness Month  
National Meditation Month  
National Salad Month  
National Salsa Month (the food)  
National Smile Month  
National Family Month

Drinking Water Week: 3-9  
National Family Week: 3-9  
National Hug Holiday Week: 3-9

National Small Business Week: 4-8  
Reading is Fun Week: 10-16  
American Craft Beer Week: 11-17  
National Polka Weekend: 22-24

Free Comic Book Day: 2  
Garden Meditation Day: 3  
Root Canal Appreciation Day: 11  
National Chocolate Chip Cookie Day: 15  
National Pizza Party Day: 15  
Hummus Day: 21  
National Polka Day: 23-24  
Geek Pride Day: 25  
Towel Day: 25  
National Senior Health & Fitness Day: 27

## Tai Chi in the News

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

### A Combined Program with Tai Chi Help Maintain a Healthy Brain and Comprehensive Cognition during Old Age

**April 23, 2015** - Mounting evidence suggests that enriched mental, physical, and socially stimulating activities are beneficial for counteracting age-related decreases in brain function and cognition in older adults.

In this study by Chinese Academy of Sciences in Beijing, the researchers used functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to demonstrate the functional plasticity of brain activity in response to a combined cognitive-psychological-physical intervention and investigated the contribution of the intervention-related brain changes to individual performance in healthy older adults.

The intervention was composed of a 6-week program of combined activities including cognitive training, Tai Chi exercise, and group counseling. The results showed improved cognitive performance and reorganized regional homogeneity of spontaneous fluctuations in the blood oxygen level-dependent (BOLD) signals in the superior and middle temporal gyri, and the posterior lobe of the cerebellum, in the participants who attended the intervention.

Intriguingly, the intervention-induced changes in the coherence of local spontaneous activity correlated with the improvements in individual cognitive performance.

Taken together with our previous findings of enhanced resting-state functional connectivity between the medial prefrontal cortex and medial temporal lobe regions following a combined intervention program in older adults, we conclude that the functional plasticity of the aging brain is a rather complex process, and an effective cognitive-psychological-physical intervention is helpful for maintaining a healthy brain and comprehensive cognition during old age.

This study is published by Journal of neural transplantation & plasticity in February, 2015.



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## Feng Shui Tip

### Make Your Home Inviting

Even if you and your family never use it, make sure the front entrance of your home is inviting and "pulls" in your guests. If you have the room, make a place for coats, hats, umbrellas, etc. Add something interesting, such as a piece of art, a fountain or mirror. This can help chi to enter the "mouth" of the home.

Feng Shui is the Art of Placement. A Chinese philosophical system of harmonizing everyone with the surrounding environment. The term feng shui literally translates as "wind-water." Each month Dale Saufley will share a Feng Shui tip that you can implement to harmonize yourself with your surroundings. If you have questions about Feng Shui, contact Dale at [dales@lakenormantaichi.com](mailto:dales@lakenormantaichi.com).

## Training Tip

### How to Sneak Tai Chi into your daily life

#### **#1) Practice Stances while brushing your teeth.**

Girl. Dale loves this one! We all have to brush our teeth at least twice a day for 2 minutes. Right!? While you're brushing your pearly whites, hold one of your seven stances. Imagine being able to sneak in 4 minutes of stance training everyday! That's almost 30 minutes every week. Not only will you be fighting cavities, you'll be making your lower body stronger.

## Ask Sifu

### What's the best way to use a fitness tracker while doing Tai Chi?

Fitness trackers are excellent devices for, well, tracking your fitness. Most offer step counters, distance walked, and even elevation. The one I have tracks my sleep and has a heart rate monitor. Most fitness trackers are worn on the wrist or on the belt. Since Tai Chi is slow moving, it's possible that it may not register your steps. I recommend attaching it to your ankle by clipping it to your sock or using a strap big enough to go around your ankle. This way you can get recognition for all the Tai Chi steps you take, forward and backward.

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## 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@Hilburnpartner.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.

*"You are not a drop in the ocean. You are  
the entire ocean, in a drop."*

*~ Rumi*

