

Lake Norman Tai Chi Times

For A Healthy Body, Focused Mind and Positive Spirit

“You should sit in meditation for twenty minutes every day — unless you’re too busy. Then you should sit for an hour.”

-Zen proverb

April, 2015

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Message From Sifu

Mindfulness For A Better Life

Lately I've had the mind on my mind. I've read "Leonardo's Brain" by Leonard Shlain, "Your Brain at Work: Strategies for Overcoming Distraction, Regaining Focus, and Working Smarter All Day Long" by David Rock, "Buddha's Brain" by Rick Hanson and Richard Mendius, and "Mastermind: How to Think Like Sherlock Holmes" by Maria Konnikova. All these books are related to the mind, and they have in common tips and techniques to make you smarter, focused, aware, to be better at work, deduce like Sherlock Holmes, enlightened like Buddha or be as creative as Leonardo DaVinci. Luckily, these books have much in common.

Of all the techniques and tips in these books, the one that is most recommended to change how your mind works, is to be more mindful. If we are more mindful, or aware, of our surroundings, we become more observant of patterns, things that are out of the ordinary, and details of objects and events that would otherwise go unnoticed by the average person. Mindfulness is the core that leads to all change that one wants to make in their life.

In Tai Chi, we are taught to be mindful, or aware. Aware of our bodies, through internal awareness. Aware of our surroundings through external awareness. We have all sorts of tools that allow us to improve our awareness and mindfulness. Breathing techniques, Stance training, Solo, Partner and Weapons forms, Push Hands practice, and Tai Chi Chuan Techniques and Applications. But, the simplest, easiest method we have to achieve mindfulness is through meditation.

I've talked extensively about meditation over the years. I personally meditate daily and I feel that it has been a major contributor to my balanced outlook on life. Although, I still need work with how I react to those drivers on 485 who have no consideration for other drivers. Meditation isn't the answer to all of my life's challenges, but it has given me the insight and the proper frame of mind to face those challenges, and in some cases, overcome them.

To make any muscle in the body stronger, you need to stress it beyond it's current limits. That stress breaks down the muscle. The muscle then undergoes a healing process which makes that muscle stronger. During this process, you may experience pain and stiffness, but it shouldn't deter you from the process.

The mind is no different. The act of meditation, at the beginning, will stress both the mind and the body. Through consistent and persistent practice, that stress will diminish. Group meditation, a knowledgeable instructor, and access to books about meditation, are helpful.

In addition to the books I mentioned above, there is a show on the National Geographic channel called "Brain Games." Each episode highlights how the mind reacts to topics such as stress, addiction, competition, food, trust and language. It gives us insight on how our mind works and shows us ways to overcome some of the automatic reactions our minds have.

Our minds are very complex. We are just beginning to discover how capable our minds are. Through the use of meditation and mindfulness, we can give our minds the tools to improve our capabilities and minimize the effects of external forces.

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Student Promotions



Block Promotions

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

Jeff Blackwell

Pat Blackwell

Kazumi Day

Congratulations to these students for being promoted to **Low Block C, Mid Intermediate** level:

Rodrick Davis

Shane Stull

Lineage Promotions

Congratulations to **Kazumi Day** for being promoted to Student Level.

Congratulations to **Rodrick Davis** for being promoted to Disciple Level. Rod has the distinction of being the first student at the Hall of the White Snake to be promoted to this level.

Way to go everyone! Keep up the hard work.

Special Events

Yoga Teacher Training – 100 hours

Friday May 15 through May 25th at The Peaceful Dragon

This intensive Yoga Teacher Training course will be led by Lama Andrey Lappa and Yogini Mara Healy. The classes will be daily Friday, May 15th through Sunday May 25th from 8am to 7pm with a break for lunch. This series will cover “A Powerful & Complete Himalayan Vinyasa Education”. For more information or to register, please [see the main page](#).



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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



April Holidays and Observances

Amateur Radio Month
 Brussels Sprouts and Cabbage Month
 Car Care Month
 Celebrate Diversity Month
 Couple Appreciation Month
 Cranberries and Gooseberries Month
 Fresh Florida Tomatoes Month
 Home Improvement Time
 International Guitar Month
 International Twit Award Month
 Jazz Appreciation Month
 Library Snapshot Month
 Math Awareness Month
 National Grilled Cheese Sandwich Month
 National Garden Month
 National Humor Month
 National Pecan Month
 Physical Wellness Month
 School Library Media Month
 Stress Awareness Month
 Tomatillo and Asian Pear Month
 Workplace Conflict Awareness Month

Golden Rule Week: 1-7
 Money Smart Week: 5-12
 National Robotics Week: 13-19
 National Pie Championships: 26-28
 Air Quality Awareness Week: 28-5/2

National Fun Day: 1

National Fun at Work Day: 1
 Don't Go To Work Unless It's Fun Day: 3
 Vitamin C Day: 4
 National Deep Dish Pizza Day: 5
 Qing Ming Jie (China): 5
 New Beers Eve: 6
 Qing Ming Jie (China): 6
 National Beer Day: 7
 Qing Ming Jie (China): 7
 Buddha Day: 8
 Trading Cards For Grown-ups Day: 8
 The Day of Valor (Philippines): 9
 D.E.A.R. Day (aka Drop Everything And Read): 12
 Grilled Cheese Sandwich Day: 12
 International Day of Human Space Flight: 12
 Licorice Day: 12
 National Pecan Day: 14
 National Library Day: 15
 National Stress Awareness Day: 16
 National Wear Your Pajamas To Work Day: 18
 National Garlic Day: 19
 Husband Appreciation Day: 19
 National Chocolate-covered Cashews Day: 21
 National Jelly Bean Day: 22
 Impossible Astronaut Day: 23
 Take Our Daughters & Sons to Work Day: 24
 National Herb Day: 26
 National Pretzel Day: 26
 World Tai Chi & Qigong Day: 26
 National Honesty Day: 30





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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 as the Primary Prevention of Stroke in Middle-aged and Elderly Adults

March 20, 2015 - Stroke is a major healthcare problem with serious long-term disability and is one of the leading causes of death in the world. Prevention of stroke is considered an important strategy. In its latest issue, the journal Evidence-based complementary and alternative medicine reported a systematic review of using Tai Chi as the primary prevention of stroke in middle-aged and elderly adults.

Seven electronic databases were searched, and 36 eligible studies with a total of 2393 participants were identified. Primary outcome measures, Tai Chi exercise combined with other intervention had a significant effect on decreasing the incidence of nonfatal stroke. For the risk factors of stroke, pooled analysis demonstrated that Tai Chi exercise was associated with lower body weight, BMI, FBG level, and decreasing SBP, DBP, plasma TC, and LDL-C level regardless of the intervention period less than half a year or more than one year. It was also associated with significantly raised HDL-C level in comparison to nonintervention.

Compared with other treatments, Tai Chi intervention on the basis of the same other treatments in patients with chronic disease also showed the beneficial effect on lowering blood pressure.

In conclusion, this systematic review indicates that Tai Chi exercise is beneficially associated with the primary prevention of stroke in middle-aged and elderly adults by inverting the high risk factors of stroke.

Training Tip

Plan your day, everyday!

The best way to accomplish all that you need to do during the day is to plan your day. Take 15 minutes at the beginning of your day and write down all the tasks you want to complete during the day. These could include work tasks, your honey-do list at home, and even things you need to do to better yourself such as reading and exercising.

An advanced tip would be to plan your day the night before. When you're ready to start work in the morning, you won't have to think about what to do. You just look at the list you made the night before and get rocking!

Ask Sifu

Is it advisable to practice my Tai Chi just before I go to bed to help me sleep better?

I certainly wouldn't recommend it. Tai Chi and Qigong are, by their very nature, energy arts. They are used to develop chi, distribute chi, and help clear any blockages of chi in the body. You definitely want this during the day when you hit the after lunch slump, but not before you go to bed.

What you do an hour or two before you go to bed determines the quality and quantity of sleep you'll get. Your sleep environment also plays a big part. There are many thoughts as to the proper environment for sleep. At a minimum, your bedroom should be dark. The temperature should be on the cool side. Keep all electronics out of the bedroom. Ideally, you should go to bed at the same time and wake up at the same time every day. You should begin and end each day with 20 to 30 minutes of meditation.

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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 and put **Newsletter Ad** in the subject.

"If every 8 year old in the world is taught meditation, we will eliminate violence from the world within one generation."

- Dalai Lama

