

european school of t'ai chi

NEWSLETTER JUN 2023

Tao Te Ching No 6

The Valley Spirit never dies
It is called the Mysterious Female

The entrance to the Mysterious
Female
Is called the root of Heaven and Earth,

Endless flow
of Inexhaustible energy.

S Addiss & S Lombardo



The Tao
is the breath that never dies.
It is a Mother to All Creation.
It is the root and ground of every soul
- the fountain of Heaven and Earth,
laid open.

Endless source, endless river
River of no shape, river of no water
Drifting invisibly from place to place

...it never ends
and it never fails.

Man Ho Kwok, Martin Palmer, Jay Ramsay



Welcome

It is wonderful to be able to report how our School continues to be such a constant source of compassionate support for all who come into its orbit - Metta in action!

Over the past year it has managed to keep offering Wednesday Zoom sessions (6 - 7 pm). alongside regular classes throughout the UK. In February our AGM offered opportunity in person and on Zoom to explore our way forward and how we can meet your, and our, needs - an ongoing inquiry.

World t'ai chi day was honoured by several of our teachers on 29th April and in early June we held our retreat at Springhead. We aim to continue this rhythm of restorative weekends, away from our busy lives, each spring and autumn. Thus Tew will be leading our next gathering at Springhead on 6 - 9th Oct for an extended three night stay.

The website awaits your regular visits to access a rich resource of teachings and shared insights - do look at it frequently, as things do come and go, as is the nature of all things.

Wishing us all well,

Jos Hadfield



After Springhead

This bowl of a garden,
held within the rim of hills,
where 7 springs bubble up
to flow into the spacious lake.
Vibrant coloured borders,
riotous and surprising,
a vast array of bloom, scent and leaf.

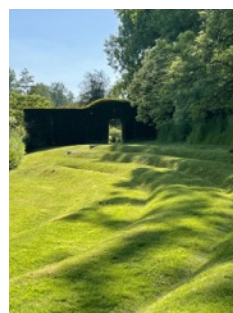


Guardian of the eastern end of the lake,
a magnificent copper beech
offers its trunk and canopy to shelter all beings.
Wild patches of long grass and meadow flowers
flank the sauntering mown paths,
slowing us down to breathe, and absorb.



Walking the round of the lake,
pausing to admire the sparks of beauty,
waltzing around the fulsome leaves
and blowsy blossoms in dappled patches of green.
Going beneath and through the tranquil arbour of trees,
before breaking out into the bright sunshine.

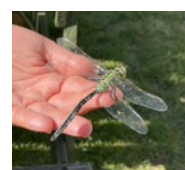
Waking up,
Seeing more clearly,
feeling so blessed to be there and then.
A bubbling sense of joy, of gratitude,
of happiness in this particular moment.
Nowhere else to be, no-one else to be.
Just that, just this.
Coming to slowly stand and greet.



Arriving into a verdant amphitheatre,
opening on to the lake and up to the hill,
passing through a green portal of yew
into the practice space
where ducks stand unconcernedly
by the water's edge.



This wider lawn, rolled and mown over the years,
where we can all meet to dance the Tao.
A space to work through our feelings and experiences
in communal support and safety.
Resting in the Wu.



Jos

Terry

Springhead in early summer. All the elements
singing their song.
Water birds at home on the lake.
springs bubbling up from the earth.
Dragonflies swooping ...dancing among the
reeds.
Breezes travelling through the trees with leaves
“shining like shook foil”
A benediction....

Jos’s intuitive sounding out...responding and
encouraging.
Listening with the senses.
Listening within.
Allowing
Trusting

A place of blessing and safety.



Cath

I found the retreat a safe space to learn, unlearn,
grow and connect in a beautiful location after a
difficult three years that had left me somewhat
fragile and unconfident. There was a warm
welcome from all, even though many are
longstanding friends there was still room for me.
The teaching from Jos was clear, inspiring and
thought-provoking with a good mix of energy –
from contact exercises to quiet meditation and
reflection. I also learned a lot from the others at
the retreat who were patient as I learned. The
weekend was challenging, in a very good way,
empowering, and enlightening for me, and two days
later I am still riding high with a new found
confidence and happiness. Amazing weather and
delicious food were the icing on the (vegan) cake.



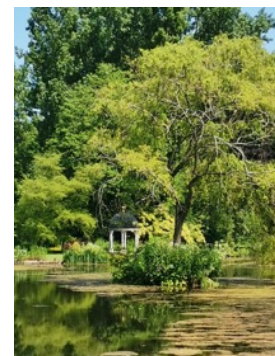
Sasha
a glorious weekend
in so many ways



Rodney

Nine step small epiphany

I love the nine step walking meditation, as it feels like a stroll, in the
countryside, on a Cornish beach, or as was the case on the weekend by
the beautiful lake at Springhead. It always feels so free and easy. Small as it
might seem, my epiphany came whilst doing the 9 step meditation.
As is so often the case the Wuji, the pause, had been at the centre of our
weekend retreat and I always enjoy that moment of stillness at the end of
the nine steps before starting off in another random direction. As is my
tendency in life (not just with the nine steps) I am often keen to get on my
way, on with the next ‘thing’, but during this weekend I enjoyed lengthening
the second pause before I set off on my travels, and now I will always
remember that moment when I found a double Wu.
Thank you Springhead, Jos and all the group for making that possible.



An excerpt from the Blog 'Chi on the Heath' - the whole piece can be found on the School website

As the seasons pass the trees change visibly, shedding their leaves, revealing the gashes in their trunks, the wounds in their branches, gently reminding us of the changing nature of impermanence; that one day we will return to merge with the forest floor. The trees know about death, our deaths. They were witnesses when we honoured the passing of friends and family, members of our little sangha. They listened to our prayers, our poems and our dedications. Maybe, in their way they wept with us.

In return we can offer them the four colours of our hearts, the immeasurable qualities of our humanity; the loving kindness of metta, gold as sunlight, the forgiveness of karuna, blue as the sky above the trees, the leaf green empathy of mudita and the open hearted equanimity of ubekkha, red as autumn leaves. Our voices quietly touch the space, reverberating up through the trees as the movement of our arms harmonises with the movement of the branches in the dome above us. Together we can touch the source.

Sue McAlpine 2021

Theme for Louanne's day retreat
in Oxford, May '23

A Dance

The stepping-stones, once
in a row along the slope,
have drifted out of line,
pushed by frosts and rains.
Walking is no longer thoughtless
over them, but alert as dancing,
as tense and poised, to step
short, and long, and then
longer, right, and then left.
At the winter's end, I dance
the history of its weather.

Wendell Berry



Forthcoming Events 2023

Wednesdays on Zoom 6 -7pm

Holding the Centre Retreat

20- 24 July Roselidden, Cornwall

Courage & Compassion Retreat
with Tew Bunnag

6 -9 Oct Springhead

for more info contact
info@metta-taichi.org.uk

