



JOY THROUGH MOVEMENT AND BEYOND
T'ai Chi Chih International Conference
Huron, OH—July 21-24, 2011
Alice Holden, CCVI

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I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to research JOY for presentation at the annual conference and relish sharing, to the best of my ability, the essence of the PowerPoint presentation.

My sincere wish is to look at the title of our practice and the text: T'AI CHI CHIH -- Joy Thru Movement! Then, to see how opposite it is from the popular worldview, both in religious and secular societies. Finally, to affirm our practice of T'ai Chi Chih and Seijaku as it brings all of us to the JOY beyond this life.

JOY, three letters having one meaning. An artist friend of mine dedicated a year of her life to painting only the word JOY over and over again. She said it had a tremendous influence on her life. What does JOY mean to you and why do you think Justin Stone chose that word to be in the subtitle of his text? (discussion)

It could mean, as a student told me, "Just Open Yourself". Another three-letter word came to mind: GOD, again three letters with one meaning (which has been given bad press). But just suppose that God is really the Source of our joy. . . that God was composed not of three letters, but three Persons in one great Energy? Thoughts ran to **Jesus** (the Word or Son), **Other** (a new name given to the Holy Spirit as we get to know how She operates), **YHWH** (the Hebrew Word used in the Jewish tradition that names the Mother/Father God Who is ONE with and equal to the Son and Other). These three are the Source of us and of all Joy according to the German philosopher, Josef Pieper. But we need not go that far. Justin Stone said it all in our Text p. 6: "The T'ai Chi Chih practices are designed to activate, circulate and balance the Divine Energy (CHI) lying dormant in each one of us." And again, "A long time practitioner of TCC will know well that the goal is to unite the Divine Energy within each one of us with the Universal Energy."

So the Joy which bubbles up within us is uniting us with the Trinity (a word used by Tertullian in the 2nd century to describe the three in one reality of the Divine Essence. He apologized that it was not found in scripture, but it was the best he could do to name the energy he saw in the action of God in the world). Justin continues, "The closer we are to JOY (not pleasure), the nearer we are to Reality, God, or whatever we want to call It. A gloomy, unhealthy Sage would be a contradiction (Spiritual Odyssey 31).

"The Zen view is that we create ourselves in every moment (SQ 13). In other words, we must take the responsibility to make ourselves JOYful, to transform ourselves right here and now. "JOY becomes our natural heritage" (SQ 23). To obtain this heritage one must **Just Open Yourself**, listen to intuition, grow in love and all the other virtues or powers of the Divine. Not only that, but "Tantra promises that every cell in the body can be brought to a point of singing with JOY" (SQ 18). "As the Zen Master Seigen said as he was dying, "Better than Zen Doctrine, the Joy of Living" (SQ 33). In other words, "Through T'ai Chi Chih practice...the world we see begins to change" (SQ 23). We see the world with God's eyes. Everything belongs and we can sing the JOY SONG, which Justin created:

JOY, JOY, JOY, JOY
HEALING WITH JOY
JOY, JOY, JOY, JOY
HEALING WITH JOY.

JOY IN MY HEART

JOY IN MY MIND
JOY IN MY SOUL
JOY, JOY, JOY, JOY
HEALING WITH JOY.

One with all life: Happy am I.
One with all life: Healthy am I.
One with all life: Holy am I. (Ref.)

One with the earth: Joyous am I.
One with the sun: Joyous am I.
One with the sky: Joyous am I. (Ref.)

Free as the breeze: Joyous am I.
Free as the clouds: Joyous am I.
Right as the rain: Joyous am I. (Ref.)

But what happened? Why is this not the case always? Our world is turned upside down by the EGO. The word "EGO" means our rational self and it is not always bad. We need an ego to get on with life. Writers have, however, suggested that we have a true ego, which is in tune with God and with JOY, and a false ego. The true or healthy ego works with the Divine Energy as a Friend: Expecting God to Organize their lives with them. The false Ego is fear-filled, and thinking itself alone, begins Edging God Out, bringing in much dualistic thinking. We judge, compare, need to know everything with certitude. We know we want to be Joyful, but create only artificial joys when in the negative ego. "Where there is an artificial high there is an artificial low: only True Joy which is not the result of some action is different" (SQ 138). For example, the Jewish people had the commission to keep alive the belief that there is only ONE God. To do this well, the Divine Energy gave them the commandments. One says to keep holy the Lord's Day. That is Sunday for the Christians, Saturday for the Jews. One day to rest, to turn our thoughts to the Divine, to be filled with love for family, for country, for life, for God. What do we do with the sabbath rest in our culture? Shop? Catch up on work? Entertain our selves with distractions? Then think about Christmas and Easter? Again, our philosopher, Josef Pieper has much to say on that topic.

Speaking of Shopping Malls, Justin says that "Our economic life is based on selfishness in the form of heartless competition and this is the opposite of an enlightened point of view" (SQ 13) "Until all have some idea of interrelatedness, there will be wars, suffering, and injustice" (SQ 16).

How do we turn this around? Our TCC and Seijaku practices are but one way. Justin asks, "Why make spiritual progress? Because it is the only way to JOY" (SQ 138). Justin wrote that the way we relate to one another is very important. "To look down on another man or culture is to insult God" (XX C. Psalms 5). "If you dislike people, how can you love God?" (XX C. Psalms 38). Justin also shows how most religious bodies misinterpret the indwelling reality of the Divine and perpetuate the false ego. "Man is sure he's the center of everything, made in God's image when in truth . . . Churches perpetuate this egotism" (XX C. Psalms 38). This also leads to the thought that God is other, rather than one with and within His/Her creation. "Without compassion, there is no Wisdom. Accumulation of knowledge can be like over-eating. Let 'What is' shine thru in the Silence; It's always there anyway" (XX C. Psalms 6). My final quote from Justin Stone: "'JOY' is always there; it only has to be uncovered" (XX C. Psalms 7).

Now I would like to add a few of my own verses.

Don't
Lament
Past Mistakes
Be T'ai Chi Chih
Consciously
Spreading
Joy.

Go
Gently
To the Core
Of Your Being
And Find There
Love and
Joy.

JOY
Is Proof
That God Smiles
On Creation
And Still Says
It is
Good!

My Lord Told Me a Joke

My Lord told me a joke.
"It's not about that,"
He said,
"It's about this. . ."
And grinned from ear to ear."

My Lord told me a joke.
"You think I'm there,"
He said,
But I'm right here,
Twinkling in your eye.

My Lord told me a joke.
"Everyone thinks I'm invisible,"
He said,

“But really I’m everything you see,
But in drag.”

My Lord told me a joke.
“People take me so seriously,”
He said,
“When really I’m 3 in 1
Dancing.”

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- Thomas Keating, Fruits and Gifts of the Holy Spirit
- Robert E. Kennedy, SJ, Zen Spirit, Christian Spirit
- Josef Pieper, Leisure-The Basis of Culture
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