

In Not Seeking Proof, You Find It

By Vincent J. Lasorso Jr.

Only the nothingness of the Tao exists of and by itself. Everything else in the universe exists in relationship to and in comparison with something else. This is the simple rule of Tai Chi, cause/effect and relativity.

In the way of the Tao, everything is as it is. A rock is a rock. There is no comparison so it is in harmony, the Wu Chi.

However, when consciousness enters the equation, the action of T'ai Chi begins. Harmony exists as the natural balance of differing aspects of the whole.

Then, springing forth from consciousness, a concept of individuality is born and with that, the observer of quantum physics genre is created, and we now have a center for the universe . . . a self.

It seems the only purpose for a self is to set about proving its own individual existence. It hopes that in the process of proving its individuality, it will find a meaning, a worth to its existence.

In the self's quest for proving individuality, it has lost the harmony of T'ai Chi and the peace of the rock.

As students, we learn by comparing ourselves to abstract standards and the example of our teachers.

As beginners, we know where we stand. Our teachers' and seniors' abilities and knowledge are so far above our own that they even appear unattainable. So we focus on practice rather than humiliating comparisons.

Then comes a day when the differences between us and others is not very well defined; in fact, you might even say we are different aspects of the same thing!

But, remember, the purpose of a self is to prove its individuality; thus, sameness is unacceptable. So means are developed to tangibly determine differences through competitions.

The purpose of these competitions is to help everyone know where they stand in reference to abstract standards and other selves. Since selves will be selves, these competitors become bat-

tlegrounds proving whose techniques and philosophies are best. Who's right? Who's wrong? Who cares!!

There is a great master of T'ai Chi Ch'uan living in San Francisco who would always emphatically tell his students, "I am not a boxer."

It was not because he lacked skill. Indeed, he had proven himself in combat, had an impeccable, impressive lineage, and had mastered abilities most people don't believe exist.

No, he is not a boxer because he doesn't need to prove himself. He has no need to prove his skills because he has transcended his need to be an individual.

Often I have read or heard from multi-decade T'ai Chi Ch'uan practitioners that they had studied with and seen demonstrations from great Tai Chi masters, never witnessing any "supernatural" feats.

Their conclusion is that since they haven't seen any proof, these abilities can't exist.

I lament for their lack of experience, but I also must ask: why should a master demonstrate his/her

supernatural abilities to satisfy the petty egotistical desires of a student or a group?

These demonstrations are given not to please the self of a student or master, but to support destiny. I'll cite two examples.

I started my study of Shaolin Kung-Fu from a senior disciple of a master who had developed remarkable psychic and psychokinetic abilities through his art.

Since I had entered into the martial arts to learn about this aspect, I jumped at the opportunity to meet this master.

There was a small group of students informally gathered around the master as he demonstrated.

While he was demonstrating a form, a psychokinetic event occurred between us that was unanticipated by either of us. It was an undeniably dramatic experience that altered my concept of reality and determined my course of study in martial arts.

As they say, read it and I'll forget. See it and I'll remember. Experience it and understand!

Many years ago, a good friend of mine was studying with a well-known Chinese T'ai Chi master. During the class, a student decided to test the master and unexpectedly attacked him.

The master, using no visible technique, hurled the student across the room and up onto a fireplace mantle. The student became sick with intestinal problems which continued on for three more days.

The master taught the remaining students how to develop this unusual ability. Although none of the students personally used these methods, my friend was able to successfully train two students in psychokinesis.

The point of these stories is not the phenomena! The point to this and many other anecdotes I know is that all the people involved in these inci-

dents were sincerely seeking truth and knowledge, not proof! And in not seeking proof, they found understanding!

The real issue of this article is that in the process of seeking to prove our individuality, our separateness, we become entangled in an infinite amount of comparisons and competitions with other selfs.

We become so focused on defining differences that we miss the "sameness". We must define differences not for the purpose of exclusion but for inclusion so that we may obtain the harmony of differing aspects of the same whole. T'ai Chi.

Due to some different training practices and living experiences, I have had some unique Tai Chi Chuan experiences.

But in comparison, I have so many more experiences in common with any serious T'ai Chi student that to seriously say my ideas and techniques

are any better, or are worth more than anyone else's, is nonsense.

We each have the common conflict to transcend. The conflict that creates all the confusion and necessity for proof. The conflict of self/no self. It's the only conflict that matters.

You don't resolve this conflict overnight or even after many years. There are many things to learn, many pathways to travel, and many proofs required to develop the ability to resolve the conflict of individuality, and the ability to understand the power and peace of the rock.

One will never see the true depths and meaning of Tai Chi Chuan, or life itself, if one continually focuses on technique and individuality. Techniques are the skills of technicians. Individuality is the root of lonely isolation. These are not the way of mastery. These are not the way of the Tao. These are the way of limitation. ●