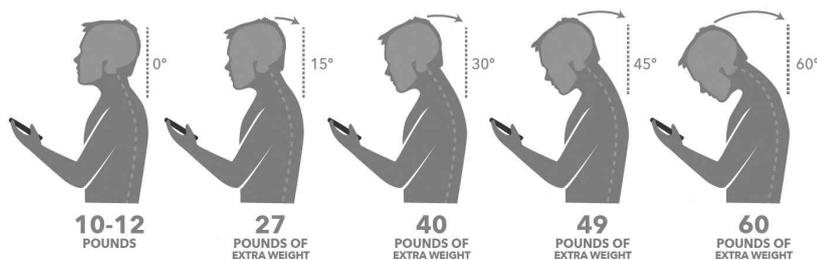




## Tai Chi Can Help 'Thorny' Problem

An attention-grabbing headline on the morning news recently went something like this: 'Younger Generations Growing Horns at the Back of Their Heads'. Yikes! Apparently, researchers from the University of the Sunshine Coast had found that around half of young people aged 18-30 had developed stalactite-like growths at the back of their skulls, potentially setting the stage for neck problems later in life. The researchers attributed the growths to the phenomena more commonly known as 'text neck', or forward head posture.

The increasing amount of attention that people (particularly the young) are giving their digital devices, means that our heads are being carried in a different position than nature intended. Instead of the skull and vertebrae being stacked neatly on top of one another in a relaxed position, the weight of the head is perpetually toppling forward when we look at our phones. This places tremendous strain on the muscles at the back of the neck; forcing our bodies to respond through the development of stronger, more prominent anchor points for these muscles to attach. Researchers foresee problems later on however, when the growths could potentially impede normal range of motion.



Tai Chi offers a solution to this most modern of problems. During our tai chi practise, correct postural alignment should be at the forefront of our awareness, over time helping us become mindful of our posture throughout our day, regardless of the activity we're engaged in.

Applying this to our head position, it is helpful to draw to mind the first of Yang Cheng Fu's 'Ten Essential Principles'. It calls for practitioners to "elevate the crown and lift the spirit". This means the neck must be straightened and the head should be upright so the *shen* (spirit) can float to the top of the head. Do not use force to align the neck; rather the feeling should be of emptying the thoughts so that the head becomes naturally buoyant.

Further study of the bio-mechanics of tai chi and efficient movement principles will be included in the Academy's 43rd Annual Health Retreat weekend coming up this 24th-25th August. To book your spot, contact head office on 02 9797 9355. Places are limited.

### AATC Annual Retreat 2019

The AATC's 43rd Annual Health Training Retreat is on again from 24<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> August at the magnificent Collaroy Centre, Collaroy.

In this idyllic location, attendees are introduced to new skills and techniques, deeper aspects of the art, and plenty of opportunity for personal practice and to catch up with old friends.

Spaces are limited and filling fast; visit [khorlivingchi.com.au/events](http://khorlivingchi.com.au/events) for more information and to book.

### Belmont Citi Seniors' Day

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> August is Belmont Citi Centre's inaugural Seniors' Day – and we're taking part!

An expo-style event, come along between 9am-4pm to browse the stalls, and see our tai chi public performance.

More information at <https://www.facebook.com/khortaichi>

### Just Announced: NEW Gosford Workshop

Just announced workshop: 21<sup>st</sup> September at Gosford 50+ Leisure & Learning Centre.

In-depth training on the eight heart calming exercises of the Yellow Emperor's Tao Yin, plus excerpts from Shibashi X.

Speak to your instructor or call head office to book in early.



## TCM Perspective: A Tea for Every Season

Did you know that according to Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) theory, there is a proper time of year to enjoy each of the many various teas available?

In the spring it is desirable to drink white tea, as this tea's energy corresponds to the season of spring. During the summer months, yellow and green tea varieties should be enjoyed.

Each of these have higher levels of polyphenols and have a cooling / down-regulating effect; cleaning up free radicals produced in the body in greater quantities during the more active months.

Oolong teas are appropriate in the autumn, as they share the energies of both summer and winter. Finally, black tea or pu-erh tea is best in winter time. These teas warm and tonify the body, containing chemicals which support the metabolism over the cooler months.

## Student Story: Bev

by Bev Harris (AATC Student)



"I initially started tai chi with the hope of improving my balance and help with managing chronic pain. I was diagnosed with fibromyalgia almost twenty years ago and told there was no treatment, but was advised to try to stay physically active. I walk every day and played tennis but neither seemed to help ease the pain I was in or improve my sleep.

I liked the sound of tai chi and contacted my instructor who thought it would be helpful. I have been doing it now for over a year and the health benefits have surpassed my expectations.

My pain has improved and as a consequence my sleep has improved. With the improvement of my sleep, my overall mental health has improved. I find I think more clearly and as the instructor puts it those 'chattering monkeys' are so much quieter now.



"We found this in your brain."

Balance has always been an issue for me; this has vastly improved to the extent that I can again climb over my rock garden to do the gardening I so enjoy and I no longer need to always hold onto a handrail to negotiate stairs and escalators.

I have more energy and can keep up with my two year old grandson. I can get up and down off the floor without difficulty (very important when playing with a two year old) and I can out-run him, just!

My cognitive memory gets a work out from memorising the movements, names of the movements and sequence—which can only be a good thing as I get older.

My instructor is excellent, I enjoy the classes immensely and see tai chi becoming an important part of my health regime for many years to come and look forward to becoming fitter, pain free and even better balanced mentally and physically in the years ahead."

*Have a Student Story of your own? We want to hear it! Submit to danw@live.com.au for the chance to be included in future newsletters.*



### Seen Online: 'Tai Chi Around The World'

Last year, YouTuber George Thompson asked people from around the world to submit videos of themselves performing tai chi in their home towns—and then published the results. Go and check out the amazing video he compiled here: <https://youtu.be/qxAf0V6yVDs>.

George has a growing library of videos online documenting his own personal journey with tai chi, including how it helped him overcome anxiety, here: <https://youtu.be/ia709MhoOB0>. While well worth a look for the brilliant footage alone, be sure to check out the two videos linked above and reflect on your own path with tai chi. How far have you come?



## The Essence of True Tranquility: A Taoist Story

Once upon a time in ancient China, the emperor was in his study, looking over volumes of diplomatic documents. He found it hard to concentrate, so he summoned his most trusted minister. When the minister arrived, he saw that the emperor was pacing back and forth, looking irritable.

The emperor said to him, "I wish to focus on the affairs of the state, but my mind is unsettled and agitated. When I feel like this, I need something I can look at to help me regain tranquility. Go and find the best artist in the land and have him create a painting that has the power to calm me down. I want the theme of this painting to be 'True Tranquility.'"

"As you command, Your Majesty."

A few days later, the minister reported that there were three artists widely considered to be the best in China. They were equally talented, so he brought all of them into the palace. Once they understood what the emperor wanted, they began painting.

When the work was done, the emperor went into the studio with the minister to see for himself. The first painting they looked at depicted a placid lake surrounded by mountains. It was a beautiful scene; the surface of the lake was perfectly still and conveyed a peaceful feeling. The emperor smiled. "This is beautiful."

The second painting showed a snowscape. It evoked the silence after a snowfall, a deep silence that went beyond mere lack of noise, because the

snow banks absorbed all sound. Both the minister and the emperor nodded their approval. "Very insightful," said the emperor.

They looked at the third painting, which featured a turbulent waterfall. "I am sorry, Your Majesty," the minister said. "It looks like this artist did not understand my instructions to paint a scene of serenity. Let me discard this painting, and we can choose from the first two." He reached for the painting, but the emperor stopped him: "No, wait." He stared at it for a moment longer, and then he said: "This is the painting for me."

"What? But—Your Majesty! How can this waterfall compare to the other two in representing tranquility? I do not understand!"

"The waterfall is not the most important thing in this painting," said the emperor. "Look again."

The minister took another look at the painting, more carefully this time. He saw that there was a tree next to the waterfall. One of the branches of the tree held a nest. A bird was sleeping inside that nest.

"See how the bird is able to relax and rest even though the deafening torrent is so close to it," the emperor pointed out. "It has such a profound quietness within, that external conditions have no power to irritate or disturb. Now that is the essence of true tranquility!"

*This story is an excerpt from 'The Tao Of Success', a book by Derek Lin, and published by Tarcher/Penguin.*



## Great Turnout For Newcastle Free Park Lesson

A fantastic weekend was had by those that attended the Academy's free park lesson at Croudace Bay Park in Newcastle earlier this month. Do not miss the opportunity to attend your next local event; check our events page regularly and follow us on Facebook: [facebook.com/khortaichi](https://facebook.com/khortaichi) to stay connected!



# Ice Festival & Water Silk Rd Tour 5-18 Jan 2020

**Ice Festival** - Ice & Snow sculptures \* *Siberian Tigers Snow Park*

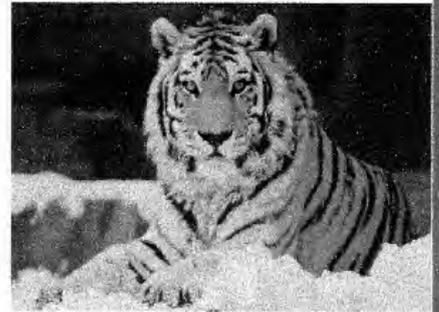
*Ice diving performance \* Silver Mountain \* Emerald lakes \**

*Emperors Palaces \* Russian architecture*

**Ocean Silk Road** -Admiral Zheng's Dragon Ships of Ming Dynasty

**South Shaolin Temple, Lao Tzu,** Glass Platform Experience

**Earth Round House** - Lifestyle & culture of the Hakka Gypsies



**All inclusive : Travel, Meals, Hotels, Sightseeing \$5299**

All Enquiries : (02) 9797 9355

Australian Academy of Tai Chi

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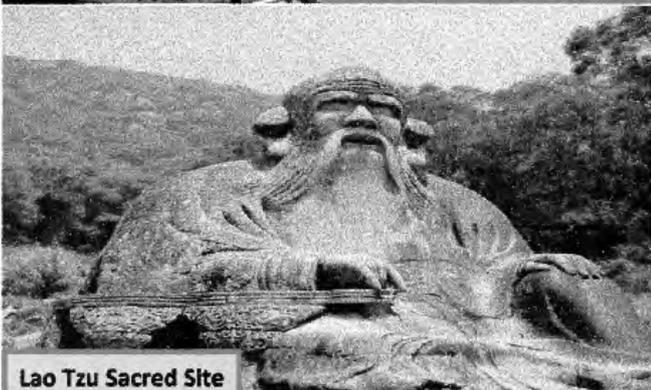
Web: [www.khorlivingchi.com.au](http://www.khorlivingchi.com.au)



Tolou mudbrick houses



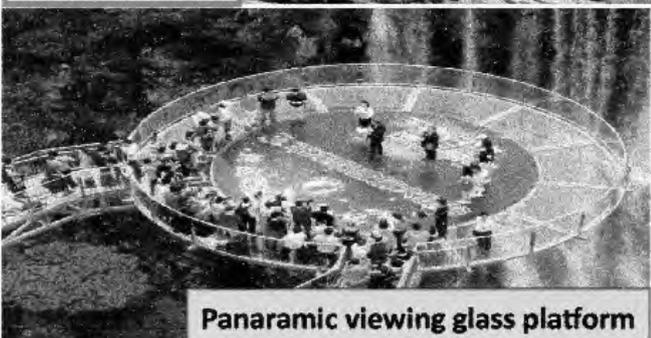
Jilin meteorite museum



Lao Tzu Sacred Site



Southern Shaolin Monastery



Panaramic viewing glass platform



Admiral Zheng maritime Silk Rd