



Linda's T'ai Chi Weekly Handout August 7, 2022

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Numbers have symbolic meaning across all cultures and the same number can have different meanings from one culture to another. A number could signify good fortune and good luck or it can signify bad luck and an ominous fortune depending on the culture. Numbers also have different connotation based on the context- cultural associations, religious, philosophic, and aesthetic meanings.

“Humanity has had a love-hate relationship with numbers from the earliest times. Bones dating from perhaps 30,000 years ago show scratch marks that possibly represent the phases of the Moon. The ancient Babylonians observed the movements of the planets, recorded them as numbers, and used them to predict eclipses and other astronomical phenomena. The priesthood of ancient Egypt used numbers to predict the flooding of the Nile. Pythagoreanism, a cult of ancient Greece, believed that numbers were the basis of the entire universe, which ran on numerical harmony. “(stolen shamelessly from Britannica.)

Let's take for example, the Jewish culture. In Hebrew, each letter has a numerical value. The number 10 is the letter Yod or Yud. The number 8 is the letter, Het. Het-Yod spells the word Chai usually pronounced like the English word “hi” or “high,” which is a word and symbol that means “life.” In fact, a common Jewish toast is “L'Chaim.”. As a result, the number 18 is a popular number that represents good luck. “I hope my Jewish friends will correct me if I have gotten something incorrect.

In Chinese tradition, the number 18 is pronounced 十八 (shí bā) and is considered a lucky number due to similarity with 實發 (shì fā), 'to get rich for sure'.

I don't know if that is how Shibashi got its name (good luck) but we do know that Shi ba means 18 in Mandarin; thus 18- form. It is a popular Qigong routine designed to calm and relax the body, mind and spirit to and to build strength, improve and restore balance, improve and restore good posture. It is also a good way to learn the concepts of T'ai Chi- rooting in the feet, rotating the hips, coordinating the lower and upper body and breathing deeply and smoothly.

I believe that qigong routines should be a part of every T'ai Chi class. These routines are simple to practice but not easy- coordinating mind, body and spirit as one unit of movement takes focus and practice.

August is upon us and T'ai Chi in the Park is well underway where we perform various qigong routines including Shibashi and the first set of the slow set of the Tung family long form. Come give it a try at Zuanich Park at 2600 N Loop Drive Bellingham near the community center at water's edge. Vaccinations still required.



Peace, Linda