



Linda's T'ai Chi Community Weekly Handout January 12, 2025

The Big Panda and the Tiny Dragon



“Which is more important,” asked Big Panda, “the journey or the destination?”

“The company.” said Tiny Dragon.

The friendship between the Big Panda and the Tiny Dragon remind us of two important concepts in learning T'ai Chi and Qigong. The first concept is that learning is a journey,

not a destination. Our goal is not to “get there” but to enjoy each step along the way. Each class gives us the opportunity to learn the choreography of Tai Chi and Qigong as we then integrate the essence of these two artforms into our body, mind, spirit and breath. We can't be in a hurry to learn. Sometimes we fall into the abyss of striving for quantity over quality. This is the impatience of needing to learn more and learn faster. The price we pay for this approach is our form becomes careless, disorganized and lacking in the grace of the form.

We should approach our Tai Chi and Qigong from the perspective that our learning is a journey and we get there when we get there.

The moral of the story told in a conversation our two friends is that Tai Chi and Qigong is best learned and best studied as part of a community. Learning Tai Chi or Qigong at home with a video or an online video is not the most effective way to learn. This approach misses the point that Tai Chi and Qigong are relational artforms. They begin first by finding a teacher that best suits your needs. Someone you feel you can trust. Second, are the relationships that form as a community of people who are learning together. Videos are great to augment your learning. But, in-person classes allow the teacher to give feedback on correct form or to address issues that may be unhealthy for the body (leaning back and putting pressure on the lumbar or turning the knees inwards putting stress on the tendons surrounding the knee and finally lifting the shoulders)

If you travel to Taiwan or China, you will see hundreds of people doing Tai Chi or Qigong together in the park usually early in the morning. Asian cultures put great emphasis on family relationships, friendships and social harmony. The true meaning of Tai Chi and Qigong is the sense of community that develops as we learn and grow together.

Note: when I refer to China I am referring to the people of China not the government. The people of China, like Taiwan and Japan are lovely, kind and generous people.

Peace to All, Linda