



*Health,
Meditation &
Bodywork Practices
for
Balance & Wholeness*



What is Toward Harmony?

After 14 years leading Brookline Tai Chi near Boston, Bill Ryan and Kathryn Komidar founded Toward Harmony in Northampton in 2009.

Toward Harmony is dedicated to helping people move toward more balance, compassion, wholeness, and harmony in their lives.

Our tai chi and qigong practices are drawn from Taoism's Water Tradition. Exploration of these arts can help you learn how to relax, let go, and flow—like water—with life, nature, and change.

We encourage students to be practical, centered in their bodies, and grounded on the earth.

While the practices we teach originate from Taoism, people from all walks of life participate in and enjoy our classes. Everyone is welcome.

Health or Meditation?

Taoists were particularly interested in the challenge of how to simultaneously make their bodies healthy and their minds and spirits clear.

Over thousands of years they developed rich and sophisticated tools to do so. Among these tools are our Water Tradition foundation practices.

With us you can learn to make your body more healthy and vibrant. Or you can learn to become more present, feel what is inside you, and quiet your mind and emotions.

Are you more interested in health or in meditation? You can explore either or both through our tai chi, qigong, and bodywork.

413-586-8880

www.TowardHarmony.com

info@towardharmony.com



A Gentle Approach to Better Health

Qigong masters are legendary in China for living long, vibrant lives, and for being doctors of Chinese medicine who help others do the same.

We'll teach you qigong and tai chi tools for self-help that such masters have refined, practiced, and taught for thousands of years.

These tools work differently than exercises that stretch and strengthen your muscles. Our exercises strengthen and balance your chi (qi) or life energy, which in turn tunes every system of your body from your joints, organs, and spine to your nerves, muscles, and immune system.

Over the years, our students have found our practices helpful for:

- Lower back pain
- Joint pain (e.g arthritis)
- Neck & shoulder tension
- Repetitive stress injuries
- Digestive issues
- Anxiety & depression
- Asthma
- Cancer
- many other conditions

Our teachers, Bill and Kathryn, are trained as Chinese medicine bodyworkers and bring this expertise to you in a nurturing classroom environment.

Our classes are small, and you'll receive plenty of individual attention.

You can practice our tools anywhere, anytime, even in everyday life activities. You don't need any equipment or special clothes.

A Coherent Tradition

All of the health and meditation practices that we teach were either developed within Taoism's Water Tradition or have been adapted to be consistent with its principles.

Our teacher, Bruce Frantzis, learned the way of water, including tai chi, qigong, and meditation from the late Taoist sage Liu Hung Chieh of Beijing, China.

At Toward Harmony we strive to teach the practices we have learned from Bruce in forms consistent with his and Liu's teachings.

We offer a diverse set of these practices, different ones of which will appeal to different people at different times. All are based on the same principles of development, so when you learn any of them, you are learning a facet of a whole.

Try a First Class Free

We start a new course session about every eight weeks.

During the first week or two of a session, you may take a first class free in any introductory course.

Our Teachers



Kathryn Komidar began her studies with Taoist lineage master Bruce Frantzis in 1994.

She taught tai chi and qigong at Brookline Tai Chi near Boston from 1997 to 2006.

She has practiced acupressure and qigong tui na bodywork professionally for 17 years. She especially is skilled at helping people become present in and comfortable with their bodies. Kate holds a Master of Music degree in Voice from Boston University.



Bill Ryan has studied with Taoist lineage master Bruce Frantzis for 32 years and is a senior instructor in his Energy Arts system. He also

studied for 3 years with Yang Style tai chi master Chu Gin Soon.

He particularly is adept at helping people recover from injuries and surgeries, both recent and old.

From 1992 to 2005 he founded and directed Brookline Tai Chi near Boston, which had a peak enrollment of over 450 students. He holds an M.S. in Technology and Policy from M.I.T.

Qigong

(also spelled “chi gung” or “chi kung”) is the art of developing the energy of your body, which the Chinese call chi (pronounced “chee”, also spelled “qi”). The qigong practices we teach are from the Taoist Water Tradition and help you to become more healthy, centered, balanced, and connected to the world around you.

Opening the Energy Gates of Your Body™

Energy Gates is our most fundamental qigong set and naturally stimulates the water element of your body in accord with Chinese five-element theory.

Through a Standing Meditation practice, and the Cloud Hands, three Swings, and Spine Stretch exercises, you'll learn to let



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your energy flow downward—like water—toward the earth.

You'll also learn to “dissolve” your body's tension and pain, and how to maintain healthy posture for maximum energy flow.

Introduction

You'll learn a Standing Meditation practice to help you be present to, feel, and relax into your body, while cultivating healthy posture.

You'll also learn the fundamentals of the Clouds Hands exercise for more effortless movement and the Back Release exercise to relax all your back muscles.

Try a free class and/or join from March 6 to 15

Tuesdays 5:45—7 p.m. Kathryn

Thursdays 12:30—1:45 p.m. Kathryn

Cost: \$100. Each class in a week covers the same material. Come to either or both.

7-week course runs from March 6 to April 19

Early Spring Refinements — 1st & 2nd Swings

Swings 1 and 2 enhance the circulation of energy through your lower and middle internal organs. You'll learn the legwork of each swing and how to more fully connect your legs, spine, and belly to the earth, and your arms and legs to your spine.

Prereq: Introduction to Energy Gates

Tuesdays 7—8:15 p.m. Kathryn

Thursdays 11 a.m.—12:15 p.m. Kathryn

Cost: \$100. Each class in a week covers the same material. Come to either or both. You may also attend Introduction classes, if you like.

7-week course runs from March 6 to April 19

Dragon & Tiger Qigong

Dragon and Tiger Qigong is a set of seven invigorating-yet-calming, gentle flowing exercises.

You move your hands through your energy field just outside your body to clear and stimulate your acupuncture meridians.

The exercises help you to release stress and pain and develop flexibility.

They have been used in China for purposes ranging from developing more energy for meditation to treating cancer.

Introduction

We'll teach you—in a fun and playful way—the physical movements of the 7 exercises of the Dragon & Tiger system. You'll also learn key practices within each exercise for developing your chi, i.e. your life energy.

Try a free class and/or join from March 7 to 16

Wednesdays 7—8:15 p.m. Kathryn

Fridays 12:15—1:30 p.m. Kathryn

Cost: \$100. Each class in a week covers the same material. Come to any or all.

Dates: 7-week course runs from March 7 to April 20

DVD: A simple Introduction Practice DVD is available for a cost of ten dollars.

Early Spring Refinements — Lively Hands

You'll learn how to soften and release tension in your hands to allow for maximum energy flow through your shoulders, arms, and hands.

You'll also learn how to awaken the sensitivity of your hands to enable you to more clearly feel and move chi through your acupuncture meridians.

Prerequisite: Completion of Introduction

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Photo by Mark Thayer

Wednesdays 5:45—7 p.m. Kathryn

Fridays 11 a.m.—12:15 p.m. Kathryn

Cost: \$100 For this fee you may also attend Introduction classes, if you like.

Dates: 7-week course runs from March 7 through April 20.

Drop-in Classes: We encourage you to take this course as a 7-week course. However, if your schedule is such that you can not attend on a regular basis, you may drop in, take a single class, and pay \$20 for that class.

DVD: A simple Refinements Practice DVD is available for a cost of ten dollars.

Tai Chi

Tai Chi's basic practice consists of a gentle flowing progression of movements known as a form. Tai Chi was originally developed as a martial art rooted in qigong. We teach its qigong and moving meditation aspects.

Wu Style Tai Chi

We believe the Wu Style of tai chi is the best for promoting health in the West. Its high stances protect your knees, and its emphasis on developing "yin energy" leads to deep nervous system relaxation.

Practice of the Wu Style promotes better balance and whole body health, and is particularly helpful for lower back conditions. You can use it to calm and steady your mind and deeply relax your body.

Please note that our tai chi courses are designed for students who enjoy learning in class by receiving brief, individually tailored instruction and then practicing on their own. If you prefer group instruction, then please try one of our qigong courses.

Introduction

In each class you'll learn foundation tai chi movement skills and principles of relaxation and healthy posture. In addition you'll learn the Short Form's initial movements.

Try a free class and/or join on March 5 or 12.

Mondays 6:30—7:30 p.m. Bill

Cost: \$100.

7-week course runs from March 5 to April 23. No class on March 26 as Bill will be away.

DVD: A review and practice DVD is available for the first half of the Short Form for \$25.

Forms & Refinements

Once you know the initial movements of the Short Form, you can then begin further Wu Style study in whatever manner you and the instructor see fit. Some people go deeper into the subtleties of the initial movements. Many learn the rest of the Short Form movements and then go deeper into that Form. Still others learn the Short Form and wish to go on to learn the Medium and Long Forms.

Ongoing study classes are conducted in such a way that you can learn in your own way and at your own speed. At the beginning of each class the entire group warms up with tai chi skills exercises and does the entire Short Form. You may follow along or watch. Then the instructor teaches each student individually whatever topic they wish to address, while other students practice what they have learned.

Prereq: Completion of Intro or equivalent study

Mondays	5:30—6:30 p.m.	Bill
Mondays	7:30—8:30 p.m.	Bill
Fridays	1:45—2:45 p.m.	Bill

Cost: \$100. You may come once on Mondays and/or Fridays, and also to Intro classes.

7-week course runs from Mar. 5 to Apr. 23. No classes on Mar. 26 or 30 as Bill will be away.

Drop-in Classes: You may attend for \$20/class.



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Qigong Tui Na Bodywork / Private Lessons

Would you like some personal help to nourish and balance your chi and move you toward greater health and harmony?

Our teachers are available for private lessons (for individuals or small groups), sessions in qigong tui na hands-on bodywork, or the two combined.

What is Qigong Tui Na?

Qigong Tui Na bodywork is a form of Chinese Medicine that is rarely found in the U.S. As with all branches of Chinese Medicine, its aim is to release, increase, and balance your chi to help you feel more alive, harmonious, and whole.

Qigong tui na works by unblocking, stimulating, and balancing the chi that moves through the superficial and deep channels and tissues of your body. It works with many body systems including muscles, ligaments, fascia, internal organs, blood, and nerves.

It can help you balance all types of chi within you, from the physical to the emotional to the mental to the spiritual.

A practitioner must have developed their own energy and sensitivity through qigong practice. They must be able to work very lightly or very deeply, as you need or want them to.

You wear loose, comfortable clothing and may lie down, sit, or stand.

Is Qigong Tui Na for you?

Our clients and students have found that qigong tui na has helped them with conditions ranging from asthma to arthritis, anxiety to depression, chronic pain to recent injury, and fatigue to trauma. It has also been helpful for them with feelings of "being stuck", "not

themselves", or "disconnected".

We are happy to work with you whether you study qigong or tai chi or not.



Photo by Linda Olstein

However, please note that qigong tui na coupled with tai chi or qigong practice can be especially beneficial. Our qigong tui na is a part of the tradition that we teach. Therefore our bodywork can reinforce qigong and tai chi practice and vice-versa.

Kathryn and Bill's Work

Kathryn and Bill practice qigong tui na somewhat differently.

Kathryn uses qigong tui na techniques to engage with you in a process of mindful awareness. She helps you learn to be more present in your body and to listen to it. Such mindful awareness enables your body to naturally relax, awaken, unwind, and open. She works with many who are very sensitive.

Bill uses qigong tui na to help people with specific concerns. He is particularly adept at helping people recover from injuries and surgeries, recent or old.

For more information

Please call or email us. Or visit our bodywork websites:

Kathryn: www.MindfulBodywork.com

Bill: www.BillRyanEnergyArts.com

Where to Begin?

Here are some general guidelines to help you choose among our offerings.

Dragon & Tiger (page 5) is a good choice if you: like to move and will enjoy learning and then refining a set of seven flowing, meditative movements; wish to develop more energy more quickly; enjoy learning within a group; and are a beginner or are an experienced practitioner who wishes to learn how to feel and move chi more fully and clearly.

Please consider **Energy Gates** (page 4) if you: prefer to learn fewer movements and go more deeply into them; have an interest in becoming more present, focused, and quiet; enjoy learning within a group; and are a beginner or have experience and wish to learn the more internal aspects of qigong and tai chi.

You'll enjoy **Wu Style tai chi** (page 7) if you: like to regularly learn and practice new movements; are intrigued with how you can unite your body and mind through movement; and can learn in class by receiving brief, individually tailored instruction and then practicing on your own.

If you have **special health or other concerns**, please contact us, and we'll be happy to suggest the most suitable course to take. Please note that for chronic conditions other than back and leg pain we usually recommend Dragon & Tiger qigong.

Free Demonstration & Orientation

Sunday, March 4, 1—2:15 pm

Our teachers will informally discuss and demonstrate the various arts we teach and describe our introductory courses.

This is a great opportunity to drop by, get an overview of what we teach, try some of our forms with us if you like, and have your questions answered. Bring your friends!

What to Wear

Clothes

Please wear loose-fitting clothes that do not restrict your movement.

Shoes

To keep our floors clean, we ask that you remove your shoes at our entrance. You may take class in your bare feet or socks or clean indoor shoes that you bring with you.

No Fragrances, Please

We ask that you not wear any fragrances or scented body products, to which some of our students are very sensitive.

If It Snows...

If you're not sure whether we'll hold classes, please:

- Call us at 413-586-8880 and press #1 for Toward Harmony. We'll leave a recorded message about whether we'll hold classes.

We'll decide whether to cancel your class at least three hours before it is scheduled to start. So if by that time there is no announcement on our phone, then you can assume that we will hold class.

Weekly Class Schedule Early Spring 2012 March 5 to April 23

Qigong 7-week courses begin March 6. You may try a first class for free or join through March 16. Courses will end the week of April 16. If we miss classes due to snow, we'll make those up the week of April 23.

Tai Chi 7-week courses begin March 5. You may try a first introductory class for free on March 5 or 12. Courses will end the week of April 23. No classes will be held on March 26 or 30 or April 27 because Bill will be away.

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Mondays

5:30—6:30 p.m.	Wu Style Tai Chi: Forms & Refinements	Bill
6:30—7:30 p.m.	Introduction to Wu Style Tai Chi	Bill
7:30—8:30 p.m.	Wu Style Tai Chi: Forms & Refinements	Bill

Tuesdays

5:45—7 p.m.	Introduction to Energy Gates Qigong	Kathryn
7—8:15 p.m.	Energy Gates Qigong: Refinements	Kathryn

Wednesdays

5:45—7 p.m.	Dragon & Tiger Qigong: Refinements	Kathryn
7—8:15 p.m.	Introduction to Dragon & Tiger Qigong	Kathryn

Thursdays

11 a.m.—12:15 p.m.	Energy Gates Qigong: Refinements	Kathryn
12:30—1:45 p.m.	Introduction to Energy Gates Qigong	Kathryn

Fridays

11 a.m.—12:15 p.m.	Dragon & Tiger Qigong: Refinements	Kathryn
12:15—1:30 p.m.	Introduction to Dragon & Tiger Qigong	Kathryn
1:45—2:45 p.m.	Wu Style Tai Chi: Forms & Refinements	Bill

In Case of Snow: For class cancellation info, please call 413-586-8880 and select option 1. If your class will be cancelled, then we will put a recorded message here saying so at least 3 hours before your class is scheduled to begin.

Toward Harmony Registration Early Spring 2012 Weekly Classes

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Home Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

How did you find out about us?

How would you like us to contact you about upcoming events?
(check one or both)

U.S. Mail

Email

Please list below the courses for which you wish to register and their cost for you. All courses are priced at \$100. If you are a full-time student or a combat veteran, then your cost is \$80 for a course.

	Course	Your Cost
1.	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____

Total: _____

Please mail this form with a check for your total to:

Toward Harmony, 16 Center St. #527, Northampton, MA 01060

Please make your check out to: *Toward Harmony*

Or you can bring the form to us and pay with cash or a check.

If you have questions, please contact us at 413-586-8880 or info@towardharmony.com

EARLY SPRING 2012 SESSION

Free Introductory Workshop & Demo:
Sunday, March 4, 1—2:15 p.m.

New 7-Week Courses begin March 5
You can join through March 16

Try a First Class for Free in any Introductory
Course from March 5 to 16



413-586-8880

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info@towardharmony.com

16 Center St Studio 527
Northampton, MA 01060

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