



Calm Your Mind

Transform Your Health

Balance Your Life



Late Fall

October 30 — December 22
2017

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

Our founding 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.

Our Teachers



Kathryn Komidar began her studies with Bruce Frantzis in 1994. She taught at Brookline Tai Chi from 1997 to 2006.

She has practiced bodywork professionally for 23 years. Kathryn holds a Master of Music degree in Voice from Boston University.



Bill Ryan has studied with Bruce Frantzis for 37 years and is a senior instructor in his Energy Arts system.

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.



Dan Winter has studied with Bill and Kathryn in Northampton since 2010. In addition to teaching, he is the administrator at Toward Harmony.

Dan holds a B.A. in Comparative Literature from UMASS Amherst.

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.

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.

Our teacher, Taoist Lineage Master **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.

What to Wear

Clothes

Please wear or bring loose-fitting clothes that do not restrict your movement. It is easier to relax into learning these arts when you are comfortable.

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.

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 your mind and deeply relax your body.

Introduction

Over two 7-week sessions (Parts 1 & 2) you will learn foundation tai chi movement skills, relaxation principles, healthy posture, and the Wu Style Mini Form.

Part 1

Part 1 of this course will be offered in our Winter 2018 session - starting in January.

Part 2

Prerequisite: Completion of Part 1 of this course.

Mondays 6—7:15 p.m. Dan

Cost: \$120. If you take multiple courses during this session, \$20 discount for each course.

Dates: 7 weeks, October 30 to December 18. **No class on November 20.**

DVD: A Review and Practice DVD is available for a cost of 25 dollars.

Short Form

Students who have learned the Wu Style Mini Form will learn the remaining moves of the Short Form over four 7-week sessions.

You will also deepen your knowledge of complementary qigong exercises, and work with core tai chi principles such as alignment and relaxation.

Prerequisite: Completion of Introductory Tai Chi courses, or permission of the instructor.

Tuesdays 11 a.m.—12:15 p.m. Dan

Cost: \$120. If you take multiple courses during this session, you may take a \$20 discount for each course.

Dates: 7 weeks, October 31 to December 19. **No class on November 21.**

DVD: A Review and Practice DVD is available for a cost of 25 dollars.



Short Form Refinements

We will explore tai chi subjects such as circularity, bending and releasing, and the details of particular moves.

This session Dan will teach about bending and releasing, along with refinements of the moves of the last half of the form.

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Prerequisite: Completion of Short Form courses, or permission of the instructor.

Tuesdays 1:45 p.m.—3 p.m. Dan
Thursdays 6:45 p.m.—8 p.m. Dan

Cost: \$120, \$25 for drop-in. If you take multiple courses during this session, you may take a \$20 discount for each course.

Dates: 7 weeks, from October 31 to December 21. **No class on November 21 or 23.**

Medium Form

The Medium Form provides greater challenges to your balance and develops stronger cross-body connections than the Short Form.

This session Bill will teach about how to apply the key principle of "lengthen in and out" while doing the Short or Medium form and Tai Chi Circling Hands.

Prerequisite: Permission of the instructor based on your knowledge of the Short Form and Tai Chi Circling Hands.

Tuesdays 5:30—6:30 p.m. Bill

Cost: \$120, \$25 for drop-in. If you take multiple courses during this session, you may take a \$20 discount for each course.

Dates: 7 weeks, from October 31 to December 19. **No class on November 21.**



Gigong

(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 become more healthy, centered, balanced, and connected to the world around you.

Dragon & Tiger Qigong

Dragon & 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

Our Dragon & Tiger Introduction course is a great place to start if you have never taken a course with us.

You may try a class free or join November 1 through 10.

For information on this course please see page 7.

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INTRODUCTORY COURSES

Introduction to Dragon & Tiger Qigong Try a first class free - Nov. 1 through 10

Dragon & Tiger qigong is a great place to start if you have not taken a class with us before. It provides many wonderful benefits, in a form that is very accessible to beginners. At the same time, it is a deep and powerful practice that you can continue to explore for a lifetime.

It is also excellent preparation for learning tai chi and other forms of qigong. With the solid foundation you will gain from Dragon & Tiger, you can go on to our other qigong and tai chi courses.



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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 for developing your chi, i.e. your life energy.

Wednesdays 5:45–7 p.m. Kathryn
Fridays 12:15–1:30 p.m. Kathryn

Cost: \$100. If you take multiple courses, \$20 discount. Each class in a week covers the same material. Come to either or both.

Dates: 7 weeks, November 1 to December 22.
No class on November 22 or 24.

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

TRY A FREE CLASS

If space allows, you may try a free class on one of the following dates:

Wednesday, Nov. 1, 5:45 to 7 p.m.

Friday, Nov. 3, 12:15 to 1:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Nov. 8, 5:45 to 7 p.m.

Friday, Nov. 10, 12:15 to 1:30 p.m.

On the day you plan to attend, please check the homepage of our website, or call 413-586-8880, and press 1. If the class is full, there will be a message saying so.

From Our Blog:

"Muscularly Focused" or "Naturally Fluid"?

The predominant model of a healthy body today, at least in western culture, is focused on muscular strength. Having a tight, hard, muscular body is associated with health and fitness.

Yet the ancient Chinese who developed qigong – and much later, tai chi – used the young child's body as a model for health and movement.

Who are the healthiest, most energetic and resilient people on the planet? Healthy young children have us all beat in this department. If you've ever tried to keep up with one, you know this to be true.

Young children's bodies are supple, springy, and resilient. They are soft but strong (for their size). They are quick, and they stand and move in a relaxed way. They move with their whole body, and every part of them seems very alive.

Qigong and tai chi are designed to cultivate these qualities of the young child's body.

Of course, good muscle tone is important. If your muscles are too weak and floppy, they cannot function well. But the muscles are only one part of the picture of how the human body works. Excessive muscular tension and strength saps a lot of energy, and can hamper the function of other systems in your body.

By practicing qigong and tai chi, you can train yourself to stand upright in good posture and with a minimum of muscular effort. You develop your

balance and body alignment so that the weight of your body can be threaded down along and through your bones, joints, and connective tissues to the ground. This allows your muscles to relax.

These practices improve the health of your joints, ligaments, tendons and fascia, and teach you to recruit the natural elasticity of these tissues in your posture and movement.

Developing awareness of the whole body is another key element to this approach. To fully integrate all of the parts of the body so that they move as one, we must learn to fully inhabit the body with the mind.

When the body and mind move together as one unified whole, it is possible to develop the fluidity of movement that we often refer to with the word "graceful."

At Toward Harmony, we call this model of health and movement the "Naturally Fluid Body and Mind."

It is based on the way that humans naturally move as children, but which we usually lose as we grow older. Rather than learn new ways of moving, we seek to peel away the layers of tension and unhealthy movement patterns we have acquired and return to the way we moved – and the good health we had – as children.

For more articles like this, visit our "On Balance" blog on our website at www.towardharmony.com

Chi Awareness Tip: Sure, It's Good To Relax, But How?

Everyone agrees that it's good to relax, no?

Our experience, however, is that few people know *how* to relax.

How does one relax? Taoists in China long ago became intrigued with this question. They studied babies and young children to see why they are the most relaxed - and energetic - of all people.

They also studied animals such as tigers that remain equally relaxed whether they move slowly or rapidly.

Their findings are built right into the practices that we teach. If you study with us, we'll teach you step-by-step methods of training and moving which lead you to relaxation.

As a start, try the following little exercise. If you would like, you can listen to a three-minute audio recording of this exercise from the homepage of our website.

Sit down and take off your shoes and, if you wear them, your glasses. Rest your palms in your lap, facing upward.

Gently curl your fingers and thumbs a little toward your palms and then uncurl them. Do these actions repeatedly in a slow, rhythmical fashion in which you never stop moving. Let the curl become the uncurl and the uncurl become the curl. Usually the slower you move, the better, but "pulse" at whatever speed feels most relaxing to you.

Now in unison with your fingers gently curl and uncurl your toes. Do this in such a way that you don't tighten your toes, even if this means that you barely move them.

Now gently close your eyes and partially open them as you curl and uncurl. Let them remain unfocused as you open and close them.

Continue to "pulse" your fingers, toes, and eyes this way for 2 minutes. If you find yourself wanting to inhale and exhale with the movements, do this too. If other parts of your body want to let go or move a bit as well, let them. Play with the speed of your pulsing, but err on the side of going slower and slower. In fact, how slow can you go and still keep moving?

Most people find that their body naturally begins to relax doing this exercise. This is consistent with Taoist theory, which says that rhythmical, slow, moderate, and continuous movements relax the human body.

Further, Taoists found that if you relax your hands, feet, and face, then the whole of your body is likely to relax.

Receive Chi Tips via Email

If you would like to receive Chi Tips like this one via email, please join our email list. You can do so on our website, www.towardharmony.com. Or you can send us a request by email at info@towardharmony.com and we will sign you up.

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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 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



Photo by Jude Olsen

you study qigong or tai chi or not.

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

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Dragon & Tiger Qigong Refinements Series 1 —

Agile Feet

You'll learn how to awaken your feet and help them become more relaxed, lively, and agile as you do the exercises.

You'll also learn how to enliven the energy pathways of your feet and how to "flick" stagnant energy out of them.

Prerequisite: Completion of Introduction

Wednesdays 7–8:15 p.m. Kathryn
Fridays 11 a.m.—12:15 p.m. Kathryn

Cost: \$120. If you take multiple courses during this session, \$20 discount for each course. Each class in a week covers the same material. Attend either or both. You may also attend Introduction if space allows.

Dates: 7 weeks, November 1 to December 22.
No class on November 22 or 24.

Drop-in Classes: We encourage you to take this course as a 7-week course. However, if you can not attend on a regular basis, you may drop in, take a single class, and pay \$25 for that class.

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



Photo by Mark Thayer

Dragon & Tiger Qigong

Refinements Series 2 —

Relaxed Legs

You will learn how to deeply relax your legs when doing the Dragon & Tiger exercise set.

We'll teach you, in each move, how to: let your unweighted leg fall out of its hip socket; push and pull energy along your legs to relax them; and let the downward motions of your legs create their upward motions.

Prerequisite: Permission of instructor based on completion of Series 1 courses or equivalent knowledge.

Tuesdays 6:30—7:30 p.m. Bill
Fridays 1:30—2:30 p.m. Kathryn

Cost: \$120. Discounts same as Series 1. You may also attend Series 2 if space allows.

Dates: 7 weeks, from October 31 to December 22. **No class on November 21 or 24.**

Drop-in Classes: We encourage you to take this course as a 7-week course. However, if you can not attend on a regular basis, you may drop in, take a single class, and pay \$25 for that class.

Dragon & Tiger Qigong

Refinements Series 3

Bill and students choose which topic to address each session, drawing from topics that range from balancing one's energy to uniting the "body gears" of the upper and lower body, to exchanging energy with the earth below and the skies above us.

Prerequisite: Permission of instructor based on completion of Series 2 courses or equivalent knowledge.

Tuesdays 7:30—8:30 p.m. Bill
Cost: \$120. Discounts same as Series 1. You may also attend Series 2 if space allows.

Dates: 7 weeks, from October 31 to December 19. **No class on November 21.**

Drop-in Classes: We encourage you to take this course as a 7-week course. However, if you can not attend on a regular basis, you may drop in, take a single class, and pay \$25 for that class.

Opening the Energy Gates of Your Body

Energy Gates qigong practice naturally stimulates the water element of your body in accord with Chinese five-element theory.

In Energy Gates you begin to learn the art of letting go.

Through a Standing Meditation practice, and the Cloud Hands, three Swing, and Spine Stretch exercises, you'll learn to let your energy flow downward—like water toward the earth.

Over time, you will learn to "dissolve" your body's tension and pain and release the energy gates in your body - key nodes in your energetic system which balance and boost the body's flows of energy.



Introduction

You'll learn a standing meditation practice to help you be present to, feel, and relax into your body, while cultivating healthy posture for maximum energy flow.

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

Not offered this session.

Refinements

In an ongoing series of refinements courses, we'll deepen the Standing and Cloud Hands exercises and learn the First, Second, and Third Swing and Spine Stretch exercises.

We'll also explore qigong techniques such as whole body awareness and presence, sinking your chi, fully lengthening your body, and learning to feel and 'dissolve' any bindings in the energy gates of your body.

The course will progress at the pace of the group.

Prerequisite: Permission of instructor based on completion of Introduction course or equivalent knowledge.

Not offered this session.

Intermediate Qigong: The Marriage of Heaven & Earth

This qigong practice naturally stimulates the wood element of your body in accord with Chinese five-element theory.

Through it you learn to move energy upward and downward and to expand your energy outward and absorb energy inward as a tree does.

You also learn to circulate chi through the macro- and micro-cosmic orbits of your body and to pulse your joints and cavities.

Practice of Heaven & Earth enables you to rebuild and strengthen your natural physical and chi pulsations and flows. This can lead to improved health - the exercise has been used in China to help people with many conditions, including arthritis.

Over time your joints become better lubricated, your muscles less stiff, your ligaments more springy, your blood vessels more elastic, and your organs more responsive.

Foundations

You'll learn the basic movements of Heaven and Earth, as well as those of Circling Hands - a related exercise.

We'll explore the nature of circular movement and yin/yang transitions and how to connect your chi to that of the earth.

Not offered this session.

Refinements

We'll explore qigong techniques such as bending and stretching, microalignments, yin and yang lengthening, tissue twisting, wrapping, ligament gathering and releasing, joint pulsing, projecting chi, and micro- and macro-cosmic energy circulations.

Prerequisite: Permission of instructor based on completion of Foundation course or equivalent knowledge.

Thursdays 12:30—1:45 p.m. Kathryn

Cost: \$120. If you take multiple courses during this session, \$20 discount.

Dates: 7 weeks, from November 2 to December 21. **No class on November 23.**



WEEKLY CLASS SCHEDULE

October 30 to December 22

(No Classes the week of November 20 to 24)

Mondays

6—7:15 p.m. INTRODUCTION to Wu Style Tai Chi: Part 2 Dan

Tuesdays

11 a.m.—12:15 p.m. Wu Style Tai Chi: Short Form Dan

1:45—3:00 p.m. Wu Style Tai Chi: Short Form Refinements Dan

5:30—6:30 p.m. Wu Style Tai Chi: Medium Form Bill

6:30—7:30 p.m. Dragon & Tiger Qigong: Series 2 Refinements Bill

7:30—8:30 p.m. Dragon & Tiger Qigong: Series 3 Refinements Bill

Wednesdays

5:45—7:00 p.m. INTRODUCTION to Dragon & Tiger Qigong Kathryn

7—8:15 p.m. Dragon & Tiger Qigong: Series 1 Refinements Kathryn

Thursdays

12:30—1:45 p.m. Marriage of Heaven & Earth Qigong Refinements Kathryn

6:45—8:00 p.m. Wu Style Tai Chi: Short Form Refinements Dan

Fridays

11 a.m.—12:15 p.m. Dragon & Tiger Qigong: Series 1 Refinements Kathryn

12:15—1:30 p.m. INTRODUCTION to Dragon & Tiger Qigong Kathryn

1:30—2:30 p.m. Dragon & Tiger Qigong: Series 2 Refinements Kathryn

In Case of Bad Weather: 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.

Course Fees, Discounts, Sliding Scale

The fees for each of our courses is listed in its description in this brochure and on our website. In general, a 7-week course costs \$120. If you enroll in multiple courses in a session, you may take \$20 off your fee for each course.

We do not offer a sliding scale. But once you've completed your first course and proven your interest, we'll happily work with you to establish a fee you can afford. Please don't hesitate to talk to us about working out a plan that is manageable.

To Register/Payment

You may register online and pay by credit card at www.towardharmony.com.
Or you may bring this form to us and pay by cash, check, or credit card.
Or you may mail this form with a check made out to Toward Harmony for the cost of your course(s). Our address is on the back of this brochure. If you pay this way, **please note** that we will not hold your space until we have received your payment.
Please contact us at 413-586-8880 or info@towardharmony.com with any questions.

Toward Harmony Registration Late Fall 2017 Weekly Classes

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

How did you find out about us?

Internet Search Facebook Flyer Friend/Referral _____

Sidewalk Sign Gazette Ad Presentation Other _____

Please list below the courses for which you wish to register, **the day(s) of the week you primarily plan to attend**, and their cost for you.

Course	Day(s)	Your Cost
1. _____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____
Total:		_____

LATE FALL 2017 SESSION

New Courses begin October 30 to November 10
Try a First Class for Free in our Introduction to Dragon & Tiger Qigong - November 1 to 10



413-586-8880

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