

# Tai Chi, Poetry and Meditation

## ***Embrace Tiger Return to Mountain***

*We are born soft and supple;  
dead, we are stiff and hard.  
Plants are born tender and pliant;  
dead, they are brittle and dry.*

*Thus whoever is stiff and inflexible  
is a disciple of death.  
Whoever is soft and yielding  
is a disciple of life.*

*The hard and stiff will be broken.  
The soft and supple will prevail.  
Tao-Te-Ching 76*

### **About the retreat**

" ***Embrace Tiger Return to Mountain....***" A retreat expanding our horizons through language: opening to the wisdom of the body and integrating of our heart and head. Each move in Tai Chi is a metaphor. The structured forms provide an inspiring backdrop for the creation of rhythmic patterns with words. Tai Chi, writing & poetry have much in common: form, structure, sensitivity and a striving towards essence. Clouds like thoughts come and go; inspired by the surrounding mountains, lochs & sky, we will combine writing with movement and mindfulness for our own wellbeing and for all living beings everywhere.

This week of Tai Chi, writing and meditation will trace our intimate relation to the dance of the elements: Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Space, and Consciousness – with an overall theme of impermanence. Whatever arises from our practice we will use to play with the reality of our interconnectedness - write about it and share our stories.

### **Is there anything special I need to bring?**

Bring a handful of earth from somewhere near your home and write about your ***earth***. Bring your writing/story to the retreat. And bring:

- A notebook to use as a journal
- Writing/drawing materials
- Elemental poems, stories & songs you would like to share
- Loose comfortable clothes for movement and tai-chi
- Warm outdoor clothes and footwear
- Bring your dreams

To allow for deeper reflections and quiet time for our writing, there will be periods of silence overnight and after each meditation (3 or 4 each day) leading to a whole day of silence.

## About the retreat team

**Larry Butler** ([www.playspacepublications.com](http://www.playspacepublications.com)) will lead some of the movement sessions, the creative writing, poetry, singing and storytelling.

**Susanne Lin Jensen** ([www.dragonspringtaiji.co.uk](http://www.dragonspringtaiji.co.uk)) will lead the tai-chi and qi gong.

**Jayaraja** (<https://www.dhanakosa.com/retreat-leaders/jayaraja>) will lead the meditations.

### Tide

If I don't catch it  
right now, the look of the bay  
at the lowest tide,  
with the sun stamping on it,  
the uncovered sand like clay,

if I let it go  
for some more important thing,  
or just look away  
for a bit, meaning to note it  
when I've first done something else,

only my mind's eye  
will be left to remember,  
when the tide has turned,  
how the whole bay looked  
like a great shell lying there

all blue, brown, silver  
and how I needed to shape  
something I could hold  
and keep, maybe, from those few  
moments before it all changed.

Susan Donnelly

*Writers need something to hold and keep. Find a small object you have held and kept to help you hold onto an experience. Use the object as stimulus for writing or storytelling. What strength or solace did you derive from this object? Bring your writing/story and your object to the retreat.*