

Eighth Level Admission Process

Function of the 8th Level

Advanced apprentices with love for and dedication to our school's teaching and art are welcome to this level. The defining quality is a commitment to service to All (Humanity) over individual self. Those who work in this level are attracted to Tai Chi Chuan Consciousness, its principles of relaxation, and its manifestation in service to the greater good. In order to decide if you would like to work with this group it is important to understand its function.

Those in the 8th level see themselves as working toward the full embodiment of the following:

- Transmutation of consciousness Manifesting Tai Chi Chuan Consciousness – a permanent state of relaxation and connectedness. Living in the quality and spirit of Tai Chi Chuan. Doing 8th level internal work to support and enhance that state. Being on the way to the 9th level: All-Consciousness.
- Carrying the tradition Carrying the tradition of Cheng Man-Ch'ing, Patrick Watson, and the senior teaching staff. Preserving and spreading teachings of the School, in Tai Chi Chuan, Qi Gong and the 5 Excellences. This includes the understanding that all members take responsibility for this School and its teachings to be available for future generations.
- Responsibility Transitioning from (years of) learning what is being offered by others to taking on full (self)-responsibility of sharing Tai Chi Chuan qualities, insights, and skills from a self-chosen state of ownership and leadership.
- Service Transitioning from receiving (i.e., being only a student) to service: giving and sharing within the 8th level group and to the school at large with the intention of serving the Greater Good.

Being in Tai Chi Chuan Consciousness means entering a next phase of learning:

- Growth in your tai chi Getting better at Tai Chi Chuan. Continuing the journey that, from the very start, motivated and connected us all.
- Growth as a teacher Transitioning from being an apprentice-teacher to being a mature TCF teacher in service of the School and Humanity. Transmitting from embodiment, self-realization and clarification of consciousness. Passing the essence of our School: applying Tai Chi Chuan as an agent of change. Spreading Tai Chi Chuan and teaching as much as possible.
- A training ground Learning to pass the essence of Tai Chi Chuan to other students as well as teachers. On the way to develop Legacy Holding skills.

If circumstances require withdrawing from the 8th level process, or if someone can no longer fulfill the requirements of the level, the person in question can request a sabbatical, or retire from the

group. In the case of retirement due to age or infirmity, the group may offer *membership emeritus*. Members emeritus may continue to participate to the degree appropriate for them (as members might underestimate what they bring to the group).

The Application Process

1. An applicant may apply directly or be nominated by any other apprentice/fellow teacher in his or her community or the school at large. The application form can be found on the TCF website. In addition to submitting the application, the candidate must provide two letters of recommendation (which may include the nomination from another apprentice/fellow teacher) – one from another apprentice who is at their level or more senior and the other from an apprentice that is junior to them in experience. We suggest the letters provide the following information:
 - What classes have you taught with the candidate?
 - What has been your experience of their willingness and ability to prepare for class and receive and give feedback after class? What is your experience of their teamwork?
 - Has this person changed and grown over the time you've known them and, if so, please detail what you have observed?
 - What do you see as this person's strengths and areas for improvement if they are invited to join the 8th level and become a senior member of the TCF?
2. The completed application to enter the 8th level, is presented to a committee that will review the application relative to the requirements listed below. Admission is based on consensus of the committee. The committee is composed of a rotating mix of five current 8th level members, including at least one Legacy Holder. The committee is formed as follows:
 - i. Legacy holders will decide which one of them will serve on the committee.
 - ii. There will be an active 8th level pool that has agreed to serve in this function. A random drawing of active members - 2 from Europe and 2 from North America - will be chosen to make up a total of 5 on the committee.
3. All applicant names are circulated to all current 8th level members, who may send to the committee any questions they would like to have covered during the interview of the applicant. 8th level members have two weeks to bring their questions to the committee.
4. Once the committee has been formed and the designated two weeks for bringing questions to the committee has passed, an interview with the applicant will take place via webcam (i.e., Skype, Google Hangouts, Face Time, etc.). The committee will cover any questions and listen to the reasons why this person would like to be in the level.
5. If the committee decides the applicant is to be elected to this level, it will communicate this decision (plus a short summary as to why, including any answers to questions that 8th level members brought up) to the applicant and the current 8th level members. If the committee is not in agreement, it will communicate to the applicant and the 8th level what criteria they feel the applicant needs to develop and the necessary steps needed for future inclusion.
6. Once elected, the nominee will be invited to the next general gathering of the 8th level to receive personal feedback from the larger group (a "line of inclusion") and to be ceremonially admitted.

List of Requirements for Nomination, Election and Membership

1. Level of teaching and Tai Chi Chuan embodiment: The applicant must be able to teach Push Hands II with comfort and proficiency; must be actively teaching at least one TCF course over the year; must be consciously working towards the potential to teach all aspects of the curriculum of our school as a recognizable tradition of Professor Cheng Man-Ch'ing and Patrick Watson.
2. The applicant must model good teaching and exhibit a willingness to teach and mentor apprentices.
3. The applicant must have completed all WFW and SFW cycles including the Golden Orbit Individual Training, and preferably be working the PH7 level when applying, or at least being ready to enter PH7 when joining the 8th level. If needed, individual or group mentoring can be offered to help attain the required entrance level.
4. The applicant must be working toward the development of his or her self in all aspects of life – physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual, for the benefit of all.
5. The applicant must be actively serving to further his or her local school, and/or the (inter)national school as manifested by the Tai Chi Foundation. With this, the applicant is a dues paying member of the TCF and has attended at least one summer or winter training in the last 3 years.
6. The applicant must be committed, trustworthy, and strong enough to keep the teachings alive now, and for future generations.
7. The applicant must have shown spiritual self-responsibility (such as being willing to process issues/karma, recognizing the equality of all, being committed to working for the benefit of others and not just for their own self-aggrandizement, etc.). Applicant will be asked to give his or her own examples on the application form.
8. The applicant must demonstrate respectful attitudes and abilities in their interactions.
9. If invited to join the 8th level the applicant will participate in an 8th Level group session to be ceremonially welcomed and integrated, part of which is receiving personal feedback from the group (“a line of inclusion”).
10. In exceptional situations, one or more of these criteria can be suspended by recommendation of 8th level members, with explication by the applicant how and when the missing criteria will be fulfilled or compensated for. The reasons for the exception will be evaluated by the Admissions Committee, which will make the final decision.