

## **Feedback from students and readers**

Mrs. Supawan P.Panawong Green  
236 Ryde Park Rd  
Rednal  
Birmingham  
B45 8RJ

22 March 2003

Ref: please help my students in Cameroon

Dear Comic Relief,

Please may I introduce myself? My name is Supawan Green, age 49. I have been teaching Tai chi as a form of Buddhist meditation at the University of Birmingham for 14 years and also am an author of four published books.

My work is focused on helping people to find their inner peace through Buddhist meditation. I believe that when people are at peace, they become a better quality of person and can contribute more to society. I strongly believe that peace on Earth is the accumulation of the individual peace of mind.

Apart from teaching in class, I also arrange a weekend retreat for my students in the UK so that they have a chance to learn and practise further. I had a student from Cameroon some 12 years ago. He took my knowledge back to Cameroon and passed it on to his fellow people. As a result, I went to Cameroon in April 2002 to share my knowledge to a group of students who were quite eager to learn from me. That was my first visit to Africa and I had formed a very good relationship with my students there. During my stay in Cameroon, I had learnt of a great deal of problems my students had been facing. Although they had tried their best to go to higher education, they cannot always find jobs, which offer them a decent living. The way to acquire a good job means having some kind of connection with higher people, a classic story in all highly corrupted society. As a result, those who have some means will thrive to come to further their education in the West, hoping for a better opportunity in life.

Now that they have known me personally, I have received a number of letters asking me to help them to fulfil their dream in the West. But I know that I am far from the position to help them as I expressed in my letter written on the 7 September 2002. Besides, I know that if only they have jobs, which offer them some decent income to live on plus my wisdom that I have shared with them, they can easily lead a happy and peaceful life in Cameroon. Coming to the West is not the answer, as we all know.

This is the main reason I write to you. Although I desperately want to help my students but I have no financial means to help them since I have my own family to take care too. So, please help me to help these young people to live a better life in their own country by helping them to create jobs. They all are intelligent young people who are full of energy, drive and good will to create better lives for

themselves, their families as well as their fellow people. It isn't their fault that they were born in Africa and live in a corrupted regime, which offer them very limited means to earn a decent living. I am convinced that if only they have a substantial fund to create works or any activities they are good at, they will be able to contribute a great deal to their society and stop thriving on the dream of coming to the West. Martin has just graduated nursing. A French lady name Aurore, Juliet and myself have helped Martin to buy a piece of land in Buea but lack of funding to do anything further. Martin and his friends can easily open a health clinic on this piece of land and provide fundamental health care to local people in this northern province of Buea. Bertin has a law degree and is extremely intelligent, full of ideas. Hilare is a tai chi teacher since the age of 14, he is now 25 and is very much like a local saint who is happy to do anything for anyone. They both are based in the capital city of Yaounde and can create tremendous work to help people. These three young men are the leaders of the tai chi club; there are still many more people I met. With the wisdom and meditation skill I passed on to these young people, I truly believe that they can contribute enormously to their community. Above all, I strongly believe that they are far better off in their home country.

I have asked them to come up with a proposal and submit to you as soon as possible. If the application of funding is successful, I will monitor their activities, keep the close contact and make sure that they are on the right track, that is helping people in all possible ways to reduce their suffering as much as they can manage. If they don't, I'll be the one who is responsible for the outcome. In other words, I will hold myself responsible should the fund from Comic Relief be abused in anyway.

I am leaving for Thailand next week and will hold a meditation retreat in Singapore. I will be back to the UK on the 7<sup>th</sup> May. In the mean time, is there anything at all you need to know for a successful application for a fund to help my students in Cameroon, please don't hesitate to let me know. Or if you wish to contact my students in Cameroon directly, the following is their email address.

Hilaire Emani	<a href="mailto:emeni@caramail.com">emeni@caramail.com</a>
Bertin Kouam	<a href="mailto:kouamk@yahoo.fr">kouamk@yahoo.fr</a>
Martin Oben	<a href="mailto:obenmartin@yahoo.com">obenmartin@yahoo.com</a>

Please find enclosed my correspondence to my students in Cameroon, a copy of my book and letters I sent out to my students. I use email as a means to encourage my students to pursue their meditation practice even though they have left my class. I also asked my current students in the UK to write a few lines of their own experiences with me. Hopefully, these documents will allow you to know me a bit better and have enough trust in me to help me fund my students in Cameroon.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

*Supawan*

**Supawan P. Panawong Green**

26<sup>th</sup> March, 2003

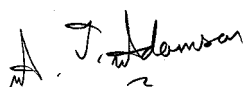
Dear Comic Relief

I'm writing to urge you to support the work of Supawan Green and her proposed project in the Cameroon. I have known Supawan for several years and have myself attended her Tai Chi classes at the University of Birmingham. I believe she a most extraordinary person and an exceptionally gifted teacher. In her classes she teaches Buddhist Meditation in a way that makes it relevant to the lives of ordinary people, she teaches us how to deal with the stresses and rigours of everyday life and how to come to terms with life's big questions.

Two years ago I contracted a rare disease Guillain Barre Syndrome, which paralysed me and brought me very close to death. Afterwards people would often ask if it had been a terribly frightening experience and I would calmly reply that what I had learned working with Supawan and helped me to cope with what I was going through during the illness and in the many long months of recovery. In my 27 years of working as a dancer and choreographer and teaching at the University I have encountered many wise and clever people but amongst them all I count Supawan as very special. In her quiet and modest way she inspires people, through her commitment and belief in what she is doing, and by helping them to believe in what they are doing.

Through her inspiration a group of students in Cameroon are keen to work towards a self-improvement project, furthering their education and building employment opportunities. Supawan has been extraordinarily generous with both her time and contributions from her modest personal income in trying to support the dreams of her students in Cameroon. I am sure that if Comic Relief would sponsor their project with Supawan Green to guide their efforts these students will make you proud that you chose to support them.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andy Adamson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small flourish at the end.

Andy Adamson

Director of Dance  
Department of Drama and Theatre Arts  
The University of Birmingham

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Dear Comic Relief,

I have been attending Supawan's Tai Chi class for a couple of years now. With her help and guidance I have learnt how to cope better with everyday life and the problems that the world throws at us all. Her knowledge is outstanding and she has a wonderful way of explaining and guiding her pupils in the practice of Tai Chi and meditation without being biased. I only wish I could practice with her everyday! Please help her to pass on this knowledge and awareness to others. We live in such a hectic and stressful world and we all need some help in being able to cope better with more self-awareness and understanding of our true selves. If only everyone in this world could practice with Sue, the world would be a better place! With funding maybe she can help just a few more people to help themselves.

Best wishes,  
Sarah Kinson

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Dear Comic Relief,

I would like to tell you all that Sue's teaching really brings results and good ones. I've only been practicing for 6 months and I can already feel the benefits of it. Sue has a clear and simple way to make her understood. Her knowledge is very and truly valuable.

GUILLAUME (one of her students from France)

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Dear Comic Relief

This message is to say that I have known Supawan Green for five years now, and have learned a lot from her about tai chi and meditation. She is a dedicated teacher who knows how to communicate clearly and simply with her students. I have been inspired by her teaching in her classes and her writings to be more committed to meditation and self-improvement. I believe that she is a trustworthy person with a sincere desire to help others. I hope that you will be able to give her a grant to enable her to help her students more in the years to come.

Yours sincerely  
Brother Nicholas Alan SSF  
Society of Saint Francis  
Glasshampton Monastery  
Shrawley  
Worcester

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26<sup>th</sup> March 2003

Dear Comic Relief,

I am writing a few lines to give my support to Supawan Green. I first met Sue some four or five years ago having been recommended to attend her local tai chi class by my martial arts instructor.

After attending the first few classes, whilst the practice at first seemed a little odd to me (being new to it) the words and explanations which flowed from Sue really spoke to me at a level which is very difficult to explain in words. I continued to attend over the ensuing months and found that I understood the practice better with each session, so much so that I attended a tai chi retreat with Sue and a good many of her other students.

Tai Chi, and Sue's teaching of it in particular, has enabled me to relax more and put the various dramas and "crises" of daily life into perspective. This is a skill and ability that I will always feel indebted to Sue for teaching me as it has had a profound effect upon my life.

Sue is a very genuine person with a real desire to pass on her wisdom, not for any private gain, but to enhance the lives and reduce the suffering of as many people as she can. Her work should be encouraged as much as possible, and I respectfully ask that you look into her application regarding Cameroon sympathetically, as I believe a little money spent on this project would go a long way to improving the lives of many people in this part of the world.

Thank you for your time in reading this & please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of help in any way.

Yours sincerely,  
Jon Lee

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Dear Comic Relief,

My name is Brian Hoff and I am a graduate student at The University of Birmingham. I am writing on behalf of my Tai chi instructor, Mrs. Supawan P.Panawong Green, who is trying to help raise relief funds for some fellow students in Africa.

The Tai Chi principals taught by Supawan has greatly improved my philosophy on life. The principal actually provides a glimmer of hope for the future of our world. I hope everyone might one day listen to what she has to say.

All of Supawan's intentions are noble and honest. If you knew her yourself, you would no doubt help the cause. Please give careful consideration to her request.

Thanks  
Brian

Hoff

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Dear Comic Relief,

Although I have not met Supawan personally, we have had contact over the Internet for some time. I bought one of Supawan's books in Bangkok last summer and when I wrote to her about some questions I had, we started to have contact over Internet. Anyway, what I like to say is that I am totally convinced that supporting Supawan's students in Cameroon will be a good thing.

I believe that Supawan has the ability and will to create something positive, wherever

there are people who are interested in her teachings about life. I think that by supporting Supawan and her students will make the world a better place to live on.

Best wishes,  
Niklas  
Sweden

Gustafsson.

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Dear Comic Relief,

Sue diligently started teaching Tai Chi at Birmingham University where I was a student many years ago. Through the practise she taught many students, myself included the practise of meditation and self-awareness. The skills gained have been invaluable and I give her my fullest support in taking her practise to Cameroon. I do hope Comic Relief can help her with what she has started.

Regards,  
Amer Vohora

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Dear Comic Relief,

May I introduce myself? My name is Thanaporn Wonglaemthong, I am a dentist from Thailand. Although I have never seen Mrs. Supawan before, I have an opportunity to read her good book-named *A handful of leaves* in Thai version. In this book -she present many things that are valued come from her actual experience from vipassana practice (Buddhist meditation), that make me trust in her intention to help other people to find their inner peace through her work.

Yours sincerely,  
Thanaporn W.

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Dear Comic Relief,

My experience with Sue can't be adequately explained without a reference to a Lebanese poet, Kahlil Gibran, who stated in one of his poems that the solution to most of humanity's problems lies in each of us becoming 'wakeful' in the depths of the depths of the depths of our souls.

Being an idealistic Muslim from a political family, I've become a bit more aware and adept at trying to notice honest sincerity. Based solely on what she has taught me and from all that I've studied on philosophy and outside of the fact that I don't know her personally, I feel no hesitation in declaring the purity of Sue's intention and the zeal she would approach her project with.

Furthermore, I deem it as an Islamic duty to recommend Sue for this project, as the prophet was extremely encouraging in positively recommending that which you know to be good. Through her past development, I can glimpse in our classes that Sue has cultivated empathy for people over the years, which I can only hope to acquire one

day, and find her a confirmatory force on a lot of my precocious musings on spirituality and Islamic philosophy.

Sue seems to confidently marry her idealistic thoughts with grounded pragmatism, e.g. e-mailing her students during the week, and adding flexibility to her timetable to accommodate all of her pupils.

This project in Cameroon seems to be yet another manifestation of Sue's idea of morality, and in the relatively short time I have known her I can only speak good of not only her vision, but her practicality, to the extent that I personally offer a helping hand to Sue if she would need it in the pursuit of the realisation of this project, with this letter being the least I could do. I hope I was a clarifying factor in your decisions and hope that the best action is taken.

Yours sincerely,

Jamal Traveller

Student of Mechanical Engineering at the University of Birmingham

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Dear Comic Relief,

I am writing in support of Supawan Green's application to manage your funding of a health clinic in Buea, Cameroon, run by her former students. I have known Mrs Green over the past ten years on and off, and benefited from what she teaches - a combination of gentle physical exercise and basic meditation techniques - both in good health, and in coping with the psychological effects following a serious head injury; when I found real value in its palliative effects.

This second experience especially makes me think of the potential benefits of her work in the proposed clinic project. Working in Zimbabwe and China for the charity Voluntary Service Overseas (V.S.O.), I became a little familiar with projects of this sort, and through her work as a Tai Chi teacher Supawan already has the social and communication networks in place through which the project could be successfully completed.

I can think of nobody better to set up and monitor whatever funding you might be able to provide: Supawan's humane dedication to her work and her students' welfare, her ability to achieve a great deal from scarce resources and her personal integrity are such that your help is practically assured of success.

I hope that you will seriously consider the proposal, which with your help could make a real difference in a

remote African community.

Yours hopefully,

Sam Walker  
Former student of the University of Birmingham

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27<sup>th</sup> March 2003.

To Comic Relief

Dear Sirs,

**RE: SUPAWAN'S ALTRUISTIC EFFORTS**

I have never met Supawan Green but communicated with her by e-mail after reading one of her interesting book entitled " A HANDFUL OF LEAVES" sometime around end of 2001.

We had communicated very frequently through e-mails and I tried to meet her around April/May 2002 in Birmingham, while I was visiting England and Ireland, when she had just returned and recuperating from surgery around that time.

The reason I wanted to meet up with her is that she appears to be a very spiritually developed person and teaches Tai chi and meditation in a very altruistic manner. Although she is a Buddhist, the Vipasaana meditation technique is a non-sectarian meditation although it was first taught by Lord Buddha. Furthermore, I am not a Buddhist.

The strong statistical evidence with scientific and clinical researches throughout the whole world reinforces the fact that "STRESS" is the cause of many fatal illnesses and diseases. Tai chi and meditation reduce stress and thereby help to save the lives of people if what Supawan teaches can be encouraged and supported to reach as many people as possible.

Supawan's philosophy and practices in life makes me think that she is almost a spiritual being in human clothes. She also practices what she strongly believes out of personal conviction. In today's world it is very difficult to find people like her with the highest calibre and strong sense of justice and fairness with a very well balance view.

Please support Supawan in her altruistic efforts to bring harmony, peace and well being to all the people who may benefit from her help as she exercise her balance of judgment very well.

Thank You.

Arthur Ngiam.

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Dear Comic Relief,

I am writing this in support for Supawan Green application for aid in Cameroon. Sue has been my Tai Chi teacher for the past 5 years; I am also happy and blessed to call her friend. Sue is truly an extraordinary woman, not only an inspirational teacher but also a compassionate and altruistic human being. Through her teachings on meditation and awareness she passes on great wisdom that is invaluable to us as we try to live more peaceful and contented lives. Her wish to help the students in Cameroon is genuine and heartfelt, she managed to visit them last year and I know, although this visit was a great success, it highlighted the fact that they need financial help beyond Sues means, hence this proposal. Please give this application your consideration, I have no doubt that it would make a real difference to the community and improve the quality of their lives. Thank you for all the good work you are doing and good luck with future fundraising.

Yours sincerely,  
Juliet Banyard.

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Dear Comic Relief,

I started studying Tai Chi and meditation with Supawan in 1991 at the University of Birmingham, responding to her posters offering to reduce the stress-load of exams! In the short term I found her classes remarkably successful, but it wasn't until a little later that I realised the full implications of her teachings-namely the secrets to living a life, which is good for you, and good for those around you. Although when I started classes her command of English was not extensive, she never seemed to have any problems explaining the very important concepts that she had to pass on. And so I found a teacher, but also more than a teacher, a friend as well. In this age of selfishness, a person who seeks the best for others, who is always willing to listen and help in any way they can, and who exudes that calming benevolence at all times, quite obviously stands out a mile. Supawan is such a person, and I would strongly urge you to carefully consider her proposals. I don't think that it is that easy these days to "better" the world, but I'm sure that with the people around her, and their intentions to help and improve quality of life for all around them, this could be an opportunity not to be missed! And if you are at all worried about the possibilities of this being a sect making applications for funding, please don't be. You could read up on some of the published material to remove that doubt, and you might even pick up a bit of passed-on wisdom! I wish you all well with the work you are doing-keep it up!

Yours sincerely,  
Matthew Pinches.

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Dear Comic Relief,

Supawan P. Panawong Green (Sue, in short) is a Tai Chi Teacher of Birmingham University in U.K. and a writer of 4 books on the right way of living. I'd read her

books and they inspire one to practise right values, compassion and mindfulness in our daily life so that one can be eased from mental suffering and be happy.

Recently, we have invited her to Singapore to hold a retreat and it has attracted nearly 30 participants who have either heard or read about her work. Out of compassion, Sue had set aside time for us despite her family and work commitment and will not charge us any fee for her precious teachings.

Based on the above and for the good cause, I hope you can give Sue an opportunity to prove her belief in her students.

Warmest Regards,

Ching Fern,

Singapore.

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Dear Comic Relief,

I have known Supawan Green for many months as my Tai Chi teacher. She is a very kind, responsive, unselfish person, highly dedicated to service to humanity. She is an author of four books and an original Tai Chi meditation system based on the Buddhist philosophy, which teaches people how to gain Peace of Mind in the hectic world we are living in now. I believe this what many of us on this planet lack and what most of us desire to achieve in order to make our own lives and lives of those around us happy and joyful experience.

Supawan teaching rises awareness of an individual implanting seeds of love, compassion and tolerance, which produces state of deep Peace and Harmony. And this is by creating individual harmony and Peace of Mind that we can eliminate wars, crimes, as well as any form of conflicts at international, national and even personal levels. This is a mentality, which if possessed by everyone, will eventually create Peace and Happiness on Earth for every living creature.

I trust that the assistance Supawan is looking for her students in Cameroon is a well worth your support, for it is a very noble undertaking truly showing our Humanity and dedication to Peace and Happiness on the planet.

Yours sincerely,

Anton Velichko  
Dr. A. V. Velichko, Research Fellow  
School of Electronic & Electrical Engineering  
University of Birmingham

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Dear Comic Relief,

The tai-chi classes I have attended during my final semester at Birmingham University have helped me a great deal mentally, and it is such a shame that we are not taught this in our education. I look forward to going to tai-chi classes more than my academic studies, for the teachings that Supawan gives really touch me and help to better me. The feeling after a tai-chi class is one, which is amazing, a completely relaxed, free feeling that I carry on through my day at hectic university. I love the classes so much, I sneak in to other ones during the week as well, just to hear more teachings and meditate.

I hope you can help the students in Cameroon to better their lives.

Lots of love

Faryal Iqbal (Fuzzy)

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Dear Comic Relief,

I learnt about the history of Buddhism and the Buddha many years ago. At that time, I didn't know that there was someone who could teach and bring back the Buddha's words and pass on to someone else. She is Supawan or we can call her "Sue". We could say that she is a representative of the Buddha.

Best regards,

Patasoso

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26 March 2003

Dear Comic Relief,

First of all, I would like to introduce myself? My name is Montana Achatewan, age 51. I am working at Ictus co.,ltd. and I am studying Tai chi as a form of Buddhist meditation in Thailand by reading from Supawan's books. I have known her personally before she came to England. She is a very good woman. She has very strong desire to help people to be happy. Please help her to achieve her goal.

I look forward to hearing the good news.

Yours sincerely,  
Montana Achatewan.

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Dear Comic Relief,

I was a student attending the Tai Chi classes of Supawan at the University of Birmingham in 2001 and benefited from and enjoyed the relaxation classes.

Supawan advised the pupils on how to help themselves relieve stress in their lives with a non-religious, non political and non financial approach to keeping our minds healthy.

Being tired of both politics and religion I welcomed Supawan as a breath of fresh air as she taught us how to relax our minds and shut out our fears or anxieties, or at least the path to how we may try to achieve this, without lecturing us on how we should think or act.

I believe Supawan is very sincere in her approach to helping others deal with aspects of life that we cannot understand very well. Supawan has produced articles and published books that I have read and enjoyed. I do hope Supawan can benefit from Comic Relief's Support, in her attempts to help her students in various countries.

Yours faithfully,  
Paul O'Malley

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My name is Annette and I also attend Supawan Greens Tai Chi class. It was actually through my sister Diana that I went to this class and I am so glad that I did. I feel Tai chi has taught me to stay calmer and to be more relaxed with myself through doing the breathing and gentle movements. It is strange that now I can calm down sooner than I would have before doing Tai chi whether I am at home or at work and feeling tense. Supawan talks to us throughout the lesson, as she doesn't let us drift, which helps us to meditate easier. I would like to thank her for her knowledge.

Annette  
Office Clark

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My name is Diana and I have been going to Tai chi for 12 weeks, it is something that I have wanted to do for some time. Since going my experience of Tai chi has improved the way I look and feel about things in general. Stress is very much part of our life, 24 hours seems not enough in a day as there are so much to do and not enough time to do it. This is where stress overtakes and anger builds up inside. Tai chi has made myself feel more relaxed and calmer, I feel it is getting to know oneself within and handle situations easier than I would have before experiencing Tai chi. I also feel the teacher has a big influence on how quick you progress, Supawan Green our tutor keeps me home from start to finish.

Diana  
A housewife

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I always love to read words of the wise and the experienced. To me, it seems Khun Supawan's writings are one of those works I love to read. She had made the explanation of Vipassana with clear exemplification rarely found in traditional works. Many terms are also simplified so I got new useful aspects in my Vipassana

practicing. Plus, Khun Supawan's achievement as a layperson that has known the ultimate truth has boosted my morale and diligence to follow suit to a greater degree.

For seekers of spiritual freedom, I think this is like an oasis where you can quench your thirst as well as get a map for the shortcut route.

Somsiri Pramudwinai, MBA, MA  
Small business owner

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I started to attend Sue's *Taichi* class in 2001 for a pure purpose of improving my physical health when I was studying at the University of Birmingham, UK. To my surprise, I was attracted by her teaching, which blended meditation, Buddhism with her *Taichi* movements. This is very much different from what I had learned in my previous *Taichi* classes. The way of her teaching made me understand the philosophy behind these slow, relaxed and continuous smooth movements. I felt that my heart was cheered and lightened. That is something I had been searching for a long time. I started to read her books found in the university bookstore or given by her. From her first book "*Dear Colin, What Is the Truth of Life?*" to her later manuscripts "*A Handful of Leaves*", "*Can the Caterpillar Be Perfect?*" "*A User's Guide to Life*", I had read them all. I was very much attracted by her books and her ways of teaching. Going to her *Taichi* class twice a week had become something I looked forward to during my university years. I felt my heart so closed to her and I enjoyed talking to her. Through my attending her class for the years, I have noticed the changes myself that I have felt fresher and strengthened after the *Taichi* or meditation class. My turbulent mind has become clearer. I have started to understand that our physical illness is obvious but our mental unwellness is invisible. *Taichi* only may excise our body but combining *Taichi* with *Vipassana* practice can help us both physically and mentally. Without a purified and settled mind, one can never do *Taichi* (or any jobs) well at the end! *Taichi* in mind and mind in *Taichi*! It is that simple! Unfortunately reading books  $\neq$  understanding  $\neq$  practice, also everyone is different from the others, that is why we need good and RIGHT teachers like Sue to guide us to understand us and life better!

Jianhui Xiong; Ph.D  
Microbiologist, Birmingham University

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There are so many positive things that I'm able to say regarding Sue's class and her writing that I'm unsure where to begin. Since attending my first class 15 months ago my life has changed dramatically. As a student, I faced the usual pressures that young people face. Like most people, I found it very easy to escape from my problems through drink and drugs, completely unaware of what it was that I was hiding from.

By attending Sue's class and through regular meditation I have become more aware of myself, my true self, that is the part which most people miss in the hectic pace of their lives. Through learning the simple technique of concentrating on one's breathing and movement life is a lot more peaceful and I'm able to feel a calmness and serenity, which other things did not bring. I now live in the moment, as opposed to rushing around trying to do one thing whilst thinking of another and find that my concentration has improved greatly.

Whatever your age, race or profession, Sue's teachings are right for you. That is the wonder of her class. You don't have to be a certain type of person or have certain problems to benefit from her wisdom, the skills that she teaches are universal and everyone can benefit.

By simply devoting a little time to meditation life will change for the better. Put simply, you will feel calmer, happier and at peace. Isn't that what we're all striving for! Sue's class has brought magic into my life and has shown me the difference between living and simply existing. For that I am externally grateful.

Elen Evans [student]

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Supawan Green is a most gifted writer, not only are her words sculpted with clarity and vision but they truly reflect the Dhamma; without ambiguity or unskilful agendas.

Supawan manages to convey the Dhamma in a way that is very sympathetic to lay people and people of other faiths, using parables we can all relate to.

I found Supawans' writing style to be candid, fluid, non judgemental, easy & enjoyable to read.

If you really want to improve your life and help the whole world too, read Supawan Greens writings.

Metta

Mr Glenn P Lawrence - BA Hon, Legal Advisor

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I was given *A Handful of Leaves* and *The User Guide to Life* by a friend who attends Supawan's Tai Chi class in Birmingham. I had not really encountered Buddhism before and certainly had not considered the possibility of leading a life that encompassed Buddhist values and ideals. Many things I read about in "*A Handful of Leaves*" struck a chord within me and I realised that what Supawan was writing about could only be the truth. I have found her books to be a great inspiration and I know that because of them my life has changed as I now have a sense of spiritual direction, something that was lacking before. I would encourage anyone to read her work because she explains a complex subject with great clarity, therefore making it accessible to anyone, no matter who you are.

Sarah Henderson. Piano Teacher. BA Hons RSAMD, M.Mus.

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My name is Justin Mills. I am an Executive Recruitment Consultant in the IT and Technologies sector. I met Sue 10 years ago as a student at Birmingham University. I studied Tai Chi and meditation with Sue during my studies and for some time after leaving university before moving back to my home area.

Sue was able to offer a user friendly guide to practising meditation through Chinese Health Exercises and also through Buddhist approaches. She always succeeded in identifying the essence of the teachings // practices and conveying these in concepts and terms appropriate to Western minds. Indeed she helped me to realise that my "Western Mindset" is not a permanent immutable way of seeing the world but just another set of values, perceptions, judgements and often barriers, something that can be turned off to allow a true mind to perceive the world innocently without value judgements and attachments.

This is one of the great gifts offered to me, one that I have been given to carry with me through this life and something that I can use whenever I feel low, stressed or just simply want to relax and enjoy life. I may not practice everyday and certainly won't be reaching Nirvana this lifetime, but benefit greatly from having been introduced to this practice.

I am very grateful to Sue and hope that as many people as possible have the chance to accept this gift that she is offering.

Justin Mills  
Consultant  
Board, Executive & Interim Recruitment  
Career Transition & Outplacement  
Coaching & Mentoring  
Individual & Organisational Development

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For a long time I tried to understand how meditation could help me in my daily life. Books failed to explain me how to achieve peace and understanding of

my true self because they were too complicated and were full of the things that meditation tries to eradicate. Thanks to Sue's teachings I finally understood how to get rid of unnecessary thoughts and how to perceive my true self and the world as they are. Her technique is so simple and effective than anyone can meditate immediately and improve their well-being.

I hope my impression can help other people. I really appreciate how easy you have made your teachings and your patience.

Belem Vasquez  
P.h.D student in Economics  
University of Birmingham

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Dear Supawan,

I am writing to give some feedback on your meditation course that I have been taking this semester. I was very eager to do anything that might aid stress relief this year as I am in my final year and therefore am constantly swamped with work as I prepare for my exams. I am the sort of person to always laugh off my problems and stresses and pretend they don't exist or go for a beer to forget them but doing your class has made me realise how cluttered my mind is at the moment and how difficult it is for me to find a moments peace in my hectic lifestyle. Since I started your class I have been trying to take a short amount of time every week to practice the techniques so I can recognise my problems and learn to keep them from attacking me. I realise that it is a very slow process and I think I'm still a long way from achieving the fourth stage of self-awareness but at least now I have a better idea of my goal and will work toward it without allowing stress to get the better of me.

I have enjoyed reading the emails you've sent me and would be grateful if you could continue to send me any information and reading material you think might interest me.

Thanks a lot

Liz Elliman

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### **Jamal's comment on Sue's class**

Commenting on Supawan's classes either as feedback for her or in an attempt to explain it to other people quickly turns into praise as a means of expressing gratitude towards her.

Thanking Sue face to face for the knowledge she had imparted in itself is something that I am sure Sue would not accept anyway, because the base of natural

normality she highlights in her lessons are indeed something quite personal and subjective to each person, something beyond. I can though and will thank her for her dedication and perseverance in teaching us aspects of life that even though they are right in front of us, still remain profoundly “hidden” especially in our western eyes. Supawan is teaching and bringing our attention to something so natural and blindingly easy and simple. To our classically scientific minds that tends to over complicate things, making an attempt to perceive “the innocent perception” as Supawan puts it, goes the opposite way.

“The innocent perception” is not a set of the concepts understood only by professors of academic or autistic “rain men”, but it is a suggestion towards something so basic and natural that we take it for granted.

We need teachers and inspired people to relate these kinds of basic ideas to curb the spiral of negativity we are embrace on: fuelled by ideas brought by anti-intellectualism in denying the need for a teacher and forming opinions on the scant knowledge that we have.

As a Muslim, I am familiar with the danger posed by those who ignore the years of study and dedication that scholars lay into the passionate fields of expertise. They feel that they can get by on relying on what they are familiar with and not actively seeking “knowledge”, a concept explicitly stated in the Koran as “men of understanding”.

Indeed, many of the concepts that Supawan impart are very analogous to Islamic thought. The bandits that tempt you in craving or laziness, the idea of Jerry, the mouse, coming into your house, attacking Tom and sending you into a physical and mental frenzy, remind me of Shaitan (similar to the Christians’ satan – but devoid of real power). These similarities are also the conclusion that the prophet Mohamed reached. The prophet is known to have said “don’t rush haste is from Shaitan”.

It is Supawan’s expertise in her field of knowledge, which enables her to reflect a distinctive guideline of practice such as the 4 foundations of awareness or returning to the four homes – a simple meditation skill leading to the innocent perception. It is also very similar to the Islamic prayer.

Prayer is a typically physical endeavor on the surface and does provide platform to know your movements. With the prostration, the kneeling, the ablutions and the purification, these movements provide a home for sensational awareness too. They are recommended by the prophet to be mindfully focused on. Without the awareness towards those movements during prayers, the same act would be declared void.

Indeed many Muslim through the century have known how to practice prayer by declaring one null of emotion and thought. Fathers and mothers who have heard of the death of their sons and daughters or any bad news would immediately experience a need to pray. They would calmly perform the ablution and pray, conversing with Allah, devoid of thoughts and feelings.

The melting of the individual into “the innocent world” (the 4<sup>th</sup> foundation or the 4<sup>th</sup> home) happening when devoid of thoughts and feelings (Jerry) as we do in

Sue's Tai chi class can be analogized to the very meaning of the word "Islam". A direct translation is difficult but it can be approximated to "submission", rooted in the word "slam" meaning peace (hence the Islamic greeting).

I would urge everybody with any desire either to probe the realms of simplicity, or any spiritual inclination, to at least read through Sue's book to gain an insight into what she said. This is the knowledge that should be actively sought by us all.

Jamal  
Student of Engineering Department  
Birmingham University

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Dear Sue,

Firstly, I would like to say how much of a difference your classes have made to me. I have been practicing, although not as often as I would like to. I have been trying not to "drift", some days it is easier than others and the overall affect that this has had on my mental well being has been remarkable.

Secondly, I would like to apologise for the classes that I unfortunately missed. A family crisis that has flung itself upon me, you know how life does, has taken some of my time away. However, your classes and my practicing have helped me to deal with these problems with more clarity and resolve.

Lastly but definitely not leastly, I would like to thank you for your expert and friendly tuition. Your classes have been the highlight of my weeks and I can't wait to enrol again next term.

I hope that you have a lovely Easter break and that you remain happy and well.

Kindest regards,

John.  
Dr. John D. O'Neil  
Cancer Research UK Institute for Cancer Studies  
University of Birmingham  
Edgbaston  
B15 2TT

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Dear Sue

Words can never be enough to thank you for all you have done in my life. I have never been the same again since I got to know the innocent perception. Yes, there was time when I lost my patience. I tried to pretend that I had never heard about it but then deep down within that unfathomable doubt of my heart, there was always

a small voice that kept telling me where I had to look for solutions to all my problems – Vipassana practice. Thank you for your kindness and understanding.

Love,  
Abansekha Sylvester  
P O box 1413 Limbe  
SWP  
Cameroon

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I have been to Sue's meditation and Tai Chi blend classes two terms in a row and have found them immensely useful to help me cope with the anxiety of being in the final year. In the first year my parents split up and in the second year I had a really painful break-up with my boyfriend so by the third year of being at university I decided that I needed some help to cope with the stress of university life! After going to Sue's classes and practising what she taught me at home I started to have a lot more control over what I was thinking and feeling. I realised that I didn't have to put up with these feelings of being overwhelmed or upset; I had the ability to gain perspective and see them as something I could conquer. I've just handed in my dissertation and thanks to Sue, it was a relatively stress-free experience because I was able to see the bigger picture and this gave me the ability to approach it in a calm manner rather than completely stressing out like I used to. Thank you so much for keeping me motivated to make meditation become a part of my everyday life; it really has made a difference.

Kathryn  
Student of Birmingham University

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Supawan's books reflect the enthusiasm and superb clarity that she also brings to her Tai Chi classes. Supawan deals with issues that relate importantly and directly to people, via the lessons available in eastern philosophy, culture and religion. Her books have the strength of her beliefs and learning and have the happy knack of making these things readily available to readers who have no prior knowledge of eastern spirituality.”

Phil Croft

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At first I attended Supawan's Tai Chi class partly out of interest but mainly to keep a friend company. After only a few short weeks my indifference turned to intrigue. Supawan's teaching of the Four Foundations through the movements of Tai Chi is both unique and unbiased allowing people to experience for themselves a sense of stillness. If only these classes were available to everyone the world over! However, at least people can experience the next best thing

through her writings. I would strongly encourage Waterstone's Booksellers to stock Supawan's books for this reason.

Sarah

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To whom it may concern

I am writing in support of Supawan Green whose books I am pleased to have found. At present I am working in the south of Thailand and of course surrounded by Buddhists. I have started to read several different books about Buddhism but never got far because they were too complicated or too difficult to relate to. Supawan has the advantage of having lived in the United Kingdom for some time, which helps make her writing more accessible. The language used in her books is concise and easy to relate to.

It took me some time to find her latest book here in Thailand where the number of English language books is limited but I did find it, I would have expected to find it in any good bookshop in the United Kingdom.

Louise Gee

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Dear Sir/Madam,

I strongly urge you to consider stocking the following titles in your store: '*The User Guide to Life*', '*Can a Caterpillar Be Perfect*' and '*A Handful of Leaves*' all written by Supawan P. Panawong Green.

I am personally acquainted with the author as I have been attending her Tai Chi meditation classes for some three years now. In these classes I have been lucky enough to receive the knowledge and acquire the skills of meditation in a very direct manner from a teacher who teaches in her own unique style, and has done for many years, developed from her own personal experiences. The three books Supawan has written are in my opinion a very successful attempt by a non-academic, non-native English speaker to put into words what she has been teaching to students in her classes. Not only does she explain in clear and accessible language, she also provides effective metaphors and comparisons and simple meditation techniques which help to enhance the better understanding of this knowledge within the context of the Buddhist traditions and beliefs. After all, it is the wisdom of the Buddha that is being discussed.

However I must stress that while Supawan's knowledge is rooted in her Thai Buddhist background, her goal in her work since she came to the West has been to find ways of passing on her knowledge in such a manner that it may benefit and appeal to people of all faiths and cultures. It is through her comparisons of different faiths and references to contemporary culture and societies along with her non-authoritative, non-dogmatic style that these works gain their broad appeal.

These books are the most valuable contribution to the literature on this subject as they are not simply the voice of another male monk reciting the Buddhist canon but the result of a deeply personal journey of self-discovery by one simple woman who has committed her life to the pursuit and dissemination of the most profound knowledge.

Yours sincerely,  
Mr Iain Armstrong  
Part-time lecturer in Music University College Northampton and  
University of Birmingham  
PhD Research in Musical Composition, University of Birmingham

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I think it is very rare to have found a teacher of tai chi and Buddhism after my initial interest was sparked on a visit to Thailand. Supawan has enabled the development of this interest through a guidance process. Not inflicting her thoughts but sharing her ideas. I never realised how many questions I had until I started reading the answers in Supawan's books.

Steph Poulton  
University of Birmingham

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I believe Waterstones should stock Supawan Green's books. I have had first hand experience of the author's enthusiastic teaching style in her Tai chi qi gong classes. I find her books to be a very useful companion to further study concepts introduced in these classes. She has developed a very palatable way of introducing Buddhist concepts even to non-religious people by her use of simple analogy in the classes and her books.

Dr. Amit P. Mehrohra  
School of Chemical Sciences  
University of Birmingham

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Supawan's course has been an important spiritual compass for me during the past two years. I've discovered a way of cutting across the pressures of student life to a refuge of calm and perspective. In the same way, Supawan's books are invaluable guides to positive thinking as a means to positive living.

Our whole culture is based on the view that the world is understood through the thinking apparatus, rather than through the silent mind.

You have to learn to reduce your 'problem' into something that is called unhappiness and deal with it as a whole.

Amy  
Student of Birmingham University

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There is one truth. Whatever we call it: Heaven, The Other Side, The Better Side, it remains the ultimate goal of all religions. We all hope to get to that truth some day. It takes several routes to attain this one destination but over the years, Sue Green has shown to us that they all lead to the one ultimate truth.

By following the prescribed method, or the four foundations of awareness, Sue takes us to the world once shadowed and reserved for a few selected people. Sue proves to us that the Buddha's path is open to every body and is also the best way to get to that ultimate goal of life.

She also gives an insight on how Tai chi and Qui Gong can help us to get closer to that truth. So whether we are die hard Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, or Jews, we can work towards the ultimate goal even in a non-religious manner.

And for those who still don't have peace within, Sue's books give great insight on how a few good steps could change a lot in your life forever.

Masong Tarkang  
Student from Cameroon

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17 Feb. 04

Dear all,

Many years ago when I was struggling to get *A Handful of Leaves* published in the UK, I wrote a letter to The Reverend Desmond Tutu, the Bishop of Cape Town. I thought that if he could agree with what I said in this book and could write a foreword for me, it would be a great opportunity to introduce the four foundations of awareness (vipassana) to the Christians as I have no doubt that vipassana is for humanity and definitely not just for the Buddhists. At that time, although the content of that book was about taking care of an individual human as well as the world community, I felt totally alone. I couldn't help thinking that I must be totally mad sitting here, writing all these challenging words without any support from anyone since no one knew what I was doing at the time. My determination was so strong that I quoted a couple sentences from the film *Titanic*, which had just been released at the time. The part when Jack was locked up in a room and Rose was trying frantically to find him as the ship was sinking. She bumped into the ship architect so she forcefully asked him where that room was. Rose looked at him in the eyes and said: "*I will find him, with or without your help but with your help, I would do better.*" These two sentences stayed with me; I always remember them because it was my character.

In the letter to the Reverend of Cape Town, I felt that it was necessary for him to have some idea about my true character because I was an unknown person and he didn't know me personally. After I talked about the purpose of my work, I told him that I

was determined to carry my work through with or without his help but with his help, I would do better.

Indeed, I caught the Reverend's attention; he kindly wrote back to me and admired my compassionate intention. He also apologised that he could not possibly write the preface for my book because of his tight schedule, his workloads as well as his weak health. He did, however encourage me to persevere with my charitable work and wished me all the best of luck and success. I was so happy to receive his letter and wholeheartedly understood his reasons. His encouragement was enough to inspire me to work hard until today.

As you know, Khun Thongchai, a lecturer of the Computer Engineering department of Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand, is working on a website for me. I would like to have a file containing feedback from my students and readers. Like most people, whenever I buy a book, I go straight to the back cover and read the blurb and also the short critiques. Although we know that the author would never think about putting negative criticism at the back of one's own book, positive critiques still influence the readers to buy the book. I intend to put my three books in the website so that people can help themselves. My point is that I am still a very anonymous person. Being a woman without any support from the establishments such as religion and education, I can do very little comparing to the huge message I want to deliver to humanity. Therefore, with the very limited resources I have, I intend to use them to the full potential. Your feedback will be one of the significant resources I can use. To make this website more effective, potential readers need to be convinced whether it would be worth their time to browse through my website or not. This is where your help will be very much appreciated. To help you have the perspective regarding my work, I will summarise the whole structure of my written work and teaching in class.

The goal of my work is to tell humanity that:

- 1) The "ultimate truth" does exist.
- 2) Saints in the past have called the ultimate nature Nirvana, God, The Tree of Life or Tao. My role is to simplify the holy words and unite them by leading people to witness a simple experience called the "innocent perception".
- 3) The four foundations of awareness or vipassana is the method leading people to the ultimate truth or the innocent perception and to encourage as many people as possible to take part in the vipassana practice.
- 4) Tai chi and Qi gong movements can be the ideal non-religious ways helping people to witness the ultimate truth.

I would be so grateful if you could help me to help others by writing a few sentences telling others how you had benefited from my works. You are welcome to bring up one issue that you feel compelled to talk about and how my work had helped you to understand - if not, just general feedback. Please state your name as well as your profession and credentials as these things are still important to potential readers. Please kindly email your feedback to me so I can compile them into a file for Khun Thongchai to transfer onto the website.

My students who know me personally know how determined I am. As I said to the Reverend Desmond Tutu, I would deliver the above messages to my fellow human beings with or without your help but with your help, I could do better. I don't mean to be harsh or threatening, I am just in the mood to use this line since it fits into the right context, that's all. Many thanks in advance.

I hope you are still working hard with your practice. Please persevere despite any obstacles you may encounter.

With metta,  
Supawan