



# Wudang

A MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER

11/20



## From Sifu Paul

Greetings, everyone,

The month of November brings us closer to the end of 2020, one of the most remarkable years in recent memory. Without sifting through the low points, the studio has adapted and remains resilient and will continue to offer T'ai Chi and Qigong to our members in ever-changing formats. One of those formats was our shift to an outdoor practice at Hampden Park. Mother Nature offered up a three-season run of beautiful weather that made us all grateful and Qi-full.

The month of Thanksgiving is upon us; my gratitude abounds to all our members who continued to pay membership dues and to donate beyond that. My deepest, heartfelt thanks to all of you.

This November also marks my 32nd anniversary for making ceremony with Master Liang as his lineage disciple, making this a fitting time to profile the Yang Family T'ai Chi Style in this issue with the second installment of our Five Families of T'ai Chi series. Also, we examine the concept of mind-intent and mindset, Lao Tzu illuminates the qualities of a great leader, and more. Be safe and be well.

## Hurry Up and Wait

The studio space is now ready for a limited return to live classes, with new ceiling fans, a HEPA air filtration system, carefully placed safe-distanced floor markings, benches moved and rearranged, and sanitizer at every turn. The whole ensemble was field tested by 11 dedicated studio members who came in to help out and participate in a practice class to see if it all worked. I'm happy to report that it



did; and oh, what a joy it was to play T'ai Chi together in our studio again.

Everything has fallen into line—except the coronavirus. COVID-19 is having a resurgence; epidemiologists such as Michael Osterholm would call that an understatement. With new restrictions being announced by the governor almost weekly, I feel the safe and prudent thing to do at this time is to postpone the opening of live classes until the coast is, if not completely clear, much, much clearer. This is a bit like preparing and packing your car and camper for your trip back to one of your favorite vacation spots, and you roll up to a railroad crossing with the gate down. There are cars in front and behind you at a dead stop, waiting for the train to pass; trouble is, nobody knows how long the train is.

I will be monitoring this situation closely and weekly and open up as soon as it makes sense to do so, but for now, we just have to wait.

A schedule for our Zoom classes will be sent out separately. Please give them a try; it's a way to connect and practice together, albeit virtually.

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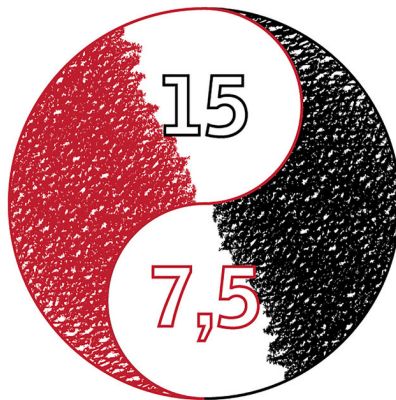
Coronavirus delays  
return to studio;  
Zoom sessions will  
continue

## We Did It! Let's Do It Again

In mid-November, we did it: we hit our \$5,000 matching-grant amount for our fall fundraiser—with six weeks left until the end of the year! Realizing our match this early is both a joy and a relief; it's humbling that so many of you reached out to support the studio and its mission in such an unpredictable and difficult time. In a typical year, our annual fundraiser seeds studio projects, education, archival projects preserving our legacy, technology upgrades, and more. In this anything-but-typical year, we need this support to manage our overhead and navigate through the winter and into the spring.

Our donor has raised the stakes and will now match up to \$7,500 in donations through December 31. This generous gesture would help us securely meet our expenditures with more assurance this fall and into the first quarter. If you are inspired to contribute, please remember that all donations will be doubled. Thank you to everyone for your continued support of the studio.

New  
 $\$7,500 = \$15,000$   
 ~~$\$5,000 = \$10,000$~~   
Matching Grant



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Fundraising goal:  
met and increased!

## The Five Family Styles of T'ai Chi Ch'uan

### Part 2

#### Yang Family Style

##### Yang Luchan (1799–1872)

Chen Chang Hsing, the 14th-generation grandmaster of Chen Family T'ai Chi Ch'uan, was the first to teach the art in depth to someone outside the Chen family; his name was Yang Luchan. From humble beginnings, Yang Luchan would go on to create a style of T'ai Chi that would become the most widely practiced form of T'ai Chi in the world, bringing good health and peace of mind through relaxed and graceful movement to millions of people while maintaining its integrity as a martial art. In addition, he

transmitted the art to the founders of four of the five family styles of T'ai Chi. The following is a brief biographical sketch of Yang Luchan and his descendants.

Yang Luchan was born into a working-class farm family in Hebei Province, in the county of Yongnian in Northern China, and in his youth, he studied a northern long-fist style of martial arts called Erlan Chang Ch'uan. Yang

## Contact Us

For timely updates, follow Twin Cities T'ai Chi Ch'uan on **Facebook**.

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Luchan's family was poor; he helped his father planting in the fields and also found work doing odd jobs off the farm. He found a temporary job working in an apothecary owned by Chen De Hu of Chen Village.

On one occasion, Yang witnessed a group of bandits attempt to rob the apothecary; they were easily subdued by Chen in what appeared to Luchan to be effortless power and control. Yang Luchan had never seen anything like this martial art and humbly approached Chen De Hu and asked if he would teach him. Sensing the youth's sincerity and worthy character, Chen De Hu agreed. After a brief period, Chen De Hu arranged for Yang Luchan to gain employment as a servant in Chen Village, with the hope of learning from his teacher, Chen Chang Hsing.

Yang made the long and arduous journey on foot to Chen Village. He was received by Chen Chang Hsing and welcomed into the compound. Over time, Yang was happy working for the Chen family, but very little instruction in Chen Family Tai Chi had accrued. Late one evening, Yang Luchan awoke to the sounds of shouting in the distant back courtyard. These were the shouts Heng! and Ha!—the sounds made when releasing martial power, called Fa Jing. Yang Luchan climbed a tree and looked into the rear courtyard and saw Chen Chang Hsing teaching his Chen family students T'ai Chi Ch'uan. Yang Luchan was delighted; from that day forward, he observed the training sessions every evening and practiced what he had seen until his skills improved.

On one occasion, Yang Luchan was playing Push Hands with one of the younger Chen family members and suddenly released an explosive burst of energy using one of the techniques he had observed and practiced from the secret courtyard. This knockdown was witnessed by Chen Chang Hsing himself, who approached Yang Luchan and asked where he had learned this technique. Yang Luchan was forthright and honest and told the master how he had been learning Chen T'ai Chi. The Master then summoned one of the senior students to push hands with Yang Luchan; the senior's attacks were neutralized



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Yang Luchan, the  
founder of the  
Yang-Style T'ai Chi  
we practice at TCTCC

and countered by Luchan, who repeatedly knocked the student down. Chen Chang Hsing realized the young man's natural ability, cleverness, perseverance, and honesty and made him an inner-door disciple; over the next several years, he taught him the complete Chen Family T'ai Chi Ch'uan system.

Yang Luchan returned home, where his arrival was anticipated by local boxers; he accepted many challenges and defeated all but one. This triggered a period of intense training and self-reflection and a return to Chen Village to improve his skill. Yang Luchan left and returned to Chen Village three times; he studied with Chen Chang Hsing for a total of 18 years.

Over time, Yang Luchan mastered the Chen Family T'ai Chi Ch'uan; his skill was pure and reached a high level. In his many bouts, he had always emerged victorious. Yang Luchan's reputation grew, and he was invited to Beijing by a distant relative, Wu Lu Ching, to teach T'ai Chi Ch'uan. There he attracted students, accepted many challenges, and acquired the name "Yang the Invincible."

Wu Lu Ching was a government official of the Qing Dynasty Emperor, Tao Kuang. He introduced Luchan to people within the royal Qing government, and he taught them T'ai

Chi Ch'uan. Through his fame and notoriety, he was invited by the emperor both to teach the royal family in the imperial court and to serve as the head martial arts instructor for the Royal Guard. He also brought his two sons to the palace to assist him.

Over time, Yang Luchan began to slow his form down; he removed all the jumping, stamping, deep stances, tempo changes, and outward release of energy that were inherent in Chen style and began to retain and turn the energy inward. His postures held the structural integrity for fighting, but they became more relaxed. The emperor's relatives and attendants began to benefit from these changes, as they had both a curative effect on the weak and sickly and a strengthening and energizing effect for all. He continued to give exhibitions and accept challenges; due to his soft neutralizing skill, his style became known as Mien Ch'uan or Cotton Fist.

Although the Chen family has adopted the name T'ai Chi Ch'uan, and it has been used throughout this article for convenience, its use came to prominence with Yang Luchan.

On one occasion, Yang Luchan defeated several skilled opponents in an exhibition. The philosopher scholar Ong Tong He was present and proclaimed that Yang's fluid technique and integration of hard and soft was the embodiment of the philosophy of T'ai Chi—the Supreme Ultimate. He even penned a verse; an ode to the master: "Hands Holding T'ai Chi shakes the whole world, a chest containing ultimate skill defeats a gathering of heroes." Yang's art became known as T'ai Chi Ch'uan, Supreme Ultimate or Great Polarity Fist. All subsequent styles that emerged from Yang's art were called T'ai Chi Ch'uan.

Yang's teacher, Chen Chang Hsing, distilled the seven forms of his ancestor Chen Wangting into two forms known as the First Routine and the Second Routine. Yang Luchan's form was based on Chen's first routine, formally known as Old Frame First Routine (Laojia Yi Lu). Yang Luchan's form was known as Old Frame.

## In Memoriam

Yang Zhen Duo (Yang Chen Duo)  
1926–2020

The fourth-generation grandmaster of Yang Family T'ai Chi Ch'uan, the third son of the grandmaster Yang Cheng Fu, Yang Zhen Duo, passed away on



November 7, 2020, at the age of 95.

He served as vice president of the Shanxi Wushu Association and founded the Shanxi Yang Style T'ai Chi Ch'uan Association and served as president. The association has now grown to more than 30,000 members throughout the province and is the largest martial arts organization of its kind in China.

Since 1971, he continually taught T'ai Chi Ch'uan for free in front of the Buddhist scripture building in Yingze Park of Taiyuan every Sunday for more than 40 years.

Since 1985, he traveled around the world to promote T'ai Chi. He wrote five books and countless articles on the study of T'ai Chi and produced three complete sets of videos instructing in the Yang Style system.

He advocated that "Tai Chi in the world is one family" and dedicated his life, energy, and enthusiasm to spreading Yang Family T'ai Chi Ch'uan in the hope that T'ai Chi will contribute more to human health. He has made an indelible contribution to the spread of T'ai Chi culture in the world.

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Use of the term  
"T'ai Chi Ch'uan"  
was popularized by  
Yang Luchan.

The term “frame” refers to the bones of the body and the architectural shapes they make in a form. There are three frame types: large, medium, and small; this refers to the size of the movements in a form. Large-frame forms promote exercise, circulation, and health; small-frame forms are performed for martial applications; medium-frame forms integrate some aspects of large- and small-frame styles.

## The Descendants

### 2nd Generation

Yang Luchan had three sons: Yang Chi, the eldest, who died young and never learned T'ai Chi from his father; Pan Hou, the middle son; and Chien Hou, the youngest. Yang Luchan died in 1872; he transmitted all his knowledge to his two sons and a few disciples outside his family.

#### Yang Pan Hou (1837–1892)

Yang Pan Hou developed a small-frame form with light, agile, and small movements, emphasizing martial techniques. He trained long and hard, acquiring all the skills transmitted to him. He followed his father to Beijing and defeated many prominent martial artists there, further expanding the Yang family reputation. His temperament was fierce, and he would often hurt his students in training; those that persevered became skillful practitioners, but they were few in number.



#### Yang Chien Hou (1839–1917)

Yang Chien Hou began training with his father at a young age. His father was very strict and overbearing, demanding that he train long and hard. Several



times, he tried to run away, only to be brought back to his fate as the son of Yang Luchan. In time, he embraced T'ai Chi and became a highly skilled master of the art, learning from both his father and his brother. He had great-empty hand skills and also a mastery of weapons. He had a soft temperament as well as a gift for teaching, so he was a great asset to his father teaching in Beijing, and he had many students of his own.

He and Ban Hou worked to revise their father's system; Chien Hou specialized in medium-frame T'ai Chi. Chien Hou's listening and neutralizing skills became legendary. He allegedly was able to place a sparrow in the palm of his hand, and, sensing when the bird pushed down through its feet in order to take flight, Chien Hou would yield and neutralize that action, preventing the bird from flying away.

Yang Chien Hou had a premonition of his own death and called his family and students together for a farewell and final conversations with them. He bathed and dressed himself in his finest garments and breathed his final breath with a smile upon his face.

Yang Chien Hou had three sons: Shao Hou, the eldest; Shao Ching, the second, who died young; and Cheng Fu, the youngest.

### 3rd Generation

#### Yang Shao Hou (1862–1930)

Yang Shao Hou began studying T'ai Chi Ch'uan at the age of six with his father, his uncle, and also his grandfather. He mastered the middle frame taught by his father and the small frame taught by his uncle; later in life, he developed his own small-frame style called “small circle” that mixed high and low postures with slow and sudden postures and emphasized fighting applications. Reserved for only his inner-door students, the form is



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Yang Luchan's sons and grandsons passed his teachings to disciples including Cheng Man-ching, one of T.T. Liang's teachers.

little known today. He favored his uncle Pan Hou's approach to T'ai Chi, and his temperament was similar to his uncle's, as he rarely pulled his punches when working with his students. His skills were of a high level; his lineage of students was modest.

**Yang Cheng Fu**  
(1883–1936)



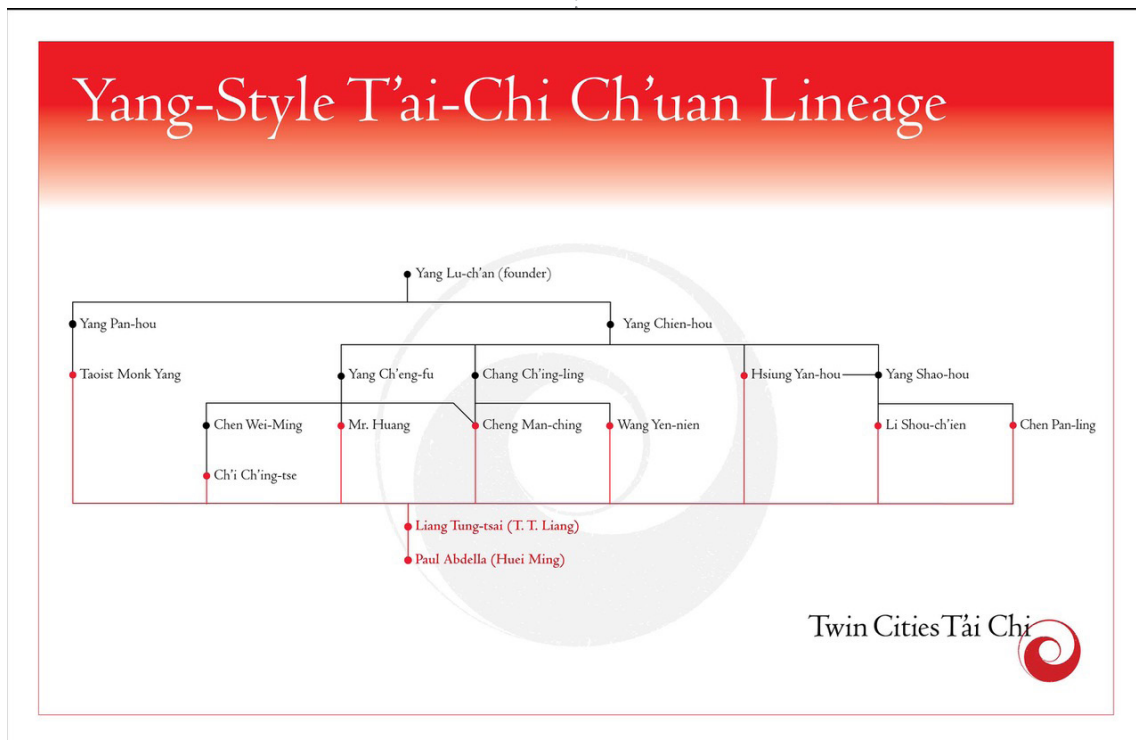
Yang Cheng Fu had little interest in T'ai Chi as a youth and didn't begin training with his father until his teens. He favored his father's medium-frame style of T'ai Chi over his uncle's small frame and shared his temperament. He smoothed out, rounded, and softened the form he learned from his father, eventually expanding it to a large-frame form. He emphasized keeping the form slow, soft, flexible, even, and coordinated with the mind. He and his brother brought T'ai Chi to the public by teaching at the Beijing Physical Culture Research Institute. Cheng Fu taught there from 1914–1928.

Yang Cheng Fu was large in stature, and his

skills at Push Hands (Tui Shao) were unequalled. With small, subtle movements, he led opponents to be off balance then suddenly released energy, causing them to fly through the air and fall to the ground. His arms were described as "iron bars wrapped in cotton."

Yang Cheng Fu left Beijing in 1928 and went south to teach T'ai Chi Ch'uan in five cities, including Nanjing, where he became the head coach at Central Martial Arts Academy. He dictated the book *The Art of T'ai Chi Ch'uan* to his disciple Chen Wei Ming. In 1930, he moved to Shanghai and began teaching and also published the book *The Complete Principle and Theory of T'ai Chi Ch'uan*. Over time, he shifted his practice from the martial to slow and continuous movements without breaks for health.

His travels throughout China took their toll on his health, as poor sanitation of the water and environment caused him to become ill; Cheng Fu died in 1936 at the age of 53. He promoted T'ai Chi openly to the public and cultivated his disciples to become masters in their own right, such as Tung Ying Chieh, Chen Wei Ming, Fu Changwen, and Cheng Man-Ch'ing. They, in turn, spread Yang Family T'ai Chi Ch'uan throughout the world.



< Yang Luchan's legacy lives on through our studio.

Yang Cheng Fu had three sons: Chen Ji, Chen Duo, and Chen Guo, all of whom practiced and taught T'ai Chi Ch'uan. Yang Chen Duo was the successor, who passed the art on to his grandson, Yang Jun.

## T.T. Liang and the Yang Family T'ai Chi Ch'uan

Professor Cheng Man-Ching, a disciple of Yang Cheng Fu, came to the United States in 1963 to give the first official demonstrations of T'ai Chi Ch'uan in America at the United Nations. He was accompanied and assisted by his disciple, T.T. Liang. Together, they had an enormous influence over the spread of T'ai Chi in North America, especially in the U.S.

Master Liang is most closely associated with Professor Cheng but in fact has lineage connections to all members of the second and third generations of the Yang family (see the T'ai Chi lineage chart).

In addition, he studied Hsing-I, Pa Kua, Praying Mantis Kung Fu, Shaolin Chin Na, and Taoist meditation with prominent teachers in Taiwan.

At Twin Cities T'ai Chi, our form is primarily derived from Yang Chien Hou's medium-frame sequence and his son Yang Cheng Fu's slow, relaxed, even postures. Yet all streams of influence from the other Yang family lines were integrated by Master Liang into his system of T'ai Chi Ch'uan.



*With the greatest leader above them,  
people barely know one exists.  
Next comes one whom they love and praise.  
Next comes one they fear.  
Next comes one they despise and defy.*

*When a leader trusts no one,  
no one trusts him.*

*The great leader speaks little.  
He never speaks carelessly.  
He works without self-interest  
and leaves no trace.  
When all is finished, the people say,  
“We did it ourselves.”*

~ Lao Tzu,  
Tao Te Ching, verse 17

## Change Your Mindset, Change Your Life

By Peter Diamandis

T.T. Liang writes in his book, T'ai Chi Ch'uan for Health and Self Defense:

It is evident that if from the beginning you try to use mind-intent to direct the movements, your skill will be improved by leaps and bounds; gradually when you have mastered the use of your mind you will be able to acquire all the techniques. Therefore, the most important guiding point of T'ai Chi Ch'uan is the use of mind-intent to direct the movements.

*In the following blog post, entrepreneur Peter Diamandis applies this concept to business and daily life.*

Progress is impossible without change, and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything.

— George Bernard Shaw

What made Steve Jobs, Jeff Bezos, or Elon Musk succeed? Was it their technology or their mindset? Personally, I think mindset is an entrepreneur's most critical asset. Yet few of us ever take the time to craft it—to purposefully select and sharpen the mindset(s) we desire.

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T.T. Liang at his home in St. Cloud, 1984, with students: Dan Polsfus (L), Paul Abdella (C), Jairo (R)

Your mindset is the filter through which you see the world. It determines how you spend your time, what decisions you make, and where you invest your resources.

I've been asked over the years whether I've always had an Abundance mindset and an Exponential mindset... The answer is NO. They are both mindsets that I've crafted over the past 10 to 15 years. So how do you craft and reinforce a mindset? Which mindsets am I most excited about? These are the questions I'll explore in this blog.

Let's dive in...

How mindsets work...

Before you choose which mindset(s) to focus on, it helps to understand how mindsets work.

Here's an analogy: if you've been following developments in AI (artificial intelligence), you know that we can train neural nets to do image recognition. The challenge with these neural nets is that they're only as good as the data you feed them.

For example, if you show the neural nets thousands of pictures of cats, and then you show them a picture of a dog, the algorithm will tell you that the dog is actually a cat. It doesn't know any better. The same is true for our brains, which are also neural nets. If you constantly feed your brain with negative perspectives, your outlook will be negative. You won't know any better.

So, how are you training your neural net?

Most of us don't realize that we're doing this training. It operates in the background. For example, through social media echo chambers or in our daily news intake of the CNN (Crisis News Network) or Fox.

Taking an active approach to understanding and crafting mindsets is something that's important for me personally, and I've made it the fundamental underpinning of my Abundance 360 program.

So, what shapes your mindset? What are the things that have you trapped thinking the way you do? What would you need to change?



Crafting your mindset...

The two key inputs that shape our mindsets are: the people we spend time with and the media we consume.

Life is who you go through life with.

There's an old saying in business that you're the average of the five people you spend the most time with. If you want to be fit, hang out with friends who exercise.

If you want to think big and aspire to change the world, hang out with people who have Moonshots and a massively transformative purpose (MTP). Garbage in, garbage out.

Just as you are the average of the five people you spend the most time with, the same is true for ideas. The news and media we consume are data that we allow to flow into our brains (AKA our neural nets). What is your news diet? What kind of movies or documentaries are you watching? What books or blogs are you reading? (Thank you for reading this blog!)

Do these inputs reinforce the mindsets you want? Or do they reinforce mindsets you're trying to avoid? As an entrepreneur, answering these questions is a critical part of your journey to be successful during this era of exponential change. The next step on that journey is choosing the mindset(s) that works best for you.

Selecting your mindset...

There are MANY mindsets you can choose

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"If you constantly feed your brain with negative perspectives, your outlook will be negative."



from. But for me, there are six specific mindsets that I find most powerful and important to hone during this era of exponential growth.

The following six mindsets are the ones I personally focus on and use to coach entrepreneurs during my Abundance 360 program:

1. **Abundance Mindset:** You have clarity, evidence, and conviction that technology is dematerializing, demonetizing, and democratizing products and services, creating increasing abundance on a global scale.
2. **Exponential Mindset:** You understand that computation and derivative technologies (AI, VR, 3D printing, etc.) are growing exponentially. Thirty doublings drive a billion-fold improvement that the human (linear) mind finds difficult to grasp.
3. **Longevity Mindset:** You are focused on maximizing your health span, tracking the biotech breakthroughs able to add 20 to 30 healthy years onto your life and making “100 years old the new 60.” You seek key insights and early access.
4. **Moonshot Mindset:** You understand that most people are focused on incremental (10%) growth, but you seek 10x Moonshot growth. You desire tools and techniques that enable you to select and implement your Moonshots.
5. **Purpose/Passion-driven Mindset:** You seek to find, refine, or update your massively transformative purpose (MTP), which allows you to live a passion-driven life. You seek tools and a community to amplify and support your MTP.
6. **Gratitude Mindset:** You recognize how incredibly lucky you are on a personal and professional basis, and you take the time to



acknowledge your blessings. You have created routines in your day that allow you to reflect on this, and to share this with those in your life in a way that brings you joy and uplifts those around you.

Which would you choose?

Can you imagine the benefits of having an Exponential or Abundance Mindset?

Would it help flip the way you see things? Instead of seeing a problem, can you see an opportunity? Remember that the world's biggest challenges are also the world's biggest business opportunities.

How long you live is a function of many factors, including your mindset. You can will yourself to death—or will yourself to a longer health span.

My mission is to transform the way you think—to transform your mindset around many factors including longevity. The best way for me to do this is to give you overwhelming evidence of the massive

medical advancements that can and will extend your health span.

I want you to go from thinking: “That sounds possible” to thinking: “Oh my god, I can't believe what's happening!”

*Peter Diamandis is an engineer, physician, and entrepreneur, best known for being founder and chairman of the X Prize Foundation, cofounder and executive chairman of Singularity University and coauthor of The New York Times bestsellers, Abundance, and BOLD. He is former CEO and cofounder of the Zero Gravity Corporation, cofounder and vice chairman of Space Adventures Ltd., founder and chairman of the Rocket Racing League, cofounder of the International Space University, cofounder of Planetary Resources, cofounder of Celularity, founder of Students for the Exploration and Development of Space, and vice chairman and cofounder of Human Longevity, Inc.*

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A Longevity Mindset focuses on maximizing health and making age 100 seem like the new 60. Master Liang, who lived to 102, certainly embraced this principle!