



IN MEMORIAM ...

Honoring Dr. Yat Ki Lai—a Beloved Doctor, Acupuncturist & Teacher

Editorial Staff | DIGITAL EXCLUSIVE

Dr. Yat Ki Lai was born in Canton in 1947 and died in San Francisco on August 13, 2019. He was 76 years old by traditional Chinese count.

Dr. Lai was determined to become a doctor - he began training very young, and for 10 years he was fortunate to study Chinese medicine and acupuncture through the traditional apprenticeship system. By age 20 he was practicing as a *Barefoot Doctor*, treating patients in the Chinese countryside.

With a strong vision of the future and an unusually high tolerance for risk, he set out for Hong Kong in 1970, at age 23, by swimming there from China. He began treating patients there in 1971. Then in 1972, he immigrated to the U.S. and settled in San Francisco, where he left a unique and far-ranging legacy. He began treating patients almost immediately, in Chinatown. In the early years, he also led seminars and lectured widely on the principles and practice of Traditional Chinese Medicine, with the goal of increasing awareness of its effectiveness among American medical doctors, and others.



He made another huge leap in San Francisco in 1980, while maintaining a growing practice, under his wife Shana's able management. With three colleagues he founded the American College of Traditional Chinese Medicine (ACTCM), the first school of traditional Chinese medicine in the U.S. His vision of training the first American generation of healers focused on clinical practice from the start. As a teacher, he always stressed differential diagnosis as the guiding principle and the key to achieving optimal healing. Dr. Lai was also a key figure in the legalization of traditional Chinese medicine in California, and ultimately the entire U.S.

Editor's Note: Taken from John Mini's tribute to Dr. Lai. The complete version will appear in the next issue.

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