

INTERNAL WUSHU ARTS NEWSLETTER

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A FEW THINGS I HEAR

1. I'll never get this
2. I can't do this
3. I'm too old
4. I'm not coordinated
5. I don't have time to practice
6. I already know that, I've learned it before.
7. You need natural talent for that
8. I'm not as good as so and so
9. It's easier for them

the list goes on

YOU ARE YOUR OWN TEACHER SO WATCH WHAT YOU SAY

Saying things like the above enforces several things to happen. The excuse is there so we won't have to expect or try too much. It confirms our negative self-imagery. We give ourselves permission not to practice or refine what we have.

If our practice is perfect we wouldn't be in classes studying. on one level we are always trying to correct ourselves and practice better than last time. This is a life-long process. The time to worry and we're in the most trouble is when we think we're practicing perfectly. Our life long practice is in correcting and understanding ourselves. Strive to practice better than last practice, that's all to be concerned about. Now being perfect.

1. If you think you'll never get this then why try? You've already decided what will happen. When you get discouraged on a movement or form just do what you can then take a break. Give it your best shot. If these arts were easy there would be more masters.

2. You may not be able to do the movement now but if you keep trying, asking questions, work on pieces of it you'll be able to get it. It just takes time and perseverance.

3. If you think you're too old, then you are. you're only as old as you think. Physically we are all limited to a certain extent. But, we're studying the internal arts, we're not trying to fit into a certain mold. Sifu is in his 80's, Gao-fu is 74 and I still couldn't keep up with either of them and I'm less than half their ages. Sifu started at age 9 but Gao-fu started at 50 and I still couldn't keep up. Age is no excuse for not trying or practicing correctly.

4. coordination is a product of practice, not a pre-requisite for practice. Some members pick up movements quickly, others slowly. We all learn differently and at different rates. Though the learning of movements becomes easier it's not really a matter of coordination. A gate that isn't used for a while gets stiff and rusty, our muscles and joints are the same. Some muscles are disconnected from others, they need to be worked and oiled to move smoothly and in harmony with other muscles. This is why we practice.

5. You don't have to practice everything, each time you practice. if you have 2 minutes you can practice. Sitting in

your car waiting for the light to change practice relaxing and sinking. Waiting for the coffee or tea to warm do the basic step or a chi kung exercise. Two minutes here and there add up. A minute of practice is more than none. We practice and study for many reasons: health, self-defense, relaxation, meditation etc., no practice = no results.

6. The minute you think you have it you don't. Have you noticed the people who think they're the most together and same are the crazy ones? If you are being corrected there must be something not quite right. Also, there are many levels to performing each movement, after one level is mastered we begin to approach the next level. Until there is a consistency at one level the others can't be reached.

7. Though we all have different 'natural' talents, it doesn't matter. Tai Chi Pa Kua isn't a style to become but a method to discovering ourselves as well as strengthening our mind, body and spirits. There is no natural talents for this, just individual pursuit.

8. It doesn't matter who is better or worse than you. They are not you! We all do what we can, hopefully our best. if you judge yourself by someone else it can be depressing sometimes and ego inflating other times. Only compare yourself with yesterday. Learn from yesterday so you can improve and advance. This is intelligence. We only have control over ourselves. Lean from others but don't compare.

9. We all have different talents. What's easy for one person is hard for another. It's very misleading to watch someone and assume the movement easy for them. They may have studied that move or form months to achieve that level of apparent effortless. Physically they may do the movements easily but may not have any idea of the inner connections or centering. Also, concern yourself with your own practice, not someone else's!

10. Words have power. I'd like you to listen to yourself for the next month. Try to change the negative to neutrals or positives. Every 'I can't' change to 'Let's try' or 'Let's try again.' The movements you have the most difficulty learning are the one you'll end up doing the best. You'll know more about them than any other movements. Are the 'I can't' -- 'I don't want to?'.

Internal wushu isn't what can be seen but what isn't seen. All movements come from the 'i' the intent causing the body to move. What you think, how you think, what you do with your thoughts are all very, very important.

The internal wushu art sometimes called method of self-cultivation is Chinese. Similar to a garden, the garden will reflect the effort put into it.