

INTERNAL WUSHU ARTS NEWSLETTER

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1993 REVIEW

JAN - Fighter, Poet, Martial Artists, Scholar, Athlete, Teacher. Movement and Stillness by master Tchoung. One Principle Covers Many Levels
FEB - Symbolism: Numbers, The Fighter
MAR - The Poet & Artist, Zhan Zhuang
APR -
MAY - Box Within a box, Bill Moyer special, The Scholar
JUNE - The Athlete, Power Base in Pa Kua Chang, Stopping Short
JULY - Distractions, The Teacher, Walking the Circle.
AUG - It's All a Process of Healing, The Student, Wuji.
SEPT - Creating A Positive Change, Lessons in Letting Go, Kootenay Tai Chi Retreat, Sung & Hsu.
OCT - Teachings of Master Tchoung, The Deeper the Cup, Time = Greater Benefits, Chi Kung Work.
NOV - Valuable Time, Tai Chi Chuan: To Simplify, The Alchemy of Chi Kung, What Belt Are You?
DEC - Read On:

WOW!

This last year has been quite wonderful in regards to the club. We have had the fortune of Mr. Yueng's visits and teaching. We have been able to receive much depth from the teachings of Master Tchoung due to his willingness (and to the great translation skills of Felicia). The continued stay of Zhang Jie. My 25th year studying celebration dinner was great. We have made contact with gifted instructors like Mike Smith and Alec Witzaney. A few of us were privileged to attend Rex Eastman's Tai Chi Retreat (you must go next year!). The Bill Moyer special awakened many to the benefits of the Chinese arts.

One thing, not as noticeable, is our influence and value to each other. Aside from the arts and classes, each of us brings a special quality, skill, and unique view that benefits us all. There have been many times I've been in a class when the instructor has asked: "Any questions?" Only to find it just left my head at that point. When someone asks a question that was in my mind before. Some people also have a skill of asking just the right questions. Some gift us by their practice, being able to watch them and see a quality we should try to

move towards. Some may remind us how serious and dedicated practice should be while another may remind us to just 'lighten up'.

We don't come together for each others company. We share an interest in these arts to varying degrees. This creates a certain bond within the class, the club, and other stylists. Our first thought as we begin practice is the wonders of the various arts. AREN'T THEY GREAT.

This month is sacred to many diverse groups but the principle is much the same. Instead of permitting yourself to get caught up in the tension and hype that accumulates as the month goes on: ground, relax, and center. Next appreciate and value your own gifts and talents, then look at the gifts and talents of those around you.



Master Gao Fu is here!

I will be turning the Chen Tai Chi class over to master Gao if it fits into her schedule.

DECEMBER

There are no canceled classes this month. ☺ We do have one extra day on Wednesday and Thursday.

GENE'S BOOK

Copies available in my file box \$5.

SORRY

I spaced out the Phinney Center being closed Nov. 11th. We will make up Thanksgiving day on the 'extra' day in December.

WORKSHOPS

Pa Kua Inner palms: chi kung to applications. February 12th. Sign up by Jan. 15th.

NEW CLASS CHI KUNG

Fridays, 7-8:30

This January I will be adding another class to the club schedule. This class will be for those interested in gaining depth to their chi kung practice and an introduction for beginners. We will have a two month theme, meaning we'll focus on specific exercises or methods of chi kung.

Tai Chi, Pa Kua, O'mei, Kun Lun, Lung Men, Wild Goose, Misogi, Aiki, and even tree chi kung will be some of the topics covered over the next year. The consistent exercises done each session will be Zhan Zhuang and certain breathing exercises.

Studying with Mr. Yueng has given me greater insight into the various methods I've already been practicing. It has also improved my practice of the various styles. We will focus on gaining greater depth in all our practices.

This class is no extra cost for members of the others classes.

SNOW

In case of bad weather first call the Phinney Center 784-2244 to check if it's open. Mid week you can call me at 283-0055, weekends 428-5974.

CLUB FEE

As each January comes around the rent seems to increase. Last year the club fee didn't increase since enrollment went pretty high. Unfortunately enrollment fluctuates throughout the year creating problems in the summer and fall. Another problem is limited space, especially Tuesdays! The class sizes has to be limited due to space. The required sales tax on lessons haven't helped.

The additional chi kung class is to help boost enrollment. Starting January the basic club fee for one class is

\$50 monthly, this includes the sales tax. We'll see what the future brings.

BEGINNING CLASSES

Jan. & Feb., Sept. & Oct are now the only months that beginners may join the Tuesday Yang Tai Chi class. The reason for this is so I may be able to keep the teaching quality high with the continuing members. Beginners need more time and nurturing than continuing members. If you know interested people please let them know. There are also new club brochures, please distribute them.

*"If you have sincerity
in your learning, you will
learn well.*

*Sincerity is the basic
spiritual power that
everybody has."*

Hua-Ching Ni

CLASS RULES:

1. Relax
2. Practice if you're not receiving instruction.
3. Talk in class should be either instructions or questions.
4. Move to another room if you need to visit.
5. Ask questions
6. Help one another
7. No pain, don't force any movement.
8. Pay on time

THANKS MIKE

The workshop went great covering the 5 elements and 12 animals. The last hour we enjoyed Tuishou and free hands practice. Mike will be down again Dec. 12th. There will be time for corrections or free hands play.

This newsletter is intended for students of the Internal Wushu Arts and interested parties. The intent is to give greater depth to some subjects, share my studies and current learning from various teachers. To keep members informed about events and changes in schedules.

My hope is the newsletter will
motivate and encourage
students in their own research.
ATD

Long Forms

If you look around there are many schools of Tai Chi Chuan, the most popular are the 'short' form groups. These forms appeal to our 'fast food' temperament. Behind this is the thought that the form will give us something so get the shortest form. In addition to getting a short form it also has to be learned in a short amount of time and need minimal time to do. Short forms are a recent introduction (1950's) in order to spread Tai Chi Chuan as an exercise system. Master Cheng Man Ching taught a short form since he didn't like to practice. However, he evolved the short form only after many years of hard daily training with master Yang Cheng Fu, so he had great skill by the time he evolved the short form. Now most schools of Tai Chi Chuan have various versions of short forms, we have a 6 minute, 10 minute, 20 minute and 30 minute form depending on the order the sections are done in.

A good stance and posture reflect a proper state of mind.

It takes more than a couple of minutes to boil water

As water is heated it gets warmer and warmer, then it becomes hot, finally it erupts into boiling.

On one level these forms can be a good way of getting started and learning basics. For those only interested a little exercise and stress reduction they serve their purpose. One problem for new students learning a short form is; they don't permit a deep level of energy work. As soon as the energy begin to move into the deeper levels the forms is over. These forms don't permit the individual enough time to refine the energy and for the energy to get into the 'deep tissues'. At an advanced level of skill the short forms do have a deep level benefit since the ground work has been set after working for years on the long forms.

One problem with learning a long form is the time investment required. Only a few members of the club have the time to do our long form every day, not to mention twice a day. Once learned the long form takes about an hour to complete. After learning the six sections the common practice is to do 1-2-5-6 one day, and 1-3-4-6 another, this ends up being a 30 minute form. When time is short then perhaps practicing one section in the morning and another in the evening works. What gives these practices power and significance is being able to practice 1-6, at least one hour once a week without a break. One hour on uninterrupted movement, focus, and circulation of energy. If you're just learning the forms then you don't have the opportunity for this continuous energy workout. After completing the form it's important to practice it uninterrupted at *least* once a week giving yourself this deep practice. The second hour of class time is to permit the energy connection to go into the deeper levels. Of course if you can practice several times a week you gain a greater storing and nurturing of energy. It is important that there is

no break in your forms and practice, it disrupts the momentum you have going. As you continue into the form you begin to relax deeper and deeper, your mind calms down permitting the energy to flow with minimum friction.

The longer this time of uninterrupted energy work is permitted the deeper the possible levels, the greater energy cultivation, the greater skill.

As time goes on, after a few years of this type of practice, these levels become softer and open to letting the chi sink and penetrate the deeper tissues. When the

body is at this stage then a short form will be able to have a strong energy effect reaching deep. Practicing a short form may eventually get you to deep layers but it will take years longer since you need a certain 'mileage'. The long form practice forces you to get that mileage in a shorter time since you're practice and study of the basic forms can't be simplified or shortened.

If you pour water on ground that is hard pan or compacted the water will sit on the surface. If it penetrates the ground it may only sink 1/4 an inch (if that). In order for the water to sink deeper into the soil, the soil needs to be cultivated and amended deeply. Five minutes of cultivation will loosen perhaps a couple of inches at the surface but not much deeper. It takes a lot more time an effort for the compacted soil to become loose and soft at deeper levels. Our bodies have this type of compactness to many varying degrees. Physical tightness, stiffness from lack of using our bodies and muscles. Stiff muscles from stress or emotional fears and traumas. As we get to the deeper and smaller muscle tissues we encounter the same tightness that our shoulder muscles have that still need to melt away. Each organ may have a tension or stress harboring there. Usually as we get deeper into our smaller muscle grouping and organs the tension and stiffness aren't from outward stress as much as emotional traumas locked in there. To loosen the tension and permit a free flow of energy to improve our overall health requires greater time and commitment. There is no quick form, easy pill to take, just time and practice. KUNG = work, FU = time} skill (health)..

BOOKS:

- 📖 THE TAO OF TAI CHI CHUAN - Jou, Tsung Hwa
- 📖 THE FUNDAMENTALS OF TAI CHI CHUAN - Wen-Shan Huang
- **THERE ARE NO SECRETS - Wolfe Lowenthal
- 📖 TAI CHI CHUAN TA WEN - Chen Wei-Ming
- 📖 THE WAY OF ENERGY - Master Lam Kam Chuen
- 📖 KI IN DAILY LIFE - Koichi Tohei
- 📖 THE ESSENCE OF TAI CHI CHUAN - Lo, Inn, Amacker, Foe
- 📖 PRACTICING AND TEACHING TAI CHI - Gene Burnett
- **CLASSICAL PA KUA CHANG - Johnson, Crandall
- **THIRTEEN CHAPTERS - Cheng, Man-ching
- 📖 LIANG ZHEN PU - Li Zi Ming
- **CHENG SHI BAGUAZHANG - translation Crandall
- 📖 CHI KUNG Health & Martial Arts - Yang Jwing-Ming
- 📖 VITALITY, ENERGY, SPIRIT A Taoist Source book - Thomas Cleary
- 📖 SHAMBHALA -THE PATH OF THE WARRIOR- Chogyam Trungpa
- 📖 TAI CHI CLASSICS - Waysun Liao
- 📖 CHEN STYLE 48 FORM - Martin Mellish

I-Chuan

MASTERING MOTION THROUGH STILLNESS

I-Chuan is an offshoot system of Hsing I-Chuan, and is one of the rarest of the internal martial arts. Although it shares the five elements and 12 animal theory of Hsing I, the training method is quite unique. A large part of the system is based on Zhan Zhuang (post training/chi kung), and specialized alignment and visualization drills that give the system its name. I-Chuan, literally translated is Mind/Intent fist way.

To watch I-Chuan being practiced you would think the person is doing a lot of warm-ups and breathing exercises. It all looks very simple and easy to do. The styles' charm is that its simplicity on the outside makes room for a lot of intricate work on the inside. In a fast double sword set it is easy to miss discrepancies in alignment, while practicing the same cut a thousand times it becomes easier to see the little mistakes and research new feelings. A benefit of this kind of training is that it becomes totally individual. All of the principles and concepts begin to work with the body's shape and abilities to get the most out of practice.

One of I-Chuan's most definable gifts is that it leads the practitioner to work on the energy concepts of the movements. Each of the five elements (fists) and twelve animals have a "Specific Implication" that is being taught. For example; Splitting (PI-Chuan) 'Implies' redirecting a strike to a lower line wrapping its energy across the back to strike out and down or to throw or lock up the opponent by 'splitting' across the arm. This seems complicated but really quite simple; study what the technique teaches you about overall movement instead of the technique itself. The animals have their own "Specific Implications" but also have a personalized method that is an attempt to acquire or feel the Spirit/Nature of the animal that is being practiced. I have found the I-Chuan 'research of Intent' training method to be very useful at showing the 'methods' that other systems are implying in their practice.

In putting together the 'Body/Mind Methods' of I-Chuan, the whole becomes greater than the sum of the parts. Advanced students who have practiced several patterns and styles of push hands will come to the same conclusion. If you train your body, in many ways, to act naturally with outside forces, the combination of these methods is surprising and humbling. I often ask myself "Who did that?" when methods come together successfully without my interference. All students and all styles have this potential.

I-Chuan is also influenced by Pa Kua Chang and some of its training method is based on Pa Kua theory. One method in particular I have found very useful and include in all styles I practice is the Four Manifestations. This method of practice is easier to feel than describe, but I would like to introduce it in hopes that other students of internal martial arts will benefit.

THE FOUR MANIFESTATIONS



Greater Yang:

In this phase the body is kept stretched and full. This fullness is a light tension around the joints, often called "internally stretched, externally bound." Throughout the practice you keep the mind on the active part of the body, the muscles. This teaches efficient motion and constant connection in the body.



Lesser Yang:

In this phase the 'fullness' is kept in the Yang side of the body, while the Yin side is relaxed but still connected and open. The mind follows the movement of yang from side to side throughout the body. This leads to discoveries into the dynamic internal changes in the body. Best done with the eyes closed. Work on 'FA'.



Greater Yin:

In this phase the concentration is on the emptiness in the body. This requires the least possible energy to accomplish movement. Throughout practice concentration is on the waist, lower back and abdomen. The arms can occasionally be left at the sides. The goal is to be as light as possible, as if training under water, the arms float and the weight rests in the legs. This is the time to regulate the breath and allow feelings of energy to manifest freely. (Consider this a Chi-kung set.)



Lesser Yin:

This phase is the same as lesser Yang, but reversed. Yang side is connected and open while the yin side is emptied totally. The mind follows the emptiness as the Yang 'gets out of the way'. It is important for the Yang to return to center before moving on. This is the time to work on opening the joints and tendons 'SHU'.

It is important to keep in mind that these are exercises to show you, on a direct conscious level, the methods that make Internal Martial Arts what they are. These methods will (hopefully) bring you to moments of Wu Wei in your practice.

Most internal forms are practiced somewhere between lesser Yin and lesser Yang. I feel that expanding the perimeters of expression of *I* (intent/mind) is an enhanced form of practice.

I hope the words inspire you to research deeper into your *I*, and your method of practice.

PA KUA EIGHT CHANGES

In the Cheng ting hua lineage of Pa Kua there are many, many form and many variations of each form. Cheng's son taught his students a certain method, Sun lu tang taught a different method, Liu Hsin Han teaches yet another method. As will naturally happen, each teacher will specialize in the movements and training they prefer, body type had much to do with this. It's a question whether Cheng taught all different changes, if the changes were their own modifications, or they picked over the many 8 changes taught them. Thus there are some changes emphasize applications and others more the chi kung, some crisp movements, some fluid, others tai chi like movements. As I've been fortunate to learn from teachers from these various lines but it also creates a problem. For me the unfortunate thing is I've found that all of the various 8 changes have an important focus in training that I like so I can't discard any of them. This also makes it difficult deciding which to teach.

Sun Hsi Kung taught what we call the Eight Mother Forms. These changes are done in at Tai Chi manner and trains deep tissue work with the muscles and ligaments. These changes teach and train body structure and alignment more accurately than the other changes do. They also emphasize greater flexibility than the others.

Sun Lu Tang is know as popularizing the Eight Animal changes. These changes are merely versions of the 24 animal chi kung palms taught in the Cheng Ting Hua system. One of Sun's characteristics was quickness and these simple changes do train quick turns and simple movements with a very nice twisting quality to them. This is an easy set to get started with but the body flexibility and stance work isn't emphasized as much as other changes. Zhang Jei has taught us the Old Eight Palms. These are good in training basic body position, basic applications, and train proper stances.

What I call the Wushu changes (since most of the wushu stylists learn a version of them) come from Cheng Youxin. These are my favorite since they teach quick body movement and fluid footwork. Low stances aren't emphasized as much as evasion and attacking, flexibility with quickness. However, without basic body strength they can be merely a dance.

Shuang Tung Pa Kua that I learned and was refined by master Tchoung isn't from the Cheng lineage but from Wang Hsu Chin's. These forms are good in teaching attack, fajin, and evasion. They also emphasize good posture and footwork.

So are there enough? Who would want to learn the 64 palms set? I didn't think so. There are enough forms of 8 to practice already but. . . These changes, each in sections of 8, emphasize the different 'energies' used to attack and defend in Pa Kua. In addition these changes merge much chin-na applications, quick turns and fluid footwork. The forms are also a catalogue of the striking and grabbing zones.

So what do you do? As a student you really don't have much choice in which to learn. That depends upon the current group studying. Over time you will be exposed to them all. As time goes on, take what is useful and disregard the rest. And try not to be confused in the meantime.

FROM YANG TO YIN

We begin the arts stiff, tense, striving, wanting, impatient, very yang. We find an awkwardness in trying to copy the movements or trying to flow, a disjointedness. Our

muscles are stiff and tense to varying degrees, partly from relying on localized or brute strength, it can also be due to the tension our muscles cling to or have absorbed due to stress. We are very yang so we begin with the very yang of the arts, the basic forms and movements. Our beginning solo forms and exercises, even the chi kung are done in large circles with various visualizations so they can be considered the very yang level of the art. The movements are meant to smooth out all the kinks in our muscles and getting the muscles, ligaments, tendons and joints to all learn to work together harmoniously. Every time we go through the forms we re-educate our muscles in cooperation and coordination with each other. This is usually different from our normal tendencies which uses brute force and strength to pick something up or move it. Back sprains are a good example of this. If the legs were used in conjunction with proper body alignments and harmony of all required muscles back sprains would be minimized. This is a very important part of training and practice. It is however very yang and shallow when compared to the entire art. Until the muscles are soft, relaxed and know how to cooperated with each other we can't even begin to talk about chi flow, nurturing or storing chi. Though this practice reaps great benefits it's at the low end of the spectrum. if we view Yang to Yin as progressing from a low to a high frequency of chi; muscles and mater being the most crude, intent and spirit toward the higher frequency.

As our practice and postures become more relaxed and easy, the movements very natural and the chi flows easier. The movements begin to direct the chi flow to various parts as we can notice a warm sensation or a buzz in the fingers, hands or feet. We are becoming more yin, softer physically yet more yang energetically. Our forms begin to slow down, we have more patience with each posture and transition. We permit ourselves time within the movements to study each part. We begin to notice where tension hides and begin to figure out how to release it.

This process continues until we begin to feel the flow of the movement and energy instead of the muscle movement of the forms. Thus we're able to relax the muscles even more, we're even less yang becoming more yin. Our thoughts are less concerned with finishing the form, it's on the 'feeling' of now. Even more yin physically but greater yang energetically. As muscles soften, chi flow strengthens. The mind / becomes more important in moving. Willing our body to move, being loose, soft and light, movements very gentle. Internally the warm feeling radiates all over, the entire body feels like a balloon inflated with warm air, not only the finger tips. The muscles are not noticed any more, just the skin that keeps the chi inside. But the chi still radiates out in all directions.

As we advancing in our practice we move outwardly toward the yin, as soft as a baby, but internally more yang, energetic and powerful. It's very easy to get caught in the various sensations and levels of the art. The five thieves are always there, waiting to distract us. If we just practice our art daily we will move in the proper direction. We can however get caught and absorbed by one aspect that will steal energy from the forward momentum. We may get caught by the forms applications, and postures, or the prettiness of the style. We may get stuck on how the warmth in the hands make the strikes better, and stop there.

All in all just practice mindfully and move toward effortlessness: WU WEI.