

INTERNAL WUSHU ARTS NEWSLETTER

A.T.Dale - P.O. Box 77040 - Seattle WA 98177 - (206)283-0055

INTERNAL WUSHU ARTS Video tapes available

Seattle

Evenings:

Yang Style Tai Chi - Tues. 7-10pm

Pa Kua Chang - Thurs 7-9

at: PNA 6532 Phinney Ave N.

Mornings:

Yang Style Tai Chi - Wed 9-10:30

at: Discovery Park

Fee: \$50 monthly - one style

Private lessons \$30/hr

Mt. Vernon:

Sundays

Affiliate Clubs:

University District:

Gene Burnett - 547-7293

senior citizen classes available

Cedar Acosta - 782-6275

Capitol Hill:

Gao fu

Gao, Li-Ting - 324-1375

Vashon Island:

Deborah Goldhaft - 463-3601

Tacoma:

Betty Jones - 564-8121

Randy York - 564-5810

Snohomish area:

Shaun Munger

P.O. Box 202

Sultan, WA 98294

Application specialist:

Dave Harris - 782-1170

PNA 6532 Phinney Ave N.

highly recommended

Los Angeles:

Harvey Kurland - (714)796-3332

Nelson BC:

Rex Eastman - (604)352-3714

Vancouver BC:

Mike Smith - (604)241-0172

BEGINNER'S CLASSES

Since the intermediate and advanced Yang Tai Chi classes have grown to a good size I now have to limit the beginners classes to twice a year. January I will be starting a new beginning class. Interested students may join this session up to the first week in February. The next beginning session after this will be September.

The Pa Kua and Chi Kung classes will be open to new students the first week of any month until enrollment is too large.

MORNING PA KUA

Due to the limited enrollment the Thursday morning Pa Kua class is canceled.

LENDING LIBRARY

Gene has contributed several books to a 'lending' library for the club. These books are only available to current club members and I ask that you be VERY mindful in returning them. Try to have them no more than a week. In the past I've lost some out of print books when I had a lending library before. Members would move away forgetting they had one of our books. I will bring the books requested the following week. There is a check out folder for you to 'request' a book and to sign out and in the books. Available now are: The Essence of Tai Chi Chuan, Cheng's Advanced Tai Chi Form Instruction, Tai Chi Chuan for Health and Self-Defense, Zen in the Art of Archery, The Spirit of Aikido, Tai Chi Chuan - Y C Chen, Tai Chi Chuan Simplified Method - Cheng, Fundamentals of Tai Chi Chuan.

WORKSHOPS

Mike Smith

If you have questions on I-Chuan or want to work on Tuishou and freehands sign up, Mike will be here January 8th.

PA KUA INNER PALMS

February 12, 9-5, Seattle

March 12, Los Angeles

Vancouver B.C. ?

The Inner Palms are one of the basic Pa Kua chi kung and training methods. I will cover the basic 8 animals, the meditations and applications of each. \$40 club members, \$60 non-members. Sign-up by Feb. 1st for the Seattle workshop.

CHI KUNG CLASS

This class will be a research into the methods of chi kung. I will not be teaching specific styles of chi kung, but instead I will be taking various exercises from the different chi kung systems and explore the various levels from beginning to advanced.

There are many chi kung systems, each equally important. However, one system may be more appropriate, or in-tune, with one person and not another. Some methods use very specific visualizations, others require none. Some require much movement, some none. Some long, some short. Some standing, some sitting. Some gather energy, store energy, circulate energy, focus energy, issue energy, heal, or destroy. Individually at times we may need to focus on one or a certain type, or in a certain direction. Over the next year I will include various exercises from Chen and Yang Tai Chi Chuan, Pa Kua Chang, Kun Lun Mt., O'mei Mt., Lung Men, Misogi, Aiki and others.

Each class will consistently work with basic breathing exercise, relaxation techniques, and Zhan Zhuang since these are common to most chi kung methods. The purpose of this session is to enable me to teach and share levels of the chi kung we don't have the time or the setting for in our other classes.

MASTER GAO--FU

Beginning Chen Tai Chi:

Mondays and Wednesdays
7:15-8:15. Mondays are at NEW
SEATTLE MASSAGE

Wednesdays are in the Fremont area. Intermediate Chen classes are moved to Saturdays 12:30-2 and are at the TAOIST STUDIES INSTITUTE I will have copies of the class schedules and flyers in my file box. Please post them.

CAPOEIRA FOR KIDS

Capoeira is an Afro-Brazilian dance-martial art. This is a good art for children. /Capoeira is now offered at the Phinney Center. Info: Barb Langland 789-3650.

*As a disciple of the art and
yourself as a martial artist,
your attitude should be that of
looking for perfection---
which means that you
continue to improve your
study and practice until there
is no defect.*

CANCELLATIONS

In case of bad weather first call the Phinney Center 784-2244 to check if it's open or classes are canceled. You can reach me mid week at: 283-0055, weekends at 428-5974.

*The basic club fee is now
\$50 monthly.*

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

by
Harvey Kurland, M.Sc.

Every time I see a new magical looking demonstration I try to keep an open but objective view, never suspend your good judgment. When evaluating seeming magical techniques and exotic promotions I am reminded of the old Chinese saying: "Believe half of what you see and a tenth of what you hear."

ARE AEROBICS NECESSARY?

In June when I visited Sifu, Grand master Tchoung Ta-Tchen, in Vancouver he had me stay at his home. We rose early to exercise. I was amazed, even though he is in his eighties he started first with a brisk walk, then he JOGGED a little. Afterward we did form, walking stick and some new ch'i kung drills. He told me jogging or aerobic type exercise was good to do and we need to do a variety of exercises. BUT FOR THOSE PEOPLE WITH LOW AEROBIC FITNESS T'AI-CHI CH'UAN IS STRENUOUS ENOUGH. The fast T'ai-Chi forms are high intensity exercise. Always check with your Doctor before starting a new exercise program.

Some teachers feel that t'ai-chi is all you should do. I think that is a limited view. Unfortunately, overall fitness is often neglected by t'ai-chi students. In class we can't do everything, so you need to do supplementary training on your own. In the "Good old days" Sifu had us do a number of supplementary exercises including hand-stand push ups and one legged squats. Some of us would practice outside of class from 3 to 6 hours per day. This is more than the average health minded student needs to do and too severe for most. But sensible general conditioning exercises are recommended. This includes some type of APPROPRIATE aerobic, stretching and muscular toning exercises.

DO YOU HAVE A TOUGH TUMMY?

After we did our ch'i kung for a while, Sifu would pound on our abdomens to see if we had a strong midsection. It is important to have minimum levels of tone in your abdominal muscles. A less painful self test is: Can you do 32 abdominal curls? These are done with the knees bent, feet free and your low back flat on the ground. By most standards being able to do 32 sit-ups is considered to be average fitness for a 40 year old. The regular sit-up is easier for some people because they are using their ILIOPSOAS, three combined muscle groups, to raise them, not abdominals. Some people will get back pain from regular sit-ups because of an imbalance between the iliopsoas and abdominal muscles causing low back strain. The "Fox bays at the moon" and some pa-kua exercises if done improperly can cause back problems due to this imbalance. Abdominal curls, where the back stays on the floor, are safer and isolate the abdominal muscles better than sit-ups. For good back health as well for effective pushing hands you need to have a strong torso. Keep the area limber by stretching. A side benefit of our ch'i kung drills is stretching and strengthening the torso.

Harvey Kurland, M.Sc., is one of the first five original American Chief Instructors certified by Grand master Tchoung Ta-Tchen. His Masters Degree is from the University of Washington in Exercise Physiology and he currently teaches in Riverside, CA.

The new year is here, wow. I'm proud to say the newsletter has been improving and the new year will see its continued growth. The reason for this is the input from other teachers. Last month Mike Smith was generous to contribute an article on I-Chuan, this month Harvey Kurland has contributed an article and there are other instructors who have expressed interest in doing the same.

Some months the newsletter can be pages and pages, while at other times just a page. Last year I had to increase it to four pages since some of the information couldn't wait for the next month. I couldn't fit everything into the two pages. Due to expenses, and my time limitation, I will try to keep it at four pages. There may be a rare occasion for five pages if necessary.

This newsletter has definitely grown beyond my original scope. My main intent was only as an additional teaching and information tool for current club members. As members moved and wanted to keep contact the mailings began. As other instructors and students have come in contact with the club it's grown still. This year CSI is advertising it and it looks like I'll be mailing out many more. I never thought it would grow into this ☺. Aside from the articles I've included a list of instructors and branches of our club within the state. It's impossible to keep the newsletter within size if I list all instructors I know, even if limited to Tai Chi Chuan. I will continue with the list, but I it will only include instructors who have a close connection with Internal Wushu Arts. As the list grows I'll handle it by reducing the print size, stopping just before it looks like a pin point. In the same situation, if I list all the books I know on the internal arts it would be pages, even if I list my favorite ones. The list will include books I recommend that are useful to the teaching of our classes, several of them, not all of them. I don't include books on forms and instructions, the books I've listed have information on theory, practice and spirit that's important to our study.

In my attempt to put together booklets of past years pre-computer newsletters, I've found myself re-typing and changing many of them, I couldn't just let them be. In changing, correcting and elaborating, I will be inserting some of the changed articles, such as this issue's *PARTNER PRACTICE ATTITUDES* from February 1991.

If you have information about a workshop locally or connected with the instructor's list get it to me early, I try to have the newsletter printed and in the mail the last week of the month. (I try!)

I will end this with an apology, first to all fluent Chinese speakers. The articles show my confusion by the inconsistency in my use of the romanized Chinese. I've used Sifu at times, Shrfu, and Shr-fu other times, Pa Kua Chang and Baquazhang. Most often I use terms from whatever teacher I had in the particular art. However, I will attempt to semi-standardize the terms I use. I would appreciate feed back should something be incorrect or be irritatingly wrong. My second apology is to all you editors and English majors. English is my second language, it's not my favorite and I find the grammar extremely difficult. After my first attempt at this newsletter many years ago I stopped since the critics didn't seem to hear what I was saying, just how I wrote it. Now I don't care, just as with forms if we get stuck on the appearance we never advance.

Thanks for your interest, Andy

PARTNER PRACTICE ATTITUDES

In addition to a greater degree of exercise and conditioning, the partner exercises and applications serve the purpose to enhance our awareness, relaxation and the softness we begin to develop in the solo forms. On merely a superficial level they teach the applications of various postures and movements within the form. They also serve a very important function to give us feed back as to how correct our postures, movements, and body alignment are. This level is still just the tip of the iceberg, the shell of the art. With practice our self-knowledge and understanding can be brought to deeper levels provided we have a mindful and open attitude. The trick here is to avoid the ME - THEM, attacker - defender, sport attitude. The idea is to learn about ourselves, not to control or conquer our partners. One of the biggest misconceptions is that the forms and postures we practice are the art when it's acutely the forms and postures that lead us to, and teach us the art. The art is our own life.

listen - be alert, stay neutral - observe

Once we get beyond learning the outward movements is when the NEI KUNG (internal work) begins. This is the art. The first road block many students come across is the ME vs THEM attitude. We see our partner as doing this to us, or we see them as an attacker to be controlled and conquered. Sometimes this brings up a competitive attitude, sometimes a fear or anger toward certain partners. What's important here is to understand why or where these feelings come from. Misunderstandings are usually the case. Unfortunately when this happens everything comes to a halt, nothing is gained except bad habits and a slow down of our chi flow - blockages. When encountering this level many student get stuck and they stop. There is a decision that pushing hands or partner drills aren't worth doing.

The attitude in the art should be one of sharing, there should be no competition; you and your partner are a team learning, actually the club is a team. We should be helpful to each other so we may all advance. The partner exercises are a joint study in the art. PARTNERS You are a team studying, using and discovering the principles of the internal arts. The first and most important part of this is to communicate with each other. If your partner goes too fast, hard, or whatever let them know. There is no one-side to these exercises. Don't get angry with them because they were too hard or too fast. Let your partner know! The majority of the time your partner doesn't realize the force they are using, or that it's an overload for you. The end result of this misunderstanding can be bad feelings between you for no real reason what so ever. On the applications, the one having the techniques applied to them should be learning and studying what they feel, how their body reacts to the movement. This is equally as important, if not more, than applying the techniques. I've learned most from being my instructor's dummy.

Once passed this we can begin to focus on the true purpose of these exercises. First, *RELAX* and try to use the least amount of strength in the movements. Be soft and smooth, try to flow with the force. Notice your partner's force and direction, from

here you will begin to develop TING JIN, listening energy. This is the first level of sensitivity in tuishou. The more you relax the more you can feel and listen to your partners direction, force, and speed. *THIS IS WHAT YOU WANT TO LEARN!!!!* You can't learn this on your own in the solo forms. You should ask your partner to work on only one aspect to the drill, movement or form until it's comfortable, then move on. It's not up to your teacher to force you to drill the movements until you understand them. Your teacher's job it to teach you the movements, to get you started and to give you the necessary tools. Whether you do anything with them is all up to you. Is it important enough for you to practice before or after classes, or during the week? Though partners may be hard to find there are occasions (like warm-up time) where you could spend 10 minutes on one drill. Master Tchung would give us an exercise, make sure we knew it and then walk away, next class we got another drill. It was up to us to practice last weeks drill if we wanted to advance. The class time wasn't for practicing the drills, it was for corrections and then the next exercise.

It's from studying and practicing the drills where you discover whether, where or when you're using too much force. Ask your partner what they feel and to let you know from time to time. Where does the movement break? Where are you stiff? Don't just move on to the next exercise, get the kinks out of the current one. The more partners you have the greater your range of learning and skill development. Eventually you try to overcome the idea that the two of you are separate. You should see yourselves as one, beyond separateness, just displaying the interchange of Yin and Yang in motion. Balancing the energy and movement. The goal is to flow with your partner's movements like water, whatever the movements are, at any speed. Flow into the weak spots and move around the attack as if they were rocks in the stream.

A good warrior has no opinions, A good warrior is simply aware.

At a deeper level, as you practice, you gain an insight into yourself. Why does anger arise when you are pushed? Why do we feel weak when practicing various movements? Why does practicing with one partner make you feel weaker than another partner? Why does the fighting mind show itself only with certain individuals? We should try to be alert yet neutral, respond when needed but without fear or anger. Seek to understand the thoughts and emotions as your practice continues.

There is no winning or loosing in these exercises; anytime you gain insight into yourself, you've won. Your physical health will improve as will your strength because of the added work of the partner exercises.

Work on how you feel and the emotions that arise when you practice then go back to the basics: relax, sink, soften, circle of power, don't fight, peng jin. Stay centered, listen, feel, and be alert.

Keep in mind this is a martial art. We are responsible for ourselves and our actions. Our goal is to be centered, healthy, and alert. From our solo forms, once we begin tuishou and

Partner Practice Attitudes Continued:

sanshou, we should have good habits of: rooting, centering, staying within our circle of strength, knowing our physical limitations. As we practice we need to trust each other. What trust means here is I will trust my partner not to be out to kill/hurt me intentionally. If I don't move out of the way as my partner punches and I get hit the fault changes depending upon my level of advancement. As a new person to the applications, if I'm practicing with an advanced student it's their fault. If however, I know the drill or movement, then it's my fault. At an intermediate and advanced level I need to trust my partner to be alert as we practice so I can give them an 'honest' force and energy so my attack becomes more realistic. As the speed and force picks up both parties must trust the other to practice sincerely, whatever the boundaries of the exercise encompasses. In sanshou, you trust your partner's punch to be a punch, kick to be a kick. At an advanced level you trust your partner to help you improve your weak points. As good partners at this level we 'push' each other to get better.

At a beginning level a good partner will go slowly and carefully so I can learn the steps and flow. At an advanced level a good partner is sneaky and tricky, creating problems so I have to change and adapt spontaneously. This permits my training to mature and advance. The commitment level at this advanced stage is great which is why you don't find many internal martial artists who have a high level of skill anymore.

ATDale

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
- ☞ TAI CHI CHUAN AND THE I CHING - Da Liu
- ☞ 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

EIGHT DIAGRAM PALM

*Walk around in circles
Changing palms.
Flow like deep water,
Movement calms.*

*Toe in, Toe out.
Movement grounds.
Fluid dance,
To Inner sounds.*

*Dance of Combat,
Dance of Delight.
Surging Essences,
Spiritual Flight.*

*Each step a beginning,
Each Change the first.
Endless repetitions,
Only deepen thirst.*

*by
Kevin Wallbridge*