

# INTERNAL WUSHU ARTS NEWSLETTER

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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

## CHI KUNG CLASS

The purpose of this class is to understand the purpose, function and method of various chi kung we are taught in addition to our practicing. I am not teaching any 'one' system but as time goes on I will introduce many methods, movements and exercises. The new exercises introduced actually depends upon the energy of the group and the

questions asked. The other purpose of this session is to create a strong foundation, a strong center so we can get the most out of any advanced level chi kung we will learn in the future. Since the movements may change week to week or month to month I can't put together a class handout. To help memorization I will list the previous months chi kung movements in the newsletter.

## MAKE MY DAY SMILE



### SUMMER RETREAT

No summer weekend retreat this year, instead I will conduct intensive Saturday sessions once a month. The schedule will be in the next issue.

## ADDICTIONS

A friend brought me the enclosed article on addictions from an aerobics class. I had the assumption that people only did things that were addictive, and that there were good addictions and bad one. Well, this article says different.

## TAOIST CREATION MYTH

At the Tai Chi summer camp last year (sign up ASAP enrollment is limited), Rex gave a series of lectures on Tai Chi Chuan, Taoism and related topics. I can't even describe how wonderful these stories and insights were. Unfortunately they weren't taped, and like special moments they seem to go quick, yet linger and have a positive effect. One evening Rex took the Taoist creation symbols and wove them into a wonderful myth. And like all myths and

stories in many cultures he created a wonderful yet simple instruction on the creation of the Pa Kua trigrams. His story gave me an insight that I had missed and been looking for. His story was powerful in its simplicity. The story wasn't recorded but Rex has kindly recreated the following version.

## PA KUA VIDEO

A new video is out on our lineage Pa Kua and it's very good. Solo drills, basics, and applications are covered. It's THE PRINCIPLES OF BA GUA ZHANG FIGHTING by Luo De Xiu & Tim Cartmell. Luo studied with one of my grand teachers. The tape is available through High View Publications Pa Kua Journal.

## TEACHINGS AS WE PRACTICE

As we practice our various arts there is a constant learning that reaches every layer of our being. Whether we realize it or not, as we begin to relax we begin to learn more about ourselves. Harrison Moretz has a nice saying: "Relaxation is who you are, tension is who you think you are." Simplistically we learn the whys, how's and where tensions creep in and relaxation slips out. In the tuishou and sanshou we learn about our fears and our fighting mind in addition to the interaction of the five elements and eight trigrams. There are also some forms that create a story, or teach a philosophy as we continue to practice them. One 'story' of the Tai Chi forms is softness and yielding overcoming hardness.

The martial art of Pa Kua Chang is, or course, based upon the Pa Kua diagram of the I-Ching. Tung, Hai-Chuan the founder of the martial art studied for a period at a Taoist temple of the Lung Men sect (Dragon Door sect). His studies greatly influenced the forms and style of martial art he developed. Some of our Pa Kua chi kung forms can be traced back directly to the particular sect as part of their meditation practice. Walking the Wuji circle, walking the yin yang symbol, and the various patterns are two of them.

If we begin the basic eight chi kung and proceed to the linking old eight changes we play out, in our practice, the evolution of the Taoist creation myth. We begin walking the wuji circle, the next form begins to define the yin and yang, then next form defines the yin within yang and the yang within yin. From here we define the motion and movement of these two forces spiraling in the center of the wuji. This evolves into our old eight changes moving through the later heaven Pa Kua diagram. As we continue to advance the various linking form patterns describe different relationships

with the kua's (trigrams) and also demonstrate and play out the creative and conquering cycles of the five elements. While learning the 24 palm 5 elements Pa Kua form there is no way to avoid learning the principles of the five elements and how they relate. The depths of this learning depends, like all other forms, upon how mindfully we practice.

## FRIDAY CHI KUNG

Releasing breath - sinking  
Body circle  
Wuji posture  
Tan Tien Breathing - YANG TAN  
*Waist Rub*  
Arm Swings  
Shoulder circle  
Ming Men tap  
Shoulder tap  
Open & sink -  
    *a. inhale through palms*  
    *b. inhale and reach upward*  
    *c. twisting*  
Pushing the circle - Tui Moh  
Rowing exercise - Funekogi undo  
Zhan Zhuang  
    *a. wuji posture*  
    *b. monkey holds cauldron*  
Misogi Body drop  
To sleep  
One point meditation

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# NEGATIVE LEARNING

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by Harvey Kurland, M.Sc.

Students often ask, "Is it OK if I take more than one martial art at the same time?" Usually they mean karate or Tae Kwon Do. My answer is, if they are just starting both, it is not a good idea. Unless of course, they don't plan to do t'ai-chi for very long and are just using it as an exercise class. Why is this? Sifu, Tchoung Ta-Tchen, told us of the difficulty of mastering more than one art. He said you rarely find a top level master that specializes in more than one contradictory art. It is like having a University professor that teaches Math and English. While he may be good at both usually he will be best at only one. If you look around at masters of more than one style, you will usually find they have a "Favorite". The one that they do best. Mixing internal arts is not as difficult as to mix hard styles, e.g. karate, with t'ai -chi. It is difficult for many hard stylists to retrain themselves to practice the subtle t'ai-chi principles, though some have.

If you are attempting to learn karate and t'ai-chi at the same time, good luck. By the nature of both having similar motions but different concepts there is a conflict in learning, one interferes with the other. This is the NEGATIVE LEARNING effect. In learning similar activities one impairs the learning of the other. For example this can be observed in someone trying to learn tennis and racquetball at the same time. Similar idea, hit the ball, but very different ways of using the body, e.g. wrist straight versus wrist snap. This results in confused responses, slowed learning and contradictory reflexes. The closer two body arts are, the greater the conflict.

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*"There is no logical reason for learning a hard style before learning t'ai-chi, in fact there are some very good reasons not to."*

Kurland

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The same concept holds for learning hard style kung-fu such as preying mantis or tiger crane styles which emphasize arm motion but no waist turning or yielding at the same time as learning t'ai-chi ch'uan. These are very effective martial arts but the body is used differently than in our t'ai-chi, so there is negative learning. Contradictory learning confuses the body. It is better to first learn one art, then after mastering it, then learn another. Otherwise you end up with what can be called "chop suey", not one, not the other. In some cases these modified and mixes of different arts are extremely effective and evolve into styles in their own right. For example what some people call Water Boxing looks suspiciously like a combination of Yang style, pa-kua and hsing-i even though stylists say it predates those arts, based upon a scroll found in a cave. Master Dave Harris has put together a very high level martial art based on many different arts. But for the beginner wanting to learn a particular system it is prudent to stick to one version until the basics are mastered. Another strategy is if you

want to work on more than one art at a time, learn two completely different arts that complement each other but do not have much conflict in concepts.

There is also the factor of diluting training time, the more time you train the better you will learn, up to a point. An hour of this style and an hour of that style is not the same thing as 6 hours a week on one art.

## BIZARRE CURRICULUM?

Unfortunately in many schools which focus on hard style, the t'ai-chi student has to learn the hard style before learning t'ai-chi. There is no logical reason for learning the hard style first, in fact there are some very good reasons not to. Usually the real basis for this odd curriculum is that the teacher's interest is in hard style, so he or she emphasizes that style. Everything else is supplementary. But once one learns to tense up and not use the waist, it is hard to unlearn that concept. It might take years to learn to relax and move, some never do. It is hard to relax, especially if you practice being tense.

It is easy to be seduced by the false feeling of power that tension based styles produce. Though many very high level hard stylists can relax, and are relaxed when they move, but for beginners that is difficult. Learn to relax first. Then later you might not even want to do hard style.

### VIDEO REVIEW

On viewing Carradines' T'ai-chi tape. In my opinion it had some good exercises and drills, but could be made better with modifications. The structure of basic exercises was good but unfortunately exercises were done in a "Hard style" way, very different from what we are trying to do. There was no evidence that I could see on waist turning and body movement. In my view there was too much emphasis on moving the hands and arms around. The novice might be impressed. It's OK, but otherwise not recommended for our students. If you use it, modify the drills using the waist and weight shifting as we do in class.

Harvey Kurland, M.Sc. is a t'ai-chi ch'uan instructor at the University of California, Riverside and an exercise physiologist. He is a Chief Instructor of the Chinese Tai Chi Association of Canada and Northwest T'ai Chi Ch'uan Association.

# TAOIST CREATION MYTH:

*meet the pa kua family*

*by Rex Eastman*



## Chapter 1

### WU CHI

Before creation everything was the same, all was one . . . the chaos of the void. It is represented like this>



## Chapter 2

### DOT

Somehow there came to be a dot:



don't ask me how.

## Chapter 3

### LINE



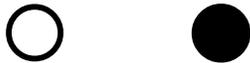
That dot grew into a line.

That line became known as the great ridge pole that holds up the universe. The line has two sides, thus creating the concept of duality.

## Chapter 4

### YIN/YANG

Duality creates polar opposites, both sides necessary for creation, each side continually creating its opposite.



## Chapter 5

### THE TRIGRAMS

The two create one. . . 2+1=3. Each one can be either yin or yang, thus there are eight possible combinations of three.

## Meet the Pa Kua family:

Dad and his three sons/the three stages of action.  
(to achieve)

### Chien



dad/heaven - the creative

### Chen



first son/thunder - excitement

### Kan



second son/water - toil

### Ken



third son/mountain - stillness

Mom and her three daughter  
the three stages of contemplation  
(to understand)

### Kun



mom/earth - the receptive

### Sun



first daughter/ wind - gentleness

### Li



second daughter/fire - clarity

### Tui



third daughter/lake - joy

The art of Tai Chi Chuan has eight principle movements that generate all its great variety of techniques:

peng/ward off/heaven

lu/roll back/earth

liea/split/thunder

tsai/pull/wind

ji/press/water

an/push/fire

kou/shoulder strike/mountain

jo/elbow strike/lake

## The Five Elements



water

metal wood

earth fire

The five elements make up all of creation. They also show how things change, transform and relate through the cycles of creation and destruction.  
chapter 1

### The Cycle of Creation

Lets start with metal. If we dig into the earth with metal tools we get water; thus, metal creates water. Water nourishes all living things; thus, water creates wood. Wood is used as fuel for fire; thus, wood creates earth. Deep in the earth are deposits of metal from which we make tools; thus, earth creates metal, and on and on . . .

chapter 2

### The Cycle of Destruction

Lets start again with metal. Metal axes chop down trees; thus, metal destroys wood. Wood sprouts up out of the earth; thus, wood destroys earth. Earth soaks up water; thus, earth destroys water. Water puts out fire; thus, water destroys fire. Fire melts metal; thus, fire destroys metal. and on and on .

The art of Tai Chi Chuan uses the five elements as strategies symbolized by the five directions:

advance/metal, retreat/wood, gaze right/fire, beware of left/water, central/earth.

Together the five elements and the eight trigrams create all the possible directions and techniques of Tai Chi Chuan. They are shown as the thirteen postures.

The eight trigrams are understood by practicing the solo forms and partner exercises.

The five elements are understood by practicing tui shou/join hands (push hands) and san shou/separate hands(applications).

Through the analogy of the martial arts uses of Tai Chi Chuan, we can understand life and the cycles of change.