

INTERNAL WUSHU ARTS NEWSLETTER

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

My hope is the newsletter will motivate and encourage students in their own research. Mailing subscriptions \$10 yearly

Keep in mind: There are no wrong styles. What's important is that your life benefits from your studies and practice.

ATD

CLUB OPEN BEGINNING CLASSES

Sept. - Oct.

If you know anyone interested in joining Tai Chi, Chi Kung or Pa Kua beginning sessions will start in Sept. Have them contact me at 283-0055. October the classes close until January.

SHR-FU VISIT

Aug. 20th

Available

I have booklets of 1993 for \$5.00 or 1992-93 for \$7 available.

Club T-Shirts L & XL \$12

CHEN TAI CHI SWORD WORKSHOP

Master Gao-fu will be teaching beginning and advanced levels of the traditional Chen Tai Chi Sword.

Sundays, Aug. 14 & 21 \$60 or \$30 per day. Each session will be three hours. Please sign up asap.

SNOWFLOW

Tai chi/Snowboard playshop
DEC 9-11th, \$225 US
Kootenay Tai Chi Center
P.O. Box 566
Nelson, BC Canada V1L 5R3
(604) 352-3714



WE'RE MISSING OUT

This month is Rex's tai chi summer camp and those of us who can't make it are really missing out. If you're going, I know you'll be having a great time. If you couldn't make it this year then try early for next year. Just think about it; one entire week nestled in the mountains being around tai chi people, practicing several times a day, exposed to four excellent instructors and someone else doing the cooking. Rex mentions this year the camp was filled by April. Next year there will be one week of pa kua and the next week of tai chi. Start planning now, it's not too early.

Correction

The quote I used in the last newsletter should read:

*The attack
is never wrong.
An attacker is always
wrong.*

My Workshops

Tuishou

July 31, 11-1pm
\$10

This will be a study and practice session.

Weaponry

Sat & Sunday Sept. 3&4
\$10 per session.

Sat - Basic Weapons: knife 11-noon, sword 1-2, staff 2:30-3:30, cane 4-5.

Sun - Weapon form practice and instruction. If you have questions on a form or want refinements sign up. We will begin at 11am and I will work a half hour on the forms requested. Any style, solo or partner work.

The Saturday sessions are open to beginners.

VIDEO NIGHT

Wed, Aug. 31st

Techniques employ four qualities that reflect the nature of our world. Depending upon the circumstance, you should be hard as a diamond, flexible as a willow, smooth-flowing like water, or as empty as space.

Morihei Ueshiba, Founder of Aikido

SUNNY HERBS

Sunny K.S. Chu,
Dr. of Oriental Medicine
18015-24th Ave NE
Seattle WA 98155
363-2028

comes highly recommended



Master Tchoung on tuishou

Q. When doing push hands, my classmates have told me I am too soft and that my hands and arms are like over-boiled noodles. How can I be soft but also have some p'eng energy?

Master Tchoung:

Your classmates' criticism shows that they have not truly become attentive to relaxation in t'ai-chi ch'uan. The t'ai-chi ch'uan classics say, "T'ai chi is first soft and pliable, then it becomes strong and hard. With a flexible waist the myriad bends are executed as though the body has no bones." Lao tzu said; "One can have the hands of an infant." Lao-tzu also said: "Step like a cat, move energy like spinning silk." Now, if you aren't relaxed and soft, how could you have the hands of a baby or move like spinning silk? Other people don't understand the subtle principles at work in t'ai-chi ch'uan's relaxation. Theirs is mistaken criticism. We

should not listen to them. I myself do just a I please. What do you think?

I highly approve of your learning push hands. Practicing the t'ai-chi ch'uan form is like learning to read. Practicing push hands is like learning to write. A person who can read but cannot write is essentially still illiterate. People who study t'ai-chi ch'uan but do not study push hands have not truly studied. There is a saying about studying push hands that applies to you; it is: "once you have become comfortable with push hands, then you will slowly become aware and understand the energy. Once you understand the energy, then you will achieve the level of the gods." This is when you truly appreciate and are attentive to the subtlety of t'ai-chi's relaxation and softness.

PAY ATTENTION - IT'S FREE

By Mike Smith

A very skilled Martial Artist/Healer once said "Fill yourself with Love, and nothing can defeat you". I have found this to be a very profound piece of wisdom for many reasons, and I would like to share some of them in hopes that others will "Fill themselves with".

Love is one of life's little mysteries. What is it really? How can it be described?. We all feel certain kinds of love for different things in our lives:

A person; we try to get in touch with their feelings, help with their problems, and trust them with our own.

A pet; we put up with all of their quirks, go out of our way to make them happy.

A car; We wash it and buy it new toys, become very aware of any subtle changes in its appearance and functionality.

An art; We research, refine and practice. Transform ourselves through the will power in our hearts.

I feel that the common act in all kinds of Love is Attention. I will give someone my whole being in undivided attention without any preconception, if I feel love for them. Perhaps love is the ability to give your total attention (sight, sound, smell, touch, mind) to a person wholeheartedly. Who knows? For this article to make any sense I am going to assume that "Attention" is a big part of Love. In order for us to be open to all of the information that will manifest if we can truly "Pay Attention" we must also be Absolutely Present. Absolute Presence is very difficult to discuss, even more so than Love. In a state of total focus, of total attention, all of the usual background noise in our lives disappears and we are capable of seeing details that are astounding.

"Fill yourself with Love and nothing can defeat you". Standing in front of an attacker leaves us pretty confused in our minds. We have fear, anger, physical. illness and even hate. If in this situation we could feel "LOVE" for this person, we have a better chance of finding a peaceful way out. If not peace, then we will see them attack us much more clearly, we will use less tension and be more present. A great deal of concentration is required in class to make this work, literally try to feel Love for your practice partner. Give every nuance your total attention. Not your analytical mind, just experience it all, forget fear and all of the other baggage with what may happen. Open your Hsin (heart, total consciousness) to the situation.

TO LOSE FEAR, YOU MUST FIRST GIVE UP HOPE

It is important not to compete with or grade yourself, just "fill yourself with love". I suggest embracing your training partner, really embrace them. Not a bear hug, but a relaxed, sensitive, long bit of "Attention" to everything you can sense of them. Melt into them, be receptive. If nothing else you will learn how much tension you hold when you embrace different people. After this it will be easier to give them that kind of attention. I feel that this is a great way to develop Listening (Ting Jin) and Understanding (Dong Jin) skills.

I have started to lean towards Healing arts a lot more recently. My connection with Andy, Dave and Mr. Yueng has inspired me a great deal. The ability to be Absolutely Present with Attention is by far the most useful tool for a Healer. Be it Massage, Acupuncture, Discussion, Chi Kung, whatever; the kind of attention that is available if you "fill yourself with love" makes healing very intuitive and effective/affective. Native American healing is based a great deal on this kind of work. The Healer has power, and applies it through paying Attention to their patient. Attention can take many forms; Rituals, stories, or direct healing with Herbs or more Spiritual practices.

"Fill yourself with Love and nothing can defeat you". Be it Healing or conflict, the ability to wholeheartedly give your attention to someone has Power. Try this; visualize being totally in love with something/someone, close your eyes and put a slight smile on your face. Just feel what it's like to give in to what you love. The safety, trust, relaxation, confidence and total peace of mind. Love/Attention/Presence can be the best medicine and the best protection. Live your life like this, contention in any form damages your Spirit.

Yes, trees do chi kung.

Let's start from the basics: everything is energy, everything is energy at various levels of vibration; matter to light, body-thoughts-spirit. One way to think about energy is as if it's water in its many forms: an ice cube, flowing, steam, or humidity. Chi, like water, has various intensities and rhythms, sometimes slow, gentle, standing still, other times quick, violent, dispersed.

Tree Chi Kung

Though what I'll be talking about here is primarily from the Lung Men Taoist chi kung (a parent of pa kua zhang) just about every branch of chi kung has a version of tree chi kung even if it doesn't (you'll see). Pa Kua has tree chi kung in the basic level of 'Bird Enters Forest'.

The basic principle of tree chi kung is that trees are the guardians of the earth (loggers don't believe this). They take what are toxins from other life forms and feed on it, transforming it into useful products for the planet; they are the filters of the planet.

Every form of life, or matter (energy) also has a type of energy field around it to some extent. Just as a sound doesn't really go to a certain distance and stop, energy and fields of energy are much the same way. Energy radiates out in all directions from each being, just getting fainter as it gets further away from its central source. This means that beyond our perception these energy fields interact and blend to a certain extent influencing each other. As we practice the zhan zhuang and certain chi kung over a period of time we can begin to feel this field energy emanating from us. This feeling of chi is first between our hands, as we begin to develop our chi kung and increase our own chi and awareness of it, our vitality increases and our chi shines brighter - stronger. The way to develop this is practicing the zhan zhuang daily. Now this is a very slow and individual process. Training with a chi kung master can accelerate this process.

If we have an internal weakness or sickness, instead of building up a reservoir of chi as we practice the chi is directed to heal the illness or weakness. If our minds are busy and can't calm down, much of the chi is used up by the thoughts and nervous energy expenditure (Stress depletes much chi). Practicing too much fa-jin movements also depletes our chi reservoir. The mind uses up much energy in its functioning which is why basic meditation and learning to calm and focus the mind are very important. As our health improves and our mind learns to center we begin to build up our chi reservoir.

Once our chi begins to build, along with our awareness, we not only become aware of our own chi but also that around us. A good example of this is being in a room when a depressed or angry person enters; the vibes change. Keep in mind that all energy isn't all the same so some types of energy may: flow, mix, merge, change, irritate or bump into each other. We're talking about a limitless levels of vibrations here.

The basic assumption of tree chi kung is that trees also feed on and filter pure energy - all vibrations. Through our practice we can open up and permit a greater exchange of chi with plants for healing, insight or knowledge. Even without specific tree chi kung or being aware of it, anytime we're around a forest, or wooded area we are benefiting from a boost of our own energy by being so close and exposed to the trees. Try doing tai chi or basic meditation in an old growth forest, the energy is so thick you can almost see it (some people can see it). As with all chi kung, tension - muscular or mental inhibit the flow or exchange of chi. If we walk relaxed through a wooded area we are

basically doing a minor type of tree chi kung. Anytime we practice around a tree or healthy plants we have an exchange of chi with the surroundings and we benefit on very subtle levels.

The most basic tree chi kung is practicing our zhan zhuang with a tree. Begin zhan zhuang until you can feel the chi flow between your palms, then use your palms and try to feel the chi flow, aura, of the tree. When you feel the current of the tree, this is the place to stop and use 'listening' energy. *This is your practice.* When you can feel the tree's chi flow, this creates a strong circuit, your energy gets hooked into the flow of the tree's chi stream. If you can't feel the energy between your palms just practice your zhan zhuang keeping your palms about 6" away from the tree. Another method is sitting in a meditation posture slightly away from the trunk, focus on the color of the bark as a column of chi, then see your chi the same color and merging with the tree. Open up all cells and pores, blending with the tree's chi.

Though there are specific visualizations and certain exercises to do with some styles, this basic method of focusing on feeling the energy connection I believe is the best. We permit the energy to flow as it should, and the changes and cleansing happens naturally, without forcing or interfering in any way. Just open up to what you feel or completely empty your mind.

Though in some styles of tree chi kung there are specific instructions of what to do with each tree and what each tree is good for, personally I don't think things can be classified so

The guardians of the earth

specifically considering we're all different and complex. What one person needs, or enjoys is completely wrong for another. As you practice and increase your awareness; what you'll find is that each tree, not merely species, has its own personality. Some trees TREE CHI KUNG CONT: are very indifferent to us (me), some trees have a very happy feelings to them. The range spans all feelings: happy, sad, healing, angry, neutral, energetic, calming, aggressive, strong, soft . .

. Also the time of year changes the feeling of the tree's energy current. Don't stand by a tree you may not feel anything from or a negative response, on the other hand a gentle tree can keep you standing there all day so you may want to keep track of time if necessary. This energy-link is a healing-link, a purification of our system. The calmer and emptier our minds are the greater the exchange, there is less resistance to the exchange of chi flow.

Try this 'listening-energy' with all types of plants, house plants as well. Spider plants, sanseverias, and African violets are considered good energy plants but see what you feel, again people and plants are individuals. If you're ill you may not want to over burden a small-newly planted tree or non-vigorous house plant. Be kind to the plants, you don't want to stress the tree out. If you're feeling great you may try to help the plant or tree heal as you practice.

Is there a certain spot in a park where you like to sit, read a book or just rest? In your yard? Check out the plants around you.



One theory of tree chi kung is that there is a subtle exchange, cellular, of information whenever the energy-link is great. So . . . on some level we are learning or absorbing information when we practice. I had one member unhappy with a class because I said to ground all our negative feelings and energy. Their was a comment that we were dumping enough garbage into mother earth. If we look at how beneficial animal waste and compost is to feed the earth and plants I feel it must be the same with energy, it's fuel for the fire. The problem with much farmland is the overused of synthetic fertilizers.

The size of the tree makes a difference, the location of the tree will make a difference. If you don't feel comfortable practicing your tree chi kung in public you may just sit by a tree with a book, pretend to be reading the book, hands in zhan zhuang position on your lap. No one should notice. Tree chi kung isn't just a Taoist practice, Druids had their own practice.

In some clubs and arts you hear specific instructions to stand with your back to the north or south, only stand by such and such a tree as you practice to absorb the proper energy of the area.. Master Tchoung would say walk around, feel the area - you'll find the right spot and right direction. If it feels right then the energy currents must be in harmony.

The following is a list of some trees that certain chi kung masters agree have these characteristics. Don't take them as law however, everyone is different. But, if you can't feel the energy of trees yet, these are a good place to start with. The colors are from the Five Element theory of Chinese medicine. The color being that of the bark. Which of the five element colors does it come closest to? It's thought that each tree/color benefits the organ associated with it. You visualize the tress's chi and your chi the same color and merging. Sometimes the colors are merely used in healing meditations for specific organs. As you practice and your awareness increases, trust your feelings and disregard the lists.

Some tree chi kung methods visualize drawing the earth or tree's chi in through the feet, filling the body, merging with the tree and extending up to the crown of the tree. Another method, usually by a weeping tree, drawing the tree's chi in through the crown of the head, filling the body, then sinking the chi into the ground.

Tree	Color	Organ	Element
Apple	Red	Heart/sm int.	Fire
Poplar	White	Lungs/lg int.	Metal
Cypress	black	kidney/bladder	Water
Pine	green	liver/gll bl	wood
Willow	Yellow	spleen/stomach	earth

According to information from a workshop with Zhang Jie here are some characteristics: cypress and cedars are thought to nourish yin chi and reduce heat. willows draw dampness out, elms calm the mind and strengthens the stomach, maples reduce pain, locusts clear internal heat and balances the heart, firs clear bruises and reduce swellings, hawthorns aid digestion and lower blood pressure, birches detoxify and clear dampness, plums nourish the spleen and stomach.

One method I find working through my own tree chi kung practice is drawing in the tree's chi with each inhalation. Though most tree chi kung work in the 'aura' of the tree; I've found that touch the trunk and visualizing inhaling the chi through the lao kung point, then either sinking it to the tantien or grounding it is very powerful.

One theory of tree chi kung is that if we practice regularly by a certain tree we set up a type of 'family-connection' or a bond with the tree. If we're away on a trip we will be able to still get a boost of energy from the tree through meditation. (It seems to work for me).

In European traditions various trees has special characteristics associated with them. Two maples were planted in a newlyweds garden for peace and love. Here are some of the European symbolism:

Tree	Characteristic
Rowan	protection
Hazel	wisdom
Maple	peace beauty
Sassafras	medicine
Hawthorn	protection purification
Oak	fertility

* TREE MEDICINE, TREE MAGIC by Ellen Evert Hopmen this isn't a tree chi kung book but has much symbolic and interesting information.

ATD

FRIDAY CHI KUNG	
Releasing breath - sinking	Loose Brush knee
Body circle	Leg curl
Wuji posture - sinking	Goose Drinks Water
Shoulder circle	Goose Flaps wings
Open & Sink Chi	Misogi Body drop
Waist Rub	Open & twisting
Arm Swing	Rowing exercise - Funekogi undo
Clam	Shaking wrists - Tekubi kosa undo
Open, Draw in Chi & Sink	Wuji posture - flame above water
Ming Men tap	Seated leg bounce
Shoulder tap	Zhan Zhuang
Pushing the circle - Tui Moh	- Monkey Holds
Tan Tien Breath - YANG TAN	- Universal post
In Yang Chi out Toxins	- Press Mt. Tai
Melting body	Tree Chi kung
Hissing Goose	