

# INTERNAL WUSHU ARTS NEWSLETTER

A.T.Dale - P.O. Box 77040 - Seattle WA 98133- (206)283-0055

## NELSON VISIT

On my recent trip to Nelson B.C. I had the opportunity to visit and practice with Rex's tai chi group. Thanks everyone for the practice time. Aside from attending next summers tai chi retreat there Nelson has some of the best restaurants. It's a beautiful place to visit.

## CLUB WORKSHOPS

(in Seattle)  
Tuishou  
Sat, Oct 1, 9-11, \$10  
Sanshou Workout  
section 7&8  
Sat, Oct 22, 9-11 \$10

**BEGINNING  
CLASSES  
ARE CLOSED**

## TAOIST STUDIES INSTITUTE

784-5632  
Feng Shui - Sun, Oct 2, 9-3 \$50  
Tea of China - Sun, Oct 16, 1-4  
\$25  
Tuishou - Sun, Oct 23, 9-12 \$50  
Feng Shui - Nov 20, 9-3 \$50

**TUISHOU & CHI KUNG**  
with Chirs Luth  
Nov 5&6 \$185  
info 825-3413

## MASTER DANIEL WANG

### WORKSHOPS

Nov 4: 7:45-9:45pm Intro & Demo  
Nov 5: 12-2 Chi Kung  
2:30-5:30 Wu style taichi  
Nov 6: 9-12 Wu style sword  
12-2 Chi kung  
2:30 - 5:30 Sun style taichi

registration:  
Mary Forlenza 547-6236  
(Master Wang has been invited by Master Gao-fu)

# Over The Years

Over the years that I've been studying and teaching, I've noticed definite land marks in my progress and the progress of students. First I noticed these in myself over the years. I've also, fortunately, kept good notes at times to record them. Consistent practice is a definite requirement for this advancement, dabblers in the arts, popping from one to another even after years never seem to show these levels. As I've taught Aikido, Tai Chi and Pa Kua the progression has been consistent in all these arts.

Early in my studied I was told that it takes three years to learn a system, and a lifetime to understand and master it. This I've heard from several masters of various arts. (Master Tchoung told us we'd have his system in three years if we were diligent in our practice. The founder of Aikido had the apprentices stay with him up to three years then sent them off to teach and develop on their own.) The first three years is learning the physical part, the superficial: training the body. After that point it's all individual research, maturation and refinement; the development of self-knowledge.

Give or take a couple of months/years here they are:

\* **6 months** - self differentiation between relaxation and when not. A sense of one's tantien.

The first landmark is the understanding of relaxation and a bit of the energy flow. This is usually catching or noticing yourself tensing up, or being tense, and then focusing on relaxing during daily activities. This is also the point after continual practice where a student begins to really get a sense and feeling of the tantien.

\* **3 years** - comfortable in movements

Up to about three years it's primarily studying movement, flow & concentration. Practicing the principles of softness, relaxation and smoothness in all actions. Studying forms and trying to *perfect* movement. By three years there is a certain 'at home-ness' with the art and practice. It all feels very natural. Outwardly at this level an instructor can see a student's inner connections.

\* **5 years** - integration of body knowledge.

As an instructor this is the neatest thing to see happen. As a student performs: applications, quick, or fa-jin movements, power manifests itself yet the students doesn't 'feel' anything. When the move is correct the student notices the result instead of the effort involved. In applications your partner is moved or thrown and you don't feel like you did anything at all.

\* **7 years** - sinking and rooting

As the body, mind and movement integration become more unified you notice your body rooting itself without 'having' to do anything. When force is applied to you it naturally is grounded or absorbed instead of upsetting you, you permit it to become a part of you, it's your energy now.

\* **10 years** - the forms begin to teach lessons. Each posture and form becomes the teacher and guide to understanding the self and connections-with-all: listening to the Tao. There is an 'new' interest in the forms and movements. The old forms are all of a sudden different and new; teaching greater lessons. This is also a stage where "enough is enough", "I don't want to learn any more forms. I have enough." Outwardly it sounds conceited to one who is not there. What's actually happening is an overload and a frustration. All a person at this level wants to do is be left alone to understand and research what they have. There is an overwhelming feeling that there is already a lifetime of study and work to do in order to get it, so more forms will only be a distraction.

\* **20 years** - forms aren't IT. The self, our core our center is the place. A seeking

simplicity, back to emptiness, the center of the wuji circle. At this level there is a sameness yet different-ness to all the forms and practice. It's studying the feeling of chi instead of the outward forms. There is a certain knowledge that comes through while just 'feeling' the practice.

(I would appreciate input and comments from other instructors)

Once a butcher was cutting up an ox for a king. As he felt with his hand, leaned in with his shoulder, stepped in and bent a knee to it, the carcass fell apart with a peculiar sound as he played his cleaver.

The king, expressing admiration said, "Good! It seems that this is the consummation of technique."

The butcher replied, "What I like is the Tao, which is more advanced than technique. When I first began, all I saw was an ox. Even after three years I still had not seen a whole ox. Now I meet it with spirit rather than look at it with my eyes."

"When sensory knowledge stops, then the spirit is ready to act. Going by the natural pattern, I separate the joints, following the main apertures, according to the nature of its formation. I have never even cut into a mass of gristle, much less a large bone."

"A good butcher changes cleavers once year because of damage, a mediocre butcher change cleavers every month because of breakage. I've had this cleaver for nineteen years now, and it has cut up thousands of oxen; yet its blade is as though it had newly come from the whetstone."

a chapter from CHUANG TSE

# FIGHT YOUR OWN FIGHT

by Gene Burnett

In every fight or conflict there are actually two fights being fought. One is the obvious cause or thing being fought over. The other is the fight over *how* the fight is to be fought. This applies everywhere. Of course in t'ai chi we don't seek or relish fighting. In fact we try to avoid fighting. Even in combat we seek to blend, deflect, counter and defend our boundaries. But if you are in a fight or even if you are engaged in a push-hands challenge the "other" fight is very important. Just as in western boxing it is essential in push-hands to not "fight the other person's fight." In other words don't play to your opponent's strength.

We all enter any conflict with priorities. It is important to sense when to hold on to your own priorities and when in the face of change to re-adjust them.

For example, let's say you enter a push-hands challenge with the priorities of learning, having fun and perhaps executing a good pushing or yielding technique. Now, say your partner enters the same challenge with the priorities of pushing you over and not getting pushed, an absolute desire to "win". The first "fight" is just the game, the rules of *tuishou*. The second "fight" is up for grabs. *How* is this "match" to be "fought?" In this case the other person might seem hard, tight and strong. They may be extremely quick and tense, almost in a panic to avoid being pushed. They may also be very hard and aggressive in their pushing using lots of hand and arm strength. They may exude a competitive "I won" energy when they push you and a hostile "I lost" energy when you push them. In this situation it is easy to get sucked into "fighting their fight." You might get caught up in *their* priorities of winning vs. losing and forget your own priorities of learning and having fun. In this case it might be helpful to breathe a little more deeply. Center your stance - shake loose the tension and return to "your fight."

Often people with the tournament style of *tuishou*; people who grab, hold, use lots of strength and who are tight, hard and aggressive are the most effective against others of that style. If you fight *their* way you are playing to *their* strength. Confronted with someone who is soft, centered, yielding and genuinely powerful their ego - satisfaction is minimal and a sense of confusion seems to grow in them. Even if they push the softer practitioner around a lot they don't feel like they're really able to touch the softer person's center. In fact they themselves feel more and more off-center. The softer person may have to step or adjust their footing but will rarely be blasted off balance. On the other hand when the softer practitioner does decide to push it is often successful with little or no exertion involved. Also, it is just not ego-satisfying to

push someone who doesn't mind being pushed! So the "hard" person ends up leaving his circle of strength. He over reaches, gives up his center, pushes too early or too late. Even if he maintains his circle of strength he will push with pride and anger and not feel true satisfaction. So. . . try to stay with your original priorities. True 'gems' in push-hands come when your priorities are learning, having fun, and maintaining your balance.

Another example illustrates a situation where your priorities may have to change. Suppose you enter into a push-hands challenge and you discover quickly that your partner's priority is not only to "win" but to actually hurt you. (This is not as unlikely as it might seem) If you continue to focus on learning, fun and balance you might end up injured or worse. Here it might be wise to shift your priorities to protecting your self, staying extremely alert or even stopping the encounter all together. If fact, if you adjust to this new partner well, you *are* learning and while it may not be "fun" it is a lot more enjoyable than being injured! All you've done here is elevate self-preservation on the priority list because the situation demanded it. And doing what the situation demands is ultimately what t'ai chi is. The deeper your center, the more options you have in your response, the easier this is to do. Work with what you have and stay true to your own "fight" when you can.

These examples are extreme to make a point. Even among evenly matched friendly partners you can still get sucked into fighting your partner's fight. Some warning signs that you need to center and regain your own priorities: you are chasing but not catching your partner, you are feeling frustrated, you are feeling crowded, you are attempting techniques that don't feel comfortable, you are attempting techniques you know are beyond your abilities, you are trying to do what your partner does best, you are feeling angry and competitive. Losing your center and finding it again are good things. Don't beat yourself up for not being perfect! Live and learn!

PS. If you notice that you are actually one of those people who get into the "must-win" head trip when pushing, see if you can find the part of you that is most interested in learning and enjoying the sheer pleasure of keeping your balance. You'll be pushed more often and you won't push as much but you'll find that the "gems" - the times you push or get out of a push effortlessly - come more and more often. And of course you'll get better and better. Brute strength will only take you so far. The path of the Tao is never-ending!

# Changing Perspective and Moving Toward Spirit

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In the middle of a cold, flu, etc., and feeling miserable have you been able to shift gears and rise above the symptoms? All of a sudden even though the body is still sick the spirit is untouched. You notice the illness but you don't really feel it? Or you don't get drawn down or caught by it. A change of perspective.

In the middle of a hectic schedule; behind on everything, everyone needing something done, about to pull your hair out then again, shifting gears into spirit and the rush, tension, anxiety leaves. The work gets done but all of a sudden it's no big deal. Nothing has changed except your view of the situation. This is a side benefit of our practice, particularly chi kung.

Once, while I was bummed out and depressed I picked up a book and after reading the first chapter I decided to change my attitude and all things shifted. All it said was that I was responsible for *choosing* my thoughts in regards to the event. Of course nothing is as easy as it's written (well sometimes it is if we permit it to happen). It all depends upon the situation and our frame of mind. The major problem is that sometimes we get stuck in a loop, focusing upon what's making us miserable or what irritates us. Perhaps a habit someone has, perhaps an action they've taken, perhaps it was the way we handled a certain situation, or perhaps where we happen to be.

"I will not think about that bad customer. I will not think about that bad customer. I will not think about that bad customer. I will not think about that bad customer." It's all up to us to let go and move on.

There's a story about two Zen monks walking down a road when they come to a big puddle blocking the way. On the other side is a beautiful young lady trying to find her way across. The first monk walks through the puddle, picks up the lady and carries her across to the other side.

The two monks continue on their journey and after a while the second monk says, "How could you permit yourself to be enchanted by that beautiful lady." Upon which the first monks says, "I put her down back there."

REMEMBER: *Intent* leads energy! Though usually when we're in a loop we're the last to realize it since we're at the heart of it. Just as in chi kung we can create blockages of chi or restrict it to a certain area. It's very easy to see when someone else is in a loop or stuck, however when we're in the middle of a situation we usually have no idea most of the time. Depression is one result or cause of chi stuck in a loop.

The important thing in all areas is to let the energy flow freely. Some of our practices focus the chi in certain directions to increase the flow to certain areas, but we usually follow with relaxing the mind or sinking the chi to the *tantien* afterwards. Letting things return to a natural state.

If one thing bothers us, it's best to focus our attention completely in another area then perhaps, if necessary, come back to see things a bit more clearly. Go for a walk, practice, try a movie, a trip to the zoo. If you have a stiff shoulder, aside from light massage and movement, it's best to focus the mind away from the area or empty the mind. By keeping the mind on the stiff muscle the energy is focused in that muscle. If the muscle is merely tense, the energy is stuck in that area and focusing more

on that area gets more energy to accumulate in that muscle. Headaches are similar to this. If the shoulder is stiff, move the fingers and wrist, focus the energy to the palms or to the feet. Try to help the flow open up. There may be other reasons for the stiff muscle, but this helps the flow of the energy move.

On another level, there are many times when we make things too important. Thus, sticking the energy where it really doesn't matter. We all know someone who may border on being an

alarmist. Someone who reads the crime section of the paper and focuses on the horror. Within situations, we need to center and see what's really important or what's possible. It's also important to know what we do have control over and what we don't. If you're stuck in a traffic jam, late for an appointment, of course you won't be happy but . . . there's nothing you can do about the situation so . . . center, loosen up and use the situation to mellow out. In other situations, check if you're over reacting to the situation. When a

crisis happens people and energy move. There's no time to panic, there's just action. Feelings of anxiety come when the chi gets stuck or only focuses in a part of the head or shoulders, so we can't really see/think clearly - thus we get overwhelmed. If you're noticing panic and anxiety it must be somewhat less than a real crisis.

One of the wonderful gifts of the chi kung is the situations I described earlier (health is definitely a great gift also). A 'shifting of gears', a moving into spirit or a higher self. In the middle of the illness, panic, and life, being able to see things from a distance while you're still in the middle of the situation. The eye of the tornado.

My own belief is that all practices in the internal arts and chi kung are methods of finding our inner self, our higher self, our spiritual self. Our center is our core and the center core of the universe. As we practice we mature on a very subtle level. Now don't get the idea that I can anytime switch into that other perspective. (Boy do I wish) But it does seem to manifest itself more often.

The entire thing centers around centering and cultivating our 'self'. This along with physical health is the most important result of our studies and training. Meditation; seated and moving, mindful practice; feeling each moment, sinking the chi to the *tantien*. All are methods leading toward this self.

If you're in a hurry to learn the form, or forms you're missing the boat. The forms don't have it, the postures are the key. Stop, feel and listen: shift gears. It's the NOW.

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Lao-tzu said:

**Consider the world light, and the spirit is not burdened; consider myriad things slight, and the mind is not confused. Consider life and death equal, and the intellect is not afraid; consider change as sameness, and clarity is not obscured.**

from *Wen-tzu*

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## WHAT BOOKS SHOULD I READ?

I've asked the following instructors what 4 books they recommended to new students in Tai Chi Chuan, Pa Kua Chang, and Chi Kung. Here are the results:

### Harvey Kurland

#### N.W. Tai Chi Association

##### TAI CHI CHUAN:

#1 - T'ai Chi Ch'uan Ta Wen by Chen Wei-Ming.

Tai Chi Chuan In Theory and Practice by Kuo Lien ying.

T'ai-chi Touchstones: Yang Family Secret Transmissions

T'ai Chi Chuan by Cheng Man-Ch'ing

##### PA KUA CHANG:

Pa-Kua Chang Illustrated By Lee Ying Arng & Yen Te Hwa

Cheng, Ting-Hua Pa Kua Chang: Chi Kung & Zhan Zhuang by A.T.

Dale (thanks Harvey)

### Rex Eastman

#### Kootenay Tai Chi Centre

##### TAI CHI CHUAN

1. Tai Chi for Health & Self-defense by T.T. Liang

2. Tao Te Ching by Gia-Fu Feng

3. The Way of Chuang Tzu by Thomas Merton

4. The Tao of Tai Chi Chuan by Jou, Tsung Hwa

##### OTHERS:

Tai Chi, The Supreme Ultimate by Lawrence Galante

Master Cheng's Thirteen Chapters by Chen Man-Ching

Yang Family Secret Transmissions by Douglas Wile

Cheng Man-Ching's Advanced Tai Chi Form Instruction by Douglas Wile

I Ching - many translations available

The Tao of Meditation by Jou, Tsung Hwa

### Gene Burnett

#### North Seattle

##### TAI CHI CHUAN:

Tao Te Ching translation Gia Fu Feng

Tai Chi for Health & Self-defense by T.T. Liang

Master Cheng's Thirteen Chapters by Chen Man-Ching

T'ai Chi Ch'uan Ta Wen by Chen Wei-Ming

On Tai Chi Chuan by T. Y. Pang

##### CHI KUNG:

any title by Alexander Lowen M.D. esp. Bioenergetics/Fear of Life/Depression & the Body/ Pleasures

any title by J. Krisnamurti

Inner Game of Tennis by W. Timothy Gallwey

Aikido in Daily Life by Koichi Tohei

### Chris Matthews

#### TAI CHI CHUAN

Yang Family Secret Transmissions by Douglas Wile

Lao-Tse: "My Words Are Very Easy to Understand" Lectures on the Tao Te Ching by Cheng, Man-Ching.

The Essence of Tai Chi Chuan by Lo/Inn/Amarker/Foe

Tai Chi Chuan for Health and Self-Defense by T.T. Liang

##### CHI KUNG

Crane Style Chi Gong and its Therapeutic Effects by Daoshing Ni

Taoist Ways to transform Stress into Vitality; the Inner Smile & Six

Healing Sounds by Mantak Chia

Chi Kung Health & Martial Arts by Yang Jwing-Ming

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 \$12 yearly

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

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### HOMework FOR THE MONTH:

*the key word is:*



## COMFORTABLE



*throughout your day, regardless of what you're doing, take a moment to see if you are comfortable. If not, then adjust your position, (change shoes etc.) then continue. Discomfort causes stress, tension, and anxiety thus blocking chi flow and injuring your health.*

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### Andrew Dale

#### Internal Wushu Arts

##### TAI CHI CHUAN:

Tao Te Ching & Tai Chi classics translations

Practicing and Teaching Tai Chi by Gene Burnett

T'ai Chi Ch'uan Ta Wen by Chen Wei-Ming

There are No Secrets by Wolfe Lowenthal

##### PA KUA CHANG

Classical Pa Kua Chang by Sifu Jerry Alan Johnson & Sifu Joseph Crandall

Pa Kua Eight-Trigram Boxing by Robert W. Smith & Allen Pittman

The Essence of T'ai Chi Ch'uan by Lo/Inn/amacker/ Foe

Cheng, Ting-Hua Pa Kua Chang: Chi Kung & Zhan Zhuang by A.T. Dale

(my book ☺)

##### CHI KUNG

The Way of Energy by Master Lam Kam Chuen

Chi Kung Health & Martial Arts by Dr. Yang Jwing-Ming

Urban Shaman - Serge Kahili King Ph. D.

Aikido in Daily Life by Koichi Tohei

### Cedar Acosta

#### New Seattle Massage

##### TAI CHI CHUAN

T'ai Chi Classics by Waysun Liao

365 Tao: Daily Meditations by Deng Ming-Dao

Zen in the Martial Arts by Joe Hyams

There are No Secrets by Wolfe Lowenthal

##### ENERGY WORK

The Art of Chi Kung by Wong Kiew Kit

The Way of Energy by Master Lam Kam Chuen

Polarity Process by Franklin Fills

Hands of Light by Barbra Ann Brennan

Books on the I Ching

\*\*\*Note: Chris Luth (his workshop listed on page #1) is one of the top push hands instructors around. I hear his specialty is yielding. If you are interested in Tuishou and can afford it I highly recommend going.