

INTERNAL WUSHU ARTS NEWSLETTER

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CLUB ITEMS

Club T-shirts Lg. \$15
Pa Kua Chi Kung Bk \$8
Misc. Videos \$35
'94 Newsletters \$5
'93 Newsletters \$5

SATURDAY CLASSES

Apr. 1 - 7&8 9-11, \$10
Apr. 8 CANCELED
Apr. 15 - group 8:30-11
Apr 22, free hands 9-11, \$10
May 6 - group 8:30-11
May 20 - SIFU? 9-11 \$10
June 3 - group session

Mr. Tao Visit

Five Willow Tai Chi Assoc. will be offering classes by Tai Chi Master Tao Ping-Siang April-June. Five Willow Newsletter is in my filebox.

SIFU'S BOOK DUE MAY

SUMMER WORKSHOP

Sat & Sun - July 1 & 2nd
Mt. Vernon WA

\$60 per day/ \$100 both days

Each day will be divided into three parts. I will be focusing on adapting our studies of chi kung in order to boost our practice in forms and tuishou work. The theme this year will be 'LISTENING ENERGY'.

KOOTENAY TAI CHI CENTRE SUMMER RETREATS

Box 566
Nelson, B.C. V1L 5R3
(604)352-3714

KUNG FU SUMMER RETREAT FOR CHILDREN & TEENS

August 1-5

\$240 Canadian \$200 US

TAI CHI CHUAN

August 13-19

\$395 Canadian \$335 US

PA KUA CHANG

August 21-27

\$395 Canadian \$335 US

GROUP FREE PRACTICE

Starting May the first Saturday of each month we're having a group practice. (April it's on the 15th) This is an effort to get everyone out to practice in the park. I'll be following the schedule below for anyone who would like to follow but it doesn't matter if you follow the group or practice on your own, just practice!

8:30 - Pa Kua Chi Kung
9:00 - Yang Long Form
10:00 - Chen 48 & Sword
10:30 - Sections 7-8-9

NEXT ISSUE!!!

Due to Felicia's efforts we will begin a column of the question and answers portion of Master Feng Zhiqiang's book. Feng Zhiqiang is Master Gao-fu's teacher and has written extensively on matters of Chen tai chi and chi kung. Thank you Felicia for translating and making many of these Chinese texts available to us all.

The Intrinsic Energies of T'ai Chi Ch'uan

translated by Stuart Alve Olson

As the story goes Chen Yen-ling a.k.a. Yearning K. Chen a.k.a. Chen Kung (the author) was one of the top students of Grand master Yang Cheng-fu, grandson of the founder of Yang style. As with most of the traditional martial arts; there was the art that was taught to the public and the 'true' transmission that was passed within the family or to trusted disciples. The Yang tai chi family had a text that recorded important practice methods, explanation and secrets of Yang tai chi chuan. On one occasion Grand master Yang Cheng-fu permitted Chen Yen-ling to borrow the text to study, but only for the night. Chen was a businessman and unbeknownst to Yang Chen-fu he had some of his workers waiting at home to spend the entire night copying the book. (no Xerox machines) Shortly after returning the book Chen disappeared and luckily for all tai chi practitioners he published the book. Since it's publication this had been the bible of Yang tai chi aside from the tai chi classics and the Tao te ching.

Mr. Olson isn't just translating the text but with Master T.T. Liang's guidance give some clarification of the text. Master Liang was one of sifu friends and practice partners in Taiwan. Olson is translating each chapter as a separate book. So far there are two volumes:

Vol. 1 - CULTIVATING THE CHI

Vol. 2 - THE INTRINSIC ENERGIES OF T'AI CHI CH'UAN

All teachers of push hands should have a copy of vol. 2.

-- ON TUI SHOU

Chen Yen-ling's book says the first energy that is developed in tai chi is the 'stick' & 'adhere' energy. This is our tuishou practice. Until the arms are relaxed, soft and loose, to the point where we can stay attached to another's arms with no breaks we can't begin to learn and understand the other energies, even true peng energy can't develop.

The next level of advancement in developing ching is 'listening' energy. After being able to stick and not needing to concentrate on staying attached then the mind can begin to 'listen' to the directions and intent of our partner. Listening doesn't mean you can do anything about it but you can feel your partner will be doing something soon. You can sense they're up to something, this is developing listening energy.

There are also three levels to these energies that he describes in the book. Get the book!

Taking A Break?

by Harvey Kurland

*"Rest is Yin. Exercise is Yang.
They have to stay in harmony"*

PART ONE

Andy asked me to write an article for IWA on what happens when you stop training. At face value it seemed to be a simple topic. But after thinking about it and doing a literature search; it was not all that simple.

I believe it was Cheng Man-ch'ing that said that every training session was like building a stack of paper. Each single sheet increasing the stack height represented one practice session. Eventually the cumulative effect of training resulted in a large stack of paper and skill acquisition, *making the assumption training was done correctly*. Cheng also alluded to that even twenty years of practice would be wasted if done incorrectly.

Grand master Tchoung Ta-Tchen would tell us "Every morning every night, twenty minutes" he referred to doing the form. That would be the ideal amount of training. Cheng recommended a little less training, i.e. five minutes, twice a day. But others, e.g. Tung Ying-chieh, recommended doing the standard long form three times. At the speed of 20 to 30 minutes per set, that would take 60 to 90 minutes total. When doing the 108 form I find doing the first set relaxes me and loosens me up. I find by the third set I feel great.

The flip side of this is what Kuo Lien Ying told me. That every missed session lost two days of training; one day forward, two days back. After a while it seems like you would end up with negative effects: after a few weeks off, you would forget sets you never learned??? Interestingly, a cardiologist I used to work with, Dr. Albert Kattus, would recommend patients gradually return gradually to training at a rate double their time off. He made the assumption that for every training session missed, you lost two. If a patient took two weeks off from rehab, we would slowly bring them back to the amount of exercise and intensity level they ended their last session with, over four weeks. This is due to the detraining effect from not exercising.

Detraining occurs when you stop exercise. Your body is in a constant state of adaptation. When you train, your body adapts to that specific training. When you stop training your body adapts to not training. The rate of change is dependent on several factors. Factors include your age, state of conditioning, type of training that you were doing, illness, injury, nutrition, etc. . Sometimes vacations from training can be positive. Rest is an

important part of training. Rest is yin and exercise (work) is yang, they have to stay in harmony with each other.

I mentioned in a previous article that "Good Students" can run into over training. Due to their love of training they have a tendency to over do it. They may also be compulsive exercisers. People who enjoy ascetic (Sweat & bleed) training fall into this easily, as there is a fine line between their masochistic "cleansing", e.g. Misogi exercises, and overdoing it. Over training means you do too much and your body can no longer adapt. There can be a cumulative effect from other life stresses, bad diet, lack of sleep, use of alcohol or drugs, all which slow down recovery time.

In over training your blood pressure may go up, resting heart rate may be elevated and appetite may be suppressed. Common symptoms are tendonitis, depression or apathy. Some people find they have more illnesses and colds when they are in this state. Many top athletes actually have worse health than normal average exercisers due to over training. In young women over training is related to amenorrhea, hormone imbalance and osteoporosis.

So if you take a break, e.g. a week or two off, and you have been over training, you may find you feel better, get stronger and are more energetic. So for this case one of the effects of stopping training for a while can be positive. Taking a vacation is the solution for over training. For the exercise addict, it's one day off and you gain two.

Most people want the physical benefits of exercise. If you could take a pill to keep your healthy, a magical supplement or mysterious herb, would you? Probably. Exercise is a that magical medicine, a pill that keeps you well and but takes twenty minutes to take. When you stop taking the medicine the benefits evaporate. If you take too much it is an overdose (over training). If you don't take enough it doesn't work. The minimum dose is three exercise days a week, for at least 20 minutes per day, at the proper intensity for you.

Specific health problems have their own exercise requirements. For example, diabetics can benefit from exercise. Aerobic exercise such as t'ai-chi ch'uan acts similar to insulin. Regular exercise is a successful method used by many doctors to keep diabetes under control. *This should be done under medical guidance*. The effects of exercise on diabetes are almost immediate. Exercise helps transport glucose across cell membranes. The benefits are lost quickly too. CONTINUED NEXT MONTH

Harvey Kurland received his Masters Degree from the University of Washington . He has degrees in public health education and exercise physiology. A certificated instructor of t'ai-chi ch'uan by Grand master Tchoung Ta-tchen He also holds certification from the American College of Sports Medicine and International Sports Sciences Association.

HELLO ???

OR

Why isn't common sense common?

This article is about responsibility. In particular about taking responsibility for ourselves in regard to practice, training and learning.

Unfortunately it's true, we tend to be our own worst enemy. Perhaps it's due to our 'NO PAIN - NO GAIN' attitude and education. But it doesn't matter, we know better so we can make things change.

Pain means STOP IT! "You've gone too far" or in the least it means BACK OFF!

Pain is definitely not a part of learning the internal arts. What it indicates is that you're going too far, doing too much, or you are not practicing/moving correctly.

When it comes to most movements it's very clear: if it hurts don't do it! However for some movements it takes repetitive mistakes over a period of time before the soreness or pain begins to show. Even doing a movement correctly *but in excess* can cause problems. I've done this in a class teaching Snake Creeps Down. You should never do 30 repetitions in an hour was the lesson I learned. Another lesson I've learned is never demonstrate how not to do it! Anyway, incorrect practice whittles away the safe alignment and slowly creates the weakness or pain. This is especially true when it comes to knees. You may not feel soreness immediately while you are practicing incorrectly but in a few weeks 'all of a sudden' your knee hurts or is bothersome. As a beginner it's the teacher's responsibility to teach you what's correct and what's not, how to stand and move properly and safely. After the first couple of months you should be well equipped with the knowledge to keep your alignment safe and healthy. Though the teacher may catch you in class you need to be alert in your own practice to be safe. This is priority above learning new movements and forms. Any stance you take you must be sure you are safe.

One of the most important parts of our study is to develop 'listening' energy and become self-aware. This means to understand our circle of strength, limitations, and weaknesses. The easiest level to see our circle of strength is in our physical movements.

Some movements have a immediate feed back as to correctness; most Pa Kua and Chen tai chi movements will let you know quickly if you're not safe. It may take

the expression of pain, difficulty in breathing or difficulty in moving into the next posture.

TAKE THE TIME TO LISTEN.

When we practice chi kung and various meditations sometimes it's a very subtle line between correct and harmful practice. Over the last few years I've stopped teaching certain meditations and visualization or breathing methods in group settings because many members insist on forcing the process. They either want to advance now and skip basics, ignore certain signs of incorrect practice, or aren't able to practice consistently in order to develop internal endurance.

I've also cut back tremendously on the repetitions of may exercise to keep classes safe and healthy. If you teach chi kung be alert to the effects of the movements you teach. It's easy to see someone else's postural mistakes but forcing chi kung or poor chi kung isn't as easy for a teacher to see or understand so it's best to be on the safe side.

COMFORT IS THE KEY

If the feeling is uncomfortable STOP, BACK OFF. All movement will work energy to a certain extent. Visualizations and specific breathings methods may boost the effect of the movement as does more repetitions. You need to know if you're on the edge of health or harm. A sign of over-doing is being buzzed, strong emotions, spacing out, or nausea.

One of the most popular Taoist meditations is called the small orbit circulation. Unfortunately (in my view) this has been written about too often and described in great detail. I've encountered many students without any previous background and training, or a strong enough foundation in rooting and sinking energy, getting into trouble jumping into this practice. The results of forcing this practice, or jumping into the advanced end without basics cover ranges of high blood pressure, headaches, migraines, insomnia, the mind scattered or always buzzed. The energy gets stuck or gets in a loop in the upper body and isn't able to ground and return to the tantien. A first sign might be lack of comfort but it can also be too enjoyable (addiction) to the practice. By the time the discomfort pops up just stopping doesn't work - the momentum keeps going. It takes much time and basic work to correct the problem thus weeks of discomfort.

Be safe, don't force or over do.

ATD

Pa Kua Chang Daily Practice

The below practice schedule is a good morning or daily Pa Kua practice (about 30 minutes). These are the most important things to practice regardless of whether you are a beginner or advanced member. Make an effort to practice with complete attention of mind, body and spirit. Only then will you develop understanding, skill and insight. To increase your practice time add the traditional 8 chi kung before or end with linking form #2.

1. WUJI - empty the mind
2. Yang Dan standing 10 breaths
3. Walk the Wuji circle left 8 then right 8
4. Link the inner palms one circle each left
5. Link the inner palms once circle each right
6. Link the inner palms 8 steps (between each) left
7. Link the inner palms 8 steps right
8. Link the inner palms 4 steps left then right
9. Link the inner palms 2 steps left then right
10. Link the inner palms 1 step left then right
11. Walk a figure 8 (or trace the Yin Yang symbol) practicing shooting palms in a soft, casual manner.
12. WUJI standing

Standing quiet, take a deep breath.
Exhale all thoughts and listen to the
silence.

Sink the chi and breath to the tantien
Begin to walk.

Seek the Wuji as you walk.
You are walking the Wuji circle,
arms and palms form the Wuji,
seek the Wuji inside.

Empty yourself
As the Wuji becomes apparent
then the changes begin,
yin/yang, five elements
and the inner palms.

Study the flow and connections of the
energy moving through all these
positions.

Slowly return to yin and yang,
oneness with the Tao,
walk the figure 8, simplifying the flow.
Return to emptiness, stand and listen to
silence.

Teachings Of Master Tung Ying-chieh



Practice Of T'ai chi ch'uan During Daily Activities

T'ai chi ch'uan can be practiced any time whether during standing, walking, sitting or lying down. The method is to use the mind to get the feeling. For example, when you casually take a cup of tea, try to differentiate the feeling of using strength to take it and without using strength.

In walking, test the lightness and firmness in your feet. In standing, test the difference between flexing the knees and straightening them, or the difference between applying strength at one foot and at both feet. Try to get the various feelings in your daily activities.

Having trained yourself in a placid mind during t'ai chi ch'uan you should always try to have this placid mind in your daily activities. Examining your daily activities according to t'ai chi ch'uan principles will lead you to use the least effort for maximum work

This will also give you less tension and fatigue. Regularly doing the exercise with serenity and correct postures will make it easier for you to maintain correct postures in walking, standing, sitting and other activities. You may even cultivate a more serious attitude in your activities.

Master Tung Ying-chieh was a classmate of Master Cheng Man-ching and a top student of Grand master Yang Cheng-fu. It's important to note that the lineage of Tung Ying-chieh, as with Cheng Man-ching, has its own unique quality and style. Though both masters taught Yang style and their teacher was Grand master Yang Cheng-fu, each grew, advanced and gained insight into t'ai chi ch'uan and developed a uniqueness in their individual teachings of the art.

