



INTERNAL WUSHU ARTS NEWSLETTER

A.T.Dale - P.O. Box 77040 - Seattle WA 98133 - (206)283-0055 - subscriptions \$12/yr. © all rights reserved

MISC. SESSIONS
 July 1&2 - summer workshop
 July 8 - tuishou \$10, 10-11:30
 July 15 - 7&8 group - 10am
 July 29 - sifu trip?
 Aug 5 - group session 9:30-11:30

(I do need to know, well in advance, if you intend to attend any of the Saturday sessions or workshops. In the future if I have less than four signing up the session will be cancelled. The only exception to this is the group session held on the first Saturday of each month except for July)

FALL SCHEDULE 1995

Yang beginning (new members joining at that time) class will be on Sat 10-11am. Tuesday will be for continuing members - meaning those working on the solo forms and push hands.

Tues. 7-8	Yang T'ai Chi form study
Tues. 8-9	Tuishou
Wed 7-8	Chen T'ai Chi form study
Wed 8-9	Weaponry
Thurs. 6-7	Beginning Pa Kua
Thurs. 7-8	Pa Kua Basics
Thurs. 8-9	Applications
Sat 10-11	Beginning Yang T'ai Chi

FALL CLUB DEMONSTRATIONS SIGN-UP

This fall we will have our annual club demonstration. This is an opportunity for interested & prospective students & relatives to get a look at what we do and why you're gone certain nights. (It's also to prove you have been coming here on those nights). If you would like to do a solo or demonstrate some form with a group please sign up. I hope to keep the demonstration down to 1.5 hrs.

*The form is the shell of T'ai Chi.
 T'ai Chi is beyond form.
 An egg without a shell is a mess.*
 Gene

**KOOTENAY TAI CHI CENTRE
 SUMMER RETREATS**
 Box 566
 Nelson, B.C. V1L 5R3
 (604)352-3714
 TAI CHI CHUAN
 August 13-19
 \$395 Canadian \$335 US
 PA KUA CHANG
 August 21-27
 \$395 Canadian \$335 US

CLUB ITEMS AVAILABLE
 Sifu's book \$35.00
 Pa Kua Chi Kung \$8.00
 Club T-shirts \$15.00
 Video tapes \$35.00
 + sales tax



NEW VIDEO

Simplified Tai Chi for Seniors by Gene Burnett

With the possibility of Gene relocating in the near future he has produced this video for his student to continue their practice and to work on refinements. This video is also intended for those of you interested in teaching tai chi to senior citizens. The Video is available through the club for \$35.00 + tax.

Gene has also updated his booklet: *Practicing and Teaching Tai Chi Chuan*, \$10 (tax included) which I highly recommend for all members, particularly beginners. Gene's new phone # is 527-4673

THANK YOU SENSEI

As many of you may know, Shihan Bernie Lau was my first and major influence in the martial arts. Though I have been studying martial arts (karate, judo, wing chun) since 1968, it was in 1970 that my real training began. At the age of 15 I was one of the first students entering a new Aikido club formed in the Ballard area of Seattle.

In order to achieve any kind of success, or to reach any destination the foundation must be good, solid and correct. I honestly believe I owe my achievement greatly to Lau Sensei. Lau sensei was the living demonstration of someone doing their best to live the ideals of the martial arts. The higher ideals of the martial arts are to centered, living with integrity and seeing harmony.

While Lau sensei was a Seattle police officer (while I was his student) he was what we all referred to as the 'ideal' cop. He taught me how to practice, study and train, but more importantly he was an example of integrity and genuinely a kind person. Through his own research and insight Lau Sensei developed his own branch of Aikijitsu called Ichō Ryu Aiki Jujitsu specializing in effective but safe police arresting methods. His school is nicknamed the Aiki School of Continuous Learning. His discoveries and research of movements are used in training Washington state law enforcements as well as in Montana, California and several other areas. Lau sensei is currently retired but acts as advisor to many clubs local and national organizations.

At a recent reunion I was honored to be promoted to the rank of 5 dan in Ichō Ryu Aiki Jujitsu by Lau Sensei. What this means is I'd better start training harder!

I'm Not Ready

We no longer need to practice these arts in order to defend the village from invaders, or to defend our family as we travel from village to village (generally). Guns have made the fighting aspect of these arts secondary in our society .

However, when attacked the old villager couldn't say, "Not now, I haven't practiced that form." or "I'm not ready yet", or better yet "you're attacking wrong!" It was NOW, do what you can, however you can, now. If a car comes speeding down the street you'd better get out of the way. It's OK to say, "I'm too tired or just not ready enough" but it'll perhaps be your last time to say it.

Argue For Your Limitations And Sure Enough. . . They're Yours!

If you are interested in more than just practicing these arts for relaxation it's important to keep in mind: **THESE ARE MARTIAL ARTS**. And though the village may not need you to defend it, it's still important to be alert, and able to respond - NOW with mind-body-spirit, this is our real training. A complete martial art is wholistic, it will train: mind, body and spirit for exercise, health, and self-defense. Whether it's moving out of the way of a car, responding to a rude comment, or dealing with anger the practice is the same: to be present-ready for life and respond with your best regardless of situation. Best means your best now, not your best practice, or what you aspire to, or what you could do when you were in your 20's. Advanced class sessions, demonstrations, leading a group session are minor applications and training of our skill, alertness and readiness. Navigating life's situations being centered is the true training and testing.

When attacked you can't say, "Not now, I'm not ready." You do your best, NOW. You do whatever you need to . . . NOW! The same holds true when a senior, or master asks you to demonstrate forms or exercises. It's one thing if you just don't remember the form, it's completely another if you just don't feel like it's perfect yet or you haven't practiced it for a while and you don't remember the entire thing. First, you miss the chance for valuable correction and instruction. Do you really expect to get the form perfect??? Even if you don't remember the entire form it's best to practice up to the part you can't remember.

Unfortunately over the years I've heard many excuses: The terrain isn't right, it isn't my sword, the lighting isn't right, "I don't want to shame you", the moon

is in Aries. When asked by the master or a senior to demonstrate there is naturally a nervousness about screwing up the form. But . . . this is an opportunity to focus, and practice (in front of them) to your best as if you have to apply the movements for self-defense. The good point is that if you mess up the only injury that may occur is to your ego. Refusing to demonstrate at the request of a master or guest instructor (aside from an injury or illness) is very rude and disrespectful. In a traditional martial arts context this tells the teacher much about your character, basically it's thought you can't be relied upon. Aside from a short statement like, "Please excuse my mistakes," focus on your practice instead of a speech about why the form isn't perfect.

Don't Show Your Training - Let Your Training Show

Instead of looking at it as a performance, or focusing on performing - practice. Unless your focus is on tournament competition or the modern wushu aspect of the art you should just practice the form instead of 'performing' the form. FOCUS This will give the teacher a better idea of what you need to work on thus you'll get better corrections and refinements.

When I look at members practicing or demonstrating a form I never look or expect the same from each member, I look to see what needs work and whether you're ready for the next step or level. With beginners I look for the choreography and basic postures while with intermediate students I look at the transitions and smoothness of the forms. Advanced members I look into the quality of their practice. At this level I look into the person, at the timing and character of the practice. As one advances in the art the timing of the movements change, there is a definite change in one's form when the focus is on the chi flow and they are using 'listening' energy to guide the movements of the form. Even if the student hasn't practiced the form in some time, or can't remember the entire form, there is a quality that comes through. For an advanced member this is where the corrections and refinements are done.

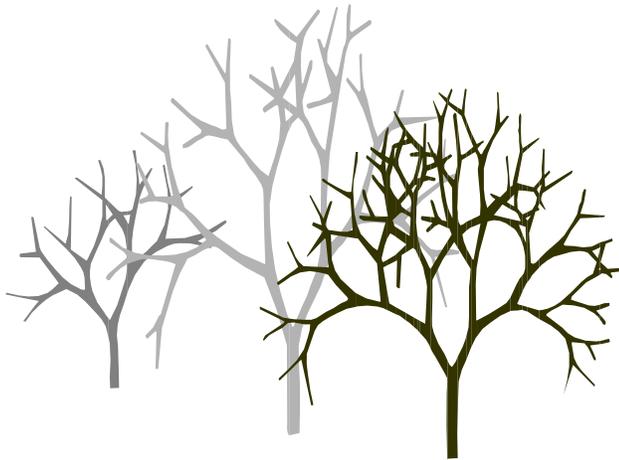
WHINE-WHINE-WHINE

When asked to demonstrate a form, or to show the last movement or forms you learned: just do your best. No apology needed or wanted! If you haven't refined a form the proper action is to do what you can. In class I'm here to teach, correct and refine the art. Whining about reasons why you didn't practice, or why it isn't perfect, or other excuses makes things worse. At the least they take up class time (there is much time wasted in class listening to excuses), at the most they support a negative self-image. Don't beat yourself up for what you haven't had time to do -- move on. Advanced members ~~should~~ are ready all the time. You just do it, no excuses needed (or wanted).

A secret: Most of the demonstrations I've done, either in the club or for my teachers, I wasn't at my best! My best is when no one is around to see my practice.

Each practice should also be our best. Let me explain: If I'm exhausted when I'm practicing I should still do my best under the circumstance of being exhausted. If you're really exhausted or tired common sense should lead you home to rest or get some nourishment, that is self-defense at that moment. Much of our training is to develop listening energy. Remember: our goal is to be healthy and centered. As we all know we can only ignore our body and mind to a certain extent before it decides to break down in order to rest.

At a recent gathering Shihan (master-teacher) Bernie Lau gave a speech making the point that our real training is outside the dojo (training hall). The practice place is a very small part of our actual training in the martial arts. In class we learn the movements, techniques and principles. We may practice in class but life is our real practice, the test of our applications and personal development. How many of us can stay centered, relaxed and untouched while being yelled at? While driving in rush-hour traffic? Are we able to stay balanced while enduring life's hardships? Can we stay loose and soft during or after an argument? This is the most valuable lesson of our practice and the testing and refining of our skills. Living our lives in health with dignity, pride, and integrity. Asked to demonstrate a form is just a pretest and another practice session. ATD



FENG ZHIQIANG ANSWERS QUESTIONS ABOUT QIGONG CONT.

Can you practice qigong when your emotions are not settled?

If you have been highly stimulated, for instance if you are very sad or very angry, it's best to temporarily stop practicing. Wait until you have recovered your normal state and then start again.

What sort of environment should you select for qigong practice?

Ideally, the surroundings should be quiet and secluded. In clean, fresh mountain air, by a stream, or deep in a forest where there are few people and it is very still. A conifer forest is really the best because conifers (pines and firs) have especially positive (load-bearing) ions and you will be able to reap great benefit while practicing in their vicinity. If you cannot find an environment as described above, then at least find some place that is quiet and has fresh air.

If you are practicing indoors, what are the requirements?

First open the window so that fresh air is circulating. If the room is a mess, just straighten it up enough so you have a place to work. If the weather is really cold, close the window after you have allowed fresh air in. This way you will avoid blasts of cold air while you are doing qigong.

Can you practice qigong in a noisy environment?

I must emphasize that in order to practice qigong you must have quiet. If the surroundings are quiet, your thoughts are settled, it's easier to enter a quiet state, and easier to obtain the attitude for practicing qigong. If the surroundings are not quiet, it's not easy to collect the thoughts, intent is hard to focus, you cannot achieve a quiet state, and it becomes very difficult to get results from qigong.

Can you practice qigong in a place where the air is not fresh?

As far as surroundings are concerned, the two most important things for practicing qigong are that the place should be quiet and the air clean. If the air is not fresh, you are better off not practicing. If you absolutely cannot find a place that has clean, fresh air then you must work up-wind, practice less vigorously, and do not practice gathering qi.

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|| Energies: It's All So Confusing

It's all so confusing; is peng a posture, an energy, or an application? Is it the one posture, a movement or are there others? The answer is YES to all the above.

There are the thirteen Tai Chi original postures according to the classics: the four direction PENG-LU-JI-AHN (ward-off - Roll Back - Press - Push); the four corners TSAI-LIEA-JO-KAO (pull down - split - elbow - shoulder) and the five attitudes: LOOK LEFT, GAZE RIGHT, ADVANCE, RETREAT, CENTRAL EQUILIBRIUM

Postures isn't always or completely the correct term to use when talking about these thirteen since these are methods of focusing attention and energy as well as being certain postures. In some movements we may have a part of it or a specific hand position that is LU, JI, AHN etc. In Yang style particularly we have specific postures with the same names as these applications as well as being the names of energies in Chen tai chi (the original method) there aren't as many specific postures with the same name. Instead these terms are used to describe the qualities, applications of the movement instead of specific postures. With the exception of JI (press) and JO (elbow) the other attitudes are aspects of other movements and postures. And even JI or JO are parts of other postures as well. Master Gao-fu said once that one of her teachers said that every posture should contain to some extent PENG-LU-CHI-AN for any posture to be complete. In the Chen method of tai chi the first form is specifically focused upon PENG-LU-JI-AHN and the second form, the Pao Chui or Cannon fist, focused upon TSAI-LIEA-JO-KAO.

Anytime we shift forward, left, right or back there is a possibility of applying a shoulder strike or push, this is KAO. Anytime the arms move forward, up, down, or back there is the potential of elbow strike, JO. In tai chi terminology these are the 'folding techniques' that make tai chi a superb martial art. As beginners we are learning these folding techniques by focusing on our basic ripple of movement.

The five attitudes: advance-retreat-look left-gaze right-central equilibrium are also contained within each movement and posture. While practicing tai chi we can't move without them. In our basic step for instance we should always maintain our central equilibrium (stay in balance), as we move and shift we slosh one way then the next (before moving left one must move right), there is shifting forward then back (advance and retreat). All postures and movements contains all principles, if not then it's not real tai chi chuan. Once we learn the forms and postures, then we need to focus our attention on the energies within each posture in order to learn about and understand these energies. Also we must practice as much push hands as possible. Understanding comes from discovering how these energies are applied and being able to apply them. If you can't show and demonstrate these

energies you don't really know them. Tai Chi understanding is being able to demonstrate and apply it what you know. Each practice brings us to greater and deeper understanding of just what these 'energies' or qualities are.

There are three levels of tai chi chuan attainment. LISTENING ENERGY:

a. SOLO FORMS - we listen to our balance, our muscle stiffness and softness, our muscle coordination. As we begin to soften and relax we begin to feel a certain warmth, an inner flow of energy. We listen to our mind protesting, enjoying etc. as we practice.

b. TUI SHOU (push hands) - We listen to our partner's pressure and force. We listen to our complaints about our partner, we listen to their stiffness, softness, yielding. We 'experience' the process of the movements intertwined and eventually we're able to feel deeper - the undercurrent of the energy flow.

c. SAN SHOU (partner work) - We listen to the quick strikes and attacks, notice the direction of force and power. We notice openings, balance, rooting, momentum. Our own fear, stiffness, emptiness.

The next level is TUNG JIN - understanding energy. (I'm now talking about what I've been told and can feel, not necessarily understand). This is a level of knowing how to balance a partner's energy and force to either neutralize, counter or borrow it. It's not being on the receiving end of a partner's movement but 'knowing' and performing the proper balance or counter to it. Being yin when my partner is yang and vice versa knowing the proper movement and no time gap between action and reaction. When practicing with someone who has achieved this level there is no winning (unless you are at the same level I guess). Every movement you do is wrong, or gets you into trouble since your partner will always have the proper response, immediately. Practicing with Master Tchoung gives a great taste of this type of skill level. The minute we touch hands, it's all over. Practicing sanshou with Dave Harris is the same every movement made gets us in deeper trouble.

TOTAL CLARITY - The level is supposed to be where the art is completely one with the person. There is no 'doing'. Movements and actions are spontaneously performed when necessary. Kind of like a weather vane; when a current or air comes the weather vane moves with it.

All we need to do is practice, Practice, PRACTICE.