



INTERNAL WUSHU ARTS NEWSLETTER

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(with all the gardeners in the club this next article is valuable.)

VIDEO SALE

Through

December 1995 all club video for sale will be on sale. All tapes will be marked down to \$25.00 US funds. WITH tax this comes to 27.05 (shipping and handling is still \$2.00).

New members may not know there are tapes available on the O'mei Chi Kung, Pa Kua Inner Palms, Yang short form, Pa Kua Chi Kung. There is a list in my file box.

MISC. SESSIONS

November 3 - Friday 7-8:30

ENERGIES CONTINUED

Levels, layers and principles of practicing and studying chi kung in our forms.

Sign up required Cost \$10

7&8 WORKOUT

NOVEMBER 18TH - Sat 1:30-3:30 sign up required (knowing at least section 7) \$10.

CLUB ITEMS AVAILABLE

Sifu's book - contains O'mei chi kung, Yang short form and partner form.	\$35.00
Pa Kua Chi Kung - this booklet contains basic principles of chi kung, Pa Kua 8 chi kung and 8 zhan zhuang instruction.	\$8.00
Club T-shirts - limited supply	\$15.00
Video tapes of our various forms- list available	\$35.00 \$25.00
Gene's Tai Chi book - a great guide for beginners and advanced members	\$10.00
1994 Newsletters	\$5.00
1993 Newsletters	\$5.00

NOVEMBER SCHEDULE

no Pa Kua class the 23rd

DECEMBER SCHEDULE

PNA closed Dec. 2nd & 23rd. Dec. 2nd we'll have a video session in Magnolia in place of class.

Happy Thanksgiving
Day

BACK PAIN ANYONE?

by Steve Gray

I learned this exercise at the University of Washington Spine Resource Center (Back pain clinic), it was copyrighted so I wrote my own version. This really works and it is the only thing that really works (except for one obscure Tien Shan Chi Kung movement which is done standing). There are couple of Indian and Taoist yoga exercises that are essentially the same.

The goal of this exercise is to strengthen back muscles. Strong back muscles help keep everything in proper alignment and do not allow dangerous dislocations to occur. As you age and your joints get sloppier you need rely more and more on strong muscles to hold every thing in place. You need to be able to hold this position for four minutes at least. At first it will not be possible but you can build up to it quickly. These strengthen the entire back including the neck (which can help with neck pain), it has also been known to cure serious cases of flat butt in male office workers.

It is recommended that you use a timer, you may enjoy it more if you read while doing this.

More gentle versions: (both of these work mainly on the lower back) Lie on the floor, put hands under chin and only raise legs off of the floor. Lie on your back with a cushion under your shoulders and raise your waist up off the floor. The further up you move the cushion the more work it will be. You can move the edge of the cushion up to the base of your neck but never let your head support all the weight. This one is called the Iron Bridge in Taoist Yoga. Doing the more gentle versions will require longer duration to get the same benefit.

There is no problem with doing these exercises even while your are experiencing back pain. Contrary to what you might expect, it will not make the pain worse while you are doing it, and it will often make it better within a matter of minutes.

As your muscles and ligaments get stronger muscle tone increases and it feels like you have a strong protective sheath around your lower back which gives it a bullet proof feeling and you may be surprised to find that your back actually feels good.

CERTIFICATION

This last year there has been mention of various levels of teaching certifications and intermediate steps to receiving a certificate from Master Tchoung Ta-Tchen. This has brought up support and controversy. What I have decided for the Internal Wushu Arts is to revive a system I used for the first 14 years of teaching. As a student completed a form and demonstrated correct basic movement and principles I would issue a form completion certificate. Many of you have several of these cluttering up your closets if they're not in recycle by now. In the 14 years I issued 80 of these certificates for various forms and arts. The new twist is that I will have a "student" and a "teaching" category per certificate. A 'student' certificate indicates the form is memorized with good body movements and principles. A 'teaching' certificate indicates strong principles of the art demonstrated as the form is done and that I believe the person has a good grasp of the form. To receive a 'teaching' certificates requires demonstration the form for one of the classes. If you have completed a form you'll like certified let me know.

READ THE BOOK!

We are the book, we are every word, paragraph and page. *Read the book.*

When we practice our forms and postures, if we merely practice the movements (to quote Rex at Tai Chi Camp) then it's as if we are looking at the table of contents, just glancing at it. As we begin our journey to practice the art deeper, beyond the mere forms there is a great peeling away of layers of stuff. These layers are the dust and soot that's settled upon our book by our upbringing, religion, politics, and learning in order to survive in our present world, family, society and our 'trying' to understand or make sense of life. Many of these things we've adopted without question because we were told/taught they were correct. Many things we've accepted at face value. Many things we've adopted above our own self, our own body and spiritual wisdom. We've accepted things we knew weren't quite correct. Part of our up bringing is to rely on others, the authority figures or the 'EXPERTS' since they know best, or are in control and thus we disregard our own true wisdom.

As we practice and gain depth to our movements, as we 'feel', 'listen' and seek to understand the movements we're actually peeling away layers of gunk getting closer to our own unique self and getting closer to our own spiritual wisdom. Many times this is a questioning of our own truths. At times this may be frightening since our practice becomes a mirror reflecting our most inner self. Skipping our routine *can* be one expression of resistance. Most times however our practice leads us to a calm, comfortableness that's actually who and what we are without the distractions of daily life or the filters we've grown up with and taught to put on. At times we may even go further and transcend this, experiencing the joy of truly dissolving the layers that separate us from the essence of all life. Entering an understanding or at least a view of energy, getting closer to patterns of energy than the layers and bulk of matter. This is a joy that is all encompassing since there isn't as great a separateness between layers of energy as there is with matter.

Now, returning to our basics and our mental and physical requirements of practice: 'Listening' is correctly practice. This is the tool that begin to strip and peel away the armor, dust and gunk that's acting like a filter in seeing our core or who we are underneath it all. It enables us to see the filters we have when interpreting what we see, feel and understand. If you're sitting in a room some night alone turn off the TV, turn off the radio . . . what's going on? Listen & feel what's going on. Most people need to have some form of distraction to

keep their mind away from their spirit, or to keep the mind from knowing what's happening inside. Distraction is the flow of modern society.

Before something happens we already have an assumption about it. Before a job interview or a conversation there is a 'practice' session within our minds as to what to say, act or how to respond. As with partner practice we can conserve energy by just listening and then seeing the appropriate action. How many times has your 'rehearsed' speech ever gone the same when you did have your real conversation with whoever?

We need to 'check-in' with ourselves. We can begin *reading the book* first every morning before getting out of bed and each evening before sleep. Are we comfortable? Relaxed? Centered?

Next we can check in as we have to stop for a traffic light, waiting in line for something, waiting for the microwave to finish etc. This 'checking in' is slowly developing 'listening energy' to ourselves i.e. *reading the book*. At first there's much we'll miss: "Sure I'm fine, things are great" but we just don't notice our shoulders are up around our ears and our back is tense and stiff like a piece of wood. Over a period of time as we practice and peel away the layers and clean off the soot we begin to notice who we really are, our own special core. That's when we can use our practice and training to begin to neutralize the waste of energy and destroyer of health. Noticing our own uniqueness, our own special spirit. This uniqueness also shows us our sameness with others, getting closer to the true human spirit.

Going deeper - now as far as our daily life; it's not enough to just read the book. We need to pay attention to what we read. We need to 'listen' carefully and try to understand what we read in our daily life and use that information to improve our lives. Tackling too much? Over-worked? Spread too thin?

What I'm trying to get at is the fact that we are responsible for our own health and nurturing ourselves. Checking in to see if we're frazzled, stressed, or running at top speed for too long. We all have a certain quote that goes to the tune of: "I need to get away", or "I'd love to be on the beach right now" or "Tomorrow I'll take it easy" or "Tomorrow I'll rest a bit". Relax now! Whatever the tune is many times this is a hope for just a minute, an oasis for rest, quietness, time out. Well, take it now. Tomorrow, next week are too, too far away. Right now we can sit down, tune out, meditate, center. Five minutes is better than nothing! Five minutes has value. It's the LEAST we can do for our health and well being to let the wisdom of our book shine and illuminate our way. Time out: NOW. ATD

A STUDY GUIDE TO PA KUA CHANG GETTING A GOOD START - PART III

by A.T.Dale

THE INNER PALMS

WEEK THREE

study body structure, alignment and connections

This week we'll study the postures and inner structural connections of the inner palms.

LEVEL 1 - after walking the wuji for a while then work on each of the inner palm postures. Hold a position then walk the circle, circle 8 times each posture each direction. As you circle first correct your posture, especially if the inner palm causes you to twist into the circle. Check your shoulder and elbow alignment. Shoulders down, elbows dropped? Then correct your palm position to the requirement of the specific inner palm. Where is the focus of the specific inner palm: tiger's mouth, fingers, lao kung point, knife edge? Correct your hand and arm position to your own body dynamics. For instance: ideally Monkey Offers Fruit should face into the circle with both elbows touching and arms in front of your chest. If this isn't possible or causes difficulty breathing or excess tension then lessen the twist into the circle and work on bringing your elbows together. Then walk and seek to be soft and relaxed within the proper posture. Walk the circle maintaining your center and balance, no wobbling. Circle keeping your hips and shoulders at one level, move smoothly as you circle.

LEVEL 2 - once you can circle smoothly, holding the postures and keep your stepping correct then focus on the particular 'energy' or function of the particular palm position. Is it lifting, poking, pushing, drilling, piercing, separating, binding? Try to maintain the energy as you hold the posture and circle and try to keep this feeling consistent when you change directions. This is what I mean when I say to get the 'feeling' of the posture.

LEVEL 3 - this is assuming you can find the comfortable spot in each posture as you walk the circle and feel the inner connections. Now. . . empty the mind and focus your attention on the curves and the empty (the negative) spaces within each posture, the hollowness of each posture. The emptiness of the wuji as you hold each position and circle. When you find

this type of inner connection each posture is light and easy yet still very strong and stable. The mind and posture are the same. Study the wuji of each position.

NI & SHUN

These are terms given to the spiraling of the arms and hands. Ni would be thumbs down, an inward rotation of the forearms while Shun is the opposite, thumbs out and an outward rotation of the forearms. These two are performed when the arms are either moving forward or back, up or down with movements thus becoming our rise, drill, fall, overturn. In the static holding postures as we walk the inner palms the 'intent' of the Ni or Shu is always there, a slight reaching in the direction/twist without muscling or straining the movement.

'JIN CHANG LI DA' expanding the joints and ligaments increases power. This is a state between just limp and stretching, a comfortable extension termed.

OUR INNER PALMS

1. Pushing Down the Earth / Fierce Tiger Comes Out of Cave

The mind focuses on the Lao Kung point, extending the chi downward. The arms are soft, the tiger's mouth is stretched and there is a slight pressure felt in the empty palms. You want your mind extending to the floor like sonar seeking the ground. The gaze is downward but keep the head top suspended. The arm energy is Ni Chan. Let the mind settle in the tantien. The tiger's mouth should feel round, as do the palm and the inner arms.

2. Hands Floating on Water / Phoenix Raises Wings

The palm and the fingers are extended, slightly stretched. The intent is on the underside of the fingers as if they are brushing across water. The gaze is forward. The arm energy is slightly Ni Chan and the arms should have a sense of spreading forward, downward onto the floor.

3. Lifting Up the Clouds

As the hands and arms spiral upward, the focus is on the finger tips, bai-hui, and ming-men. There should be an extension to the fingers as if you are holding a piece of plywood on your head and supporting it with your finger tips. As you have this upward extension the ming men sinks downward to balance the upward action. The gaze is upward but don't tilt the head. The

arm energy is Shun Chan reaching forward, upward and outward.

4. Single Palm / Phoenix Extends Wing / Green Dragon Extends Claws

"SIT THE WRISTS" is one of our important principles, here is a great place to focus on it. The heel of the hand has the energy focused a bit more than the entire palm, regardless whether we are using the Ox tongue or Dragon palm. The wrists sit and the intent extends from the heel of the hand and knife edge forward while the lower hand spirals around the waist and presses toward the circle. The lower hand's fingers point upward toward the inside arm's elbow. The fingers should point upward like candle flames. Both hands have a gentle shun chan this shun is actually 'guo' wrapping of the arms inward. Sit the wrists and the waist then suspend the head top.

5. Snake Palm

The inside hand spirals to the center with the intent on the finger tips 'reaching' forward (like a snake moving through grass), think of holding a pebble in your palm. It's the outer hand, as always, that keep you turning into the circle. This outer hand has the energy extending from the lao gung along the curve of the circle but there should also be a feeling of extension along the knife edge of the hand traveling down the arm. It's as if you are gently pushing something in front of you as you walk, or shielding your eyes from the sun. The inside hand is shun chan and the outside hand is Ni chan.

6. Bear Palm

The arms twine Ni chan and the intent extends outward from the lao kung to the center of the circle, the fingers point towards one another. The chest is always empty, elbows lower than the wrists. The body seeks to face the center of your circle. Be sure you don't sacrifice the chest circle for turning completely into the circle. There should always be a 'YUAN' hollow, round feeling in the chest in all our movements.

7. Monkey Offers Fruit

Both palms shun chan, with the intent lifting from the lao kung point and the finger tips. At the same time the hands are extending forward and up, away from the body, *OFFERING*. Another focus on this one is stretching the fingers and keeping them parallel to the floor. The elbows, forearms, up to the little fingers should be touching as first priority, then work on twisting your torso to face the center of the circle, then work on the palms extending away from the body into the circle.

8. Piercing Heaven and Earth

Both arms are shun chan and the intent is on the finger tips piercing the heavens and earth. Each hand extends away from the other one up one down, inside

the circle. It's as if your arms are a twisted rubber band being stretched up and down. Your gaze is back, behind you.

9. Flying Dragon Palm / Holding Up the Mountains

The palms are Shun Chan with the focus on the lao kung as if hold tea cups in your palm. Arms are along the circle you are walking, one forward one back trailing the body but be sure not to arch your chest. Your body faces the center of the circle.

10. Lion Palm

Inside palm is shun chan, outside is Ni chan. Somewhat similar to the snake palm; the lion palm has the outside hand above the head and the inner palm focuses on the tiger's mouth instead of the fingertips. The tiger's mouth is stretched on both hands with the intent on the curve between the thumb and forefinger. It's as if you are holding a staff in your hands over head and pointing it toward the center of your circle.

WEEK THREE FOR TAI CHI MEMBERS:

Similar to the Pa Kua postures; study your stances and postures as you arrive at them. Check the structure of each stance, foot to hand . . . feel the connections they should always be there. Hesitate after the posture arrives and first sink, then be sure there isn't any slack in the inner connections, the peng-jin is full and expanded. Hold the posture for a few moments, reflect, connect and align, then move on.

Next take a movement out of the form and repeat it over and over again. Study the individual movement. Your posture and alignment as you perform the movement, study your flow and smoothness. Work at perfecting the individual movement.