

Please tell your friends

BEGINNING CLASSES

Phinney Center Saturday 10-noon

Magnolia Club Thursday 9-11am

(Thurs need 2 or more members to continue)

Saturday 9-9:45 Yang Long form practice at Phinney
Neighborhood Center parking lot on nice days.

For morning sessions bring gloves and a sweater, if
the weather is nice we'll be outside.

ITEMS FOR SALE

Wuji club T-shirt L - \$15.00

Assorted video tapes \$35.00 @

Our Yang Style Tai Chi book \$35.00 *(contains the
o'mei chi kung, short form, partner form)*

Pa Kua Chi Kung Book \$8.00 *(contains the pa-kua 8
storing chi kung and the 8 zhan zhuang chi kung)*

Teaching and Practicing Tai Chi Chuan by Gene
Burnett \$10.00

Assorted Pa Kua books from Joe Crandall.

**KOOTENAY TAI CHI CENTRE
SUMMER CAMPS
20TH ANNIVERSARY!**

TAI CHI CAMP:

August 11-17,

\$360 U.S.

PA KUA CAMP:

\$360.00 U.S.

(\$655 for both weeks)

Kootenay Tai Chi Centre

Box 566

Nelson B.C.

Canada V1L 5R3

Phone/Fax (604)352-3714

SEATTLE SUMMER CAMP

July 22-27th

There will be several instructors throughout
the city offering classes morning to evening at
reasonable rates (\$10 per session paid to the
teacher). If you are teaching, or know a teacher
that would like to participate please give me a
call 283-0055.

SO FAR: Chris Matthews (classes to be
listed later) ATDale - Mon. - Sat. I will be

leading a morning chi kung & tai chi session 8-9:30am, short staff mid-day, pa-kua
inner palm training afternoons, and partner tai chi 6:30-7:30 work evenings.

GENE BURNETT - 7:45-9:00 Gene will be offering "Tai Chi Principles in Action:
solo work, partner work, daily life" a five days series.

SIFU'S CELEBRATION

June 8&9

This event has grown beyond the original idea of a celebration for sifu's book.
Teaming up with the Chinese Cultural Center it is now a two day presentation of
the various aspects of Tai Chi Chuan. In the two days there will be lectures and

demonstrations by top level masters of
tai chi chuan and chi kung. Saturday
night there will be a banquet in sifu's
honor.

FRIDAY DISCONTINUED

The advanced class on Friday will
be merged with the Monday advanced
class.

**RULES FOR BEING
HUMAN**

- ① You will receive a body. You may like it or hate it, but it will be yours for the entire period this time around.
- ② You will learn lessons. You are enrolled in a full-time informal school called life. Each day in this school, you will have the opportunity to learn lessons. You may like the lessons or think of them as irrelevant and stupid.
- ③ There are no mistakes, only lessons. Growth is a process of trial and error, experimentation. The "failed" experiments are as much a part of the process as the experiment that ultimately "works."
- ④ A lesson is repeated until learned. A lesson will be presented to you in various forms until you have learned it. When you have learned it, you can then go on to the next lesson.
- ⑤ Learning lessons does not end. There is no part of life that does not contain its lessons. If you are alive, there are lessons to be learned.
- ⑥ "There" is no better than "here." When your "there" has become a "here" you will simply obtain another "there" that will, again, look better than "here."
- ⑦ Others are merely mirrors of you. You cannot love or hate something about another person unless it reflects to you something you love or hate about yourself.
- ⑧ What you make of your life is up to you. You have all the tools and resources you need. What you do with them is up to you. The choice is yours.
- ⑨ Your answers lie inside you. The answers to life's questions lie inside you. All you need to do is look, listen and trust.
- ⑩ You will forget all this.

Anonymous

Certificates, Ranking and Training

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According to Grandmaster Tchoung, teachers are special. They need to be technically competent, have the ability to teach and be willing to teach. There are high level masters who are not willing to teach, so they would not be considered good teachers. Only those good at imitation can learn from them. On the other hand there are teachers who are not technically competent.

While time does not necessarily correlate to skill, the amount of time spent learning is a factor to gain skill. There are students who became very skilled after two or three years of training, and those who after 20 years have poor skill. In evaluating a teacher ask, 1) was their teacher highly skilled? 2) were they a good student of that teacher? An example is the two teachers of over 13 years who were thrashed by my 2 year student in pushing hands in a regional tournament. Apparently their study was not complete. Learning T'ai-chi is a systematic process and there is a positive relationship of skill and time spent studying in a structured class. Talent is another factor.

We give form certificates when one passes a test on the form. T'ai-chi doesn't use the *kyu-dan* belt ranking that other martial arts use. The white and multi-color belts (KYU RANK) and black belt (Dan) system is a Japanese innovation which goes back to Professor Kano, the founder of Judo. The Chinese systems use a familial arrangement. Instead of colored belts they call each other older brother or older sister, etc., as discussed in the definitions handout. The Japanese prefer the more militaristic ranking system. Though some Chinese kung-fu clubs are now using the Japanese belt ranking method to motivate students.

Our certificates are based on form levels. In *aikido*, *karate* and *judo*, beginners have a white belt. You will get a certificate for each section of the form that you pass in an official testing situation. There are several instructor levels including apprentice instructor and chief instructor. Instructors are expected to understand the meaning of the movements, how do applications and be able to explain the concepts clearly. The chief instructor will have to pass tests on section one through six, san shou (7&8), fast form (9), pushing hands, sword, stick and knife given by Grandmaster Tchoung. The highest level is give by Grandmaster Tchoung Ta-Tchen directly. Five Americans: Dave Harris, Carey Brooks, Don Scott, Harvey Kurland, and Andrew Dale were directly trained and certified by Grandmaster Tchoung, but only Andy and I are currently teaching his t'ai chi chuan.

Most other martial arts work on an assumption that the student will train in class for a minimum number of class hours and gain a level of technical skill in order to take a test for rank. For example in older Aikido testing requirements the lowest rank was 6th kyu (10th kyu for children) white belt. In one system 60 hours would be needed to test for the next "KYU" level which is 5th kyu, others used 6 months and not hours. Six months seemed to be the standard time and anywhere from 40 to 100 hours would be needed to test for the subsequent ranks until brown belt. To qualify the student would have to show they were competent at testing. At 1st kyu Brown belt anywhere from 90 to 200 hours will be needed depending on the association. The next step is 1st Dan or the coveted black belt where an additional 120 to 400 hours are needed or 1 to 2 years. They don't count outside solo training hours. Originally Shodan or 1st degree Black belt was considered an official student, i.e. just beginning to learn as their basics were correct. It was not a big deal, not the elevated position it is today. But, what I want to focus on is the training time. Time is related to learning.

The average aikido or karate student attends three classes a week for one to two hours. That is 3 to 6 hours a week. More dedicated will train 10 to 12 hours per week. So in one quarter it is conceivable have the requisite hours to test for the first ranking, but most take 6 months. At this rate a student could possible get a black belt in 2 to 5 years depending on the association and skill of the student. Most students take several years. In Japan they train every day for one to three hours a day or even more. They also have weekend intensifies that add more hours. So it is not surprising that they can earn a black belt in one or two years. Three different aikido associations use 410, 540 to 1100 hours of classes training or 3 1/2 to 5 years to just qualify to test for a black belt. Then you have to pass the test. But most teachers know when students are ready to test. So what does this mean for t'ai-chi students?

Let us say that the black belt in aikido is equivalent in competence and training to a certificated t'ai-chi instructor; then the hours could be similar. If you attend class only once a week, as most t'ai-chi students do, based on hours and breaks, it would take 8 to 10 years to get to instructor level. That could be why there is an old saying that it takes 10 years to learn t'ai-chi. In aikido or karate once a week would be tough, as the student would be in chronic soreness. But if you attend class twice a week it would take 4 to 5 years. This does not

CERTIFICATES CONTINUED: include outside practice time. Outside practice time is doing homework for keeping up with class. Basically, in t'ai-chi for every hour of class you should practice one to two hours outside of class to allow the concepts to sink in, ideally every day.

In Seattle, we often practiced 3 to 6 hours a day outside of class. When I started in 1970 I trained 5 to 6 hours a day, six days a week. Later my training program was from 3 to 6 hours a day, for about five years, at least five days a week. Official classes with Grandmaster Tchoung were three hours twice a week. Just the classes alone would be considerable, but with the outside practice we accumulated over 1000 hours per year of various types of training. We were doing 300 t'ai-chi class hours per year and another 300 hours a year with other classes. On the other hand, there probably is a maximum practice time that is effective. There is diminished returns for excessive amounts of training. Too much can lead to physical problems and burn out. This is well known in exercise science.

There is a specificity of training. For example, people who get good at pushing hands spend a lot of hours on just doing pushing hands. Don't expect to be good at pushing hands without lots of practice. Some may have a natural talent for it. But the ones that get good spend many hours just pushing hands. Hours of training is what leads to learning. As the old saying goes, "Ten Thousand Repetitions to learn a technique." There are teachers who can barely do pushing hands as they don't practice it, never learned it or don't care about it.

How many hours a week do you practice? Enough to keep your momentum going or just enough to follow along? If you can't remember what you did last week, that means you are not spending enough time doing homework. If you practice 6 hours a week at home and attend two classes a week with no breaks, you can expect to learn the whole system in 3 to 5 years at the basic instructor level. But more important, the daily exercise is what helps keep you healthy. As Grandmaster Tchoung told us, "Every morning every night, 20 minutes."

Harvey Kurland received his Masters Degree from the University of Washington and has dedicated himself to public health issues for the last 30 years. He has degrees in public health education and exercise physiology. He is a certificated chief instructor of t'ai-chi ch'uan by Grandmaster Tchoung Ta-tchen and teaches at the University of California at Riverside and Loma Linda University. He also holds certification from the American College of Sports Medicine and International Sports Sciences Association.

THE STUDY, LEARNING AND PRACTICE OF TAI CHI CHUAN - Part I

BY ATDale

All our instincts are wrong when it comes to learning and practicing the internal arts. For instance we know in order to succeed we must practice hard, put lots of effort into our practice, sweat bullets: no effort = no gain. WRONG

What we need is perseverance, mindfulness, and consistency but that doesn't mean putting lots of effort i.e. straining. In order to advance and reach the deeper levels we need to actually play ~~seriously~~ joyfully with the alertness of a child and permit the tai chi to unfold. The harder we try the further we get from our goal. Actually that's another problem:

we have goals when the only goal while learning is to be here now, listen, soften and feel.

"But I want to learn the long form", "but I want to learn the sword", "but I want I want I want...." There are actually various levels of focus to maximize your wandering into the depths of tai chi. These levels aren't levels of advancement but levels of understanding and patience.

BEGINNERS: The harder you try the less you'll understand it. The greater effort the less results and understanding. You must forget

something many times before you'll ever remember it. This is actually wrong since we're not learning but rediscovering. All these postures and exercises are to un-do our un-natural habits of movement. Habits of moving unsafely, off-balance, unhealthfully. The grace you notice when watching a long time practitioner isn't a learned thing it's an unlearning. Just like a piece of sculpture, it's what was taken away that results in the work of art.

The first secret is to be comfortable in all actions, movements and standing. Always move within a circle of comfort and easiness (this applies to your life as well). In order for this to begin to happen you need to 'listen' and 'feel' continuously. You'll begin to discover what or where you're not comfortable (that you've always accepted before) and then adjust your postures, stance or movement. NO STRAINING. . . EVER!

Now while you're in class, following and learning the various forms PLAY. Play with the movements and postures don't try to memorize, capture or study them. The movements are to help the mind listen to the inner connections of the body. How the muscles and ligaments connect, how the mind can find the blockages and melt them away. As you begin to play and feel you'll discover the inner connection and smoothness that gives you a feeling of relaxedness and well-being. This is the tai chi, not the movements. The ~~goal~~ idea is to keep this smoothness continuing from one posture into the next, move without disturbing it. If you can't do this then BIG DEAL, you have a life time to work on it. Follow the class and the teacher for the class time.

"But how do I remember the movements?" The secret is permitting your body to remember the movement not your mind. In your individual practice always start at the beginning of the form. Do the opening and rest. If you remember the next movement then great, if not just keep repeating the opening. After next class or perhaps next month you'll begin to understand how to get into the next posture. Then start over. . . start at the beginning and move through the form until you hit a road block then give up, don't force it just start over. The benefit is from the repetition of the movements you already know, not moving into the new postures you've just learned. Doing the movements isn't tai chi, relaxing and playing with the movements, feeling them is. If after a period of time you still can't remember the choreography then make up your own. Try to incorporate the principles from what you know of tai chi and move. Just move.

Learn a little, forget a lot.

Harold Naka

A STUDY GUIDE TO PA KUA CHANG

by ATDale

WEEK SEVEN:

greatness comes from the details

Any great piece of art or action comes from the details, the smooth transitions and keeping the quality high even in the smallest part or action. Athletes don't make it to the olympics by being casual in thier practice. This is a fact, not a truth. We may not want to be Olympic metal winners but if our eye seek far down the road of our art we need to pay attention to the links in the chain. The more attention given to any task, work, practice, or study the higher the result, the better the quality, the stronger the piece, the more beauty.

The one important factor in all our studies is diligence and perserverance. We don't need 'natural' talent or a specific body type. Sincerity and a mature approach to our practice and art is all that's necessary. Skill doesn't just pop up one day, it doesn't just appear, it's slowly cultivated over a *long* and *continuous* period of time.

Over the last few months I've covered the different levels of practice from the ground up. These are the pillars that support the Pa Kua body and the Pa Kua skill. We don't have to be fanatical about our practice but we do need to be mindful and pay attention to each part as we practice. Be alert. One of my teacher's said that if you're mind isn't on your practice then don't practice, you're wasting good time. I don't completely agree with this since any practice gives physical benefits of health. But inorder to get more out of our practice we need to practice each single movement and listen, feel, research the posture, the flow, the centering, the energy, the emptiness, the fullness.

Too many times as people practice they practice the movements but ignore the core that the movement should be an expression of. Each individual practice should become a spiritual moment. You are researching your centering, your mind, body, spirit harmonization. This is your meditation.

The child in us pops up wanting to just get through the forms, show how powerful we are (if others are watching us do the form), seeking to feel our strength as we practice the functions of

the forms, wanting to look sharp (impressive) as we pracice. Wanting to show how well we know this form. It doesn't matter except to the child within us. What matters is the calmness, centerdness and energy flow we experience when our practice is correct.

If time and discipline is unlimited then I'd suggest the following schedule for practice **EACH DAY**:

zhan zhuang - 1/2 hr
walking wuji circle - 1/2 hr
inner palms - 1/2 hr
single palm - 1/2 hr
8 changes - 1/2 hr
tuishou - 1/2 hr
applications - 1/2 hr
free hands - 1/2 hr

Since we all have lives and things to accomplish each day this may not be possible but it can be staggered throughout the week in different porportions:

Now it's up to each of us to decide what we want from the

art, or where we want to take the art to. Health, spiritual harmony centerdenss, chi cultivation, self-defense, or martial arts. Then we need to keep that focus in our minds so our 'intent' will lead us in that direction. Have you heard Intent leads energy????

Anyway, it's unrealistic to think that we'll have a strict practice schedule to be followed each day for the next few years. In summer you may be inspired to practice more, be outside amongst a wooded area as a special retreat to practice. Life may get a bit hectic at times so perhaps all we can practice is 5 minutes of wuji circling, we may

find ourselves one month primarily working on foot patterns or one change. It doesn't matter really except that it's done with 'intent' sincerity and attention. Five minutes of mindful practice is worth more than an hour of posing in forms.

DAY ONE

zhan zhuang - 20 breaths
walking wuji - 8 circles each direction
inner palms - 8 circles each direction

DAY TWO

zhan zhuang - 20 breaths
walking wuji - 8 circles each direction
inner palms - 8, 4, 2, 1 stepping pattern
single palm change 15 minutes

DAY THREE

zhan zhuang - 20 breaths
walking wuji - 8 circles each direction
inner palms - 8, 4, 2, 1 stepping pattern
8 changes - 1/2 hr

DAY FOUR

zhan zhuang - 20 breaths
walking wuji - 8 circles each direction
inner palms - 8 circles each direction
misc. Stepping patterns and drills

DAY FIVE

zhan zhuang - 20 breaths
walking wuji - 8 circles each direction
inner palms - 8, 4, 2, 1 stepping pattern
tuishou 1/2 hr

DAY SIX

zhan zhuang - 20 breaths
walking wuji - 8 circles each direction
8 changes
applications

DAY SEVEN

zhan zhuang - 20 breaths
walking wuji - 8 circles each direction
8 changes
free hands