



# NEWSLETTER

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## WINTER 1997 SCHEDULE

SATURDAYS	LIANG YI GROUP 9-9:45 BASICS/BEGINNING	Liang Yi 9-9:45 Pa Kua storing chi kung 10:00-11:00 Yang T'ai-chi or Pa Kua 11:00-noon
MONDAYS	Private Session	Free practice 7-7:30 Rou Shou 7:30-8 San Shou 8-9 Free 9-9:30
TUESDAYS	YANG T'AI-CHI GROUP	Chi Kung/Zhan Zhuang 7-7:45 16 Tui Shou movements 7:45-8:30 Sections 2&3 -9:00 Free 9-9:30
WEDNESDAY am	YANG T'AI-CHI GROUP	O'mei Chi Kung 9-9:30 Tui Shou 9:30-10:00 Short Form 10-10:45 Sword 10:45-11:00
WEDNESDAY pm	CHEN T'AI-CHI GROUP	Chan Ssu Gung 7-7:30 Tui Shou 7:30-8:00 48 Form 8-8:30 Pao Chiu 8:30-9 Free 9-9:30
THURSDAY	PA KUA GROUP	Zhan Zhuang 7-7:30 Circling 7:30-8 24 Animals 8-8:30 Linking Forms 8:30-9 Free 9-9:30

### 1997 COMING ATTRACTIONS:

*This spring:* T'ai-chi Cane Saturdays 9-9:45 then Aiki Jo  
*March:* T'ien Shan Chi Kung Saturdays 10-11

### IS IT TIME TO MAKE A COMMITMENT?

The custom of making a New Year's resolution should perhaps include your practice. Now for those of you who have made the art part of your life lets put a focus on practice for this year. You may decide to perfect and polish a particular form, or what about taking one of the principles and make it a focus in your practice and daily life for the next year? Don't be too foolish like trying to make a commitment to practice everyday we all know life gets in the way of that one every now and then but . . . when you do practice and train have a goal.

### HALF WAY THROUGH

Sections 7&8, also known as the T'ai-chi Sanshou (separate hands), are solo forms that become a partner applications study form. It's perhaps the most difficult form in T'ai-chi since aside from knowing your own movements you have to coordinate them with what your partner is doing. In addition to just the form there are still all the basic principles of the art: rooted, suspend the head-top, soft, relaxed, fluid, listening, etc. Then the forms are done not just slowly but also fast with change in speed and tempo trying to confuse and disorient your partner. One assumption is that these two forms grew out of the Chen Ar Lu (Pao Chui) from Yang Lu Chan (this was written in an article many

years ago by Yang Shau Chung) The following have made it through sections 7 and the partnering of it:

Russ Fish, Derryl Willis, Deborah Goldhaft, Barbara Osinski,

### YOU WEB PEOPLE

To save expenses (for both of us), time and effort, those who are on the web will be able to download the newsletter instead of me mailing it to you. Currently the newsletter has been in a 'frame' so when you've selected print nothing would print. I will be sending out notices and the URL of the current newsletter each month once it's posted.

### THIS NEWSLETTER

The initial goal of this newsletter was to keep the club updated to changes in class schedule, new classes, and for material to think about relating to improving practice. This newsletter has grown slowly from one page to four pages. With this growth I hope you have seen the quality and content deepen.

I more than welcome article for future issues from students and other

instructors. Unfortunately I've had to make some difficult decisions as to what's included and what's not. Some articles have had to wait an issue or two before printing but I'm grateful for the help. If you're interested in submitting an article for the newsletter here are a few of my guidelines:

Articles only pertaining to improving the quality of our practice and life. No our style vs .... Please, all styles are 'special'.

Due to uncertainty of publication dates, lack of communications etc. I've omitted advertisements for non-club related instructors, classes and workshops. An exception to this is if I know of a visiting instructor who will be here for a limited time, and I have enough forewarning.

I will not edit your documents. I may change fonts and adjust spacing but I will not change any text without permission. Please if possible submit in text or word for windows or e-mail so I don't have to retype the document.

THANKS TO ALL SUPPORTERS

# Ch'eng T'ing Hua

## Pa Kua Chang

As with all art forms there are many views as to what's real, true, etc. Also many views as to practice. My teachers have always emphasized the view that for Pa Kua or T'ai-chi to be 'true' you're art and practice must include: Chi Kung, Push Hands, Applications and Weaponry. There is no such thing as T'ai-chi only for health (as far as tradition). All these arts evolved as martial arts and were used to defend villages, kingdoms and individuals. Now, knowing the applications doesn't mean you have to learn to fight, or want to fight. The logic is so you know why your hands and feet are moving in a certain direction (intent leads energy, thinking about pushing is different than merely moving your hand forward). Also, this puts your mind in that direction accessing the 'energies' required for that movement to happen correctly. Looking at a picture of a peach isn't the same as visualizing that you're touching, smelling and tasting the juicy, sweet peach!

Now comes the dilemma: does this mean if you just need some relaxation method, or exercise you aren't sincere enough to study the art? Does this mean you shouldn't have access to the wisdom brought about by it's general practice? Does this mean the arts will be eventually watered down beyond their value? WHO CARES?

First, it's your life and your study. Seek to improve the quality of your life first, improve your health and move in a positive direction. Then worry about the above questions.

### HISTORY

The earliest records of Pa Kua Chang taught are from around 1870 when Tung Hai Chuan began teaching. Some say he was the creator of the system, others that he had learned the art from a Taoist. All that can be verified is that he was a martial artist that was a member of the *Quan Zhen* (Complete Truth school of Taoism evolved in the 8<sup>th</sup> century). This sect was part of the *Lung Men* (Dragon Door) sect of Taoism. The Lung Men sect comes from a branch of Taoism that emphasizes keeping the body healthy is as important as meditation. Many chi kung methods come from this branch. A unique practice of the Lung Men sect was their morning and evening circle walking meditation. One belief is that Tung Hai Chuan evolved the art of Pa Kua through creatively combining his Lung Men training and martial arts knowledge. (For deeper research into the origins see: Pa Kua Chang Journal, Vol. 3, No.1).

Tung Hai Chuan didn't teach many his art and among those who studied with him many were body guards and escorts, men who already had martial arts background. Most studied just to become better fighters. There are two of his students that are responsible for spreading much of his teachings and who assisted him in teaching: Yin Fu and Ch'eng T'ing Hua. Master Tung's art was continuously evolving and he taught all students according to their nature and talents. This leads to many flavors of Pa Kua out there;

but there is still a uniqueness to the practice and training of Pa Kua that is very noticeable even among the different flavors.

### CH'ENG T'ING HUA

Ch'eng T'ing Hua studied in the latter part of master Tung's life and was in charge of teaching for Tung the last few years. Ch'eng had an interest in the entire art; martial, philosophical, spiritual, health. He had an appetite to learn from many, share ideas, research and to teach. Ch'eng and Yin Fu are responsible for much of the Pa Kua that has been passed to the present generations. Ch'eng had friends in the T'ai-chi and Hsing I worlds and would exchange practice and training ideas. Throughout his life Ch'eng T'ing Hua expanded much of the art. One addition is the Pa Kua Wu Xin San Tsai San Pan form (5 elements, 3 powers, 3 levels) a form combining Pa Kua and Hsing I.

### BRANCHES OF CH'ENG T'ING HUA

Master Ch'eng taught many and among them several branches or 'flavors' of his Pa Kua method developed. Here are a few:

*SIX HARMONIES* - this method comes from the lineage of Ch'eng's eldest son (Ch'eng Yu Lung). It has a more fluid, T'ai-chi like quality to it. It also emphasizes great flexibility.

*NINE PALACES* - this method comes from his top student Liu Bin (a Taoist scholar). The forms are very elaborate in this system and there is a definite influence of Hsing I displayed.

*CH'ENG VILLAGE* - this method comes from Ch'eng middle son. Ch'eng would periodically go back to his home village and teach. Upon his death his middle son returned home and taught. This method is similar to the Six Harmonies yet doesn't use flexibility as much as quickness in practice.

*OTHER:* Sun Lu Tang, Gao Yi Sheng and others studied from Ch'eng and through their own creativity and understanding have their own 'flavors' of Pa Kua though definitely Ch'eng style.

### FORMS OF PA KUA CHANG

As you encounter Pa Kua practitioners there are many, many forms what have evolved out of the many flavors. 8 animal palms, 8 inner palms, 8 changes, 24 striking palms, 24 animals, swimming body form, dragon form, the list goes on. All styles have a common denominator of 4 things:

WALKING THE CIRCLE

SINGLE PALM CHANGE

DOUBLE PALM CHANGE  
FLOWING PALM CHANGE

In actual fact the other forms really don't matter but these four training methods are the core of the art and where all students should put their effort into practice, study and research. All else is just frosting on the cake.

## PRACTICE & STUDY

A mistaken assumption as with T'ai-chi or Hsing I is that the forms are what is the practice of the art, or the stylization of the techniques and movements.

Pa Kua like it's sister arts of T'ai-chi and Hsing I are based upon the training of mind/body/spirit, more correctly working on the harmonization of mind/body/spirit. The forms can be practiced for years without much progress if the mind isn't used to study the body in movement, using the 'I'(intent) to move the body and avoiding brute strength and muscle to move

the body or make the applications work. Training in the internal arts is to relax the body and train it so all the muscles move in complete harmony like all the instruments in symphony. Developing the body so it moves like a snake, not an oxen. Next is having the mind 100% present 'in' the body, feeling, listening and moving the body. Developing a sense of center so the body becomes like a tire, properly inflated moving in perfect balance around the hub. Then moving and practicing with 'spirit', liveliness.

Have the spirit of an eagle and you will move like an eagle.

### 6 METHODS OF PA KUA

Move like the dragon. Turn like the monkey. Change forms like an eagle.. Treading mud step. Scissors legs. Stable as a sedan chair.

ATD

**T**he most unique part of T'ai-chi ch'uan practice is the emphasis on relaxation. What we are doing is working on relaxing as we move. This is harder to do than static relaxation. Static relaxation is a good place to start.

A good basic exercise is to lie on the floor and go through your body from head to toe and let go of tension. In yoga they call this the corpse pose. It is also a ch'i kung exercise some people call *Fang Sung Kung*. You do the floor exercise with your mouth relaxed and the tongue at the roof of the mouth. Breath through the nose with the diaphragm. Your eyes are closed. Breathing should be smooth and soundless, no straining. As you exhale tell yourself to relax and let go. This is a simple exercise that has similar health benefits to meditation. Ideal length of time to do this would be 20 minutes. Relaxing in a supine position is easy, the hard part is staying awake.

The next level up from *Fan Sung Kung* are seated and standing meditation exercises. Simple standing posture such as the T'ai-chi stance or wu-chi stance can be used. I covered these in my previous articles in the December 1995 and January 1996 IWA issues.

Some psychologists believe that holding ones breath and tensing muscles are defense mechanisms. It is part of the primitive startle and fright response. The tension numbs you out. This tension or constant numbing of the body is a physical way to get away from feelings and feeling. An extension of this is the use of drugs and alcohol. Relaxing and breathing is a way to let go and get back in touch with what is going on in your body and mind for those who need more emotional work. It can be

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effectively combined with counseling. Our 24 ch'i kung drill combines breathing and relaxing with simple stretches, making it a good technique for beginners. The T'ai-chi form acts in another way to learn to relax by using more complex movements. The form has many nuances. Keep the

shoulders down, relax the hands, turn the waist and keep the head up. The real secret to T'ai-chi Chuan (other than practice) is to relax, relax, relax, completely relax, let go of tension but do not collapse. Let all the tension melt away and go down to your feet. This is called sinking into your feet, tension goes into the ground. But to relax while doing T'ai-chi does not mean being a zombie. There is spirit and awareness in this relaxed state. The hardest thing is to let go of tension, so hard that many wushu T'ai-chi teachers are telling their students to use force. Is this just a cover up for their own inability to relax? Or is it the false sensation of energy that tension gives? Either way, if we consult the classics using force is an error, we need to relax.

Pushing hands practice gives the next level of relaxation training, where you are desensitized to being pushed by another person. By relaxing and breathing with the exercises you will find you get more relaxed and centered.

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 Art of Living

The master in the art of living makes little distinction between his work and his play, his labor and his leisure, his mind and his body, his education and his recreation, his love and his religion.

He hardly knows which is which.

He simply pursues his vision of excellence in whatever he does, leaving others to decide whether he is working or playing.

To him he is always doing both.

Zen Buddhist text

SUMMER WORKSHOP

July 25,26,27,28<sup>th</sup>

Washington Park, Anacortes

details in February newsletter

