



XIN QI SHEN DOJO

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 dojo@wuji.com www.wuji.com subscription \$10yr



2000

Tian Shan Qi Gong

class starts Feb

INSTRUCTOR CERTIFICATION
 Congratulations to Cedar Acosta for being the first member of the club to reach teaching certification in Chen Taiji Quan. What this

- means is knowing:
- ▶ Chen Chan Ssu Gong
 - ▶ Chen Stick & Sphere
 - ▶ Chen 48 Form
 - ▶ Chen Sword
 - ▶ Chen Saber
 - ▶ Chen Er Lu / Pao Chui
 - ▶ Tuishou

Certification is issued when a student shows consistency in the forms, an understanding of the applications, dedication to practice, knowledge of body mechanics, and an understanding of the Taiji Classics.

If the world hasn't come to an end, things to plan for:

MARCH

- ▶ Monkey Festival—
Bainbridge Island, WA

AUGUST

- ▶ Bandon Retreat, Bandon
OR
- ▶ Kootenay Tai Chi Retreat,
Nelson B.C.

SEPTEMBER

- ▶ Energetic Retreat, Crescent



LET'S IMPROVE THE CONDITION OF SOCIETY

- Support excellence
- Generate kindness
- Encourage quality
- Seek simplicity

When service is good, when someone is excellent at their job; just don't expect it, let them know you appreciate their skills, thoughtfulness, and competence. Too many people just voice when things are lousy or poor. Show appreciation.

Smile more, generate kindness. If you look around the majority of people walk around in their own world preoccupied. A simple smile and a hi can change the energy for the moment.

Support quality in service and goods. It may cost a little extra but real quality is worth it.

Seek simplicity: do less, enjoy more.

Let's change things

Remember: intent leads energy. Our thoughts can put momentum behind energy and movement, be careful to keep things healthy and positive.

INSTRUCTORS are you learning?

Teachers, when was the last time you took a class? (I don't mean in your specific art or field.) When was the last time you studied something new or different? An art that you weren't accomplished in? More questions: Do you teach the same in all classes? Is your teaching the same as it was last year?

In the time I've been back skating I've developed a renewed sympathy for beginners and new students (continuing students are different). The approach of a coach can either make things easier or just complicate things even more. Our learning abilities all differ, our minds deal with information in many different ways (sometimes different each day) and the ideal teacher is the one that's able to put it in a way you understand and at the proper pace. Teaching is an art in itself, changing, adapting, and growing.

TEACHING:

- ▶ Knowing how much to teach at one time
- ▶ Knowing the right time to correct a student
- ▶ Knowing how much to correct
- ▶ Knowing what depth to teach
- ▶ Knowing how to avoid confusion, simplify to make learning easier
- ▶ Repetition of basics

HOW MUCH TO TEACH

As a beginner it's very easy to get overwhelmed and confused. It's impossible for a beginner not to be confused in the first few sessions since it'll all be new. I usually tell a new class not to try to learn or memorize, just copy and think of 'playing' instead of learning. After a few weeks things start getting clearer. Consistency with the flow of the class and a simple progression in movements helps make it easier for beginners. Consistency in class warm-ups and curriculum is one way of making it easier for students. It also gives the beginners a guide for their own practice sessions.

Students need small steps at first since all the steps are new. One thing at a time, piece by piece.

RIGHT TIME TO CORRECT

Things need to bake, it takes time to bake. If a student doesn't have an idea of the general movement, giving them detailed corrections can make the learning very depressing. Trying to understand a general idea of what to do when you're getting instruction on left hand

coordinates with your right leg, then bend your left leg @#\$% just messes things up. In my teaching philosophy I first try to get the student into the general movement, once this is understood then I add details.

HOW MUCH TO CORRECT

With beginners I only focus on the most obvious correction. I try to do one correction so the student only has only one thing to perfect. Next time I'll focus on something else. Too much information (TMI) being given three or more things to think about and correct during a lesson usually has a bad effect, especially for me as a student. In my own studies when I get TMI I find myself unable to do even one of the corrections. With advanced students I may give several corrections, or try to make them think for and correct themselves. Also I expect more with continuing and advanced students, I believe they need to be pushed to become less reliant on the instructor and more on their own intuition and understanding. Master Tchoung's favorite saying to the advanced students was: "You yourself, what do you think?"

DEPTH OF TEACHING

If a student is new and just learning the basic movements I'll stick with movement and flow. Breathing, focus, intent, applications and qi come later. Once in a while the application helps to give an understanding of the movements and make it easier to learn but I only touch upon it. Remember, for a beginner it's sometimes too easy to be overwhelmed and frustrated.

SIMPLIFICATION

Breaking down a movement into its components sometimes helps get the movement across, sometimes just complicates things. It all depends on the student but simplification is the place to start. Part of my philosophy in teaching is it's OK and sometimes important to practice 'sloppy' in order to understand the correct method. This raises a few eyebrows from my teachers. I've found starting with a sloppy movement and then slowly bringing it into focus makes the movement understandable and easier to learn. It also shows students how to do the movements relaxed.

REPETITION

Repetition in teaching as well as practice can't be emphasized enough. Principles need to be drilled in!

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However remember: You'll forget new things three times before you remember them, and you need to repeat something 1,000 times before you get it, and the first 100 times don't count!

WE ALL LEARN DIFFERENTLY

Personally imagery works well for me when learning a movement. As I'm working on a movement the image of an eagle or crane automatically give me an open extended posture whereas a monkey or snake closes and softens my form. Other's need specific details about left & right foot, left & right hand there. The method isn't important, results and what works are. Unfortunately most classes are group and classes sessions and the teaching methods are compromised due to one teacher and lots of students. I've also found that during individual sessions my teaching method changes depending upon the individuals temperament. The more hurried the student is in learning the next movement the quality of the teaching goes down.

TEACHERS:

The Technical teacher— parts and components. From the sharp to the correct.

The Artistic teacher—go with the flow. From the fuzzy to the sharp to the correct.

Did you have a coach or teacher that was better than all the rest? Why was this one different from the rest? What was unique about their teaching style? Or were you able to connect to this teacher better than the others. Did this teacher treat you different from other teachers? As is true with anything, if we enjoy what we're doing we learn faster and easier.

When it comes to learning movement; whether in sports, dance, or martial arts the process is all the same. I find it useful in addition to taking lessons in another art, to watch others teaching. Anything to expand my approach to getting the art across.

STUDENTS:

"I'm confused, I just don't get it."
"I can't!"
"I'll try."
"I'll get it sooner or later."
"I'll never get it."
"I feel so dumb."
"I know that!"
"Wow that's great . . ."

As there are different methods of teaching there are also different and varied ways in learning and in the way



different people learn. The trick in all these arts is to find a teacher whose teaching is compatible with the way we learn or is able to modify the teaching method to the variety of students within the class. It's important to try to figure out how we learn so we're also able to translate what is being taught into our own learning method.

It's also important after the first couple of months for a student to decide if they're willing to put in the effort required to continue learning and progressing. As you continue on each month, getting deeper into the art and form, there needs to be a responsibility to do your homework in order to keep up and honor the instructions you've been given so far.

TECHNICAL VS FLOW TEACHING

As I've been back skating the last 3 years I've worked with coaches that represent the spectrums of teaching. For me though the technique and mechanical is important however, if I get more than just a little instruction it confuses the daylights out of me and I get a mental block. Too many things to think about. At times like this I've found it best to change topics and move into something different since it just gets worse, more complex and harder to learn. My learning method is mostly with imagery, flow and following. If I'm shown a movement then given 'general' instructions it's easier for me to start getting it. As I get instruction for a particular movement sometimes I have to translate it into my way of learning.

If a coach says, "I want you to extend your arms and free leg in the process of this jump" I usually think 'soaring eagle', and it happens, extend wingtip to wingtip.

LET IT BAKE

Much of the time when students are given corrections it needs to 'bake'. I've had teachers that once they've given you the correction they expect it 'now' and then start adding the next step and more and more and more ****#\$%@ instead of letting it sink in. GET REAL!

OR

In a few instances where I'm able to do the corrections immediately they add more and more messing things up instead of letting well enough alone.

AND MORE QUESTIONS

What and why are we teaching? It is to enable others to explore and benefit from these arts? Or it is to say "I'm a teacher of . . ."

Andy

Club Schedule Winter 2000

Monday	7:15-9:00 Aikido 5 kyu and up
Tuesday	6:30—7 pm Emei qi gong 7-8:30 Yang sections 3&4 8:30-9 Advanced
Wednesday	9-11 am Yang Taiji (Xin Qi Shen Dojo) 7:00-8:30 Tian Shan Qigong (beginning February)
Thursday	6:30-7:00 Bagua Qi Gong 7—8 Bagua Training 8-9 Advanced
Saturday	9-10 Bagua Basics 10-11 Yang Taiji Basics 11-noon Chen group 12-12:30 Saber, Dragon

Letter from a traveling club member:

Hi Andy...

Thanks for the email. I love checking in with everyone at home. This morning we woke early and went to Lampini Park. I was told that they practice tai chi there each morning. I had no idea what to expect. We woke before the sun rose and took a taxi over. What a sight to behold. By 6am, it was like a festival. Food vendors. Groups setting up picnic with tea pots. And food cooking on portable stoves. And all over the park, people doing tai chi. I was amazed. Most were older. And I just stood in awe as I watched people do what you had taught us. Many of the moves I recognized. But some were different. It was fascinating. People were in groups of 10 or 20 or just one. There were so many to watch. I tried to find a quiet corner, private and do some moves, But found myself so nervous. It's exactly as you said...Like being on a board 100 ft in the air. Oh well. It was odd and exciting all at once. I saw a few groups doing sword. It was easy to pick out the teacher in each group. The moves were beautiful. I walked away being impressed with the sense of commitment I

observed. I have no doubt they are there everyday before first light.

I noticed one group had these cool collapsible swords. I looked to buy one but got lost in the insanity of Bangkok's China town. That's a long story in itself. Oh well.

Anyway, wanted to pass this story onto you. I miss you all.

Love Donna

Club News

NEWSLETTER MAILINGS

This NL is mailed out to those attending club related workshops (for the last year). Those wishing to stay on the snail mail list after that a mailing fee of \$10 U.S. (\$15 Canadian) will keep you on for a year. If you have email there is no cost for updates of the online version which is usually online a week prior to mailing. Be sure I have your current email address and request to be put on the newsletter list.

www.wuji.com

If you have access to a computer you have available many club resources. Most of the past newsletters are online, there are article and essays on practice and information about my teachers and more.

dojo@wuji.com

Is the official club email address.

NEW BEGINNING CLASSES JANUARY 8th

I will be starting a brand new beginning group for Yang Taiji and Bagua, if you know someone interested in classes this is the best month to start.. The Chen Taiji class is closed for the year. Saturday continuing members will be expected to arrive early to warm-up then proceed to work on their forms. The second 1/2 of each session will be focused on the continuing members.

TIAN SHAN QI GONG

Weds 7-8:30 pm
Starting Feb 2nd
At: Xin Qi Shen Dojo in Magnolia.

MORE QI GONG

The evening hours are expanding starting January.

- ▶ Tues: 6:30-7:00—O'Mei Qi Gong
- ▶ Thur: 6:30-7:00—Bagua Qi Gong

These sessions are practice or

follow along, non-instructional. They are open to all club members paying minimum monthly dues \$60. Sessions are at the Xin Qi Shen Dojo. If they become popular I will be expanding the times from 6-7.

INSTRUCTOR CERTIFICATION

Cedar Acosta—Chen Taiji Quan

FORM COMPLETION

Yang Taiji Section #9 (Jio Lu)
Deborah Goldhaft

Bagua Qi Gong & Inner Palms

Paul Cooper
Michael Hall
Anne Walker
Jim Doulong
Chris Laliberte
Rikki Scandora
Belinda Frazier
Tom Campbell
Brian Baxter
Dave Chaus
Ruth Pattison

Russ Fish
Ruth Simondale
Ken Astrein
Mike Ullman

AIKIDO KYU EXAMS FEB

Know irimi/tenkan variations, know the proper names of each waza, don't worry about Jo or Bokken requirements this time. Mike will be testing Shodan.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

Spring & Summer 2000—
▶ Saturday Jo classes
▶ Chen sword (open to those familiar with Chen 48 form)