



# XIN QI SHEN DOJO

8316 8th Ave NW  
Seattle, WA 98117  
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## UP AND GOING

Quite a production, but the new dojo is finally up and going. Thanks to all club members and supportive friends of the dojo. The open house was a huge success. With over 50 people visiting it was more of a workout and workshop than merely an open house. Thanks to Dave Harris and Bob Iden for encouraging tushou and roushou practice. With only minor things to be done now, it's time to schedule events for the future.

Looking to the future, we have special sessions and workshops by Master Gao Fu, and a series of workshops by John Camp on the Si Xiang (a Fu Family form combining Taiji, Bagua, and Xing I), Dave Harris will be offering basics on freehand drills, Bob Iden is already offering push hands workshops.

One of the events I will be trying to put together is group workshops. In the next two months I plan on trying to arrange a Saturday workshop event featuring Mr. Yueng, Gao Fu, Michael Gillman, Kim Ivy, and myself presenting various Qi Gong practices and outlooks. Toward spring I hope to do a similar event with Tuishou and another on Applications.

Mike Hall has already put the dojo free time to use by committing to open the dojo the second Friday of each month for tuishou and practice 7-9pm.

If you have access to the web check the workshop page for updates and corrections. If there is a cancellation of a workshop it will be posted ASAP. This should encourage you to pre-register for workshops so the organizer has your phone # just in case of changes. Do not assume you can just show up.

*Andy*

## FALL DOJO WORKSHOPS

### Bob Iden Push Hands Series:

Oct. 29, Nov. 12 & Dec 3rd \$99.00  
Sundays 1:00 - 4:00 pm  
Contact Bob: 425-317-8658

### Xing-I Pao Quan

November 18th, 11:30 - 1:00pm \$20.00  
Contact Andy: [dojo@wuji.com](mailto:dojo@wuji.com)  
or (206)283-0055

### Master Gao Fu Chen 48 Form corrections

December 9th, 11-12:30 \$20.00  
Contact Andy

### Xing-I Zuan Quan

December 16th, 11:30 - 1:00pm \$20.00  
Contact Andy: [dojo@wuji.com](mailto:dojo@wuji.com)  
or (206)283-0055

PRE-REGISTER!

### WINTER INFORMATION

Open or closed? If for some reason we have snow or very bad weather . .

You can call the dojo # 283-0055 and I should have a message as to cancellations. Or, you can check the web at [www.wuji.com/info.htm](http://www.wuji.com/info.htm) or give me a call at 234-6604.

### 2nd FRIDAYS

Taiji Mike (Mike Hall) is opening the dojo for *club members only* to practice on the second Friday of each month. In particular it's so the push hands group can get together for more practice.

### PARKING AT DOJO

During daytime classes please be sure to park across the street or around the corner. Two of our neighbors require easy access for customers, hence the limitation on parking in front of the dojo.

### DOJO CLOSED

Nov 23rd - Thanksgiving day  
Dec. 24th - Jan. 1st

### CLUB SHIRTS AVAILABLE

Blue & Maroon  
T-shirts \$15  
Sweat Shirts \$25

### SCHEDULE CHANGES

The minor changes are:  
Monday Aikido 7-8, 8-9  
Friday Jo - 1st Friday only

### WHAT TO EXPECT

Aikido group:  
8 basics & Bokken this fall  
Kaeshi waza & Jo winter  
Chen Taiji continuing group:  
Chen 48 this winter  
Chen sword next summer  
Chen Pao Chui fall  
Yang Taiji continuing group:  
Tuishou & Da Lu winter  
Yang Sword next summer  
7&8 next fall  
Bagua continuing group:  
8 mother palms this fall  
Xing I Bagua this winter  
Bagua Staff next summer



Master  
Guo Lien Ying

# ARE MARTIAL ARTS ENNOBLING?

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"For lack of wood a fire goes out, And without a querulous man contention is stilled. Charcoal for embers and wood for a fire, And a contentious man for kindling strife." Proverbs 26:20-21

Got your attention? I know this is controversial. There are claims that martial art training makes one a better person. I would like to see the evidence for claims that are made. If you know of any research that demonstrates that idea, I would like to see it. My premise is that the arts themselves are not ennobling.

A doctor, professor, painter, martial artist, poet, lover, writer, actor, accountant, dentist, etc., can be a virtuous, good and honest person or evil, unethical, or just a bad person. Or like most of us, walking the line in between. Practicing the art, studying anything really, is an amoral activity. T'ai chi and Kung-fu are exercises. They may make you feel better, be less stressed and think more clearly, but they do not substitute for moral or ethical training or conscience. I know several very high-level t'ai chi ch'uan, karate, and kung-fu masters who I do not want to associate with, because they have an evil side to them, i.e. bad vibes. I prefer not to be around their "Energy." If they, the epitome of the art, are not virtuous, then how can the art make one virtuous?

Football was once said to develop character, but how many pro ball players are in jail right now? Is the idea that "the sport makes you a better person," just an old saying that has no basis in fact? If it does not hold true for Western sports, then why should it be true for Asian martial arts where the idea is to learn to fight, and, in the old days, to kill?

There is no relationship between doing an art form – being an excellent artist, scholar or athlete – and character. I believe there is no relationship between being a martial artist and being a virtuous person.

Training in how to fight, learning to hurt others on one hand, or to defend oneself on the other, does not necessarily instill moral lessons. Only moral training does.

Many of the martial arts at one time had (or claimed to have) some kind of supplementary ethical/moral study or emphasis, but that was secondary to the physical training. Practitioners read religious texts, philosophical works, meditated, prayed and had spiritual counseling. There was also an expectation of correct moral behavior. One must strive to be a good and honest person, in order to be one.

Action is more important than intent. If you do good

deeds, for whatever reason, you are doing "good". If you do bad deeds, but are thinking about or talking about being good, you are still doing evil. Your Actions are important and determine who and what you are. If you lie about what you teach to fool students, try to mystify students, or just act in an unethical way, are you being an ennobling person?

I have been told of masters who sexually harassed, abused or intimidate their students and others. I have heard of masters who took advantage of their students sexually, emotionally and financially. I have seen referees being threatened by black belts who did not like the call. I have been told gleefully by teachers about their black belts who go out looking for fights to beat people up, trying out their well-rehearsed techniques on the unsuspecting public. Is that ethical?

There are teachers who use their students, or people they know they can beat, as punching bags (and the students pay for the honor?) There is a place for this in martial training process, and it may be appropriate for certain classes. They are the masters, if they do not act ethically, after all their years of training, then how can anyone claim the arts magically cause students to be better people?

If they want to fight, they should go into the ring with someone who is willing to fight. Fight someone who they may not be able to beat, i.e. a fair fight. That is a real test of their skill and is the only honest and ethical way to do it. Beating up some untrained or unaware fellow just getting off work, or some beginning student is not a fair fight.

## Schuck and Jive Artists?

Less of a problem, but really common, is that some teachers misrepresent what they teach. For example, a teacher I knew of many years ago claimed to be a master, but it turned out he was an advanced student and was only a few lessons ahead of his students. His students were learning real kung-fu technique, but they were training with essentially a green belt claiming to be a master, but who was really a master manipulator. Today we find teachers taking a few workshops on tai chi chuan, then they start teaching and claim mastery to unwitting students.

Another odd idea is that some teachers claim their style is a "Secret Ancient Method," when it isn't, and is that important anyway? Does secret mean good? I have heard of at least three secret or closed door t'ai chi

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# The Founder of Aikido

*“Even standing with my back toward the opponent is enough. When he attacks, hitting, he will injure himself with his own intention to hit. I am one with the universe and I am nothing else.”*

Sounds cool, doesn't it? This is from the memoir of Master Morihei Ueshiba—Osensei (great teacher). There are several books in the club library that detail the life of Osensei so I'll just touch upon some points. I figure it's best to give an idea of this genius through some of the things he has written.

Here's another story about a rebel, one seeking to be the strongest, the best, with an insatiable appetite for learning and exploring coupled with a high degree of creativity and insight. Never satisfied with just learning and practicing what he was taught, he explored and moved beyond the standard or traditional.

*There is no time and space before Ueshiba of Aikido--only the universe as it is. There is no enemy for Ueshiba of Aikido. You are mistaken if you think that budo (way of chivalry) means to have opponents and enemies and to be strong and fell them. There are neither opponents nor enemies for true budo. True budo is to be one with the universe; that is, to be united with the Center of the universe.*

Farmer, martial artist, environmentalist, religious seeker, mystic, explorer, and most of all, Teacher. In his youth, Morihei Ueshiba sought to become as strong as he could get. From accounts of his younger years he apparently achieved this. One example was that he would break the rice pounders during the local festivals. It got to the point where they wouldn't let him volunteer to help! At only 5' he was the only one able to keep up with the horses during marches. He would carry other soldiers' equipment on marches. Not just to help them, but to improve his training. Also when he was farming, he had extra strong tools made for himself so they wouldn't break when he was working.

*Willingly begin the cultivation of your spirit. I want considerate*



**Morihei Ueshiba**  
1883—1969

*people to listen to the voice of Aikido. It is not for correcting others; it is for correcting your own mind. This is Aikido.*

Osensei studied any art available to him. He studied sumo, several jujitsu systems, aikijujitsu, spear, bayonet, sword, and staff. As soon as he achieved a good level of skill he'd seek out a better system. It's said that after only a few months of study he mastered a couple of jujitsu systems to the point of being awarded a teaching license and asked to teach. Instead, he'd hit the road looking for something new and challenging.

One of the strongest influences was an Aikijitsu master of the Daito Ryu system, Sokaku Takeda. Described as a mean old warrior, few could put up with Takeda. His teaching and personality were difficult. However, it's interesting to note that most of the formal students of Takeda moved on and developed their own styles and systems from what he had taught. Each system unique to itself but incorporating the methods of Aiki — harmonizing energy.

*When an enemy tries to fight with me, the universe itself, he has to break the harmony of the universe. Hence, at the moment he has the mind to fight me he is already defeated. There exists no measure of time -- fast or slow.*

In addition to his martial pursuits, Osensei had a deep spiritual quest, seeking the truth, seeking the value of his studying these arts, as well as their value to society. He studied all philosophies and religions available intently.

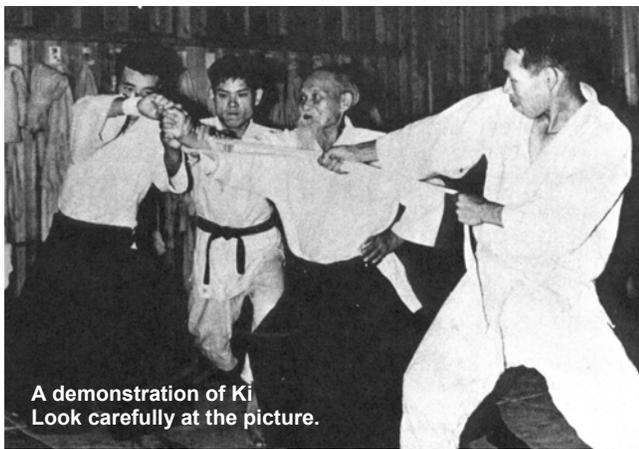
His religious studies eventually became intermingled with his martial arts studies. Many of his Aikido disciples have said that in the middle of a lesson he would give lectures on mystical topics that no one could understand. It was also said that he'd make up words when there was nothing to explain what he meant. As he grew older his descriptions of techniques would be less technical and more symbolic.

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*Don't look at the opponent's eyes, or your mind will be drawn into his eyes. Don't look at his sword, or you will be slain with his sword. Don't look at him, or your spirit will be distracted. True budo is the cultivation of attraction with which to draw the whole opponent to you.*

One of the strong religious influences on Osensei was the Omoto-kyo religion. The Omoto-kyo religion emphasized organic farming and living close to the land. They believed that there was a new order in the world that would be led by their leader in a kingdom of peace and love. And that everyone could become one with the divine. Since they were opposed to the Emperor and the government (actually they saw everyone equal to the emperor) they were watched closely by the government. Onisaburo, the charismatic leader, believed himself to be the new enlightened one to bring peace, order, and love to the world. (For detailed information check out: Abundant Peace: The Biography of Morihei Ueshiba Founder of Aikido by John Stevens.)



Osensei intensely studied Buddhist and Shinto scriptures, eventually becoming a Shinto priest. Much of his symbolism comes from Shinto, and many Aikido schools believe that Aikido can't be truly learned unless you study Shinto. Anyhow, in 1925, after defending himself barehanded against a swordsman, Osensei had a spiritual awakening. One description was that he could sense how and when the swordsman would cut and attack, so he moved out of the way, just before the sword reached its mark. He kept this up until the swordsman was exhausted. From this point on his new Aikido began to evolve.

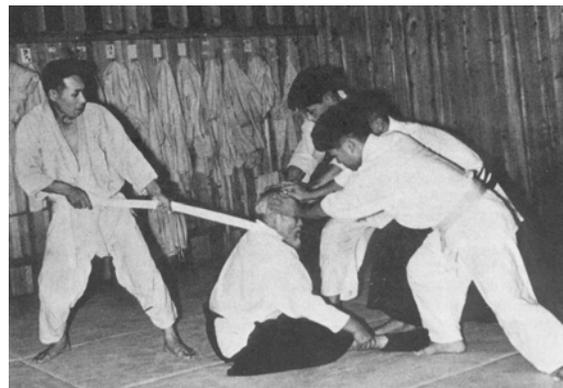
We're very lucky since many movies are available of Osensei from 1935 to his death in 1969. If you look at some of the videos you can see his evolution from very



hard and rough techniques to simple, effortless, and almost magical arts. I'm sure that if he were alive today the art wouldn't look anything like we're doing it now. Looking at his top disciples we can also see the progression of his art and teaching. The early disciples tend to be very static and stance oriented, whereas his younger disciples are softer and more fluid.

The sad part is that after Osensei's death, many of his top disciples, believing they were the only one to understand his teachings and the art created much conflict and dissention among many students and Aikido practitioners.

*"As soon as you concern yourself with the 'good' and 'bad' of others, you create an opening in your heart for maliciousness to enter. Testing, competing with, and criticizing others will weaken and defeat you."*



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forms, and how ironic, none resembled the others.

Some "Masters" have their students hang on for years with the carrot on a stick promise they will teach them secrets if they stay long enough. For example one teacher told his students they had to stay with him for 10 years before he would teach them pushing hands or sword. Maybe he had a valid reason. Maybe the students were really incredibly slow learners, but it sounds like the carrot on a stick idea to me.

There is no reason why a teacher cannot be honest about what his/her art is, and leave it at that. Unless they are trying to scam students? Or maybe they are just boosting their own egos.

Hucksters are out there, as one master told me a long time ago in San Francisco, "you have to watch out for the Schuck and Jive Artists." The shame is many people know of this type of thing going on and don't speak up about it. It is accepted, tolerated even, by many real masters.

Often those who speak out are considered the bad guys. That is a shame. If we want to raise the standard, first we need standards. Maybe there needs to be an ethical board to deal with martial art teachers? Possibly the major organizations can formalize ethical standards for their members to follow.

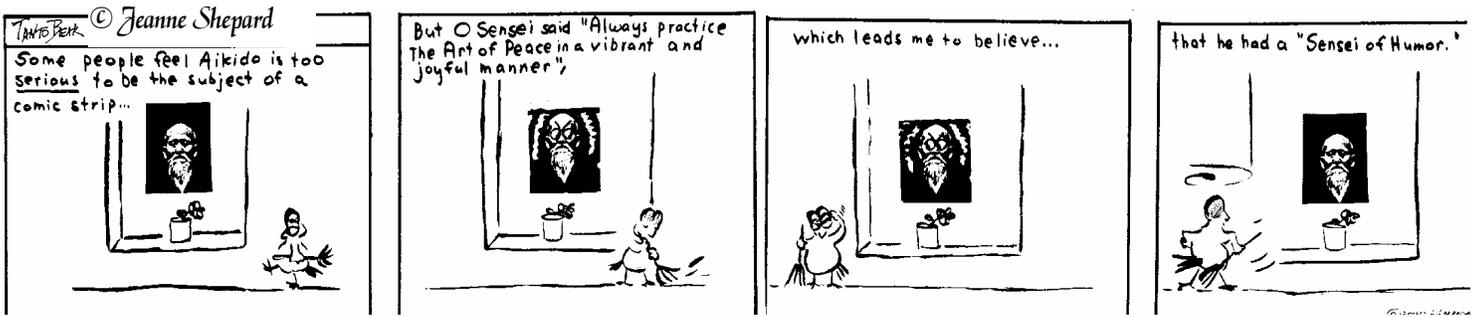
If martial art instructors are to claim the arts make students into better people,

Xin Qi Shen Dojo 8316 - 8th Ave. NW September -- December 2000						
am	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9:00			Yang Taiji basic			Chen Taij Beginning
10:00			Yang Taiji continuing			Chen Taiji form work
11:00			Private instruction			Misc.
11:30						Instructor's Class 1st
Noon	Private instruction					
4:30		Children's Aikido J. Kanetomi Instructor		Children's Aikido J. Kanetomi Instructor		
5:15		Teen Aikido J. Kanetomi Instructor		Teen Aikido J. Kanetomi Instructor		
Evenings						
6:30		Beginning Yang Taiji Basics	Beginning Qi Gong	Beginning Bagua Inner Palms		
7:00	Basic Aikido	Long Form	Tian Shan Qi Gong	Palm Changes & Form Work	Aiki Jo 1st Friday	
7:30						
8:00	Aikido 5 kyu up	Tuishou Da Lu Sanshou	Advanced	Tuishou Roushou Sanshou		
8:30						
9:00						

the teachers need to live up to that expectation and lead by example. If they are not interested in ethical behavior, then maybe it is time to stop making those claims?

"Cease to do evil; Learn to do good.

Devote yourselves to justice."



# Relaxed and Natural

By Kim Ivy

In every class I hear the two words, “relax” and “natural,” more than I hear any others. Those words creep into every snake, turn into every shuttle, and sink into every needle. As regards to my shoulders, my elbows, my breathing, “relax....” As regards to my approach to learning and expressing the forms, “be natural....” Even in the safe refuge of standing meditation, “relax and be natural!” As I struggle within the chaos of learning, those two words take on proportions that are at once mythical and absurd.

What are the components of being relaxed? Our teachers might say, loose shoulders, empty elbows, and open hips. What is the technique of natural? The Classics might point to moving from the center, understanding the waist and hips, and having a peaceful intent. Yet, for me, each time I begin to focus on relaxing my shoulders, they just get tighter! It is as though my neurons garner their weapons to fight the fact that this lump of bone and muscle is not relaxed. The lump takes up its armor, refusing to budge, and my brain becomes a battlefield of cells trying to intimidate each other into submission. As for natural? Those cellular warriors have been engaged in this way for so long, they believe the battle is what is natural.

How then to step off this battlefield and avail ourselves of these essential and core principals? One possibility might be to simply stop trying to change. Now, this is a concept! The internal arts by their very nature are deeply involved in change. They are wrapped in a philosophy that tells us that “all is change.” How can we possibly not change? It is not that we won’t change, it is that

we stop trying to change. We instead focus our awareness on the reality of the moment. We develop objectivity. Rather than trying to fix ourselves, we simply open our insight: “Oh, my shoulder is up,” “my elbow is tight,” “my hips are stiff.” Rather than engaging our will to dominate over the present circumstance, we step aside and take the situation for what it is.

Another stride towards a relaxed and natural practice might be to bring this concept into our daily lives. How many times during our week do we feel we have to change? We often fiercely believe our work, our partnerships, our eating all have something that needs adjusting, and our days become wound up in that process. What if we were to simply bring to these relationships non-critical awareness? The next time you feel you have to fix something about yourself (or another), experiment. Simply say, “oh, I notice that I eat chocolate cake at midnight.” And then even, “that’s interesting.” The next day, see how your shoulders are during Ward Off.

Laotsu says, “when we correct our minds, the rest of our life will fall into place.” Could it be possible to relax by simply being aware of tension and then just allowing it to be? Might we have better relationships with ourselves if, when our buttons getting pushed, we say, “that’s interesting?” Would we get to know better our authentic selves by stepping out of habitually trying to change? When we take things for what they are, the battles inspired by criticism and judgment melt into peaceful landscapes of compassion and insight. Now, that feels relaxed and natural.

