



# Xin Qi Shen Dojo

WUJI.COM  
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## Body, Mind, Energy, & Spirit

*The body has shape, it's a coarse vibration of energy, it's limited and restricted by physical laws. The mind has no shape or color but still has limitations placed upon it by our beliefs and thoughts. Everything is energy but here I'm talking about our energetics, our feeling healthy, our interconnectedness, and the effect of the power of our thoughts. Similar to the mind, energy has no shape or color and is only limited by the way we live, behave, believe, and think. By spirit I mean our own unique individuality, our character that makes us completely unique. Our spirit is beyond shape, size, and has unlimited potential.*

### PHYSICAL

*We live in a physical world, abiding physical laws. Many we're unable to violate but some we tend to stretch which results in our own injuries and illness. An example of this is not acknowledging how to move efficiently and picking up a heavy object incorrectly.*

*Training in these arts is to understand how to live in this physical world safely, strongly, centered, and healthily. Our muscles and joints work together so we may move freely. Each has its own laws and restrictions. A healthy muscle has an elasticity whereas joints are like hinges and can't be stretched or take injury without permanent damage, thus limiting our physical movements. Practicing our forms is how we begin to understand, strengthen and learn to control this physical instrument we move through life in.*

### THE MIND

*The mind has the potential for being limitless. Many inventions have been created because the inventor thought 'outside the box'. The mind is like the nozzle of a hose, it directs and focuses our Qi. When the mind is dispersed the energy is scattered, when focused and calm it directs our energy like a laser beam.*

### SPIRIT

*Our character, our selves. As we learn to center and become more secure we're able to be ourselves and express ourselves more freely as we move through life. Moving from our center instead of being swayed by our surroundings.*



Internal Arts Festival

**Dojo  
Exhibition  
Saturday  
Jan. 14  
2 pm**

*Learn from the past.*

*Plan for the future.*

*Be in the present.*



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# Internal Arts Festival

It was definitely a success! My primary worry about setting it up was how many participants could we fit into the dojo. Instructors included, on a full session we had 35 and it was just right.

The quality of the instruction, like at Bandon, was exceptional. The best part was, that without getting together and planning it, each instructor's session complimented the others. In addition,

the quality of the participants was quite high. We had some beginners and quite a few seasoned practitioners. One participant said it was like going from private lesson to private lesson. All in all everyone seemed to take the instructions and work on the deeper levels instead of merely practicing the drills.

Good spirits, friendliness, sharing, and laughter were all flowing freely. (Very

gushy huh?) We had members from Spokane, Walla Walla, Tacoma, and Vancouver.

Now I'm planning on another event this spring with the same instructors so stay tuned.

Thank you all for helping, attending, and sharing.

**Xie Xie**

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## Festival Notes

*During the different sessions, each instructor seemed to verbalize certain principles that made the lesson clearer. Burk took some notes and sayings from the classes that stood out.*

### **Sana Shanti**

Am I allowing my partner to move me?  
Taiji is the art of laziness  
Soften a little more, then just a little more.  
Is there a gap in your connection?

### **Bob Iden**

Too much work, no good  
Every attack has a clock; don't stop your partner's clock  
We have little arms like a T-rex, we have to move with our centers  
Go to zero  
Arms relaxed like a dead fish

### **John Camp**

When meeting force, turn the body or go around.  
In place of push hands, harmonizing hands.  
Instead of pushing, follow  
Instead of receiving, lead  
Listen for potential strikes (gap)

### **Derryl Willis**

One principal, three techniques  
When the center moves the body follows

1. Center moves forward and back,
2. side to side
3. Combination of the two.

In weighting the feet such as 40 -50, always reserve 10% for the head  
Think of a rotisserie, the bone turns and the flesh hangs and moves around it.

### **Andy Dale**

Be one with the Universe  
Don't let the mind catch a sickness that the body has  
The mind is powerful, think outside the box  
Qing yi shen, Mind, body, spirit  
It's all about me  
Just do it right

### **Dave Harris**

There is a lot of information in here, pay attention and you may see it.  
The primal mind was developed over thousands of years of survival

### **Bernie Lau**

Anything can happen at any time  
Pay attention  
The mind is very powerful.  
Move, don't ask 'why me?'  
Seek to be in harmony

**Kuden:** A word or phrase to remind students of principles that outsiders wouldn't know or understand.

Be a good thief

Listen behind!

Protect your partner.

Water flows downward.

Mind like a mirror.

A slow arrow doesn't pierce anything.

Skill is developed to enable options.

A master doesn't have to move fast or use strength.

# It was ten years ago . . .

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*It was ten years ago* that I ventured for the first time at the Phinney Center in a class with Andy Dale, a T'ai Chi Ch'uan instructor. I was not exactly sure what T'ai Chi was about but I had heard it was good for health and did not require a lot of physical skills. "It is exercise in slow movement" I was told . . . Considering I was already 54 years old and was not exactly in great physical shape I was not interested in aerobics, ballet dancing (which I had done when I was young,) tennis or any other sports. I could have done jogging or walking but I always found this boring unless I am going somewhere. To walk around Green Lake is not my idea of exercise or relaxation. It might be great for some but it is not for me. T'ai Chi sounded the right thing: it was not competitive and I could practice at my own pace. I was not wrong in my vague view of T'ai Chi Ch'uan but I was totally mistaken in thinking it would be easy and not exacting. Since then I have learnt a lot about T'ai Chi as an art and as a philosophy and I have never regretted the painful first months of tedious, repetitive steps. My only regret is that I did not start sooner.

*What has T'ai Chi Ch'uan taught me?*

Physically the practice has improved my balance, my flexibility, my breathing.

My legs are stronger. My body in general feels stronger. My job as an art dealer requires some physical work of lifting paintings and sculptures (sometimes quite heavy) and I have learnt through T'ai Chi how to carry things using my full body, particularly the legs rather than just the arms, avoiding stress in the neck and shoulders and the risk of hurting my back. From a car accident in 1960 I had a knee injury and was unable to kneel without great pain. Little by little I noticed that kneeling is getting easier, less painful. Injuries do heal with time but I strongly believe that without my practice the pain in my knees would only have gotten worse and have handicapped me. With my legs getting stronger, my balance has improved although I still have to work on it. I have not yet achieved total control on quick turns, kicks, standing on one leg and "snake creeps down." If only I did not rush these movements I would be fine! Easier said than done....

My flexibility is a little better. Practicing Pa Kua Ch'uan style has helped on both balance and flexibility. Walking the circle is perhaps my favorite exercise. There is nothing to remember, you can really empty your mind and just concentrate on one step at a time, trying to keep the position of the body correct and at the same time relax. Working on the "Dragon Palm" has been an humbling experience. After a number of years of serious regular practice I was entitled to think I had achieved a certain degree of skill, then a new form was introduced: the "Dragon Palm," and I was back to the beginning: awkward, stiff, lacking agility, grasping for air. I realized I needed more preparation, back to basics, back to tedious training. Perseverance is the key. Practice... practice... practice. I may do it better next time around.

What has improved the most is my breathing. It used to be very shallow (I spent too many hours studying when I was young, with my back rounded, neck tucked in the shoulders.) With the Tan T'ien breathing I can feel how much deeper my breathing has become and how much better it feels. I never thought I would really enjoy such a simple act as breathing. All the Chi Kung exercises are helpful.

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## Member Profile Francine

One tough lady! Francine has been a member of Xin Qi Shen Dojo since 1987! There is no class she hasn't participated in. She has studied intensively:

Yang Taiji Quan including: Qi Gong, Long Form, Push Hands, Sanshou, Roushou, Sword, Saber, & Cane.

Chen Taiji Quan including 48 form, Sword, Chan Si Gong.

Bagua Zhang 8 mother forms, 8 flowing forms, linking forms, Dragon Palm, Liang Yi Quan, Roushou, Sword, Inner Palms, Qi Gong, and much more.

Xing Yi Quan five elements and 10 animal forms.

In Aikido she is 5th kyu. She still working at perfecting a forward roll at the age of 60+. Who of us would have the stamina for that? She's one of the few people I've met in Aikido that took an instant knack to Irimi Nage. The throw nicknamed 20 year throw since it takes about that long to get it.

Over her connection with the dojo she's taken private lessons from Madame Gao Fu, and taken workshops from Master Tchoung Ta Tchen, Zhang Jie, Dave Harris, and Master Yueng among others.

Francine continues to take classes in Bagua, Aikido, and Roushou. She loves partner work and won't just go with a movement, you have to do the technique correctly. Commonly heard in class, "You don't have my balance yet!"

Francine is part of the strength and energy of the club. She's been a tireless and solid support keeping the dojo going and helping out.



peace

(Continued from page 3)

Mentally T'ai Chi Chuan has changed my outlook on life. I do not think I am boasting if I say that I am a better person than I was. My awareness and my sensitivity are more acute. I observe more. I think more. I am more willing to listen to other ideas and be more understanding, I am more open. I am more patient. I am more at peace with myself. I am more in control of my actions. I have learnt not to be affected by trivial matters. I am wiser and happier. Is maturity the only factor? One learns from experiences encountered in daily life and ten years is a long time. But looking around at people in their declining years has convinced me that getting older does not necessarily mean getting better, far from it. It is also true that many people practicing T'ai Chi are not losing behind their pettiness, their sense of competitiveness, their mean disposition, their complexes and fears. I feel that these people are not practicing T'ai Chi, they are accumulating forms, they can look very good and skillful, they might be dominant in push hands and believe they are very strong, but it is all on the surface. Maybe that is all they want to achieve and if they are happy that way that is great. I am more interested in the process of learning than in the result. I like the different styles (Yang, Chen, Pa Kua) because they give me different responses. I have to approach them differently. I am fairly well disciplined, but doing the same movement again and again would lack some excitement because I have not yet reached the point where I know how to dissect the movement

completely. Learning different forms helps me feel if I can keep the concentration long enough, if I can keep the connections from move to move. I am very happy reworking the same forms and starting from scratch because I can then practice at another level. The movements are already in me and the awkwardness has disappeared. The movements are already memorized so nothing gets in the way.

In the years to come I would hope to improve on my sword forms. I have not been practicing enough to feel comfortable with either the double edged sword or the broad sword. To get the connections from the feet to the tip of the sword seems an impossible task yet, as well as relaxing the arm holding the sword. Here again patience and practice is the key.

My other weakness is partner work: applications, free hand, push hand are very difficult for me. It will take me at least another ten years to feel at ease with it.

I am somewhat surprised to have stayed with my practice of T'ai Chi Chuan for so many years and to contemplate continuing until I drop dead or my body or mind totally deteriorate. It has been and I assume will continue to be very rewarding. I am very thankful to Andy for his patience, understanding, enthusiasm and his continued support. I am also very thankful to all my partners for their camaraderie. The "esprit de corps" in the club is very special and I feel privileged to be a part of it.

### Standardizing & Retiring Forms

In the development of the Chinese martial arts, there were a couple of organizations that established martial arts training centers to develop a strong curriculum and college-like situation for those interested in developing skill and teaching as well as a place for the masters to pass on their teachings. One of these was the Ching Wu Association compiled a series of basic forms from various arts as their first year or basic's program. At one time the instructors of the Ching Wu Association were: Yang Cheng Fu, Sun Lu Tang, and Fu Chen Sung.

With the various arts I've studied there are a few elements I feel strongly about their value to develop basic skills and set the foundation for further development. I'm putting together a standard curriculum for Xin Qi Shen Dojo to enhance the development of our members' skill in the healing and martial arts.

Among the forms I currently consider core to our dojo are:

**Aiki Jo**, short staff and **Yang Taiji Cane**. As a self defense tool the short staff and cane are the most useful and acceptable to carry around. As a training instrument the short staff teaches excellent body movement and footwork. The partner short staff and cane

also teach greater alertness and body agility.

**Emei Qi Gong**: this qi gong is one of the best for developing body flexibility and relaxation. In addition it permits the mind to begin to feel ones' energy flow. The Emei Qi Gong is the one Master Tchoung Ta Tchen insisted we learn before beginning Yang Taiji Quan.

**Bagua Dragon Palm**: This form I consider advanced and forces you to develop not only quick footwork but also change of direction.

**Nei Gong Bang** The Chen Taiji short stick exercises help teach coordination, fitness, and help with hand to hand harmonization.

**Yang Taiji Sanshou** though difficult to learn the partner Taiji form is an excellent tool for learning sticking, footwork, nerve and wrist techniques.

There are also some forms that are very multi-functional. This is a trait of Aikido and Bagua. All empty hand movements, if correct, can be done with a variety of weapons without much change. An example of this is the Dragon Palm which is also a Crescent Knife Set, Broadsword Set, and Cane Set. Most broadsword forms can be done as a cane set also.

As I work toward simplification of my practice and teaching I'm also looking at retiring some forms that I personally feel are exercises in learning a form. I am making sure these forms are passed on and have a video record of them.

Bagua 7 star Staff section 2. This is one set that's very long, complex and for me seems disjointed. This set will be preserved not only on DVD but also through the following dojo members: Joel Hartshorne, David Wheeler, Brian Johnson, Jim Harmon, Brendan Mattson. This will be replaced in the Bagua curriculum by the Aiki staff and Aiki partner staff.

Tchoung's Yang Taiji section 9. Though standard in Tchoung's system this set has evolved even as I studied with Master Tchoung. This is another form I'll be re-placing in the curriculum with a modified version. This set as well is recorded many times and variations on DVD as well as being kept alive through at least 15 club members having learned it. Among them are: Joel Harshorne, Gene Burnett, Bruce Brown and members of Harvey Kurlands' advanced Taiji group.