

Don't practice: study / research

"Oh, I do Taiji." "I practice Taiji." Well then, you're not a sincere student of the art! This is not an aerobics or boot camp session that by merely going through the forms is it.

These forms, movements, and applications have lessons buried deep within each part and form. Every practice session should be an uncovering of the layers and secrets they contain.

Look at each practice as a lesson instead of merely a workout. If we move with a listening attitude and an open mind paying attention to what's going on. This is not boot camp training. These arts are a cultivation of something much more, much deeper, much more refined than a boot camp or aerobics session.

Do all postures contain kai/he (open/close)? Do you take time for xu (storing)? Can su ting fei ting (lingering) be more subtle? Can you differentiate the difference between peng and strength? What about the 3 groundings and the 3 liftings? It's time to go deeper and deeper. I remember fondly the high skill level of my teachers who spent their lives ceaselessly trying to understand the complexity of these internal arts. Their skill levels are ones I aim for and would love to approach. It's still beyond me but that and the love of these arts what makes me keep trying.

Pick one of the many principles and make it your months project to refine them, or find them, in all your various forms and practice.

Roushou

1:30 - 4:00 PM \$55 @ session (prepay \$45)
Cloud Hands: June 26th
Cat Washes Face: July 24th
An Zhang: August 26th
all levels welcome
Dale sensei

Studying the Yueng Quan exercise of Cloud Hands, Cat Washes Face, and an Zhang as sensitivity drills as well as an applications technique. Beneficial for Taiji push hands and sanshou. We will focus on the possibilities and applications from the basic drills. These exercises were core in the earlier teachings of Harris sensei and Master Fook Yueng.
email to sign up: dojo@wuji.com

A.T.Dale Internal Martial Arts



Summer 2010

Xin Qi Shen Dojo
8316 - 8th Ave NW
Seattle WA 98107
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Teaching Certifications

I am proud to announce the following have achieved instructor status in the dojo. They have spend many hours dedicated to learning and refining the solo forms. This is not an easy tasks and required much self-discipline and passion. In addition to the solo forms they all have shown an exceptional aptitude in the Taiji Sanshou, the difficult Taiji partner form.

CONGRATULATIONS!



- Edmund Ng: Yang Basics Instructor
- Lori Peterson: Yang Basics Instructor
- Debbie Doyle: Yang Basics Instructor
- Bill Ross: Yang Basics Instructor
- Tom Flener: Yang Basics Instructor
- Barry Lasky: Yang Senior Instructor
- Joe Schneider: Bagua Intermediate Instructor
- Peter Hranek: Bagua Basics Instructor



Schedule

Yang Taiji Quan:	Xing Yi Quan:
Monday 4:15-5:45 pm	Thursday 7:30-9:00 pm
Tuesday 7:20-9:00 pm	Tuishou:
Wednesday 9:00 - 10:30 am	Tuesday 8:00-9:00 pm
Chen Taiji Quan & Sword:	Roushou:
Saturday 10:30-noon	Wednesday 6:00-7:30 pm
Bagua Zhang:	Sanshou:
Thursday 6:00-7:30 pm	Monday 6:00-7:30 pm
Summer classes in lower Woodland park	Saturday 9:00-10:30 am

MY TEACHERS

I talk about this in class often but I thought it might be time to put it in writing so there is a record of it.

When it comes to Internal Arts masters, I haven't met any that I consider equal to Masters T.T. Tchoung, Fook Yueng, Gao Fu, Feng Zhiqiang, Zhang Jie, Dave Harris, or William Chen. I've heard equal things of Master Tao Pingsiang from instructors I respect but I never had the privilege to learn from him.

Each teacher was awesome but each had made the art theirs and expressed it through who they were instead of it being stylized. Master Gao wasn't a martial arts master but she definitely was an internal arts master. Her understanding and ability to teach the inner practice and the core training of the internal arts was amazing. She knew how to train internal martial artists even without being a fighter herself. Her persistence and high expectations were hard to live up to but we tried. At the same time she never stopped learning or seeking to learn from anyone. That's a lesson in itself. I remember at one of the Internal Arts Festival she attended every session and was especially interested in applications.

Now the focus of this article is actually the high skills and how different the internal arts can be expressed. Each of the instructors I've studied with or had the privilege to touch left an immense impression. They gave me an idea of what I need to work on and how to study.

When pushing hands or being at the end of an application with Tchoung Ta Tchen there was a softness, a cuddliness (like a teddy bear). His touch and contact was so soft it was disarming. It was comfortable and relaxing. THEN, you'd fly back or be thrown to the ground as if a giant wave or big gust of wind swept you there. His touch was sneaky, I don't know how to describe it any other way. It lulled you into a relaxed and safe spot before you were thrown. There was no advanced warning, just softness and

then you were flying. On the other side were his strikes. I swear his fingers could go through skin. They were like iron spikes. I remember the first time he hit me. I was use to my teachers stopping on contact or just before contact. There was this control of punches. Tchoung hit me! He did a Pi Xin Chuei (back handed slap) on my nose. It felt like his hand traced the back of my skull. But, at the same time, though I thought my nose was broken it wasn't. It was a relaxed, loose strike, but my eyes watered and as I wrote, it felt like he had broken my nose. I understood he was holding back :) which was really scary. He could go from teddy bear softness to a hardness of being hit by led beads.

Master Fook Yueng is different. Soft but light. His touch wasn't like a teddy bear, but more like a fly. It would be super light then solid when he hit or pressed forward. His fingers were able to touch every nerve on the surface he touched. His nerve techniques are incredible.

Now, one of the great learning experiences I had was attending one of William Chen's workshops. We did a basic pushing exercise and he permitted me to work with him for 3 minutes. He wasn't there! As Bob Iden says, you can only touch William's shirt. We were doing what our club calls 'yielding exercise'. I saw myself touching Master Chen but I couldn't feel him! I pushed lightly and hard (at his invitation) and though my eyes saw him there I couldn't feel him. His lightness and sensitivity was mind boggling.

In contrast was the privilege of pushing hands with Gao fu's teacher, Master Feng Zhiqiang. His hands were super loose, almost floppy. His core was solid. I've never touched anything as solid. I don't mean hard but firm. He permitted me to push and encouraged me to go for it. It was like trying to push a huge slippery bar of soap. All my force just slipped away, the harder I pushed the more slippery it got. At the same time he could move freely in any

direction. That was very scary. He was kind and friendly but the power of his core movements gave me the impression he could move in any direction, any time, regardless of what's around him. I was helpless. Unlike Tchoung, where I felt like I was safe, pushing with Feng was a feeling of, "Oh shit!" Again, he was friendly and kind but the power was awesome.

Though Master Zhang Jie is a Bagua master, the lineage of Liu Bin has much Xing Yi in it. That is what I felt in his applications. No nonsense, directness, and to the point. In applications Zhang would just go in and deal with it. There was not much yielding or softness, just action.

Now to Dave Harris. This is one artists that learned the basics, relentlessly practiced the basics, refined the basics. Then, he moved beyond them. Not just the basics, the art, but I dare say his teachers. (I don't say this lightly). Those who were lucky enough to touch hands with Dave know that it was magic. It was disorienting. He had 2-5 techniques happening at the same time. His touch was light like Master Yueng's. His deceptive leading was like Koichi Tohei's or Sid Woodcocks. Dave moved beyond technique and art, as he said he did Jazz. He surfed what came his way and let his training and skill deal with it. Like Bruce Lee, Dave's skill can't be taught.

Here's the problem: Most think that studying the art or style will automatically give them skill. Not so! The styles are a frame work for the principles they are based on which is the actual the study of the art, not merely the movements and forms. Dave's, Tchoung's, Feng's, Zhang 's, Yueng's, Gao's skill didn't just come from the art they practiced but from them. Studying beyond the art into the core of the art and forms. A passion of getting to the root of the art instead of merely following the superficial movements.