

國際楊氏太極拳協會



Tai Chi Chuan

Number 8 • Spring 2002

The Newsletter of the International Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association



Letter from the President

Dear member

Shanxi Association's 20th Anniversary is coming soon. The registration for these events will soon end. I want to tell all of you that due to the hard work of all our directors, advertising, and the support of our members, our events and arrangements are processed neatly and organized. The events will be extremely grand.

According to the association records, the total number of registrants is 166 persons. These registrants come from the U.S.A., Canada, Sweden, Italy, Germany, France, Brazil, Korea, and England. Sixty registrants are from Asia. 95% of the Chinese registrants are association members. There are seventy people who will be competitors. Fifty of those competitors will be joining the ranking examinations for their first time.

I understand that many people are coming to sightsee and not just for this grand ceremony. They also hope to see some Chinese culture and beautiful scenery in China. In our program in Taiyuan, you will see Masters of five different major styles of Tai Chi Chuan give speeches and perform demonstrations. You will also see the performances of Yang Style practitioners from many different countries. In our trip to Suzhou and Hangzhou, I can have time to travel with my grandparents, and also with you to enjoy this wonderful time together. When I picture this coming scene, there is an extremely exciting sense of fulfillment in my heart.

There are many Tai Chi friends who have registered for our trip to China, but there are also many friends, for many reasons, who cannot join with us. The summer is coming soon. I would like to remind all of you that our Association will have seminars on the East Coast and the West Coast of the U.S.A. during August. For those Tai Chi friends who cannot attend these events to China, you may join with us in Buffalo, NY or Seattle, WA at our Yang Family Tai Chi seminars.

Thank you for your support.

Welcome New Centers

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Yang Jun
President
Translated by Lai Mui Ma



COVER :

Push Hand practice
Tui Shou practice in front of Yang Luchan's House.

Part of Marco Gagnon digital Art gallery. Limited edition giclée on canvas, signed by the artist and come with a certificate of authenticity.

See it online at :
www.marcogagnon.com
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Tai Chi Chuan

THE 13 FORM *Works Wonders*

By Vicki Norman, Michigan Center Student

I was so excited this summer when Grand Master Yang Zhen Duo presented us with his new 13 Form at the Michigan Center Seminar. I thought this was great, a form that people could learn in a shorter period of time and do anywhere. It can be done on a break at work, at an airport, or even in a hotel room. I couldn't wait to teach it!

When I started the 13 Form in my September classes (Roseville Parks and Recreation Center, Mi) I thought I would offer free classes to children in hopes of sparking some interest in youth. It would be great cross training for any sport or dance. I had no idea of the reward of this offer. The first 2 weeks of class, little Lisa Marie would try to do the repeating bow stance practice, and would fall flat on her face. SPLAT, SPLAT!!!!!!! You see, Lisa Maria had a stroke a few days after birth suffering from a heart problem. She has trouble with her balance and her extremities. I have learned from my teacher, Han Hoong Wang, not to draw attention to a person with a problem as not to embarrass them. Lisa Maria would get up again and again and go on. Although my heart was aching, I know she needed to do this on her own. Still, I didn't want her to hurt herself. My brainstorm was to bring a walker to class for her so she would have something to hang on to. It worked! On the 6th week



Lisa Marie, Vicki Norman and friends

I forgot the walker. It was an amazing thing! Lisa Maria didn't fall one time. She enjoys Tai Chi so much and has already learned the limit of extension for her body. She is calmer in class and has an increased attention span. Her mother has stated that she feels Tai Chi has a positive effect for Lisa Maria mentally and physically and wants her to continue on.

When I see this, I can remember as clear as day when Grand Master Yang Zhen Duo told us that Tai Chi was a gift from his Grandfather to the world for good health. He and his family have passed that gift down to us. Now it is our turn to share that gift. I am eternally grateful to Grand Master Yang Zhen Duo for his words of wisdom and for all of his

and Yang Jun's teaching. None of this would have come about, if not for my Great Teacher Han Hoong Wang who has shown the utmost patience in teaching me Tai Chi along with the gentle subtleties of the Chinese culture. I am hoping that she continues that patience as we "Train for the China in 2002" trip. (Smile)

Lisa Maria has already given me more reward than I could ever imagine. Thank you Lisa Maria Cook.

These photos are from classes taught at Roseville Parks and Recreation Center.

Preparation



Cloud Hands



Punch under elbow



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All Tai Chi Chuan enthusiasts are invited to submit articles, letters, and pictures for publication.

Both critical and complimentary letters concerning the form and content of this newsletter are welcome. Please send correspondence in electronic format to: editor@yangfamilytaichi.com or mail to:

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DIRECTOR PROFILE

Horacio Lopez of the San Antonio, Texas Center



Horacio Lopez and his two most senior students, Dixie and Harriet both age 86, with the Masters at the San Antonio Seminar Summer 2001

Horacio Lopez was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where he completed his public-school education and worked as a Social Worker before commencing his journey of insight and spiritual understanding through the study of conscious movement, with a number of important teachers of dance and active meditation world-wide. Mr. Lopez became a student of Qigong and Tai Chi, partly to accomplish his own structural healing after a serious accident raised the specter of risky spinal surgery. His personal realization with these studies led Mr. Lopez to a lifetime commitment to Tai Chi Chuan, which he first pursued with Wu style Masters in China and the U.S. before opening his school in San Antonio, Texas, in 1987.

Mr. Lopez first met Master Yang Zhen Duo in 1990, and was so inspired by Master Yang's refinement, awareness, and clear, gentle teaching style that he dedicated himself to study full-time with Master Yang. Following his first extended visit to Master Yang in China in 1992, Mr. Lopez began teaching Yang style at his school in San Antonio. He returned to China in 1995 with ten students to represent U.S. Yang style practitioners at the Third Yongnian International Tai Chi Chuan Gathering in Handan, Hebei Province. There, Mr. Lopez and his students joined Han Hoon Wang and her Michigan students, plus Bill Walsh and Dave Barrett, and together formed the U.S. team. Coached by Mr. Lopez and Mrs. Wang, the U.S. team won First Place in group performances of the Yang style empty hand and Saber Forms. In recognition of this outstanding performance, the Yang Family authorized the first Yang Chengfu Tai Chi Chuan Centers in the U.S.

Mr. Lopez returned to China in 1997 with another group of students, this time for the

15th Anniversary Celebration of the Shanxi Province Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association. Mr. Lopez and his students participated in the First International Invitational Traditional Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan competition with practitioners from around the world. Mr. Lopez himself earned Second Place in the empty hand form, and Fourth Place for the Men's all around competition. Mr. Lopez was the only Western participant to place in the Awards Ceremony in this competition.

Mr. Lopez has helped strengthen the practice of traditional Yang style Tai Chi Chuan in the U.S. by hosting seminars in San Antonio taught by Master Yang Zhen Duo in 1996, 1997, 1998, and 2000, and by Master Yang Jun in 2001. Mr. Lopez continues to work closely under the leadership of Master Yang Jun in promoting the skills and values of traditional Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan in the U.S., and serving the International Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association as Director of the Department of Ranking Standards.

Mr. Lopez has introduced the benefits of traditional Yang style Tai Chi Chuan into the lives of hundreds of people of all ages. He teaches in the same school he opened in 1987, in the same location. Many students have studied there continuously since the first visit of Master Yang Zhen Duo to San Antonio in 1996. Mr. Lopez' youngest student is 15 years old; his oldest student is 87 years old.

In all of his Tai Chi Chuan classes and lectures, Mr. Lopez continues to transmit Master Yang Zhen Duo's essential message: "There are ten requirements for practice..., when these requirements are fulfilled, the features of Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan become manifest..."



Horacio Lopez leads a group practice .



How To Focus On Arm Movements by Fixing The Chest In Tai Chi Chuan Training

Duc Nguyen Minh
Laboratoire de Mécanique des Solides
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Considering separately the movements of legs, chest and arms may sometimes be of interest in teaching handform tai chi chuan. This procedure can be used to focus on different aspects of a technique when presenting a posture to the students. This teaching method by stages is certainly used in many sportive activities, and applies to tai chi chuan as well. It can also be considered as a pedagogic method, complementary to a classical global approach of the movement.

For beginners, for example, discovering the specific tai chi chuan walking stances can be of prime importance. Getting familiar with the directions of displacement on the ground, discovering "fullness and emptiness" with walking stances, suspending the head, keeping a constant height, at a slow and constant displacement rate, represent some significant outcomes of this exercise (according to the Yang style). Another benefit is the strengthening of the legs, which is most important for beginners, especially if they have never practiced any sports before. Weakness in their legs causes equilibrium troubles and creates tensing, which impedes relaxation needed in tai chi chuan.

Movements of the waist with its relaxation and rotation can be superimposed to walking stances. In a second step, inclination and rotation of the chest controlled by the waist can be added to the training. The relative movements of the upper limbs can also be considered separately, by fixing the chest vertically.

Then, the relative movements of hands and arms appear much more restrained when compared to their absolute trajectories during the form practice. Getting fully conscious of the rules governing the movements of the upper limbs will allow the student to improve this aspect which is often overlooked by beginners.

In this essay, I will pay special attention to the study of these relative movements of the upper limbs by fixing the chest. The considerations are linked to the traditional Yang Cheng Fu handform school.

2. DEFINING THE FREE SPACE AROUND THE FIXED CHEST

When a student watches the teacher demonstrate a technique, he is an observer attached to the ground. Fixing the chest will help the observer concentrate on the chest, and watch the upper limbs evolve in this new reference system. If the observer has to move his upper limbs, he must be aware that a free space around the chest is available, but limited according to certain "criteria".

As a general rule, only half of the space in front of the chest is available: the limbs never go backwards. An exception to this rule concerns the elbows, when preparing for example "an" (push) in "lan que wei" (grasp the bird's tail) sequence. The other rule concerns the volume around the armpits, which has to remain free, so the available volume for the arms is still more limited.

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Besides this, forearms are often oriented in some privileged directions – or angular sectors – which represent other useful landmarks for the student. These directions, which also represent line forces, are the following:

- The forward direction, e.g.: "an" (push)
- The oblique directions (right and left hand side), e.g.: "dan bian" (single whip)
- Upward and downward directions, e.g.: "bai he liang shi" (white crane spreads its wings)

3. RECALLING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SHOULDER, ELBOW, AND WRIST.

Shapes of the upper limbs are subject to some rules, involving the relative positions of shoulder, elbow, and wrist. The movement of the limbs involves a continuous evolution of one shape to another. We recall here some of them, only on a descriptive point of view without discussing the force transmission they imply. In a general way, the elbow is sunk down. Indeed, as often taught by Master Yang Zhen-duo, inclination of the wrist with respect to the forearms governs the general shape of the upper limbs, both for palm and fist techniques:

Wrist "erect"

Erect the wrist results in sinking the elbow, which causes a vertical "bending" of the limb, with keeping the angle between arm and forearm generally larger than 90°: for example in "an" (push). When the wrist is erected and inclined obliquely inward, there results an oblique bow for the arm, with the elbows stretching aside, as for example, in "brush knee" (during the "opening" action). For a "closing" action, we can mention the upper arm in so-called "grasping a ball" preliminary to "pen" (ward off) technique. In most cases the elbow is slightly sunk down.

Wrist "flattened"

The wrist is flattened in the continuation of the forearm or slightly "bent", like in "pen" (ward off). Here again, the elbow remains sunk down. "Chui" (punch) as a fist technique belongs to this category.

Wrist "bent"

A bent wrist generally concerns fist techniques as in "shou di chui" (the fist under the elbow), and corresponds to arms bowed inward. The "hooked" hand

in "dan bian" (single whip) is a limit case with the arm and the forearm in the continuation of each other.

4. MOVEMENTS OF ARMS WITH RESPECT TO THE CHEST

Thus, movements of the upper limbs are limited to the available space around the chest, and must obey to kinematic rules dictated by their specific shapes. The taichi player has also to bear in mind the privileged directions in front of the chest and obliquely on each side (and sometimes up and down). These different elements represent learning landmarks for a student, both to get started for a beginner, or to get corrected for a more advanced learner.

For illustration, let us describe a kind of "grasping a ball" which takes place after "ti shou san shi" (raise hands), and is preparatory to stepping up to "bai he liang shi" (white crane spreads its wings). The two arms are initially in "raise hands" position, both stretched in oblique right direction according to the sideways direction of the waist in the form. The movement starts by "lu" (roll back) – like the preparation with arms stretched more obliquely on the right (corresponding to turn waist to the left). Then both arms are pulled down to the left, with the left arm leading.

In pulling, the left arm is progressively unfolded down toward the oblique left "sector", then the elbow becomes steady, and the movement is transmitted to the forearm in an ascending – fan-like movement with the palm facing the ground, and the wrist progressively erected. The left arm takes the final form of a bow, characteristic of the upper arm in "grasping a ball."

Following the left arm during the pull down, the right arm has to preserve the space around the right armpit during its descent. Finally, the right arm seems to wind itself around a fictive obstacle taking finally a "pen" (ward off) form characteristic of the lower arm in "grasping the ball".

5. IN WHAT PURPOSE USE THE FIXED CHEST METHOD?

When should we use the fixed chest approach in pedagogy? To my opinion, a global learning of the technique has to

be achieved first by the student. The fixed chest method can then be applied to the precise movements of the upper limbs. This kind of approach seems to be particularly useful for postures or group of postures involving direction changes, together with waist rotation and complex movements of the arms.

This is the case, among others for "dan bian" (single whip), for the sequence including "gau tan ma" (high pat horse) and "you fen jiao" (separation of right foot), and for "yu nu chuan suo" (jade lady passes through shuttle).

Showing such postures by the fixed chest method, we need also to present the preceding postures and the following ones, so that the student can place them inside the form with regard to the hand movements. This means that theoretically, the whole form could be performed entirely with a fixed chest.

Another benefit of this kind of practice is to allow the student to discover on a reduced aspect of the form, some characteristic features of taichi:

- Closing and opening, and other yin yang aspects
- The importance of elbows which often appear as "leaders" of the upper limb movements
- Connection between the arms, their reciprocal equilibrium, which for example, manifests itself in their nearly equal opening to the centerline of the chest as in "ye ma fen zong" (wild horse parts mane), "xie fei chi" (diagonal flight), or "zou peng" (left ward off).

It must be pointed out here that fixing the chest does not mean keeping it rigid. Tai chi essentials still hold for the chest and for the whole body. The head remains suspended, shoulders, waist, and knees are relaxed, the chest is kept slightly inward and the back is slightly curved. The whole body, although motionless, remains lively while moving the upper limbs. Obviously, after fixed chest work, the upper limb movement has to be progressively replaced by the normal form, and connected to walking stances, weight transfer and rotation of the waist with subsequent movements of the chest.

It must be mentioned that a separate training of the lower limbs with the waist and the chest might include elbows, due to their particular importance.

6. CONCLUSION

I have presented some aspects of training with a fixed chest as part of a selective training of taichi postures which would include those of the lower limbs and the waist. The fixed chest method can be developed for the complete form, but this would require a specific commitment which could appear useless with regard to the form practice. Indeed, this pedagogic method does not intend to be alternative to a traditional one. Its use should rather be limited to correct certain difficult postures already taught to students, and sometimes to help some of them achieve an easier learning.

techniques. In this way, it is permitted to hope that this method could help participating to technique transmission of our style.

Finally, it can be guessed that the fixed chest method proposed for the handform also holds for other taichi forms (saber, sword). The ideas presented herein by the author are naturally subject to discussion, and he will be grateful to receive some comments from the reader. ☯

By helping to improve movements of the upper limbs and to harmonize them according to yin and yang principles, this method can be considered as a complementary pedagogic means, for the same reason as an elementary tuishou exercise could be complementary by allowing a student to enforce his feeling of « pen ». Moreover, the method provides the student with a possibility of self-correcting his postures by comparing the upper limb positions with a fixed chest with those in the actual posture.

On the other side, a systematic research on the arm movements with a fixed chest, are interesting for the teacher himself who is led to an original reflection on the posture with some unexpected outcomes. Teachers using this approach can compare their different outcomes, which provides them a privileged basis to check their respective



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August 14-16 • Sword Form

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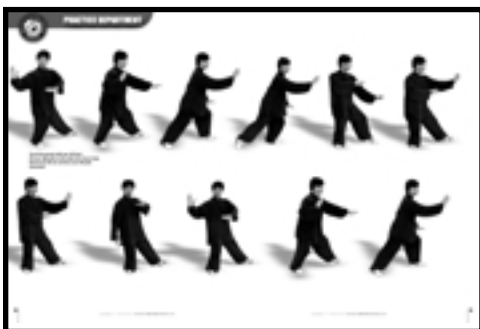
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August 23-26 • 103 Hand Form
August 27-29 • Sword Form

ERRATUM

In our previous Newsletter on p.9 we forgot one brush knee on the repetition. You can download the correct version in pdf format on our web site.



Shift your weight forward and circle your arms in to the back left. Meanwhile, pick up your right leg and step forward with it opened to 45'.



Turn your body to the right side and separate your arms. Your left arm should be bent slightly. Sit your palm. Your right arm and right fist will sit beside your hip. Round your right arm with the elbow pointing to the back. Step out while turning your body.



Gradually shift your weight forward and turn your body to square. Follow the turning of your body, punching out with your right fist. Bring your left palm in to sit beside your right forearm at the same time. make sure that your shoulders are level.



FRONT VIEW

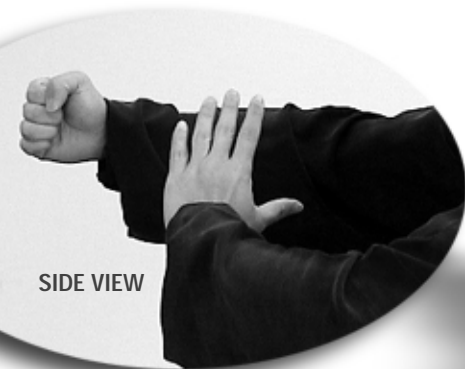


FRONT VIEW

Circle your left arm to your left and sit your left palm. Circle your right arm in front of your body and round it. While making this circle, gradually make a fist. Make sure that the right fist is palm down with the eye of the fist facing your body. On this step forward, your legs are not shoulder width, they are on the two sides of a single line.



FRONT VIEW



SIDE VIEW



Turn your left palm up and circle it under your upper right arm. At the same time, your right arm goes slightly to the left.

Shift your weight back. At the same time, turn your body to the right. Follow the turning of your body with your left arm warding off, and your right arm pulling back. Your right arm has to pass over your left forearm.



Turn your body to square, and at the same time rotate your palms and sit them in front of your body.



Shift your weight forward and bend your knee. Push out with your arms. Your arms should be shoulder level and bent slightly. Sit your palms. Keep your arms about shoulder width apart.



Shift your weight to the left side. Circle downwards with your arms and turn in your palms.

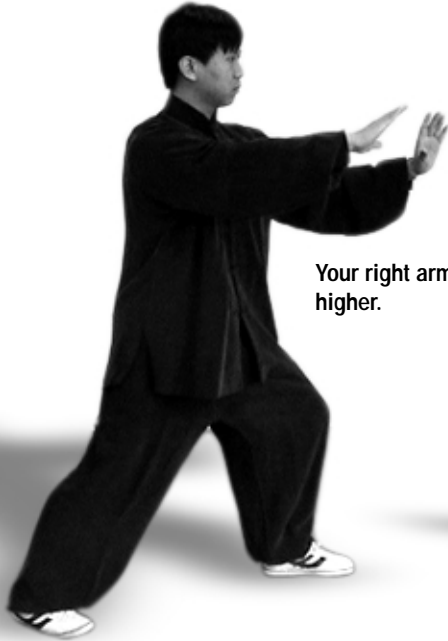


Cross your arms with ward off energy and raise them. They need to be rounded.

Keep sinking your shoulder and elbow.



Stand up at the same time as you separate and extend your arms to shoulder width apart. Your palms are facing up.



Your right arm is slightly higher.



Your arms are open and you sit the palms.

Shift your weight back and turn your body to the right. Sit your palm and round your arms so they make a slight oval together.

Turn your body to the right, and follow the turn with your left foot until it faces straight forward. Your right arm follows your body's turn, chopping. Sit your weight in your right leg.



Rotate your arms and turn your palms face down.



Push down with both your arms. Keep sitting your palms.



Rotate your palms and put them down on the side of your body. Keep your body relaxed, like we do for preparation.

Wu De :

Martial Virtue

*A Conversation with
Masters Yang Zhenduo and Yang Jun
Conducted by Dave Barrett and Translated by Jerry Karin*

This past summer in Portland, Oregon during the Seminar week at Reed College, the Masters were kind enough to sit down with us for a lengthy interview after a busy day of teaching. Our conversation began by exploring the ethics and traditional cultural values within the Chinese Martial Arts generally and Tai Chi Chuan specifically. Of particular interest was how Tai Chi Chuan practice in the modern era carries these traditional ethics into the complexities of the present day. The discussion focuses briefly on models of behavior for past generations, I'd like to summarize the well established code of conduct for martial artists that has developed in China.

Martial Morality covers two main areas: the actions and the mind set of the fighter. In activity, one should express Humility, Respect, Righteousness, Trust and Loyalty. Mentally, one must have Will, Endurance, Perseverance, Patience and Courage. Prospective students were examined rigorously in all these areas and any found lacking were not initiated into the tradition. Disciples who violated these precepts were dismissed. Stories abound throughout the course of Chinese history where these virtues played a crucial role in

individual careers as well as social upheavals. These stories are still passed along through popular kung fu heroes and their movies. They form an indelible pattern in Chinese culture and are well known beyond the martial arts community. For those interested in a detailed explanation of these traditional precepts I refer you to Dr. Yang Jwing-Ming's and Master Shou-yu Liang's book: *Baguazhang*- (Emie Baghuazhang), *Theory and Applications**, pages 9 to 20.

* (YMAA Publications, 1994)

I'd like to thank Jerry Karin for his brilliant simultaneous translation of the Masters' remarks. On listening to the tape during transcription I marveled at his ability to work within the flow of Master Yang's speech, so that he could express himself naturally and develop his ideas spontaneously. By sharing his unique skill with the rest of us we can all benefit from his hard work in translating difficult concepts into elegant and understandable language.

Now that is a Virtue!



WU DE
calligraphy by Professor Chan Sik Hung

DB: I'd like to ask about the moral code of Tai Chi Chuan and specific character traits that are developed through our practice. Several members have written me asking about the ranking test where it mentions a moral standard, they are curious about what this might be and where they can find out about it.

YZD: It's a very broad area; we can narrow the discussion to focus on morality within the martial arts traditions. Of course this should be a part of all occupations, for example in education, teachers have a duty to promote the proper social values, knowledge and physical development of their students.

As far as the martial arts are concerned, there is an innate quality of character required, a common standard of behavior. In the past you had to respect your teacher and the teacher as well had a responsibility to respect and care for the students. If we broaden our view this means the younger generation should respect the elders and the elders have a responsibility to look out for the youngsters.

In feudal times you had to be loyal to the person above you. This was a fundamental element of traditional society and of course there were many other aspects of this. To benefit oneself by harming others is not acceptable. For example, in the past if you had students that you adopted as your disciples, they would not be allowed to perform criminal activities. In the martial traditions one was expected to do righteous acts to benefit others. Just because one was skillful in the martial arts did not mean that they could do whatever they wanted to. One should be loyal and truthful.

YJ: This means that if one is stronger and more skillful than others, they should not take advantage of the weaker person.

YZD: Back in feudal society they used to talk about values in their family: loyalties to parents, care for children, and respect for spouses. In the martial traditions when we salute we have to cover the fist with an open palm as a gesture of humility and restraint. This is the main idea: not to act aggressively and take advantage of one's skills to do bad things.

One should have character, to be fair and straight. As they used to say this is the distinction between a gentleman and a petty man. Respect and tolerance are crucial; one should not take advantage of a group because they are smaller and weaker. These are the general ideas.

DB: In terms of personal development, personal character traits, how does Tai Chi Chuan help to develop the individual?

YZD: Nowadays our practice is not only martial, it has developed into a multi-purpose discipline but the traditional virtues still apply: be humble, honor the elders take care of the youngsters, do not take advantage of the weak. Even though one's skills may be very advanced, do not be prideful. However good you are there is probably someone better, and someone even better than that. You need to be humble.

YJ: There is a traditional saying: For every strong one there is one even stronger, for every tall mountain peak there is an even taller one beyond it.

YZD: These points developed out of a fighting tradition, in the larger social context it is sometimes difficult to avoid conflicts. But Tai Chi Chuan has changed. The moves are gently expressed, slowed down, not the fierce fighting styles of the past. This practice is slow, gentle and even. This can help give you a more coordinated and smooth existence and environment. It can tame your nature. With some people, their minds are hyperactive and agitated. Our practice allows them to slowly relax their thinking. This is a definite aid for personal cultivation

YJ: Especially important is our principle that within the movement you seek quiescence. This is a trend that can affect your life in general. If you are not struggling or competing there is very little that can disturb you.

YZD: This is a very nice thing in general. It is really a benefit for people's health and the health of the society at large. If we have the common goal of staying calm and centered and there is a matter of argument we can resolve it peacefully among ourselves without splitting into competing factions. We can get along in a coordinated fashion but so often social matters fall into argument and division, this has a negative affect socially. So it's important that the individual cultivate calm and equilibrium. In Tai Chi Chuan practice we address both the mind and the body so we often say that our practice can cause both to be healthy. In this way we can all respect each other and cooperate without any incidents. Otherwise there is struggle and division. This is the main idea: personal cultivation can positively affect the larger social dynamic.

DB: For the Tai Chi Chuan student, what particular qualities are necessary: Patience, perseverance, attention to detail? It seems these are elementary ingredients for success in practice.

YZD: You should have these conditions whether it be in Tai Chi Chuan or anything. When you do something you have to follow through and do it thoroughly. Don't do something in a half attentive way. This is true of any endeavor. For example, in our Shanxi Provincial Tai Chi Chuan Association there are many different practice groups some small and others quite large. They are like a big family. Everybody is concerned about each other, helping each other. If someone's family has a problem whether it is a difficulty or a happy thing like a wedding, the word gets out and the group pulls together to help. If there's work to be done, people show up to

武德

help. One of the members may be quite sick, so people take up a collection and go over to care for this person. This has happened many times in our Association. So if something big happens like the loss of a parent, the first thing members will do is come to the group and share with them and get support. They get along like a family. This is all through the larger group dynamic of Tai Chi Chuan practice. Everybody should help each other. If there is a problem we should go and help. This is a good result of practicing together. We train physically but we also train mentally and this affects our relationships

In the old days among the high level martial arts, not just bare hand also any kind of fighter, there were important conditions for the disciple to follow: not to steal or to force oneself in a sexual situation. One had to be careful not to teach such individuals. These were traditional precepts; today we focus on creating calm and even behavior in the individual. It is often said that when people begin to study Tai Chi Chuan they care more about others. Through this activity they can calm themselves and train their character. This can be a good influence in peoples' lives.

DB: This seems to be a unique feature of Tai Chi Chuan. There are many other sports but so many of them are competitive. In Tai Chi Chuan practice not only is there personal development but it also benefits a group approach to problem solving.

YZD: It shouldn't be competitive, it's not only Yang Style, there are many other styles of Tai Chi Chuan. But if we focus on Yang Style, even within this style there are many differences there too. We are working toward the health of the people. We shouldn't criticize other stylists, saying, "Our's is the only true way, your's is no good." We shouldn't do this. In practicing Tai Chi Chuan, if there is some difficulty or question we should get together and discuss it. We should strive for unity.

Somebody asked me about the Simplified 24 Move Tai Chi Chuan form, is that bad? Is our's better? I don't see it that way. I feel that the Simplified form can promote Tai Chi Chuan effectively, and because of the government's support of this form, Tai Chi Chuan has become more popular. This is a good phenomenon for us who practice Traditional Yang Family Style. It's not a bad thing. Of course there are some exceptions, it's hard to be absolute about this, generally they are the same. Some areas of the forms are slightly different, that's hard to avoid. I still think there is consistency with our Traditional Style and no serious contradictions. We can't say, "That's just wrong, mine is better." Of course, the Traditional Style has it's own special qualities. The world is a big place. Everybody has their own enthusiasms. For example, in Europe the food is different, even in China in the North they like salty and in the South sweet. This is not the same. So of course in doing Tai Chi Chuan there will be many different styles. That's good, people have more of a choice, not only one kind. The goal is still the same: to improve the health of everyone.

Now as far as which to study, that is up to the individual's preference. Just because I like to eat hot peppers, someone else is bad for not eating them? That's ludicrous! Some like vinegar and some don't but you can't say vinegar is bad; I may like vinegar and you don't. Some like Chen or Sun Style Tai Chi Chuan, everyone has their particular tastes and even more so one should not criticize on this basis. So if someone develops an effective method and popularizes it, there is a positive benefit. If the method was no good it would have disappeared, its existence indicates its benefit. Let them do it. This is how I feel about it.

DB: If I could summarize our discussion: Tai Chi Chuan has a positive effect on the personal level and in the community as well, but what Yang Laoshi was just talking about was a wider political awareness of tolerance, equanimity

and cooperation. If I could ask one last question: In your experience, what are the character traits a Tai Chi Chuan teacher needs to be successful?

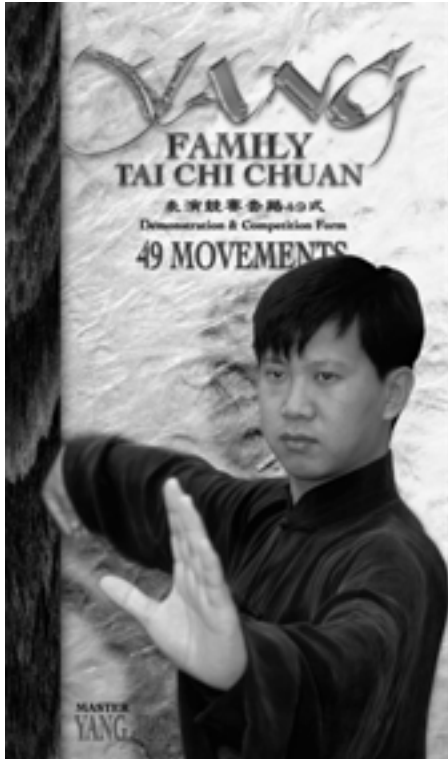
YZD: First, you have to establish your own skills through study and practice. If you want to be a teacher you have to be a model. If you are demanding something of others you must first demand it of yourself. Only then will the others learn correctly. If you're not square with yourself, the others won't be either. Find in yourself the traditional virtues of Respect and Humility.

The Chinese concept of teacher and disciple may be slightly different than that in the West. They used to say that the relationship was like that of father and a son. So this is a very intimate kind of relationship in some ways.

YJ: Many of the rules of behavior and points of etiquette we have been discussing go back over three thousand years and are drawn from a variety of traditional sources such as Lao Tzu, Chuang Tzu, Mencius and Confucius. These form a backdrop for Chinese culture. The current moral climate in China has changed a bit from more traditional models. In the past, when one wanted to study martial arts you were asked, "What is your purpose in training?" The first answer would be to strengthen the body and the second would be to develop a benevolent morality. There is a long tradition of martial heroes who used their skills righteously for the benefit of the people.

Now a days it's difficult to only use the Chinese moral compass. All of Chinese martial arts have become internationalized. To sum it all up the idea is that one should do good things. It's hard to talk about many of the details because of cultural differences.

DB: I would like to thank the both of you. Perhaps these virtues of martial practice are well known in China, for many of our international friends this conversation will be very interesting. ☯



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7. MAIL TO

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OS DEZ PONTOS ESSENCIAIS DO TAI CHI CHUAN

Transmitido oralmente por Yang Chengfu e registrado por Chen Weiming

7. SINCRONIZE O CORPO SUPERIOR E INFERIOR

Nos clássicos do Tai Chi "Sincronizar o Corpo Superior e Inferior" é expresso como: "Com sua raiz nos pés, emitindo desde as pernas, governado pela cintura, manifestando-se nas mãos e dedos – dos pés à cintura – completa tudo em um impulso". **** Quando as mãos se movem, a cintura se move e as pernas se movem e o olhar se move com eles. Apenas então podemos dizer que o corpo superior e inferior estão sincronizados. Se uma parte não se move ela não estará coordenada com o resto.

8. UNA O INTERIOR E O EXTERIOR

O que estamos praticando no Tai Chi depende do espírito e por isso há o dito: "O espírito é o general e o corpo suas tropas". Se você puder elevar o seu espírito, seus movimentos naturalmente serão leves e ágeis, a forma nada mais que vazio e cheio, aberto e fechado. Quando dizemos "abrir" não queremos apenas dizer abrir braços ou pernas; a intenção mental deve se abrir junto com os membros. Quando dizemos "fechar", não apenas significamos fechar braços ou pernas; a intenção mental deve fechar-se junto com os membros. Se você puder combinar o interno e o externo dentro de um simples impulso ****, então eles se tornarão um todo sem costuras. (Uma unidade completa).

9. (PRATIQUE) CONTINUAMENTE E SEM INTERRUPÇÕES.

Força nas artes marciais externas é um tipo de força bruta adquirida, e por isso ela tem um começo e um fim, tempos em que ela continua e tempos em que ela se corta, de tal forma que quando a força velha é usada e quando a nova força ainda não surgiu, há um momento que é extremamente fácil para a pessoa ser coagida

por seu oponente. No Tai Chi nós usamos mais a intenção do que a força e desde o princípio ao fim, suavemente, incessantemente, em círculo completo e retornando ao início, circulando infinitamente. Isto é o que nos clássicos do Tai Chi se fala por: "Como o Rio YangTse ou Amarelo, fluindo infinitamente". E novamente: "A força do movimento é como desenrolar fios de seda". Estas duas frases são referencia a esta unificação de um simples impulso****.

10. PROCURE A QUIETUDE DENTRO DO MOVIMENTO.

Artistas Marciais Externos apreciam saltar e parar como boa técnica e eles fazem isso até que a respiração (chi) e a força sejam exauridas, tanto, que após praticarem, eles ficam sem fôlego. No Tai Chi nós usamos a quietude para dominar o movimento e mesmo em movimento, ainda preservamos a quietude. Assim, quando você pratica a forma, quanto mais lento melhor! Quando você pratica devagar, a sua respiração torna-se profunda e longa, o chi submerge no campo de cinábrio (dan1 tian2) e naturalmente não há constrição danosa ou alargamento dos vasos sanguíneos. Se o estudante tenta cuidadosamente, ele pode ser capaz de compreender o significado oculto nessas palavras.

**** Literalmente "em um chi". Poderia ser abordado também como "em uma respiração".

We would like to thank and congratulate Jerry Karin, for this excellent English translation of the Ten Essentials, which has given us the opportunity to translate it into Portuguese and enrich our knowledge about this ten special items now much more clear than ever. Please Jerry, keep on this task for the benefit of all Tai Chi Chuan practitioners.



by Angela and Roque
- São Paulo - Brazil



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