

COMBAT & HEALING

The Magazine Of The World Taiji Boxing Association



MARCH 1994 No. 16

COMBAT & HEALING

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POSTAL ADDRESS:

Taiji Publications, P/O Box 792 Murwillumbah NSW
2484 Australia (066)797145.

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printed by 'THE PRINT SPOT' Murwillumbah NSW Australia

ABOUT THE COVER

James Figg, 1720's. England's first bare knuckle champion. He was also a champion of staff and sword. The reason for putting him on the front cover is that I have three dogs and rather than put them on ... Nah, I'll put them on as well.

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Recommended Reading

Internal Strength Magazine

Traditional Internal Information: P/O Box 280948 Lakewood CO
80228-0948 U.S.A.: \$US20.00 (\$10.00 extra for overseas) U.S.
funds. Quarterly.

Modern Kung-Fu Journal

Traditional Wushu, Neo-Classical Gung-Fu: P/O Box 5619, Chi-
cago IL 60680-5619 U.S.A. Cost, same as Internal Strength.

WHAT IS BALANCE IN AN INTERNAL CONTEXT?

by Michael Babin

A great deal of lip-service is paid to the concept of being "balanced" in the internal arts. In truth, learning to appreciate all aspects of this, in particular avoiding being "double-weighted", is the hardest part of understanding that synthesis of body and mind which makes T'ai Chi Ch'uan, for example, different from a Shaolin style.

Balance is not just physical; there are other dimensions to be considered: are you balanced in how seriously you take your training -- neither training obsessively day and night, sacrificing family and friends, education and/or career nor being lackadaisical, training sporadically as the mood strikes you.

In self-healing and martial terms, balanced training implies learning to cultivate the harmonious interplay of

yin and yang in your physical movements. It also implies that you will spend roughly equal amounts of time practising the slow forms and the applications forms/martial exercises of your style.

It also means that you will do your best to learn skills that might actually provide self-defense skills without turning yourself into a paranoid "hair-trigger" waiting to explode if someone looks at you the wrong-way on the street.

It also means that you will do your best to learn skills that might actually provide self-defense skills without turning yourself into a paranoid "hair-trigger"

Balance also implies that you will persevere as much because you enjoy the classes and solo practice as because you are determined to "improve yourself" in some way. With the right attitude, your T'ai chi work becomes play of the highest order. You don't have to be grimly determined to "do T'ai Chi" to see its greatest benefits.

It is also sadly true that balance is also often miss-

interpreted by those practising and teaching the internal arts. You only have to attend any of the form and push-hands competitions or watch such events on video to understand that it is most often being experienced solely on a technical/physical level.

However, balance in internal training is not simply a question of how well you can stand on one leg or how well you can resist being pushed by your peers even though doing both requires a basic understanding of essential "internal" body mechanics.

You don't have to be grimly determined to "do T'ai Chi" to see its greatest benefits.

In internal term, balance has as much to do with your mental activity while practicing [the Classics speak of the mind leading the ch'i and not the other way around] as it has with how you physically accomplish those movements [not the hands or feet leading the physical movement but the waist and hips leading the limbs.

In addition, our emotions can easily manipulate our sense of balance. For example, the instant a beginner supports his

body weight on one leg in order to do a kick, he or she will experience any of a variety of emotions: "Why is my supporting knee trembling?"; or "This hurts!" or "I'm going to fall over and look stupid!"; or "I can't do this smoothly and it looks so easy"; or "I can't get my knee up as high as that middle-aged guy next to me!"

In addition, our emotions can easily manipulate our sense of balance.

The more experienced practitioner has more technical skill as well as a new set of emotional responses when practising the same movement: "This is getting easier all the time!"; or "Wow, look how high I can kick, I'll be doing better than my instructor soon"; or "The judges have to be impressed by this"; or "I feel like I could stand here all day on one leg and the others are struggling to keep their balance."

By contrast, the expert, in the best sense of the word, moves through each posture with what looks like effortlessness and pays no conscious attention to its SPECIFIC DETAILS unless he or she

has a particularly bad, or good, day. Progress in the technical performance of form is still important; but has become much less-so than in the beginning.

"performance" has become totally inappropriate in describing such an individual's state of being while moving in form or doing a martial technique.

Eventually a few experts become master practitioners (Erle Montague and Liang Shouyu are two that I have had the pleasure of seeing do form) and both seem truly as unconcerned with impressing others as they are with the occasional technical mistake during their performance.

In fact, "performance" has become totally inappropriate in describing such an individual's state of being while moving in form or doing a martial technique. Their movement seems as natural to them as taking a walk or going up a flight of stairs. Sometimes they stumble when doing both; but, such minor losses of balance are recovered from automatically and have no bearing on their innate ability.

The first T'ai Class I ever did in the mid-70's was a more mundane example of this. The class was being held in a jujitsu dojo and we had just spent a few minutes at the end of the session listening to the instructor tell us how T'ai Chi practice would make us calmer and bring greater balance, co-ordination and a sense of attentiveness to our lives.

He then dismissed the class and we all headed for the changing rooms in the basement. The instructor promptly slipped and rolled all the way down the flight of stairs leading to the basement. Everyone stood at the head of the stairs in shocked silence -- a few repressing laughter -- as he sprang unhurt to his feet and looked up at us with a red face. No one spoke as we all filed carefully down the stairs and followed him into the changing room.

The more experienced practitioner has more technical skill as well as a new set of emotional responses when practising the same movement:

I used to tell this story to my students as an example of how arrogance can lead (literally in this case!) to a fall and that even an instructor could make a fool of himself and survive the embarrassment. However, now that I am a lot older and my T'ai Chi a little better, I can also appreciate the skill with which he rolled his way to his feet -- unhurt except for his pride -- after a loss of balance that might have seriously injured someone else.

By contrast, the "non-master" is often overly-concerned about technical prowess and the outward beauty of what he or she is doing.

Even masters are human and will occasionally struggle briefly with the need to "do it right" or appear "infallible". However, in general such practitioners also obviously couldn't care less how their T'ai Chi or Pa-kua or Hsing-I looks to observers because of their faith in their own understanding of the art and because he or she is able to recover so smoothly from a "loss of balance" that the mistake is difficult for the average observer to see.

By contrast, the "non-master" is often overly-concerned about technical prowess and the outward beauty of what he or she is doing. Such a pre-occupation can easily become a source of internal and/or external tension that diminishes the quality of training.

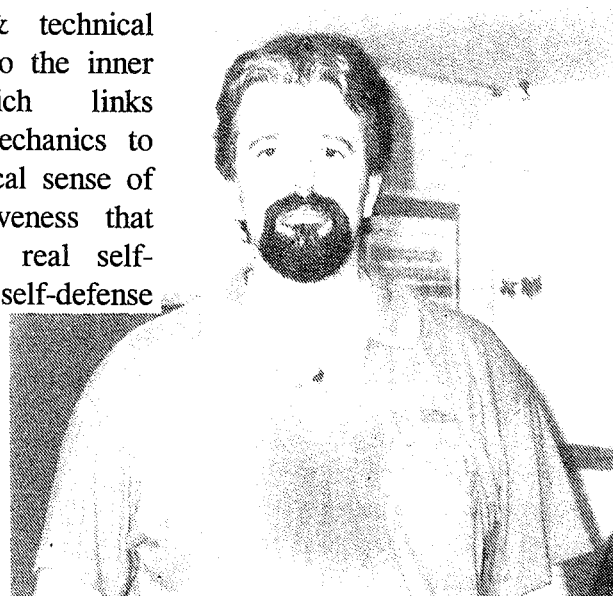
This is not to say that the ability to balance yourself on one leg is unimportant or that the technical beauty of your movements are unimportant.

If you go too far in the other direction you may develop an obsession with internal development that leads to other problems

The best practitioners manage to find true balance in terms of paying attention to both their physical & technical competence and to the inner experience which links effective body mechanics to that almost mystical sense of calm and attentiveness that eventually brings real self-healing and self-defense skills.

The best practitioners manage to find true balance in terms of paying attention to both their physical/technical competence and to the inner experience

Figure 1: Mike Babin



Push Hands, What the masters say

Erle Montaigne

It is my argument that when it comes to anything in life, one should experience it him/herself. It's just not good enough to take some master's word for things if we do not actually understand it ourselves.

My main teacher, Chang Yiu-chun said over and over, "stop asking questions, learn it yourself". Someone, had to invent the martial arts, and there had to be a time when the martial arts, all systems were contemporary and not classical. Something only becomes "classical" after many years of use. And even then, it must be still accepted by the public who make use of any particular "classic".

It's the same with the martial arts. A style only becomes a classic style after many years of continued and tested use. But does that make a "classic style" good? Perhaps thousands of people are practising something that is not good, simply because they take the word of the inventor, never questions. So often we hear the phrase, "is it a classical style", with the tone of, that it must not be good if it is not classical. We never once think that at one time, all classical styles must have been new styles yet to be tested.

Taiji and all of the other "internal" styles had an inbuilt mechanism whereby we are able to still practice the style as times change. Many of the ancient styles were built around the self defence needs of the time, when people roamed the streets with swords hanging by their sides. Or people would live in fear of spear attack etc. This is not usually the case in modern times and to remain a viable martial art, all systems must be able to change to deal with modern

times. I know of karate katas where one move is to slap the bottom of the foot during that doing of that kata. No-one knew for many years exactly what this slap meant until a friend of mine went to Okinawa and found out that this slap was representative of taking off the wooden "shoe" worn by ancient Japanese, to throw it at an attacker! But, the move is still right in there.

Having said all of this, I will now include what many of the masters had to say about push hands, and see if you can pick out the areas of change built in to the system.

One must keep in mind however, that when I am talking about "push hands", I mean the advanced method of "joining arms" and not the beginners form of push hands where we simply learn about joining with a partner/attacker.

Only at a high level of learning will all of the great benefits of push hands be available. In fact, I know of so called "masters" who have been doing the basic push hands for over 30 years, never knowing that there is anything above this and they have gained nothing, just going on some other old master's word that it will all work out in the long run. What use is a martial art if we are only able to use it when we are ninety, or what use a healing art if it does not heal us until it is too late!

Push hands is the basis of t'ai chi as a martial art, as well as a healing art. By joining hands with a partner we not only learn to 'feel' another person, we learn to listen with our skin. We learn to know about the centre, where it is and how to find it. In this way the whole body be-

comes highly sensitised and we just know where and when an attack will occur. There is nothing supernatural about this, it's just that we work with other people for so long that we begin to know certain signs.

For the purpose of healing, we learn to feel the changes in potential of the acupuncture points and are able to find them more easily. In order for all of the above to take place we must practise push hands the 'right way'.

Everyone is different but there are certain guidelines left to us from many years of trial and error by the masters. The following are translations of what the masters said.

Yang Sau-Chung

Yang Sau-Chung (1909 - 1985) was the eldest of the four sons of Yang Ching-Fu and the teacher of my main teacher. I also became one of the only westerners to be formally introduced to Yang.

He said:

"Keep yourself well in balance, lower your shoulders and elbows, push hard with the momentum of the waist and leg, keep your eyes on the opponent and at the same time hollow your chest and raise the back.

The strength comes from the whole and not just the arms. Do not exert force but the idea is there. Shift your centre of gravity as required, action and idea should be in harmony. Action is included in inactivity. Loosen the waist. Keep your mind on

the tan-tien. After a while a potential energy will develop and can be used to great advantage in attack and defence".

Yang Ching-Fu

Yang Ching-Fu was one of the greatest modern masters and is responsible for the founding of the modern Yang style. He did much good for taiji but in a way he also did much bad, as his style was so easy to learn that people nowadays think that, that is all there is to taiji.

Cheng-fu was responsible for changing his father's style into something that everyone could learn, leaving out most of the martial arts from the style.

He said:

"The head should be held vertical so that the spirit can reach the crown".

"Sink the chest naturally and pluck up the back".

This does not mean being hunch-backed. When the chest is concave then the back is naturally lifted. Relax the waist, it is the director of the movement and can't do its job if it is tense.

"Know the difference between yin and yang, your step will be lively and full of energy. Sink the shoulders and elbows".

If this happens you are able to use fa-jing (explosive energy) to great advantage. Use the mind and not force. The whole body should act as a whole unit.

"The ch'i is joined without breaks".

When we use force to attack there is a time when the power is broken waiting for the body to gain control again. At this time we could be easily attacked. When we use the power of the mind the ch'i is never broken but flows on and circulates back inwards leaving no openings.

Yang Pan-Hou

Yang Pan-Hou was the uncle of Yang Ching-Fu and apart from Ching-Fu's brother, Yang Shou-Hou, and Chang Yiu-chun, he was probably the last great Yang master to teach the original Yang Style as a full martial art. What Pan-Hou has to say is slightly 'harder' in tone than many of the others.

He Said:

"In p'eng (ward off), both arms should be rounded with a distance between the wrist and chest."

The arms are as if being held up. Whether active or inactive, the idea is always there for attack. Firstly we use 'roll back' then 'squeeze forwards' (chee), this leaves not much room for escape.

"When we apply 'press' (arn), we must look as if we might fall but keeping our centre we easily fool the opponent. Contact with both arms and stick to the opponent. If the opponent is heavy and fast then use the technique of 'split' to throw him many feet away. Elbow and/or shoulder are used if our technique is somewhat lacking and we are pulled or pushed off balance. We need not fear the great tech-

nique of the opponent, we move and change to the conditions. Move in close and take the advantage but be careful of your three fronts, hands, eyes and feet. Watch the opponent's seven stars, head, elbows, shoulders, hips, knees and feet."

Always attack from the side when attacked first. With a little practice most people can develop a strong p'eng so use pull down or split.

Always follow up a successful action without delay to finish the confrontation. Control your four sides but look for weaknesses in your opponent's four corners.

When using elbow or shoulder stroke, move in close in order to uproot using little energy. Use the 'fa-jing' to surprise the opponent then use spinning energy from the side, turning the waist with great speed. If we are close to the opponent and the longer techniques will not work, use shoulder, elbow and knee. Not knowing about yin and yang is like having a cart without wheels. When we have the opponent 'in our palm' and feel yin, be wary, if we feel yang then attack. The maximum power of the hands and feet must arrive together from the side out of the free circle. To know about the circle we must first of all know about timing. We must use defence then offence, evade and attack simultaneously. If the opponent locks the joints, follow the movement and block the lock. Sink the body to escape from pulling of the wrist and turn the wrist.

Chang Yiu-chun

Chang, I regard as my main teacher nowadays, although I

have had many other teachers. Chang was a true warrior and a true man of the internal. His words matched his external appearance and way of moving, very economical. But, like his movement, his words, although not many, held much greatness within every word.

"When touching the opponent, think with your skin". "You should never hurt anything, let your body do it". "If you do not want to be pushed over, then you have already lost". "Lose yourself in the movement". "Do all Australians think like you!"

"Your eyes are open, but closed". "Feel your opponent like you feel your woman, tenderly, he attacks and you aren't there". "Everything is alive, do not hurt it, walk on the grass and thank it for making your path soft". "You eat too much!" "You talk too much!" "When you do push hands, be like that tree over there".

Using the right muscles for the right job

In order to make the best use of your given physical strength you must know how to use only the amount of muscle necessary for that particular work. In particular, you must know how to relax counter muscles. For instance, you do not want to use your biceps muscle if you are pushing or your triceps if you are pulling. Lean up against a wall with the back of one of your palms touching the wall, lift one foot off the ground so that there is a lot of pressure on the arm. Now feel your biceps - they should be totally relaxed.

Next, grab some object which is attached to something solid and lean backwards with your arm slightly bent as before. Now your triceps should be totally relaxed.

Using ch'i

Ch'i is quite indefinable; the closest translation is energy or electricity. All I am able to say is, do all of the right things as in the main points of ch'i kung and t'ai chi and you should start to feel something new. I have seen some seemingly supernatural feats, some fake and some for which I have no answer. I have discovered more to be fake than otherwise, but it is the one in a million that I have seen that makes me believe that there is something extra to be gained. Even if it is just great good health, what more can you ask for? With a little more training, you might just find out something else.

The main idea is not to start t'ai chi and ch'i kung to become a superman. If this is your idea you will never succeed, as the following story illustrates.

A young lad in Japan wanted to study sword play with the most famous master in Japan so he gained an audience with him. The boy asked the master how long it would take him to learn the sword if he practised every day. The master told him about 25 years. The boy looked shocked and asked how long it would take him if he practised night and day and had master-ship as his only goal. The master told him that he would never learn.

Keep in mind that if your own technique works against your friend who is perhaps at the same level as yourself, it may not work against someone more experienced. Only keep what is useful for the martial art. Do not try and be 'good at push hands'.

Still being in workshop mode, after having attended the annual W.T.B.A. camp, Debbi, Martin and I descended on the Brisbane Martial arts bookshop, burrowing into every corner and shelf, equipping ourselves with Qi kung and Pakua **books**, swords and Pakua staffs (seemed we weren't the only ones bent on a look around as a familiar face of a Cairns-ite came smiling through the door).

Armed with our excessive luggage, we settle down on the plane and decide to put to good use the 3 hour flight: Debbi and

ety as we can fit into the 2 days, rather than concentrate on one or perhaps two aspects:- as we both had a one day workshop earlier in the year in which only one topic was focussed on.

The time factor gave us scope for multiple choices; so we wrote a list of ideas that we would like to include:

- 1) New techniques learnt at the Midginbil Hill workshop
- 2) Qi kung that the students had not done in class before
- 3) Applications from the 3rd. Third, Yang Lu- Chan form
- 4) Mitt work: with fa-jing being the focus for more advanced students
- 5) Small San Sau: at basic and advanced level
- 6) Large San Sau: at basic and advanced level

Elaborating from this list we looked at each item to see what we want to include:

1) —

- i: As the students had all completed the circular Pakua form previously, it was timely to proceed onto the applications, particularly as we had concentrated on learning these at Midginbil Hill; due to the complexity of these applications we knew that we would get no further than the end of the 3rd. palm change in the allotted time.

THE KIWI CONNECTION: PLANNING A WORKSHOP

By Lyn McAlister

I will plan a workshop.

The first decision is to determine what group of students we intend to cater for- we settle on all graded students: Intermediate and Advanced levels, and therefore will have to base the instruction to fit the needs of the individual, with the latest advance techniques being taught to the higher graded students.

We next decide that the content should include both TAI-CHI and PAKUA with as much vari-



Lyn Teaching Martin, Small San-Sau

on the mitts, small and large san sau.)

3)

- In a one-day workshop on the Yang Lu- Chan form earlier in the year, applications up to the end of the 2nd.third had been shown and practiced; as the same students would be attending we decided to complete the applications to the end of the 3rd. Third of the form.

- ii: Prior to the camp Debbi and I had been very fortunate in having some private training with Erle, specifically looking at the fa-jing in Large San Sau, and Erle also went over the Advanced Small San Sau—both of these we felt we should at least introduce at our workshop.

- iii: Some of us had done basic Post-stepping but Erle went on to show us the applications; without correct Post-stepping one would find it difficult, if not impossible, to be grounded martially.

2)

- Commencing each day with a Qi kung is a means of gathering everyone, not only topographically, but also procuring a group energy.

In London last year, I had learnt a Qi kung which I have named 'snake-fingers' Qi kung. The other Qi kung is one to assist in obtaining fa-jing, (which we intend to work on, with punches

4)

- As the advanced students had minimum practice on the mitts we decided to stay with the basic straight punch and look at the body movement components that are required to get a correct Tai- chi shock



Bagwa

punch, pertaining to the individuals' level.

5)

- Those students who had not completed the Small San Sau form would aim to

do so. At an advanced level, those students who have trained for several years, and are familiar with fa-jing would learn some modifications of the movements that take this form to a more intricate and realistic level.

6)

- Some of the students had never done Pauchui; others had completed the sequence of the paired form: Large San Sau; whilst others had done Pauchui with fa-jing. Erle is now teaching his more advanced students Large San Sau with fa-jing in short but definite modules: this not only gives one time to draw ones breath but allows for the control that otherwise could induce injury.

Again we looked at our list to determine in what order we should proceed: there was some obvious grouping:

- e.g. a) all fa-jing work: Qi kung for fa-jing, mitt work

Small San Sau and Large San Sau.

- b) Pakua: after Applications we thought to include some Pakua Push Hands.

'TAI-CHI' becomes more than an art, a discipline; it becomes a way of life, a culture, a means for survival, something to cherish and nurture and to pass on to others.

The other items we would place so that we did not do all the most physically energetic things one after the other; after all we needed everyone to last the pace!

Following is our final Plan for the 2 days:—

DAY 1:

- Qi kung: Snake Fingers
- Pakua Circular Applications
- Pakua Push Hands
- Punches
- Post-stepping plus Applications
- Yang Lu-Chan Applications 3rd. third

DAY 2:

- Qi kung: Thymus tapping

- For fa-jing
- Mitt work for fa-jing Advanced Small San Sau
- Large San Sau I basic and fa-jing

There will be a follow-up article in the next magazine going into detail of techniques with which you may not be so familiar and also to explain our approach in different body movements and expectations for intermediate to more advanced students.

We have all come to realise that there is a lot of social interaction with our various groups of T'ai chi and this workshop was not only hard work, and informative but it was lots of fun.

I would like to conclude with this statement written by a student of mine:

'TAI-CHI' becomes more than an art, a discipline; it becomes a way of life, a culture, a means for survival, something to cherish and nurture and to pass on to others. It is not selfish, as the more one shares ones Tai-chi the better the understanding"

Thanks

I would like to thank the following, without whom this article would not be possible, as they participated in the workshop (in alphabetical order): Dean, Don, Eleanor, Gus, Martin, Paul, Petro, Reg, Robin, and most of all Debbi who shared all the planning and instruction with me.

The Kiwi Connection

Lyn and Debbie Hart, along with Annie Blackman form the Kiwi Connection.

All are members of the W.T.B.A. with Annie and Debbie being our highest graded li'l girls.

You may write to Annie & Debbie at 77a & b respectively, Seaview Rd Waiheke Island Auckland, or phone:

Debbie & Lyn: 418 4314

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By Erle Montaigne

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Martial Arts, The Forgotten Art

By Erle Montaigue

There was a time when martial artists had to hide their identities, train under the cover of darkness and assume their normal roles during the daylight hours. The reason was obvious, they were trained killers, assassins, where one blow from a hand or finger would kill their opponent. They wouldn't even talk about the martial arts to outsiders, with only their immediate family members knowing about their hidden abilities.

Nowadays, martial artists go out of their way to show and to prove that they are martial artists. They wear loud clothing with their name written in large letters across the back or front of their loud 'gi'. Next to their name is the word 'sensei' or 'sifu'. They enter into competitions to show how good they are at the martial arts and have their trophies displayed in prominent positions in their homes for all to see and to ask about. The reason for this strange behaviour is that martial artists, somewhere along the way turned into sportsmen and women. You cannot be a sportsman if you cannot compete to win at something, after all, that's what sport is all about, beating someone else either for ego or for money or both.

It is my view, that if you compete in tournaments for any reason, in any way, in public, you should prefix your art with the word, 'sports'. Sports karate, sports kung-fu etc. The reason is that you just cannot mix the deadly ancient martial arts with sports martial

arts, there is no way. The ancient martial artist relied upon the very deadly techniques becoming sub-conscious, so that if he was attacked, these deadly techniques would just be there without thinking. A slap to the neck area to instantly kill the opponent, or a couple of fingers to the eyes etc. We cannot use these techniques in the ring or in tournament, so we train **not** to do them. We actually train to be **not deadly**, so that we will not be disqualified. We train to become the world champion or to win that next tournament on the way up to the world championships.

*we train not to do them.
We actually train to be
not deadly, so that we
will not be disqualified.*

Some people say that this does not apply to their martial art because they do **non-contact**. So we see a young lad 'fighting' in his non-contact tournament, he gets a beautifully timed reverse punch to the stomach area and is awarded a point. But does he know where he is striking to?

Any good body builder or martial artist can take a punch to the stomach area, so why is this particular martial artist given the point. So, he breaks a few bricks to show that he has the power. Bricks, and indeed all objects that martial artists break are brittle and break easily. A stomach is not brittle and will not break given the correct training. We have other martial artist also saying that their 'sport' is correct because they do 'full contact'. There are no full con-

tact tournaments, at least those that are legal. All have some sort of rules. And what of the person who would enter into such a competition! They should be gaoled for wanting to hurt someone for self gain. Anyone who enters into a competition when he knows that he is able to maim someone, is mentally deficient, and is not a warrior.

I'm not saying here that we should not do 'sports karate', but rather that we should all realise that it is no longer a martial art.

Are the referees trained to spot a strike to deadly points? The answer is no. Ask any karate or kung-fu person where they are striking to in tournament and they will just say, "to the stomach area" or to the face etc. The deadly strikes have been deliberately left out of the martial artist's training because they are just that. And along the way, newer black belts and trainers themselves have forgotten about their martial arts background and what they used to be used for.

When I was a lad, many years back, I used to look in awe at anyone who I found out to be a martial artist. This person had the ability to kill with one finger or to fight several men and win. This was the idea that we had back then. I ask my older sons what they think of this or that martial artist, and they laugh! They have seen tournament fights on the television and live, nothing deadly about it, nothing

special, more like a regular boxing match than a deadly game.

One of the other reasons for the demise of the martial arts, is that it simply takes so long to learn if one learns it in the true way. Nowadays we have to be black belt in one year, and I have seen advertisements in magazines (U.S.A. in particular) advertising that anyone can be black belt standard in one year. So, a young lad wants to learn a martial art, and is told that he will be a black belt in 10 years, he goes to the next school who tells him that he will have his black belt in one year. He choses the one year stint of course.

I'm not saying here that we should not do 'sports karate', but rather that we should all realise that it is no longer a martial art. It is a sport, and it is OK to do that particular sport, but don't call it a martial art. It's a bit like grouping the works of Dickens in the same bag as the works of Barbara Cartland, calling them both "classic literature". Both have their place, but are perceived to be different.

The Deadly Martial Arts

There are not many martial arts nowadays that have remained intact over the years. Much hard work was done back in the early days (like the 11th and 12th century) to make the few martial arts that were popular back then, into very deadly systems. My own martial arts of taiji and bagwa used to have this deadly aspect, but have since lost it even more-so than the other martial arts. I'm talking now on a general public level, or what the general martial arts public

perceive any particular martial art as being.

Even Karate, our newest martial art, back when it was invented, had very deadly strikes.

My limited knowledge of other ancient martial arts tells me that these also had a very dangerous aspect and have also since lost it with only a handful or even less, of masters retaining these aspects but not teaching them. Even Karate, our newest martial art, back when it was invented, had very deadly strikes. They didn't know why these strikes worked, as the Chinese didn't tell them, but they knew where to strike to cause the most damage. Now, ask many highly ranked karateka what this strike causes and why, and he will not be able to tell you. Ask him further what this move means from his kata, and he will tell you a very basic technique, one that might or might not work.

My own martial arts of taiji and bagwa used to have this deadly aspect, but have since lost it even more-so than the other martial arts.

Many karateka are now seeing this and are beginning to look further at their own arts, with some looking at other older mar-

tial arts and trying to get the big picture, then taking that knowledge back into their own more modern art to cause it to become more whole. Many are seeing the folly of sports karate as a self defence art, but sadly, these are few. I have even had martial arts schools in the U.S.A. ban my video tapes as being too dangerous! They are supposed to be teaching very deadly martial arts, and yet they ban a video because it is too deadly!

The Deadly Techniques

Without writing a whole book (which I am) on the most deadly strikes, I will cover an area that all classical deadly martial arts have in common, the neck.

Many are seeing the folly of sports karate as a self defence art, but sadly, these are few.

Look at any animal fighting, they do not fight, they survive, and that usually means killing the opponent. Where does a dog go for, the neck. Even chickens go for the neck!

When the referee at tournaments reads out the rules, what are the two areas that are firstly outlawed. The neck and eyes. The neck is the most vulnerable area of the body. The reason is that it cannot bob and weave like the head (eyes) are able to, it is mainly soft tissue and in there are many very sensitive organs, that when either struck or squeezed will cause the opponent to black out or die. In any

fight, if for instance a good judo person is able to get any sort of neck lock, the fight is finished right there. If someone knows how to strike to the neck, the fight is also finished.

Easier to strike to the neck though as we have to come in really close in order to get a choker, thereby making that technique a little more dangerous to the doer, especially against someone who knows how to punch. This may sound obvious, however, I have seen many martial artists throw their best shot at an oncoming judo attacker and have it just bounce off doing no harm what-so-ever! In an attacking rage, you don't just punch to the face area and hope for the best, you must know where to strike, and you must know how to punch from a very short distance without drawing your fist back or bringing it from your hip. A good grappling attacker can be on you before you can blink, so it's important that you have been trained to attack the instant he attacks with the most devastating punches to the most devastating points.

Many argue that we (martial artists) should aim for the least damaging points when attacked, to just put him down without really hurting him, to only use the right amount of pressure to that neck point to only cause a mild K.O. This is fine, as long as you have the control which can only be gained over many years of practice, and not only the deadly techniques but also the control must have become sub-conscious. It is my opinion that those

who make these statements, have never been faced with that little gleaming piece of metal



Photo No. 1

with a raving lunatic at the other end. In these cases, all control goes out the window with your absolute fear! And you do the best you can to simply survive.

Where does a dog go for, the neck. Even chickens go for the neck!



Photo No. 2



Photo No. 3

Bagwa is one of the internal martial arts. The techniques from Bagwa aim 75% of the time at the neck area. Either striking directly at the neck points or by squeezing those same points or by simply bending the neck in a certain way as to break the back bone at the neck. There is no competition with bagwa, no points gained, it is just over-kill.



Photo No. 5



Photo No. 4

As far as the method of using bagwa for self defence is concerned, many years is taken up in gaining sub-conscious reaction. Things like 'eagle vision', 'reptile brain', fa-jing, are all learnt before any of the deadly techniques are even shown. This grounding gives the bagwa practitioner the foundation to then lay over the top the most deadly techniques, knowing that they



Photo No. 6

All neck strikes are dangerous no matter how controlled or how soft. If a person goes into K.O. or is even a bit dazed or unsteady from a neck shot, then it has been a dangerous strike that caused this. But then, this is a part of the warrior's tools, to be able to work out instantly whether or not an attack is for real. And this only comes with many years of realistic training. All attacks involving edged weapons have to be considered to be for real. So we use the most deadly strike.

will work because that grounding has been done. So although I am showing a couple of bagwa techniques here, it's a bit like giving someone a handful of bullets with no gun.

All neck strikes are dangerous no matter how controlled or how soft.

Every part of the palm is used in bagwa. One of the more simple techniques in the kata would be as follows.

The waist turns to your left as your arms open slightly and your right foot moves forward. (Photo No. 1). Now the waist turns back to your right as your palms close slightly. (Photo No. 2). The waist turns back to your left as your left palm pulls in and your right palm pokes forward. (Photo No. 3).

Notice that I have made mention of the waist here. The waist is

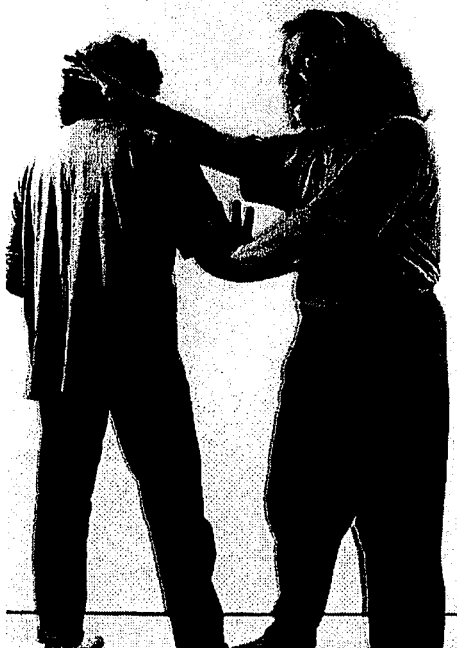


Photo No. 7



Photo No. 8



Photo No. 9

the motor of bagwa. Although I have talked you through the movement of the waist, it all happens in a split second with the waist doing a fa-jing or 'explosive energy' move. The hands simply follow the waist. This is the beauty of bagwa at an advanced level, all you have to do is to control the waist and the hands will look after themselves.

At a kumite level, that same movement again; He attacks, there is an instant shake of the waist from left to right, your left palm has taken his right forearm, striking it in a way as to cause a 'set up' dim-mak point to be activated. (Photo No. 4). Now as the waist is violently turned back to the left, your right fingers poke into St 9 (stomach 9) point at the side of his neck causing either death or K.O. (Photo No. 5).

In the above case, the fingers could have struck to any number of neck points causing the same outcome. To an onlooker, and reading this scenario, it seems as if not much has happened and that this technique is rather simple. But internally there is much work happening in order to make this move fa-jing. Without fa-jing, the move will not work.

In the neck there are 'dim-mak points', 'nerve points' and internal organs. Bagwa makes use of all three strikes. For instance, using the same technique again, I

could have used the knife edge of my right palm, (Photo No. 6), to strike to his vagus nerve area, (a nerve strike, or pressure point) which causes signals to be sent to the cardio-inhibitory centre in the brain which in turn cause a signal to be sent to the heart to slow down or to stop.

I could also have used a slightly different angle and come in from behind his neck, (photo No. 7), to the accessory nerve which is also attached to the vagus nerve higher up in the head, causing not only the heart to stop but also the nervous system to shut down in a 'neurological shut-down'. This point at the back of the neck is particularly vulnerable when grappling, a light tap is all that is needed here to cause the opponent to fall onto the ground.

If you can strike to the face, then you can strike to the neck. I can either punch to his face, (Photo No. 8), or use a palm to his neck, (photo No. 9). the action is the same, but the outcome is greatly different, with the neck strike winning every time.

But, you cannot use these techniques in tournament. Some tournament rules allow the use of the old 'sleeper' wrestler's neck lock, but do not allow strikes to the neck, thus favouring jujitsu and wrestlers. The effectiveness of the neck lock, whether it be an air lock, blood lock or a point lock, has been shown time and time again provided that the receiver, **allows** the attacker to get it on in the first place. But a person who knows good neck technique will always defeat a person who does not. And I am talking about absolute self defence here and not tournament 'fighting'.

SEX FOOD TAIJI

What A Heading!

Sexual Fasting

In order to make the greatest use of our given ch'i or internal energy, and to take our sexual habits back to being normal again, we must also go on a 'sex fast.' No, don't burn the magazine right now, it's not as difficult as you think. All you have to do is to give it up for three or four days, and then see how your normal sex will be enhanced naturally. Your sex 'taste buds' will spring back to life and give you renewed feelings towards your partner.

In order to make the greatest use of our given ch'i or internal energy, and to take our sexual habits back to being normal again, we must also go on a 'sex fast.'

Eventually you will be able to only have sex twice or at the most thrice per week. Younger people are able to do it more often, because they have more yang energy. As we grow older our energy is depleted, if we 'do it' too much. Our 'driving qi' naturally changes as we grow older (and wiser), so that our sexual qi is used in different ways, such as the arts, or higher level thinking.

It can be seen from all of this that you will have more ch'i for the physical action of elimination, as well as for the spiritual workings of the mind. Most people just feel a little closer to 'God' when they fast.

The American Indian 'fast for manhood' involved the young brave going onto his part of the mountain with only a blanket and some water. There he would sit and fast for four days, and always on the fourth day he would be visited by an animal or bird, or a reptile etc. This animal would then be his special animal for life and he would take on that name. When he died he would expect to return as that animal.

Rules

- 1/. If not sure of your internal condition, start with a lead up diet of fruit for two or three days.
- 2/. Start with a short fast of no more than four days. Less if it becomes too difficult.
- 3/. Be careful of what you eat after the fast, only take mildly laxative fruits such as apple, pear, banana etc.
- 4/. After the fast, try to leave out breakfast as a general rule, this will prolong the elimination effect from the night before until lunch time the next day. This should be an easy habit to get into.
- 5/. Try to perform mildly active exercise such as walking, t'aiji or swimming. Do plenty of reading

and have your quiet times alone just doing nothing.

- 6/. The most important thing to remember is not to go back into your normal eating habits, chose a more natural diet.

Once you have finished your fast you will now want to know what to eat to enhance the cleansing effect of the fast allowing you to keep your sub-conscious mind on your goal, so that your internal energy will be able to make it happen. The food that you eat now will be of the greatest importance.

Firstly, you must learn to eat the right amount of food for your level of work. To do this, you must ask yourself if you are really hungry, or just wanting to satisfy your taste buds. If you are really hungry, or think you are, eat an apple or some other piece of fruit, this will stop the hungry feeling. If the apple tastes like manna from heaven, then you are off to a good start. If however you feel like some Kentucky Fried Chicken, then you aren't doing too well.

When you sleep, you still use energy, this is called the 'basal metabolism', and certain functions that are in use, whether you are asleep or awake, come under this category

This means that you aren't really hungry, and that your tongue is telling you lies again. If you are really hungry, the most simple foods will look,

smell and taste like nothing else on earth.

In order to allow your tongue to tell you when you are really hungry, you must only eat at certain times, and never in between those times. Give up breakfast, this is a really important part of your new regime and a very difficult thing to do.

Most people only need breakfast because it's an early morning hit to start the day. Most affluent Westerners do not need breakfast at all, and it is quite safe to wait until lunch to have your first meal. This will also cause that first meal to taste wonderful, no matter how simple it is. Just an avocado sandwich, with no butter, just a little tahini will taste great if you really need it.

The food you eat must fulfil three functions. It is the fuel that we need to create heat energy. It provides the raw materials for building and repairing of the tissues. The regulating substances that control the complex functions of the body.

The food that you eat must be the raw material that the body needs to convert into substances that satisfy these functions.

Food must be easily oxidised by your body to produce energy for external muscular activity as well as internal workings as previously mentioned. Food is also the fuel for heating of the body and building new tissues.

When you sleep, you still use energy, this is called the 'basal metabolism', and certain functions that are in use, whether you are asleep or awake, come under this category. Breathing, heart beat, communication functions of the nervous system, filtering

activity of the kidneys and peristaltic movements of the digestive tract, are all basal metabolism energy demands.

The basal metabolic rate (B.M.R.) is at it's highest during the early months of life. Women have a slightly lower B.M.R. than men. The emotions effect both endocrine and muscle tension, and this also affects the B.M.R. A higher protein intake increases the B.M.R. and a fasting lowers it.

Most affluent Westerners do not need breakfast at all, and it is quite safe to wait until lunch to have your first meal.

The food that you eat should be able to be converted into the correct fuel with the least possible energy spent for the highest possible nutritional value. So it stands to reason that if you eat food that is easily digested, and which contains the greatest amount of nutrients with the least amount of poison, then you're on the way to good health and a long life. You will also have more ch'i for the important job mentioned earlier of direction of the sub-conscious energy to change your circumstances, or to cause something to happen.

A Medical Assessment Of Taijiquan (T'ai Chi)

The following is a transcript of excerpts from a report compiled by Professor Qu Mianyu of

China. Forming an important part of the treatment often prescribed in hospitals and sanatoriums, taijiquan has proved its efficacy in treating chronic diseases such as high blood pressure, neurasthenia and pulmonary tuberculosis.

The effects of taijiquan have much to do with its characteristic features;

- 1/. The exercise requires a high degree of concentration, with a free mind.
- 2/. The movements are slow and uninterrupted like a flowing river.
- 3/. Breathing is natural, sometimes involving abdominal respiration and is performed in rhythmic harmony with body movements.

The high degree of concentration required in taijiquan also benefits the function of the central nervous system. Training the mind and the body at the same time, these exercises stimulate the cerebral cortex, causing excitation in certain regions and protective inhibition in others. This enables the cerebrum to rest, and relieves the cerebral cortex of the pathological excitation caused by ailments, thus helping to cure certain nervous and mental diseases.

Continuing Prof . Qu's report: . . .

The results of recently completed testing and examination of taijiquan practitioners is of particular interest to medical and sport personnel. In this pro-

ject healthy subjects aged between 50 & 89 were divided into two groups and given a battery of tests. Group A contained 32 people who practised taijiquan regularly, while group B (the control group) was composed of 56 individuals who did not engage in taijiquan training. In general, those in group A were found to have stronger physiques characterised by more efficiently functioning cardiovascular, respiratory, osseous and metabolic systems.

Other Findings

In regard to cardiovascular efficiency, the two groups underwent a functional test of stepping up and down a 40cm. high step 15 times within a minute. All but one person in the A group could bear this workload with normal type responses in blood pressure and pulse. In the control group, capability of bearing this workload decreased, and abnormal responses (such as type of step reaction and dystonia reaction) increased with age. The difference was also evident in electrocardiograms. (Prof . Qu then gives these scientific findings but would bear meaning only to medical practitioners).

These findings suggest that regular practise of taijiquan results in an increased supply of blood to the coronary arteries, more forceful heart contractions and improved hemodynamic processes. Moreover, taijiquan may enhance the regulatory function of the central nervous system, improve the co-ordination of the various organs in the human body, increase the tension of the vagus nerves, ensure

adequate supplies of blood and oxygen to the tissues of the various organs and facilitate substance metabolism. All of which contribute to a lower rate of incidence of hypertension and arteriosclerosis.

The average blood pressure for group A was 134/80.8 while in group B it was 154/82.7 mmHg. The rate of incidence of arteriosclerosis was 39.5 and 46.4 respectively.

Regular practise of taijiquan can increase the elasticity of the lung tissues, the respiratory magnitude of the chest (which helps to retard the ossification of the rib cartilages), ventilatory capacity of the lungs and improves the exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide. Experiments showed group A to be superior in both the respiratory discrepancy of the chest and vital capacity. The greater vital capacity results from a stronger diaphragm and muscles of the thoracic walls, greater lung tissue elasticity and a lower rate of ossification of rib cartilages.

For those whose breathing is severely limited by ossification of rib cartilages, abdominal respiration accompanying taijiquan exercises will help ventilation of the lungs, and through rhythmic change of abdominal pressure, speed up blood flow and gas exchange in the alveoli pulmonum. This explains why, when completing the functional test, group A subjects breathed more easily and recovered more quickly than those in the control group.

Taijiquan can also strengthen the bones, muscles and joints. For instance, the spine. Since many taijiquan movements hinge on the waist and involve a

great deal of lumbar movements, systematic exercise can be beneficial to the form and structure of the lumbar vertebral and indeed the spinal column as a whole. Researchers noted that only 25.8 % of the subjects in group A suffered from spinal column deformities, whereas in the control group the percentage was 47.2. Furthermore, fewer group A subjects were victims of common, age related hunchback deformities. Individuals in this group had more flexible spines as evidenced by the fact that 77.4% were able to touch their toes, as against 16.6 in the control group.

X-ray examination indicated that the rate of incidence of senile osteoporosis was 36.6% for group A and 63.8 for the control group. Senile osteoporosis, which leads to deformity and inflexibility of joints, is a degenerative affliction mainly caused by inactivity of the osteoblasts, resulting in their inability to produce sufficient matrices so that more bone is resorbed than formed. It may also be caused by such factors as reduced blood supply to bones owing to arteriosclerosis and poor absorption of calcium and potassium from food due to a lack of hydrochloric acid in the gastric juices. In so far as taijiquan can prevent or lessen such disorders, its role in retarding the aging process is noteworthy .

Limited data were uncovered relative to the effects of taijiquan exercises on substance metabolism in the human body. However, judging from the difference between the two groups of oldsters in skeletal changes and in the incidence of arteriosclerosis, the beneficial effects of exercise appear to be significant as far as the metabolism of

fats, proteins and calcium and potassium salts is concerned. In recent years, several researchers in other countries have studied the role of physical exercise in delaying senescence. Cholesterol levels have dropped substantially for those engaged in regular exercise.

Experiments conducted on elderly people inflicted with arteriosclerosis reveal that after five or six months training there has been an increase of albumin and a decrease of globulin and cholesterol in their blood, while symptoms of arteriosclerosis have greatly diminished.

Professor Qu concluded that a regular programme of taijiquan exercises can be beneficial to one's physical wellbeing.

There have been many other experiments done in other countries with regard to taijiquan and these are well documented. For my own experience, I have seen one student of mine who was a diabetic placed onto tablets instead of two daily injections of insulin. I have seen chronic ulcers heal up after the doctors had given up, and I have personally treated R.S.I (repetitive strain injury) and seen it healed due to the practise of taijiquan. I have also seen students whole attitude towards life strengthen almost overnight. It is a truly amazing exercise especially when combined with the correct diet and breathing exercises.

The younger you are the better taijiquan will work to keep you young and healthy, it is not an old person's exercise, it is for everyone.

SUMMER CAMP

Erle Montague will be holding his annual Summer Camp at Kadaitja in the North of N.S.W.

Dates

March 25, 26, 27.

As usual we will be covering whole chunks of information.

This one will be unusual as we will have many people from overseas who are already attending the 3 month camp at Kadaitja.

Price

\$150.00 for the three days which includes everything. Just bring some sleeping things, towel etc.

Contact

Sheila or Stuart At Kadaitja
(066) 791565

Overseas: (61-66) 791565 Fax is the same.

This is the first of the official W.T.B.A. Camps at Kadaitja so it will be a doozie. Bring your guitar, drums, squeezeboxes, anything. Along the way we might do some Tai & Bagwa!