

COMBAT & HEALING



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COMBAT & HEALING

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EDITOR

Erle Montaigne

ART DIRECTOR

Ben Gabriel

U.S. Correspondent, Al Krych:
SUB EDITORS:

Sandra Press and Eli Dana, Katalena

TECHNICAL ADVISORS

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ABOUT THE COVER

Miss Gung-fu Camp 1995

Katalena Montaigne has started her Gung-fu training early at age three and a half. She had her 4th birthday during Camp 1995 I wish I had stretch like this.

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Recommended Reading

Australasian Fighting Arts magazine
POB 673 Manly NSW 2095 Australia

Write for subscription rates. Erle Montaigne has his own column in this magazine. Has been running since 1973.

THE VIOLENCE THAT IS TAIJI

By Erle Montaigne

What thoughts come to mind when you think about the 'gentle' art of t'ai chi? Probably, like just about 90 percent of the western martial arts community, you will be contemplating on words like, peaceful, running brooks, soft music, ballet, yoga, calm, taoist philosophy, non-violence. If those words did come to mind, then you, again like most of the western martial arts world would be dead wrong.

for the most part, taiji is a very violent martial art.

Sure, taijiquan has the above aspects simply because the body must be relaxed, or as the Chinese put it, 'in a state of sung', but for the most part, taiji is a very violent martial art. In fact, I always tell people when they are looking for a taiji class, to look for violence in that class. If it is not there in the advanced classes, then leave that class.

I say in the 'advanced classes' because everyone must first of all learn the katas or forms and in learning, and thinking, there is not much violence. Even those people who come only for the great healing benefits that taiji can impart, also must go through the violent stages of the art. We think of healing someone as being calm and beautiful, but healing, using taiji/energy has also to be violent. How much more violent can you get, fiddling with someone's internal energy, you are violating their body while you fix them. The 'intent' for the healing art of taiji and the 'intent' for the fighting art of taiji are exactly the same, it's only the physical manifestation that is different. And we learn about things like affecting someone's energy flow, or being able to balance out the acupuncture meridians in someone's body by learning about the violent nature of taijiquan. It's much easier to learn about violent fighting and then use that

same energy to heal, rather than go straight into the healing art of taiji. The art of "Paired Meridian Balancing" is a type of taiji massage where the practitioner is able to simply rub the patient's meridians without actually touching the skin, while the 'balancing hand' is placed upon the 'balancing point'.



Meridian Balancing

This balances out the meridian pairs in the body. There are 12 main acupuncture meridians in the body and these each have a partner meridian, making for six pairs of meridians. If one side of any one pair is out of balance, then a physical or mental illness occurs. It is the job of the taiji healer to re-balance these pairs so that the amount of yin or yang energy within each meridian is exactly the same. Only then will the body come back to a state of balance.

must know about energy and how to use it. The easiest way is to learn the violent part of taiji

In order to affect a balancing affect upon the patient's energy (qi) within the meridians, we must know about energy and how to use it. The easiest way is to

learn the violent part of taiji as this is where we learn about energy and the transference of it and the ability to drain, upset, add to or disrupt someone's qi.



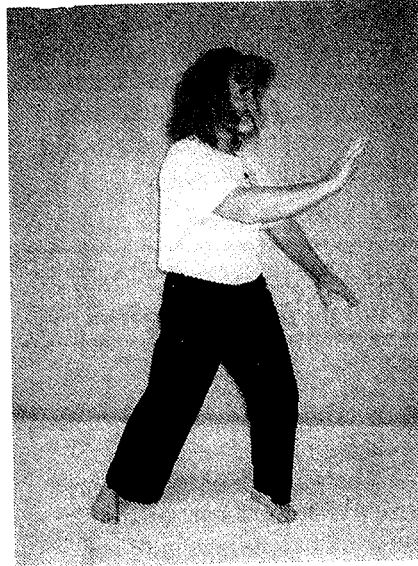
Violent Taiji

This is also exactly what we wish to do when we are healing someone of an illness. The only difference is that instead of hitting someone in a vital point and putting adverse qi into that point, we 'touch' the vital point with positive energy in order to heal.

Meridian Balancing

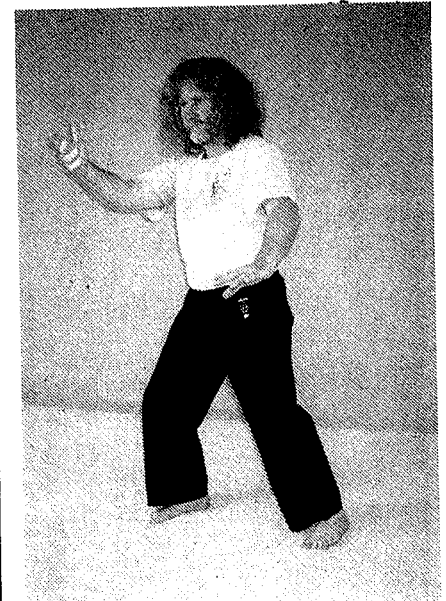
Meridian Balancing Affects Paired meridian balancing is an extremely affective way to balance the energy flow in someone's body. I have had personal experience with this. Now, we have practitioners of acupuncture, massage, shiatsu and other alternative healing arts who are using this method of healing and are achieving great results. I even have a surgeon as one of my students who is using this method to calm patients before surgery. The 'Heart/Small Intestine' pair are the major 'fire' pair. This pair will control what all of the other pairs do. So it is this meridian that we begin with. This pair also have an affect upon 'laughing

and happiness'. So, at a lesser healing level, if someone simply is either too happy, laughing hysterically, or is never happy and never laughs, then they will have an imbalance in this meridian pair.



Brush Knee Step

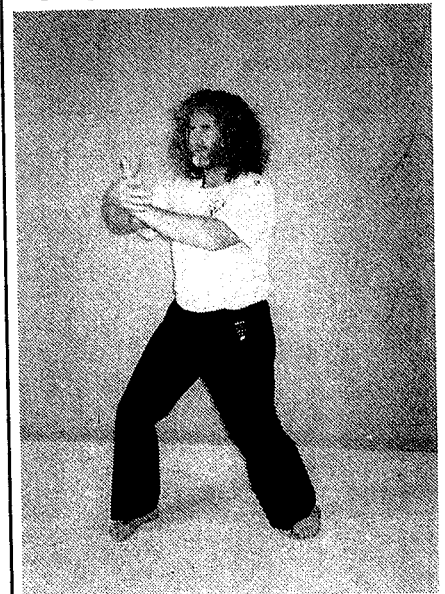
The above is what the practitioner actually does to the patient. However, there are other matched postures from the taijiquan form that are used as qigong movements so that the patient can go home and continue the therapy by themselves. Obviously, someone comes to be healed and they are hysterical, you cannot give them a qigong to do by themselves as they are not capable of even listening to you. So you as the practitioner must firstly balance the appropriate meridian pairs so that they will come back to a more normal mind level. Then, they are able to be taught the appropriate qigong. In the case above of 'heart/small intestine' imbalance, the particular qigong from the taiji form are the movements called "Brush Knee And Twist Step" then into "Parting Horse's Mane". There is a specific way of getting from the first posture into the next, and the way that we do these two postures sends us in a circle, repeating the movements eight times.



Parting Horse's Mane

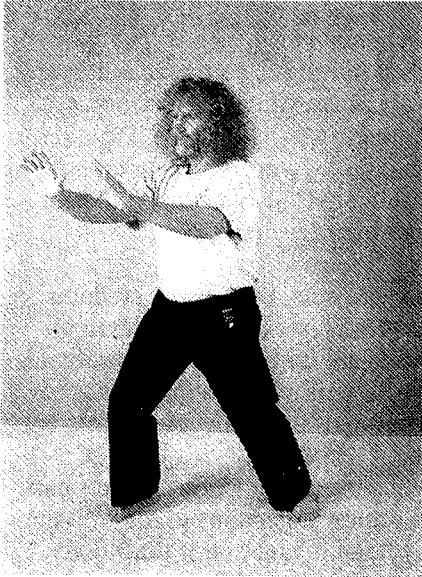
Lung/Colon

If a patient has extreme difficulty in simply learning things and they have an abnormal amount of grief with weeping all the time, then they need to have their 'lung/colon' meridian pair balanced. So, the practitioner would firstly balance the meridian pair, then the patient would be taught the taiji group of postures called "grasping swallow's tail".



Grasping Swallow's Tail 1

Each healing can take anything from only one session to ten sessions to completely balance a meridian pair. The beauty of balancing the meridians is that the associated physical illness will also be cured. Of course, if someone is working in a deadly chemical production plant and is breathing in carcinogenic fumes all day, then there is little we can do to help as the root of the affect is continually being helped.



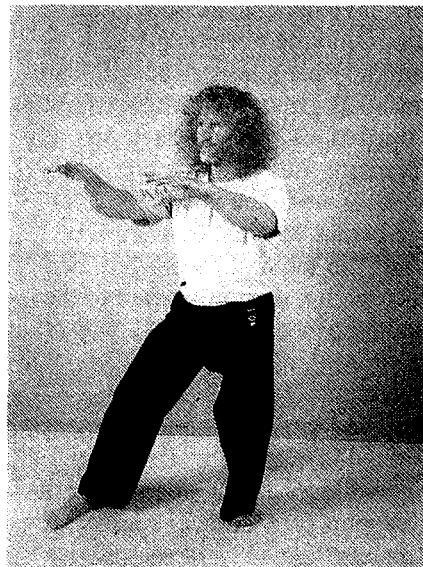
Grasping Swallow's Tail 2

So, we go through all of the six meridian pairs in this way until the patient is completely cured. However, in order to teach someone how to do this healing, they must firstly either already be well versed in energy movement throughout the body, or they must have practiced taijiquan as a fighting art, but not as the fighting art that 90% of all taiji instructors teach. The soft, mystical, move out of the way type of taiji. Learning this type of taiji will not give any self defence, nor will it impart the ability to heal others. The taijiquan must be learnt at its most violent level. To explain this violent level, I will explain for instance how taiji is used to help someone defend themselves against one of the hand orientated attackers, a boxer for instance. There are only two types of attacker, hand and foot, or grapplers and taijiquan has an-

swers to both of these. But boxing is something that most westerners can understand about. At one of my workshops, I had a young man along who was a boxer. He came into the class in the middle of one session and had not taken any of my classes previously.

if someone is working in a deadly chemical production plant and is breathing in carcinogenic fumes all day, then there is little we can do to help as the root of the affect is continually being helped.

So when he saw me simply explaining about some type of fighting method by having someone hold their arm up for me, he asked about how it would work against boxers who do not leave their arm there for me to do something with. They generally come in, throw a few punches, then get out of there for fear of getting hit themselves, this is the nature of boxing. All one can really do is to try and punch the opponent before he punches you. So I asked this young man to attack me when he wished. Before he even lifted his hands, I rushed at him



Grasping Swallow's Tail 3

and poked him in his neck at a dim-mak point. He then said, "Oh, but I didn't punch yet"! I didn't say anything to this, just allowed his mind to catch up on what was happening. This was not a tournament fight, it was simulating reality where there are no rules and no ring for protection and no gloves. He thought for a while and then said that if this were for real, he would simply move backwards as I attacked. This time I had to say something. There is something wrong with this scenario, he is moving backwards and I am moving forwards. Who is the fastest? The best athlete in the world cannot move backwards faster than any normal person. So I again demonstrated this by allowing this chap to know when I would attack and he could not retreat as fast as I rushed forward. This is one of the areas that martial arts schools fall down in. We do 'one step sparring', where someone attacks and the other retreats and defends. We do not make account for when someone is rushing at you violently, explosively so that you cannot possibly retreat in defence.

You must always come forwards, this is your only defence in the street, come forward violently and attack violently.

You must always come forwards, this is your only defence in the street, come forward violently and attack violently. Your attacks must become reflex through many hours of training, so that when attacked, you will just react, violently, then walk on, as if the attack did not happen. This is the way of taijiquan fighting. And healing.

Faith and the Internal Arts

by Michael Babin

Annoying as it may seem to the internal arts instructors who are teaching competent styles to the best of their ability, it is possible for a beginner to achieve dramatic self-healing from even the most de-based methods as taught by those who are little more than frauds.

In the same way that a television evangelist can heal the truly afflicted as well as the neurotics in his or her audience, someone can take up taiji convinced of its innate healing ability or the healing ability of a particular instructor and after a few weeks of lack-lustre and/or incorrect practice become "cured" of long-term ailments.

In the same way that a television evangelist can heal the truly afflicted as well as the neurotics in his or her audience, someone can take up taiji convinced of its innate healing ability

I have seen this happen several times over the years and it should not be too surprising. It is simply another example of how the mind and "faith" (even when that faith is misplaced) can achieve miracles.

In recent years, even western doctors have become more willing to admit that the placebo effect (i.e., thinking that a treatment will heal you) is the main ingredient of upto a third of all cures. In fact, one of the major factors in the crisis in western medicine is that the average person has lost that sense of "faith" in the medical system and doctors that is so important to the healing process.

Unfortunately, the healing achieved through an incompetent method is often short-lived if the student loses "faith" in the it or the instructor for whatever reason. Conversely, a new ailment will often replace the one that was

healed if the underlying psychological or biological causes are left untreated (i.e, my chronic headaches have stopped; but now I get painful cramps after every meal!).

In addition, forms and methods that are taught badly, without proper attention to body mechanics and individual limitations, can also cause a variety of physical trauma: knee injuries and lower-back pain being the most common.

Such misplaced faith is bad enough when limited to solo practice, it is even worse when the instructor claims to teach martial techniques which only work on a student who is subconsciously co-operating with their teacher.

For example, if I tell my students that I will be able to pull them towards me with the ch'i in my hand, it will work with a significant proportion of them. If I then explain that it's not really ch'i but just a subconscious reaction on their part (i.e., autosuggestion) to my moving my hand in and out of their body space, it will still work on a significant proportion of the students — even though their intellectual mind knows that I was "tricking" them before.

Such misplaced faith is bad enough when limited to solo practice, it is even worse when the instructor claims to teach martial techniques which only work on a student who is subconsciously co-operating with their teacher.

On a traditional martial level, the taoist magicians who told the young patriot boxers at the turn of the century in China that their paper charms and martial methods would stop the bullets of the foreign "devils" were probably not all trying to mislead their followers. At least some of them must have