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# *Tai Chi & Bagua*

*Combat & Healing*

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**Lead Story**  
**Research In China**

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**A Taoist Healing**

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**Beginning 3 Circle Qigong**

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**Hidden Meanings**

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**Everything That Happens**

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**Mr. Mo**

**PLUS**

**WTBA NEWS**



The Usk River Wales Uk.

**42 Big Pages This Issue: 18 Full Articles**

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# Research In China

Research in China

by Paul Brecher

**M**y name is Paul Brecher, I have been a student of Erle Montague since 1989, for all these years I have practiced what he teaches because it was what I was looking for in the martial arts. Erle teaches Chinese Internal Martial Arts but with the practical realism that many people think should only be applied to the external martial arts.

This approach has upset many people and they also add a number of other complaints about what Erle teaches. They say that tai chi is for healing only, not for fighting. Or that tai chi may be for fighting but you only push and pull the opponent, you don't actually hit them or if you do it is never in a way that would hurt them. They insist that tai chi does not contain dim mak ( the common term for hitting acupuncture points ) and that the Yang style tai chi does not have fa king (explosive strikes ) in its forms.

They say Yang style tai chi should only be practiced slowly all the way through with no changes in speed or rhythm and certainly not with fast fa king aimed at dim mak points. And that Erle's claim that Chang san feng created a style on wudang mountain that was a Chinese internal martial art ( nei jia chuan ) which Yang Lu chan later learnt and developed into his own style, that we now call Yang style tai chi is false history. They say yang style tai chi is derived only from the Chen family and that it was the Chen family who created tai chi.

These criticisms of Erle have followed him for years and because I practice and teach his systems people have also expressed their criticisms to me.

So I have done some research to try and find out about the true history of tai chi and how it was practiced.

So the first thing that I will do is quote from literary sources before I give my own experiences from my last trip to China in 2005.

The Lost Tai-Chi Classics from the Late Ch'ing Dynasty by Douglas Wile is an outstanding work, here are some quotes about yang style tai chi from that book. These quotes are direct translations from the historical documents known as the tai chi classics.

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*These criticisms of Erle have followed him for years and because I practice and teach his systems people have also expressed their criticisms to me. So I have done some research to try and find out about the true history of tai chi and how it was practiced.*

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- You must understand the life and death hand techniques, you must understand the life and death acupuncture points. Attack the points so life is no more.

- Draw the opponent in, attack with great force. Use spiral movements attack the opponent's neck. Be like a

speeding horse destroying all in its path. Attack the opponents acupuncture points with the hand techniques of break and beat.

- Applications for fingers are seek and stab the acupuncture points, applications for whole hand are break and drain opponents Qi, applications for fist is to punch. - Every move is an attack, destroy all in your path. Use elbow to take his life. Leave your opponent no room to escape, strike without mercy.

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*Here is some historical information from an article from Wudang Magazine from 2000 written by Xin Xilan and Gu Ziyuan. Yang Lu Chan taught Fast Frame, when training, there is fast and there is slow, there is fa jin, there is jumping and leaping, there is hard and soft, pauses and transitions are mutually interspersed, fast and slow are mutually together, front and back are mutually connected. The whole frame is performed in 6 to 8 minutes.*

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The hand like a swift sword, slicing across the forehead or throat, send the opponent straight to hell.

- The whole body must fa jin when attacked. Attacking the opponent's blood vessels and acupuncture points and he will faint,

forceful attacks on the death points terminate the opponent's life.

Here is some historical information from an article from Wudang Magazine from 2000 written by Xin Xilan and Gu Ziyuan.

Yang Lu Chan taught Fast Frame, when training, there is fast and there is slow, there is fa jin, there is jumping and leaping, there is hard and soft, pauses and transitions are mutually interspersed, fast and slow are mutually together, front and back are mutually connected. The whole frame is performed in 6 to 8 minutes.

Yang Lu Chan (1799-1872) taught his skill frame to his sons, Ban Hou and Jian Hou and to Jian Hou's son, Shao Hou (1862 – 1930) and each practised this Fast Frame.

Yang Cheng Fu (1799-1872) who was Jian Hou's youngest son changed the Yang Style Taijiquan Frame according to his own body type and nature, this was called the New Frame or Big Frame. When Cheng Fu was born, his grandfather Lu Chan had already been dead 11 years.

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*Yang Cheng Fu (1799-1872) who was Jian Hou's youngest son changed the Yang Style Taijiquan Frame according to his own body type and nature, this was called the New Frame or Big Frame. When Cheng Fu was born, his grandfather Lu Chan had already been dead 11 years.*

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The original skill frame of Yang Lu Chan was called the Old Frame, Small Frame, or Quick Frame. Shao Hou, only practised Small Frame, or Quick Frame until the time he died.

He never practised Cheng Fu's New or Big Frame. Shao Hou mainly studied with his uncle Ban Hou.

When Ban Hou died Cheng Fu was 9 years old. When Cheng Fu was 34, his father Jian Hou died. Therefore Cheng Fu mainly studied with his father and his training was different than Shao Hou's.

Here is a description of Yang Shao hu doing tai chi.

Yang Shao hu was swift and powerful in delivering his blows and, with eyes blazing like torches, a grim smile on his face and roaring and howling as he darted back and forth, he was held in awe by others. The technical features of his taiji were: overcoming strong attacks with movements that appeared to be soft, adapting oneself to others movements and following up with quick attacks, using the motion of Sudden Connection Fa jin to defeat the opponent with surprise attacks. The hand movements included, catching, striking and capturing, injuring the attackers muscles and harming his bones, attacking the opponent's acupuncture points and controlling his arteries and veins, using Continuous Fa jin and Sudden Connection Fa jin to strike the attacker down with lightning speed.

So if we look at these literary sources we see that tai chi as practiced by Yang Lu Chan and his close family was a very fast effective martial art for fighting that uses fa jin and dim mak.

So now on to China ! Yang Lu Chan used to live just outside the south gate of an ancient walled town called Gwan Fu, near another town called Yong Nian. I went to both these places. It was here that I met Mr Yang Zong Jie who was the editor of Yong Nian Tai Chi Magazine and knew all the local Tai Chi people and places and had done an immense amount of historical research.

I asked him about the history of tai chi, he said:

There is the outer school known as Wai Jia centred around Shaolin Song Shan and the inner school known as Nei Jia originating in Wudang. The Nei Jia lineage is, Chang San Fen - Wang Tsung Yueh - Jiang Fa and then Chen Chan Sing who taught Yang Lu Chan who taught in Beijing from 1850 to 1860.

He said that 70 years later Yang Lu Chan's descendants taught and then it became popular at this time. People wanted to know the history and so the Yang family said that Yang Lu Chan's teacher was from Chen Chau Coh, Chen Family Village.

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In 1929 the Chens taught in Beijing but it was Pao Chui ( Cannon Fist ) not Tai Chi. Then the next year the Chens returned to Beijing and said they were

teaching Tai Chi and that it was an older version than Yang Lu Chans.

So in 1929 in Chen Village is the first record of Tai Chi. The Chens in 1929 then started to change their Pao Chui to make it more like the Tai Chi they had seen in Beijing.

Yang Shao Hu's style of Tai Chi was very explosive and known as Quick Frame later his younger brother Yang Chen Fu created a softer version.

Mr Yang Zong Jie said Today the Yang Chen Fu style was the most popular then the Yang Ban Hou and the least popular was the Yang Shao Hu style. He said Yang Shao Hu had grandsons who were alive today and in their thirties but they did not practice Tai Chi.

Without saying the name of the form I was about to show him I then did the first of the 12 Wudang Forms that I had been taught by Erle. He said that what I did was not one of the recognised family styles of Tai Chi, Yang, Chen, Wu, Wu and Sun but that it was Nei Jia Inner School of Boxing. He said Tai Chi was a different style to Wudang Style.

He said in Yong Nian Tai Chi was first called Soft or Sticky Boxing before it was called Tai Chi. The Soft referred to how a person should be when practising the forms when by themselves and the Sticky referred to how they should be when they fight. I asked him about hitting the acupuncture points when attacking an opponent, he said of course every Chinese martial art has its own version of acupuncture point striking including Yang Style Tai Chi.

Mr Yang Zong Jie introduced me to the top Tai Chi instructor in Yong Nian, Mr Zhao Xian Ping who had learnt from Zhai Wen Zhang who

was a student of Yang Zhao Ling who was the son of Yang Feng Hou who was the older brother of Yang Ban Hou who was the son of Yang Lu Chan.

Mr Zhao Xian Ping also learnt from Zhai Wen Zhang who learnt from Han Xing Xian who learnt from Hao Wei Zhen who learnt from Li Yi Yu who learnt from Wu Yu Xiang who was a student of both Yang Lu Chan and Chen Ching Ping.

Mr Zhao Xian Ping and his students demonstrated many of their tai chi empty hand and weapons forms and two person fight sequences. They were powerful and obviously martial with jumping kicks and explosive punches. The fa jin training method of the Yong Nian Giant Spear was particularly impressive. The spear was about fifteen feet long and very, very heavy. To lift it was hard enough, they were doing the most incredible type of fa jin body shake to get the spear to shake, a very great skill.

Mr Zhao Xian Ping explained some of the principles of Yong Nian Tai Chi he said it was soft and slippery and that regular practice was necessary. He said that Shaolin fa jin and Yong Nian Tai Chi fa jin were different. With Tai Chi fa jin one needed to be more relaxed and have a deeper understanding of balance.

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*I showed the first seven Wudang Forms to him again without saying what they were and he said that these were Nei Jia Chuan (Inner School Boxing).*

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During a meal with Zhao Xian Ping he explained about which acupuncture points to strike and he talked about the close relationship between

tai chi and acupuncture. He stressed the importance of moving in such a way that the opponent's strike missed you but you were in a position to hit him.

I showed the first seven Wudang Forms to him again without saying what they were and he said that these were Nei Jia Chuan (Inner School Boxing).

Mr Zhao Xian Ping and his students had all been incredibly friendly and hospitable and they were all unbelievably tough people, very very solid but also able to flow like snakes or water.

Next Mr Yang Zong Jie took me to Yang Lu Chan's Old House by the south gate of the ancient walled town of Gwan Fu. Here I got into conversation with eighty year old Mr Han Hui Ming who teaches Tai Chi in the courtyard of Yang Lu Chan's house. Mr Han Hui Ming was a student of Li Wan Chang who was the student of Yang Ban Hou who was Yang Lu Chan's son.

I showed Mr Han Hui Ming my Old Yang Style Long Form that I had learnt from Erle Montaigue, I did the movements with fa jin. Mr Han Hui Ming said that his teacher Li Wan Chang used to do fa jin the same way he had seen me do it and that Yang Ban Hou did fa jin as well but that after Yang Cheng Fu started teaching the form without fa jin most people now did Yang Style slowly.

He went on to say that the fa jin of the Yang Family Style was still practised by people who trained in the Wu Yue Xiang Style of Tai Chi because Wu Yue Xiang was a student of Yang Lu Chan. He then very kindly agreed to dem-

onstrate this form, it was amazing to watch, he was eighty years old and still doing the most vigorous movements, inside crescent kicks and rushing forward and dropping down in to the movement called punch to the ground and then leaping up into the double jumping flying front kicks.

In China it is a popular custom to exchange business cards, on Mr Han's as well as his name and address it states his occupation....Fighter !

Next I went to a town called Handan, were Mr Yang Zong Jie took me to meet Yang Zheng Guo the younger son of Yang Chen Fu.

I asked seventy eight years old Yang Zheng Guo about his family's history, he said:

There was never any photographs taken of Yang Lu Chan and that the picture of him is actually a reconstruction based on the picture of Yang Shao Hu.

Yang Zheng Guo continued that Yang Shao Hu studied Small Frame with his uncle Yang Pan Hou. He said that small frame was very fast and explosive. Between 1920 and 1930 Yang Shao Hu went to teach martial arts in Nanjing and Hangzhou. Yang Shao Hu died aged 68.

I demonstrated the Old Yang Style Long Form that Erle had taught me, Yang Zheng Guo said "No mistakes, not bad". Yang Zheng Guo then demonstrated his fathers form and said that this is what his father taught, his form was all slow and even.

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*although Yang Cheng Fu is famous for promoting a version of the Yang family Long Form that he created to be done without any fa jin, he did keep the fa jin for himself and his number one student who taught it to Mr Lu.*

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Mr Yang Zong Jie also introduced me to Mr Wang Chang Xing who is 71 years old and a very famous Tai Chi practitioner in northern China. His teacher was Bai Gong Xian who was a student of Yang Ban Hou. Mr Wang Chang Xing said, You must be sung to fa jin. My teacher Bai Gong Xian used to fa jin and so did Yang Ban Hou also Yang Shao Hou trained with Yang Ban Hou.

I had found out a lot in Yong Nian

that there is a statue of Chang San Fen. On the wall is a large bronze plaque it says that Chang San Fen created the Wudang School of Taoism ( Daoism ) and that he created Wudang Style Martial Arts based on the principles of the interaction of yin and yang.

In the book called Wudang Mountain published by the Museum of Hubei in 1991, it says Chang San Fen created the Wudang Shan Neijia Chuan -Wudang Mountain Internal School of Boxing, which is characterised by the use of internal force. It says that the martial arts of Taiji Quan ( Tai Chi Chuan ), Ba Gua Zhang ( Pa Kwa Chang ) and Xing Yi Quan (Hsing Yi Chuan ) are all derived from the Wudang Shan Neijia Chuan of Chang San Fen.



*Paul Brecher at Wudang Shan in China 2005*

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*I demonstrated the Old Yang Style Long Form that Erle had taught me, Yang Zheng Guo said "No mistakes, not bad".*

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I next went to the city of Chengdu and met Mr Lu who was from Wen Zhou town and in his late seventies and his teachers name was Mr Lu Zi Jian who was 112 years old and had a martial arts school in Chong Qing an industrial town on the Yangte river. Mr

Lu had also been a student of Fu Zhong Wen in Shanghai and learn his Yang Style 85 movement form. Fu Zhong Wen was related

and Gwan Fu, I thanked Mr Yang Zong Jie and then travelled to Wudang mountain. Here I visited the Lang Mei Temple originally built in the Yuan Dynasty. It is in this temple

to and the top student of Yang Cheng Fu. When Mr Lu demonstrated this form he did it with explosive fa jin on certain movements. To me this was very important because it would seem to mean that although Yang Cheng Fu is famous for promoting a version of the Yang family Long Form that he created to be done without any fa jin, he did keep the fa jin for himself and his number one student who taught it to Mr Lu. I left Chengdu and travelled to Emei Shan ( Emei Mountain ) and was introduced to Mr Shen, the head of the Emei Mountain Martial Arts School. He and his students did an incredible demonstration for us of Ermei Shan martial arts and afterwards I demonstrated the first four of the 12 Wudang Forms that I had learnt from Erle but I did not say what they were, I just did them at full speed with extreme fa jin (explosive movement ) and really emphasising the dim mak ( acupuncture point strikes ).

Mr Shen said "That's Wudang Style", it turns out that he had also trained on Wudang Shan for eight months and had learnt some of the basic training movements. He then demonstrated the training method for one of the movements from the Third Wudang Form and some movements that were very similar to some moves in the second form.

Mr Shen said "Short powerful attacking fa jin movements with a sharp short exhalation of breath are the characteristic of Wudang Nei Jia Chuan ( Wudang Internal School of Martial Arts )" So after all my research it is clear to me that...

The wudang system that Erle teaches is the same system that Chang san feng created on wudang mountain which Yang Lu chan later learnt and developed into his own style. Yang

style tai chi is for fighting by striking the most vulnerable parts of the opponents body using fa jin and dim mak. It should be practiced with changes in speed and rhythm and with a martial intent and that therefore Erle is teaching real tai chi.

Only a few people are doing this real tai chi as was practiced by its founders, the vast majority are doing variations on Yang Chen fu's more modern all slow form for healing. This is fine, each person should be allowed to practice as they choose, live and let live.

Paul Brecher teaches tai chi, wudang and bagua in London [www.taiji.net](http://www.taiji.net)

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### *Addendum: By Erle Montaigne*

As Paul has stated, I have received much flack because of my stance on this "once great" fighting system, in that it should always be taught as it was originally intended; as a great fighting art, out of which the great health benefits will naturally follow. In fact, you can never take away the self defence aspects from the healing aspects for to do so, you lose the whole idea and way of learning this wonderful form.

I of course have not invented what I teach, however I have over the years worked upon many training methods and ways to bearing a student along in these arts which or course have been my own invention. But the basic forms remain the same.

I have often asked my senior students what they would do, if they were to discover that I made it all up (a preposterous thing as it is so

easy to see that I haven't!) And all but one or two said that they would stay on because the system is the best there is, regardless of who invented it.

And therein lies the whole crux of this matter; it's the system that is great, NOT the inventor!

Many students, need that direct lineage to some old Chinese master in China because it makes them feel secure. We have that lineage, however, I do not place much importance upon it as it is how the *system* holds up that is important.

# WTBA NEWS

It has been a long time since we had an edition of Combat & Healing. Mainly through my being too busy with my other different 'hats'.

So there is much to talk about and many wonderful things have happened within the WTBA over the past 15 months since the last ed.

Our **Summer camp** in Germany last August, hosted by **Ron and Frauke Beier** (Our WTBA representative in Germany) was really the best camp that we have ever had and hopefully it will continue to be so next July when the next one is slotted for. For the teaching and learning but also for the friendship of those participating from 17 different countries. It didn't matter about any language barriers as we all got around that area beautifully using movement and broken French, German, Italian, Spanish, Croatia, Belgium, Russian etc. And I urge everyone to come to the next one in 2008 as that good feeling lasts a long time after we have all gone back to our respective countries.

My biggest joy however, was that my two sons, **Eli and Ben** are now taking classes and workshops in their own right, as both are now at levels that puts them very high up in the organization and learning. In fact, in our home I often have to hide in order that the endless questions and training stops long enough for me to play some guitar or write something! Eli and Ben are off to Australia in October 2007 for a 4 day camp on an island off the Queensland coast. Eli is off to the USA also in

October, Croatia, Japan and some other countries will follow.

**Peter Smith** continues to travel to India at his own expense to treat and teach at a hostel for abused children. I have an article by Pete on my website in the articles section and I urge you all to read it as it is heart breaking stuff.

Our own classes here in the village of Llangadog are being very well received by our instructors and senior students. Our last class saw around 30 students and instructors turn up from all over the UK and the rest of the world. These classes are the nitty gritty of the internal systems where we all get down and get dirty! This area has sadly been missing from most modern Tai Chi schools in particular. You need to be sore the next day, you need to receive a few bumps and grinds in order to really learn that what you are learning will hold you in good stead in a real street situation. And that is what these classes are for.

However, we also cover much of the form-work that is so necessary in a teacher's repertoire to bring everyone into line so that we are sure that all of our WTBA instructors are teaching the same stuff. Please see our web site [www.taijiworld.com](http://www.taijiworld.com) for details and to see if you are eligible to attend.

**Jerry Shaw** has been made the World-wide secretary for the WTBA. Jerry is a loyal student, instructor and friend and holds his own classes near Bath in the UK. You can contact Jerry at:

[jerrshaw@googlemail.com](mailto:jerrshaw@googlemail.com) should you wish to be invited to our regular classes in Llangadog Wales.

## Facebook:

**Nasser Butt** has opened a special WTBA Facebook section where WTBA members can talk to each other and share ideas. It is invitation only as we only want positive people on it. You can contact Nasser at: [neteru@ntlworld.com](mailto:neteru@ntlworld.com) and ask him to invite you to join. Nasser teaches in Leicester UK and had a good following and his classes are highly recommended as his no nonsense approach is just what we ask for in the WTBA.

We are now getting into some really interesting and exciting areas of the training like the real reason for the Tai Chi practice of Large San-Sau where we actually strike points of each other's arms and other parts in order to activate the Qi to cause powerful fa-king striking and internal power. This was the biggest secret about this form. It was only ever taught as a two person fighting set with the idea that we learn how to use the Tai Chi postures. However, it has a far greater use.

And Baguazhang is also getting exciting now that we are getting into the advanced methods of the Bagua Linear form for healing and self defense.



# A Taoist Healing

*Kurt Levens (USA)*

The story starts when my Intelligence Services Unit was moved into a multi-storey building that was part office space and part parking lot. It was called the Parkade Building. We were on the second floor and Narcotics was above us.

The space assigned to us was roomy and allowed us to have a conference room, two areas for desks and a storage area. Yes, it also had a wonderful view of Camden, New Jersey, the most dangerous city in America. The first indicator of a problem appeared when we had lunch for visiting detectives from Atlantic City. An oriental cockroach about three inches long emerged from the wall and began walking around. While this alone scared our visitors, the fact that I had to do a fa-jing jump on it twice with my cowboy boots to do him in that really alarmed them.

Before you even got to our office you were met by gang graffiti sprayed in the hallway by one of the most dangerous street gangs in the US – the Latin Kings.

Then when you parked some type of white calcium like substances used to get on the car. It was an agency car. Inside in the hallway was a four foot wide by eight foot wide area that was perpetually damp. When it rained it looked like one of those commercial feng shui water machines. After the rain mold would grow until the

building workers would scrape it off and repaint it.

The heat was great as it crossed all of the regions of the globe. They turned the heat off every Friday at 5:00PM and did not turn it on until Monday at 8:00 AM. So in New Jersey in the winter you froze all day Monday. Then by Friday morning it was about 95 degrees. You experienced a gradual thaw to a baking each week. For the summer you might think you would expect the effects to be reversed with the air conditioning getting cold on Friday. But No, it never got cold. When the air was on you had to open windows and run fans to stay cool.

That describes the environmental contamination in which I had to work. From the beginning I was plagued by upper respiratory infections and flu like symptoms.

While attending a conference in Cleveland in the spring of 2002 I became ill and endured a 10 hour drive home in a snow and rain storm with about a 102 degree fever. Went right to my family physician, and he said I had pneumonia.

In November 2002 I developed an extremely bad cough and was once again diagnosed with pneumonia. This time was different. I had terrible sweats with on and off fevers. I was coughing so hard I pulled some muscles off my rib cage and ended up in the emergency room. This was really bad. I couldn't seem to shake it.

Between the spring of 2002 and November 2002, the Eustachian tube in my left ear was constantly clogged up and I was plagued by intermittent earaches the whole time. Also, during this time I began experiencing pain in my left knee.

As of this time I never used much sick time, but this thing was getting to me. A co-worker actually a subordinate went to my supervisor and told him I was going looney with hypochondria. I think the guy was just trying to get me transferred so he could move up.

Well, his sleazy backstabbing worked and I was relieved of command for unsatisfactory performance. The one supervisor tried to make it like he was doing me a favor by transferring me. They transferred me in February 2003 to the Police Academy. At the Police Academy, my new Captain Reggie Beckett told me he was glad to have me and that the other supervisor said I had to go because I was a hypochondriac. At the Academy I was able to exercise everyday and get myself into good shape. My orthopedic doctor gave me a knee rehabilitation program and it worked great.

The Police Academy is located out of the city in a nice community college setting. Everyday I was outside supervising or leading physical training. My left ear finally opened up and my knee came around.

Two months after I left the Parkade Building for the Police Academy they found active Legionnaires Disease in the building. They admitted that the building was mold infested and my agency pulled all of our people out of the building.

I still couldn't get into running shape. I was short of breath.

In July of 2004, I was diagnosed with a torn rotator cuff that required surgery. I got the surgery in September. After rehab, I was on a hike in the woods with a backpack when I stepped into a hole and torn the meniscus in my right knee. I was turning into a physical wreck. Plus I was shoved into a paper pushing job I just couldn't do. I didn't get into police work to be a lawyer's gopher boy. So I took an early retirement in February 2005.

July 2005, I developed a bone chip on the rear of my left patella probably as a result of Kung Fu activity. It was surgically repaired.

Every time I tried to get in shape, I got injured. I refused to believe that it was all from just growing older.

Two months ago I developed an incredible pain in my chest while resting. It was an intense cramping pain. Based on my age and family history it was off to the emergency room to get my heart checked. I was poked, jabbed and drained of blood. Okay it wasn't that bad. They did an EKG, an MRI and a nuclear stress test. What they found was that my blood sugar was extremely elevated. And the chest x-ray showed pneumonia. I had no symptoms of pneumonia. No one could explain

anything about what happened to my chest that caused the pain.

About a month ago I started doing some very strenuous chi kung using the Six Healing Sounds but also integrating the five elementals into it incorporating color, direction and internal visualizations while doing vigorous exercises in a pristine wilderness near where I live. I was also doing ongoing iron body/golden bell chi kung at a truly high level. I was using a commercially available dit jow I had gotten from my friend and TCM practitioner Dr. Katie Belko. For anyone in the States, Dr. Belko operates a Taoist Supply store next to her practice in Runnemede, NJ. Visit her website at [www.daointyourself.com](http://www.daointyourself.com). Also at that time I began to ingest small amounts of pine tar into my system.

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*The complexity of proper diagnosis in Traditional Chinese Medicine is incredible to understand and work. However, now looking back with hindsight, the diagnosis is clear.*

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As I hiked through the Pine Barrens of New Jersey I would stop at one of two special 1,000 year old pines that I had found. I would take a small amount of pine tar and roll it into a ball about 5mm in diameter. Then I would place it in my mouth allowing my body heat to soften it, mix with my saliva and swallow, chewing on the tar like gum during my walks. Somewhere I remembered coming across an old Taoist text that said if you could find a 1,000 year old pine, the sap would help you become an immortal. Pine tar is also

an excellent disinfectant and cleaner. When mixed with alcohol and boiled, pine tar becomes turpentine a most effective solvent.

Two weeks ago I had an incredible lucid dream. Not unusual since I have done dream chi kung for some time. In the dream I was in a Chinese Temple doing Martial Arts at a very intense level. Then I was placed on a table where I was massaged all over. It ended with a Chinese man touching me at the Hegu (CO 4) point saying, "You have obstruction here." Then the Master came and said that there was no charge but that a donation of an amount of money would be expected within 72 hours. Well, being a Taoist initiate, I did a thanksgiving ceremony sending over the money in joss.

Sunday, one week ago I was attending a movie with my 8 year old son. Out of no where my body propelled something into my mouth. I knew it was not regurgitation because there was none of the vile acidic taste that accompanies that. I will be as delicate as I can here. It was a dense frothy foamy phlegm type of substance; I can only assume it was propelled out of my lungs. There was no cellular mass to it.

The complexity of proper diagnosis in Traditional Chinese Medicine is incredible to understand and work. However, now looking back with hindsight, the diagnosis is clear.

While I was working in the Parkade building, my lungs

were invaded by a pernicious influence. That influence interfered with the spreading of my protective chi making me vulnerable to invading forces; hence the pneumonia episodes. It also made me vulnerable to other injuries.

While my lungs were unable to properly process my lung chi, it resulted in my kidneys kicking in pre-natal chi for my protection. The weakened condition of my kidneys resulted in the problems with my knees. I suffered injury because there was not enough protective chi in the knees. On page 346 of the "Encyclopedia of Dim Mak" by Erle Montaigue and Wally Simpson you can read about just what a blockage at Hegu could cause. As for febrile disease with anhidrosis, that explained the bouts of pneumonia with the accompanying sweats. Deafness, explained the problems I was having with my left eustachian tube. It also states that one of the functions of Hegu is to "activate the dispersing function of the lungs" the interruption of this function explains the loss of my kidney chi.

I am now able to breathe much more deeply and my endurance level has become phenomenal. My strength levels are also growing daily. I don't know how long I can hold a ma (horse stance) because I must usually quit because of outside interference around the hour level. I can now hold my hands in the high tree hugging position for over 45 minutes and more.

I believed that the combination of intense chi kung and ingesting the pine tar loosened up the blockage enough for my body to expel the pernicious substance on its own. Using the Five Elementals Theory, pine tar is wood. Wood creates and strengthens metal. The lungs

and colon are the metal organs, so the pine tar would have acted to tonify the lungs and clear Hegu. The dream was either my subconscious telling me where the blockage was located in a mode I could comprehend; or spirit healers doing a healing massage ceremony on a different plane of existence. Both are consistent with Taoist teaching.

So after five years of suffering from the pernicious influence that invaded my body, the healing and tonifying of the chi kung combined with the herbal cleansing and tonifying aspects of the pine tar coupled with the healing work done on the other side during dream chi kung all came together to expel the pernicious influence.

I can actually feel a clearing in my chest like something was removed. My lung capacity has been greatly increased. All of the previously perceived kinks or blocks in the meridians are gone and the chi is flowing at an amazing rate.

So, is there a lesson here. Of course, the tao is deep and mysterious, its ways are hard to understand, but staying in the light of the tao will allow the body to heal itself in a natural way. Or in simpler terms, this stuff really works.

# 3 CIRCLE QI GUNG AND THE BEGINNER

Written by Samuel G. Beatty

I started my internal gung-fu training in November of 1994 in Oslo, Norway with Ken Johnson.

At the time I did not know who Erle Montague was. I had been training in Fukien gung-fu for a few years and my teacher at the time was a no-nonsense man. He was a very nice person but he had no respect for ti chi chuan. He called it, "flower - no power, just show". He would always say it was bull&\$\*!. He had never seen anyone use it as a fighting art.

While I was teaching break dancing in Norway, a local person told me about tai chi classes in Oslo. Remembering what my teacher had told me years ago, I still kept an open mind and attended the classes. When I walked into the class I was amazed at what I saw - Tai Chi, Small San Sau and Single Push Hands, but what really caught my eye was 3 circle Qi Gung.

The first time I did it, it killed my whole body. Even though I could do a 45 minute horse stance and throw a thousand punches, here I was, I couldn't even do 3 circle qi gung for 5 minutes. At the time the main focus was Wu Chi stance, so I didn't practice 3 circle qi gung as much as I would've liked too.

One day I attended one of Ken's karate classes and there was a book with Erle's name on it. I

picked it up and just started reading. What stuck out was Erle's words, "Don't be someone else's disciple, be your own master". I took that as "be responsible for yourself and learn as much as possible".

From that moment on I read everything I could get my hands on that Erle wrote. I knew from my earlier training days that you have to learn (master) the basics first, everyone around me was trying to get all the 'good oil', but I stayed focused on mastering the basics.

My dream at the time was to get to Australia to learn and meet the indigenous people and also train with Erle and the WTBA crew who at the time was residing in Murwillumbah, NSW.

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*The first time I did it, it killed my whole body. Even though I could do a 45 minute horse stance and throw a thousand punches, here I was, I couldn't even do 3 circle qi gung for 5 minutes.*

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When I first got to Sydney, Australia, I trained with Keith Brown who welcomed me with open arms. The first thing he corrected was my 3 circle qi gung. I was like a brand new sponge ready to absorb and that's what I did, I started all over from scratch. Triple Heater and 3 circle qi gung became second nature to me.

When I moved to Central Australia (Uluru - a beautiful and sacred

Aboriginal site that all should visit sometime in their life) that's where I really got a hold on 3 circle qi gung. I did it for twenty minutes straight! I came out the room so excited that I told my partner (in crime), who is now my beautiful wife, Taryn, that I accomplished it!!! She was 8 months pregnant with our daughter, Majeda-Mo', that she couldn't be bothered, as she had her own (natal chi) to achieve!! I did 3 circle qi gung everyday, I worked up to a hour. When I got back to Sydney I went to see Keith Brown and I told him about it. He looked at me and smiled and said, "Erle has just informed us we only need to do it for 15 minutes!". I was flabbergasted, but I smiled back and said, "ok!". After that I focused on every little teeny aspect of 3 circle Qi gung.

Whilst inside the meditative state of 3 circle qi gung I started to understand myself a little bit more.

During Camp 2000 Erle gave a correction on where the tongue should properly be placed whilst doing 3 circle qi gung, but the information didn't stop there. Erle stated, "that you don't have to be so serious, that you can smile and even have a conversation, that it is the sub-conscious mind that is doing the work".

I wanted to get a good grasp on what I was learning so I took my time and practiced, as I advanced I felt like was sink-

## *The Secret To 3 Circle Standing Qigong*

*Erle Montaigne*

ing internally. I felt this peaceful feeling. I also noticed something else about this 3 circle training. This 3 circle qi gung would bring to the surface hidden layers of stress and trauma from everyday living and then 'magically' release it from my body.

For the beginner take your time, the pain you feel will pass, it's just your body adjusting. It will prepare you for what's ahead. Ask questions, ask your instructor, look at the WTBA videos/DVDs, speak to other classmates. If you are alone, 'no worries mate', focus on the intent! You'll be surprised on what you'll receive! Your guiders are always around...ask them for guidance.

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*Sam is now living in NY with Taryn and their 4 children. Sam teaches for the WTBA Tai Chi and Bagua in NY.*

When I first began 3 circle Qigong, I was not told anything. I had never heard of it before and I was not told why I was standing there in this strange position feeling and looking like a bloody idiot. I thought at the time that the teacher was a bit unprofessional not to tell me at least why I was doing it. However, many years later, I realized that there was method in his approach.

I stood in that position, not daring to move from it as the "Master" could be watching. He left the room and I stayed there. 10 minutes past and began to shake and shake. I had Niagra Falls coming out of my finger-tips onto the floor below and my mind was zapped.

After 15 minutes, the teacher entered the room and I felt great relief that now I could finish this grueling stance. He looked at me, made some adjustments and walked out again! I thought I would die. Another 10 minutes past and he came back to see a quivering wreck. This time he was eating a bowl of rice. He sat in the corner and just watched me.

Another ten minutes and he came over to me and placed his hand onto my arms and gently pushed them downward in to a lower position in which I was to stand for another 10 minutes.

He then beckoned to me to finish and to follow his movements in order to finish correctly. Then he told me to go home!

I had to call a cab that night as I could not walk, I had to lower myself down his stairs with my arms as my legs just wouldn't do anything.

After some 40 years of practice, I now know why I wasn't told anything. So that I would not try to DO the stance, but rather have the stance work for me at a sub-conscious level without any thought. No fancy mind games, lifting the Qi up the back and down the front etc., Just stand there and BE Qigong.

This is the greatest secret to Standing Qigong. As soon as we play funny little mind games, like taking the Qi here and there or taking the outer Qi into the Inner Qi etc. We have lost it.

Just stand there and it will all happen for you.

# The Hidden Secrets of Large San-Sau

*Erle Montaigne*

I remember first learning the Large San-Sau, that two person set that is supposed to teach the student the fighting meaning of each of the Tai Chi postures and thinking that, at last, I have learning the real self defence applications.

However, I also remember thinking that although some of these applications were really good, straight forward and not complicated, some of them were downright stupid and would never work in a realistic fighting situation. I persisted learning this form and two person set thinking that perhaps I would become so good at this, that the moves that seemed very complicated, would have some inner meaning some time down the track.

Well that day never came and I still thought that some of these fighting applications were still really silly. And it wasn't until I began practicing the two person set with a partner in a much heavier way that I discovered what my teacher meant by "hit not important, before important".

I noticed that after a heavy large san-sau session that my inner and external power was far greater with less energy used to gain this power. I seemed to have much more body awareness and co-ordination utilizing every fibre of my body in a organized and balanced manner in order to gain this great

power that seemed to come from nowhere.

I was then told the real reason for practicing large san-sau in this way. The final strikes of san-sau are only there to cause us to want to do the practice, however, it is what comes before each of the final applications that is the main area.

You will notice that when you practice with your partner, that certain areas are struck prior to your final attack. The outer arms, the inner arms, sometimes the elbows and other body parts are all struck just before you attack. This comes in the form of some kind of blocking or jamming application and is always aimed at very definite acupuncture or 'dim-mak' points.

It wasn't until I was taught the real meaning of san-sau that I understood why my teacher always was pedantic about the areas that were blocked heavily prior to attack.

These 'lead up' methods are designed to bring our partner's Qi into play causing it to awaken so to speak.

## *The Power:*

When we have these points especially on the inner and outer arms 'worked' when we practice san-sau, they are designed to cause our own body to produce the correct hormones and enzymes to work upon exactly the correct muscle groups for the fighting arts. These points cause the body

to automatically gain more power when attacking using less energy to gain that power.

For instance, during the very first movement where we step to the left as our partner is throwing a right straight at us, we will slam his outer forearm at PC (Pericardium) 8 point and CO (colon) 10 points and these will be 'rubbed' back up his arm in the correct direction to cause this Qi activation to occur.

He will then slam our inner wrist area at 'Neigwan' or PC 8 point also back up the inner forearm which causes this activation to occur.

You must feel the bumps of this form so although it must not be too hard as to cause damage to the points, it must be hard enough to cause the partner to feel it through his whole body. We then work our way through the whole form, covering a myriad of different points and combinations of points as we train.

## *Final Points:*

There are however, a small number of 'final strike points' that also must be 'touched' during the practice. However, this is never given until the student is advanced enough to that he or she does not actually kill their training partners!

# Us Animals

Don Morgan

Here I am doing my qui gong thinking that funny was that my top half and bottom half working together. Then the old dog watching me got up yawned stretched and wandered off for a sniff about.

It made me think that he uses his body as a single unit with four legs that work in unison, without him having to think about it. His head sticks out at the front balanced by his tail at the back.

Whereas I being such a splendid example of a monkey use my legs for moving around and have completely separated my arm movement so that I am divided at the waist and my head just sits on my neck doing a bit of thinking now and then.

I expect thousands of years ago my ancestor or the greedy monkey was looking at apple tree thinking: if only I could reach those delicious fruit up there when he pulled himself up on the branches and grabbed an apple. After a few more (I said he was greedy) he had a look around and thought I can see further now. Soon all the cool apes were doing the new tanding Up

A few thousand years later what had we lost by walking on two legs. Yes the connection between our upper and lower limbs. However the basic design of our bodies is still the same as all other animals, so when we do our Tai Chi

movements they slowly start to re-connect and the whole body moves in unison.

When I do the form it is a delight to me when a turn of the waist seems to lift one foot or move the arms into position, or that expansion and contraction of the whole body. It seems like the movements of the form are pre-programmed into my body movements, is this movement using the design of my body to move as the four legged beast that my ancestors evolved from?

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*Whereas I being such a splendid example of a monkey use my legs for moving around and have completely separated my arm movement so that I am divided at the waist and my head just sits on my neck doing a bit of thinking now and then.*

---

In four legged animals their legs work in various combinations of movement with their bodies (for a horse walk, trot and gallop). Are the movements of Tai Chi similar? Watching a greyhound run the movement comes from bending his spine which drives his whole body. This looks like An to me.

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## *The Ten Essential Points*

*Tai Chi has 10 essential points*

*To ease your spirit & spare your joints*

*Number 1 is Suspend your Head*

*As though dangling from a thread*

*And now continue with the rest*

*Number 2 is Hollow your Chest*

*So to carry on with much haste*

*You must keep a Loose Waist*

*Solid & Empty you must know*

*Droop your Shoulder & Sink Elbow*

*The others are more spiritual of course*

*Apply your Will and not your Force*

*For the next two there is no doubt*

*Up & down, then in & out*

*Upper & Lower must Co-ordinate*

*Internal & External Unify for number 8*

*Go with the flow in Absolute Continuity,  
then*

*Seek Serenity in Activity for number 10.*

*By Anne Finlay*

# YANG CHENG-FU FORM

*Brandon Broderick*

Yang Chenf-fu Form Postures and Their Progression:

Preparation – feet shoulder width a part, hands down to sides (away from body).

Raise arms to double wrist block (hands angled in slightly).

Lower arms to double palm block (hands turned in slightly).

Circle arms upward to right side.

Left push (arn).

Block right (high/low p'eng block).

Grasping Swallows Tail – p'eng left.

Grasping Swallows Tail – block left.

Grasping Swallows Tail – double p'eng.

Grasping Swallows Tail – grab tail.

Grasping Swallows Tail – roll back.

Grasping Swallows Tail – squeeze (ch'i).

Grasping Swallows Tail – sit back.

Grasping Swallows Tail – double press (arn).

Sit back ready.

Fishes in eight.

Single whip.

Lift hands.

Play guitar (pipe).

Roll back.

Shoulder press.

Right p'eng.

Stork spreads wings.

Hold the ball.

Brush knee, twist step right.

Hold the ball.

Play guitar (pipe).

Hold the ball.

Brush knee, twist step right.

Hold the ball.

Brush knee, twist step left.

Hold the ball.

Brush knee, twist step right.

Hold the ball.

Play guitar (pipe).

Hold the ball.

Brush knee, twist step right.

Step up parry & punch.

Pull back & scrape off grab.

Push forward.

Double palm strike.

Sit back

Apparent close up.

End of first 3<sup>rd</sup> of form

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Hold the ball.

Brush knee, twist step right.

Carry tiger back to mountain (corner stance)

Grasping Swallows Tail – grab tail.

Grasping Swallows Tail – roll back.

Grasping Swallows Tail – squeeze (ch'i).

Grasping Swallows Tail – sit back.

Grasping Swallows Tail – double press (arn).

Sit back ready.

Fishes in eight.

Guard the house.

Fist under elbow.

Turn up palms.

1) Step back & repulse monkey (right).

2) Step back & repulse monkey (left).

3) Step back & repulse monkey (right).

4) Step back & repulse monkey (left).

5) Step back & repulse monkey (right).

Inverse hold the ball

Part Horse's mane.

Lift hands

Play guitar (pipe).

Shoulder press.

Right p'eng.

Stork spreads wings.

Hold the ball.

Brush knee, twist step right.

Needle at sea bottom.

Fan through the back.

Turn around & chop with fist (and uppercut).

Step up parry & punch.

Pull back & scrape off grab.

Diagonal p'eng (left).

Grasping Swallows Tail – block left.

Grasping Swallows Tail – double p'eng.

Grasping Swallows Tail – grab tail.

Grasping Swallows Tail – roll back.

Grasping Swallows Tail – squeeze (ch'i).

Grasping Swallows Tail – sit back.

Grasping Swallows Tail – double press (arn).

Sit back ready.

Fishes in eight.

Single whip.

1) Wave hands like clouds (left).

2) Wave hands like clouds (left).

3) Wave hands like clouds (left).

4) Wave hands like clouds (left).

Half hook single whip.

Raise hands to heavens.

High pat on horse.

Draw bow right (finger touches elbow as heel touches, fingers touch other elbow as toes touch).

Separation of right leg.

Draw bow left.

Separation of left leg.



Spin around & left heel kick.  
Elbow on knee.  
Brush knee, twist step right.  
Hold the ball.  
Brush knee, twist step left.  
Fist on knee & attack 3 points.  
Turn around & chop with fist  
(and uppercut).  
Step up parry & punch.  
Pull back & scrape off grab.  
Diagonal p'eng (left – eyes follow  
bottom hand downward).  
(Bottom hand scoops & crosses  
on outside of other arm).  
Right heel kick (corner).  
(Right thumb to chest).  
Attack right (palm strikes).  
(Turn bottom hand over & bring  
your right hand over hour head  
thumb down, turn left).  
Hit tiger left (bottom hand  
punches up & top hand punches  
down – elbows over knees).  
(Turn bottom hand over & bring  
your right hand over hour head  
thumb down, turn right).  
Hit tiger right.  
Double phoenix punch (move fist  
up as turning left).  
(Open hands & cross hands right  
over left).  
Right heel kick (corner).  
Double wind goes through ears  
(hands come down over knee)  
Double phoenix punch.  
(Open hands & cross hands left  
over right).  
Left heel kick (corner).  
Spin around & right heel kick  
(corner).  
Elbow on knee.  
Step up parry & punch.  
Pull back & scrape off grab.  
Push forward.  
Double palm strike.  
Sit back  
Apparent close up.

End of second 3<sup>rd</sup> of form

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Hold the ball.

Brush knee, twist step right.  
Carry tiger back to mountain  
(corner stance)  
Grasping Swallows Tail – grab  
tail.  
Grasping Swallows Tail – roll  
back.  
Grasping Swallows Tail – squeeze  
(ch'i).  
Grasping Swallows Tail – sit back.  
Grasping Swallows Tail – double  
press (arn).  
Sit back ready.  
Fishes in eight.  
Single whip (into corner).  
Turn & inverse hold the ball.  
Slant flying – right.  
Inverse hold the ball.  
Slant flying – left.  
Inverse hold the ball.  
Slant flying – right.  
Sit back to block right (high/low  
p'eng block).  
Grasping Swallows Tail – turn left  
& p'eng left.

Grasping Swallows Tail – block  
left.  
Grasping Swallows Tail – double  
p'eng.  
Grasping Swallows Tail – grab  
tail.  
Grasping Swallows Tail – roll  
back.  
Grasping Swallows Tail – squeeze  
(ch'i).  
Grasping Swallows Tail – sit back.  
Grasping Swallows Tail – double  
press (arn).  
Sit back ready.  
Fishes in eight.  
Single whip.  
90\* turn right – hold the ball.  
Turn right foot out 45\*, cross  
hands (right arm inside), step  
ahead with the left foot and pull  
right arm back.

1) **Fair lady works at a shuttle**  
(raise the left palm to a high block  
and then do a right palm strike).  
Drop right hand, pivot right 45\*  
– hold the ball.

Swing foot around 225\* right,  
cross hands (left arm inside),  
then pull left hand back.  
2) **Fair lady works at a shuttle**  
(raise the right palm to a  
high block and then do a left  
palm strike).  
Drop left hand, and turn left  
90\* - hold the ball.  
Step left 45\* with the left foot,  
cross hands (right arm inside),  
pull right arm back.  
3) **Fair lady works at a shuttle**  
(raise the left palm to a  
high block and then do a right  
palm strike).  
Drop right hand, pivot right  
45\* – hold the ball.  
Swing foot around 225\* right,  
cross hands (left arm inside),  
then pull left hand back.  
4) **Fair lady works at a shuttle**  
(raise the right palm to a  
high block and then do a left  
palm strike).  
Sit back to block right  
(high/low p'eng block).  
Grasping Swallows Tail – turn  
left & p'eng left.  
Grasping Swallows Tail – block  
left.  
Grasping Swallows Tail – dou-  
ble p'eng.  
Grasping Swallows Tail – grab  
tail.  
Grasping Swallows Tail – roll  
back.  
Grasping Swallows Tail –  
squeeze (ch'i).  
Grasping Swallows Tail – sit  
back.  
Grasping Swallows Tail – dou-  
ble press (arn).  
Sit back ready.  
Fishes in eight.  
Single whip.  
1) Wave hands like clouds  
(left).  
2) Wave hands like clouds  
(left).  
3) Wave hands like clouds  
(left).

4) Wave hands like clouds (left).  
Half hook single whip.  
Point your toes of your back foot to the rear and then turn front heel forward.  
Snake creeps down.  
Golden cock stands on one leg – right.  
Golden cock stands on one leg – left.  
Turn palms upward.  
1) Step back & repulse monkey (right).  
2) Step back & repulse monkey (left).  
3) Step back & repulse monkey (right).  
Inverse hold the ball  
Part Horse's mane.  
Lift hands  
Play guitar (pipe).  
Shoulder press.

Right p'eng.  
Stork spreads wings.  
Hold the ball.  
Brush knee, twist step right.  
Needle at sea bottom.  
Fan through the back.  
White snake puts out tongue (just like turn around & chop (and up-percut) but the hand is open).  
Step up parry & punch.  
Pull back & scrape off grab.  
Diagonal p'eng (left).  
Grasping Swallows Tail – block left.  
Grasping Swallows Tail – double p'eng.  
Grasping Swallows Tail – grab tail.  
Grasping Swallows Tail – roll back.  
Grasping Swallows Tail – squeeze (ch'i).  
Grasping Swallows Tail – sit back.  
Grasping Swallows Tail – double press (arn).  
Sit back ready.  
Fishes in eight.  
Single whip.  
1) Wave hands like clouds (left).

2) Wave hands like clouds (left).  
3) Wave hands like clouds (left).  
4) Wave hands like clouds (left).  
Half hook single whip.  
Raise hands to heavens.  
High pat on horse.  
Inspect horses mouth (step forward).  
Spin around & right heel kick (don't cross hands, just move left hand up & right hand forward).  
Elbow on knee.  
Brush knee, twist step right.  
Hold the ball.  
Brush knee, twist step left.  
Fist on knee & attack 3 points.  
Pull back & scrape off grab.  
Diagonal p'eng (left).  
Sit back to block right (high/low p'eng block).  
Grasping Swallows Tail – double p'eng (step through).  
Grasping Swallows Tail – grab tail.  
Grasping Swallows Tail – roll back.  
Grasping Swallows Tail – squeeze (ch'i).  
Grasping Swallows Tail – sit back.  
Grasping Swallows Tail – double press (arn).  
Sit back ready.  
Fishes in eight.  
Single whip.  
Point your toes of your back foot to the rear and then turn front heel forward.  
Hook circles under & wrists cross.  
Open hands and push backward circling downward.  
Snake creeps down (pulling down).  
Step forward to seven stars (double hammer fist strike right arm under, right foot forward in a cat stance).  
Hold the small ball (grapefruit size, like double p'eng, right hand forward).  
Riding tiger back to mountain (step back to stork spreads wings

with left foot forward & right hand high).

Left hand moves upward and circles outward, place right fingers under left elbow.  
Throw arms right with left fingers under right elbow.  
Spin around & lotus kick (spin to right and set left foot down behind right foot. Arms continue all the way to the right like “attack right” movement. Lotus straight leg kicks circles from inside to outside while arms move to the left side like “attack left” movement).  
Double phoenix punch (hands circle down & across ending up over knees in double punch position).  
Shoot the tiger (left low hammer fist, raise right fist over head & turn hips right).  
Open left palm, circle your right fist down towards the palm & sit back.  
Right fist chop (step right foot out 45°).  
Step up parry & punch.  
Pull back & scrape off grab.  
Push forward.  
Double palm strike.  
Sit back  
Apparent close up & finish. (Turn right 90°, swing arms outward, then downward, then upward & crossing right arm on the outside).  
Drop both palms down, left palm on right. Raise arms in a double wrist block position as you sink downward, hands angled in slightly. Lower arms in a double palm blocking position as you stand up, hands turned in slightly.

End of the last third and entire form

# Everything that happens to me is good

Geoff Thompson



I heard it the other day and it made me smile. So much so that I went and made myself a cup of tea.

Someone said (with a hint of a scorn, and a peppering of self pity maybe) ‘that Geoff Thompson bloke, he lives a charmed life. He has had it so easy.’

Another friend (a fellow writer) tilted a similar lance in my direction; he told me that his lack of commercial success was due to the fact that he has had so many things block his path (poor health, family issues etc). I on the other hand had succeeded only because I’d had it so easy.

He said this like nothing bad has ever happened to me. As though I was somehow impervious to the slings and arrows of life.

I have to come clean though. He was right. They were all right. I do live a charmed life and I have had it easy, but not because nothing bad ever happen to me, rather

because everything that has happened to me has been good.

*Let me try and explain.*

My lovely Dad died two weeks ago. It was good.

It was his time and I was pleased that he finally got to matriculate this hard university we call life. It broke my heart to see him suffering so much whilst he was ill. I couldn’t even talk on the phone without breaking down. He had cancer. It found its way to his bones. Then he died. My dad lived a good life. He was a good man. Loved by many. Disliked by none. But he has finished his brief sojourn on this spinning globe and now he is home. And that is not just good it is cause for celebration. He has left me with a great legacy of love and very valuable lessons; how to live bravely. How to die with dignity.

One of my gorgeous babies took an overdose of strong pain killers. I got the 5am phone call and my heavy heart bled. A five minute journey to the hospital took a life time and when I got there all the doctors could tell me in prognosis was ‘we won’t know until tomorrow.’

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*I do live a charmed life and I have had it easy, but not because nothing bad ever happen to me, rather because everything that has happened to me has been good.*

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It was a long day. An even longer night.

Some one said ‘terrible what’s happened to your daughter.’ I said ‘what’s happened to my daughter is the best thing that could have happened.’

My girl had fallen into a dark and loveless Chasm where even the voices of her kin could not be heard. She was in a relationship that was imprisoning and dangerously destructive and none of us – not me, not her sisters, and not her mum – could break her out. When she lay in that hospital bed a small voice (somewhere in my consciousness) said to me ‘we are sorry she is here, this is the only way we could get her out’.

I trusted that this was true and it was.

She recovered, she went to uni, she met a nice guy who was appreciative of her beauty and sensitive nature. She is now happy and training to be a teacher. What happened to my daughter saddened me beyond words, but what happened to my daughter was good.

My brother died violently. He was bloated and yellow and ravaged and....so very beautiful. I have never felt such profound love for anyone as I felt for Ray during his five fast days of slow dying. I loved his very bones. But my brother loved the drink and the drink loved my brother. So much so that the love affair killed him. There was more to it than that of course. Drink was his ar-

moury and life was his enemy and....well, you can guess the rest. When he died it was not me he called out for. It was not my mother's name that bounced and echoed off the hospital walls, nor my dads, nor his four heart broken children. He cried out the name of his drinking companion, another alcoholic that shared his oblivious and sad existence. It was hard. But it was good. The friend that passed the bottle in long days of hard drinking was very human and very broken and he loved my brother and for that reason alone I loved him. I was with Ray as his decaying body buckled and bled and closed down. It was one of the most harrowing experiences of my life. It was also one of the most beautiful experiences of my life. I felt privileged that he chose me to watch his back as he left this life and went into the next room.

What happened to my beautiful brother has informed everything I do, everything I write about and everything I think. The lessons he taught me – both good and bad – I pass on. It will, it has and it will again save others.

My brother's death was good. I have another family member who is dangerously ill. I can offer no more information than this; the illness is self inflicted. Me and my close family are forced to stand by and watch the slow decline because you can't save someone who will not be saved. It is her life. It is her body. It is her soul. It is her story. So what is happening obviously needs to happen. It is her journey and it is good because all journeys lead *Home* and that is ultimately where we are all heading.

I also have my own story. Much of it does not make easy reading, especially my back story. I carry the karma of the hundreds that I fucked up on night club doors when I worked as a doorman; the bouncer. It has been hard to forgive myself. No self pity here. No regrets. It was all good. The pre fight, in fight and post fight have all been excruciatingly good. I am left with the residual ache of remorse, lessons that are as profound as they are stark and reference points that add an empirical wisdom to every new situation that I bring upon myself. Re-living each teeth smashing boot in the mouth, each concussive stamp and each spitting invective has been.....uncomfortable. In my former incarnation as a man of lower consciousness I also fucked around, lost my integrity, betrayed my ex-wife, stole, fenced and hurt my kids with my thoughtless actions. You don't just do that shit and walk away without debt. The trail follows you until you find the courage to turn and face it and take the atonement that is due. We all have to atone.

My actions spawned ten years of karmic residue that have brought me sadness, self hate, guilt, self-harm and illness, but each of these represented a step on the ladder of consciousness that has delivered me to where I am now. A better place. A beautiful place. Physically, mentally and spiritually.

So it has all been good. *Very* good.

Especially the experiences that fell into the realms of excess. Because the road of excess (as Blake said) leads to the palace of wisdom. Every excess I indulged produced a

lesson so painful, so profound, so earth moving that it permeated my whole consciousness. Although I vow never to repeat the dark experiences that I brought upon myself I know that life will continue to proffer some of her own. It does have a habit of providing hammer, anvil and furnace to temper every blade. So, if in Her next instruction I find myself revisiting those night places I will do my very best to neither spin nor toil, neither will I complain because it will all be good.

Every thing that happens to me is.

And when folk say 'that Geoff Thompson bloke, he has got it so easy...' I will continue to smile. I will continue to drink my tea. Because....I know they're right. I do.

Thanks for listening in.

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*Until the age of 30 Geoff Thompson worked through a plethora of menial jobs, from glass collector to floor sweeper; he even spent a decade working as a nightclub bouncer.*

*Convinced that there must be more to life than this, Geoff decided to become a martial arts instructor (polled as the number one self defence instructor in the world by Black Belt magazine USA) then followed this by living out his dream of becoming a writer.*

*He is now the author of over thirty books, a stage play, a BAFTA winning short film and two feature films.*

# Mister Mo

by Morné Swanepoel

'Real difficulties can be overcome; it is only the imaginary ones that are unconquerable' - *Theodore N. Vail*

Using about half of his speed, the coach threw a jab at his student's face. Without flinching, the student easily parried the punch. "Good! Lets try again" the coach said. "I'm going to pick up the pace a little". The Student smiled and nodded confidently. The coach threw a jab at three-quarter speed, but this time the student wasn't fast enough. The coach pulled the punch just barely touching his student's face. Frowning, the Coach said, "Okay. Lets do it again. Remember, I'm going to do it faster. Try to react quicker". The Student smiled confidently. And again, the coach had to pull his punch.

"I guess I can't go any faster", the student said apologetically.

"Again", the coach said. He threw the punch at about one-quarter speed, but the student barely managed to parry it.

"One more", the coach said. This time the punch was even slower. And again the student barely managed to block it.

The student shrugged his shoulders, "I'm just not that fast, I guess", he said sheepishly.

"Wait", said the coach.

Wait? the student wondered. Wait for what? Without emotion, the coach, turned, walked to the safety equipment and slipped a large pair

of boxing gloves on. As he approached the student, he threw several fast punches. The student's smile faded.....

"Okay, we'll do it again", the coach said.

"But, err, but why are you, what's the gloves for?" the student said.

"So you don't get hurt too badly if my punch gets through", the coach said nonchalantly. "I am not going to hold back. I am going to hit you in your head". The student's eyes bulged. Before he could say another word, the coach's punched flashed at him at about half-speed. The student blocked the strike with ease.

"Again!" the coach ordered, as he threw several more punches in rapid succession. The wide-eyed young man blocked each one.

"Again!" This time the punches were almost full speed. Yet the student blocked each one, even though his techniques were somewhat poor and sloppy.

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*How does a person stay motivated to be involved in the Martial arts for the rest of your life, or to stand up every morning and faithfully stick to your training routine? How do I not become part of the majority of people who give up their training in a few years time?*

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Nevertheless, the student's movements had suddenly developed a new vitality. There was energy and spirit in each parry. The coach stopped. He stepped back and

grinned.

"Ok that's enough for now!". Somewhat bewildered, the student returned the grin and stared at his coach's back as he walked away. He couldn't see the smile forming on his coach's face.

As many of you know, I have been training and teaching since 1976. Martial Arts has become my full time profession and way of life since the early 1990's. How does a person stay motivated to be involved in the Martial arts for the rest of your life, or to stand up every morning and faithfully stick to your training routine? How do I not become part of the majority of people who give up their training in a few years time?

'Difficulties should act as a tonic. They should spur us to greater exertion' - *B. C.*

*Forbes-*

If someone asks me what a human being ought to devote the maximum of his time to, I would answer TRAINING. Train more than what you sleep ! I put my non-stop dedication to the arts down to one phrase "Mister Mo". Mister Mo is the reification of motivation. I have added Mister to show respect. Mister Mo means no retreat, no surrender. No retreating from the hard effort, no surrendering to laziness or sloppy form. I believe Mister Mo should be the most important person in your life, even more important than

your teacher, your classmates or your students. It's good to have an end to journey toward, but it's the journey that matters in the end. Mister Mo is the one who urges you to attend class when you'd rather stay at home and watch TV. Mister Mo is inside you when you do the extra kick, punch or takedown. Mister Mo wipes the sweat out of your eyes so you can crank out a dozen more reps of that technique that has been so difficult for you. Motivation is what keeps us training month after month, year after year. It is what drives us to face our own physical and mental limitations. Mister Mo makes us confront our own laziness, fears and failure and fears of success. It is what makes us walk the endless path of the martial arts. It encourages us to push ourselves to our limit and then beyond. It helps us tune out pain as we drive ourselves to victory over oneself.

'A desire can overcome all objections and obstacles' –**Gunderson-**

Teachers open the door, but you must enter by yourself. Avoiding pain might be the biggest motivational factor there is. For example, doing a proper technique to avoid a broken nose is an example of an **external motivation**. Most people who train in the martial arts do so, at least initially, because they want to learn self-defence. They don't want to get hurt if they are attacked. For those who enjoy the sport aspects of the arts, external motivation may be the next tournament trophy. For some it is the next belt. For example students quit when they reach a particular belt rank. The belt was their goal. Once they earn it, they no longer have motivation. Mister Mo departs from their thinking.

Unlike external motivation, **internal motivation** is a more difficult concept to understand. Internal motivation is the desire to excel for the sake of pursuing excellence. Internal motivation means you are competing against yourself not others. It means wanting to do as well as you can, regardless of how others do. Internally motivated students tend to persist in their training. While they are satisfied with each promotion, they are also driven to succeed beyond ranking or trophies. These students train because they want to improve, not to impress others. If you cannot find the truth right where you are, where else do you expect to find it?  
How can I stay motivated?

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*Don't worry what others are doing. If you are trying to surpass someone else, you are limited to what that person has done. You must have no limits! Always strive for excellence.*

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*Search for that drive to succeed.*

Become mentally motivated. Mister Mo is in all of us. You can call on him at any time when things get tough.

Don't worry what others are doing. If you are trying to surpass someone else, you are limited to what that person has done. You must have no limits! Always strive for excellence.

Set yourself more challenging goals and record them in a journal or diary. Then set your time to re-view your goals so you can evalu-

ate your progress. Then set new goals.

Focus your growth and development as a martial artist and as a person.

Learn joyfully, and then share joyfully. Daily improvement in every aspect of your life is the overall goal. Don't just think positively, act positively!

Be yourself, but be the best of yourself! And when you feel discouraged, call on Mister Mo.

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# Breathing Exercises for Hypertension, Enlarged Prostate and Arrhythmias

By Martin Eisen

High blood pressure is frequently difficult to treat in a short time by acupuncture or herbs. Patients become discouraged and turn to western medicine. Some forms of Qigong can lower blood pressure. However, most of these forms must be taught to the patient and are not simple to learn.

Most of these Qigong methods have a common factor. The rate of respiration is slowed down. This may be the chief parameter which accounts for their lowering of blood pressure.

Recent research shows that 3 or 4 15-minute sessions of slow breathing (less than or equal to 10 breaths per minute) can lower both systolic and diastolic blood pressure, usually within 8 weeks (1) – (19)

In one clinical trial, some diabetics were not able to sufficiently lower their respiration rate. However, with a longer training period and some instruction on proper breathing, a lower rate of respiration might be achieved.

The breathing exercise should be performed using normal, Buddhist or diaphragmatic breathing, like opera singers. The Taoists thought that normal breathing was one of the secrets of longevity. If you look at a baby in its crib you will only notice its stomach move up and down as it breathes. By contrast, when most seniors

breathe their upper chest heaves up and down and there is no visible movement of their abdomen, a consequence of shallow breathing. A Chinese doctor looks at the abdomen of a critically ill patient. If it moves up and down as the patient breathes, the patient has a better chance of surviving than a patient with no visible abdominal movement on breathing. Thus, you may have to instruct patients so that normal or diaphragmatic breathing is done automatically.

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*Most of these Qigong methods have a common factor. The rate of respiration is slowed down. This may be the chief parameter which accounts for their lowering of blood pressure.*

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Normal or diaphragmatic breathing can be practiced lying down or sitting in a chair. The practice methods are similar. The method of practice while sitting in a chair will be described. Inhale and exhale gently, smoothly and continuously through your nose. Sit comfortably, with your knees bent and your shoulders, head and neck relaxed. Place one hand on your upper chest and the other just below your rib cage. This will allow you to feel your diaphragm move as you breathe. As you inhale, the hand on your chest must move as little as possible, while the hand on your abdomen must move outwards. When you exhale, the hand on your abdomen moves inward, which you can help by

slightly and gently pulling your abdominal muscle inward. Once again, the hand on your chest moves as little as possible. At first, you'll probably get tired while doing this exercise because an increased effort will be needed to use the diaphragm correctly. Keep at it, because with continued practice, diaphragmatic breathing will become easy and automatic. Practice this exercise 5-10 minutes a few times a day.

It is relatively simple to instruct most patients in slow, normal breathing. However, for patients who can't concentrate there is a device, Resperate, which helps a patient breath slowly. The Resperate has three components. One is a little computerized module the size of a personal CD player. The second is a standard set of earphones. And the third is a chest strap holding a breath sensor.

Patients put the elastic strap around their chest, put on the earphones, and sit in a chair. The device plays soothing music. Incorporated into the music are tones that represent the patient's actual breathing. Patients are instructed to match their breathing to the tones, which gradually slow until a person is breathing at the relaxing rate of 10 breaths per minute.

Slow breathing has the physiological effect of relaxing the muscles surrounding the small blood vessels, which allows the

blood to flow more easily. Alpha blockers block receptors in arteries and smooth muscle. This action relaxes the blood vessels and leads to an increase in blood flow and a lower pressure for the control of hypertension. The action in the urinary tract enhances urinary flow for an enlarged prostate. Slow breathing seems to have the same effect as alpha blockers. Thus, it may also reduce the symptoms of an enlarged prostate. This conjecture has not been subjected to clinical trials, but has worked on one subject.

There is another simple breathing technique purported to help eliminate and prevent heart attacks due to abnormal electrical events to the heart, and to generally enhance performance of the central nervous system (CNS) and to help eliminate the effects of traumatic shock and stress to the CNS. Most patients would prefer to try this approach rather than the risks of ablation or a cardiac pacemaker.

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The method requires 1 breath per minute (BPM) respiratory exercise with slow inspiration for 20 seconds, breath retention for 20 seconds, and slow expiration for 20 seconds, for 31 consecutive minutes. Do not attempt to use the required time intervals to start. Use a time interval - say, 5 sec-

onds, or even less, so that no straining is involved. Try to practice every day.

This technique produced favorable shifts in all hemodynamic variables measured for 4 subjects during the 1 BPM exercise and in the post-exercise resting period (20). The authors conclude that the long-term effects of this technique appear to reset a cardio-respiratory brain-stem pacemaker. This effect may be the basis for the purported health claim of this yogic breathing exercise. Large scale clinical trials seem warranted.

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# My conversations with Lao Tzu

By Paul Brecher [www.taiji.net](http://www.taiji.net)

The first time I met Lao Tzu he was on the ground slumped against a tree and it was not clear if he was lying down meditating or having a little afternoon nap or if he had just collapsed because he was drunk.

He was not neat and tidy, he was sort of relaxed and kind of at ease within himself and did not seem to care one way or the other what others might think of him. I woke him up and asked him to explain the Tao he said ‘ I feel a bit hungry do you want to come and get a bite to eat ? ’ ( Now many decades later I realize that he was not asking me if I was hungry but that he had in fact just given me the answer to my question. )

So we were sitting down in the old Chinese tea house having some dim sum and oolong tea (this was his favourite tea, oolong means black dragon) and I just started asking him questions, this was how I used to be when I was younger, full of over excitement and enthusiasm.

Anyway I said I did this martial art called Tai Chi Chuan and did he also practice this style or had it not been invented yet because he was a mythical character from Chinese legends of thousands of years ago. He said that he practiced something that changed and evolved and would later become known as the martial art of Tai

Chi. He said Tai chi at its heart was really certain movements put together in a certain order, we were both using the same moves but maybe the order was a bit different that was all, not so important.

I felt a bit annoyed, when he said that, I said how can you say its not important, of course its important otherwise its like saying all the different Chinese internal martial arts are just the same ( when obviously mine was the best ! )

He did not reply straight away, he just slowly sipped his tea and grimed this very annoying little smile and then very calmly said that yes, exactly, all the different styles used the same letters to make different words to tell us different stories.

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*I felt a bit annoyed, when he said that, I said how can you say its not important, of course its important otherwise its like saying all the different Chinese internal martial arts are just the same ( when*

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obviously mine was the best ! )

He went on to clarify things by saying that the most important thing about tai chi for fighting or healing was The Way of Moving. Knowing lots of moves is good and knowing lots of martial applications is good but without The Way of Moving it is not Tai Chi.

What does The Way of Moving look like?

Like a Dragon coiling and uncoiling!

I said one style must be better than another for fighting, what move from your style would you do if I punched you right now, I would hit you in the head with this tea pot he said and then he shrugged his shoulders and then as he sighed and said martial arts training and fighting are different, just like learning to swim does not make you a fish.

How did you know when you had got to the highest level I asked him. He said he trained for ten years then he had a dream, in this dream he tried to punch the opponent in the face but his fist was moving so slowly as if through honey he could not reach him.

After another ten years of intense training he had another dream, in this dream he punch their face but it was like hitting a soft sponge and the opponent remained unaffected.

Finally after another ten years of the most dedicated and unrelenting training he had his final dream in this dream he punched the face of the opponent as fast as lightning and when he connect, their face was crushed and smashed and shattered.

How amazing I said, it took you thirty years to get to the highest level.

That was not the highest level he replied, that took me another ten years, to go beyond the martial arts into the healing arts and then I stopped having such violent dreams, also you know that the opponent who's face I was so happy to have finally smashed in, it was of course my own face !

Lao Tzu said he thought life was a dream but one that was worth living. He said to master martial arts was like a dream in black and white, to master the healing arts was like a dream in colour and to really have accomplished a high level in ones spiritual development was like a dream of a new colour. The only problem was it was very hard to describe it to anyone !

I was not distracted from my initial annoyance by his philosophising about life and dreams. I wanted to know what was the best martial art. He said ' Young man it is not the style that causes the opponent to be knocked out or killed but the person, it is not a style which is deadly but the mind intent of the individual. If you are prepared to hit as hard as you can to the most weak and vulnerable parts of their body the opponent will die.'

Lao Tzu concluded our conversation that day by saying, 'When I was your age young man I was so intense in my training that I did not remember to stop and watch the clouds on their journey across the sky. You should continue to train, a little bit every day but remember Tai chi is like a good dish, it is a tasty fulfilling meal, it is a very nutritional feast. However if you try and cook it too quickly it is ruined and you have to start all over again.

Better to add the ingredients in the right amounts one by one at the correct moment and then leave it to slow cook over a long period of time.'

We finished our meal and I went to pay only to find out that Lao Tzu already had without me knowing. When I returned to the table he was gone and there was a scribbled note that he had left for me, it said "Looking ahead the way is long, Looking back it is short. If you don't go within, you go without. The beauty of the Way is that there is no Way."

# Qi JingBa Mai and Ba Gua Zhang

*Presented by Wally Simpson*

In the Ling Gui Ba Fa (8 Techniques of the Mysterious Turtle) system of Acupuncture all the points on the body are dominated by the Shu points of the arms and legs. These points in turn are dominated by 8 Confluent points that are associated with the 8 Extraordinary Vessels. The Confluent points according to this system are where the 12 Primary and the 8 Extraordinary Vessels intersect. Each of the Confluent points has its own trigram from the I Ching.

There are said to be three Internal Martial Arts in China. TaiJiChuan is said to be the Mother of the Internal Arts; Baguazhang the Daughter and Xing Yi the Son. BaGuaZhang is based on the trigrams of the I Ching and is reputed to have amazing health maintaining and restoring properties.

At the beginning of the Qing dynasty in the He Bei province of China, Dong Hai Chuan (1796 – 1880) is said to have invented the Art of Ba Gua Zhang. One of Dong's students, Cheng Ting Hua who died during the Boxer Rebellion of 1900, had a son who made

this art popular in the Beijing and Tianxin regions.

It was Sun Luc Tang (1860 – 1932) another student of Chen Ting Hua's however who became most famous, writing books on TaiJiChuan, BaGuaZhang, XingYi and a fourth book called 'The Esoteric Way of the Martial Arts'.

Ba Gua Zhang has since built up a reputation as being both a deadly martial art and an amazing way to gain longevity. It is said that those Master of this art who were not killed in battles, lived very long and healthy lives.

In the style of Ba Gua Zhang that I have learned, we walk a circle holding our hands as Dragon palms. The palms are held in different directions and in different ways (eg palm up, palm down, etc). We have 8 different palms and there are 64 different possible combinations of these palms. These 64 combinations are said to contain all the changes that occur in Heaven and on Earth. For all but the 6th palm, these palms are held around the level of the middle Dantian.

BaGuaZhang incorporates the attributes of different animals into its movements, their appearance, the way they move and think. No 1 Palm for insistence has the character of Heaven and its animal is a Lion, Solemn, it can be Explosive

and Aggressive. The Extraordinary Meridian represented by this palm is Chong Mai. Chong Mai according to the Ling Shu is seen as the Ocean of 12 meridians and the Ocean of Blood. Blood is seen by many commentators of the classics as a vessel which carries the Shen. It is said the Shen must be housed in the Heart at night to allow sleep. The Heart is seen as the Emperor of the body and its temperament is Solemn; the Lion is seen as the King of Beasts.

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*Ba Gua Zhang has since built up a reputation as being both a deadly martial art and an amazing way to gain longevity. It is said that those Master of this art who were not killed in battles, lived very long and healthy lives.*

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The 8 basic palm changes or any of the 64 combinations of palm changes may be done as a Qigong, preformed either standing in Horse stance or walking a circle.

The palms are also incorporated into a form where they are used in various postures.

According to Yoshio Manaka MD, in his book 'Chasing the Dragons Tail' "The 8 Extraor-

dinary Vessels may be the first channels formed as the fertilized ovum divides. The first division between left and right is the axis of the Ren and Du Mai's, while the second division gives rise to the Dai Mai and so on." If this is the case then these Extraordinary vessels may be seen as storehouses of structural information as well as primordial Qi and reservoirs for any excess from the other vessels This would infer that they might be used to correct structural imbalances as well as problems of Qi and Blood.

Manaka talks about the Octahedral Model of the body as being defined first by the Ren and Du mai which gives us the left and right division of the body structure; Then the Dai Mai giving us superior and inferior division of the body.

These first couple of divisions are very easily to picture, the following ones take a bit more work to see.

If we look at the leg branch of the Chong Mai Trajectory, we see that it descends the Yin aspect of the leg we can also see it is close in its pathway to the Yin Qiao Mai and the Zu Tai Yin (Sp) [though on the foot it appears to be closer to the Zu Shao Yin (Kid) and Zu Jue Yin(Liv)]; from Zhubin (Kid 9) the Yin Wei Mai also traverses this region of the leg; this gives suggestion to an Anterior, Posterior dividing line on the Yin aspect of the leg – (Manaka tends to talk about this division as being defined by the Spleen Mai.)

The Shou Jue Yin Vessel (Pc) gives us the Anterior, Posterior dividing line on the Yin aspect of the arm. The Master point for the Yin Wei and Chong Mai's are found on the Pericardium and Spleen respectively.

On the Yang aspect of the leg the Zu Shao Yang (Gb) follows a similar pathway to the Yang Wei and Yang Qiao Mai's and gives the suggestion of an Anterior Posterior dividing line on the Yang aspect of the leg. Manaka suggests this division is formed by the Gall Bladder Mai and indeed this is fairly close to an Anterior Posterior division of the trunk.

The Shou Shao Yang (Sj) fits this division on the Yang aspect of the Arm.

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***BaGuaZhang with its twisting turning centrifugal force gives us the ability to access this group of vessels by stretching and squeezing the Meridians.***

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The Zu Tai Yin (Sp), Shou Jue Yin (Pc), and the Shao Yang Mai's (Gb / Sj) appear to have important relationship with the QiJingBaMai. Not only do they roughly represent Anterior posterior division of the body but 4 of the Confluent points for the QiJingBaMai lie on these vessels (Gongsun (Sp 4) – Neiguan (Pc 6) – Waiguan (Sj 5) and ZuLinQi (Gb 41).

These dividing lines of the body separating Left / Right – Superior / Inferior – Anterior / Posterior and the regions contained within each division, appear to be responsive to treatment of the Confluent Points of the Extraordinary Vessels, this effect then flows over into the Vessels that intersect them. Tightness in muscular groups and reactive tissue will change, become looser and less reactive when the Extraordinary Vessel points of the related regions are treated. This in turn affects body structure and the functional events that caused the tightness and or reactivity to occur originally, also change resulting in a very powerful therapeutic intervention.

Manaka and his associates concluded that the QiJingBaMai have older embryological and evolutionary roots than the 12 Main Meridians and have a major effect on the symmetry of the body. In relation to the Octahedral Model, their movement of Qi (primitive signals) appears to be much broader than that of the Main Meridians.

BaGuaZhang with its twisting turning centrifugal force gives us the ability to access this group of vessels by stretching and squeezing the Meridians.

When we walk the circle in BaGuaZhang we do it in such a way so that,—— as much as possible, we avoid putting weight on the front foot. The

moment the weight is transferred to the front foot it must become the back foot. The unique stepping method gathers no momentum; the power for the movement comes only from the Dantien / waist. This allows the practitioner to be able to stop immediately and go in the opposite direction. For this to occur the practitioner has to become posted on the weighted foot; alter the structure of the waist slightly so as to lift the hip of the unweighted foot, which in turn lifts the unweighted foot as a flat foot and moves it to the front with a shake of the waist.

So here we must have the Ren and Du Mai's, the dividing line between left & right sides of the body, communicating and making stable the upright structure of the body. There is probably some activation of the Qiao and Wei Mai's contributing to this stabilising of the upright structure. This will allow us to become posed on one leg while explosively moving the other leg and the body around the standing leg. We must also have an activation of the Dai Mai to allow the hip to be lifted enough for the foot to rise as a flat foot and be carried forward by this explosive shaking that originates from the Dantien / waist. The momentum of each step must not be carried on into the next step, it has to stop when the foot stops and rest unweighted before the next step is taken.

The Ren and Du Mai in some text are seen to arise from the Lower Dantien (referred to as 'the Moving Qi between the Kidneys' by Matsumoto & Birch) while the Dai Mai appears to travel through the Lower Dantien. If all

Ba Gua Zhang achieved was the activation of these 3 vessels, it would be an art worthy of note. It does much more than this as the various palm changes and postures unfold through out the walking of the circle while doing the form.

Each posture can also affect one of the Zang Fu and examples of this may be found in postures such as Duck Lands on Water which works not only on balancing Heaven and Earth but also on the on the Kidney, Liver and Spleen. ——— Kidney and Liver are in a Parent Child relationship while Liver and Spleen and Spleen and Kidney are in a Grand parent Grand Child relationship.

Leaning on the Horse to ask the Way is working on the Qi of the body which is stored in the Vertebra. Each individual vertebra is like a small capacitor which stores a charge of energy / Qi. In this movement we elongate the vertebra slightly then drop it back down so that each vertebra is sitting squarely on top of the one underneath it. This will allow us to both store Qi more efficiently in the capacitor of the vertebra as well as issue it when and where it is needed. This pose uses two Number 1 (Heaven) palms, No 1 palms are said to activate the Chong Mai. A branch of the Chong Mai according to 'A Manual of Acupuncture' by Peter Deadman and Mazin Al-khafaji, ascend inside the spinal column. Matsumoto and Birch quote the Ling Shu in their book 'Extraordinary Vessels' "the Chong Mai ascends in front of the spine".

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*Leaning on the Horse to ask the Way is working on the Qi of the body which is stored in the Vertebra. Each individual vertebra is like a small capacitor which stores a charge of energy / Qi. In this movement we elongate the vertebra slightly then drop it back down so that each vertebra is sitting squarely on top of the one underneath it.*

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Transfer Flower Connect to Wood is said to work on the Stomach. This may indicate some type of activation of the Chong Mai as it is also known as the 'Ocean of the Five Yin and Six Yang Organs and of the 12 Meridians', it is also called the 'Ocean of Blood'. The pose begins with a number 1 palm (Chong) and a number 6 palm (Yang Qiao), it then moves into two number 4 palms (Yang Wei). My Bagua teacher talks of this move as transplanting, or perhaps grafting one plant into another "We take the Roots of the Flower and connect them to Wood so that we have a balanced flow of Qi. It loosens up the ground Qi that ascends through the legs and gives us an overall quality flow of Qi." Our Root is the Dantien {No 6 palm is the only palm held at the level of the lower Dantien – it is said to be represented by Water and heal the Kidney – its animal is the snake B flexible, agile with a great capacity to flow.} Number 4 palms are representative of Thunder / Arousal / Shaking – its animal is the

Dragon who has leaping, twisting, undulating and changing form – Yang Wei has its Master point in Waiguan (Sj 5)

The activation and Harmonization of Qi through the Ren and Du Mai's is what in Qi Gong terms is called the promotion of the Grand circulation of Qi and it has a powerful effect on all the Yin and Yang Vessels and Qi of the body in general.

The Dai Mai has the ability to harmonise upper and lower / Yang and Yin regions of the body. As its name suggests it acts like a belt around the body holding all the other vessels in place. An example of how this vessel is activated can be found in the Movement called 'Flock of Wild Geese Flies (Bursts) Out. — As we walk the circle and preform the twisting and turning movement that are so typical of BaGuaZhang we generate a lot of Qi in the Dantien (you can become quite hot in general). This Qi then becomes available to the various vessels and ZangFu of the body in similar ways to the way Qi from food and drink becomes available to the body.

The structure of the body is twisted and an effect is generated through all of the dividing lines / Extraordinary Vessels B when we have an effect on the Yin / structure we also affect the Yang / function of the organism just as when we effect the Qi / function of the body we have an affect on the Xue to nourish the structure of the body.

## *The Bagua Palms*

**Number 1 palm** faces up with the fingers pointed away from the body, it represents Heaven / Creativity / Power, it is said to heal the head. Its trigram is called Qian and it is represented by ☰. Its direction is North West and its season is the beginning of Winter. The Shu point for Qian is Gongsun (Sp 4); this is the master point for the Chong Mai. Its animal is the Lion which is Solemn and contains Explosive and Aggressive energy.

**Number 2 palm** faces down with the fingers pointed away from the body, it represents Earth / Receptivity / Pleasure, it is said to heal the middle jiao. Its trigram is called Kun and it is represented by ☷. Its direction is South West and its season is the start of Autumn. The Shu point for Kun is Zhaohai (Kid 6); this is the master point for Yin Qiao Mai. Its animal is the Monkey which has Agility and has Shrinking ability.

**Number 3 palm** faces away from the body with the fingers pointed up, it represents Fire / Clinging, it is said to heal the eyes. Its trigram is called Li and it is represented by ☲. Its direction is South and its season is mid Summer. The Shu point for Li is Leique (Lu 7) which is the master point for the Ren mai. Its animal is the Falcon which has Spinning, Turning and Chopping / Swooping? ability.

**Number 4 palm** faces towards the body with the fingers pointed towards each other (it is similar to the 3 circle Qigong of Taijichuan). It represents Thunder / Arousing / Shaking, it is said to heal the left side of the abdomen. Its trigram is Zhen and it is represented by ☳. Its direction is East and its season is dividing of Spring. The Shu point for Zhen is Waiguan (SJ 5) which is the master point of the Yang Wei Mai. Its animal is the Dragon which is unpredictable and has Leaping, Twisting, Undulating and Changing form.

**Number 5 palm** faces medially with the fingers pointed away from the body. It represents Wind / Gentle, it is said to heal the first seven vertebrae. Its trigram is Sun and it is represented by ☱. Its direction is South East and its season is start of Summer. The Shu point for Sun is Zu Linqi (Gb 41) which is the master point of the Dai Mai. Its animal is the Phoenix which is seen Swirling in a Continuous Circle.

**Number 6 palm** faces towards the body with the fingers pointed towards each other (it is held so the hands are level with the lower Dantian). It represents Water / Danger / Abysmal, it is said to heal the Kidneys. Its trigram is Kan and it is represented by ☵. Its direction is North and its season is absolute Winter. The Shu point of Kan is Shenmai (Bl 62) which is the master point of Yang Qiao Mai. Its animal is

the Snake which is Flexible and agile with both Striking Point Paralyzing ability and a great capacity to flow.

**Number 7 palm** faces medially with the fingers pointing upward. It represents Mountain / Stillness, it is said to heal the neck. Its trigram is Gen and it is represented by. Its direction is North East and its season is the start of Spring. The Shu point for Gen is Neiguan (Pc 6) which is the master point of Yin Wei Mai. Its animal is the Bear which is Powerful but Docile with great Uprooting ability.

**Number 8 palm** faces laterally with the fingers pointed away from the body (when we are using two number 8 palms, we join both Shaoze's (Si 3's) and as much of the Xiao Chang Mai's as possible). It represents Clouds / Yielding (Lake / Joyful), it is said to heal the right side of the Abdomen. Its trigram is Dui and it is represented by. Its direction is West and its season is Dividing of Autumn. The Shu point for Dui is Houxi (Si 3) which is the master point of the Du mai. Its animal is the Unicorn which is seen to Stand on One Leg and Twist like a Tornado.

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\* A Manual of Acupuncture by Peter Deadman & Mazin Al-Khafaji

eats more or even better injects less insulin before training this will be the right way in order to get the healthy benefits and keep out the long and short term (unconsciousness) danger.

Christian Zietsch Germany

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*Addendum to my Article about the benefits of Tai Chi on Diabetes and Insulin Users.*

From WTBA Member Christian Zietsch (Germany)

*A warning – especially to the insulin users,*

**R**eal tai chi also could initiate a serious hypoglycaemia too, if the initial BGL was in the perfect range or less (I have to face this phenomena some times). So I have the glucose pieces close to me. Lots of us but more the type II guys which have a strict injection and eating schedule - often not consider the consequences. Too much hypoglycaemia is that bad like to high BGL at all the times. You are poisoning yourself. The greatest “benefits” of hypoglycaemia is like that: your blood remembers it and so your glycosylated (or glycated) haemoglobin (HbA1c or long term BGL) will be reduced – and this makes the doctor happy, if he/she doesn't know the real reason for the good value of it. If someone



# Tai Chi Notes

*Bahaer Khalil  
Egypt*

This morning I was watching one of Mr. Erle's clips in which he was explaining why old masters were not keen in telling the theory of their martial arts and one feel when doing the form.

Actually this was perplexing me a lot. Surprisingly, I found that it's not only me! In a book called "Chi kung the way of energy" written by master Lam Kam Chuaen, he wrote a column under the name "Are they cheating me" describing how was his first impression when he was told to stand in the basic chi kung position and it was not logic and he kept asking and asking without finding answers and when just did what he was told to do he found the answers that he was searching for.

I practice tai chi chuan and chi kung alone and I found that the major problem is not to have a few information, or to be accurate, it is to give much care for collecting information and spend few care to make use of what you have. I remember that Bruce Lee said knowing is not enough we must apply willing is not enough we must do.

At the beginning I wanted to know every thing about tai chi chuan and chi kung even before I start practicing. I started reading books and watching videos. I wanted to master them in few

months then search for something else! Enthusiasm is good but even water can kill. When I started practicing I always had and still have a tendency to think that I am doing every thing well and I was born to be a tai chi fighter. The problem in that is I started to deviate from the skill rather than sticking to it! And that is why those old masters kept the theory of their martial arts and meditation and just give us those straight forward advices which for the first time seem silly and insufficient. Those masters wanted us just to practice, simply because it is the only way to know. Reading books and watching videos is cool but practicing rules.

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*I practice tai chi chuan and chi kung alone and I found that the major problem is not to have a few information, or to be accurate, it is to give much care for collecting information and spend few care to make use of what you have.*

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**In the following lines I want to share my notes on practicing the form as a beginner hoping that they may help people who practice alone like me.**

You will find that all tai chi masters keep emphasizing on keeping the back straight and vertical and I insist on bending it. Actually I do not mean to do that of course but when I straighten my back my stability decreases and since I want to feel that I can do what my body is not prepared for yet, I subconsciously bend it. I tried to look in mirrors but

they distract me and I can not concentrate. I think using a video camera will help more or simply if you kept your chin pulled in slightly ((as the old masters kept saying!)). *so if you want to make sure your back is straight make sure to pull in your chin slightly and watch out whenever you feel over stable and rooted your back may be bending.*

old masters also emphasis on relaxing shoulders and I have to admit that after practicing tai chi and chi kung for the last year I fell my shoulders are more relaxed but recently I started to convince myself I can relax them more than any body else so I started deviating again.. guess how? I noticed I hunch my upper back since this drops the shoulders or to be accurate it makes them dead yin. Actually tai chi and chi kung were designed so that you try to relax when your posture makes you tense and to breath deeply when your breathing is constrained so that you can relax and breath deeply more and more throughout our daily life. It is like training on what is difficult makes what is easy easier. *Therefore, if you want to make sure that your shoulders are relaxed think of your elbows and try to visualize that they are heavy and pulled down but watch out not to close the (kua) ((as the old masters kept saying!))*

Old masters in addition emphasized that arms follow the body and they do not move by themselves. It is like your clothes when you move they move with you because they are following and not because they can walk! This is easy to be understood but it

is difficult to be done as all other aspects of tai chi and then I started deviating again. This time I noticed that I raise my right shoulder if I turn right and visa versa as if I pull my body with my shoulders and I think I do that subconsciously because I am not rooted enough yet and turning my body while keeping shoulders relaxed makes me feel not stable and floppy so I deviate. Or because my timing is bad so that my body does not move in the right moment. Concerning the same aspect I deviate also by holding my breath when turning to falsely increase my stability. So keep in mind you will not fell stable or rooted throughout the form otherwise you deviate just like me. Actually this like learning riding bicycle... some children are very afraid to fall over so keep looking down all the time so they never learn. And when you practice the form keep checking when you fall over and more importantly why and what is wrong not by asking and asking and depressing yourself like saying “ ooh this not gonna work I can not learn tai chi alone I will give.. if only there is a trainer!” *but by practice.*

the most exciting thing I learned up till now is the foot work in tai chi. In our daily life we walk by shifting our weight then we move one leg to the front. In the form we move one leg to the front first then we roll on it like a train rolling on rails. The latter way of walking makes you more stable ,i.e., it gives you the upper hand in any fight. If you do not walk correctly this will appear in your hips especially in the “brush knee twist step” posture. At the end of every step look at you hips if (when your left foot is in the front and the right on in the back) your left hip is higher than the right ,i.e., the level of pelvis is not parallel to ground, this may be because you shifted your weight to the front before your left foot touches the ground ,i.e., you lean rather than rolling and you

put more than 70% of your weight on the left foot. Actually it will be nice to play that game before the form which may help to grasp what it means to move like a cat and to roll your waist like a wheel. Lean against a wall so that your right shoulder is resting on the wall and your right leg is about 2 inches away from that wall then start pushing yourself away from the wall using only your right leg. From this game I want you to feel what it feels to move the torso by the rear leg without leaning forward. By the same way when you walk in the form make sure that your weight is on one leg then extend the other leg to the front no weight on it until it touches the ground heels touches first then start pushing yourself with your rear leg and if the rear leg is the right when pushing focus on the left hip not the right one. If you found that ( when the rear leg is the right one) the right hip is higher than the left hip then you focus on the left hip not the right one and visa versa. Also make sure the foot ball does not touch the ground before you start shifting your weight. So as long as you are rolling forward keep the foot ball off the ground.

Finally, you should focus on what to be done not what to be felt. I hope that may help. By the way, I kept saying ((as the old masters kept saying!)) because at the beginning I hated classics and thought that they are mysterious and can not help. Now I think they are the only ruler to draw a straight line.

Bahaer Khalil  
Egypt

# The 3 important stages of street violence

Morné Swanepoel

Street violence which can be directly related to the unlawful exercise of physical force is a reality which all of us live with on a daily basis. Training to protect oneself for street confrontations is very intense and quite different from training for competitions, even the No holds barred competitions that are very popular today. The Pavement arena is where there are no rules, where anything goes and where you can expect the unexpected.

The latest buzz word in the martial arts community is 'reality-based?' It is a police term, though never widely used in the law enforcement community, which refers to realistic Conflict Rehearsal training. The term 'reality-based' was brought to light thanks to one of the world's leading reality based instructors, Sergeant Jim Wagner. He defines reality-based as follows:

'Training and survival skills based on modern conflict situations that the practitioner is likely to encounter in their environment (their "reality"), in an accordance with the use-of-force continuum of that jurisdiction.' - Jim Wagner

According to the Oxford Dictionary, the word reality/realism/realistic can be defined as:  
Actually existing or occurring.  
Practise of things in their true nature and dealing with them as they

are. Based on facts rather than ideals etc.

Your duty as a Street Self Defence Coach/instructor is to expose your students to what is real in today's world of street violence and to ensure that their training methods and techniques is on par with what is actually happening out there today i.e reality based.

In the reality-based world there are 3 main conflict stages that one is exposed to. Any violent or self defence situation can be divided into these important stages.

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*The latest buzz word in the martial arts community is 'reality-based?' It is a police term, though never widely used in the law enforcement community, which refers to realistic Conflict Rehearsal training.*

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## 1 - Pre Conflict (before the fight)

Most situations can be avoided by ensuring one exposes oneself to pre conflict training. Pre conflict training consists of various factors such as: Threat assessment, situational awareness, hostile awareness, legal issues, verbal judo etc. Learning how to avoid confrontations physically, mentally and socially is imperative to any reality based self defence training. Besides the physical techniques and training methods one can incorporate to achieve these results it is just as important to expose oneself to case studies of various violent crimes to identify the pre conflict stage and methods of

avoidance or minimal damage/injury.

## 2 - Conflict (the actual confrontation)

This is the part that most Self Defence and Martial Art schools focus on. The problem is that most of them are based on theory, rituals, tradition and set sequences or forms. Not one confrontation is the same and trying to memorize complex techniques for certain situations or attacks is going to get you killed or seriously injured. The conflict stage has social and asocial violence components which need specific attention such as gang attacks, the way criminals fight with weapons, carjacking, robberies, muggings etc. It is also important one is able to establish the difference between social and asocial violence and the amount of force you will be using to successfully defend yourself and your loved ones. The importance of getting the most effective results is directly related to the tools that are brought into action focussing on the most vulnerable targets that are available

## 3 - Post Conflict (after the fight)

These are the actions you will take after the confrontation/fight. Again there are many factors involved here which needs to be addressed in ones reality based training such as first aid training, escaping methods, citizen's arrest methods, communication with the

authorities, courtroom survival, attacker description and incident detail etc.

Your training should focus on reality based training methods and techniques which specifically focuses on modern conflict situations, and eliminating outdated techniques and training methods. No time should be wasted on rituals, memorisation of complex techniques or forms but rather on resisting opponents and scenario training which will give the practitioner immediate results and feedback. Constant evolution and updating of ones potential enemies and the way you are preparing yourself to deal with them is essential if you want to survive the streets of today.

### *Defending yourself against the strangle*

Most situations can be avoided by ensuring one exposes oneself to pre conflict training. In the following scenario the lady(Aileen) was unable to avoid the attack and is being attacked aggressively.



sequence 175.jpg

It is clear that the attacker is serious about his intentions and that Aileen finds herself in an awkward situation. Being trapped against an obstacle which in this case is a wall at a public parkade ensures that the attacker achieves maximum leverage with his strangle. Aileen needs to injure her attacker as quick as possible to ensure that her body has sufficient oxygen to function productively.



sequence 177.jpg

In this specific situation Aileen is able to drive her knee into her attackers groin creating an injury and a spinal reflex i.e. the attacker bends forward due to the injury and pain experienced.



sequence 179.jpg

The situation requires Aileen to take her thumbs and drive it into her attackers eyes. Again due to the injury and pain experienced the attacker bends backwards.



sequence 196.jpg

Due to the spinal reflex(bending backwards) Aileen is able to drive the attacker down to the ground where she positions herself in a domineering position.



sequence 197.jpg

To be able to escape this aggressive attack Aileen drives

her thumbs right into the opponents eye sockets creating immense pain and injury.



**sequence 199.jpg**

Aileen is able to escape this attack and make her way to safety while leaving the attacker in pain, agony and a damaged ego.

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# The pornographic wasp.

Geoff Thompson

If I told you that it was a wasp that taught me the dangers of pornography you'd probably accuse me of being a honeycomb short of the full hive, but it is true. But before I recount the lesson....I have a confession to make. I do like pornography.

Actually that is not entirely accurate.

Let's say that I am *highly aroused* by pornography.

I don't really like it because, well, like all addictions, it drains my energy, sometimes it completely disempowers me. I am highly aroused by it because....well, it is innate, it is my genes.

So I don't watch it anymore. I don't read. In fact I don't entertain it at all. I haven't for many years. I let it go, around about the same time that I stopped drinking alcohol. But I don't judge it either. I don't like porn because it is an addiction and addictions are prisons for the weak of will. I won't be weak neither will I be prisoner to my senses. I wanted to be strong and I wanted to be free. So my issue with pornography was neither a moral nor ethical one. For me it is all about mastering my body and mind through the control of self (all growth starts with the self). The first and best and most immediate way to control the self is via the senses, and I tackled (and continue to tackle) my senses through the deliberate slaughter of

my addictions. The Kabbalah teaches us that all our power, all our wealth is locked into our addictions, and when we kill those addictions we win our power back. And when we have our power back we can do anything we like with it. Those who are heavily addicted are prisoners to their addiction. Killing them opens the door to freedom. (Our main addictions in this society are drugs, alcohol, gambling, pornography and people pleasing – most people are infected with at least one, some people have them all). It is a trick that I learned from Ghandi, who used this method of abstention to change the course of human history (no less).

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***Those who are heavily addicted are prisoners to their addiction. Killing them opens the door to freedom.***

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At the time of his death he had some 300 million followers. He believed that each of us had one major addiction and that when you closed the door to that you closed the door to all your addictions. He started by killing his addiction to sex, then he set about mastering palate claiming that if you controlled the palate all the other senses would fall into line and when you controlled the senses you controlled yourself. And when you controlled yourself you literally controlled the world. This is why I stopped watching pornography.

This is what my friend the wasp taught me. Like most people I convinced myself that a little bit of porn was OK. *As long as I kept control of it.* But with something as powerful sex (especially for the sexually profligate male who has about a million years of procreational conditioning in his jeans) moderation (I believe) is an untenable philosophy.

Like any drug you indulge each injection needs to be stronger and sooner than the last to get the same hit. It is small wonder then that people who initially indulge light flirtation with porn quickly progress to the hardcore, often dangerous, mutations that no longer resemble the procreational act of intercourse with a loving partner. I always justified it to myself as 'just something blokes did' until my appetite grew more and more controlling and started to threaten my integrity. It got that it was hard for me to walk down the street without checking out (and imagining what I might do with) the curves of ever shapely female that happened to pass by. I'd go into book shops to purchase works on philosophy and psychology and spirituality and suddenly find myself in the erotica section flicking through the pages of 'porn made to look like art.'

When you find yourself doing things against your own will you have to start asking yourself a few questions. The ques-

tion I asked myself was ‘is this something I can indulge or will it always be an addiction looking for a host.’ Because we all think we can indulge and flirt around the edges of our addictions, but deep down we know that really we can’t, because an addiction that is alive is always an addiction that is a threat.

Many famous folk have ruined their careers, their health and their relationships because a flirtation with fire set light to their whole lives. I have many friends who have not given their addictions the respect they demand. Their flippancy has (or will) cost them dear. Some lost their jobs, others their liberty, many their lives. Whilst I am not saying that porn will kill you I am saying that it will imprison you (whilst letting you think that you are still free).

And this is where the wasp came in. This is not a metaphor. It is a true story. I sat in my garden drinking a fruit juice and I did what I always do when I need an honest answer. I’d just indulged in a porn fest (even though I really didn’t want to) and was feeling.....*controlled*. And weak. Because I no longer felt that I had a choice in the matter. The urge came on. I indulged it. I felt shit afterwards. It had become a habitual cycle. I knew that I wanted to lose this addiction but I just couldn’t find enough reason to stop. I kept rationalising and telling myself ‘a little bit won’t do you any harm.’

Deep down I also knew that *the little bit* was getting bigger and bigger. It needed to be stopped. So I put down the empty glass, closed my eyes and asked for a

sign. When I opened my eyes there was a wasp hovering just above my glass. It landed briefly on the glass, stole a residue of my fruit juice and then flew away. Within a few brief seconds the wasp was back. He was still being careful; he hovered, landed, had a look around, took a glob of juice from just inside the glass and flew away again. When he returned the third time he was more confident. He flew straight into the glass, took several globs of juice and, when he was ready, flew off once again. I smiled as I watched the wasp return again and again, each time more confident, each time staying a little longer, each time going a little deeper into the glass and each time drinking in a little more than the last.

Until the final time.

Arrogant now, my wasp flew straight to the bottom of the glass where there was a pool of thick juice. He stood right in the middle of it and drank and drank and.....started to drown. He was up to his little knees in juice and could not lift himself back out. The small indulgence had quickly turned into a life threatening addiction.

I got the message.

I tipped the glass up so that the wasp – having kindly passed on its wisdom to me – could fly away to live another day.

I never indulged my addiction again.

Thanks for listening in.

Geoff Thompson.

# What is double-weightedness?

Kieren Namasi

The concept of being double-weighted in the martial arts seems to be thrown around a lot, with little to clarify what is meant by it and often less to substantiate why it is a bad thing. In this article I intend on examining a couple of uses of the word “double-weighted”, and thereby hope to identify a legitimate and interesting sense in which the old Yang style as a system lacks doubleweightedness whereas the Chen style taiji, Hsing-I has it.

The most common use of the word double weightedness refers to distributing ones weight evenly on both legs and then, perhaps, executing some technique from this position. I will call this the distributive notion of doubleweightedness or DD. DD is often attributed to Chen style of Taiji and some systems of Hsing-I. Furthermore it is sometimes offered as a reason as to why Lu-Chan broke ranks with the Chen’s and formed his own style in which he hoped to repair these faults. This last point seems somewhat an oversimplification. After all, if it were merely a fact of shifting the weight a little for some given posture, then there would hardly seem to be a need to create a whole new system, albeit one that is supposedly modelled on the former. Furthermore consider the following objection in the Wang-Tsung-Yueh classics:

“... anyone who has spent years of practice, and still cannot neutralize, and is always controlled by the opponent, has not apprehended the fault of doubleweightedness”

If this objection were aimed at the distributive notion of double weightedness, then it would hardly seem worth mentioning. After all, by definition DD would just require a slight shifting of the weight and it is hard to see that such an insignificant change would be the decider. Certainly, whilst one remark rhetorically that inches or centimetres can decide a particular victory, this does not address the whole gamut of victories, nor as mentioned does it explain why one would need to restructure an entire martial art system to accommodate it.

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It is unlikely that DD is even an intelligible sense of double weightedness. I have found it quite nigh on impossible to distribute the weight *exactly* on both feet at the time that a particular technique is executed. Moreover, I doubt that any could and of course actually does. In the martial arts one never just stands there, there is always an isometric tension between the legs. This tension forces one leg to be more “yang” than other. That is, even if one appears to have the weight evenly distributed on both legs,

but has isometric or “internal” tension between the legs, then in virtue of this one cannot have ones weight evenly distributed between ones legs over a particular point. So, it would be unlikely that there are any half decent martial artists, be they a Chen’s stylist or otherwise, has actually ever employed this kind of weighting.

A second notion of double weightedness can be attributed to Erle Montague. He has maintained that over and above not having an even weight distribution on both feet, one must not have both hands “double yang” or “double yin” or even strike with both hands simultaneously. We could take this idea as expressing the concept that double-weightedness occurs with respect to Yin and Yang. Thus one leg must be more yang than the other, that if the hand that is striking is yang then the other must be yin and so on. Informally we might say that ones body has to be in a state that is much like a sinewave, always alternating between the twin poles of yin and yang. But whilst this might well be a correct assement of how the body ought to be, it is not clear that we should describe this state as avoiding doubleweighthedness. For consider the following, if not being in doubleweightedness is to have ones energy moving between Yang and Yang then what are we to make of the concept of Wuji? For Erle’s de-



scription of doubleweightedness, i.e. not differentiating between yin and yang, seems to be co-extensive with the concept of being in Wuji. I take Wuji here to be a pre yin and yang state. Sometimes it is taken as formlessness – of being a thing with no parts. With respect to the martial arts, it appears to align with the concept of methodlessness. Nevertheless, it would generate a falsity if we identified doubleweightedness with Wuji – and of course nobody does, but if we explain doubleweightedness in terms of a lack of polarity then it seems we must.

The problem here is that doubleweightedness has been given a reading that is something like not having a polarity, when really it should read something like, “not having the correct polarity. Thus doubleweightedness is not a absence of polarity but rather an imbalance. However, even if something like this notion is correct it doesn’t explain why one would need to restructure a whole form to accommodate it. After all it seems like this more refined version can be remedied by adjusting one’s thinking rather than radically changing or altering forms. Moreover, this refined sense seems still to be too broad, for it suggests more of what it is like to be internal. And I would hesitate the identification of not being double-weighted with having the internal. Even a cursory reading of the various internal martial arts classics suggest that acquiring the internal with respect to fighting is more than just balancing ones polarities.

A third version of doubleweightedness can be found in a footnote in Sung Lu-tang’s

taiji book. The foot note might have come from Sun Lu Tang or it might be from Tim Cartmell ( See: Cartmell, 2003, pg. 220 in *a study of taiji* by Sun-Lutang) Either way its is illuminating. The footnote attributes doubleweightedness to the fault of using force on force. Here is an interesting thing, what is common between Hsing-Yi and Chen style Taiji that is different from the Old yang style, is that former focuses a large part of their training in the gaining of leg strength. In the case of Hsing-Yi, it is reasonable to suggest that Hsing-Yi’s powersource comes from the San-Ti posture, and this posture is geared towards gaining, amongst other things, leg strength. That is, Hsing-yi in part relies on the leg strength of the practitioner to deliver powerful strikes.

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Thus irrespective of whether a given Hsing-yi practitioner distributes their weight somewhat evenly on both legs, or whether the practitioner has balanced their polarities, there is a legitimate sense that Hsing-yi can be said to be double-weighted. The same applies to the Chen style, their push hands and form practice is done from a very low position in order to facilitate the gaining of leg strength for powerful locking and/or striking.

Now whilst it is true that the Old yang style will give you strong legs, the focus of training for power is on the waist. This is why in the old yang style there is no real emphasis on getting down low. Of course, what needs to be established is that whether this shift of emphasis from leg power to waist power plays a crucial role in the avoiding a force-on force approach to fighting. The response to this appears to be found in the world of strategy. With Hsing-Yi there is the emphasis on destroying power with power and having a strong driving force. With the Chen style, from what little I know, the emphasis is on those uprooting movements, locks and throws. But perhaps what is more telling is the way they do their push hands. From those low down positions with techniques that presumably seek to take advantage of ones own leg strength and, hopefully, the opponents lack thereof. With strong legs one is able to achieve a powerful stance and if required holds one’s ground. This starts to look like force on force.

With respect to the old yang style, the fighting is a lot like being sucked into a black hole then being ripped apart. With the focus on the waist and not the gaining of leg strength, one is forced to solve problems with efficient mechanics, particularly a kind of mechanics that will serve one well in old age when one does not have strength. Now this seems to explain a few problems that have been raised in the course of this article. First, why it was necessary to abandon the Chen

style, and seek a whole new structure to gain fighting skills. To gain the Old yang way of fighting it is not enough to adjust your weight a little or even emphasize polarity. One would have to redesign the way that one gets power, and this requires a change in the way one does one's forms and training. Secondly, why the Wang Tsung Yueh classics mention doubleweightedness as generating sluggishness; for if one does rely on the weights then for fighting one cannot stand one's ground but must move one's center around the opponent. Or at least never allow one's opponent to get a fix on one's center. Finally why Luchan was able to beat the very strong. If one relies on leg strength or a strong body one will not be able to beat a seasoned old yang style fighter, since the core strategy relies on getting around strength and not letting it impede one's victory.