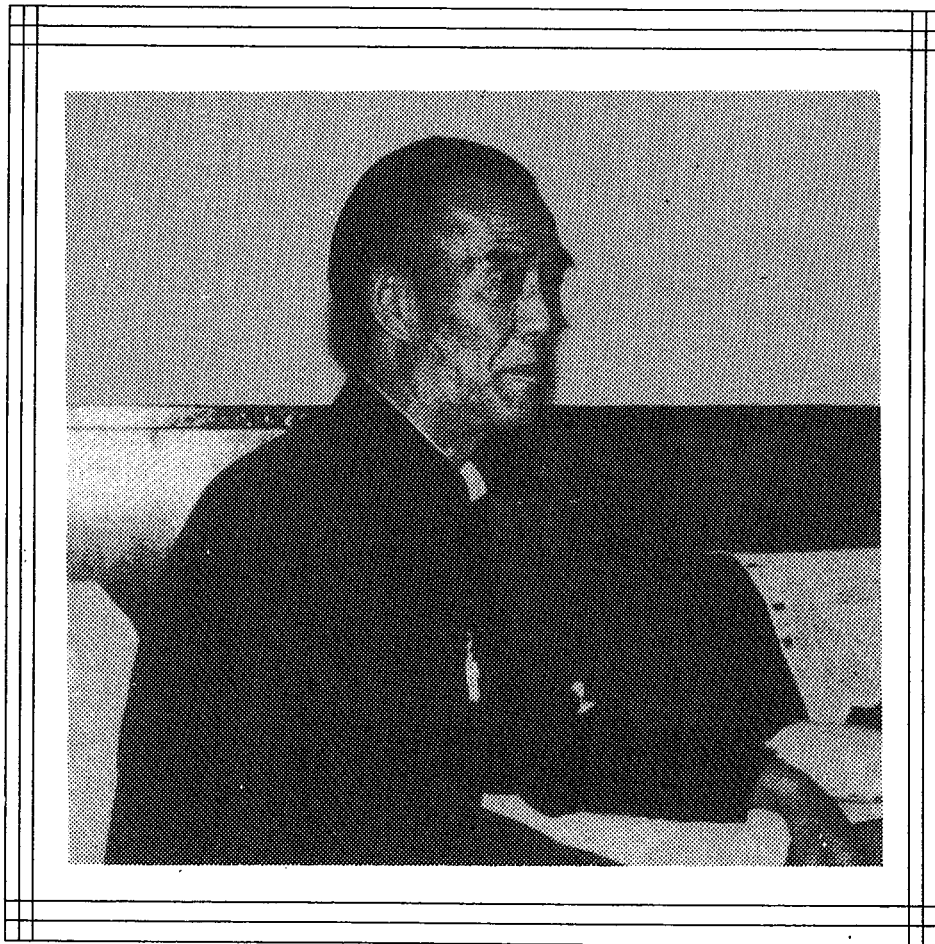


# T'AI CHI

## Combat & Healing



june 1992 number 9

# T'AI CHI

## COMBAT & HEALING

### EDITOR

Erle Montaigne

### ART DIRECTOR

Ben Gabriel

U.S Correspondent, Rolly Brown:

### SUB EDITORS:

Sandra Press and Eli Dana

### TECHNICAL ADVISORS

Master Wang Xin-Wu China (Taiji, H'sin-I)

Master Chong Kwok China (Healing)

Master Mak Po-Sun Australia (Taiji)

Master Shao Shan-Karn China (H'sin-I)

Michael Babin Sifu Canada (Taiji)

Edward H Star Sifu USA (Kung-Fu)

Master Fu Sheng-yuan Australia (Taiji)

Mike Sigman U.S.A. (Chen Taiji)

Master Fu Zhongwen China (Yang Taiji)

Stephen Hurst Sifu England (Taiji)

Graham Noble Sensei England (Karate)

Uri Slomonski Poland (Pa-Kua Chang)

Master Dan Inosanto USA (Geet Kune do)

Jim Uglow, England (Hung-Gar & Taiji)

T'ai Chi, Combat & Healing is independently owned and published for the International Martial Arts Community, distributed worldwide. Opinions and viewpoints expressed in this magazine do not necessarily represent those of the editor, staff or publishers. Many will disagree, many will agree with articles and views published in the magazine. In the interest of fairplay and harmony among martial arts schools, all responsible instructors, individuals or organisations with something valid to say will be given a go.

### POSTAL ADDRESS:

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

Published quarterly by Taiji Publications. Reproduction of any material without permission is strictly prohibited. All material remains under copyright to the publisher.

The acceptance of advertising does not necessarily imply endorsement of services or products. All articles, photographs and other material submitted for publication must be accompanied by return postage unless specifically solicited. Contributions are encouraged with each article being accepted or not upon its own merit.

Our eternal thanks to Kevin Brennan, Editor supreme of Australasian Fighting Arts Magazine for his valuable help and ideas.



### ABOUT THE COVER

Master Wan Wu-tien was 75 years old when the photo was taken. He only took up Taiji at age 50 after having 11 open heart operations! He has since not had any trouble and was, back in 1985, the Chairman of the Ningxia Taiji Association. I believe that Master Wan still lives in Ningxia in Yinchuan, an autonomous region about 700 miles West of Beijing.

### CONTENTS

- 1 **Advanced Ideas On The Internal Arts: By Stuart Le Marseny, (Australia)**  
Stuart puts forward some pretty challenging scientific ideas on how to prove 'Qi' and gives some simple experiments to help. Were you really here six months ago? Read on!
- 6 **Learning Bagwazhang The Hard Way: Michael Babin (Ottawa Canada)**  
Michael gives some sound advice on how to keep learning even when you don't have a teacher.
- 8 **Chang Yiu-chun continues his talks on his ideas of Taijiquan.**  
This time on the Taiji form and diet.
- 10 **Taiji & T.E.A.C.H. Randell Waddell (Australia)**  
Randell Waddell talks about some innovative ideas on how not to get into a fight.
- 13 **Ritual Fighting: Georges Saby, (France)**  
Georges Saby talks about some pretty instinctive habits inherent in us all and how to make use of these traits in a confrontation. More of how not to get into a fight.
- 16 **The Physical Side Of Qi: Mike Sigman (U.S.A.)**  
Mike continues his informative and down to earth articles, this time demystifying the 'qi' debate and bringing it into the physical realm.

### Workshops U.S.A. & Canada by Erle Montaigne

September 26th & 27th Ottawa. Contact: Mike Babin. 613-7397805

September 28th & 29th New Jersey. Al Krych. 908-4751619

September 30th & 1st Oct. California. Jon Parmenter. 818-2461918

### WTBA Taiji Gathering Winter 1992:

July 20th until July 26th: Camp Bornhoffen, Numinbah Velley Qld.

WTBA Training camps in 1993 will be held in Spring and Fall.

March & October 1993. All welcome. Even Mike Babin, will be there.

# Advanced Ideas On The Internal Arts

By Stuart Le Marseny (Australia)

The following article, if it is to be understood properly by the advanced student of T'ai Chi, will require the reader to 'think' a great deal, to conduct some minor but harmless experiments on oneself, and to do some minor research into suggested reading materials.

Much has been written of late about the internal arts, mostly regarding T'ai Chi, as it is the most common and information previously withheld is now being released. People are realizing that the information was withheld for a very good reason. The aspect I am referring to here is the devastating Dim-mak. The information to date has almost entirely been conducted with technique, eg. how to do it, and just when you thought it was easy, along comes, 'how to do it properly', an absolutely vital source of information if one is ever going to be proficient.

But what we have after we start to use dim-mak which was learned on a non-face-to-face basis is still an external phenomena. A very effective one, but an external art still. The use of the word 'internal' accurately describes that the movement begins and finishes entirely within the scope of control of the practitioner. No outside influence can disturb the balance, timing or the return to central equilibrium from the instant it is decided to move, until the movement is fully completed.

The placing of the body is a particular posture, or the way in which to get from one spot to another to effect the next movement has virtually nothing to do with the essence of the internal arts.

We have certain techniques which advanced students are trained in to shorten their reaction time and to control, as far as possible, the nerve impulse, transmission mechanism to achieve almost unbelievably fast reflexes. These most certainly are internal, but they are not the purpose of this article. The purpose is to explain the internal movements we are dealing with and how to bring them under control so that this energy can be more utilized and understood by the advanced student.

All things written on this subject in the past especially in the classical texts have been written in such a way as to establish and maintain an air of mysticism around the author, and usually they leave the reader more confused than ever before, rather than giving a clearer insight. More recently, articles have been written denying that internal energy even exists and putting the effectiveness of T'ai Chi down to merely good body mechanics and good timing, both certainly indispensable, but this is certainly a case of more happening than the eye perceives.

I will begin by stating a few scientific facts and I will build from there in a rational and logical manner so to make a subject that is extremely complicated, as easy as possible to follow and understand.

Brain activity and nerve impulses throughout the body are likened to electrical energy in modern medical texts. Where does this energy come from? We don't obtain energy from an external source as such, other than the food we eat, the water we drink and the sun's rays. It should be mentioned there that it is a basic law of physics that energy cannot be

created or destroyed, merely transformed from one state to another.

On a physiological level, our bodies absorb nutrients through the stomach and the villi of the small and large intestine. On a life force level, unless we have some sort of generator inside of us, we must also absorb and store the energy needed by our bodies from these same sources, the logic I feel is inescapable.

This is why many people who play T'ai Chi, develop a craving for a better diet, giving up meat, eating more fresh food etc. They subconsciously crave more energy giving foods as they become more aware of their body's energy system, and this system regulates itself.

The transforming of this energy is extremely complicated and on this point alone a very large book can, and has been written. Any good medical text can be obtained for more information on this.

The electrical type of energy that we have discussed, also exists within the body to operate the muscles. To do even the most minor actions, sometimes requires a great many muscles to be operated at once. Every movement requires some muscle action. If you accept this energy movement as fact, then it stands to reason that his energy must be stored somewhere in the body, and then travel via some pathway to reach the muscles.

The energy or electrical impulse to operate the muscles used while merely going about daily activity, is sent via the brain, but the energy does not originate here, it can only originate from where our food and water are digested or processed, in the body, the lower abdominal area. The Chinese have a name for this, the

'Tan-Tien', or lower energy centre. Being able to feel this energy centre and channel its contents is one of the basic objects of T'ai Chi.

The plotting of this energy movement through the body and how to alter it, is the basis of acupuncture and the physical movements that affect this energy movement are the very fabric of T'ai Chi.

Briefly, what we do in T'ai Chi is to accelerate this energy flow in the body from a once in 24 hour period to a three times in 20 minutes cycle. Or in the case of Qigong (breath work), to bring this energy to a particular point and hold it there to heal intensely that particular point.

The more advanced student's aim is to bring this energy centre and its energy contents under the limited conscious control allowed by the mind. This control is possible only as long as its basic life support function is not interfered with, and it is this aspect with I will expand later.

The reason that normal activity does not affect the energy flow, and that T'ai Chi does, is because the T'ai Chi movements open the energy channels in sequence to allow the energy to move through the body. In normal activity, this does not happen.

The movement of this energy or qi, as it is commonly known, is a well documented phenomenon and I doubt if anyone will now doubt its existence or its associated medical use. Leaving aside its T'ai Chi aspect, it is the basis of acupuncture, acupressure, touch for health and all muscle balancing healing sciences, as well as the Japanese Shiatsu and the Chinese tui-na massage systems.

The scientific equipment which measures this minute energy movement is only now being invented and used, although, already, there is much scientific study being done in China on the qi flow in T'ai Chi and

Qigong. Both in the East and West, scientists are now beginning, slowly to accept the idea of an energy flow. It is not at all unusual to accept logical scientific conclusion backed up by practical experimentation, and in this case, countless cases of the principles being used (acupuncture), without having the instruments or apparatus available to measure (back then), see or weigh have been accepted by medical science.

The energy flow or qi as I will refer to from now on, is vital for life, as vital as the very air we breathe "literally", without it we would simply fall apart. It is the very essence of being, and as such, this qi is under direct subconscious control exactly the same as the other main life support functions, respiration and heart activity etc. There are many other body functions under subconscious control such as digestion, the lymph system and half the nervous system, but the ones we are concerned with to make this article understood are the more obvious ones.

I will deviate briefly to give a small insight into the complex role of this qi in the body function. In acupuncture, the doctor either increases or decreases the flow of qi to a particular part of the body, this is fine, but what is never discussed is the what is the energy doing there in the first place; briefly it is this:

The body is a continual hive of subatomic activity .. All body cells are continually being replaced as they wear out. Some live for days or weeks, none more than a few months. This continual activity is the very essence of our being. If it slows or weakens, we become ill. If it stops, we die. This is the main activity of qi, to supply the energy for this essential function and to regulate the flow of this energy.

The main acupuncture channels can be likened to the arteries and veins of the body, and from these vessels

eventually come many thousands of smaller and smaller vessels, to carry the blood to all parts. So it is the same with the qi, there is no corner of the body that the qi does not reach. The other main function is the formative aspect. When the body takes form in the womb, grows from child to adult and undergoes this continual subatomic cell replacement activity, there must be a controlling influence to keep an eye as an eye, a finger as a finger or the whole body as it should be in relation to size, shape or colour, function etc. Remembering that nor one spec of what we were made of 12 months ago, now exists. In any 24 hour period the adult body loses billions of cells from various parts of the body. The body is being constantly renewed and if this controlling influence malfunctions, we get cancer, lumps, bumps and humps, and disease etc.

This is where acupuncture and its other associated health sciences come into play. It restores the energy flow to its natural balance, the same as T'ai Chi, it returns the energy to it correct balance and flow. It restores health and vitality.

The qi is no different to the other vital life support functions of respiration and heart function in that they can be brought under limited conscious control with correct training and concentration. As long as their basic function is not interfered with. If this basic life support function is endangered, then the subconscious will regain control by rendering the conscious side of the brain inoperative, and reestablish the correct balance.

### **The Breathing:**

Anyone can speed up or slow their breathing as the mood takes them, as long as you do not swing the balance of the body too far from centre. As an example, go for a short sprint, you would now be breathing heavily,

try to breathe slowly and shallow, you will not be able to for long, you will lose your control and you are forced to take deep breath. If you had sufficient control and concentration to maintain the shallow breathing, you would deprive the body of oxygen, thus interfering with the basic function. You would then lapse into an unconscious state and stay that way until normal function was restored, at which time some control would be returned to the conscious mind and you would awaken.

At the other end of the scale, breathe deeply and fast without doing any exercise and you will hyperventilate. You soon become heady and disorientated and if you continued, you would lose consciousness once again. You would stay out until normality is restored by the subconscious mind, then you would awaken.

Both of these are examples of consciously seeking to interfere with the basic breathing function of supplying the correct ratio of gases to the body. The subconscious mind reacts to prevent this interference in vital function. The point is that you can consciously control your breathing but only within certain parameters. Control of heart function takes a little longer to learn but is no more difficult.

The heart beats at a certain rate, continually changing to meet the body's needs from internal and external conditions. In this experiment, do not expect success at first, you may, but more likely, success will come at the fourth or fifth time.

Sit quietly in a silent place, you should be able to see a clock with a prominent second hand. Firstly, concentrate on your body and feel the pulse within. If you have never meditated before, this in itself may take some time.

After becoming aware of your heart beat, super aware. Feel the pulse,

hear the heart, picture in your mind's eye the heart working. Once again, this step could take some time, perhaps one or two half hour sessions. After having achieved this, continue the awareness and watch the second hand of the clock. Work out how many beats of the heart per 5 to 10 seconds. we will take a normal rate of 75 beats per minute, 12.5 per 10 seconds. Now, having established this relationship firmly in your mind, concentrate on slowing the heart down to 10 per ten seconds. Then 9 then 8 etc. This is not particularly difficult. but requires very good concentration.

If you were to continue this, initially, the subconscious would slow down all bodily functions to maintain homeostasis. You would go into a meditative dreamlike half sleep state. If you continued further, the heart would slow down to such an extent that life would be threatened. At this point you would pass out. The conscious loses control. The subconscious regains this control and restores the homeostatic balance, at which point you would regain consciousness. The subconscious thus having relinquished control of some functions to the conscious once more.

Now, after having read this passage and in time trying these experiments, it is not difficult to understand that the other main, vital life support function which we are dealing with here, qi flow, can also be brought under conscious control. However, only to the extent that its basic function is not interfered with. To go beyond this point, the subconscious will take control to fulfill the qi flow's basic functions.

The next point I wish to establish beyond doubt, is the existence of the energy field around the body. This field is totally separate to the internal meridian system and is not to be confused with the body's aura.

This energy field is not perceptible to the human eye because the electromagnetic waves and ultraviolet radiation cannot penetrate glass, nor the adult human cornea. This of course, is a protective mechanism to prevent ultra violet light from the sun entering the cornea. So it is not to be confused with the human aura which is very real and perceptible to the trained observer. It is a slightly confusing point because we have the two energy fields around the body, independent of each other but intertwined.

One of the first accurately recorded scientific attempts to view the aura was made by an electrician from St Thomas Hospital, London. he invented coloured or dyed glass lenses which allow anyone with practice to see a glow around the human body which changes in intensity and colour depending upon the viewed person's emotions. It is this point regarding emotions that so interests us as will shortly be explained.

The fact that this electromagnetic energy field totally surrounds and permeates the human body is a well documented fact in scientific circles, both East & West, and supported by *Kirlian photography*. This process refers to the photographing of the energy field around plants, trees, leaves, animals and what concerns us, people. The process is described here by *Harvey Oldfield*, an English physicist;

"The Kirlian effect is the result of a High-voltage corona discharge caused by pulsed high-frequency waves (which must not be confused with simple high-frequency waves), and it can therefore be explained in terms of ordinary physics; through the action of high-frequency fields, electrons are emitted from the body of an organism and this energy is dissipated in the photographic emulsion in the same way as light. An image is thus formed in the emulsion, de-

pendent to the strength of the emitted electrons.”

One of the earliest quantum physical explanations of what was happening in Kirlian photography was offered by *Dr W.A. Tiller* of Sanform University;

*“A basic idea in radionics is that each individual organism to material radiates and absorbs energy via a unique wave field which exhibits certain geometrical frequency and radiation-type characteristics. This is an extended force field that exists around all forms of matter whether animate or inanimate. A useful analogy here is the physical atom that is continually radiating electromagnetic energy in the form of waves because of its oscillation electric development and its thermal vibrations. The more complex the material, the more complex the wave for,”*

The energy field described above increases in depth and intensity with varying phenomena such as temperature, both body and atmospheric, time of day, medical condition and the one which most concerns us here, mood.

The energy field increases in both depth and intensity most dramatically when the subject becomes angry, it becomes scattered in intensity and irregular when the subject is agitated. This is the most important aspect. I think that everyone has personally seen, experienced or at least heard of the almost superhuman strength or activities of an extremely angry person. This is the phenomena we wish to control.

What we are aiming to do is to have the positive energy benefits of the mood without the negative effects of the actual emotion.

The reason the study of energy field mentioned above is so important is that through a series of practices, we move to take control of this energy

field by controlling the circumstances which cause it to alter.

The factor which is most relevant to us is anger. This has an effect energy wise which is desirable as I explained earlier, increasing and intensifying the energy field. But conversely, anger in a martial confrontation has many disadvantages. It causes loss of timing, loss of control, loss of power and because of this, loss of the exchange. So what the advanced student is training to achieve is emotional detachment whilst retaining the energy benefits.

The way in which we control this is to alter the way the mind, “brain”, perceives stimuli. The way to so this is to alter the way the stimuli are received and sent through the main receptors, the eyes.

Our moods are influenced by many internal factors, state of health, view of oneself, hormonal disturbances, cosmic influences etc. Whilst recognizing this, I will, for the purpose here, assume that all influences are balanced and we will deal only with external factors. These can include what we might feel through the skin, prevailing weather and temperature conditions, noise, what we might taste etc. The thing that has the quickest and most dramatic effect is what we see. What the advanced student is taught to do is to alter the way in which the eye perceives the circumstances around them. This, in effect, with the correct training, creates a false sense of anger in the mind, so that the energy benefits are achieved without the loss of control that comes with the actual emotion of anger. This action is hinted at, but never explained in classical text with such comments as;

*“Narrow the eyes, but do not furrow the brow...” and;  
“The student must feel what he sees...”*

The advanced student practicing “eagle vision” is already exercising

this principle of altering the visual input to control the frame of mind.

I will give a few examples of what I am trying to explain to make the link very clear.

Try to really concentrate on something with your eyes held wide open. It is very difficult. It is natural to slightly close the eyes and to furrow the brow. Try to lift something heavy with eyes wide open. Once again unnatural. It is easiest with the eyes almost or even closed. Because you go internal to activate your inner strength.

On the opposite side, try to maintain a happy frame of mind with a furrowed brow. After a few seconds, the eyes begin to affect the state of mind. Study photographs in newspapers or magazines and look at just the eyes. Cover the rest of the face. It is quite obvious whether the person is angry, sad or happy, just by looking at the eyes. The eyes are linked to the emotion, undetachable. What we are doing is framing the eyes in such a way as to create a state within the mind instead of a state within the mind exhibiting itself in the eyes. The link between the eyes and mind is so strong, that one cannot be altered without it exhibiting itself in the other.

### So Far Established:

- 1/. We have an energy flow through us. ( backed up by acupuncture science.
- 2/. We have an energy field around us. ( scientifically recorded by Kirlian Photography).
- 3/. This energy cannot be created or destroyed merely transformed from one state to another.
- 4/. The energy originates from the lower abdominal area, tian-tien.

- 5/. This energy flow is under subconscious control and other functions normally under subconscious control can be brought under limited conscious control with concentrated practice.
- 6/. Our external energy field alters from day to day in response to changes in internal and external circumstances. The changes brought about by internal circumstances can be controlled to our advantage.
- 7/. The eyes provide the easiest and quickest way to alter the stimuli that are reaching the mind because of their direct connection to the cortex. Therefore, the easiest and quickest way to alter the body's energy field to our advantage.

All I have done up to this point is to establish the parameters for what I am about to explain. Please do not think that what I am about to detail is all there is to internal energy control movement, it is but the beginning.

Through a series of specialist exercises and meditative techniques, most notably the T'ai Chi forms, both the slow meditative ones and those containing the explosive fa-jing energy release points, and certain qigong postures, a person studying the advanced levels of T'ai Chi are taught to, at first feel the energy flow, then to become super aware of it. And finally to bring it under the limited conscious control allowed by the parameters previously explained.

This is basically no different to the experiments detailed earlier in regard to bringing the heart rate under control. However, it is somewhat more difficult, and takes much longer, a couple of years of daily practice at least.

What you are in fact doing is bringing the two sides of your conscious closer

together. Bridging the gap if you like. You can perceive something at a conscious level, but move on a subconscious level with all the power and speed that comes with this subconscious movement.

At the same time as learning this energy control, the student is being taught the techniques of internal physical movement, body alignment, body mechanics, timing, accuracy, strike points and their effects and of course the actual way in which to evade, counter, counterattack, kick, strike, etc.

The advanced student none has control over the energy movement within the body and around the body and the practical means to use it. What happens now? Do lightning bolts zap from the fingers? No, but it isn't all that far from the truth. The two energy systems act in different ways.

- 1/. The student causes the energy field around the body to increase in depth and intensity by means detailed earlier. This has a dual benefit, in that the advantages of the emotional state are achieved without the drawbacks. Also, the striking part of the body eg. the fist is surrounded by increased energy field. It is literally like wearing a protective glove.
- 2/. On an internal level, I have detailed earlier, how the student is taught to accelerate and increase the energy flow in the body. Having achieved this, when he strikes with all his commitment, speed, timing, power etc. the subconscious perceives there is enormous work to be done and sends qi or energy to do this work. This energy rushes into the hand, or whatever is being used, and because the movement of the hand, and indeed any work done by the body is physical, this energy is changed into a

type of electrical impulse energy to operate the muscles. This in effect, super charges the muscles incredibly for a millisecond. In time, achieving the desired effect of being able to move incredibly fast and to strike with tremendous power. Couple this with the accuracy of a strike to a dim-mak or acupuncture point of the body and you have why T'ai Chi, the Mother of all internal arts, is the most dangerous, effective and devastating martial art ever conceived. And why the actual personal instruction in these methods have always been, and still are, a closely guarded thing.

*Stuart Le Marseny is the leading student of Erle Montaigue and is the highest graded instructor for the WTBA. He teaches on his property in Northern NSW Australia and holds regular classes for people to come and stay on the property. You'll have to do some work though!*

*Phone WTBA headquarters on (from Australia) (066)797145. Or from overseas: (your overseas code) plus 61-66-797145. People who attend these, live in classes, will also have access to Erle Montaigue for private lessons depending upon time and availability.*



Stuart Le Marseny Using "Brush Knee Twist Step"

# Learning Pa-Kua the Hard Way

By Michael Babin Canada

**I**n 1991, I and some of my students had the opportunity to meet and for a few hours, train with Erle Montaigue in the basics of Pa-Kua Chang. Since then, I have been practicing what little I learned at that time and have purchased the relevant videos to learn more.

I'd like to share my experience as a pa-kua novice with those of you who are contemplating or have recently begun trying to learn it (or another internal martial art) the hard way — with no or infrequent personal instruction.

For those who are unfamiliar with Pa-Kua, it is a weirdly beautiful discipline filled with agile twists, sudden swoops and lifting actions as well as speedy hand movements. Its internal healing and life-prolonging benefits are proverbial and the martial aspect is highly effective if morally ugly. It is designed to penetrate an attacker's aggression and maim or kill, Erle quite rightly refers to it as the "art of overkill".

---

## **The roots of Pa-Kua Chang, pronounced "Bagwazhang" and meaning "eight Trigrams Palm", lies in the deliberate obscurity of its Taoist originators in China.**

---

Perhaps as a modern reaction to this, as with T'ai Chi, much of the self-defence aspect has been lost or minimized by most of its present practitioners. This is not altogether a bad

thing as we do not live in lawless or feudal societies. However, it is also true that learning a martial art should imply that you are developing realistic self-defence skills.

If challenged, it's not enough to think "My martial art is more spiritual than yours." You, not the other fellow, also have to be standing and conscious at the end of the discussion! The roots of Pa-Kua Chang, pronounced "Bagwazhang" and meaning "eight Trigrams Palm", lies in the deliberate obscurity of its Taoist originators in China. Their exercise therapies to aid meditation, prolong life and provide self-defence skills were refined (in combat terms) by laymen who learned the art and depended on it while employed as convoy and personal bodyguards.

Like T'ai Chi and H'sing-I, this art emphasizes balance, natural breathing and total relaxation, stability of stance without rigidity, the development of internal energy, use of the waist/tan tien and the use of the mind to create intent.

You can think of the energy movement in Pa-Kua like that of a roller coaster moving up and down on a circular track, whereas that of T'ai Chi is like a roller coaster twisting freely in all directions.

On a martial level, most defensive and offensive movements are done with the open hand, the weight of the body stays on the back foot, kicks are low and the footwork is precise and nimble. The central essence of this art is in change. Change of direction and/or tactic done while walking a circular pattern and executing, at a

basic level, combinations of the eight hand positions.

The most famous instructor of the art lived at the turn of the century. Tung Hai-ch'uan was renowned for his ability to adapt the principles of his art to the existing martial capabilities of his senior students. Consequently, the styles that evolved from the efforts of those students, often differ markedly one from the other.

Modern Pa-Kua comes in a bewildering variety of styles and interpretations and skilled instructors are relatively rare in China, much less elsewhere. The popularity of the art is, however, growing rapidly and outstrips the supply of legitimate instructors.

---

## **If challenged, it's not enough to think "My martial art is more spiritual than yours." You, not the other fellow, also have to be standing and conscious at the end of the discussion!**

---

Consequently, home-study through videos/books is often the only means of instruction available for those determined to develop some skills, no matter how rudimentary. Based on my experiences to this point, I would like to offer some suggestions on maximizing training on your own.

It helps to have relevant experiences when learning a second art. I have been practicing Yang style T'ai Chi for some years and teaching since 1985. Having a core understanding of its principles had certainly been an