

# NEWSLETTER

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A GOOD  
TEACHER ISN'T  
ONE WHO CAN  
TEACH,  
IT'S SOMEONE  
THAT  
STUDENTS CAN  
FOLLOW.



## BEGINNING CLASSES

### JANUARY 3rd

The beginning classes will be:  
Saturdays 10-noon as usual but the  
set-up will change.

10-11 Taiji/Bagua instruction

11-12 Group Qi Gong

We will be working on the Bagua qi  
gong system.

## MONDAY NIGHT SESSIONS

Until April I will be giving a series of  
workshops interspersed with form  
corrections session. (Non-club mem-  
bers \$20 per session, club members  
no charge)

- January 5<sup>th</sup> : Principles and  
Practice of Qi Gong
- January 19<sup>th</sup> : Form corrections  
(any and all)
- February 2<sup>nd</sup> : Video Night
- February 16<sup>th</sup> : Form corrections  
(any and all)
- March 2<sup>nd</sup> : Principles & Practice  
of Taiji & Bagua
- March 16 : Form corrections (any  
and all)

*all sessions RSVP*

## CLOSURES

In the event of bad weather or emer-  
gencies are you sure I have your cur-  
rent phone number? Also if you  
have an e-mail address this makes  
things so much easier to notify mem-  
bers of last minute events. Check  
the club payment folder in my blue  
box to see if the information is cor-  
rect.

## FORM COMPLETION

The following have completed the *Chen  
Taiji 13 Energies Sword*

- Tom Flener
- Cedar Acosta
- Allen Gillespie
- Al Anderson
- Eric Grymewski
- Rick Bodzewski
- Derryl Willis
- Laurie Kawasugi

*Yang Taiji Sword*

- Arno Helmholtz
- Donna Planthoff

*(Continued on page 3)*

# Nei Jia as a Spiritual Path

by ATDAle

As time goes on as does my practice, in  
addition to working on a book of the Inter-  
nal Arts in daily life the central core to me  
has become the 'spiritualness' of these arts.  
I am not a fan of religion but I do believe  
in human spirituality. To me they are very  
different things. Spiritual to me is to be-  
come ourselves, center and let our own  
uniqueness and sameness is expressed  
freely and with no friction or veil. One of  
my favorite books is 'The Prophet' by  
Kahlil Gibran. In the book there is a chap-  
ter of an old priest asking him to speak of  
religion.

- "Is not religion all deeds and all  
reflections"
- "Who can separate their faith from  
their actions?"
- "Your daily life is your temple and  
your religion."

When I hear the word religion I usually  
think about the 'organized' religions and  
politics but here it's used in the spiritual  
sense.

## Something Extra

Now, why do we practice? We each  
may have superficial reasons or excuses  
for practice but the bottom line for those  
who continue studying and enjoying these  
arts is that there is something extra. They  
speak to a connection with our inner selves  
and our connection with all things. Qi  
Gong . . . energy work effects all levels. Qi  
binds/is all things even space! Everything  
is some vibration of energy. We live with  
the earth, nature, plants and trees. We

*(Continued on page 4)*

# ENERGIES OF TAIJI QUAN

So . . . you teach Taiji? Would you tell me the significance of the 13 postures and that are core to Taiji Quan?

Anyone teaching Taiji should have an understanding of these 13 energies since the form evolves from them. As the classics state: "The 13 postures should not be done carelessly."

## THE BASICS

Every teacher should know that Taiji (regardless of style) is based upon 13 postures. Actually in the Yang method of Taiji the 13 energies are related to specific postures but the postures help represent the 13 energies:

*PENG, LU, CHI, AN, TSAI, LIEA, JO, KOU, advance, retreat, look left, gaze right, central equilibrium.*

Now there are more than 13 energies, the Yang family lists about 32 but again the list is actually endless. These 'energies' are related to martial functions and applications. In some forms they may be actual techniques, in others they may be qualities exhibited while doing a movement. Now ponder the images that the following words bring up: sweep, swoop, swing, lower, drop, fall, lift, toss, flick, twist, squeeze, smash, poke, or pierce.

## INTENT LEADS ENERGY

Each of these conjures up different feelings and images distinct enough from each other to make a difference. Lifting vs. tossing for instance has a different sense of 'energy' to them. To toss something implies faster and perhaps more force than lifting something. This is where the importance of the energies comes in within our practice. It sharpens our intent and focuses our attention thus changing the characteristic of our movements. If you're practicing the form and don't distinguish between the actions and the energies, especially the first 4: peng, lu, chi, an then your Taiji isn't truly Taiji. It's slow moving exercise!

There are also many other energies we should manifest as we're practicing our art. There's:

- Pi (splitting as with an axe in Pi shen chui (Split With Fist),
- Ta (sometimes called Pat as in Gao Ta Ma (High Pat the Horse) but Ta is actually reaching for something just out of reach).
- Ling (leading) sometimes manifest in Dan Bien (Single whip).



- Ti (lift) as in Ti Shou (lift/raise hands).
- Ban (deflect) as in Ban, Lan, Chuei (deflect, parry, punch).

And many, many more.

Now it's impossible without direct instruction to see or get an understanding of these various energies but I'll be giving it a small attempt here. However, intellectual understanding isn't the same as knowing the energies. That insight and wisdom only comes with instruction, applications and devoted practice. Reading a book about someone's hiking trip isn't taking a hiking trip, seeing the beauty, smelling the flowers etc.

First let's begin with one of the ten principles of Grandmaster Yang Cheng Fu: you must distinguish clearly between yin and yang within our practice. Full & empty, store & release practice them first because it's the beginning of the energies.

The first four and perhaps the most important:

## PENG, LU, CHI, AN

*Without air in the tire the tire is no good!*

In Yang style we have the Peng postures but this isn't necessarily Peng energy. According to Masters Gao Fu and Tchoung Ta Tchen, if there is no peng jin there is no Taiji! Peng is a proper inflated tire, without the tire being inflated the car won't go anywhere. Peng is a fullness and openness of the body. If at any time you collapse or crimp there is no peng and you are in a very weak and vulnerable position. Peng is like bread dough that has risen. Peng is the energy that enables a flower to be soft yet still have a clear, pretty shape. The minute the flower wilts, no peng . . . death. Peng is the power of a wave as it moves a boat.

*(Continued on page 3)*

(Energies - continued from page 2)

Yes, all our movements must be relaxed and soft but this does not mean collapsed and limp. Unfortunately too many practitioners don't understand the principle of Peng and end up with anemic Taiji. This may be very relaxing but even health wise a collapsed posture curves the back too much creating bad posture. A collapsed posture puts kinks in our muscles and energy systems. Energetically peng keeps the body and meridian passages naturally open so the Qi can flow smoothly without restrictions. It's like driving on a straight road or one with mild curves; you can drive at a smooth easy speed. If there are many sharp turns you have to break often and you have a stop and go driving situation that wastes gas and is very annoying. When we look at our other Taiji requirements they all lead to a body position where peng can be achieved: suspend the head top, all limbs curved, empty the chest, round the hips . . .

According to Master Gao Fu, peng is also an interfacing energy for all the others to manifest. Without peng you can't have any of the other energies. If there are no tires on the car, regardless of how much gas you have you're not going anywhere.

Unfortunately the translation of peng is WARD OFF. Peng has this ability but it doesn't 'push' things away. If you have a big beach ball filled with air, the beach ball has peng energy. Now, unless you apply pressure to it, it will not apply pressure back (to keep its shape). As you apply pressure you will feel pressure back. The ball trying to rotate when pressure is applied is also a part of peng jin. It won't pull away it will just seek to maintain its shape. In a sense Peng is a force field. Though in Yang style there is the Peng posture, every movement has peng. Every position in Bagua has peng. If we're full of life we have ample peng jin.

### ONE STEP FURTHER

Now in daily life I would also say that being secure and centered is peng jin. Not needing to prove anything yet at the same time not being a shelf for others' stuff. Integrity and confidence I consider examples of 'spiritual' Peng jin. Now these here are my own interpretations from my own practice and understanding. Most likely there are specific Chinese words and characters for them but at this time I don't know them!

NEXT NEWSLETTER: LU JIN

**“Study the teachings of the pine tree,  
the bamboo, and the plum blossom.  
The pine is evergreen, firmly rooted,  
and venerable.  
The bamboo is strong, resilient, un-  
breakable.  
The plum blossom is hardy, fragrant,  
and elegant.”**  
M. Uyeshiba, Founder of Aikido

### MASTER GAO FU'S CLASSES

Qi Gong & Chen Taiji  
information: 325-6364

### XING I CHUAN INSTRUCTION

Randy Clere: 706-4511

### LUB ITEMS FOR SALE

- Club shirts & sweatshirts \$18-\$24
- Club videotapes \$28.00
- Sifu's book \$37.50 Yang system

### NEW TAPES AVAILABLE

### FUTURE WORKSHOP WARNING

July 17-20th I'm planning on another four-day open workshop similar to the Anacortes event. This time I'm planning on Bandon, Oregon.

### BANDON LODGING INFORMATION

**SUNSET MOTEL** \*\* - 1-800-842-2407,  
1755 Beach Loop Road, P.O. Box 373,  
Bandon, OR (E-Mail: sun-  
set@harborside.com)  
www.sunsetmotel.com (by the beach prac-  
tice area)

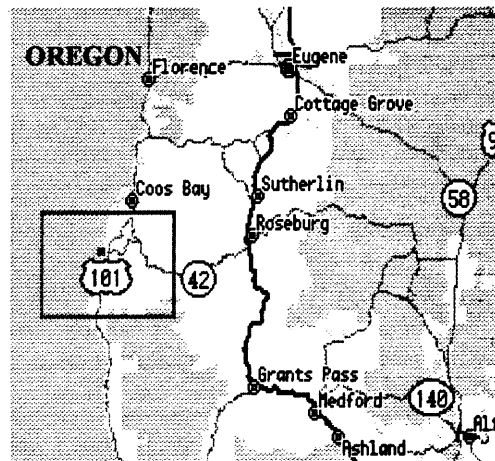
**BANDON BEACH MOTEL**, (541) 347-4430  
or (541) 347-9451, P.O. Box 1838, Bandon,  
OR 97411

**GORMAN MOTEL**, (541)347-9451, 1110  
-11th SW, Bandon, OR 97411

(I will be putting together a more detailed  
list)

Bullards Beach State Park 347-2209

*More  
in  
Future  
Issues*



*(Spiritual Path continued from page 1)*

feel, we sense, we experience something special when walking in a forest or a beach. There may be joyfulness as we encounter certain friends and people, we hear the sounds of waves and birds and there is a serene calm that we experience and taste for a moment. Something that is also somehow familiar to some part of us we may not understand.

## Listening Energy

What's happening as we study the arts of self-cultivation we increase our ability to sense, feel, experience and understand. The internal arts are one of these methods. Due to present society we've grown up with and learned methods of cutting ourselves off from who we truly are to become what society and our culture indicates is successful or proper thus many times having our most valuable asset *US* wither away. Practice is nurturing our body, mind and spirit.

In our daily practice the core culprit to connecting with our own spiritualness is RELAXATION. For those of you not members of the Internal Wushu Arts I consider the word RELAXATION bad. It implies work or 'trying' to do something. Instead I'd like to see this word replaced with COMFORTABLNESS. For when we make ourselves 'comfortable' the body relaxes. In all stances and situations I believe our first effort should be to check and make sure we are comfortable. If not then take a moment to adjust and correct your posture, position or if able your situation. Being comfortable enables the body to relax, it also means that you are within your circle of strength, your safety zone. The proceed with what you were doing.

TENSION IS WHO YOU THINK YOU ARE  
RELAXATION IS WHO YOU ARE!

H. Morretz

As we practice this in various situations daily we slowly move beyond the superficial, the physical body. If the body isn't comfortable and safe, the mind isn't capeable of calming and centering. Once the body is taken care of then we can begin to see how uncomfortable our 'mind', our-self is in our current situation. Anger, irritability, sadness, road-rage, jealousy etc. Then we're able to 'relax' take a deep breath and be in the present. Center now before continuing. We may be in adifficult situation but for this moment, if we can calm or relax then our next action will be stronger and most likely more correct. Instead of being controlled by the situation we'll be able to move more from our own center, our body wisdom and self instead of reacting. One of my favorite sayings:

A WARRIOR HAS NO OPINIONS,  
A WARRIOR IS SIMPLY AWARE AND ACTS  
ACCORDINGLY.

As time goes on with our practice and we learn to stay centered I believe our senses become fine tuned. In order to work on 'listening' energy you must center yourself and be mindful. In order to listen you must be quiet and attentive. Can you listen and talk at the same time? In this process we get in touch with our self, our spirit and inner self. Though this is our 'inner self' there is a connection to all things, there is an understanding of *US* instead of *ME/YOU*. The experience of the beauty around us, the joy, the inter-connectedness, the oneness.

As we become healthier through our practice and center we're polishing our spirit. Through our daily practice of mindful movements we're refining our ability to listen. This will effect all that we do and all we encounter. The sound of calmness resonates out in all directions like ripples in a pond.

In Aikido, practice is looked upon as training, a polishing of ones' spirit through practice, researching and seeking to gain insight into each movement. The Aiki, the blending of energy and movement in the context of self-defense. Non-fighting. The same is true of the Chinese internal arts. Mindful practice is a polishing of ourselves.

*Smile, rest, enjoy.*



Now what do you mean by  
"Repulse the Monkey?"

# PRACTICE MAKES PERMANENT SCIENTIFIC TRAINING

part 1 of 3

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"How many t'ai-chi teachers does it take to change a light bulb. Ten. One to change the light bulb and nine to say in our school we do it a little differently." Old saying.

To become proficient at martial arts and specifically t'ai-chi ch'uan you need desire, natural talent, a good teacher and perseverance. Elite athletes and recreational exercisers have different requirements. Depending on the level of advancement of the athlete, all are important. Most teachers teach the way they are taught, which may be inappropriate for students, there is a better way. The key is a balanced program, proper progression, overload, learning proper body posture and mechanics. The modern teacher should train students with the intent to minimize injuries as they maximize competence.

A balanced program will include warm-up, stretching, conditioning, technique training, rest and proper nutrition. Warm-up is done before stretching with the intent of getting the body ready for exercise. It allows students to train with less chance of injury, protects the heart and may improve performance. A common mistake is to turn the warm-up into the conditioning phase of the program. Warm up should be done for at least five to ten minutes at a sub-maximal intensity. It is not conditioning. For example, in weight training if you can do ten repetitions of 100 pounds then ten repetitions of 50 and then 60 pounds would be a warm-up. The same idea goes for other exercises as well. Walking, jogging, calisthenics and traditional ch'i kung or some type of low intensity total body exercise is great for warm-up. (1, 9)

While director of exercise physiology for the National Athletic Health Institute I had the great opportunity to work with many world class athletes in track and field, kick boxing as well as several professional teams, including the L.A. Lakers, L.A. Kings, L.A. Rams and L.A. Dodgers, as well as being a consultant to Sho Kosugi's Karate team and several amateur teams. I can say without hesitation that professional athletes are different than recreational exercisers. Most elite athletes have what is called natural talent. This is a hard to measure composition of body type, muscle fiber type, neurologic processing, heart size and other genetic factors, combines with innate ability to learn the techniques of that sport. Any world class athlete has a certain amount of genetic talent, but so do many non-athletes. The elite, including famous masters, train very hard for many years to gain their level of skill. Many people in t'ai-chi who have natural talent,

train for a few years then stop training, so they never reach the advanced stages of the art. The average person who perseveres, under the guidance of a good teacher, will attain greater skill.

People fall into a wide range of body types, some are ideally specialized for certain sports. In general mesomorphs are muscular, ectomorphs are skinny, and endomorphs are rounder and heavy. Mesomorphs usually excel at competitive body contact sports; ectomorphs may be better at long distance running. People usually have more than one trait, e.g. world record holding super heavyweight Olympic lifters are usually endomesomorphs while other body weight based athletes are ecto-mesomorphs. Think of physical specimens categorized along a bell shaped curve. One side of the curve has world class athletes of a certain type, the other side the people picked last for the high school team that the opposite side of the curve starred in. Most average (by definition) people are some place in the middle with a mixture of talents. Then there are people who have the natural talent and don't do anything with it. One of the great things about studying martial arts is that you can train and compete all your life if you want to and not have great natural talent. At one time it was the place for the non-athletic type to excel due to slow progressive training.

Persistence makes up for lack of natural ability. Still there are those athletes at the top of the curve who become the greats. That is why there is confusion over the best style and training method as observers cannot factor in natural talent and desire. But at the same time your basic abilities and where you are now will determine the correct training program for you. Your strengths and weaknesses can be directed into the best program tailored to your needs. That is your starting point. (18)

There are many types of teachers and students. All have different needs and desires for training. What I believe is the most important starting point is finding the appropriate training program for you at this time. This is what makes or breaks many students. No matter what your level, there is an appropriate level for you. You have to start at the right place. Instructors have a tendency to be at the higher end of the curve. Instructors are more likely to be good athletes who persisted and survived years of training. Even those who are not natural athletes endured years of arduous training and put themselves in a unique position. What is considered optimal training for them is not appropriate for beginning students. Teachers

(Continued on page 6)

need to develop an appropriate training program for their students. That is a good way to keep students. If it is too hard, students will get frustrated and give up, causing a high drop out rate. If it is too easy students may be bored! and move on. It has to have appropriate intensity and a built in progressive overload.

We all adapt to exercise. That is a basic premise. We adapt specifically, that is whatever we do, e.g. push-ups, we will adapt to that and that may not carry over to anything else. You may be the push-up champ in your dojo but not be much of a runner. You might be able to stand in a picture perfect horse stance for an hour, but not be able to spar. Everything is specific. An important part of this is what you are training for, specificity, how hard you exercise, i.e. intensity, and the concept of progressive overload.

Intensity of training is how hard you train. This will determine your progress. The best way to start new students out is to start with low intensity, easy, on the first day of class, and build up gradually. Instead of having them do 100 sit-ups the first day start with 10 and work up. Proper intensity is important for the techniques taught, as well as the type of supplementary training used. Everyone has their own unique starting point. One person may breeze through your class with energy to spare, while others crawl out. The teacher's job is to make the intensity appropriate for everyone. Bravado and machismo has no place in developing scientific training programs. That is best done by developing a specific individualized training program. What was considered optimum training for rice farmers, who are fit due to their work, in the 1800's is not ideal today. (16)

In aikido, the intensity of training can be based on the type and number of throws done without switching partners. For example low intensity training would be doing techniques on the mat, suwari waza where techniques are done on the mat. Switching Uke and Tori after one throw each is lower intensity than switching after two or four throws each. Adding a pin after each technique adds completeness and reduces intensity. The more rest in between throws the lower the intensity. In aikido the person thrown is getting most of the exercise. A specific high intensity training method used in judo can be adapted to aikido and jujutsu, is called go nin gake and ju nin gake, i.e. five-man take down and ten-man take down. This is where one person throws five or ten fresh people without a rest. If the fresh athletes resist, as is done in judo training, this is a high intensity overload specific to the activity. Overload is how you develop. Once your body adapts to one level of training you have to stimulate it with the next level. (1, 16, 17)

Slow t'ai-chi is a very low intensity exercise. My research since 1975 on its physical effects showed it is similar to walking about 3 to 4 miles per hour. Intensity and overload can be increased by changing the methods of training, speed of movement and deepening the stance. (2, 3)

Progressive overload is one of the most important concepts for scientific training. Without the proper overload you don't get far. Overload is pushing your body a little harder than it is used to. As you adapt to your training you, increase you overload. Your body adapts to the overload. If you start at an appropriate level of training and use the principle of overload, then after a few months you can do much more than when you started. This is what is done with weight training and running. With a little thought it can be used in all martial arts classes. As soon as your overload stops you don't progress. For example in karate doing 20 punches with full power then adding ten per week until you can do 100 punches with full power, is an example of combining intensity with overload. If you did 100 punches with full power your starting day of class, you might end up so sore that you can't do much of anything the next week. Other than a sado-masochistic benefit, it! does your body more harm than good, as soreness is a sign of connective tissue damage. But by slowly increasing the number of punches done per class over time, there is a greater long term benefit. The progressive nature of overload is important. (16)

Yang style t'ai-chi ch'uan as well as other traditional kung-fu systems has an inherent overload and progression. Both the learning of techniques and training has a built in progression. For example most schools start by teaching the t'ai-chi slow form to beginners. The form is learned step by step. In t'ai-chi ch'uan if too much is taught too soon, then the student becomes bewildered. The techniques blend together and are learned poorly. Learning step by step is the correct progression. When the student learns one technique properly then he/she can learn the next. (5)

The most important concept for both students and instructors to remember is not to rush through training but to learn slowly, thoroughly, step by step. Students who learn too much, too fast, do not assimilate concepts well and have a poor foundation for future learning. They then will get sloppy and are confused as to techniques and applications, so they cannot attain the proper clarity of mind. Techniques become jumbled. The structure of study should be gradual and thorough, for after learning one step well the student progresses naturally to the next. The student should be able to do step one before going on to step two, or else the whole process gets fuzzy. (5)