

NEWSLETTER

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 atdale@cnw.com http://www.cnw.com/~atdale/ subscription \$10yr



Foundation

"Your virtue is the foundation of your professional work; no house frame ever lasted without a solid foundation."

Your mentality is the root of your prosperity; no branches and leaves ever flourished without a well-planted root."

Huanchu Daoren



WORKSHOPS

July 10-12th
SUMMER RETREAT
 BANDON, OR:
 See Page 6

August 23-29th
**KOOTENAY LAKE
 TAI CHI RETREAT**
 \$445 Canadian or \$370 US
 Kootenay Tai Chi Centre
 Box 566,

Nelson B.C. Canada V1L 5R3
 Phone Fax (250) 352-3714
 e-mail: chiflow@insidenet.com

September 4-9th
**GILMAN STUDIO
 TAI CHI CAMP**
 Camp David on Crescent Lake
 inf.: P.O. Box 431
 Port Townsend, WA 98368
 Send for a brochure,

WORKSHOPS

NO SATURDAY CLASS JULY
 See class schedule this page.

SATURDAY CLASSES AUGUST
 9:00 -10 Bagua instruction
 10:00-11:00 Yang Taiji
 11:00-12:00 Wild Goose Qi Gong
lower Woodland Park (50th by Picnic area east of Aurora)
 All weather.

AIKIDO THIS FALL
 Starting this September I will teaching a beginning Aikido class Mondays 7-8:30 p.m. This class will be Sept - Dec. Though we will be doing 'rolling' (sitting and rocking back) this class will be non-tumbling. I will focus on the philosophy, history, and foundation of Aikido. The class will be conducted traditionally. Sessions will be at the Xin Qi Shen Dojo

CLUB INFORMATION
 Have you moved?
 Changed phone #?
 Added an e-mail address????
 If so be sure I have the info.
 If you're on e-mail you'll usually have access to the newsletter a week a head as well as bulletin updates.
 Need a form printout? Check out the resources page on our web site. Most of the Qigong, Taiji and Bagua forms you're learning are online.
 Also you can access various classics and writings on this page.
www.cnw.com/~atdale/

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INTERNAL WUSHU ARTS July & August

Classes at:
 Discovery Park S. Entrance
 by the church
 Bad weather: Xin Qi Shen Dojo

	TUE	WED	THUR
6 - 7 pm	All	All	All
7 - 8	Yang	Chen	Bagua
8 - 9	All	All	All

The 7-8pm sessions are for the intermediate students already in these classes. All means I will be available to answer questions and work on refinements to who ever shows up, any style or form. This is also a good time just to come and practice.
 Club fee \$55 monthly or \$14.00 per session.

DON'T RENT, BUY!

By ATDale

BIG GRIPE: Too many people come to class only to rent the forms and exercises taught. They come and follow along yet when home don't practice, not even a part of the art. For beginners this is understandable, but even for a beginner you should 'play' with a movement or part of a movement you remember from the class. If you are interested in learning or advancing in the art, this is the way to begin to 'buy' or absorb not, just for forms but the health, exercise, energy and spiritual benefits of the art. No practice = nothing. Little practice = something.

Now the secret to learning is repetition! Usually members will not remember the very last movements taught, at least at the beginning levels. However, every form has a start! Begin at the beginning and go as far as memory serves. Then . . . linger there for a while, if the next movement doesn't come then just start over again and refine what you do have, let it sink into muscle memory. Then the next class session focus on the next movement, no more. Don't overload yourself. If while you are practicing alone, the next movement comes then do it but don't go pasted it. Start over and practice through this movement until there isn't a glitch in it. This is the only way your body will integrate the movements into your muscles and you'll be able to move passed the memory thing.

If you're new to the art or 'movement' learning then don't put too much pressure on yourself. I'm not focusing on you in this article. The best thing to do is take a basic movement and play with it. If you remember the form and sequence then that's fine but as a beginner take it easy so your body can learn to learn movement.

The rest of you however! Especially if you've been studying more than five years you have no excuse for not knowing how to practice or not practicing between classes. If life is hectic and busy then perhaps you shouldn't be learning another form? If you are learning two forms at the same time it's a good sign to drop one of them. Are you interested in learning the art or the forms? Are you seeing how much you can tackle? Are you bent on stressing yourself out?

SIMPLIFY

The more you tackle the less you will learn and do well. Also there's enough stress in life so why add more? Take one piece of the art, one style or form for the time being and polish it, refine it, seek new insights into what you have.

- The more you tackle the more I expect from you.
- The longer you've practiced the more I expect from you.
- I expect practice with quality.

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WWW.AMAZON.COM

For those of you on the web I've added a bookstore to my site. I've listed books in categories: must have, should have, should read etc. I'm an associate member of Amazon.com which means anyone ordering the book through my site may give me as much as \$2.00 kick-back per book. Also if you use the search feature on my web pages, any books you order I will get credit for. (cool huh?) On books that Amazon doesn't have I'm working on links to places where you can order them.

FORM COMPLETION

Partner Broadsword

Deborah Goldhalf
David Miller
Cosette LeCiel
Jesnette Unger
Sam Schneider
Jennifer Lange

CONGRATULATIONS

Tentative Fall Schedule 1998

pm	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur
6-7		T'ien Shan Qigong	O'mei Qigong	Chan Ssu gong
7-8	Alkido	Yang Taiji	Chen Taiji	Bagua
8-9		Open Chen	Open Bagua	Open Yang

Saturday classes will continue as is. The 6-7 session is open to all members and coming late isn't a problem.

7-8 time is for the intermediate group to train. 8-9 is open to all students of the particular style to workout and get refinements.



THE STUDY OF T'AI-CHI CH'UAN AND AIKIDO

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People get angry if you refute their beliefs. They want to believe so much that they don't want to hear the truth if it contradicts what they accept as their reality. That is what Western science has fought since the dark ages. Truth is truth. Many people in the Internal arts fall into this trap, they believe without proof. This gets us to the "Cult of the Teacher" where students suspend good sense and rational thought to follow a teacher. They believe what ever the teacher says without reflection, and if their teacher is reputable and honest they will do well. But if the teacher is a scam artist or just wrong, what then? For example, I have heard several teachers tell their t'ai-chi students to use force, really using hard style to impress unwitting students. They also use parlor tricks to impress their students. The sophisticated student will know that these are just tricks but the novice may believe in the "Big Magic". Unfortunately t'ai-chi teachers don't confront these scam artist and they get away with ripping off students. T'ai-chi ch'uan is an internal art and it has very specific concepts. If these philosophical concepts are not followed, then even if it outwardly appears to be t'ai-chi, its guts are not. We have to differentiate the external appearance from the guts of the art. Illusion from reality.

T'AI-CHI CH'UAN IS THE EPITOME OF A SOFT ART

In a visit to Vancouver several years ago a young master tried to throw over Tchoung Ta-tchen while doing pushing hands. Every time he thought he thought he had him, Tchoung seemed to dissolve away. Then Tchoung would return and softly throw the young master up against the wall. The young master remarked he couldn't find Tchoung when he tried to push him and couldn't feel him when he was thrown by him. T'ai-chi ch'uan is the ultimate internal soft style with very specific concepts foreign to most other martial arts. It is what makes t'ai-chi ch'uan, tai-chi.

EXTERNAL ARTS ARE FROM THE WEST

The Chinese martial arts art usually loosely classified as "Internal" or "External" systems. Bodhidharma, known in China as Tamo (Damo), came from the "West", i.e., India. According to D.T. Suzuki, Tamo was the 28th Buddhist patriarch in India and became the first patriarch in China. Tamo around 520 AD traveled from India to China and eventually ended up at the Shaolin Monastery. Mythology states that he taught the monks a series of exercises to improve their health and strength. Over

time a martial art was developed there, called Shaolin Ch'uan. It is hard to believe that Tamo started Shaolin but probably it evolved over time by bringing together various folk and military fighting arts.

Chang San-feng (1279-1368) studied at the monastery. He was not satisfied with the "Hard" method based on brute force. He became a Taoist mystic. He had a vision that formed the basis for what is now called t'ai-chi ch'uan. In his vision Chang saw a crane trying to kill a snake. Every time the crane would peck at the snake, the snake would evade and return the attack. The core concept of t'ai-chi is the physical manifestation of the concept of yin and yang. The commonly seen yin/yang diagram is properly called the t'ai chi diagram. The highest ideal is not to fight force against force. The young master experienced this with grand-master Tchoung as he flew against the wall from Tchoung's soft push. I'm sure Andy's students hear these stories all the time..

Much later a group of martial artist masters of T'ai chi, pa-kua chang and Hsing-I ch'uan got together in 1894 and formed an organization related arts called "Internal Family Boxing" (Neijiquan). Those three arts are called the "Internal Arts"; while Shaolin Ch'uan and its offshoots are called "External" arts. Other arts have added their name to the internal banner because it sounds good. The term is a historical record. It is as simple as that. Just so happens, the Internal Arts focus on the development of internal power (chin), but so does Shaolin. So they are also called Hard and Soft Styles, focusing on their methods and mind set.

What is the difference between hard styles and soft styles? One view is: Basically Hard stylists are impressed by physical strength, deep stances and speed, they delight in using force (li) and tension. They often fight force with force, where the winner is the stronger. They use hard chin. In contrast, Soft stylists are impressed by subtlety, effortless technique, being able to be relaxed when doing techniques. They use soft chin. "The technique of no technique". It is a mind set. The Internal stylist's world is subtle. But, there are hard stylists who claim to practice t'ai-chi and soft stylists who practice Shaolin and karate. Many of the best karate fighters are essentially soft stylists but karate is not an "Internal Art".

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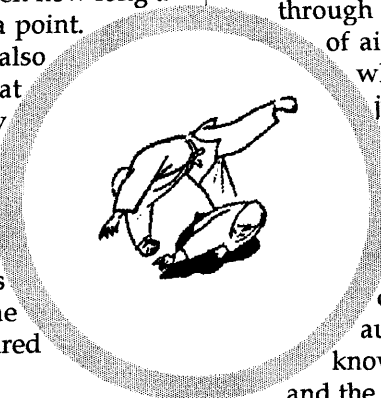


T'AI CHI IS A BONELESS ART

Good t'ai-chi is "Boneless". You are relaxed and move as if you don't have any bones with the movements strung together. The energy of the snake. There are no isolated arm movements. That is, there is no isolated waving the hands around in t'ai-chi, as is unfortunately depicted in movies and commercials. The posture should be straight with the head held up from above and back kept straight. The shoulders are "sunk" down and relaxed. Most techniques use a waist turn and weight shift which moves the arms. The whole body in relaxed, nimble and lively. But not a flaccid limp art as some make it seem, it should be a spirited relaxation. Not a zombie.

TAKES TIME TO LEARN

There is a direct relationship between how long a student takes lessons and skill, up to a point. Previous training and innate talent is also a major factor. Some experts claim that the time in the art does not necessarily correlate to skill. This is because there are many people who practice t'ai-chi all their lives and do not show any kung-fu, skill. But learning T'ai-chi is a systematic process and there is a correlation between skill and time spent studying correctly in a structured class, under a qualified instructor.



AIKIDO AND T'AI CHI CH'UAN

Aikido was evolved and founded by the great Moriehei Ueshiba through the 1930's-1940's. It is conceptually, but not technically, the most similar Japanese art to t'ai-chi and pa-kua chang. After Ueshiba's death several of his top students promoted aikido that differed subtly from each other. At one time it was estimated that there were over 30 different versions. The concepts espoused were the same, but the methods ranged from practical to mystical, brutally hard to soft, as in t'ai-chi. Some students have made it into a quasi-religion, as in t'ai-chi. The parallels are amazing in how the arts evolved. But t'ai-chi had 300 more years to make the changes we see today. By the definition, Aikido is a soft art, but not an "Internal Art"

In aikido as in t'ai-chi soft would mean being relaxed and using as little brute force as possible. Ideally, the attacker, UKE, flies through the air without knowing why. In "harder" aikido the UKE feels manipulated and controlled by NAGE (thrower) and muscular force is used to make a technique work. Poor technique is not being in harmony and using muscular force, just as in t'ai-chi.

Some students feel more secure in using force; others temperamentally like to use force. They like to feel in control and muscular power, i.e. "Doing something". It is easy to learn to use force, especially for those who are physically powerful, it becomes a habit. As in t'ai-chi a strong person can make an awkward or inefficient technique work. If this habit continues it will follow the student even to advanced rank. Even some high ranking aikido black belts, as well as t'ai chi ch'uan masters use brute force, they are described by Andy as, "Having the sensitivity of a rock."

Highly skilled aikido or t'ai chi ch'uan experts can make basic applications look like magic, in reality it is just incredibly subtle and exquisite technique. This is real technique and not the "trained seal acts" where an instructor waves his hands and the student flies through the air for no good reason. Often demos of aikido are as hoaky as the t'ai-chi demo's where master do nothing and students jump and hop away or fly through the air with the wave of a hand. While the students want to look good the instructors do not promote the real art by these drills. Some are energy projection drills where the student cooperates with the teacher, let the audience know that. Otherwise the knowledgeable viewers will think it is a hoax and the true believes will think it is magic.

A CALL FOR VALUES AND CHARACTER

There needs to be honesty in these arts, tell it like it is. Be honest, don't make it more than it is. As I get older I think what I value in teachers is enthusiasm for teaching their art, honesty and values. If they don't "Feel" right, I stay away from them. Tricks and athletic talent mean little to me as their are many gifted athletes, but character means a lot more. As one gets more attuned to energy of others, you may find some have a negative energy feel, or feel dirty energy. This may be a sign to you that their character is questionable.

Stay toward the noble path, turn toward the light. Peace and Light

Harvey Kurland is a well respected t'ai-chi ch'uan instructor, a teacher under Grand Master Tchoung Ta-tchen, who teaches for the University of California at Riverside and Loma Linda University's Drayson Center. Kurland graduated from the University of Washington and has certification from the ACSM, ISSA, and the CTCCA
www.pe.net/~rvtaichi/

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If you're working on a partner form, solo or weaponry, you have an obligation to your classmates and partners to practice and know your side well enough so you don't trip them up!

RESPONSIBILITIES

As we begin these arts, learning the qigong and solo forms we really don't have much responsibility to anyone but ourselves. Actually I take that back. You have a certain responsibility to the teacher to give it your best shot, be mindful of what's being taught and the rest of the class. For instance keeping questions asked related to what is being taught.

However, once you begin partner work you accept certain responsibilities that come with this type of practice.

1. KEEP PRACTICE SAFE
2. DO YOUR HOMEWORK
3. PRACTICE, PRACTICE AND PRACTICE

KEEP PRACTICE SAFE

These are martial arts, not dance. The movements and techniques are designed for self-defense and fighting hence they are inherently dangerous.

Be mindful

Is your partner a beginner or advanced member? To they have physical restrictions, i.e. a bad back? Partner work is just that, you are partners. There is a cooperation and coordination that must take place for you to practice. The minute you begin partner practice you need to be able to trust each other in order to learn and advance. If I can't trust you to be smooth and paying attention to what you are doing I won't fully give you the 'honest' energy needed for our practice.

Be alert

Chatting about your job, kids, car won't do. You need to keep your focus on what you are doing. Not just to learn, refine, and advance in the techniques taught but in order to keeps the practice safe. This is especially true in a crowded class. Someone may be pushed in your direction, a sword may be moving in the same direction your partner may be moving toward. Be 100% here now on what you are doing and learning now. Can you talk and listen at the same time? All our skills are based upon internal and external listening and observation.

Do not deviate from exercise

What if I do this instead? Should only be done if you and your partner are working on free-style or have agreed to this type of practice. Whether in push hands, free-style or weaponry I occasionally notice some jerk taking a pot shot or trying to sucker punch a partner to show, for some reason, that they could have 'gotten' them. Very impressive but you've just lost the trust

from your partner since you've demonstrated you're trying to 'get' them. That may be appropriate if the two of you are sparring but while in class there are strict safety codes to abide by. In my own studies there were club members that I would not practice with due to a possible injury. I've had my shoulder pulled out due to a careless partner, hit from behind because some fool misjudged distance while trying to be smart. I've also seen sprained wrists and separated ribs from a 'reaction' to a partner trying to sucker punch another and the first one reacting in self-defense, spontaneously.

Be a good partner

Now remember the key word: PARTNER. The two of you are working together to learn and refine your skills. It's not about you doing a technique to your partner. It's about helping your partner refine their technique, so they can help you. Honest energy

means that if we're doing an application from a punch, I will punch at a speed we can work and learn from (eventually it will be fast but not at the beginning). My punch will arrive at the target, not 5" in front of the target. I will put enough energy and strength into the punch so you have something to work with and can tell if you are moving correctly. This does not mean resisting the technique. If you know what technique your partner is practicing you can easily resist or counter any technique.

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

While learning partner forms don't let your classmates down. The only way to get beyond the step by step mode and into the real energy, flow and application of the movement is to go beyond trying to remember the form. Are you holding up your partner or the class? If you can't commit to the requirements of homework then you shouldn't be doing partner work. It's difficult enough for your partner to remember their side and try to execute it correctly without you stopping them because you can't remember the next movement or you're doing the wrong movement.

PRACTICE, PRACTICE AND PRACTICE

Doing the forms are not a dance, they are not the choreography. We use the choreography so that we may begin to work on the nei jia, the internal workings of these arts. The sensitivity, energy, timing, flow, and power. Until you have the forms down you can't get there. If you can't do the forms quickly, any direction without a glitch then you don't have it at all.

WARNING SIGNS:

- People don't want to practice with you
- Did you bathe?
- Are you safe to practice with?
- Do you practice or talk?
- Have you 'accidentally' hit a partner in class?