



# XIN QI SHEN DOJO

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I don't think that it is a virtue to continue to do the form in the same way year after year. The form is ever changing and evolving. If you do the form exactly like your teacher after a few years of practice on your own, you are probably stuck. Look at any good teacher and notice how his or her form is different from day to day and moment to moment. The form is an expression of exactly where we are right now. Open up and allow inspiration to enter.

From: A String of Pearls by Michael Gilman

Life is growth. If we stop growing, technically and spiritually, we are as good as dead.

Your mind should be in harmony with the functioning of the universe; your body should be in tune with the movement of the universe; body and mind should be bound as one, unified with the activity of the universe.

Morihei Ueshiba, founder of Aikido

Change, change, change! The internal arts are based upon change. The method varies and changes but the principles remain constant. Sometimes big, sometimes small, sometimes slow, sometimes quick. You apply the principles as needed, when needed.

Master Tchoung Ta Tchen

Empty empty, full full, with spirit ever present.

To practice Taiji without mastering the principle of full and empty, is to waste time and not accomplishing anything.

Wu Meng-hsia

Although the changes are numerous, the principle that pervades them is only one.

T'ai Chi Ch'uan Lun by Wang Tsung-yueh

***It's time to be outdoors,  
 Summer sessions are in the park.***

## SATURDAY CLASS

Classes are full! I can't handle more during the Saturday session so there are no openings for beginners until September. Beginning May, all Saturday sessions will meet at lower Woodland park by the tennis courts on 50th street. This will be all weather so bring rain gear and warm clothing since spring doesn't seem to want to come. If you're a fair weather person you may want to pay per session \$15.00.

## EVENING SESSIONS

Check the new class schedule on page 2. The Advanced Thursday applications session is by invitation only and for only for this month to see how the class progresses.

## NEW CLASSES

Joel Hartshorne, one of the club's certified instructors in Yang Taiji and Bagua will be offering a class, training and workout session in the internal arts. He will be combining practices and principles of Taiji, Bagua and Xing-I. Sessions should be in the Phinney Ridge Neighborhood. For more information call: 782-2099

## QI GONG INTENSIVE

Check the schedule insert for times.

Once a month on Saturdays there will be a basic Qi Gong intensive 2:30-3:30 covering movements, theory, and practice of qi gong for

*(Continued on page 3)*



# AIKIDO: TOHEI'S PRINCIPLES OF KI

*Continued from last month*

Master Tohei's principles of energy, movement and health.

- KEEP ONE POINT
- KEEP WEIGHT UNDERSIDE
- RELAX COMPLETELY
- EXTEND KI

To repeat a bit from last issue, there's lots of hype in Qi Gong and the martial arts about increasing our Qi and power.

Learning the 'secrets' of internal power and Ki. However, what's actually the main problem is that we live dispersing our energy and move inefficiently. It's like trying to push something heavy with our back arched, shoulders and elbows up. Not only is this position weak there's a great potential for self injury. Also, these positions and postures aren't very natural but somehow we are in patterns of moving unnaturally much of the time.

## PRINCIPLES OF KI

If you look carefully at Tohei's principles of Ki you'll notice two are mental imagery and two are body sensations. Keep one point and extend Ki are mental images. Some of us tend to be more kinetic and others mentally focused when it comes to learning and practicing. Tohei's four principles take this into account. Also, as I said in the last article these principles weren't invented by Tohei or new to the arts, they're as ancient as Taoist health theory.

## RELAX COMPLETELY AND KEEP WEIGHT UNDERSIDE

You can't do one without the other! First keep in mind that relaxation in the internal arts doesn't mean loose or limp, just the release of excess strength, tension and body/mind friction. This principle in itself is the core of most healing arts (disease = dis-ease). A relaxed body moves freely and easily, there is a sense of flow to one's movement. When everything is going super and life is good our movements tend to have a carefree attitude.

On a health level as we relax there is minimal friction within our body so body energy can flow easily for maintaining our body to function as it should. The energy is also permitted to build and increase improving our health and vitality. On a martial level as we're relaxed our movements become naturally quicker and more powerful. Just look at any successful athlete and you'll notice one of the differences between their

movements and the runner ups is a relaxed smoothness in movements.

As we practice our art or even move about in our daily life we need to practice relaxation in order to become better at it. Notice when your shoulders are up, then sink them, notice when you clench your jaw and loosen it, notice when you're gripping the steering wheel tightly and soften your grip.

Now *Weight Underside* is actually a result of relaxation but it can also cause you to relax by just focusing on your own heaviness. Just as waking up in the morning or sitting in a favorite chair there is a sense of heaviness, sinking. This feeling is actually feeling the pull of gravity, which you can only do by relaxing. If you focus on your arms being heavy you'll relax!

Weight Underside puts attention on our body experiencing gravity and letting go to it, hence we relax. The principle of Weight Underside also helps align our body for proper movement and execution of power for pushing, pulling or striking. If you push a refrigerator you have to lower your shoulders, elbows in and down and push from your foot, through your hips, to your shoulder blades to your hands. This is the ripple of strength principle in the Internal Arts. If the movement or energy floats, lifts, or becomes weight upperside we lose power and can actually hurt ourselves if we try to push or strike something really heavy. Just try pushing something-heavy focusing on upperside of your arms or with your elbows out. This puts your body alignment in a weak and vulnerable position.

Now as I said before these principles aren't new but if we understand them we have a shortcut to efficiency, power and health. Don't try to think about all four principles, find the one that makes sense to you and use it, perfect it. A principle I use for myself is COMFORTABLE, it accomplishes the same thing. I check every now and then to see if I'm moving or standing comfortably. If not I take a second to do so then continue on with whatever I was doing. In order to be comfortable I need to relax which causes my weight to be underside, which results in one point (centeredness), which enables ki to extend (radiate). In Aikido the catch phrase is Keep One Point, for me it's Be Comfortable, All Same!

Andy

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## Club Spring & Summer Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Saturday
7-8pm	Aikido basic	Yang Taiji Sections 3-6	Chen Taiji 48 form & Pao Chui	Bagua training	9-10am Bagua basics
8-9pm	Aikido 6 kyu up	Yang Taiji Sections 7-9	Chen Dao Aiki Ken	Advanced class	10-noon Yang Taiji basics

Yang Taiji morning classes also Wednesday 9-11 am in Magnolia

# WHINE, WHINE . . .

As I was talking with a skating coach the topic of 'fun' people to teach came up.

Now first of all don't focus on "Am I fun to teach", or "I'm so slow getting it I must frustrate my teacher", or "So and so get it easy, it must be nicer teaching them". For some reason these are common statements or thought for many students. The bottom line for a teacher is that the student is eager to learn, practices (within their capabilities), and tries, that's all! We all hit plateaus once in a while, we have some movements that come easy, others that don't. This is all a part of learning and teaching. That's not the focus of this article.

One of the real trials in teaching is the individual that whines, complains or starts with excuses why they're not getting it during lessons. If you don't practice or haven't practiced enough it'll be quite evident in your lesson so you really don't have to announce to the teacher, "I haven't had time to practice!" For good or bad it doesn't matter, show me what you can do and remember at this moment. Don't waste time on guilt or chat. Another side to this may be not liking what's being worked on or lacking the patience needed. That may be the 'lesson' of this study.

Teaching someone who apparently is getting the movements quickly isn't necessarily more fun than someone who takes longer. In my experience the person that gets the movements quickly only gets the outer movements instead of focusing on the process and internal of the movement. Personally the movements I've had the most trouble getting eventually become my best movements since I spend

more time on them and know them inside and out. These are usually the ones that I teach the best .

Though some days you may not feel like working out or practicing, if you have a lesson or are in a class do your best to focus and be there. If things just aren't going well perhaps you need to rest and take it easy instead of being in class? To get back on track, when you are in class or taking a lesson all that's expected is for you to try and be alert. You are spending time, energy and money for this session so make the most of it.

Another difficulty in teaching is teaching someone who's in a hurry to get more. Those in this group many times are satisfied with superficial accomplishments. "Oh, I've got that move, what comes next?" Clearly shows the 'internal' aspect of the art is ignored and there's no interest in depth or polishing the art. Impatience in learning takes that much longer to develop skill in the art.

On another note you are not buying the movement or lesson. You are paying for the advice and skill of the teacher *to be the teacher*. You must first have respect and trust in the teacher, otherwise find another one. Remember, an excellent teacher isn't necessarily a good teacher for everyone. There's a story of Master Tchoung being approached by a prospective student giving him quite a bit on money saying he wanted to learn the fast application form. Tchoung took the money and said join the class, when your advanced you'll learn the fast form.

Don't whine, complain or argue. Listen, try and practice.

Andy

(Continued from page 1)

exercise, health, healing and martial ability. The second session 3:40-4:30 is for advanced students working on the Tian Shan Qi Gong. Each session is \$5.00 for club members, \$10.00 non-members.

## **BANDON WEEK**

July 10-12th or 15th?

July 10-12 I will be offering 3 sessions per day. I will be staying til the 15 and depending upon who is there we may continue some of the sessions. I am also available for private lesson.

There may be some surprise instructors offering classes and we will have the honor of Master Yueng joining us so there may be Qi Gong classes, talks or sessions. Our practice sessions are on the beach in front of the Sunset motel.

Tentative schedule:

- \* Bagua footwork / Dragon
- \* Palm
- \* Partner Cane / Jo
- \* Taiji practice & corrections  
we will be staying at:  
[www.sunsetmotel.com](http://www.sunsetmotel.com)

## **SUMMER INTENSIVE**

July 30th – Aug 1st

This year we will be in Seattle at Discovery Park. Some of the participating instructors will be Michael Gilman and John Camp. There will be form applications, push hands, free hands, Bagua, Xing I, lectures on teaching, learning, Qi Gong and who knows what else. I will be offering the following sessions:

- \* Teaching & Learning the internal arts
- \* Xing-I Five Elements
- \* Partner Freehand Drills

*A full schedule will be in the July issue*

## **NO SATURDAY CLASSES IN JULY**

## **MASTER GAO FU CLASSES**

New Classes starting  
(see picture in Master's gallery)

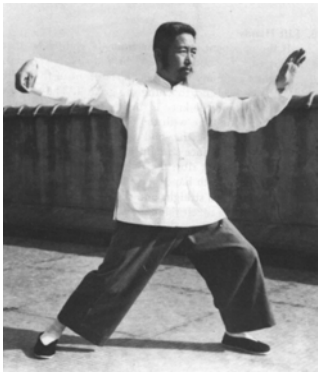
Qi Gong: Mondays 7-8:30

Chen Taiji 24 form: Wed 7-8:30

Info: Jill 206-325-7959

# Gallery of Masters

The primary reason for doing this gallery wasn't to introduce or give background to the various masters. A picture is worth a thousand words! If you look at the pictures, each one is an example of all the principles that the internal arts are based upon. Each picture demonstrates: Xin Qi Shen. Xin – correct body structure and alignment. Qi – there is a sense of energy and fullness in each postures. Shen – if you can see the eyes there is a focus and sense of spirit expressed.



Master Cheng Man-Ching  
Yang Taiji Quan  
Student of Master Yang Cheng Fu, grandson of the founder of the Yang Taiji method.



Master Gao Fu  
Chen Taiji Sword  
Student of Masters Tian Xiao Chen and Feng Zhi Chiang top students of the Chen family's 17th successor Chen Fa Ke.



Master Chiang Yu Kun  
Bagua Single Palm  
The top student of Master Kuo Lien Ying in Taiji, Bagua and Xing I Quan.



Master Tchoung Ta Tchen  
Zhan Zhuang Meditation  
Student of Master Shi Dao Mai, grandson of the founder of the Yang Taiji method. Also a push hands colleague of Master Cheng Man Ching. Bagua student of Wang Hsu Chin, Xing I student of Yuan Tao.



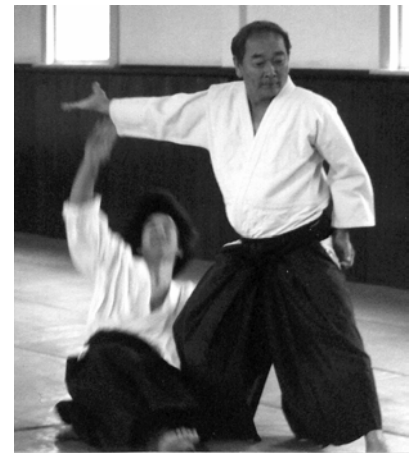
Master Kuo Lien-Ying  
Zhan Zhuang  
Responsible for spreading the practice of Taiji in San Francisco, he represents the Kwan Ping Taiji method, claimed to be taught by Yang Ban Hou, son of Yang Taiji Founder Yang Lu Chan.



Master Morihei Ueshiba  
Founder of Aikido  
Died in 1968, O'sensei studied and mastered many Japanese jujitsu, sword and spear arts. Through his personal enlightenment he evolved Aikido: the way of harmony with energy.



Master Wang Hsu Jin  
Bagua Eagle  
One of the foremost practitioners of Taiji, Bagua and Xing I in Taiwan. He studied Bagua with Chang Chao-tung, and Li Tsun I students of the founder of Bagua.



Master Sado Yoshioka

# A Questionnaire

What is the difference between a dabbler and a practitioner? The difference between a practitioner and professional, a student and disciple?

Regardless of art, sport, or field there's a full range of participants and practitioners. It baffles my mind when I hear someone say, "Oh yes I do Taiji" which upon closer questioning it means they took a class 10 years ago for one month. Or seeing someone teaching after taking a 10 week course and only knowing the outward movements of the simplified form. BUYER BEWARE! Being traditionally trained this also urks me sometimes (can you tell).

There are opportunists, ignorant, and misguided individuals out there as well as mindful practitioners with integrity. We can also delude ourselves sometimes and get caught up in the fluff and hype of the arts and end up with no depth or real understanding. I've covered in depth in the past the difference between practicing, studying and researching the art, and that teaching isn't practicing! If you want to improve: PRACTICE.

The wonderful thing about the internal arts is just that: INTERNAL! Though we have work and life to deal with that may come in the way of our practice we can still work on the principles and the prep work. Relaxation, softness, body alignment, suspend the head-top, center, root etc. Actually a real practitioner shouldn't we able to

avoid these reminders in their daily life. These reminders aren't practicing the art but we are nurturing ourselves and our health. The internal arts are a physical expression of the Taoist philosophy of health.

I was sitting around looking at a quiz and thought it would be fun to do an internal arts quiz for practitioners to look at their commitment to the art and their study. Life is never simple where schedules never change and we never get tired, or bored. However, this should help you focus or at least show you where your focus is.



Andy



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#### You Practice:

1. Twice a day
2. Once a day
3. Twice a week
4. Once in a while
5. Only in class

#### During your lesson:

1. You listen and practice
2. You offer your opinions
3. You compare it to what you know
4. You explain that your other teacher did it differently
5. You notice the decorations in the room.

#### Before class:

1. You practice and warm-up.
2. You watch the advanced students practice
3. You visit with others.
4. You tell sifu you couldn't practice
5. You tell sifu why you couldn't practice

#### During practice:

1. You practice each movement carefully
2. You polish what you have
3. You work on the new stuff
4. You follow other's forms and practice
5. You rest and watch

#### Most of the class time:

1. You practice
2. You listen
3. You watch
4. You sit down
5. You talk

#### Personal practice:

1. You work on principles
2. You work on smoothness
3. You work on form
4. You focus on applications
5. You get through the form

*Lowest score is best*