

Xin Qi Shen Dojo

WUJI.COM
8316 8th Ave NW
Seattle, WA 98117

Autumn 2004
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2004 Fall Sessions

Beginning Classes Start October

- **Yang Taiji:** Tues. 6:00-7:00 pm,
Wed. 8:30-9:30 am
Included: Wed. 6-7 pm, Nei Gong Bang
- **Bagua:** Thurs. 6:00-7:00 pm,
Included: Wed. 6-7 pm, Nei Gong Bang

Internal Arts Instructors Training

1st Saturday each month \$10
1-3pm starting October

Continuing Sessions

- Roushou:** Mondays 7:00-9:00
- Yang Taiji Quan:** Tuesdays 6:00-9:00
- Chen Taiji Quan:** Saturdays 8:30-11:00
- Sanshou/Tuishou:** Wednesdays 7:00-9:00
- Bagua Zhang:** Thursdays 6:00-9:00

September Club Fees Increase

The basic club fee will increase to \$80 monthly this September due to the annual rent increase. Each addition session will stay at \$10 monthly.

CORRECTION!

In the last issue I printed the *Eight Methods* by Li Tung Fung and listed him as the founder of Hwa Yu Taiji Quan (Liu He Ba Fa) this is incorrect. Li tung Fung was a disciple of Chen Hsi I who was the founder of Hwa Yu/Liu He Ba Fa.

Sorry,
Andy

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Xie Xie Madam Gao Fu

Since the late 1980's we've had the fortune and privilege to have one of China's living treasures teaching in the Northwest. Now at 88 years of age Madam Gao Fu will be retiring home to Beijing.

I can't emphasis enough how lucky we've been to have someone of her skill, quality, generosity, and spirit accessible to us all. Since her first arrival, Madam Gao Fu has had a tremendous impact and influence on the quality and depth of the practice and teaching of the internal arts in the northwest. I remember her first workshop in Madison Park about 15 years ago. Within 5 minutes she had introduced me to levels of Taiji I'd been blind to. I spent the rest of that year re-teaching the Yang Taiji class section 2 for greater energetic depth and function.

I remember one of her colleagues from China visiting and talking about Gao Fu's reputation. He said, "In China we say the teacher can only take you to the door of the art, you must open the door and enter by yourself. But . . . If you study with Gao Fu, she'll take you to the door and pull you inside whether you like it or not!"

Madam Gao Fu's first visit united the many scattered Taiji schools in the Seattle area. Though we knew of one another, she was the one who broke the ice and enabled us to become friendlier and helpful to each other.

So how can we honor someone so skilled and generous? By reviewing what she's taught us, by polishing and studying the art so that one day she'll see that her visit to the Northwest has sown many high-quality practitioners. So that one day she'll be proud to call us her students.



Shihan Teru Hayashi

As many of you know, growing up I was a dojo rat. Even when there wasn't class I hung around the dojo, practiced and ran errands for sensei and his family.

It was in either 1971 or 1972 that the top Shito

Ryu Karate shihan came to visit from Japan to teach. At the time I was immersed in Aikido training not karate. However, I would watch the karate classes and 'play' with some of the weapons between class. I remember 'playing' with a bo and the chief sensei got so furious that he taught me one of the karate bo katas so I'd do it right.

Anyhow, when Hayashi was visiting I sat and watched him teach, spar, and rest. What struck me was how fluid this

karate person was. During class he looked and taught like the typical karate instructor: locked stances, forceful punches, and stiff movement. However, between classes as he practiced and moved it was nothing like movement I associate with karate.

On one occasion, while he was sparring with two of his young disciples at the same time, he dogged one and swept the other off his feet. The floor was linoleum on top of concrete. He again blocked and countered the first guy, but then spun around just in time to have his foot keep the guy falling from hitting his head on the floor. Instead it hit his foot.

This was the first master I'd seen, and the memory of his movements and actions have been in the back of my mind since. It drove home the idea that our basic training is just that, basic. And as we practice the idea is to grow beyond those structured movements into more natural, fluid movements.

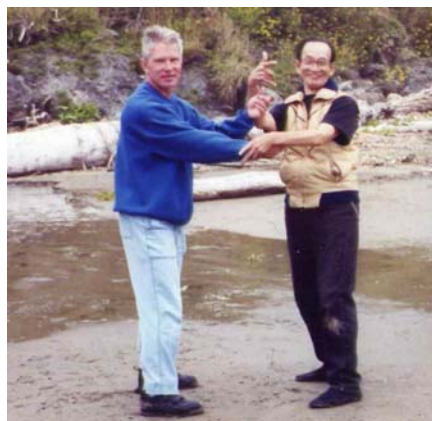
Master Teru Hayashi passed away September 2004. He was in his late 80s. Here's hoping that many of his students and followers will carry on his skills.

QUESTIONS MISCONCEPTIONS

Does past experience count? How often should I practice? I Don't want to practice wrong.

There are several reoccurring questions that pop up fairly often as well as certain misconceptions about practice and the internal arts. Here are my views.

If you read some of the old writing on the internal arts you'll encounter something to the effect that it's harder for an ex-hard stylist to learn the internal arts than a rank beginner. Though it's true that many reactions need to be retrained, let's face it, we all have our laundry and challenges in practice and learning. Though a rank beginner doesn't have some of the strength, habits, stiffness, and ideas of martial arts that an already trained practitioner has, it all comes down to the individual. No one has an easier time than another.



The internal arts focus on coordination, movement, and centering instead of blocking, attacking, and locking into stances, so a beginner doesn't have those ideas and habits to overcome. However, at the same time a trained martial artist knows what it takes, they know how to practice and train. They also tend to have more drive to develop skill than a rank beginner. I think it's equally hard to develop the discipline to practice and train as it is not to use muscle and strength in movements.

We've all heard we need to do 100 repetitions each day, or if we don't

practice morning and night no progress will be made. If you're just starting to learn a form or an art this is true. Daily practice is the only way to get it into muscle memory and out of trying to remember what comes next. However, for those of you who have been at it for over 3 years and have trained intently, it's impossible to fit a practice of everything into one day. Especially if you have a life!

Consider one week a day. Every other day do the qi gong or a particular section of the form. Train the days between, use the evening to merely go through your latest forms. There's lots of combinations you can do. You can fit it all in!

Beginners are usually concerned with practicing wrong! The fact is we never reach perfection, each practice we have is to polish our form and art. Any practice is better than no practice. Once you are familiar with the form and movement it's only then you can begin to correct and polish.

Spiritual Martial Arts

The last time the Shaolin Monks gave a performance in Seattle I kept hearing how athletic they were and about all the feats of strength they performed. Hearing this and seeing clips of the demonstration one thought kept reoccurring to me: Are they real monks? Are they really Buddhists? How much time do they spend in meditation compared to their martial training? Can they recite all the sutras? Do they feed the poor and homeless? Are they good people? Are they centered and secure? Are they religious or spiritual? Are they kind?

Human beings can justify just about anything. Wars are waged to instill peace, violence is pursued to show inner strength and to teach lessons. Spiritual martial artists sound to me like peace-keeper missile, and peaceful occupation. It doesn't make sense, does it?

How realistic is this? How spiritual can something or someone be if it is based upon destruction, suppression, maiming, or killing? Remember the martial arts evolved and were created for either war, fighting, or self-defense. Is learning to fight (i.e. to hurt someone) spiritual? Looking at world religions and their history I guess there is a strong connection between religion and violence. Look at the Crusades and the witch trials, to name two.



First of all I don't see one's spirituality as the same thing as being religious. My definition of spirituality is a very personal thing, a way one carries oneself in the world and how to seek to understand ourselves and our existence. Those I consider spiritual tend to have a positive effect, outlook, and impact on those around them without forcing the issue. They are kind and helpful and an example for me to improve myself. Religion has nothing to do with it.

Aikido is many times called the 'peaceful martial art'. Peaceful, in relation to what? Does a peaceful martial art mean that knowing you're able to defend yourself and injure someone else enable you to be calm and peaceful? Do

spiritual or peaceful only relate to how you feel about yourself?

I see spirituality as an inner contentment few have. A contentment that isn't ruffled or tripped by the outside world. Those I classify as the most dangerous martial artists I know are also the most easy going, generous, and genuinely the nicest people I've ever met. The people who loudly claim to be 'religious' tend to be the opposite. They have quite a bit of anger and seek confrontation, while the top martial artists and fighters I've met end up avoiding conflicts and emphasize getting along. What is the transformation that turns someone who's trained to fight into someone who avoids it at all costs? Having seen the worst are they smart enough to know to avoid those situations?

There is no real answer. But I think it's important to understand what is actually meant by what we say, why we train and our goals.

What a happy spirit, what a strong spirit, how spirited she is.

Xin Qi Shen - mind body spirit (not spiritual.) Spirit is our inner core, our self. As we practice and center, becoming secure in ourselves, we can move from a stronger self.

The Six Combinations

by Li Tung Fung
Hwa Yu Taiji Quan

The Body combines with the mind

The mind combines with the idea

The idea combines with the Qi

The Qi combines with the spirit

The spirit combines with the movements

The movement combines with the air



1. The mind directs the body to move.
2. First you must have an idea and purpose for the movement.
3. As you focus, your intent directs your Qi.
4. Without spirit, Qi has no power. Movements become lively.
5. Stay alert and aware, no slack between your mind, body, and spirit.
6. All parts of your body must feel the air around you. Only when you are capable of moving through the air around you, coordinating all parts of your body, will you achieve a natural state.

Kung Fu time method

Time devoted to a method.

How are you practicing? What do you practice? What goals do you have?

First of all remember that the internal arts were originally martial arts, the goal to protect the village and be safe from attack.

Second, written history states Taiji was originally a series of 13 movements that weren't stung together but used as drills. Similar to Xing Yi Quan and traditional Bagua Zhang. Not many forms or long connected movements, just many repetitions of a few drills. The health aspects came later due to the unique emphasis of these arts on relaxation, smoothness, and total body coordination (instead of using localized strength).

Now-a-days forms are the popular method of teaching and learning these arts. Unfortunately, alone, they are not conducive for developing kung fu (skill) or mastery. Think about it. With all the different movements connected together in various forms it's like doing one or two push-ups, a sit up, a leg raise, a jumping jack etc. Well at that rate the push up, sit up, etc won't amount to any exercise, conditioning, or strength. Only repetitions of push-ups etc. will amount to developing strength. Linking them all together however will develop a greater degree of body unity and complexity of coordination.

All I'm saying is that just practicing forms isn't enough to develop kung fu. Now, at the same time, how long do you practice? How long can you sustain your practice? Master

Pang would say that the level and quality of our Bagua was reflected in our non-stop, non-interrupted practice. This also included from the moment we start our practice having the internal connections in all movements without permitting any slack, physically or energetically, in our movements.

In order to make the arts more popular and accessible short forms and fast-food mentality have permeated the arts. Again think about it. Walking a block isn't as much exercise nor requires as much conditioning as walking a mile. Next, if you walk a mile but sit down and rest every 5 minutes the benefits still are not the same as continuously walking that mile.

As you read the stories of the old masters, even though they were doing long forms they still did many repetitions at one practice. Master Tung Ying Chieh recommended doing at least 3 repetitions of the long form at one sitting. Master Yang Cheng Fu was said to make his advanced students doing about 9 as he observed them. Masters Feng Zhiqiang, Chen Xiao Wang, and other masters we know of high skill today all state they practiced 4 or more repetitions of the forms as they were training in the art and learning.

If you practice for health, relaxation, or just leisure it doesn't matter. But, if you're interested in developing kung fu then get to work. Skill doesn't just happen.

Be as still as a mountain.

Move like a great river

*Taiji 13 Postures Classic
Wu Yu-hsiang*

Walk like the wind.

Stand as if nailed.

*Clearly distinguish each movement.
Bagua song*



Bandon Dojo
be there next year

Nurture Excellence

Too often we're quick to criticize bad work or service and remain silent when things are done well. Take a moment to acknowledge and show appreciation for good work, helpfulness, or even just an attempt to do things correctly.

Xin Qi Shen Dojo

Club Library in Jeopardy

More and more videos and books missing, are they at your place? The club library is slowly diminishing. I believe this is mostly due to those taking videos and books home then forgetting you have them. The old check-out system has been changed to make it easier to spot who has what. Now, when you check out an item, put the information (date, your name, item) up on the dry board. Check out is for two weeks. When returning the item erase your name. Fortunately, I have copies of some irreplaceable dojo videos but there's enough to do aside from seeing what's missing and making more copies. Some valuable tapes are gone permanently. Also, please be sure to return the tapes in the original box since there are ID labels on the end of the boxes.

PLEASE:

- Check out for maximum of two weeks.
- Return the item to the same place or same order if it's numbered.
- Rewind tapes!
- Don't be greedy, don't take more than 3.
- Report damaged tapes to me.

DOJO STUFF

DVDs available:

- Chen Taiji Quan
- Bagua Palm Changes
- Bagua Weapons
- Bagua 64 Palms

To come: Yang Taiji Quan, Bagua Wu Xing, Partner Weaponry, Roushou.

CLUB INFORMATION: do I have your current email, phone, and address?

MADAME GAO FU WORKSHOP for dojo members only October 16th, 9-11am, \$20

PARKING next to a driveway across the street may get you towed, even if you're a foot away. The residence have cars towed at the drop of a hat.



Discipline and Etiquette

When in class can you follow? Can you surf the leader's movement and form? Are you paying attention and staying alert?

No that classes have moved inside it's even more important to be mindful, respectful, and courteous.

Since the dojo is small it's important that we move like a school of fish. Part of our discipline is to listen, not just in push hands but to the energy and movement of the group. This is part of training and developing alertness, distancing, and awareness. On the one hand it's important when doing forms to focus internally on our inner connections, another part of your practice is listening to your surroundings. In applications part of our training is to join and match our partner's punch and movement, this actually begins in our solo form training as we practice as a group. Adapting to the leader's rhythm of the forms.

On another level show respect to whoever is leading, don't go off on your own. One of my joys in the last few years was following Master Tchoung's form. As he was leading, I could feel a wave of energy from his movements, even when I wasn't looking. Instead of doing 'my' form, I followed the flow of his energy which gave me a different insight into the form practice.

Also, keep in mind that sound travels. If you're talking on a cell phone outside the dojo door we can hear you!

If you'll be missing a class there's no need to call. The only exception to this is the Wednesday morning session since enrollment is small, or if you're taking a private lesson.

REMINDERS:

- No personal conversation during class time.
- Be alert, aware, and courteous.
- If feeling ill or sore during partner work, let your partner know.
- Don't overdo.
- Please pay on time.
- Sign up for workshops.