



CALIFORNIA KUNG FU & TAI CHI INSTITUTE

Volume 2 Number 1 February, 2008

NEWSLETTER

SCHOOL NEWS



SAVE THE DATE!!!!

**World Tai Chi and Qigong Day
April 26, 2008
10:00 AM**

Come celebrate the 10th annual World Tai Chi and Qigong Day with us. World Tai Chi and Qigong Day (WTCQD) is an annual event held the last Saturday of April each year to promote the related disciplines of Tai Chi and Qigong.

The event begins in the earliest time zone of New Zealand at 10 AM, and then participants across Oceania, Asia, Africa, Europe, North America, and South America take part, with celebrations in sixty nations and several hundred cities, ending with the final events in the last time zone in Hawaii almost a day later.

Bring your family and friends. We will have a special Tai Chi and Qigong class that day....and some surprises!!!! Watch the bulletin board for more information.

KUNG FU

What is Wushu?



Wushu is an important part of the cultural heritage of China. It is said that the term Wushu first appeared in a Southern Song Dynasty poem by Yán Yánzhī (384-456 BCE). Originally, Wushu was a method used for defense and survival. Today it reigns as the most popular sport in China, practiced by young and old alike. *Wu* translates as martial; *Shu* translates as art. Wushu then is the term used for Martial Arts. The meaning behind Wushu encompasses all aspects of the art of fighting. It is formally defined as a traditional Chinese sport in which attention is paid to both the internal and external exercise. The internal aspect of Wushu contributes to its health-keeping effects while the external aspect underlines its combative value. The two combine to form the characteristic features of Chinese Wushu. To be a true Wushu practitioner, one must be able to maintain a balance between the internal and external aspects.

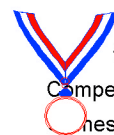
Wushu routines may be performed solo, paired or in groups, either bare-handed or armed with traditional Chinese weaponry.

the term Kung Fu to refer to Chinese Martial Arts. This is due in part to the fact that Instructors who immigrated to the West in the last century were from the southern part of China. In this region of China, Chinese Martial Arts were referred to as Kung Fu, rather than Wushu.

In the last 30 years, Wushu in Mainland China has been formalized and modernized so that there is now a universal standard for training and competing.

The International Wushu Federation (IWUF) was established on October 3, 1990 in Beijing, China. The IWUF is an official member of the International Olympic Committee. Presently, the IWUF has 114 member federations from 5 continents.

Also in 1990, Wushu was inducted as an official medal event in the Asian Games. Since then World Championships have taken place with 56 participating nations.



This year, Wushu will be showcased at the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games Wushu Competition that coincides with the Olympic Games in August.

In the West, people are more familiar with using

TAI CHI

What is Tai Chi?

Tai chi is a centuries-old Chinese martial art that descends from Qigong and has its roots in Traditional Chinese Medicine. According to some records, Tai Chi dates back as far as 2,500 years. The practice of Tai Chi involves a series of slow, meditative body movements that were originally designed for self-defense and to promote inner peace and calm. Most modern styles of Tai Chi trace their development to at least one of the five traditional schools: Chen, Yang, Wu/Hao, Wu and Sun.

Some refer to Tai Chi as a form of moving meditation as focusing the mind solely on the movements of the form helps to bring about a state of mental calm and clarity. Tai Chi practitioners learn a number of movement poses. These poses work on steady, healthy breathing, supple posture, and a smooth movement of the body's joints. As with Qigong, each pose has a beneficial effect on a certain organ or organs in the body. For instance:



Snake Creeps Down
benefits the large intestine and

kidneys.



Brusk Knee benefits the heart and
lower digestive tract and helps with
stomach disorders.



Apparent Close Up helps prevent
gastric problems.



Roll Back benefits the large intestine.

The practice of Tai Chi teaches us to remain centered and learn to move with the world – both in a literal, physical sense in terms of martial self-defense, and in a more abstract, meditative sense. The core of Tai Chi could be described as learning to remain balanced and react appropriately to whatever we encounter. This is one reason many find Tai Chi such a valuable discipline. Practitioners of Tai Chi usually find that within a relatively short period of time, they are better equipped to handle stressful situations, and find themselves less prone to being caught off balance either physically or mentally.

气功 QIGONG

What is Qigong?

The documented history of Qigong dates back approximately 2,500 years. However, Chinese archaeologists and historians have found references to Qigong techniques at least five thousand years old.

Qigong (or Chi Kung), one of the pillars of Traditional Chinese Medicine, is a powerful system of healing and energy medicine. It is the practice of using breathing techniques, gentle movement, self-massage and relaxation/meditation to cleanse, strengthen, and circulate the vital energy flow (Qi) in the body. In Traditional Chinese Medicine, good health is the result of Qi circulating freely throughout the body.

Qigong practices can be classified as martial, medical, or spiritual. All styles have three things in common: proper alignment, proper breathing, and proper mental focus

or intention. Some practices increase the

Qi; others circulate it, use it to cleanse and heal the body, store it, or emit Qi to help heal others. During all Qigong forms, the breathing and movement exercises help the practitioner tap into the healing and restorative energies of the universe.

The slow gentle movements of most Qigong forms can be easily adapted, even for the physically challenged or infirmed and can be practiced by all age groups.

The practice of Qigong helps reduce stress, increase vitality and enhance the immune system. Qigong has also been found to improve cardiovascular, respiratory, circulatory, lymphatic and digestive functions. Those who maintain a consistent practice of Qigong find that it helps them regain a youthful vitality, maintain health even in old age and speed recovery from illness.



One of the more long term effects of Qigong practice is that it re-establishes the mind-body-spirit connection.

When these three aspects of our being are intergrated, we create harmony within ourselves and in the world around us.

**Life is connected to energy,
essence is connected to spirit.
Plunge the spirit into the mind,
gather energy into the body. The
Tao is therein.**

The Book of Balance and Harmony
Thomas Cleary Translation