



CALIFORNIA KUNG FU & TAI CHI INSTITUTE

Volume 1 Number 1 November, 2007

NEWSLETTER

SCHOOL NEWS



SAVE THE DATE!!!!

On December 16th, we will have belt testing, special performances, our annual holiday pot luck and much more. Watch the bulletin board for further details and news of our end of the year sale.

OUR DIRECTOR

Tai Chi and Martial Arts Master Zhi Zhuo Li, Director of California Kung Fu and Tai Chi Institute, has taught Tai Chi and Kung Fu in China, Australia and the United States for the last 20 years. Master Li is a renowned athlete, judge, coach and scholar of Chinese Martial Arts. Master Li's teachings promote physical and spiritual growth in his students by way of both external and internal martial arts styles. To that end, his goal is to increase his students' understanding of the value of Chinese Martial Arts and Healing Arts and further their learning of Chinese tradition and culture.

KUNG FU



MARTIAL ARTS ETHICS

The concept of ethics or virtues is an integral part of Chinese history and tradition. The Tao Te Ching refers to virtue: *The Way gives birth, virtue nurtures, things form, momentum completes* (Thomas Cleary).

The study of Chinese martial arts is composed of both the practice of martial skills and the observance of martial ethics or virtues. Martial ethics, referred to as Wu De, are based upon the virtues of :

仁

Ren - Kindness

义

Yi - Justice

勇

Yong - Courage

信

Xin - Honesty

忠

Zhong - Loyalty

..... who practice martial arts respect these virtues and use them as a guide to always do what is instinctively right and follow the natural way.

MARTIAL ARTS GREETING

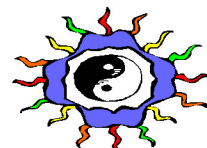
The martial arts greeting of the bow with specific hand formation is called Baoquan Li. Baoquan Li is an ancient greeting ritual that expresses good manners, respect and humility.

The hand formation contains great symbolism. The closed right fist signifies martial arts traditions, training and the development of ourselves through this training. The four fingers held close together on the right fist represent everyone in the martial arts world as being equal. The thumb on the right fist represents us as individuals; it is bent slightly to show our humility and humanity.

The open left palm symbolizes martial arts virtue and our responsibility to uphold and adhere to Wu De, martial ethics.

The left hand covering the right fist expresses that the principles of martial arts are rooted in theory, philosophy and virtue. The techniques of combat are governed by the principles of civility, peace and etiquette.

The hands meeting show that we, as true martial artists, use both our intellect and physical abilities to refine and develop ourselves and live in accord with our true nature.



More and more, the Western world is recognizing the benefits of practicing Tai Chi and Qigong. Developed in ancient Chinese monasteries, hospitals and imperial courts, Tai Chi and Qigong are profound yet simple methods for increasing vitality and longevity and maintaining optimal health and inner peace.

TAI CHI



*Tai Chi combines slow movements, breathing practice and mental concentration to enhance the energy flow in the body. Tai Chi benefits both the mind and the body. It helps to prevent disease as well as accelerate the healing of illness. Additionally, Tai Chi also helps to reduce the negative effects of aging. The following article about Tai Chi was excerpted from **Time** magazine, July 31, 2002.*

WHY TAI CHI IS THE PERFECT EXERCISE

It's easy to tell people to make exercise part of their daily routine. It's not so easy to tell them what to do. Some folks like to run marathons or climb mountains. But if you would rather care for your body without risking life or limb or increasingly creaky joints, you might consider Tai Chi Chuan, the ancient martial art that looks like a cross between shadow boxing and slow-motion ballet. Tai Chi combines intense mental focus with deliberate, graceful movements that improve strength, agility and - particularly important for the elderly - balance.

Practitioners praise Tai Chi's spiritual and psychological benefits, but what has attracted the attention of Western scientists lately is what Tai Chi does for the body. In many ways, researchers are just catching up to what tens of millions of people in China and Chinatowns around the rest of the world already know about Tai Chi. Scientists at the Oregon Research Institute in Eugene reported last week that Tai Chi offers the greatest benefit to older men and women who are healthy but relatively inactive.

Previous studies have shown that Tai Chi practiced regularly helps reduce falls among healthy seniors. The next step, from a scientific point of view, is to determine whether Tai Chi can help those who are already frail.

There are several styles of Tai Chi, but most of them start with a series of controlled movements, or forms, with names like Grasping the Sparrow's Tail and Repulse the Monkey. Either way, the goal is to move at your own pace. As Tai Chi master Martin Lee of the Tai Chi Cultural Center in Los Altos, Calif., puts it, "Pain is no gain."

It can take a few months for the effects to kick in, but when they do they can act as a gateway to a new lifestyle. "Once people start feeling better, they often become more active in their daily life," says Dr. Karim Khan, a family-practice and sports physician at the University of British Columbia. Any form of exercise, of course, can do only so much. "For older individuals, Tai Chi will not be the endall," says William Haskell, an expert in chronic-disease prevention at Stanford University. "But Tai Chi plus walking would be a very good mixture." Younger people probably need more of an aerobic challenge, but they can benefit from Tai Chi's capacity to reduce stress.

The best thing about Tai Chi is that people enjoy it, so they are more likely to stick with it long enough to get some benefit. It helps when something that's good for you is also fun.



QIGONG

Qigong is the oldest energy healing exercise. Qigong is a system of healing and energy practices that uses breathing techniques, gentle movement, self-massage and meditation to cleanse, strengthen and circulate the life energy (Qi) in the body.

Breath is life. The following breath practice

is part of a Qigong method called Marrow Washing in which energy (Qi) is gathered and then stored in the marrow of the bones. Ancient Chinese intuition was quite accurate in sensing that vitality was stored in the marrow. In fact, all red and white blood cells and almost all immune cells are born in the marrow.

QIGONG'S GATHERING BREATH PRACTICE

Many people find Gathering Breath a calming practice. It is a form of meditation that allows for some gentle movement, which often makes it easier to relax. Frequently, people who have a difficult time meditating find it easier if some mild movement is involved. The arm movement helps to open up the rib cage allowing you to take fuller, deeper breaths.



Allow yourself to relax deeply during this practice.

Sitting down, with your hands starting in your lap (or standing, with your hands at your sides), begin to inhale and move your hands outward and upward in a scooping motion. When your hands are slightly above and in front of you, the inhalation should be complete.

Bring your hands, side by side, palms facing you, toward your head. Then move them slowly down in front of your face, in front of your chest, in front of your abdomen, while exhaling. When your hands reach the navel area, linger for a moment and then repeat.

While you are practicing this movement, visualize gathering the healing resources from all around and sending them to the bone marrow to keep it pure and preserve its functions.

To maintain health, do 5-10 times a day. To enhance health, do 10-15 times a day.