



THE TAI CHI CLASSICS

TAI CHI CHUAN CHING BY CHANG SAN-FENG

Once in motion, every part of the body is light and agile and must be threaded together. Qi should be full and stimulated. Your spirit should be retained internally. No part should be defective, no part should be deficient or excessive, no part should be disconnected. The root is at the feet; movement is generated from the legs, controlled by the waist and expressed by the fingers. From the feet to the legs to the waist, all must be integrated and one unified qi. When moving forward or backward, you can then catch the opportunity and gain the superior position. If you fail to gain the superior position, your mind will be scattered and your body disordered. To solve this problem, you must look to the waist and legs. Up and down, forward and backward, left and right, it's all the same. All of this is done with your mind, not externally. If there is a top, there is a bottom; if there is a front, there is a back; if there is a left, there is a right. If your mind wants to go upward, this implies considering downward. This means if you want to lift and defeat an opponent, you must first consider his root. When the opponent's root is broken, he will be easily defeated. Substantial and insubstantial must be clearly distinguished. Every part of the body has a substantial and an insubstantial aspect. The entire body and all the joints should be threaded together without the slightest break. Tai Chi Chuan is like a long river and a large ocean, rolling ceaselessly. Originally there are 13 movements which are based on the 8 Trigrams and 5 Elements. The 8 Trigrams are manifested as 8 hand techniques represented by Wardoff, Rollback, Press, Push, Pluck, Split, Elbow, and Shoulder. Wardoff, Rollback, Press, and Push are the 4 primary hand techniques. Pluck, Split, Elbow, and Shoulder are the 4 secondary hand techniques. The 5 Elements are manifested as five directions for footwork represented by Forward, Backward, Left, Right, and Centre. These are the original 13 movements of Tai Chi Chuan.

TAI CHI CHUAN LUN BY WANG ZONG-YU

Taiji is born from wuji. It is the mother of Yin Yang. In motion yin and yang divide. In stillness they return to wuji. No excess, no deficiency. Following the opponent, bend, then extend. When the opponent is hard, I am soft; this is called yielding. When I follow the opponent, this is called sticking. When the opponent moves fast, I move fast. When the opponent moves slowly, then I follow slowly. Although the variations are infinite, the principle remains the same. After you have mastered the techniques of adhering and following, sticking and connecting, make them skillful enough to apply in pushing hands. Then you can begin to understand the opponent's energy and interpret his intentions. However, without a great deal of study over a long period time, you cannot suddenly grasp this intuitive understanding of your opponent. An insubstantial energy leads the head upward. The qi is sunk to the dan tian. No tilting, no leaning. Suddenly disappear, suddenly appear. When there is pressure on the left, the left becomes insubstantial. When there is pressure on the right, the right becomes insubstantial. Looking upward, it seems to get higher and higher. Looking downward, it seems to get deeper and deeper. When the opponent advances, it seems longer and longer. When the opponent retreats, it becomes more and more urgent. A feather cannot be added and a fly cannot land. The opponent does not know me, but I know the opponent. A hero has no equal because of all of this. There are many martial art style each emphasizing their own principles and techniques. However, they are nothing more than the strong beating the weak, the slow yielding to the fast. The one with power beats the one without power, the slow hands yield to the fast hands. All this is natural-born ability. It is not related to the power that has to be learned. Consider the saying: "Four ounces repel a thousand pounds." It is apparent that this cannot be accomplished by strength. Look, if an eighty-year-old man can still defend himself against multiple opponents, it cannot be a matter of speed. Stand like a balanced scale, move lively like a cartwheel. When the opponent presses sideward or downward, then follow. When there is double heaviness or mutual resistance then there is stagnation. Often after several years of dedicated training,

one still cannot apply this neutralization and is controlled by the opponent. The reason for this is that the fault of double heaviness is not understood. To avoid this fault you must know yin and yang. To adhere means to yield. To yield means to adhere. Yin is not separate from yang. Yang is not separate from yin. Understanding that yin and yang mutually cooperate leads to intuitive wisdom. After intuitive wisdom, the more practice, the more refinement. Silently learn, then ponder; gradually you will approach your heart's desire. Fundamentally, give up yourself and follow the opponent. Many misunderstand and give up the near for the far. This means a slight error at the start of your training will have greater and greater consequences as time goes on. The learner, therefore, must discriminate precisely. Every sentence recorded here is extremely important. Not a single word has been added carelessly or for decoration. Without a high degree of wisdom and effort, you won't be able to understand. The past teachers were not willing to teach indiscriminately, not just because of the difficulty of choosing people, but also because they were afraid of wasting their time and energy.

EXPOSITION OF INSIGHTS INTO THE THIRTEEN POSTURES BY WU YUXIAN

Use the heart mind to transport the qi. The wisdom mind must be steady and calm, then the qi can condense deep into the bones. Circulate the qi throughout the body. It must be smooth and fluid, then it can easily follow the mind. If the spirit of vitality can be raised, then there is no delay or clumsiness. This means the head is suspended. Wisdom mind and qi must exchange skilfully, then you have gained the marvellous trick of roundness and aliveness. This means the substantial and the insubstantial can vary and exchange. When emitting energy, be calm and relaxed, concentrated in one direction. When standing, the body must be centered, calm and comfortable, so you can easily manifest the eight directions. When transporting qi as though through a pearl with a "nine-curved hole," even the tiniest place will be reached. When using emitting energy, it is just like steel refined one hundred times, you can destroy all strong opponents. The appearance of your attack is like an eagle catching a rabbit. The spirit is like a cat catching a mouse. Be calm like a mountain. Move like a river. Accumulate energy like drawing a bow, and emit like shooting an arrow. Find the straight in the curved; accumulate, then emit. Power is emitted from the spine; steps change following the body. To collect is to release; to release is to collect; broken, then reconnected. Back and forth with the opponent must have folding and mutual entwining. Advancing and withdrawing must have rotation and variation. Your fist is extremely soft, then extremely hard. If you can breathe correctly then you can be agile and alive. Cultivate qi naturally without harming yourself, and energy can be coiled and accumulated, and there will still be surplus. The heart mind is the order, the qi is the message flag, and the waist is the banner. First look to expanding, then look to compacting, then you approach perfection. It is also said: If the opponent does not move, I do not move. If the opponent moves slightly, I move first. Appear relaxed, but not relaxed. Seem extended, but not extended. Even if your martial energy is broken, never let your mind be broken. Remember, the heart mind creates the intention, the wisdom mind regulates the process, the body manifests the action. The abdomen is relaxed and sunken so the qi condenses into the bones. The spirit is comfortable and the body is calm. When one part moves, every part moves; one part still, every part still. The wisdom mind leads the qi flowing back and forth, adhering to the back, then condensing into the spine. Strengthen the spirit of vitality internally, and express externally, peacefully and easily like a cat walking. The qi is like a cartwheel, the waist is like an axle. Applying energy is like drawing silk from a cocoon. Throughout your entire body, your mind is on the spirit of vitality, not on the qi. If concentrated on the qi, then stagnation will occur. A person who concentrates on qi has no strength. A person who cultivates qi through the spirit of vitality develops pure power.

SONG OF PUSHING HANDS BY UNKOWN AUTHOR

Be conscientious about Wardoff, Rollback, Press, and Push. They contain the 4 basic strategies of Tai Chi Chuan. They are sign posts to a deeper comprehension of the fundamental energies of the universe. When practicing, adhere lightly to each other, following the motion back and forth, up and down. When you attack high, you are vulnerable and must cover low. When the opponent attacks high, counterattack low. This will make it difficult for the opponent to get in and defeat you. Tai Chi Chuan is based on the principle of using four ounces to deflect one thousand pounds. This means using the power of your mind not brute force. When a punch is coming at you with great force, adhere lightly to it, and lead it slightly off its course and away from you. When an opponent attacks with great force, lead his attack away from you. Your opponent expects his attack to meet resistance. If instead you lead and deflect his attack past you, he will lose balance in the direction of his motion. This is the time to attack. Adhere and connect means to attach a hand to him, and to become one with his motion, wherever he moves. Stick and follow means to stay in contact and not let him get away.

SONG OF THE THIRTEEN POSTURES BY UNKOWN AUTHOR

The original thirteen movements are the foundation of Tai Chi Chuan and must not be treated lightly. The meaning of life originates at the waist because qi is generated and stored in the dan tian. When alternating back and forth from emptiness and solidness be mindful and mentally focused. Take care that the qi is flowing freely, without any sluggishness, throughout the body. When you vary and exchange insubstantial and substantial you must take care that qi circulates in the entire body

without the slightest stagnation. In movement there is stillness. In stillness there is movement. Vary your response to your opponent and show the marvellous techniques of Tai Chi Chuan. Deliberately consider the intention and purpose of each movement. Then it will be possible to obtain effortless skill. Always keep the heart mind centered at the waist. With the abdomen calmly relaxed, the qi stored there can rise without hindrance. Keep the tailbone centrally aligned and straight so the spirit of vitality penetrates up to the crown of the head. Then, with the head feeling as if suspended from above, the entire body will be light and agile. Carefully and attentively study the techniques deep into their roots. Then bending and stretching, opening and closing, will be done freely with spontaneous skill. To enter the door and be led along the way, one needs oral instruction. Practice without ceasing, the way is through self-study. The standard rule of Tai Chi Chuan is that your wisdom mind joined with qi is the masters, your body is the servant. The ultimate meaning of Tai Chi Chuan is to live and long healthy life and achieve enlightenment. This song has one hundred and forty words, every word is real and true, no meaning is left behind. If you do not follow the words of this song, your time and energy are wasted in vain, and you will sigh in regret.