



The Newsletter of the
Twin Cities T'ai-Chi Ch'uan
Studio
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Wu-Dang

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www.tctaichi.com
 email: tctaichi@minn.net

Complimentary for studio members.
 \$6.00 subscription for others.
 Please send requests to address at left.

Red Cross Seminar

Saturday, October 1, 6-10:00 p.m.

American Red Cross Adult CPR Course

Everyone should know what to do in an emergency. You should know who to call and what care to provide. Learn all the skills of adult CPR needed to save the life of an adult victim of sudden cardiac arrest. In this course you will learn: Rescue Breathing, CPR, First Aid for choking, use of a breathing barrier and disposable gloves, recognizing signals of heart attack. Each participant will receive a certification for Adult CPR from the Red Cross. **We need sign ups by September 20. Cost is \$50 per participant.**

New Fee Schedule

As of September 1, 2005 our membership fees increased by \$5 per person per month. Since our inception in 1993 we raised the fees only twice, in 1996 and 2001. This is not being done because of financial crises; instead it is a natural and healthy cost-of-living increase.

| | Full Membership | Age 65+ or Once-Per-Week Membership |
|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| Single Members | \$70 | \$50 |
| Household of 2 | \$115 | \$85 |
| Household of 3 | \$155 | \$110 |
| Jr/Sr High Students | \$25 | |

NOTE: In our last newsletter we mistakenly listed 55+ as the age for discounted dues, the correct age is 65+. Sorry for any inconvenience or confusion.

7:30 & 8:30 Classes—Take Note!

Remember that the landlord is locking the building at 7:40pm. Plan your evening accordingly. You may come before 7:40 and quietly practice or wait for your class.

New Schedule

T'ai-Chi Ch'uan Curriculum Clarification

Starting September 15, 2005, we will divide the Solo Form classes into two levels of experience. We will also institute prerequisites and proficiency requirements to attend the advanced classes.

Solo Form Classes

If you finished the Solo Form before June 15, 2005 (see newsletter if you are unsure) your classes are the **Refinement** classes **Monday** and **Thursday 6:00 p.m.** You may also begin or continue attending the Weapons class and/or the Pushing-Hands class.

If you finished the Solo Form after June 15, 2005 or have not yet completed the Solo Form, your Solo Form classes are the **Instruction** classes **Wednesday 6:00 p.m.** and **Saturday 12:30 p.m.** You must complete the Solo Form and Auxiliary Lessons and have one of the instructors check your proficiency before going on to more advanced classes.

The **Monday and Thursday Solo Form classes 12:30-2:30** remain open for all levels. The **San-Shou** class on Tuesday 7:30 p.m. now requires completion of the Pushing-Hands class.

Disciples, Board Members and designated Helpers may attend any and all Solo Form classes. Beginners may attend the two Instruction classes and the Day classes. Everyone else may attend the two Refinement classes and the Day classes.

Other Styles Curriculum Clarification

Hsing-Yi Ch'uan may be started when Level I: 5 Elements is offered.

Pa-Kua Chang may be started when Level I: Basics is offered.

Praying Mantis may be started when Level I is offered.

Eclectis is open to interested students who have permission from the instructor and are currently studying T'ai-Chi at the

studio. It is required to watch one class before actively participating.

Liu Ho Pa Fa 12 Animals is open to all interested students at the time of a schedule change (9/15, 1/15, 6/15). Students can begin at other times with instructor's permission.

Liu Ho Pa Fa Mother & Sons form is open to interested students who have completed the 12 animals and have permission from the instructor.

These styles will be taught from beginner to advanced and this is how they must be learned. From time to time a specialty class will be offered in the schedule and the newsletter will inform you about eligibility. As always, if you have any questions, ask Ray, Paul or Kim if you need more clarification.

Praying Mantis Curriculum

Level I: Blocking, Grabbing, Trapping

1. 10 Warm-ups
2. 8 Stances
3. 3-Star Conditioning
4. 7 Blocks
5. Ch'i-Shou
6. 3 Eye Drills
7. 4 Leg Blocks
8. 3 Blocking Drills
9. 6 Hands
10. Grabbing & Trapping Drills
11. 10 Elbows
12. Sup Ba Sao
13. Basic Staff & 2-Person Staff
14. 12 Key Words & Drills
15. Sabre

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Level II: Sticking, Ch'in-Na, Knock-downs

1. Spring & Bridge Hands
2. 6 Basic Sticking Hands
3. Single-hand Sticking
4. 5- & 9-Star Sticking Hands
5. Walking 3-Star Sticking Hands
6. Jai-Yao
7. 10 Ch'in-Na Techniques
8. 2-Person Ch'in-Na San-Shou
9. Beng-Bo & 2-Person Beng-Bo
10. 10 Knock-downs
11. Spear

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Level III: Intercepting, Sparring, Dim-Mak

1. 6 Intercepting Drills
2. 3 Basic Kicks
3. 8 Lama Long Fists
4. Bok Yuen Tow Toe
5. Kick Defenses
6. Basic Self-Defense & Escapes
7. Focus Mitts & Bag Routines
8. Sparring Concepts & Drills
9. Siu Gar Sek
10. Basic Iron Palm
11. Green Dragon Staff
12. Vital Points
13. Tamo Sword
14. San-Tsai Sword Fencing
15. Chase-Hands

Pa-Kua Chang Curriculum

Level I: Basics

1. Standing
2. Waist Strengthening
3. 2 Basic Hands
4. Medicine Ball, Sand Ball, Beanbag
5. Circle Walk
6. Hook Step & Swing Step
7. Palm Strikes
8. Low Kicks
9. Single Palm Change
10. Bridge Hands
11. Trapping
12. Double Palm Change
13. Ch'in-Na Joint Locking Techniques
14. Blocks & Defenses
15. 8 Inner Palms
16. 4 Basic Sticking Hands
17. Master Choi's Weight Routine
18. Master Chan's Forearm Conditioning

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Level II: 64 Palms

1. Original 64 Palms
2. Yao San Sam Sao
3. Pa-Kua Deer Horn Knives

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Level III: Swimming Dragon

1. Swimming Dragon Form
2. Chase Hands

Hsing-Yi Chuan Curriculum

Level I: 5 Elements

1. Sam T'ai-Sek
2. 5 Fists
3. 5 Element Sensitivity
4. 5 Element Change Form
5. 5 Element Cover Form
6. 5 Element Linking Form
7. Dragon & Tiger, Phoenix, Leopard, Bear
8. 2-Handed Sabre

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Level II: 12 Animals

1. 8 Brocades
2. 12 Animals
3. 8 Styles
4. Basic Sparring Drills
5. Spear

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Level III: Research

1. Advanced Sam T'ai-Sek
2. 12 Animals Linking Form
3. Chase Hands Sensitivity
4. 7 Pearls Strung Together
5. Classics & Research

Specialty Classes

- Taoist Meditation
- Strength & Flexibility
- Yi-Ch'uan
- Choi Style T'ai-Chi Ch'uan
- 37 Posture Short Form

The Last Two Weekends with Master Choi

By Sifu Ray Hayward

Thanksgiving weekend, 2004 was the tenth Thanksgiving weekend of eleven consecutive years I spent studying with Master Wai-Lun Choi at his school in Chicago. The weather was dark and dreary when Paul Abdella and I arrived at Master Choi's studio in the Lincoln Park area of Chicago, foreshadowing the weekend ahead. We were greeted at the door by a smiling Master Choi, but we could see he was sick and not feeling good. After the usual pleasantries and greetings, Master Choi told us his health was failing and that he couldn't eat anything because he was developing allergies to everything. This set the mood for a melancholy and depressing weekend. We knew retirement was coming soon for Master Choi, but this decline in health made him decide to retire in the spring. This weekend was turning out to be the conclusion of many lessons and paths. Paul finished the Main Form of Liu Ho Pa Fa which he started seven years earlier. I finished Master Choi's T'ai-Chi Form. And Master Choi was finishing over thirty years of public teaching. The end of an era had come.

Wanting to capture and catalogue as much as I could, I asked Master Choi if I could take photos of both levels of his studio. He looked at me and said, "You do what you want. Consider this your school." Used to many hours of classes, we were sad to have Master Choi stop to rest after only an hour or so. Because of his stomach problems, we didn't get to take him to our favorite Chinese restaurant for a meal.

In spite of poor health, Master Choi gave us some great lessons. Concerning meditation he said a simple meditation technique is, "Don't forget—don't focus." He quoted a Classic that says, "Outside calm, but there is something inside." He told us that "something" is your meditation technique. He reminded us that, "The Classics are the headlines. You still need face-to-face time with the teacher to learn how to do it—to get the story."

Looking back on thirty years of teaching for a living, Master Choi gave us insights into two negative experiences he had with students over the years. He told us about the Chinese phrase "*Mo Dai, Mo Sai*." *Mo Dai* means "No High." *Mo Sai* means "No Low." Master Choi lamented the lack of respect shown to teachers by students and the need for students to be friends, or on the same level, as the teacher. He said this makes it hard to teach and to learn. He also quoted the founder of Yi-Ch'uan, Master Wong Hong-Chai, "Smart people have no patience (to learn Martial Arts), dumb people can't get it, so both quit," and said he has now had this experience.

In the midst of this gloomy weekend, I was taught the liberating essence of the Spear, a weapon I have been studying and practicing for over twenty-five years. Master Choi also said, "Ask for whatever you want." I had nothing to lose so I asked for his teacher, Master Chan Yik-Yan's secret Bruise Juice formula (Dit Da Jow), which he brought the next day. He also said one of the funniest things I had heard from him. He was talking about meeting a Northern Chinese person (Master Choi is from the south), he said, "They speak Mandarin, I speak Cantonese. It was like a chicken talking with a duck." As we

were preparing to leave, Master Choi must have seen our sadness, because he said, "Remember, a tiger is still a tiger even if he's hurt."

Master Choi set May 1, 2005 as his retirement. He had some equipment for us so we decided to travel to Chicago in April to pick up the equipment and to take a few last private classes. As we walked up to the door and entered Master Choi's studio, we were surprised to find him watching a boxing match on TV and dancing around on his toes shadow-boxing like a spry 20-year old!! Greeting us with a big smile and hearty handshakes, the transformation from our last visit was miraculous. Here before us was the Grandmaster we know, energetic, happy, powerful, and lively. I was shocked and had to ask him what he was doing over the past five months. He said he had been "continuously practicing standing meditation to improve my health." I felt Master Choi was more peaceful, energetic and happier than I had ever seen him. We trained with him for hours on end until we had to ask to stop to get something to eat. We once again went to Chinatown for a meal and good conversation.

This weekend was full of light, in contrast to the darkness of Thanksgiving weekend. Master Choi pulled out all the stops and gave us lessons from his more than thirty years of teaching. He gave us lessons on self-defense, kick attacks and defenses, throws and ch'in-na. At one point he threw me so fast and hard, that when I got up from the mat I was dizzy. About the ch'in-na, or joint-locks, he gave this wonderful insight, "When you use the ch'in-na techniques, you have to look ahead like playing Chess, this move goes to this move, etc. Give the opponent no time to fight back. Plan two moves ahead, just like a play in Chess. There are many ideas, that's why you have to learn all the methods and techniques, then you have to apply them for different situations. The basic idea is you control the person to slow them down."

He gave us the essence of the Lama-style and of Thai kick-boxing, "Lama is like fighting a crab. If you get rid of the claws: no problem. Lama tries to hit and hurt the opponent's hands and legs." And, "Thai kick-boxing has the hands block the hands and the legs block the legs. That's a good idea, but even a leg block can get broken." Master Choi also told us the official name of the "Embrace the Moon" standing posture is Wan Yuen Chong—"Combined System Post." He also gave us advice on training with the heavy punching bag, "If you think the bag is heavy, you will tense up. Internal styles should punch cotton."

I asked Master Choi what he planned for the future. He told us he wants to research the highest level of meditation. He reminded us that "the highest level is about using meditation to get the Internal Power out. Body Power (Lik) is not power. 9 joints united plus the mind is power (Ging)." He also wants to produce instructional DVDs, write explanations about the Classics, and teach a few students privately. As we were leaving a most profound weekend I told Master Choi that I left Thanksgiving weekend feeling sad for him, but this time I feel sad for myself.

Master Choi smiled and said, "No party lasts forever."

T'ai-Chi Ch'uan and Bone Health

by Sifu Paul Abdella

"The chi should be stimulated." This stimulation of the chi can be compared to the small waves which form on a lake when the wind blows them to and fro in a system of troughs and crests. When the chi is stimulated in this way, it produces heat. Gradually this heat increases and penetrates the bones and becomes marrow.

-Master T.T. Liang

There is much written in the news and health journals about Osteoporosis these days. Most of the literature tends to promote the benefits of weight bearing exercise, calcium supplementation and drug therapy to increase the density or hardness of the bones. Although these are important elements in counteracting the loss of bone strength there is little discussion on the importance of stimulating the nervous system through breath work and low impact body-mind disciplines such as Qigong, Tai-Chi and Yoga and their relationship to bone health. The following is a short article written by Dr. Philip Incao that originally appeared in Lilipoh magazine (Spring 2005) suggesting there may be more to the story than the news headlines seem to indicate.

Bone Health and Osteoporosis

By Philip Incao, M.D.

A lot of misleading advertising today reminds us, especially women, to be sure to take enough calcium to avoid osteoporosis. Therefore most Americans mistakenly believe that the reason our bones get thinner (osteoporosis) and we become more prone to fractures as we get older, is because we're not getting enough calcium in our diet. This popular misconception is good for the dairy and supplement industries but it doesn't help the rest of us very much. Here's why:

Bones are not the solid inert chunks of calcium that we imagine. Bones are living dynamic organs of our body that are continually being remodeled; that is, they are continually dissolved and rebuilt by specialized bone-dissolving and bone-building cells within us. All of our bones completely renew themselves every seven to ten years. Bone loss that can lead to osteoporosis happens when, for a variety of known and unknown reasons, the activity of the bone dissolving cells predominates over that of the bone-building cells.

Our bones consist of a living matrix or network of protein fibers which create the framework upon which mineral crystals of calcium phosphate salts are laid down. The protein fibers are alive and grisly and make the bone flexible while the mineral calcium salts are dead and make the bone hard, dense and heavy.

Bone density measurements, which essentially measure bone calcium, confirm that after about the age of 50 it is normal for a person to lose bone density over time. Loss of bone density that is slightly greater than normal for ones age is called osteopenia. Moderately greater than normal loss of bone density is called osteoporosis.

Research done in Holland in 1997 showed that from age 60 to age 80 the risk of hip fracture increased thirteen- fold among men as well as women. The surprising finding was that loss of bone density (bone calcium) accounted for only a doubling of the risk, while "other factors" accounted for the rest of this thirteen-fold increase risk of hip fracture in these Rotterdam citizens. These other factors had nothing to do with loss of calcium or bone density but rather with the loss of flexibility and elasticity of the bones which normally occurs as we age.

What makes our bones elastic and flexible? The living part of our bones, the protein fiber matrix. As we age, this tight and dense framework or matrix of protein fibers becomes thinner and looser because the individual fibers lose their elasticity and become drier and stiffer (the same is true for all the tissues of our body). This makes our bones more brittle and prone to fractures, and slower to heal when they do fracture.

Therefore, to avoid fractures, and to have vigorous, quick-healing bones we must learn how to maintain our life forces, for these are the forces which maintain the tightness and the resilience of the living protein fiber framework of our bones and the sheer mineral mass of calcium phosphate crystals which are deposited within that protein fiber framework. Osteoporosis is not just the loss of bone mineral mass (calcium crystals) but also the fraying of the intimate fabric of living protein fibers which forms the very basis of our bones. One can demonstrate this non-calcium protein fabric of bone by immersing a chicken bone in a bottle of white vinegar for several days until all the calcium dissolved away. What remains still has the same shape and form of the bone but it is entirely elastic, as if made of rubber! Rubber is, after all, also derived from a living substance. It is made by the rubber tree.

So we see that our miraculous human organism combines living and pliant protein fibers with hard crystalline calcium from the non-living mineral world to create our sturdy and resilient bones, and then our organism continually remodels them and heals them when they are injured. These life forces of growth, remodeling and healing in us which Rudolf Steiner called etheric forces or simply the etheric (called chi or prana in eastern wisdom) are responsible for the vigor and resilience of our bones and of all our other organs and tissues as well.

After mid-life our vital etheric forces gradually decline. This is the fundamental reason why our bones lose both elasticity and density then. What makes us vulnerable to fractures is primarily the loss of the living elasticity of the protean fiber bone matrix. The loss of non-living calcium density from our bones is only a secondary cause. Both losses are caused by the gradual withdrawal of our etheric life forces from our bones with aging. However, it is only when the life forces withdraw at a faster rate for our age that osteoporosis and an abnormally high risk of fractures come about.

Article continued on page 5

Bone Health and Osteoporosis continued

Modern medicine has no name for, and no way of measuring, the loss of elasticity of the protein fiber framework of our bones. Nevertheless, the integrity and flexibility of this living framework are the most important factors protecting us from fractures.

Modern medical research however has identified a number of lifestyle, nutritional and hormonal factors which have been repeatedly observed to accelerate the bone deterioration we call osteoporosis. These factors are quite diverse, ranging from physical immobility to lack of sunlight to poor diet to caffeine intake to hormonal imbalance to excessive protein intake to tobacco use to alcohol overindulgence to overly vigorous exercise!

What we can say with certainty from the perspective of anthroposophic medicine is that all of these known factors, which accelerate osteoporosis, are factors which diminish or deplete the vital work of our body's etheric life forces.

San Shou Graduates

Jeff Christianson

Lynn Dennis

Dan Frederick

Giovanna Fregni

David Innes

Patrick Jarvis

Matt Lauters

Mike Linden

Marcos Lopez-Carlson

John Stitely

Morgan Willow

Empty Stepping

Standing
is not enough,
my here so far from there.
Full, I cannot move. Shift. Toe out.
Forward.

Morgan Grayce Willow

From *Arpeggio of Appetite* forthcoming from
Finishing Line Press in October, 2005.

Items for Sale

Books

Lessons with Master T.T. Liang - \$20
Collection of years of notes. By Ray Hayward
String of Pearls - \$15
Collection of articles written by Studio members.

Other

10th Anniversary Edition of Wu-Tang, 24p. - \$3
T'ai-Chi Fan – various colors - \$13

Video Cassettes

Solo Form, Warm-ups, Chi-Kung - \$20

DVDs

Solo Form Class Basics - \$20
(Warm-ups, Chi-Kung, 1st Section)
T'ai-Chi Fan - \$18
T'ai-Chi Fan DVD w/Fan - \$28
Praying Mantis: Jai-Yao Epitome - \$20
Praying Mantis: Beng-Bo - \$20

Studio Logo Shirts

(Sizes M, L, XL – 2X cost slightly more)

100% Cotton T \$8

100% Cotton Long-T \$12

50/50 Sweatshirts \$16

We have many in stock, but other colors, styles, shirt-types can be ordered. See order sheet in Studio office.

The Taoists I had the good fortune to encounter were not over-superstitious. They included men both simple and urbane with a partly mystical partly humanistic philosophy. Thought I do not remember hearing any of them deny the existence of gods and spirits, I did not find them unduly concerned with rituals. Like Buddhists, they understood that spiritual development lies with oneself, that neither gods nor sacraments help or hinder in the gradual refining or coarsening of man's essential being. Given the likelihood of enjoying a lifespan of from sixty to seventy or more years, they set out to achieve within that space of time an inner development capable of negating the effects of man's departure from the ways of nature and enabling them to eradicate evil propensities – acquisitiveness, passion, inordinate desire – which lead to selfishness, and callousness if not to deceit and downright cruelty.

-from Taoism: The Road to Immortality, p. 174
by John Blofeld

Class Schedule for September 15, 2005 – January 15, 2006

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Saturday |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| 12:30-2:30 Solo Form | | | 12:30-2:30 Solo Form | 10:00-11:30 Eclectsis |
| 6:00-7:30 Solo Form Refinement | 6:00-7:00 Pushing-Hands: Drills/Methods | 6:00-7:30 Solo Form Instruction | 6:00-7:30 Solo Form Refinement | 11:30-12:30 Liu Ho Pa Fa Level II |
| 7:30-8:30 Weapons Cycle 1: Sword | 7:00-8:00 2 Person San-Shou | 7:30-9:00 Hsing-Yi Ch'uan Level I: 5 Elements | 7:30-9:00 Praying Mantis Level III | 12:30-2:00 Solo Form Instruction |
| 8:30-9:30 Pa-Kua Basics / Liu Ho Pa Fa 12 Animals | 8:00-9:00 Praying Mantis Level I | 9:00-9:30 Pa-Kua Chang 64 Palms | | |

NOTE: The Studio will be closed Thursday, November 24, and Saturday, December 24 through Sunday, January 1.

**TWIN CITIES T'AI-CHI CH'UAN STUDIO
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FIRST CLASS MAIL