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Vol. 54

# Combat & Healing

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Side Effects of Dim-Mak

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Spiritual Tai Chi

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Street Self Defence

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Reiki

PLUS

WTBA NEWS

# Combat & Healing

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# Difficult Taijiquan

By Erle Montague

Each morning while I am practicing my form several times, things pop into my mind. Things of great relevance to one's practice and which I am passionate to pass on to others so that they too will feel and gain the great benefits that I have gained and am still gaining.

However, once finished my forms, that idea has either been lost or it has been placed by my logical mind into a completely logical set of ideas that bears little or no significance to the original reflex idea.

Some mornings however, the idea is so strong that it sticks with me until the end and I am able to put it all into logical words that do not lose the original essence of the thought. This morning was one of those times, so without even picking up my guitar and playing, without even eating or talking to anyone, I am now putting into words some information that I hope will be useful to every one. By the way, we are now in our new home in the 'freezer'! And it is so wonderful to perform a set of movements without ending up a lather of sweat! Only the fingertips drip drop after each session as we have little humidity and

the temperature this morning was 2 degrees c.

Most people have heard me saying that Taijiquan must be difficult; if it is not difficult then you are not doing Taijiquan! It was made difficult and must remain difficult forever, no matter how hard or for how long you train, or how experienced you are. I have had 'sifus' come up to me and say that they really know their Taijiquan so well that it is no longer difficult, I have now given up trying to tell them that they are no longer doing Taijiquan! It's the same as yesterday while walking in the street with my family, three young girls approached me to purchase for them cigarettes!

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*There are two reasons that Taijiquan is made difficult. A physical reason and an internal reason. The internal reason is probably the most difficult of all.*

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Cigarettes are illegal for people under 18. So I gave them a very friendly lecture, using some street language that they would understand, telling them about some girlfriends of mine in my youth who were the most beautiful young things that one would ever find, only to grow into old women who looked 60 or 70 when they are only in their

40's! Then I go on to tell them how it affects the liver and how the liver controls the skin and therefore it is the skin that is greatly damaged. So they will look like a prune at age 25! The answer was that they would get some skin cream and would I buy the cigarettes for them anyway! I guess I was the same at age 17, totally invincible and would not listen to anyone.

There are two reasons that Taijiquan is made difficult. A physical reason and an internal reason. The internal reason is probably the most difficult of all.

The physical reason is one that I usually tell people; it is physically difficult because the old genius masters who invented all of this stuff, built into each movement a way of activating each acupuncture meridian in the body by a series of gentle stretches and twists. The 'heat' (Qi) is generated by the lowering of the legs to cause heat to build up in the caudon (tantien), then the rest of the body directs that Qi to all parts by the twists and turns and stretches that we must perform. It does this by the automatic reflex action of the body, which sends Qi to any part of the body that needs Qi at any time. However, this activation must be done (in Taijiquan) in exactly the manner as it is activated in a 24-hour period natu-

rally when we perform the form CORRECTLY. So each movement was worked on and tested, then added to the form over hundreds of years. So when I see people walking through a set of movements with no twists, no stretching, no yin and yang of hands, feet, legs torso, shoulders, knees etc, I know that they do not know, nor are they performing Taijiquan. However, I have stopped giving lectures to other than captured audiences as I have been verbally abused on many occasions for interfering with what their 'sifu' (what a stupid word, it's OK in China, but not for westerners!) had taught them.

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*The main physical difficulty that most people get wrong is the interaction between waist and hips.*

The main physical difficulty that most people get wrong is the interaction between waist and hips. You will see it all the time, when someone performs the form and the waist is doing exactly the same things as the hips, there is no movement between waist and hips. This activation between hips and waist gives you the necessary stretch in the torso and whole upper body to generate Qi in that area. All internal organs are activated and healed because of this interaction of yin and yang between waist and hips. Hence the reason for the 'opening' and 'closing' movements of the 2<sup>nd</sup> level of Yang

Lu-ch'an form. We perform this form larger because we are learning about the waist and hips and how they differ. It should not stay that way for ever as the form will change the back to a smaller frame so that eventually the large twists and turns are hardly noticeable; however, they are still there.

Lifting the foot for in stance during the set of postures known as 'Wave Hands Like Clouds' is one perfect example of a physically difficult movement. The foot must be lifted, heel and toe in perfect harmony, leaving the ground at exactly the same time. This makes it difficult because you are forced to use your whole abdominal area to lift the foot without first lifting the heel thus making it easier. It is quite difficult to lift the foot in this manner especially when you are lifting the right foot after the large step to the left.



Number 1

**Photo No. 1** shows this step done incorrectly by lifting the heel slightly first. This is how most people, even so-called great masters, will do it.



Number 2

**Photo No. 2** shows the correct and difficult way to do this step. Another step such as this is when we perform the 'step back and repulse monkey, normal' step. The front foot must be lifted, heel and toe together. **Photo No. 3** shows how it is normally done in correctly while **Photo No. 4** shows how it is done correctly. Another difficult step is at the end of each third of the form when we have to squat down and then lift the left leg to bring it up to shoulder width (from double shoulder width). The left foot must be lifted heel and toe together and this is difficult. **Photo No. 5** shows the incorrect way to do

this by lifting the heel first thus making it easier while **Photo No. 6** shows the correct and more difficult way.



Number 3

that we can squat straight down by simply turning the rear foot back by 90 degrees only once. This longer posture in itself is difficult to get into when done



Number 4

So there is much more to performing Taijiquan correctly than meets the eye. Unfortunately most people only ever get to perform Taijiquan in correctly



Number 5

'Snake Creeps' down is another movement that is difficult. However, this one is usually difficult for most people even cheating the move by shuffling the rear foot backwards rather than taking a much longer step (single whip step) to begin with. **Photo No. 7** shows the initial stance for single whip done incorrectly as a normal 'bow' stance. You cannot squat straight down from this posture as your legs are too close together so you have to either shuffle backward with your rear foot or even worse slip your front foot forward in order to get the necessary stretch for this posture. **Photo No. 8** shows the correct single whip posture so

correctly, causing you to have to hold your balance on one leg for much longer and causing great stretching of the lower 'kua' (groin area). Most people will perform this posture the easy way as in **Photo No. 9** by swinging the left foot around and placing it on the ground before the rest of the body turns. Then it is relatively easier to change the weight onto it and then turn the body to the West. However, you will see that we do it in a totally different way in order to make it difficult. We have to stand on the right leg and turn the torso almost to the West with the left leg off the ground, only then do we stretch the leg and place it down slowly! **Photo No. 10 and 11** shows this way of stepping.

and so lose all of the great healing benefits that this wonderful set of movements can give.

### *The Internal Way*

The internal way of making things difficult is even more difficult both to perform and to explain; however, I will attempt to explain it. Most people, well our students anyway, know that Taijiquan is indeed the highest level of Qigong. I see other Taijiquan schools teaching the 'Flying duck Qigong', the 'shitting dog' Qigong, the 'Flapping Goose' Qigong, the 'Eagle Qigong', the '8 Brocade' Qigong etc. etc. It would seem that newer and more exotic ways of Qigong are being invented every month! If they



Number 6



Number 7



Number 8

were doing real Taijiquan they would know that all they would ever need would be basic 3 circle standing qigong and the Taijiquan form itself! And the only reason that we have the basic 3 Circle Standing Qigong is

Taijiquan as a perfect Qigong as we have to learn the movements first. So the 3 Circle Qigong takes the place of what we are not getting from our Taijiquan at a basic level until we work our way up to doing it at a very advanced 'Qigong' level.

So why is it so difficult. Most people know how difficult simple Standing Qigong is, especially in the beginning. It is mainly the mental process that is difficult once the physical thing of having to stand with bent knees for 20 minutes. (Photo No. 12 shows the 3 Cir-



Number 9



Number 10



Number 11

because in the beginning it is almost impossible to perform

cle Qigong). So how much more difficult is it to then have to move, taking steps and moving the arms while still trying to maintain a 'no-mind' state? This is very difficult indeed. However, in order to enjoy real Taijiquan, this must be achieved. Totally 'sung' (relaxation) of the upper body in particular is essential during the whole of the 20 or 40 minutes of practice. And even more important is the 'sung' of the hands.

When Taijiquan is performed correctly. You can not even feel your hands or know that they are there! You will feel (without thinking about it) a swelling and ebbing of Qi within the body, rising up the back and then subsiding again as you move your arms up and down. Your eyes will not stare, but will not look at anything either. It's as if you are asleep while walking. You must be aware at all times that your hands are not moving at all, they are being moved by Qi and the rest of the body. As soon as this Qigong state is broken, you must get back into it as soon as possible so that the link is not broken. You will feel your backbone straightening out and elongating automatically, you will feel your waist and hips moving in harmony against each other, your breathing will become natural and deep as if you are taking in so much more oxygen with each breath. You will not even notice that you are stepping, as your legs will take care of themselves. And this is

the way it is with Taijiquan. The legs hold you up like great pillars; never a thought is given to the legs and feet as they have been trained to step correctly and to hold you up. We never think about the things that hold our walls of our house up do we. We might think about the windows and doors etc., but the most important thing is what holds the whole house up and we never think about it because there is no reason to. It is the same with our legs; we do not have to think about them.

Once you have learnt each movement and know exactly how to perform them, each posture will change slightly to emulate what the internal Qi is doing. You will feel this. The biggest mistake that most students make is that they perform the form exactly the way that they were taught by their 'sifu'. This is HIS or HER way of do-



Number 12

ing form, not yours! All a teacher can ever do is to teach you the very basic building blocks exactly the way that it was invented. Then he or she should allow you to see what their form looks like at an advanced level so that you will have some idea of what to strive for later. However, it should also be pointed out that you would gain your OWN form, one that will be different to every other person because you are different! The Qi movement will dictate to you exactly how you should perform your form and you will only ever feel this once you are able to perform the whole form as a Qigong, the highest Qigong ever invented in fact. And this is difficult!

I am often asked what to do when the space that one has to perform his or her Taijiquan is not quite large enough. Now that I am in a much colder climate I am also discovering this. No way that I am going out in the freezing sub-zero, ice or snow on the ground, temperatures to practice, although I remember holding a workshop in Canberra many years ago with my old friend Jim Marincic who would take great joy in taking his students down to the lake in minus 8 degrees to train! No-one was complaining though as we were all trying to be macho! Although I have always known how to get around it as I have experimented with smaller spaces so that I would now what to tell people.

The classics tell us that we can perform the form in a one metre square space. This is B.S! However, it is possible to perform form in a small area. I have just preformed my own form in a space that is about 1.5 metres width by 2.5 metres length. We still have not made a training space in the house. I was thinking of using our huge ‘man sized’ shed up the back for training as we used to in the tropics. However, I think that inside that tin shed is actually colder than the temperature outside!

So when you are coming to a wall, you will simply adjust your stepping so that you will not run into the wall. Perhaps a side step or a cross step or a couple of steps backward instead of forward. These must of course be done in the same slow and ‘sung’ way that the rest of the movement is done so as not to lose the essence and ‘moment’. Eventually, you will get to know

your own room and more importantly you will get to sense what is around you so that no matter where you are, your body will simply adjust to the new area automatically, you will not have to think about it so that you are able to maintain the ‘sung’ state for the whole form. Wave Hand Like Clouds is the posture where most people get into difficult in a smaller space as it takes you a larger distance to your left each time. So you simply get into the habit of wither doing that group of postures in a circle so that you have only moves one step to the left, or you do the postures to the left AND to the right during each session. This will have no effect upon the Qi activation but will get you out of trouble as far as space is concerned.

### *Wave Hand Like Clouds*

This set of postures is the most difficult to fit into a smaller

space. So here’s how. We begin from Single Whip. **Photo No. 13.** Go into the first posture; by turning your left toes 90 degrees to your right weighted and inhale. As you do this, your left palm will move to about chin height as your right will move under it as shown in **Photo No. 14.** Notice that the waist and hips are not the same! Do the first hand movement (as in Yang Lu-ch’an’s form, last version) and take the step behind your left foot. Exhale. **Photo No. 15.** Now, if you are getting close to that wall, rather than stepping the left foot a double step to the left, you will now take the right foot back to where it was by a double step. Inhale. **Photo No. 16.** Now you can take that right foot again to be behind the left foot lifting the heel and toe together and you have not moves to the left. You can do this for the whole 4 steps of the posture until you come back onto Single Whip. This will save space and you have not lost any postures.



Number 13



Number 14



Number 15



## *Brush Knee & Twist Step*

If you are having difficulty coming too close to a wall sideways during this set of postures, it is a relatively simple matter of 'cross-stepping'. From the initial posture **Photo No. 17**, rather than lifting your right leg and stepping straight forward, thus taking you too close to the right hand wall, after you brush your right knee, take a step across your left leg and place it as shown in **Photo No. 18**. To finish the posture lift your left leg and place it into the correct position as you strike with your left palm. **Photo No. 19**.



*Number 16*



*Number 17*

You can see from the above that it is relatively easy to maneuver your body correctly without losing the 'sing' state or Qi flow in order to get out of the way of walls and furniture. You should experiment with those postures that you are having difficulty with. Just remember to keep the movement in context rather than just stopping and moving out of the way, then resuming, as this will have a detrimental effect.



*Number 18*



*Number 19*

# He who fights

by James Readman UK

'He who fights with monsters should look to it that he himself does not become a monster'

I will always remember where I first heard this famous quote, it seems to ring true now more than ever to martial artists in today's society. We live in the middle of some very dangerous times. In the last few months there have been reports of some vicious beatings, knife attacks and murders.

Like I said, we live in a dangerous world. We have to begin to ask ourselves will our barehanded methods of self defense protect us? The chances are increasing that we will not be confronted with just the fists of a gang of yobs but the sharp and shinny blades which they carry.

Now we don't carry weapons, because we obey the law. Because of this the majority of weapon defenses will be barehanded against a knife. We've all heard how Erle himself has three scars on his body from encounters with knives. In his words, 'The first two represent my handling a knife attack the wrong way, while

the third scar represents my almost getting it right!' If a man with skills such as Erle's can still come out of an encounter wounded how will the rest of us fair?

So what is the answer? I believe that it will be a very long time before guns are gone from our streets (after the tragic murder of two young women in the UK earlier this year a 'gun amnesty' was hosted by police in which people were able to hand in weapons they might possess free of prosecution.

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*Now this might not be such a big issue to advanced students of the WTBA, but beginners like myself are far more at risk by not being 100% sure how we would react in that situation.*

Over one thousand were handed in in Eastern regions alone. at least this shows that people are trying to reform, but it also gives some indication of the weapons which were around before and the amount which probably still fill the streets) But knives are something which will never go. As long as someone can buy a simple kitchen knife there will always be the risk that the man who is cornering you as you walk home, yelling

abuse at you and making crude remarks toward your partner has a small blade concealed on him somewhere.

This seems to be what the world has come to in some places. So what will it come to in the end? Will we all end up afraid to leave our homes if we live anywhere near a big city? will all our training come to nothing in the face of fear caused by a small piece of metal. All we are, all we have learnt and all we could one day become extinguished by 6 inches of metal.

Now this might not be such a big issue to advanced students of the WTBA, but beginners like myself are far more at risk by not being 100% sure how we would react in that situation. Now obviously I'm not blaming any one but myself for this. I should train harder in these areas than I do, but if I were ever faced with a knife in the street would I remember what I had learnt? would I go overkill (or worse, for me at least, under-kill) not knowing when to stop? all these are worries which spring to mind when considering the intricacies of knife survival.

So what's the alternative? What if it was legal for people to carry weapons for the purpose of self defense from others who do? what if it was legal

for me to carry deer horn knives in public, or for a friend to carry a wakizashi? it would certainly even the odds when it came to a confrontation between myself and a guy with a knife who wasn't just out to rob me.

---

*'He who fights with monsters should look to it that he himself does not become a monster'*

But what would we be doing to the world? After all 'He who fights with monsters should look to it that he himself does not become a monster' I'm not saying we should start carrying weapons to defend ourselves, in fact I think that's the worst possible outcome of this violent society.

I would hope, with all my heart, that it will never come to this, that one day we could live without the threat of violence, that the violent would always be arrested and convicted and the innocent would always be protected.

But when you defend your life (at the risk of taking theirs) are you still innocent? I think that goes beyond the scope of this article (and the scope of my brain!)

I will sum up by saying this. The world is indeed becoming a seemingly more violent place. We must do all that is

within our power never to add to this.

We must defend ourselves, the people we know and love, but we must never create violence where no violence needs to be. The temptation to carry a weapon to protect ourselves has probably appeared in a lot of minds, but surely this is not the answer. In the (hopefully, unless it's your job) rare occasions in which we deal with monsters, we must try never to become one ourselves.

Thanks for reading

## NEW VIDEO TITLES FROM MOONTAGU

### MTG243 Advanced Knife Fighting Volume Two

On this title, Erle shows and teaches the next two forms in the advanced knife fighting methods, those of "Bending Form" and "Fast Footwork Form". These two forms were taught at Erle's recent International workshop in Australia and all were in awe of the graceful movement and deadly application that these forms give. They also allow your brain to push out a balanced level of 'Fight or Flight' hormones/chemicals into the body so that the correct one will be chosen in any given situation etc. So if it's fight you must, then you will fight with the greatest amount of energy and aggression etc. Some very interesting techniques are shown within each of these forms.

### MTG244 Taijiquan's 'Waving Form'.

This is the form that is said to be the closest emulation of the internal flow of Qi in the body. It is not a new form but rather a 'way' of performing the forms that you already know. It is important to see someone doing this form as that is the only way to learn it. You take it into your sub-conscious and slowly over the years it grows until one day you are doing Waving Form. This could be called the highest level of H'ao chuan. Erle taught it at his latest workshop in Australia and the way he taught it, every one was able to grasp the concepts relatively easily even though it will not grow within them for a couple of years. This form is the highest balancing of Yin and Yang in the body and also teaches us how to fight without thinking about it. It is a truly beautiful form!

### MTG245 The Formal Day to Day Training of the Montaigne Children V. 8

Carries on from V. 7. Including YLC form up to and including Wave Hands Like clouds

### MTG246: Advanced Knife Volume 3.

On this volume, Erle teaches the next two advanced knife fighting forms of "Reverse Knife" and "Quickly Moving Hands" form. The reverse knife form teaches excellent coordination and footwork and timing while the Quickly Moving form teaches the use of the knife and hands against many attackers, also relying upon excellent footwork. Both are excellent for health working upon acupuncture meridians and generally toning the whole body.

# Long Term Side Effects of Dim Mak Strikes

by Paul Brecher The Senior  
London Instructor for  
Erle Montague's World Tai  
Chi Boxing Association London  
England

I am a martial artist and a medical practitioner so I am writing this article so that people who are interested in the use of dim mak within their martial arts training are aware of the some of the occasional possible side effects of being hit with a dim mak strike.

It is my recommendation that you don't ever volunteer to be a person who dim mak is going to be demonstrated on.

I never knock my students out and always make it clear that dim mak is only to be used for defeating opponents who attack you, it is not for any other reason.

If a strike is a dim mak strike it usually means that the strike is landed on an acupuncture point. The points that are selected are because they are on top of particularly weak or vulnerable parts of the body.

Or that by striking a particular part of the body that it self may not be vulnerable it will non

the less initiate a process either through the acupuncture meridian system or through the nervous system that will cause a weakening of some part of the body enough to cause knock out, collapse, paralysis or death.

If a person is hit in the head, it does not matter which acupuncture point was hit or whether KO occurred, there will be slight brain damage. This damage is most clearly noticeable in people who practice boxing. The effects are not noticeable when people are young, they believe that there is nothing wrong and that every thing is fine.

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*If a person is hit in the head, it does not matter which acupuncture point was hit or whether KO occurred, there will be slight brain damage*

However the effects begin to emerge as the years go by and people develop what is known as symptoms of being punch drunk. In extreme cases there are more severe symptoms similar to Parkinson's disease, shaking of the hands and an inability to control the limbs.

If a dim mak strike does cause knock out (whether it was through a blow to the head or not) the sudden blood pressure drop deprives the brain of oxygen enriched blood for a period of time. This damages the ability of the brain to function properly.

We can see the effects of this when we watch a person get knocked out.

As they go into knock out they lose their vision, they lose power in their legs and arms. They lose their balance and whilst unconscious they lose their memory. It is also possible to see a tremor of the body occurring as they fade into unconsciousness. (Some slip into a coma for a few days or weeks and then regain consciousness, some never regain consciousness and stay in a coma till they die which could be in a few hours, days or weeks later, or not for many years.) The healing ability of a young person may be sufficient to heal the brain damage but maybe not.

People who allow them to be repeatedly knocked out increase the chances of immediate serious problems occurring. They are also increasing the cumulative long

term damage explained previously.

If the dim mak strike was to a point that is on a major nerve then the knock out, collapse or temporary or permanent paralysis that occurs is due to damage to the nervous system.

Again if a person has excellent self healing ability then the damage to the nervous system will be healed by the body itself. Some times the body is not able to do this and there is permanent damage to the nervous system either on the location of the strike or to the nervous system in general or both.

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*Again if a person has excellent self healing ability then the damage to the nervous system will be healed by the body itself.*

The damage could be permanent pain with occasional involuntary spasms or it could be an inability to have fine motor movement of a limb or it could be limb weakness or if the nerve damage is very serious then there could be muscle wasting and atrophy of the limb.

There are also some other long term effects of nervous system damage, like an increased sense of nervousness or uneasiness and reduction in reflex

response time and hands eye coordination.

People who have been knocked out also often develop a susceptibility to being knocked out more easily in the future. Without a doubt the body is always made weaker by being knocked out; certainly it is never made stronger from the experience.

I could say a lot more about the long term effects of dim mak strikes but I feel I have said enough to clearly make the point that dim mak strikes are designed to cause damage. They do achieve this and therefore volunteer to be hit is the same as saying that you volunteer to be knowingly damaged.

*If you would like more information on Paul's classes in London please call Paul on 020 8264 8074 or visit [www.taiji.net](http://www.taiji.net)*

## *A New Video By Jennifer Press.*

JP1:  
The Eight Secret Treasures  
Qigong

**The *Eight Secret Treasures from China*** are a set of eight excellent simple but effective Qigong methods for getting the body ready to heal itself. They are used as a forerunner to learning Taijiquan and other Qigong methods in China. Especially for stark beginners and older people, these make an excellent start into one's internal martial/healing training.

Jennifer Press has been training in the Internal Healing arts since 1972 and has studied in China, Taiwan, India and the UK.

In Australia it is available through JP World: [jpworld@norex.com.au](mailto:jpworld@norex.com.au)

In the UK, through [www.kunzhi.com](http://www.kunzhi.com)

In the Usa through [www.taichiamerica.com](http://www.taichiamerica.com)

## DEER HORN KNIVES & WTBA TAIJI FARM JUMPERS NOW AVAILABLE

The WTBA in Australia now have available for sale, a range of jumpers and other tops sporting the new and beautiful Taiji Farm Australia WTBA Logo.

The WTBA has also gone to great lengths to make the perfect Deer Horn knives from Spring Steel and has them for sale at a very reasonable price (compared to what they are sold for for instance in the USA).

Please contact Mause Eaglen at [wtba@norex.com.au](mailto:wtba@norex.com.au) for further details or write to her at: Po Box 22, Uki NSW 2484, Australia. Or you could Phone on + 61 (0) 2 6679 7015

Once Moontagu Books moves to the UK in November 2003, WTBA Australia will take over the selling of Erle Montaigne's video and VCD titles as postage from the UK to Australia is huge! Email: [wtba@norex.com.au](mailto:wtba@norex.com.au)



*Taiji Farm WTBA Australia Jumper, all colours, all styles available*



*Patch on pocket of jumpers, all different colours with any colour background*

# Spiritual Taiji

Ron Beier WTBA Germany

A few months ago a woman whom I had never seen before entered one of my “beginner phase 2” classes, those classes where the few hapless students who have survived my introductory classes and decided to put up with my jokes for another semester try to learn the second part of Yang Cheng-Fu’s form. She introduced herself and said that she had attended taiji classes near here, run by a man whose name I was n’t familiar with. Master so and so. Master of what? Master of Reiki, Qigong and Taiji she said. This dear woman had decided that she wanted to try to follow my class even if the taiji I was teaching was somewhat different from what she had learned. Why? I asked, thinking smugly that my fame as a teacher had finally begun to spread. Because my classes were nearer her home she said. She would n’t have to drive so far. So much for the spread of my good name. What had she learned, I asked. Peking 24 she said. OK, I said, the basic principles of taiji apply to whatever style is practiced, so why not just see how things go.

She was able to follow reasonably well and did seem to have integrated some of the basic movement principles, though there wasn’t much precision in her form. Afterwards I asked her how she felt and she told me, well, it was different from what she was used to. I asked her, different in what way? Well, she said, many of the movements were different of course, but most of all the classes she had attended were more spiritual.

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***I was taken aback for a moment and could n’t think of anything to reply. What did she mean, more spiritual?***

I was taken aback for a moment and couldn’t think of anything to reply. What did she mean, more spiritual? For a whole week I bounced ideas off the inner walls of skull, hearing them reverberate, knocking the wax out of my ears. I looked up the source of the word and found something about the Latin roots meaning “of breathing or air”. Well, I certainly continue to breathe while practicing taiji. On some days I may breathe very little and very slowly while practicing, but this thought did n’t get me any further. I decided I would ask my student to elaborate

when next she put herself at my mercy.

“What did you mean, your former classes were ‘more spiritual’?” She had come a little early and I used the opportunity to ask before the other students arrived.

“Well, we always meditated for ten minutes before we began. And then we watched our breathing for ten minutes or so. Some times we walked around slowly holding round stones to try and feel the qi. And we spent a lot of time at first just holding the qi-ball between our hands and trying to feel it expand and contract. And there were always candles lit. He (her former teacher) talked alot about our astral bodies and we spent a fair bit of time just sensing the auras around our bodies and around those of the others while we walked around slowly with our eyes closed.” I was speechless. This is fortunately sometimes misinterpreted as the silence of deep wisdom.

I asked my wife that evening, after class, whether she felt I was leaving out a whole big important part of Taijiquan in my classes and I repeated what my new student had said. She looked at me with that sideways glance which means: what kind of crap are

you trying to pull now? I repeated what my new student had said. "Maybe I should do more of that kind of thing in my lessons. What do you think?"

"Are you off your rocker? One of the reasons students keep coming back to you is because you don't do that sort of thing. Why would you start now? Forget it. Your classes are fine." With that she turned back to her equestrian magazine, for her the case was closed.

Still, the idea that I was not giving my students everything they were entitled to get gnawed at me. The idea that I was possibly missing a whole big aspect of taiji that others had tapped into galled. I began to consider if and how I should approach this whole business of "spirituality". And what was it really? What did it have to do with candles and qi balls?

I remembered when I first learned to meditate in a "spiritual retreat" almost three decades ago, in the heart of the death throes of the flower power era. In a very heterogenous group it was easy to see which of the wannabe gurus considered himself more spiritual than the rest of us; between meditations the halls would be graced by these creatures walking with half-closed eyes, slow premeditated pace, hands often folded in

front of their chests undulating like a jellyfish in pee-warm water. One other fellow-sufferer who had only joined the course to impress his future girlfriend labeled them "bliss nin nies". The extreme cases were referred to as "space cadets".

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***this same species of creature sometimes showed up at certain taiji workshops and gatherings.***

For some reason I kept on meditating but I did stop attending retreats, only to find many years later that this same species of creature sometimes showed up at certain taiji workshops and gatherings. I was again confronted with the question of my own approach to this thing called "spirituality" and my own lack of manifest signs of such as I had seen them in others. And now, after years and years of meditation, practice of internal arts, searching, contemplation, reading, introspection and frequent, heartfelt exhortations and expletives, I had someone telling me that my classes weren't spiritual. Ah, the pain of it; my vanity was sorely injured.

My journey to this point had taken me through and around many experiences, realizations and seeming epiphanies. I realized with a start that I had long ago given up looking for any of these

things, had given up searching for spirituality. Why? Be cause I had come to feel that, by its very nature, the spirit of things is manifest in everything we do. Like the polar forces yin and yang, where there is materiality there must also be spirituality. We can't invoke it or create it, we just have to prepare ourselves to become aware of it.

I'd come to believe that one of our purposes here is to refine our own awareness using whatever vehicle or tool we are given, so that we may increasingly clear the dark glass clouding our perceptions. The more we do this, the less we work against ourselves, or rather against our Selves. For the more I see, the more I am aware that my Self extends far beyond and below this small localization of experience, this receptor of sensory signals I had come to regard as "my self". I am climbing a mountain, and each time I turn around to look, the world is bigger, I am smaller, the air is cleaner and more rarified. Taking the view is easy, it is the climbing which requires discipline and strengthening of the material tools we have at hand, our bodies and minds. I will never get a broader view by concentrating on my powers of vision; I have to concentrate on my powers to climb and the eyes which I already have will be enough to grant me the vision. The view, the



knowledge, the spiritual vision is a byproduct available to us at any time; we need only put our selves into a position to take advantage of it.

It seems to me futile or at best inefficient to approach spirituality by pretending or wishing to be spiritual. I'm not likely to become rich by walking around pretending to have money or even worse, printing my own. Instead I have to expend my efforts on creating the conditions which allow for income, either through hard work (not very likely) or acquiring power over others (the most secure source); the money comes then of itself. In the same way, I have to create the conditions necessary to the sustenance of that inherent awareness of even the finer workings of the manifest and unmanifest energies around me, I have to refine the vessel which is to carry the awareness so that it doesn't dissipate; the awareness itself already exists, it often just doesn't have a vessel fine enough to hold it.

I cannot teach anyone to be aware, but I can show someone a set of movements which can, if used properly and conscientiously, guide her or him to a somewhat more refined awareness. I can't "be spiritual" or show anyone else how to be spiritual, but I can constantly strive to refine the exploration of movement I refer to as

taiji or Qigong so that in pacing my awareness to the ever finer tuning of movement within, I am graced with a conjunctive awareness of that which I still perceive as being without. In following my example, others might find the same. True to the principles of polarity we all know and cherish, the further I go in the "physical", the more I increase the unmanifest "spiritual" or the potential thereof.

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***It seems to me futile or at best inefficient to approach spirituality by pretending or wishing to be spiritual.***

This same student who got me ruminating in this vein continued to the end of the course without missing even one day of training. On the last day she told me she would be signing up for the next course as well. I was naturally pleased, but was afraid to ask her why, figuring she would probably say that the time of the day on which the course was held was convenient for her. Having heeded the words of my wife, I hadn't added any qi-balls or candles or walkie-feelies to the course, I'd just tried to get across to my students that everything was there, waiting for the day when their diligence and openness would make them ready to accept it. I ventured something to that effect, hoping these might

constitute wise parting words which they could take with them into the summer, and one brave soul responded: "Yeah, but I want to feel the qi energy tingling in my tantien. When do we learn that stuff?"

I had some questions in answer to that one, but I didn't want to spoil their summer holidays. Maybe I'll try out those questions when we all gather again in the autumn.

*Ron Beier is the WTBA Representative in Germany.*

# A Bagua Experience

*Klaus Baltzer: Germany*

Erle, I m happy to share with you what came over to me (never wished it) thru BaGuaZhang.

*Sometimes life is hard.*

Since I knew that my wife will die; I fled with her and my son



into the mountains. I live in a beautiful natural environment. I worked at my home office, did supporting my wife, an enjoying the days.

And for each day 1-2 hours of playing Bagua. At all weather, snow, ice, wind etc . My thoughts always focusing

on the beauty of the techniques, trying to get better, knew and noticed the positive effects of BaGuaZhang on my physical condition.

My wife died February 2002, I was very very sad. However after 2-3 weeks I started trying to live as normal as possible again. Even after 4 weeks of her death, when driving my car saw her sitting on my right side.

I trained now always in a way or mindset that I tell myself: if thoughts arise in me, they flow away like the clouds in the wind.

This spring I built my Wooden Bagua-Circle and practiced, 3-6 hours each day. At the end I concentrated more on the names of the postures and the translation in my language.

I watched regularly (1CD each day) your BAGWA TO MAX DVDs (Circle-form) and the BAGWA Essentials 1 and 2 again and again.

***From where is this picture? It changed my life completely (always when I remember this the same experience!).***

I recognized your saying "A snake never poison it self" somewhere in your videos, I understood that rationally however nothing happened.

Last week I watched a Bagua video, some one walking the circle, with Nr.3 Palm "The Dragon Wandering around", I thought rationally the name fits, not anything else.

Last Friday Morning -sitting in my bed. Suddenly with a feeling of the warmth and coldness both at the same time, and an enormous joy and a lot of tears I recognized that I'm the wandering Dragon.

**The rain (tears) washed (my) the wounds of the dragon, he stands up stretches its legs and wings (Bagua-playing) and dances (being happy).**

And the second picture: **Dragon (snake) does not poison itself** (the bad thoughts are gone - I know this is from your video somewhere). It's also a feeling that something Power inside me wanting to break out.

At the same Friday there was a last rear up of the winter, having stormy weather all day long , even snow and a temperature of about 0 C

(=-32 F). Next day the real summer was here having sun an temperature of about 16 C.

From where is this picture? It changed my life completely (always when I remember this the same experience!).

I swim with my car in the Motor traffic, get not excited - not wanting to race (like I did before). I smile to people I met and understand them deeper as never before. I made some days off, visiting people and sharing my joy (but did not telling them what happened to me - however telling them the story of the dragon if I meant this could help them) I never had such a deep experience (opposit of the feelings when my wife died? BaGua the Art of Change or opposites?) , lasting for such a long time, hope it never stops.

Thank you very much for producing your Videos and sharing your knowledge with it, and please keep on doing. This fantastic powerful art should never disappear.

This is my real story and I'm very happy about the Change. Dragons are very seldom. If you have a similar story like this - let us collect it somewhere.

The wandering Dragon leaves his cave and flies away :-)

## HARD QIGONG

*From Sherif Abdelnaser Egypt.*

I got an other one of those < hard qigong > meditations:

1. Do the previous relaxation method in the first email which was briefly breathing in and be like filling the hole body with air and breathing out and have the body just drop more and more in each exhale until your body feels like it stuck to the place you're lying on or sitting on.
2. On the in breath it's like your filling your hole body with the white color, don't do like your painting your body white! But like if the color itself were like something filling your body, bone, muscle, and skin.
3. On the out breath be like your expelling something black out of your body.
4. The breathing is like in breath your pushing the air down using your diaphragm to the tantien area and on the out breath it'll be like your pulling out the air from the dantian using also the diaphragm.

## Street self-defence: The paradigms of coping with street encounters

*Gunther Vanwesemael: Belgium*

If one day you will be confronted with an aggressive situation or a person who creates an aggressive situation, you should always remember in street self-defence, or street fighting if you like, there is no such thing as a free lunch. You have only one chance, so never ever be indecisive or hesitate. In order to gain that pre-occupation, use whatever you consider useful to knock out your opponent. Thus, in street fighting there are no rules at all.

Psychologically, in the street animal behaviourism reigns, people prefer to behave using certain (animal) rituals, for it is much more convenient (in society for normal people or in a peer group for criminals). Hence, understanding the fundamentals of human behaviour you are entering the world of dealing more easily with street encounters. Moreover, you will survive!

Most important, as animals, people do not like to be hurt. The aggressor, acting alone or in a group, will not immediately attack, but will use his perception of the person, i.e. a potential victim; the aggressor is looking for signals of weakness. Even a fight in the café

does not occur without an incident, a causal reaction which can start with eyeballing: ritual behaviour.

Additionally, your behaviour and his behaviour or reaction upon a situation is function of the person and the environment. In other words, if you act or even look like a (potential) victim you yourself are creating an opportunity for mobsters to take (rob) you as a victim. For instance, if you like to drink, never walk down the street being drunk: that is creating an opportunity – you're easy prey.

As a matter of fact, street encounters are quite uncomplicated; they are mainly based upon stimulus and response. And they should be simple, for humans behave and think simply as well, it's much easier.

I would like to consider three paradigms which ought to allow you for not becoming prey or a victim. Consideration at any time does not mean declining personal happiness. In fact, it increases the well-being and safety of your life.

The first paradigm when you get out "minding your own business" is to be **aware**, especially of the environment (which includes persons). Look around you and ask yourself what do I see – look

for potential danger. Seeing is knowing: if you see a group of youngsters in a dark alley and you feel a little awkward then leave. Don't hesitate and wonder about how beautiful and peaceful life is. Reality is that death might watch you. Read the newspapers and don't go walking in dangerous areas. You can have all the training you want, you never match a bullet flying towards you. Maybe you can fight similar to John L. Sullivan or Jack Dempsey, but you'd better not try your luck in the street, where there are no rules at all and no referee ringing a bell. Being aware complements with knowing yourself: your limitations and your strength. No need for telling you to train the mind as well as the body. The goal of your training must always be **balance** in mind and body. Remind the old yin and yang principle in taiji.

When the (your) surroundings have been determined and you are now at least prepared, the next reflection is to have an intention. This intention is the **willingness** to kill, i.e. to defend your life and the life of your beloved ones. Willingness signifies controlling the situation. In other words, it is a coping strategy and amplifies a positive outcome. This willingness reflects not only a mental or internal state

of the person (a mental set); it also appears in the physical appearance. And, I don't mean to build muscles (as in pumping iron); I mean to look confident and to let the eyes speak.

Obviously, the aggressor also has an intention: to rob you or even worse. That's why you don't want to give him an opportunity.

If you did foresee the aggressive act and you still couldn't prevent it from happening, you only have one option left: to strike, without hesitation. You need to be ready in a split second and strike as hard as you can (be efficient) and strike continuous until the aggressor is out of action (be effective). Efficient striking depicts moving the entire body – not just striking with the hand, use your full body. Effective striking illustrates the goal of finishing the aggressor.

In his mind (or mind-set), the aggressor does not anticipate that you re-act physically (striking). He expects you to freeze (physically **and** emotionally). Nonetheless, you will be stressed, as adrenaline will occur and you must deal with it. You must understand the ramifications of adrenaline and its reactions on the body: if you react too slowly, you **will** freeze. Therefore: don't hesitate at all. You might additionally determine the increase of adrenaline as fear (trem-

bling of the legs), which is quite normal (cf. fight or flight response), so, again: no hesitation is allowed. Use your knowledge to your benefit!

Conclusion: in daily life all you ever need is awareness, willingness and readiness. These paradigms are interdependent and cause you to have the power and the knowledge to make things happen or not instead of letting things happen to you.

*Vanwesemael Gunther  
Law Enforcement Officer  
Anti-Aggression Team  
Brussels Police Force - Belgium*

## *Review of May West London Workshop with Russell Morgan and Ross Lardner*

Russell and Ross held a sinking workshop for their students in Chiswick, West London. 23 of us gathered in the local community centre and spent a happy four hours reviewing the basics. After three years of learning the form it was an eye opener to have corrections right from the first move.

Whilst we were all learning more advanced versions of the moves or corrections to our basic form we also were learning to finish the moves and sink at the end.

Attaining the state of "sung" through the form is difficult. Focusing on sinking at the beginning and end of every move makes a difference. As an example let's review Single Whip from the end of Fishes in Eight. To pick the left foot up: sink and close up the C spine this lifts the foot. Turn and sink to place the foot. As the weight moves forward sink into the left heel. Three times to think about sinking in one move!

Whilst this is definitely the beginners form and learning it "square" is one step on the path to enlightenment, it was amazing to notice the difference in the feeling of the moves.

*Crispin White UK*

# The use of taiji and qigong in physical therapy

Tomas Waldegren, Sweden

Being both physical therapist and martial artist one inevitable tries to combine the two. This goes both ways. The way of the physiotherapist is to analyse movement, to try to understand and feel how and where the movement takes place. This benefits me, and sometimes, when I do not explain too much, it benefits my students.

***this can only be taught if the patient is genuinely interested, and if not, which is usually the case, basic exercises are taught instead.***

Being a physiotherapist also means that I have patients, people in need of physical rehabilitation. The difference between the average patient and the average student is that the student usually can be goaded into doing an exercise because it teaches you something useful, while the average patient want an exercise that gives maximum, quick result with the least amount of effort. Naturally, the average patient is not interested in the long-term effects of taiji, but is rather focused on being able to go back to the previous life-style that person had lived.

In university we were introduced to a simplified version of taiji that could be taught rather easily to patients. Investigations on similar methods shows that elderly people fall less of ten and take more social interest when doing taiji.

Taiji could also be used for back problems because of the focus of a vertical spine and how the waist muscles are working. This naturally includes single push hands.

Unfortunately this can only be taught if the patient is genuinely interested, and if not, which is usually the case, basic exercises are taught instead.

There are two major fall downs with the Yang Lu'Chan form when it comes to rehabilitation:

1. The fa-jing.
2. It is somewhat difficult to learn.

The first point is easy to amend, just don't do the fa-jing!

The second one is the problem.

In my opinion, the true value of taiji comes when you put the waist- and hip-muscles in

to play, that means the Hao Chuan level of training.

Teaching something less than this, in the knowledge that the person will not try to progress, is not very satisfying.

For me, this problem has been solved in another way. Not willing to dilute taiji I try to find qigong exercises that "stands on their own", that is, that can be done separately rather than being an integrated part in a specific form.

The post exercises, for example, can be integrated in programs for knee and ankle rehabilitation with very good results.

I have found that the qi developing qigong from taiji (double p'eng in to pull down) can be used as a part of a regimen for lower extremity problems as well as shoulder girdle problems.

Actually, the list goes on.

I tend to mix basic strength training exercises with taiji/qigong methods that teaches body/mind-coordination for the best result (like the qigongs associated with the 12 short dim mak forms). One reason for this is that it actually seems to work best this way, another reason is that it is the only legal approach for a phys-

iotherapist in Sweden where the law for bids us to use al ter native therapies but allows an integration.

This integration is only ac cepted if west ern med i cal the ory can ex plain the ef fect.

For physiotherapists at large, taiji is less pop u lar than it was ten years ago and qigong has taken its place.

The uprising of “medical qigong” has led to the situa tion where op por tunists make up their own forms based on (and this is an actual quote!) “the movements that felt best and those that looked most graceful” an sell them to the medical society.

Here is a shame ful at ti tude on be half of west ern trained ther apists.

We (as a group) tend to look down on al ter native ther apists be cause (frankly) too many of them still lack proper train ing. But at the same time it is ac cepted to go a “qigong in structor course” in less than two weeks while an tra di tional organization usually demands at least two years expe ri ence and ba sic train ing in TCM.

This has led to, just as what hap pened to taiji, that qi gong in many cases is degen erated to slow moving Chinese in spired relaxation move ments lacking all but relaxed breath ing and slow, graceful move ments.

For modern man this is enough to give positive bene fits like improved health, but does not give the deeper ef fects on the body that proper qi gong does.

Taiji and qigong does have a place in phys i cal ther apy, both the ex tremely sim pli fied meth ods and the clas sical methods.

The patient/student will gain in prop ortion to the effect of the method presented to him/her.

And al though all will not learn how to fight or what qi can be, most will have a pos i tive ex pe ri ence.

Personally I tend to frown on sim pli fied methods where ef fort is no longer needed but hey, I might be wrong on that one.

*Tomas Waldegren  
Physiotherapist  
Instructor WTBA Sweden*

# Modified Simplified Forms

## *Why you should NOT do any shortened or modified forms of Taijiquan!*

No, you should give up the shortened form immediately as it will eventually damage your body and mind!

The masters of old were genius and they invented a set of movements which emulated the Qi flow in a 24 hour period. In fact during practice of an original form (not a shortened version), we cause the Qi flow to be activated three more times, hence it's great health giving nature. If we were to then leave out postures or change others to different places in the form, the Qi is being activated in all the wrong places to the flow is broken. And it is broken and changed Qi flows in the body that allows illness to slowly come in!

The fa-jing (explosive energy) movements of the Old Yang System provide outlets for Yang Qi that builds up during practice. This is very important as building up too much Yang Qi (by doing all slow movements) then goes in to its opposite of Yin, thus causing 'Yin Dullness' which is what many of the old Chinese masters who only ever did the all slow form died of! So we need

those energy release points. However, having said that, if for instance an older person or someone who is ill learns the all slow moving form, this will only benefit him or her as their body is probably too stiff to begin with. The dangers only come when we are progressing with our form training and everything that is supposed to happen begins to happen. This is the time to then go into the Older Yang Style with its energy release points.

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*Having said all of that, shortened forms are not going to do much damage when taught merely as a set of relaxing movements!*

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Having said all of that, shortened forms are not going to do much damage when taught merely as a set of relaxing movements! For instance where a group of older citizens is taking Tai Chi for their general health and for some easy exercise etc.

The problems come when people get hooked on Tai Chi (and they do!) and wish to take it further to advanced levels of Qi flow and management. Now, it is imperative to learn one of the original forms without any changes.

But why not teach the Yang Cheng-fu form to be gin with? Why give a form to someone that has been modified and therefore inferior when the Yang Cheng-fu form was invented solely so that the elderly and sick people could learn Tai Chi and gain some of the great healing benefits that this wonderful art has to offer.

In modern times when many people see a quick buck in teaching Tai Chi, they learn the simplest and quickest Tai Chi in order to get out there and start earning money, but in doing so do not realize nor do they care that they could be doing damage to their students in the long term.

We have two great original styles of Tai Chi. And anyone no matter what state of health (provided that they can move) or what age can learn one of these to gain much better health, or take it to its higher levels of self defense and medical healing.

You do not have to learn an inferior unhealthy 'style' of Tai Chi as you have everything you need in the Original Styles.



# In the search of healing arts – Reiki

Tomas Waldegren: Sweden

All martial artists are taught that the healing arts traditionally were taught to fighters. Most classical systems of kung fu for example had some healing methods in them.

More so are internal martial artists, usually the fighting form also is the healing form although that is not always the case.

For myself it was the healing art that took me from external to internal in -94, and the fighting art (Erle's two first Dim Mak books) that made me change to Yang Lu'Chan style in -95.

Parallel to this I started to practice qi gong, to be more precise, I spent a few years going through the major so called medical qi gong-styles active in Sweden, looking for the one style that would make me a proficient healer. Well, I found one, but that is another story.

But in this search I started to come across the method called Reiki.

Reiki is a method of laying on hands, thus transferring energy. When done properly you

will act like a channel for the energy and very little or nothing at all will come from you, thus one's own supply of energy is not depleted when treating others. It is usually taught as a non-religious method although there are hints to a Christian background as well as Buddhist. Many Reiki Masters are actually teaching a Theosophist version.

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*This method sounded interesting to me, and yes, after the first weekend I felt the energy going through me and into my clients.*

This method sounded interesting to me, and yes, after the first weekend I felt the energy going through me and into my clients.

How effective the method is as a treatment modality is beyond the focus of my writing today, I will instead speak of the system.

Reiki is normally divided in three levels, level one and two usually taught in one weekend each, level three (called the master level) is sometimes taught in one weekend but usually in four-five spread over maybe a year.

In each level there is an initiation that opens up the system, and some symbols are im-

planted in the person.

The level of information given out varies but it is not unusual for level one-practitioners going away from a weekend having no more true information than the recommended hand positions for the basic treatment. Level two teaches distance healing and the use of symbols in healing.

The master level teaches additional symbols, how to do the actual initiations, and some additional ways to treat clients.

(A note. The serious student of internal arts might ask how long time it takes to become a Reiki Master. The answer is: You can go from total beginner to R.M. in less than one year if you have an available teacher and enough money.)

The lack of information about the substance of the system made me realise, as so many other doing Reiki has done, that a huge amount of information had been lost in the way from Japan – USA – Sweden, and I started to do some research on my own. The conclusion of my studies led me to the belief that Reiki primary is a meditative system based on Buddhist mystic experiences, which, naturally, since humans have reasonable similar minds, parallels what Christian and Muslim mystics has been expe-

riencing the past two millenia. The healing effect is secondary to the potential religious path you are set upon when engaging in Reiki.

Many, if not all, spiritual paths from the east have as their central teaching that one shall be freed from delusion.

Unfortunately, that is not the case with a high percent age of the Reiki practitioners I have met the last years. The idea that "since I have got Reiki I have no use of any other method" is quite prevalent. I have met a man saying that since he became a Reiki Master he no longer had to do his qi gong because every time he treated an other patient he also treated himself.

I find that kind of thinking "interesting", like finding matches in the hands of a small child.

Or perhaps I just lack faith!

Personally, I do taiji, qigong and Reiki meditations.

Taiji because it is the best method I have ever experienced to unite the mind and body, and of course because of the fighting training.

Medical qi gong because practicing a method with the focus of making you a healer does make a difference.

Reiki meditations because they give a glimpse of a spiritual breakthrough, although I must admit that at this moment of time this is not important to me and I tend to spend most on my training on get-

ting the basics correct. There is time for the spiritual path later on when the basic functions of the bodymind are working optimal.

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*Many, if not all, spiritual paths from the east have as their central teaching that one shall be freed from delusion.*

After nine years training in the internal arts I have found out that there are only two shortcuts that actually works:

1) Doing a classical style under a competent teacher.

2) Putting in a lot of time both on the physical part and parallel with that study the theory that explains the method.

Everything else seems to be an illusion, or perhaps, delusion.

As most of you that reads this magazine already know, nine years is a short time practicing, and with accumulated experience more knowledge will come.

Until then, have a great life.

For you who would like to study the different aspects of Reiki including the religious part, my book on the subject might be published in Swedish as soon as I can persuade a publisher that it is worth the effort.

For you non-swedish speakers: Sorry, but do you know how tedious it is to translate a book?

# Scientific Proof for Eating Apples

I have been telling people for years that an apple a day really does keep the Dr., away!

So it is nice to receive some evidence as follows.

The photochemicals in fresh apples could play an important role in the fight against cancer, according to research published in "Nature" (2000, 405, 903).

A team of researchers led by Rui Hai Liu at Cornell University, USA reported that the antioxidant activity of fresh apples is primarily due to the high concentration of particular phytochemicals, namely flavonoids and phenolic acids, contained in the fruit.

The proven antioxidant and possible anticancer activity of Vitamin C means that it is a popular dietary supplement, despite studies showing that a high dose (500 mg) may act as a pro-oxidant in the body. The team of researchers has discovered that 100g of fresh apples has an antioxidant activity equivalent to that of 1.5g of Vitamin C.

Rui and co-workers were able to extract phenolic acids and flavonoids from fresh red delicious apples, finding particularly high concentrations of

the compounds in the not peeled fruit.

They measured the total antioxidant activity of the apples, by carrying out a total antioxidant scavenging capacity (TOSC) assay and found that apples with skin had a higher TOSC value than those without. By comparing the total antioxidant activity of the unpeeled apples (83.3 TOSC) with that of the average level of Vitamin C found in the fruit (0.32 TOSC), the researchers concluded that almost all of the antioxidant activity in apples could be attributed to the photochemical.

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## ***The researchers then treated colon cancer and liver tumor cells with extracts of the Red Delicious apples***

The researchers then treated colon cancer and liver tumor cells with extracts of the Red Delicious apples and found that the cell proliferation was inhibited, with the extracts of unpeeled apples being about 60 percent more efficient at halting cell growth than those of peeled apples.

The researchers suggest that the consumption of whole fruits, containing a mixture of phytochemicals, may provide the antioxidant balance

needed to quench reactive oxygen species.

As Rui says; 'eating fruits and vegetables is better than taking a vitamin pill. You can obtain enough antioxidants from food without worrying about toxicity'.