

Vol. IV, No. IV

July 1989

P.O. Box 630, New Millford, N.Y. 10959

Body Dynamics of Chen Form

by Bob Sharpe

Taijiquan is more than overt movements of the arms and legs into specific martial postures. It is a system of internal body control, consisting of a method of breathing by which the body's intrinsic energy, or "Chi," is used to direct body movement. This body dynamic is the master key to fully developing all of the energies accessible to the Taijiquan player, and a means of greatly increasing one's quality and speed-of-development of Taijiquan play. It also provides a source of martial power that goes beyond merely cleverly manipulating the movements of one's opponent.

Taiji breathing, or "Reverse Breathing," is done as follows: On the inhale, the player expands the chest and contracts the abdomen, simultaneously and making an inward movement of the arms and legs. On the exhale, the player relaxes the chest but expands the abdomen, simultaneously making an outward movement of the arms and legs. On the exhale, the player relaxes the chest but expands the abdomen, simultaneously making an outward movement of the arms and legs. After a time of such practice, usually a few months, the player will begin to notice warm intrinsic energy collecting in the abdomen. This energy, with proper breathing and posture, can be controlled mentally by the player and directed to every part of the body. It is drawn inward on the inhale and exhaled outward on the exhale, in the spiraling manner illustrated in diagram #1 (pg 2).

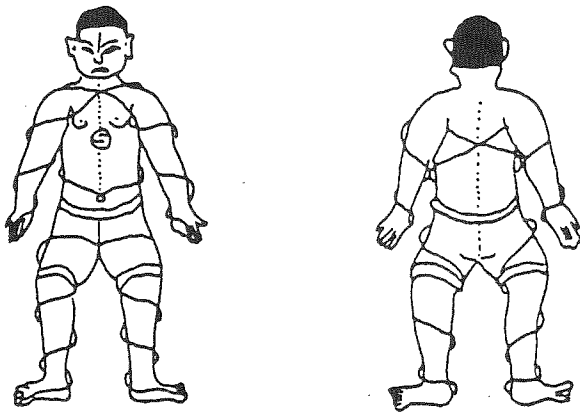


Diagram #1

The key to all movement in Taijiquan, both internally in the body and externally in the postures, as well as in the technique of fighting an opponent, is encapsulated in the yin-yang diagram, #2 below. Observe the circling and spiraling aspect of the lines in the diagram. All Taijiquan movement should be made in this circling and spiraling manner, with a clear distinction between soft and hard, slow and fast, insubstantial and substantial weighting, etc. Taijiquan avoids moving in a straight line.

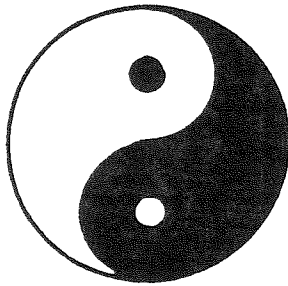


Diagram #2

Taijiquan is also more than mental and physical technique; it is spiritual technique as well. This spirit should be expressed in the postures, the body, the eyes, and particularly, raised to the top of the head. It is most important to hold one's head up. In Master Jou's analogy, "Think of the young kitten, how he learns to hold his head up alertly, how his spirit is indrawn and concentrating on waiting to pounce. He moves the body to get the

intrinsic energy moving in the body, then uses the intrinsic energy to move the extremities." It can happen faster than it takes to say it, and is a matter of timing and closure. When your opponent attacks with a hard motion, adhere to it and evade it, counter attacking to his consequent soft side or motion. Use your mind. As you pick up your opponent's motion, think of the Taijiquan posture you are developing and complete and execute it, then another as required. As the old Chen Masters said, "Study by memory, little by little, and eventually you will have your own way."

To maintain a spiritual aspect and to see things with spiritual eye is continually important. Even when fighting an opponent, it is not the opponent himself, a concrete thing, which one ultimately wishes to control and re-direct. It is the cause of opposition, an abstract thing, with which one grapples. Spirit has no known weight or substance. It is nothingness, but it is undoubtedly the controlling power in the inspired minds of enlightened human beings, and possibly the controlling power behind all things in the universe. When playing Taijiquan, it can be useful to keep this profound and spiritual aspect of life in mind. This enables one to visualize mundane things in their broader perspective, so as to interpret them correctly.

Spirit, though it lacks substance, can be perceived and felt as though it were a tangible thing. It's like a plant, which has growth which can be nourished and improved upon. The way to nourish one's spirit is to train oneself to be mindful of it, to hold one's head and body erect, so as to contain it, and to condition one's mind and body to animate, control, direct and express it. In this way one's innermost potential can be realized in daily life. Taijiquan has been designed over many centuries, in the words of Chang San-Feng, "To enable people to live happier and longer lives, and not merely to perfect the art of hand-to-hand combat."

A Note of Appreciation:

Thanks to everyone who has helped with this year's Chang San Feng Festival. Many people contributed time and energy to prepare for the week-end. Others worked behind the scenes during the festival to keep things flowing! Another thank you goes to everyone who came to attend the festivities. Of course, the names are too many to mention, but you know who you are, and we couldn't have done it without you!

The Tao Series

by Jou, Tsung Hwa

1. **The Tao of Tai Chi Chuan
Way to Rejuvenation**
Third revised edition,
hardcover, \$17.00



2. **The Tao of Meditation
Way to Enlightenment**
hardcover, \$15.00



3. **The Tao of I Ching
Way to Divination**
hardcover, \$20.00



To order the book, send check or money order to:

**Tai Chi Foundation
POB 828
Warwick, NY 10990**

1989 Summer Workshops at the Tai Chi Farm

Master Jou Tsung Hwa:

1. The Master Key to Tai Chi Chuan
July 14-16
2. The Second Chen Routine - July 17-21

Master T.T. Liang:

Push Hands, Yang Long Form, Weapons Forms, and Taoist Philosophy - Aug. 7-11

Mr. B.P. Chan:

Pakua, Hsing I, Chi Kung and Tai Chi Ruler in Tai Chi Farm's lovely Pakua Garden.
August 15-19
(Register Mon. P.M. or Tues. A.M.)

Course Fees - 1989

	Weekend	5-Days
Tuition:	\$85	\$170
Lodging: Cabin	\$20	\$ 40
Camping	\$10	\$ 20

WEEKEND WORKSHOPS – begin at 9:00 A.M. Saturday and end at 3:00 P.M. Sunday, with registration and informal gathering on Friday night.

FIVE-DAY – seminars begin at 9:00 A.M. Monday and end at 12:00 Noon on Friday, with registration and informal gathering Sunday night.

PRE-REGISTRATION FORM — 1989 TAI CHI FARM PROGRAM

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE (_____) _____

SUMMER WORKSHOP

DATES OF COURSE _____

COURSE TITLE _____

CABIN/CAMPING _____

TOTAL AMOUNT _____

NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTION

I am enclosing \$_____ for a subscription to Tai Chi Farm Newsletter. (\$10.00 U.S. / \$15.00 foreign).
(Please send a separate check for your newsletter subscription)

Send To: Tai Chi Farm, P.O. Box 630, New Milford, NY 10959
Please return this Form as Soon as Possible!



TAI CHI FARM
P.O. Box 630
New Milford, NY 10959

Postage Paid
Permit 124
Non-Profit Rate
Warwick, NY 10990

Jay Dunbar
P.O. Box 7
Carrboro, NC 27510

Please Notify Tai Chi Farm if Your Address Changes