



GUANG PING
YANG TAI CHI ASSOCIATION

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HONORARY CHAIRMAN Y.C. CHIANG

Dear Guang Ping Yang Tai Chi Members:



In the March installment of the Universal Post, I talked about the importance of understanding how standing meditation and the dynamic quality of stillness is integral to the process of learning Tai Chi efficiently. In my classes I want students to achieve an inner experience of stillness in motion by applying every device (trick) I can to release the mind's grip on the body's

experience. The goal is to allow the body to glide and flow with the movements without the encumbrances of preconceived motions of what it looks like from the "outside." Then the movements, with proper coaching, effortlessly flow from a direct sense of the body's own wisdom. I talk my students through the process like a guided meditation – encouraging them to stop thinking about the experience, and just experience the experience by letting go of all intentional goals. I use visual and verbal metaphors to accomplish this.

Metaphors become the best device to grasp concepts and experiences that cannot be explained literally. The use of metaphors, we need to remind ourselves, are merely devices, tools, vehicles to get us to our destination, not a final resting place. In fact, I often rhetorically ask my students "how would you describe what you are feeling when moving through a particular movement?" I look for the right responses in their metaphors. Master Y.C. Chiang often uses metaphors and similes to emphasize the quality of the experiences he is trying to convey. The eyes must be alert like a "cat ready to pounce," the body like "clay moving through honey," the arms like "twisting rebar." The poetry of the Tai Chi classics consistently reminds us that Tai Chi, "flows like a great river." My task as a teacher is



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FROM YOUR EXECUTIVE TEAM

Greetings fellow T'ai Chi players!

We hope you are well, enjoying your practice, and making preparations to attend the Annual Conference October 5th, 6th, and 7th at the Quails' Inn Resort, Lake San Marcos. We also want to take this opportunity to publicly welcome our newest board members, Tricia Boucher of Oakland, CA, and Marilyn Mathews of New Milford, NJ. Tricia joined the board in April and Marilyn's first meeting was in May. They bring with them great life experiences and welcome, fresh energy and ideas. They've joined us during peak load season (there's an energy crisis even here!) and are, as you might expect, quite busy getting familiar with works in progress and learning the lay of the land, so to speak. In addition, Tricia has taken on the position of Board Secretary, a brave soul indeed! Look for them at the conference and introduce yourselves. Welcome Tricia and Marilyn!

The entire board has been busy and very focused on getting ready for the October Convention in San Diego. Our conference team (Nina Sugawara, Dominick Ruggieri, and Nick D'Antoni) has really pulled out all the stops and put together an exciting lineup of teachers and classes. There is something for everyone, something at every level, and plenty of time for us all to share with each other informally. It is always gratifying and inspirational to find so many wonderful teachers willing to contribute their time to our association - that really means for all of you. Please plan to join us in October for what promises to be an absolutely terrific event.

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FOREVER MY SIFU...KURO LIEN YING BY HENRY LOOK

Grandmaster Kuo Lien Ying, forever my Sifu. In the old Chinese saying; “One day your Sifu, forever your father.” In the years I studied with Sifu, I was taught the important value axiom on the five virtues of life: Loyalty, Respect, Humility, Honesty and Integrity. He often reminded me of the five major important values while practicing “Kung-Fu.”

1. Economy - Make your movements brief and effective.
2. The Shortest Distance Between Two Points - Keep the movements simple and direct.
3. Curb Temperament - Be at peace always.
4. Have patience, nurture with serenity - Blank the mind without anxiety.
5. “Tsuang Zhong,” standing meditation, the “Universal Post” is the highest ultimate training for internal martial arts, without which, all your training will be in vain and become useless.

After more than 30 years since I first met Sifu, today my memory of him is still very vivid and clear. My fondest memory was his always smiling eyes with a happy contentment. He enjoyed the daily associations with his students at the park or in the studio. Often times, he was very playful and humorous, especially early in the mornings when he came out to the park. Reflecting back on the many years of good memories, I'd like to share them with all my Guang Ping Tai Chi family and friends. Before I relate the memorable events which I personally experienced with him, a brief history of Grandmaster Kuo is in order.

Kuo Lien Ying was born in Inner Mongolia, Northern China in 1895. His father was a silk merchant, and the family was independently wealthy. In his youth, Kuo had no interest whatsoever in literary education. All he wanted in life was, Kung Fu, Kung Fu and more Kung Fu.

At the tender age of 12, he started training in Northern Style Shaolin Kung-Fu. Within a few short years, he became very proficient and skillful with the art. At the age of 23, he studied Guang Ping Yang Tai Chi Chuan, and lastly, at age 28, he entered into the study of Hsing-Yi Chuan and Ba-Gua Chang. Through many years of dedication and practice, he became a master of Tai Chi Chuan, Hsing-I Chuan and Ba-Gua Chang.

Before the turmoil years of the Communist take over in China, shortly after the Second World War, Kuo migrated to Taiwan. In 1965, he immigrated to the United States and settled in San Francisco's Chinatown. After less than a year of teaching Kung-Fu on a hotel roof top, he went back to Taiwan to bring his 21 year old bride to this country.

During his absence, his many loyal students in San Francisco found an empty store, adjacent to a funeral parlor in an alley facing Portsmouth Square Park. The empty store was available because Chinese people are superstitious and will not rent a place next to a mortuary. Kuo often said: “Don't worry about dead people, worry about live ones.”

As a welcome homecoming surprise for the honeymooners, his loyal students secretly converted the store into a Kung Fu studio. The front section is a 16 feet by 32 feet teaching studio, complete with seven feet high mirrors on the entire length of the left wall. Above the mirrors, a series of enlarged black and white framed photos of Sifu in different martial art postures. The living quarters, in the rear with a large light well, provided natural light for the kitchen; adjacent to it, a dining table in the hallway. The bedrooms are on each side of the hallway with curtained windows looking out to the studio. Near the front entrance to the right, the stairs lead to a full basement where dozens of smelly t-shirts and sweatshirts could be found hanging on rope across the room in the back. Occasionally, it was tough to do “secret practice” walking the Ba-Gua circle in the stench filled basement. A year later, the new bride blessed Sifu with his youngest son, Chun-Mei Kuo.

During my years with Sifu, I've had the good fortune to experience the many memorable events which I still hold vividly in my mind today. Fond memories were many, here are some of my favorites:

Some quiet early mornings, when Sifu was in a happy mischievous mood, he would come out smiling to us as we say in chorus “Sifu Jiow!” (Good Morning!). He would smile and return our salutation “Jiow, Jiow!” As he walks very casually in front of us, while we were half asleep doing warming up exercises in front of the bank of elevators, without warning, he suddenly sprang into action and pulled open his snap-button jacket, with a twist of his shoulders at lightning speed, a *rope-dart* projected out from his body flying towards its' target... **BONG!** hitting a nearby metal lamp post, or **SLOOPE!** the dart penetrated into a nearby giant tree trunk. The surprise wakes everyone into attention, then he would walk around with a mischievous smile and twirl the *rope-dart* with precision movements around his neck, shoulders, arms, elbows and feet. Naturally, we were always very impressed with his surprise demonstrations. The *rope-dart* was his secret weapon while riding “**Shot Gun**” guarding gold and silver ship-

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ments across the country in horse drawn wagons.

Occasionally, in the midst of the quiet morning calms, he would clear his lungs with a belching sound coming from his dan tien...

EEER! pigeons around the park would take flight. I'm sure the same sound woke up many of residents living in apartments around the park.

One of Sifu's dining pleasures was eating Sashimi, raw fish, drinking Sake at Yamato, his favorite Japanese restaurant in Chinatown. As we know, Japanese restaurants, in general, are traditionally a quiet atmosphere with quiet diners. One evening, Sifu, wife Simu Kuo, son Chung Mei and I had dinner together at Yamato. While enjoying the fresh raw fish, complimenting the morsels with hot sake, Sifu all of a sudden clears his lung with **EEER!**, the thundering sound vibrates the dining room like an earthquake! When I looked around, in great embarrassment, I saw one diner had dropped her chopsticks, another spilled hot soup on her dress, one old lady dropped her bowl of rice on the floor! After all that excitement, Sifu and his family continued on with their dinner without a clue that all the diners were looking at our table.

On the way out of the restaurant, I apologized to the owner about 5 year-old Chung-Mei running around like a living terror interrupting diners. The restaurant owner, a friend and client (I designed their Yamato restaurant at the Century Plaza Hotel in Southern California) said "Our whole restaurant staff is afraid to complain to Master Kuo for fear he would break our necks!"

One day nearing the Thanksgiving Holiday, I walked into my favorite Chinese grocery market in Chinatown, Ping Yuen Market, which specializes in Barbecued Duck, Chicken, Pork and many take out cooked Chinese Dishes. Sifu Kuo was ordering a twenty pound barbecued turkey. I asked, "Sifu, are you having a Thanksgiving dinner party?" He said; "No, I don't like turkey because the meat is too tough and dry, but my son Chung-Mei loves to eat it, lots of meat, not much bones." Here he ordered a twenty pound turkey for three people!

Occasionally, I see Sifu Kuo walking through Chinatown. With his great presence and straight robust posture, many Chinese citizens around Chinatown recognized and greeted him with great respect, especially shop owners along Grand Ave. He was a much respected personality in the community.

Every morning whenever I practice my Tai Chi, I am forever grateful to my great mentor, Sifu, for his unselfish guidance and sharing of friendship. I shall always remember and be thankful for his planting the seed from which my Tai Chi Tree continues to mature, continues to grow and become forever green.

Each year in the month of June, Guang Ping students and friends gather together for the Annual Kuo Lien Ying Memorial at Portsmouth Square in San Francisco's Chinatown to pay our respect and honor him. When we perform Tai Chi exercises together, I can always sense his presence and spirit smiling down upon us....it reminds me of the weekends when he was so detailed in correcting our forms. When we finished, he always ended the session with a "**How**"!, (Good!), slowly he would walk away with a quiet giant smile of approval on his face.

Forever my Sifu, thank you and I miss you!



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As you know, each year's conference has been something special and unique, often building on the energy, ideas, and momentum of the previous year, sometimes taking new turns and opening new doorways of experience. This year will be no exception. We are building on last year's efforts to incorporate a wider perspective by bringing Rick Barrett back for his phenomenal Push Hands Workshop. At the same time we are returning with renewed focus on the Guang Ping set, trying to provide some useful new skills that are concrete enough to be taken home, taken to heart, and worked on to help us all improve the quality of our practice. For the first time, as you've probably already noticed, we are offering some sessions which have restrictions and/or pre-requisites. We ask that you do your best to honestly assess your level of practice before signing-up for one of the "advanced students" sessions. We have built the schedule so that there is only one "restricted" offering in any time block.

It has long been the board's desire to do a better job of providing additional support for our members who teach. We're hard at work on several ideas and will be "unveiling" them, at least some of them, soon. Let me offer a sneak preview by saying that, among many other ideas, we're planning to launch a listing of teaching members on the website (only for those with a paid-up "Teacher" membership) and there have been serious discussions of the POSSIBILITY of an association certification for teachers of Guang Ping Yang T'ai Chi. However, as a first step, there will be several sessions on this year's conference schedule which have been designed to be of particular interest to teachers: Don Rubbo's "Methods and Principles," a panel discussion on "Teaching the Aged and the Infirm," and a demonstration/discussion on "Comparative Form." Each of these is intended to boost our success at fostering the kind of productive sharing of techniques and experiences that teachers can especially benefit from.

In order to make it easier for those who wish to upgrade their existing "Individual Membership" to a "Teachers Membership," we are offering the **Conference 2001 Teachers' Upgrade Special**. We'll "**bump you up**" for a flat \$10.00 fee. You'll not only be able to

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TAKING A TAI CHI STEP FROM STUDENT TO TEACHER BY RANDY ELIA

During the past year, Karen Onny and Marilyn Mathews started teaching Beginning Tai Chi at the Peter Kwok's Kung Fu Academy in Emerson, NJ. Although they have very different backgrounds in teaching adults, their experiences as they moved from student to teacher were very similar. They recently met with me to talk about their experiences:

GPYTCA: What was your reaction when Sifu Randy Elia asked you to begin teaching?

Karen Onny (KO): I was so honored and really ecstatic to begin teaching. Then reality hit and I got scared. I kept thinking "what if I forget what I'm doing when I'm in front of the class?"

Marilyn Mathews (MM): I was excited but it took me a while to really feel comfortable with teaching Tai Chi. I've taught for a long time but I think it is quite hard to teach to your peers. I was also afraid that I would give up being a student when I took on the teacher role and I really love doing Tai Chi too much to give up my personal study.



GPYTCA: Have you given up studying Tai Chi?

MM: No, I actually learn as much teaching as I do being a student. However, Karen and I are both very up front about our need to be students.

GPYTCA: What did you find hard when you first began teaching classes?

KO: Well, it really came down to being terrified of teaching people who had been taking class longer than I. I kept wondering if they would rather have Randy teaching than me. But I feel there is a great benefit to having more than one teacher. It opens you up to new pathways.

GPYTCA: How did you overcome your fear?

KO: I actually began teaching Kripula Yoga at about the same time. This gave me the opportunity to practice my teaching skills with two groups of people and get feedback in different areas. They really let me know how I was doing. It was great when they told me how much they liked class. So I just had to let go of any resistance I held inside me. You know, just stop listening to those little voices inside your head that say "You can't do this."

MM: I began teaching at another location, so I was able to develop my format with total strangers. I worried about not being able to explain the moves in enough detail so people would understand and yet not overwhelm them with too much description. But I found that "talking less" really "is more" and I was able to streamline my commentary much to everyone's relief.

KO: We both worried about not being able to demonstrate the moves well.

MM: That was a big issue for me. I always have problems with my kicks, but I decided it is helpful for beginners to know that teachers aren't perfect all the time. I just tell them there are energy fields that disrupt the Tai Chi flow from time to time.

KO: We both try to inject some humor into our classes to put new people at ease and just generally to lighten up the atmosphere.

GPYTCA: What has been your greatest strength as a new teacher?

KO: I really try "to be there" for the students, to talk and listen to all of them either before or after class. I focus about 65% of my awareness during class on them to make sure they are getting the moves. The other 35% I focus on me to make sure I'm on track with what I want to accomplish in that class.

MM: I think of it as "giving up myself" to the class. In other words, being completely focused on making the class environment good for learning, doing what ever it takes to meet the students' needs and covering the information I planned for that class.

GPYTCA: So what have you learned?

KO: Teaching keeps bringing me back to my center. As you become more empathetic with your students, you become more forgiving of yourself. Teaching and doing Tai Chi is about letting go and seeking Wuji.

Karen Onny is a certified Kripula Yoga Instructor

Marilyn Mathews is a Training & Development Consultant



NATIONAL QIGONG DAY BY JOANNA SCHOON

Sensible people would probably have just stayed at home on Saturday April 7, 2001 with all the rain coming down throughout Orange County and not a patch of clear sky anywhere. But you have to realize Taiji and Qigong folks just aren't typical, especially when it comes to an event of global impact, like WORLD T'AI CHI and QIGONG DAY.

Being the organizer of the event at Irvine Valley College, I went to the outdoor site at 8:00 am, prepared to go ahead with our plans, just in case it might clear up. Although it stopped raining for awhile, it started coming down steadily just before 9:00 am, our scheduled starting time. I knew we would not be able to hold it outside on the lawn as planned. People started gathering despite the rain, so we moved over to the classroom which I usually teach from 8:00 am - 10:00 am on Saturday mornings. It was too small for the event but we had to get out of the rain. One of my dedicated students stood outside in the rain and directed people still arriving over to the new location. When we got to the room, I realized that canceling was not going to be an option. So many people had arrived. All of the scheduled workshop leaders and demonstrators showed up as well, that we had go on with the program, though I expected it to be an abbreviated one, since another class was scheduled to use the room at 10:00 am. But, the Chinese Lion Dance (a new addition this year) performed by the Lo Han Lion Dance Team must have brought us the luck we needed; as it turned out that the Dean of the School of Health Sciences, PE & Athletics for Irvine Valley College was there and she was able to arrange a room for us after moving around some regularly scheduled classes.

So World T'ai Chi and Qigong Day at Irvine Valley College went off despite the weather, though a little more disorganized than I had envisioned. We didn't have the nice stage and PA system, or the flowers, bamboo, and fans for decorations, or the tables for the teachers to display their class information. But we did have about 90 - 100 enthusiastic people who managed to find us, despite the rain and the continual change of rooms. We were able to go with the expanded program this year, which involved more teachers, new demonstrations, and a choice of free workshops. Rose Ting was back again by popular demand to start us off with her rousing qigong exercises, followed by a centering and calming Standing Meditation led by Valarie Prince. As the entire group performed T'ai Chi and Qigong together, the room filled with palpable energy!

Everyone enjoyed a good time and marveled at the flexibility and good fortune which made it all possible. This was one of those times that the old adage applies "when things aren't going the way you planned, just T'ai Chi it!"

JoAnna Gee Schoon
National Advisor to the GPYTC Association
Taiji Instructor for Irvine Valley College



The picture to the right shows JoAnna offering "lettuce" to lure the Lion which brought us luck on a rainy World Tai Chi & Qigong Day in Irvine, CA.



ANNOUNCING NEW BOARD MEMBERS

The Guang Ping Yang Tai Chi Association would like to take this time to proudly announce two new additions to the board of directors, Tricia Boucher and Marilyn Mathews.

Tricia Boucher is a new board member and Secretary for the organization. She has an advanced degree from the Graduate Theological Union at UC Berkeley and currently manages the library there. She has studied Tai Chi under Fu-Tung Cheng for the past four years at the Berkeley Buddhist Monastery. As a beginner, she entered in two local competitions, one in San Francisco and one at U.C. Berkeley and won first and third places respectively in the "forms" competition in the Guang Ping category. She has been participating in our annual get conventions and remains committed to her practice and the advancement of Guang Ping Yang Tai Chi.

Guang Ping also welcomes Marilyn L. Mathews from the east coast, Marilyn has 30 years experience in education. As a national staff member of the Girl Scouts of the USA, she conducts courses focusing on management skills, diversity, organizational development, and fund development. She has designed Internet based training and currently works with an Instructor-of-Trainers certification program. She has been a student of Randy Elia of Peter Kwoks Kung Fu for six years and has been teaching Tai Chi for two years. Marilyn has taught physical education, k-12 in public schools and at the university level. In addition she has been a curator of education at an art museum. She has a B.S. in physical education from East Stroudsburg State College in Pennsylvania and an art education certification at the College of Great Falls in Montana.

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attend the "Teachers" conference sessions, but you'll automatically be included in our "on-line" listing of teachers and be notified of all future special offers for teachers only. All you need to do is make a note on your conference registration and either include the additional \$10 in your payment by check or, if you're paying by credit card, we'll add the \$10 upgrade fee when we process your registration charge. Simple and painless! At this time, the only eligibility requirement for a "Teachers Membership" is that you are, with the permission of your own teacher of course, actively engaged in teaching Guang Ping Yang Style Tai Chi and related practices.

October is usually a very beautiful time of year in the San Diego area. If you can, it's a good time to bring your family and plan to spend a couple of extra days. Of course there are the beautiful Southern California beaches, but don't forget Sea World, the world famous San Diego Zoo, Wild Animal Park, and tons of fabulous shopping and dining opportunities in the area. Just a bit north of San Diego proper, there is also Lego Land (for both the little ones and the little-ones-at-heart!), and of course within an hour's drive you can take your pick of ocean shores, desert sands, or mountain evergreens. So how

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TOURNAMENT NEWS

We would also like to congratulate the following Tai Chi Players for their outstanding successes in competition:

Gary Rosenblum - Peter Kwoks Kung Fu Academy - Gold Medal Intermediate Division Guang Ping Yang Division International /Kuoshu Tournament at Hunt Valley Maryland 2000.

Dennis Glanfield - China Hand Kung Fu Academy - Gold Medal Tai Chi Saber & Bronze Medal Guang Ping Yang, in the Open Yang Division, The Bash Kung Fu Tournament, New York, NY, June 2001.

Khadi Madama - China Hand Kung Fu Academy - though not Tai Chi but Shaolin Kung Fu, won a Bronze Medal in Women's Weapons (Fan Form), The Bash Kung Fu Tournament, New York, NY, June 2001.



OTHER TOURNAMENT NEWS

We are pleased to announce the Guang Ping Yang has been formally recognized as a separate style in the Yee's Hung Ga Kung Fu Tournament to be held September 29, 2001, Teaneck, NJ.

Though The Bash and Yee's Kung Fu have been focusing on external arts, they are encouraging more internal arts to participate in their tournaments. This year The Bash even had a division for Moving Push Hands and announced its' intentions to expand its' internal divisions.

Editor s Corner

**Please feel free to submit your articles to the
Universal Post.**

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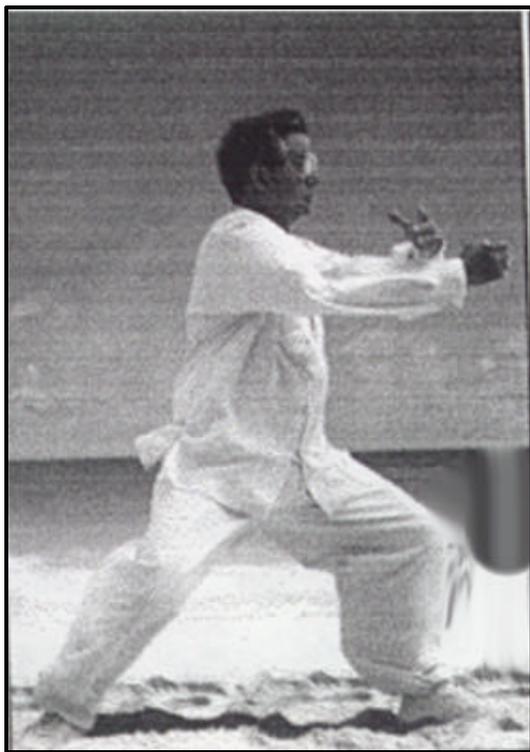
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COMPLETE GUANG PING FORM BY DAVE CATER, INSIDE KUNG FU



Look Moon Hung, better known as Henry Look, was born in Sacramento, California, in 1927. He was the fifth of seven children to Look Yiu and Look Sun Kum. In 1929, his family moved to Canton, China, but returned nine years later when Japanese bombers began pelting the Chinese Countryside

A strapping teenager who ran track, played basketball and soccer, Look was a natural fit when the Marines enlisted his services during World War II. Not surprisingly, he was sent to Tsing Tao, where he toiled in the intelligence section and worked as a translator.

Following the war, Look attended Cal-Berkeley and graduated with a degree in architecture. As one of the world's most respected architects, Look created a unique niche by mastering the art of designing Japanese restaurants. Among his finest creations are Inagiku at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York, the Yamato at the Century Plaza Hotel in Los Angeles and 26 worldfamous Benihana establishments.

The stress of a highly demanding work schedule finally began taking its toll. Doctors told Master Look that unless he found a peaceful diversion, he was heading for trouble. He was exposed to martial arts through his uncles while living in China. But it wasn't until a chance meeting with professor Kuo Lien Ying at a park in Portsmouth Square in San Francisco's Chinatown that the internal flame was lit.

Professor Kuo, the son of a silk merchant, was a master of a little known internal martial art called Guang Ping Tai Chi. At the time, 40 - 50 people joined Professor Kuo for his early morning classes. Professor Kuo was 80; at the time, skinny, yet robust and vibrant. But there was nothing meek or mild about his skills. He had the hands of a surgeon - soft, sure, dedicated.

One story illustrates his immense internal energy. One day while Look was hurrying to leave the studio, he and Professor Kuo bumped into each other at the doorway. Professor Kuo sent Look flying back 12 feet - 16 feet. Professor Kuo is considered one of the greatest internal stylists of all time - someone so far ahead of his time - students only now are discovering the depth of his knowledge.

For Look, Guang Ping Tai Chi was just what the doctor ordered. It provided the perfect panacea for a busy life that found him jetting from San Francisco to Tokyo at a moment's notice. He began feeling better, looking healthier and performing at levels he never thought possible.

It was a pleasant surprise to Master Look, but not to those who practiced the art in China. They had discovered the amazing curative benefits of Tai Chi more than a century earlier. During the Ching dynasty of the late 1800s, Tai Chi, was a secret family art. The civil unrest of that period sent the few competent teachers into hiding.

But it took someone with courage and foresight to introduce Tai Chi to the masses. That man was Yang Lu Chan, a fiesty young student whose love of the art was greater than his fear of reprisal. Yang Lu Chan is credited with creating Yang Style Tai Chi, the most popular internal art in the world. He also laid the groundwork for Guang Ping Tai Chi, which derives its name from a walled in city in Shanzi province.

Yang Lu Chan created the universal Yang Style for the masses. But his real passion lay in Guang Ping, a style as martial as it was peaceful. He passed all of his knowledge of Guang Ping to his second son, Yang Ban Hou, who then taught Wang Juo Yu. From

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PROFOUND OBSERVATIONS BY DAPHNE FIELDS

No doubt, we all have had fun little experiences like these from our psychic body, if you follow the generally accepted general theory B.K. Francis sets out in his commentary on the 8 bodies. Anyway, I enjoy them and others might share theirs too.

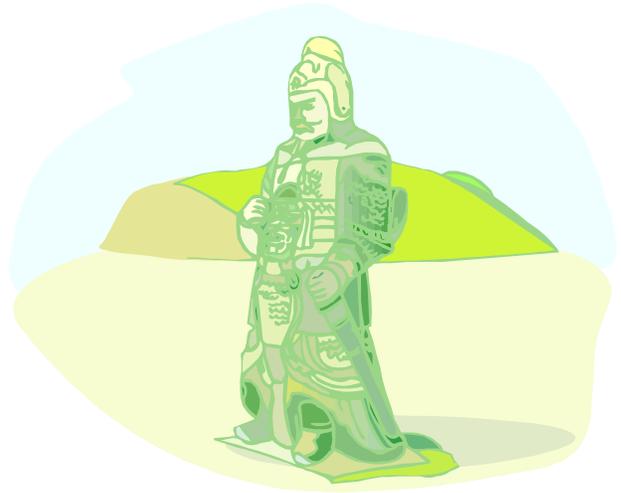
So, there's three recent experiences I wanted to share, two of them a similar experience that represent a fun part of my training these days. Like chi, they come when they want and like chi, you can only hold them as they gleam if you're very very "soft." I know those of us who have practiced long years have these experiences and it might be entertaining to share them.

My first story starts early, 4:00 am or 5:00 am, too early in one way. Why I can't sleep anymore when there's light in the sky I do not know but it is a good time to practice. It is often when my sleepiness dulls the active mental part of me that my qi gong is best; I can sense qi best. I can make little gains that would elude me if I was grasping after those gains in a wakeful state that makes us humans sometimes—lets face it— such a pain in the neck. It was one such morning last week that I worked on a practice where you circle your energy around and around in your body, in one direction, dozens of times, then the other way. After I had dutifully done this exercise, that bores part of me to tears despite the clearer sense of qi that increases with each practice, I lay on the couch. Very sleepy, still I persevered with some training and focused my attention on the third eye area (that Y.C. tapped at the 99 convention, saying, "that's next") and guided my breath and qi in through the third eye and out the bai hui and vice versa. Then all of a sudden, there was this pinkish purple mist in little wispy clouds coming out of my forehead - whoa - this is neat, mmm... all of a sudden a little more awake! Then I realize, at the same instant that if I wanted to maintain this strange but exciting little phenomenon, I was going to have to keep it cool, maintain the meditative state I was in, quietly observe and not push, which I actually managed to do for another few minutes or so.

My second begins in class. It's close to the end of the seniors ladies class in Castlegar. We have a beautiful space there - 2 walls of mirrors, wood floor and a good sound system. I love that group, several of whom have studied with me there for 5 or 6 years. There's birdsong in the music I'm playing as we weave our way through the graceful moves of the form. All of a sudden, I'm not me. I'm a creature of nature, not human, but I speak the human language - oddly enough it seems at that moment and also, odd, yet wonderful that some of these human creatures understand me! This sense of being some other creature of nature lasted about a minute. It was good because even though I felt like a tiny creature and definitely a minority creature, with little voice. I was surrounded by a strength that one might feel from being in the middle of an old and healthy forest, maybe I was a bird.

Finally, a more dramatic one, was when a Buddha jumped out of my solar plexus when I was doing the 5 Star Qi Gong looking out onto the Rockies - that was amazing. I talked with a Buddhist mediation teacher about it much later and he says it represents a certain stage on the path. Who knows, anyway, its fun and its the reality, isn't it, that we are all one.

My Tai Chi House



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there, the mantle of leadership belonged to professor Kuo Lien Ying.

Professor Kuo unveiled a style to the West that combined all the positive aspects of Yang Style with qualities that added strength and versatility. Guang Ping's stances were lower and wider than Yang Style but not as pronounced as Chen style. A stronger, more balanced foundation gave the student more power and greater flexibility.



Professor Kuo's version also featured a healthy diet of Hsing-I and Bagua, which can be seen in Guang Ping's spiral force energy and projecting force energy theories. After seven years with Professor Kuo, Master Look began studying with I-chuan master Hsing Yuen Han. Founded by Wang Hsiang Zhai, I-chuan is the standing meditation segment of Hsing-I. Wang Hsiang Zhai's teacher was Kuo Yun Shun, considered the greatest Hsing-I fighter of all time.

By this time, Master Look was splitting his time between martial arts and architecture. Sparked by Professor Kuo's Guang Ping and Hsing Yi and Han's I-chuan, Master Look soaked in every ounce of knowledge from internal masters throughout the San Francisco area, and for internal arts, there was no better place to learn and train than the Bay area.

Despite studying under some of the best, Master Look's search for knowledge had not been satisfied. He remembered a conversation he once had with Professor Kuo,

who told him the only martial artist he respected in China was professor Pung Shi Yu.

Professor Yu died three years after coming to the United States, but his internal energy skills continue to be a topic of much discussion. Rarely has anyone seen such sheer strength and power coming from one who barely seemed to move. The joy of becoming closer to the secrets of internal energy were shattered in 1984 when death claimed not only Professor Yu, but also Master Han and Professor Kuo.

Master Look took these deaths very hard. But he also realized the future of Guang Ping rested in his capable hands. If not him, then who? If not now, then when? Look's first organized classes were part of a local parks and recreation program. His first formal San Francisco school opened in 1990. In 1993, he founded Tri Internal Martial Arts in Sacramento, California, which grew to 140 students in less than two years.

TIMA's curriculum teaches Guang Ping form and applications as well as Hsing-I's I-chuan. Using Professor Kuo's teaching as a floorplan, Master Look's Guang Ping emphasizes efficiency and economy. In other words, the shortest distance between two points is a straight line.

He also incorporated his architectural and engineering theories into his martial arts. He viewed the body as a structure. The foundation was the root. Without firm rooting, the power is diminished, the strength limp and ineffective. Guang Ping is like a willow tree in gale force winds. Unlike the mighty pine, which has no give, the willow bends and flows to the prevailing breezes.

Guang Ping is a wonderful mix of the old and new. It is a martial art with many faces, but only one design - to help you discover the secret to inner peace and health throughout life.

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to suggest the verbal catalyst that solidifies an experience of feeling in the students. So, how to begin this process? I'll elaborate on the previous summary. In my classes, after completing their basic stretching and kicking exercises, I ask my students to:

- 1.) To stand in the classic "ready" position to begin Tai Chi – hands to the side, back plumb, as though a string from the sky is pulling up the head and the buttocks and lower back are counter-weighting the pull upward.
- 2.) Relax as thoroughly and systematically as possible.
- 3.) Give oneself an "inner smile," as though you are privy to an inside joke.
- 4.) Slowly focus on the breath while being conscious of the tan-tien and the rising and falling of the abdomen.
- 5.) Then I ask them, without changing their external position in the least, to slowly begin tightening and stiffening up with their muscles, as though performing an isometric exercise with the entire body. The body must feel as though it has fallen under the spell of a seizure. I count slowly and methodically to the count of ten. At ten, the student should feel as stiff and taut as a board, **everywhere**. The idea is to slowly ramp up the latent tension way beyond "normal" tension, then slowly release from that higher state of tension to a state of relaxation way beyond "normal" relaxation.
- 6.) I then proceed to slowly count down from 10 back to zero. Asking the students to release and relax their muscles and minds at the same pace as they tensed them.
- 7.) I continue to count down beyond zero, -1, -2, -3, -4, etc. Sometimes I stop at minus ten, and sometimes I continue to reverse count fading out like the ringing in a once struck bell. Still they have not ostensibly changed positions, but the resonant state of tensing and relaxing and releasing becomes apparent.

By experience, the usual response is that one becomes considerably more relaxed because you feel the process of releasing as a continuum – not as static "state of relaxation." In other words the dynamic of relaxation and tension is a flow – like an electronic AC/DC current, not a dead, lifeless, limp wire. I ask the student to continue whatever it is they are "doing" or "not doing" to achieve the feeling they have at minus five of the countdown. As one "lets go" at subtler and subtler levels the amplitude between tense state and relaxed state becomes a barely discernable hum; then it becomes dynamic silence.

Once students are used to incorporating this method of simple arms-at-the-sides standing, I then introduce the process of allowing the arms to rise slowly with each breath up to the classic "Embracing Nature," Universal Post Stance using the least amount of energy as possible. If I feel there is understanding and experience of the enjoyment and the "comfort" of standing meditation, then this is where we begin the first movement – slipping the body ship of dynamic stillness into the silent stream of the Tai Chi Form.

This is the point where I find it so critical to introduce the right feeling into the learning of the form--especially with our style of Guang Ping Yang. Because of its inherently sparse, martial flavor, our form can often be interpreted by well meaning students to be inherently abrupt and staccato-like. It seems to me that just the opposite tendency must be encouraged; use our straight, sparse style to flow as smoothly and seamlessly as possible. Only then will one be able to find all the "hidden" spirals and subtle blocks that exist within the form.

My favorite metaphor that I use (so much so that it may have lost its effectiveness with my older students) to begin the form is the Pendulum. I typically use this in conjunction with the classic "string holding you up" image. I ask the student to visualize the sus-

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This membership will entitle you to quarterly issues of the **Universal Post Newsletter** which is full of interesting history, facts, and information about Guang Ping and Tai Chi. Send your payment today to help support the Guang Ping Yang Tai Chi Association or to renew your membership! If you have any questions, please call the membership coordinator, Valarie Prince, (949) 460-9654, c/o Kuang Ping School of Tai Chi, P.O. Box 1528, Laguna Beach, CA 92652.

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can you resist this fantastic opportunity and amazing sales pitch?!?!
By the way, the hotel informs us that rooms are going fast, so please make your room reservations **ASAP**. Thanks!

We're eagerly anticipating all the fun and good work of the conference and look forward to seeing you all there.

Many Blessings,

Nina Sugawara & Nick D'Antoni

MISSION STATEMENT GUANG PING YANG TAI CHI ASSOCIATION

To promote, perpetuate, develop interest in, and preserve the quality of Guang Ping Yang Style T'ai Chi Chuan throughout the world, and to provide support for research and education in Guang Ping Yang T'ai Chi in honor of the memory of Sifu Kuo Lien Ying, who brought Guang Ping to the United States, and in commemoration of his unselfish sharing of his many skills.

EVENTS

July 16 - August 10, 2001 - 5 Tigers Martial Arts Summer Training Camp - Call Donald & Cheryl Lynne Rubbo - 415-456-9095.

July 21 & 22, 2001 - The Mind-Body Energy Connection with Leo Fong & Randy Elia - Call Peter Kwoks Kung Fu Academy 201-967-0790.

August 4 & 5, 2001 - 2001 U.S. Open Kuoshu & Martial Arts Championship presented by Grandmasters Richard Lee and Lily Lau - Call 925-686-2229 or 510-339-7775 for info. Henry Look is the head judge for the internal arts division.

September 8, 2001 - Tai Chi Fa Jing & Qigong Workshop with Randy Elia - Call China Hand Kung Fu Academy 732-920-0605.

October 11, 2001 - I Ching Workshop - An "How To" Class with Sifu Mark Gates - Call China Hand Kung Fu Academy 732-920-0605.

October 27, 2001 Paul D. Pickens II Research Foundation Fund Raiser - Call Donald & Cheryl Lynne Rubbo - 415-456-9095.



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pendulum actually between and *beneath* their feet. The “string” extends through the spine, out the crown of the head, and continues toward the sky. As one begins the weight shift from weight-between-the-legs to all the weight on one leg, I want the student to feel the pendulum shifting toward and underneath the weighted leg. The “string” is moving *absolutely vertical and plumb with the pendulum*—which, of course, means that the sacrum, spine, neck and head will move in perfect alignment over the leg. I try to induce the understanding that every part of the body, but especially the lower back and sacrum, must feel relaxed and *comfortable*, as relaxed and comfortable as when standing at “minus ten.” Any direction change that takes place at this time must be accompanied by a rotation of the waist and therefore the pendulum. Any extension of the opposite leg must be accompanied by a sinking of the body and therefore the pendulum. The idea is to *not* let the pendulum “swing”. The idea is to have the body moving so evenly that an imaginary cup, filled to the brim with water, would not slosh a drop over the edge because of tilt, yaw, or pitch. This takes care of the tendency of “clunking” with every extended step required by our form. This evens out all the rising and falling and dipping of the body; and finally, this enables the student to nurture a deep sense of the calm, eye-of-the-hurricane, dynamic Guang Ping.

At the convention this October, I hope to make more of my metaphor toolbox available so that you may tinker with your minds and see if we can amp up those chi engines a bit.

By Fu-Tung Cheng



GUANG PING
YANG TAI CHI ASSOCIATION



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Wherever the mind reaches, the feelings are also there
 Wherever the feelings reach, the Chi is also there
 Wherever the Chi reaches, the power is also there

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