



YMAA News is a quarterly publication. Back issues are available for free download at www.ymaa.com



FOREWORD

By Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming

Dear Friends and Readers

Much has often been said by me about the trust that should exist between teacher(s) and students. I tried to emphasize the importance of this word far more than any others all of which were part of YMAA's Code of Honor. It saddens me to inform you that just recently this trust was broken. As all of you know, YMAA utilized many weapons for training. These weapons were neatly displayed and placed on storage racks in all of the training studios. They were there for YMAA students to use and for no other reason. Recently, it was brought to my attention that some of these weapons were taken without my permission. Needless to say I was appalled and thoroughly disappointed that a YMAA student would do something like this. Sadly, I must inform everyone that there is a feeling that this did indeed happen. I am not pointing my finger at anyone. However, I would like everyone to know that since I have been teaching martial arts in Jamaica Plain, our studios have always had an "open door policy." As a result of these recent thefts, I have been forced to remove from the upstairs studio practically all of the weapons. They are now under lock and key.

This is a sad pronouncement, one that I struggled with for quite a few days. But if I were to keep these weapons in the same place, all of our students would soon be deprived of their use. As a teacher, I have learned to establish trust among everyone and I want that trust to continue. So if you do see anyone removing a weapon of any kind from the YMAA premises, please bring it to my attention. I shall take whatever appropriate action is required to see that the weapon(s) is returned to its permanent place for ALL of our students continued use.

Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

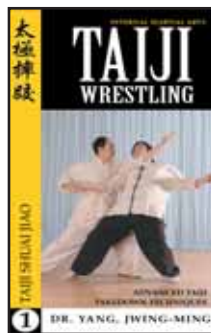
VIDEO REVIEW

Taiji Wrestling Advanced Taiji Takedown Techniques

by Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming

Volume 1, \$34.95, 90 minutes,
ISBN 1-59439-037-1

Volume 2, \$34.95, 90 minutes,
ISBN 1-59439-038-X



If you want to reap the full benefits of Tai Chi's martial applications, suggest that you purchase both of Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming's Taiji Wrestling videotapes (Taiji Shuai Jiao). Both of these advanced Taiji takedown technique tapes will help practitioners

to understand one of the oldest forms of Chinese martial arts. many students who practice Tai Chi on a regular basis usually don't get a chance to analyze each and every movement from Grasp Sparrows Tail to Seal Tightly and everything in between. Both of these tapes not only provide information on how Tai Chi developed into a complete system within itself over thousands of years, but answers many questions as to why it is so important to thoroughly learn the form and progress from there.

Unlike most martial arts, a great degree of patience is required to progress to a higher level, however, one must realize why it is so important to know how to react to a sudden attack. To just attend a Push Hands class every now and then is alright, but to be able to see why YMAA instructors emphasize the importance of knowing the rudiments of the form is even more important.

Tape **volume 1**, is subtitled "Cross Pushing Hands (Jiao Shou) and Tape **volume 2** is "Parallel Pushing Hands (Ping Xing). Volume 1 focuses on applying Shuai Jiao techniques found in Crossed Pushing Hands in which opponents face each other with right hand to right hand or left hand to left hand. Volume 2 focuses on applying these same techniques found in Parallel Pushing Hands, except with opposite hands. The combined tapes show 33 moves in all and as any instructor might tell you, that's all you'll need to know when trying to learn how to destroy an opponent's root and balance, and consequently throwing him down.

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TEACHING STYLES

REACHING STUDENTS THROUGH EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

BY LAWRENCE A. KANE

I realized fairly early in life that different people learn and process information in different ways. When teaching and learning styles misalign, students progress slowly, if at all. As a child, I had the opportunity to take judo instruction from a former national champion who was the highest-ranking black belt in the United States at that time. No one could argue that he did not know his art, for truly he had mastered it. Yet in seven years of practice I truly learned very little, placing no higher than second in a variety of tournament competitions and progressing only to green belt.

In retrospect my natural learning preferences did not properly align with this instructor's teaching style. A traditionalist, my *sensei* preferred a modeling approach for instruction with virtually no explanation or discussion. While I certainly understood the *omote* (surface training) or gross physical movements of each technique he presented, I developed no real understanding of the *ura waza* (inner way) or subtle details behind what made them effective. This mismatch not only inhibited my progress but also eventually led me away from judo into the study of other martial forms.

As a martial arts instructor it really does not matter how much you know if you cannot communicate it successfully to your students. Educators have a variety of teaching styles available with which they can effectively convey their knowledge. Different styles are appropriate for different applications. Exemplary instructors will match appropriate teaching styles to the situations for which those styles are best suited. The six main teaching styles are modeling, lecturing, cooperative performance, independent performance, knowledge capture, and role reversal.

Modeling: As I discovered in judo, traditional instruction of Asian martial arts typically relies heavily on modeling relationships. Students observe and attempt to imitate their *sensei*'s techniques, transcending potential language barriers and other inhibitors of communication. This is a particularly powerful method of introducing students to the gross physical patterns or movements of a martial art. Once the basics are understood, however, other teaching methods will generally be required to communicate important subtlety, depth, and nuance.



Lecturing: This approach is particularly useful when communicating conceptual frameworks such as the strategic approach of a martial art. The concept of *kaisai no genri*, the work of finding hidden techniques within kata, is a great example. While kata are composed of many apparent fighting techniques, or *hyomengi*, these movements are often stylized with their applications deliberately concealed. The theory of *kaisai* provides practitioners a basis from which to identify and understand hidden techniques so that they can be used in real-life self-defense situations.

Cooperative Performance: Cooperative performance can be a powerful tool to help students understand how to apply martial tactics within the framework of an art's strategy. When working various *kumite* (sparring) drills, it is often useful to discuss what works, what does not work, and why that is the case in conjunction with application of the techniques. This can help students develop a better understanding of which approaches are most effective for someone of their unique personality, size, conditioning, skill level, and body type.

Independent Performance: Independent performance is an excellent opportunity for students to internalize and further develop previous learning. Students should practice their art form outside of class at least a little bit each day. No matter how many times a strategy, technique, or application is explained by an instructor, there is nothing like experiencing a concept for one's own self to truly understand and



internalize it. Independent practice is a great vehicle for this self discovery.

Knowledge Capture: Many martial arts require advanced practitioners to complete a thesis project concurrent with testing for *dan* (black belt) rank. This is an excellent opportunity for these individuals to advance the knowledge base of their organization while clarifying and adding depth to their own understanding as well. As students progress through the lower rank, it is very useful for them to document what they have learned in journals or notebooks. The mere process of writing things down facilitates internalization and understanding of the knowledge that is written.

Role Reversal: The most common use of role reversal in martial arts is when the instructor asks individual students to lead portions of a class. By teaching others, students internalize the material and develop a deeper understanding of the techniques they instruct. They also help their instructor ensure a productive classroom environment by accommodating a variety skill levels simultaneously, making efficient use of class time, and optimizing personal attention that the instructor has with each student.

In summary, martial artists have a variety of styles available with which they can effectively communicate their knowledge. Like tools in a workshop, different teaching styles are appropriate for different applications. Proficient instructors will match each approach to the situations for which it is best suited. Wisely using modeling, lecturing, cooperative performance, independent performance, knowledge capture, and role reversal will help you communicate martial knowledge to your students more effectively.

Tailoring teaching styles to student needs is just one aspect of creating a fun, productive, safe, and profitable atmosphere for your martial arts school. To find out more, please consider my book *Martial Arts Instruction: Applying Educational Theory and Communication Techniques in the Dojo*.

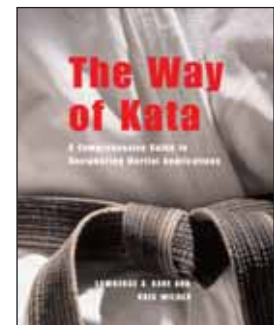
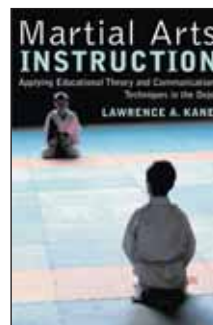
Lawrence Kane is the author of *Martial Arts Instruction: Applying Educational Theory and Communication Techniques in the Dojo* and co-author of *The Way of Kata: A Comprehensive Guide to Deciphering Martial Applications* (September, 2005). Over the last 30 or so years, he has participated in a broad range of martial arts, from traditional Asian sports such as judo, arnis, kobudo, and karate to recreating medieval European combat with real armor and rattan (wood) weapons. He has taught medieval weapons forms since 1994 and Goju Ryu karate since 2002. He has also completed seminars in modern gun safety, marksmanship, handgun retention and knife combat techniques, and he has participated in slow-fire pistol and pin shooting competitions.

Since 1985 Kane has supervised employees who provide security and oversees fan safety during college and professional football games at a Pac-10 stadiums. This job has given him a unique opportunity to appreciate violence in a myriad of forms. Along with his crew, he has witnessed, interceded in, and stopped or prevented literally hundreds



of fights, experiencing all manner of aggressive behaviors as well as the escalation process that invariably precedes them. He has also worked closely with the campus police and state patrol officers who are assigned to the stadium and has had ample opportunities to examine their crowd control tactics and procedures.

Kane lives in Seattle, Washington. He can be contacted via e-mail at LAKane@ix.netcom.com.



YMAA AROUND THE GLOBE

TAI CHI NEWS MAKERS

If you can get a back copy of the Boston Globe dated August 16, 2005, check out the Living pages. That section contains a very well written article by **Kevin Galvin**, Globe staff writer, titled *The master's next move*. Galvin writes about **Dr. Yang Jwing-Ming** and how he quote, "Aims to take the study of martial arts to a higher level." End quote.

Jaime Rodriguez, YMAA Boston Tai Chi student, was among the more than 400 guests who attended a fund raiser for Casa Nueva Vida. The Hispanic charity organization located in Jamaica Plain celebrated its 18th anniversary recently. Casa Nueva Vida is a shelter designed to serve the needs of homeless Latino families. The benefit raised more than \$30,000. Rodriguez also coordinated a series of public readings at the Egleston Square and Jamaica Plain libraries for Latino writers. (See page 6 for a related story about Rodriguez)



OUCH!

Nearly one third of the adult U.S. population has chronic high blood pressure. Since some medications have side effects, physicians need to be made aware that Tai Chi can sometimes lower high blood pressure as effectively as medication. Ask your doctor to look into Tai Chi. However, never adjust medication levels without consulting your physician.

THE TAI CHI FOR ARTHRITIS PROGRAM

Created by noted Tai Chi Master, **Dr. Paul Lam** with a team of arthritis and tai chi experts, this program is designed specifically for people with arthritis. Scientific studies have shown that this program will relieve pain by 30 percent after three months of tai chi practice, and improve mobility and physical functions by about 30 percent as well. The program is easy to learn and will improve almost all aspects of health. For more information go to the World Tai Chi and Qigong web site (www.taichiforarthritis.com)

TAI CHI GAINING GROUND AS EXERCISE FOR ELDERLY

According to a recent news article published by the Reuters Health news service, Tai Chi may offer a gentle way for even frail elderly adults to keep moving. The article says that *Tai Chi Fundamentals* combines the traditions of the Chinese practice along with modern therapeutic principles to form an exercise plan feasible for elderly adults with a range of health problems – from arthritis to heart disease. Long used in China as a way to promote

wellness, Tai Chi focuses on building strength, balance and flexibility through slow, fluid movements combined with mental imagery and deep breathing. Studies have suggested that the elderly can reduce their risk of falls, lower their blood pressure and ease arthritis symptoms through the practice, and some research indicates Tai Chi can improve heart and blood vessel function in both healthy people and those with heart conditions.

PROFILES

Author and YMAA Tai Chi instructor **Ramel "Rami" Rones** hosted a DVD signing and demonstration recently at **The Buddhist Palm** in Boston, Mass. Rami is the author of *Sunrise Tai Chi* – DVD (YMAA 2005). Rones is also a scientific consultant of Mind/Body Therapies at Dana Farber Cancer Institute, Harvard and Tufts Medical Schools, as well as co-author of numerous scientific publications.



SPECIAL TOPICS

QIGONG - A PART OF YOUR
EVERYDAY LIFE - PART 2

BY YANGLING JOHNSON

In Part 1 Qigong master Yanling Johnson explained that all ancient Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) practitioners practiced qigong or tai chi and were great masters. Chinese martial arts originated from qigong and the majority of masters have TCM knowledge especially on tui na and orthopedics. Almost all the Daoists, and many Confucian scholars, including officials and generals, have some TCM education which includes eating correctly.

Many of these people were diet experts and qigong or tai chi masters. For example, some of the more famous TCM experts were Bian Qu (500 BC), Ge Hong (284-363), Tao Hong-jing (452-636). I can name almost all the well-known TCM experts through 7,000 years who were also great qigong practitioners. The Yellow Emperor himself, a great TCM practitioner, set the best example for this. He was a great qigong master because of his knowledge of the art. What the Yellow Emperor learned from his teachers was that the first priority to preserve health and longevity was prevention by practicing *dao yin* (qigong). And secondly, to eat right and use the correct dietary rules that play a very important part in TCM practice and also in qigong practice.

Eating right and using diet for healing, vitality and longevity, is a huge part in TCM practice. More deeply, this food practice is for enjoying a healthy life while pursuing Dao in qigong practice. In TCM, flavors in herbs and foods, their colors and functions follow the yin and yang and the five-element cycle. When you look around and see those "strange" foods that the Orientals eat then check the information on those "strange" foods, you will see that many of them have lived on earth for billions of years, much longer than cows, goat, pigs, chickens, etc. Because of their "old-age," these foods contain many more beneficial elements for humans. To dig deeper, you will find that they all serve the roles of yin and yang to meet human's needs. The Chinese have been educated to follow the yin and yang rules in their diets for the same reason they have a qigong practices and that is to protect qi, the treasure of life. Qi-gong is the "oldest brother" of traditional Chinese medicine. It helps people gain good health and spirit growth. Qigong and its branches, the Chinese correct diet and all the TCM treatments, are in fact Natural Psychotherapy. Foods, acupuncture needles, herbal formulas, acupressure, etc. all function to balance xin - the heart-mind (the Monarch role), and the rest of the

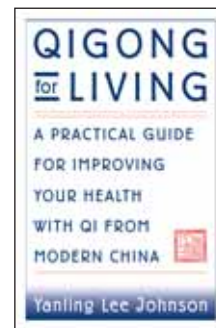
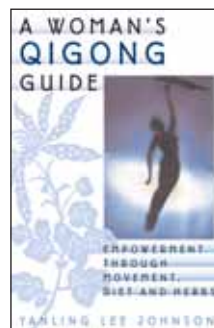


organs (the official roles). They can all play their individual role to take care of the different emotions that influence different organs. No one can ignore the fact that the qi practice called qigong is the heart of TCM practice -- the whole being health care. The Chinese medicine is rooted and produced from qi practice, guided by the *I Ching* and the *Yellow Emperor's Nei Jing*.

Today the *I Ching* mainly refers to the *Zhou I Ching* that was updated during the Zhou Dynasty (3,000 years ago.) However, according to a few excellent Chinese *I Ching* experts, the other two older versions of the *I Ching*, the *Lian Shan I*, and the *Gui Zong I*, which some Chinese historians claimed missing, are not lost. These two versions contain much more information about the universe and our human world. The *Lian Shan I* was passed down during the Xia Dynasty (21-16 B.C.); the *Gui Zong I* was passed down during the Yin Dynasty (between 16-11 B.C.).

Traditional Chinese Medicine is a branch that teaches human beings how to correspond with nature and universe. To harmonize with nature has become the essential principle in Chinese medicine practice as this is the first step in qigong practice. Qigong can heal, prolong life, and can explore even more human potentials. Don't be fooled by what the practice should be named. Language is only a tool, a way to explain this human-universe joint-energy exercise.

Yanling Lee Johnson is author of *A Woman's Qigong Guide* and *Qigong For Living*.



YMAA STUDENT PROMOTES HISPANIC WRITERS

What does Jaime Rodriguez do when he's not practicing Tai Chi at Yang's Martial Arts Association (YMAA) in Jamaica Plain, Mass.

Besides his job as research coordinator at the William Joiner Center for the Study of War and Social Consequences at the University of Massachusetts, Boston Campus a little bit of everything.

As a community activist, Rodriguez came up with an idea 11 years ago to pull local Hispanic authors out of the depths of anonymity and introduce them to the public.

Rodriguez sent his first writer, Martin Espada to Boston Public School classrooms where Espada shared his writings and his life about growing up in Puerto Rico and America, also as a former tenant and lawyer. Eventually, more local Latino writers emerged and all had interesting stories to tell from their struggles marked by war and political turmoil to bi-cultural clashes and racism in the US. Soon many interesting and informative stories were being shared with the community by Latino writers from as far away as Spain and Argentina. Their mutual interest blossomed into what is known today as the annual Hispanic Writer's Week.

Recently, many of these writers gathered at the Egleston Square Branch of the Boston Public Library in Roxbury and again at the Jamaica Plain Public Library to educate the community about who they are.

"This is one way for us to share our stories, our poems...our culture," said Raquel Ortiz, who penned a short story she read last year—now part of her recently released memoir, *The Silk Purse*.

While Rodriguez, a Vietnam War veteran, is not a writer himself, he believes Boston with a growing Hispanic population needs more public forums to showcase their talents.

"Boston is a well-known place for writers, but I don't see many here for Latino writers. Nobody was doing this," said Rodriguez, who was born in Puerto Rico and has lived in Boston for 25 years.

"For me, this is part of community development. We want to show that in every Hispanic is a poem, a history, a narrative, a story."

There's no doubt that Rodriguez has a few interesting stories to tell but he doesn't talk about his Vietnam war experiences unless he bumps into an old buddy or is recommending a book about that war to a friend. However, this much is known about Rodriguez. He served as an US Army infantry man, more commonly referred to as grunts in the 17th Reconnaissance Unit at Bien Hoa, North of Saigon. After returning to his home located in a little beach town Northwest of Puerto Rico he became a public school teacher. Two years later, he journeyed to Cambridge, Mass., where he became a student at The Harvard University School of Education. But the job that he seemed cut out for didn't come his way until a few years after he left Harvard to become the research coordinator at the William Joiner Center at the University of Massachusetts.



"I knew that there were quite a few Vietnam veterans just like me who had unfinished business to tend to," stated Rodriguez, who developed the Full Circle Research Project. He observed that in recent years many veterans groups have gone to Vietnam for healing and to recover from the trauma that they suffered there. Much of the information that they brought back with them in an effort to promote healing among their comrades was mostly anecdotal; not subjected to any sort of controlled verification. His hypothesis was that returning to old battlefields and meeting Vietnamese combat veterans could be extremely therapeutic for US GIs who fought in Vietnam.

During one of his trips to Vietnam in the late 1980's, Rodriguez visited North Vietnamese leader Ho Chi Minh's home, his bunker and the headquarters he used during the War.

"All of these places were located in Hanoi," recalled Rodriguez. "I asked the keeper and historian how Ho Chi Minh was able to deal so well with the horrors of that war and still remain an effective disciplined leader, and he answered: Tai Chi. Besides directing, coordinating and managing the war, he spent time every day practicing Tai Chi.

A few years later, Rodriguez joined YMAA to also deal with what he calls, "his own unfinished business of the Vietnam War.

EDITORIAL

KICKING CANCER TO THE CURB

Because of limited space in its news letter, Yang's Martial Arts Association rarely, if ever, responds to letters from our readers. However, one letter did draw special attention. It came from Wendy Barlow, who was diagnosed with ovarian cancer two years ago. Barlow lives in Liverpool, England and takes her Tai Chi lessons from Mike McCann at the Millennium Center in Belle Vale, Liverpool. What prompted her to write YMAA was a story that appeared in YMAA news in 2003 about Cathy Kerr, (*Qi versus Cancer*). Barlow, a deeply religious person, believes that Tai Chi has contributed to her recovery from the dreaded disease. It was December, 2003, when Barlow was diagnosed with ovarian cancer which had metastasized to her right lung. The prognosis was gloomy. Following surgery, she had to undergo chemotherapy which left her body in a weakened condition. Enter some very close friends who suggested that if she wanted to speed up her recovery, she might consider swimming, walking and Tai Chi.

"I believe Tai Chi and in particular Qigong and the help

of Mike has been instrumental in building up my physical strength, my mental strength and full breathing capacity to my right lung," said Barlow. "Just having a class to get up for on Monday morning, (having) to concentrate on exercises, breathing and Mike's instructions on how to exercise at home has relaxed my mind.

Barlow says even though Tai Chi plays a small but important part in her life, she thought her letter might help others to deal with the disease.

"(Others) might be encouraged to hear how it has helped me back to fitness. My remission is expected to be lengthy if not total, to date. I look forward to many years of Tai Chi."

DAN HOOD



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