



YMAA News is a quarterly publication. Back issues are available for free download at [www.ymaa.com](http://www.ymaa.com)



## FOREWORD

By Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming

Dear Friends

Time goes by so fast. It seems like only yesterday that I said the same thing, yet here we are once again standing on the threshold of a new year. The month of December is a very nostalgic and special time, special because we are commemorating YMAA's 23rd anniversary. Over the years, I have met so many wonderful people, people who have helped to make our worldwide martial arts organization into something that we can all be proud of. In the past we have ushered in each YMAA anniversary with a Kung Fu / Taiji demonstration. But just like the changing of the seasons, faces change and new faces step up to take their place. Those few who remain have put forth a strong effort and have been instrumental in helping me to keep YMAA as functional as those who have moved on. It gives me great pleasure to say that because after I return from a long, tiring trip, I can actually see the results in the students. I don't know if their instructors tell them as often as I do to practice, but they must be doing something right. It's a satisfying feeling to walk into one of our training rooms and see YMAA instructors taking the responsibility to see that students "get it right. In turn, the instructors can take pride in watching their students test and hopefully be awarded their next qualifying stripe. That's a great accomplishment. Another thing that I've noticed is a more relaxed instructor/student question and answer period, especially during the Push Hands classes. I would like to see more of that same type of atmosphere in all classes. Students learn faster if they ask meaningful questions and are provided with beneficial answers. We must all remember that we were once students ourselves.

We will be faced with many new challenges in the New Year, both at the instructor and student level. Just like those in the medical profession; instructors must stay abreast of all new Kung Fu/Taiji information that is made available to them. This will eliminate problems when it comes to disseminating that information to students and/or colleagues. In turn, students must cooperate with one another. Practice with each other to learn whatever you are being taught. And if someone does make a mistake, go back to the beginning and practice (ponder) until he or she "gets it right." If you question goes unanswered, I expect every instructor to discuss it with me. We will do whatever we can to resolve the problem. One last note; treat your fellow students with the utmost respect and remember the YMAA Code of Honor. If you leave each day without it, whatever your instructor teaches you becomes somewhat meaningless.

Thank you for your cooperation and a very Happy New Year to all.

## VIDEO REVIEW



### Chinese Qigong Massage - DVD Fundamental Techniques for Health and Relaxation



by Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming

\$49.95, 220 minutes, Code: D0592

ISBN 1-59439-059-2, DVD9-NTSC all regions

Tai Chi (or taijiquan to be precise) is known for its graceful movements and health preserving effect. Since being introduced to the west, it has continued to gain popularity because it is the perfect antidote to today's stress filled modern lifestyle. Scratch beneath the surface, however, and you will find a rich martial art with traditions that stretch back over hundreds of years. Most, if not all, Taiji practitioners know that Taiji's roots grew out of Qigong and the progress that has been made by modern science in the study of Qi. For example, in ancient China, people had very little knowledge of electricity. They only knew from acupuncture that when a needle was inserted into the acupuncture cavities, some kind of energy other than heat was produced which often caused a shocking or a tickling sensation. It was not until the last few decades, when Chinese people were more acquainted with electromagnetic science, that they began to recognize that this energy circulating in the body, which they called Qi, might be the same thing as what today's science calls "bioelectricity." But you don't always need a needle to alleviate some of the aches and pains that everyone seems to experience as they get older. And that's where Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming's *Chinese Qigong Massage* video (Available on 2 VHS or 1 DVD) comes in handy. Dr. Yang has studied and translated many ancient Chinese Qigong documents into English and he explains how bioelectromagnetic energy works. Simply put, bioelectricity in and of itself is just another name for Qi. Massage is one of the most common practices in Chinese medicine and Qigong for regulating the Qi and blood circulating in your body and returning them to their normal healthy state. This might explain one of the practices of *Marrow Washing Qigong* in which the stress on the bones and muscles is increased in certain ways to increase the Qi circulation. (More on that later). It's nice to have a qualified person massage you, but as Dr. Yang explains in his video series, you can obtain many of Qigong's healing benefits simply by massaging yourself. However, on his video, Dr. Yang includes basic two person massage techniques, front and back massage of the body, including the head, torso, legs, and arms. So if you already have the book *Chinese Qigong Massage*, we recommend that you add this video to your collection.

DAN HOOD

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## EXCERPT FROM TAI CHI CONNECTIONS

BY JOHN LOUPOS

When I wrote my first and then my second book on T'ai Chi, my publisher was all over my case. He felt that my books would have a more predictable appeal if they narrowed their focus to target a specific audience, i.e., beginners or intermediates/advanced students. As I look back, having now authored three books on the subject of T'ai Chi, I agree that yielding to my publisher's advice might actually have been quite sensible—write a book for beginners and then continue on to write progressively more advanced sequels for intermediate and advanced practitioners. The truth is, though, that writing in a more linear fashion would not have been in keeping with the manner in which I teach T'ai Chi Ch'uan.

The essential concepts of T'ai Chi—the essences of rooting, of structure, of energy, of living congruently—are all introduced from the get-go in my entry level classes. Students who are brand new to T'ai Chi may hear all about centerlines, or the importance of not bouncing, or how to open their kua, or fa jin power, right from the very onset of their training. Even my more experienced students know better than to skip these entry-level classes, for there is very little I deem imprudent to address in them.

I believe that people “get” things when they are ready for them. If some idea or concept is beyond the grasp of certain members of my class, they may only comprehend a very small part of it during their initial exposure. But the next time they are presented with the same or some similar lesson, they will be better prepared to absorb what they weren't ready for earlier. With each subsequent exposure, progressively more pieces of the T'ai Chi puzzle fall into place. Over time, as more and more pieces fall into place; each piece serves as a reference point for the other pieces, regardless of when they appeared on the students' learning curves. In this way the “whole” of T'ai Chi begins to take shape, but only as the students, themselves, become ready for the lessons before them.

Just prior to completing the manuscript for this book [*Tai Chi Connections*], I had the pleasure of reading Barbara Davis's just released book, *The Taijiquan Classics: An Annotated Translation*. (Barbara is also editor of *Taijiquan Journal*.) In her book (Davis 2004, 53), Barbara notes some of the difficulties inherent in compiling credible data for a scholarly text such as hers. In particular, she notes that the Taijiquan Classics, which are an inventory of early and significant literary works on T'ai Chi Ch'uan espousing its most vital principles, were all written in the classical Chinese tradition. Classical Chinese, according to Barbara, “makes great use of rhythm, rhyme, poetry, alliteration, parallel prose, visual puns of written characters, aural puns based on like-

sounding words, as well as allusions to or quotes from canonical works . . . (with) a tendency towards ambiguity, obliqueness, and terseness.” From this she construes that “the works were not primarily intended for a popular audience.” In other words, a great deal of what was written about T'ai Chi early on, and which has since come to be regarded as gospel, was intended to be comprehensible only to those already privy to T'ai Chi's secrets, or to those of a social class that could comprehend the subtleties of the written classical Chinese language.

The approach of, apparently, confining T'ai Chi knowledge to members of the same “club” or social class as ascribed to by the classics is in direct contradiction to what I hope to accomplish as a T'ai Chi author. It is my intention to reveal what I can of the magic that T'ai Chi has to offer so that all readers can come away from this book both more knowledgeable about T'ai Chi and better equipped to improve their actual level of skill when practicing T'ai Chi. *Editor's note: In the March 2006 Issue of YMAA News, Loupos will discuss some very important aspects of T'ai Chi Ch'uan.*

Books by John Loupos.



### TAI CHI CONNECTIONS

*Advancing Your Tai Chi Experience*  
\$20.95, 240 pages, 250 Illustrations  
Code: B073/0320



### EXPLORING TAI CHI

*Contemporary Views on an Ancient Art*  
\$20.95, 228 pages, 135 Illustrations  
Code: B065/424



### INSIDE TAI CHI

*Hints, Tips, Training, and Process for Students and Teachers*  
\$20.95, 220 pages, 143 Illustrations  
Code: B056/108

## EXCERPT FROM CHIN NA IN GROUND FIGHTING

BY AL ARSENAULT & JOSEPH FAULISE

Even as a novice, I was well aware of the shortcomings of karate as a complete fighting system (recently this has become painfully illustrated in the Ultimate Fight Challenges). I dabbled in judo and eventually studied Qin Na (*Chin Na*) and Shuai Jiao with Master Liang. So strongly did I feel about being personally unable to address the missing portions of the fighting spectrum, I felt incumbent to bring judoka into the various karate dojo in which I trained. I did this in order to broaden the minds of fellow students and instructors who were open-minded and secure enough in their own art forms to allow such a different kind of training to take place.

Over the last 22 years as a street policeman in the mean streets of Vancouver, (British Columbia) I have come to realize the acute deficiencies of karate as a defensive art, or more practically as a controlling art, as my chosen vocation demands. For me, Qin Na was like a 'Snap-On' tool: it allowed me to adapt my martial arts ability to suit the highly balanced needs of personal self-protection with controlling those I was empowered to arrest. I was entrusted to use only as much force as necessary, as prescribed by law. And so, I have mentally wrestled with the solutions to resolving problems that I encountered, or are reasonably expected to encounter, on the street. I had to select and apply force options from the entire use of force spectrum: from mere presence, appearance and reputation, to dialogue, empty hand control, impact weapons and even deadly force.

When struggling with this book's basic concept, I began to look at the relationship between Qin Na and ground fighting in the Police Judo classes that I continue to train in. From an intellectual stand point I used this knowledge of the biomechanical principles of Qin Na in order to understand the techniques that were being shown to me. But from the stand point of survival on the mat, I was forced to fight back with Qin Na in order to strengthen whatever hold I could muster or to weaken my opponent's resolve with what feels and looks like just plain old 'dirty fighting'. I came to realize that I couldn't use too many Qin Na techniques, because attacking joints like those of the fingers and wrists for example are illegal in judo, with overt cranial and cervical pressure point attacks being forbidden as well. Many of these potentially harmful techniques, including leg locks, were taken out of the sporting forum so that healthy and safe competitions could take place.

I did examine judo techniques through the filter of Qin Na and realized that I could hold some of the principles of judo within the conceptual framework of Qin Na. I also realized that the reverse should be true because we are dealing with only a limited number of biomechanical principles



Officer: Al Arsenault

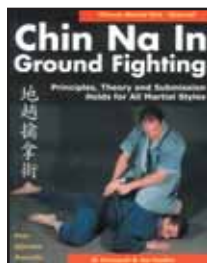


Joseph Faulise

relating to the bending and twisting of the various body parts, mainly those of the extremities. It really does not matter if you are working the finger, arm, leg or even the entire body as a jointed and segmented unit; bend and/or twist the segment in an unnatural or extreme way and you can defeat your opponent. The resultant pain you create will give you the ability to control your opponent to some degree and if necessary break down his desire to fight.

Certainly it takes a lot more strength to manipulate the torso than the pinkie finger, nor will bending this same little finger guarantee that your opponent submit, but both these kinds of techniques have their place in your ground fighting arsenal. Rather than just putting out yet another collection of interesting holds, we felt that we could make this book more useful and original by concentrating on the following three martial aspects:

- 1) The selection and preference of holding techniques which are capable of immobilizing or incapacitating an opponent with a limited danger to counterattack (that is to say you are not confined by, nor protected by, the rules of sport).
- 2) The relationship of these holds to the biomechanical principals used in Qin Na and the augmentation of these holds using Qin Na techniques.
- 3) The identification and use of pressure points for offensive and defensive purpose.



### CHIN NA IN GROUND FIGHTING

*Submission Holds for All Martial Styles*  
\$29.95, 382 pages, 750 Illustrations  
Code: B064/663

# SECRETS OF HAPPINESS

## EXCERPT FROM BOOK

# TAI CHI FOR DEPRESSION

BY DR. AIHAN KUHN, CMD



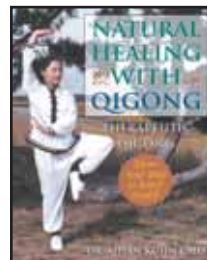
**Practice Tai Chi and Qi Gong regularly to keep your body and mind balanced.** When a person is not happy, there are two things that need to be addressed: your mind is troubled, tangled, disturbed by negativities; or your energy flow in the body is blocked, stagnated, or not flowing the way it is supposed to flow. When a person is happy, his mind is clear and healthy, his body's energy is harmonized and flows smoothly. Tai Chi practice includes special body movement and correct patterns of breathing to balance the energy flow in your body, and balance the energy between your mind and your body.

**Keep a positive attitude.** If you have a positive attitude, and take positive action, you most likely will be successful in whatever you do. If you fail, you can always get up and start over again. What is the big deal in failing? When you have a positive attitude, people like to be with you, they feel cheerful, and they feel good. Not many people like to be with someone who is negative; you lose friends that way. When you have no friends, the depression becomes more pronounced. It is like a negative circle, everything becomes worse and worse. Without a change of attitude, or a change in thinking, antidepressants are less likely to be helpful. A friend of mine has depression. His main issue is the negativities in his mind. He cannot see the positive side of things and we know that everything has two sides. He lost friends one after the other and he lost girl friends one after the other. He continues to feel lonely and frustrated, continues to feel powerless, has no energy for work, and is unable to work. He continues to sink into the darkness with many different kinds of medication. This type of person is very difficult to treat because they don't have a positive mental attitude and they aren't willing to change their way of thinking.

**Don't be afraid of hard work.** Hard work can be a good learning experience: the more you do, the more you learn. People complain that they work too hard. I believe if you enjoy the work you do, even if it is hard work, it can still be rewarding. If you don't enjoy the work you do, perhaps you did not find the right occupation. If you complain about everything you do, you are in trouble, and you need to get help. Complaining creates negative energy that not only disturbs other people but also sends negative energy to yourself and makes you unhappy. Sometimes, you can get joy at work from being with different people, from being exposed to different knowledge, and from getting paid for what you did. Sometimes, you can even enjoy it because you are away from housework. If you are a positive minded person, you can always find positive ways to enjoy anything.

**Be honest with yourself, and with others.** Honesty is a very important way of living in harmony. It would make the world different if we were all honest with each other. If people lose trust in family, friends, business associates, politicians, etc., it creates problems in their daily lives and in society. Some people play mind games and try very hard to figure out what to say or what to do and they modify their behavior because they are so afraid of being criticized. They don't understand that if you are honest, you are natural and happy, you have nothing to worry, to fear, and you have nothing to lose. If you play mind games, you cannot be happy. The constant tension creates stress and blockages in your energy system and also makes your life too tiring and stressful. You cannot be happy when you carry a lot of tension and stress.

**Help other people.** Human beings have a long history of helping each other in order to survive and live. In China, families help each other, friends help each other, and co-workers help each other. This made the Chinese a "happy culture" even with a much lower average income than in the United States. In the United States, the living standard is much higher than in China. The average income is much higher and there are many more wealthy communities. But why do we still have so much unhappiness and depression? A friend of mine accidentally cut a dead tree in her neighbor's yard, and the neighbor filed a lawsuit for \$2000. Is a dead tree more important than friendship with a neighbor? From many years' observation and experience, generally speaking people who tend to give are happier, people who tend to take are less happy. When you help other people, you get psychological rewards from being able to give and from being helpful. The positive action makes you feel good and happy. You are free of worry. If you think you lose something by helping others, if you are worried that you are giving out too much and not getting back, or if you try to calculate if it is fair or not fair, you create tension and stress that causes the blockages in your body and mind.



## NATURAL HEALING WITH QIGONG

*Therapeutic Qigong*  
\$15.95, 140 pages, 140 Illustrations  
Code: B070/0010

## GREEN TEA AND TAI CHI

Tai Chi and Chinese food have a lot in common. Both have yin and yang properties and both provide the body with a good jolt of energy. Many people who talk about energy don't really pay that much attention to how it originates in the body. That's something they all seem to take for granted, that is unless they happen to be a martial artist or health food specialists, or how about a very talented group of dedicated culinary experts.

For example take Sonny Wong, Pandora Law, S.M. Jou and Ming Chen, co-owners of the Green Tea restaurant in Newton (Mass.). Not only are they dedicated to their art but also know how to satisfy their customer's needs. Wong is not only a tai chi/qigong practitioner, but a master chef as well. He and his partners believe in the Asian philosophy of food as health-giving.

The more than 200 dishes listed on the Green Tea restaurant's menu are delicious. Many of them like the Steam Sesame Bean Curd have specific healing properties according to the management's accumulated knowledge of traditional Chinese medicine.

"If a person really wants to increase their energy, I suggest that they begin their meal with herbal tea and herbal soup, both of which have good yin and yang properties," says Wong. "But if they really want a taste treat then they should try the mince shrimp and bean curry."

However, Wong likes Green Tea customers to know that some dishes, like the aforementioned, have more yin than yang properties. Is that bad?

"Not really," he smiled. "It's primarily a question of balancing: eating in harmony with the seasons: countering yin, or cooling foods such as spinach, asparagus, or lettuce with yang or hot food (ginger, garlic, hot peppers and beef). But if they don't eat meat, fish (protein) will suffice."

If you're feeling slightly fatigued, Chen, will recommend that you add a little bit ginger to your chicken with mushroom soup. Feel a cold coming on he'll recommend a tofu dish (to sweat out the cold) with black bean sauce (healing to the lungs and digestive system).

When you visit their restaurant, it might be a good idea to give them some idea what you're looking for in a meal. You can also find Wong behind the sushi bar preparing a delectable array of fresh fish for Green Tea customers.

If you don't see Law or Wong when you first enter the Green Tea, don't worry, they'll find you. You won't be overwhelmed by their courtesy but you will be swept away by their warm friendly smiles and the type and quality of Chinese food you don't often find in the suburbs.

The Green Tea Restaurant is located at  
24 Elliot Street, Newton Massachusetts

DAN HOOD



Sonny Wong



Steam Sesame Bean Curd  
for Yin / Yang balance



Yin & Yang Herbal Soup  
for Yin / Yang balance



Mince Shrimp and Bean Curry  
for all Yin

## YMAA AROUND THE GLOBE

### THE TAO OF KNITTING

Not only is Angela Laughingheart the YMAA Milwaukee instructor, she's also a very talented knitter. She knits felted shapes that cause light to be viewed in a sculptural way. Laughingheart says that in Chinese Taoism there's a belief that life originated from a state of neutrality or no extremities (Wuji). At the point of creation there was a dramatic outward expansion (Big Bang) when all matter manifested itself from anti-matter. Now there were two extremes, known as Yin and Yang. Her knitting starts in the center from a single stitch with outward increases that create a multitude of circular and twisting shapes that merge with the surrounding light.

### STRENGTHENING THE BODY

According to Mandla Nkosi, YMAA Kettlebell Instructor, Russian Special Forces personnel owe much of their wiry strength, explosive agility, and never-quitting stamina to kettlebells. Soldier, Be Strong!, the official Soviet armed forces strength training manual pronounced kettlebell drills to be "one of the most effective means of strength development" representing "a new era in the development of human strength-potential."

### TAI CHI INSPIRATIONS CALENDAR 2006 EDITION

Back by popular demand, a wonderful holiday time gift for your Tai Chi friends. This 13 month (January 2006 - January 2007) calendar features lovingly preserved and reproduced historic and contemporary images of great Tai Chi masters and players. Inspiring quotations by a prize-winning writer, poet, and Tai Chi champion - Don Ethan Miller. Photos Included in 2006: Yang Fukui, Zhu Tian Cai, Yong Yijiao, Ted Box and Yom, Cheng Man Ching, Liang Shouyu, Ma Yueh Liang, Janet Gee, Arthur Goodridge, Guo Gaoyi, Bow Sim Mark, Yu Cheng-Hsiang, and Chen Weiming.

For more information visit [www.ymaapub.com](http://www.ymaapub.com)

### ANOTHER REASON TO EAT FISH

According to a recent study of 3,000 people in Greece, fish reduces chronic inflammation in the body, which has been increasingly implicated in heart disease. Those who ate at least 10 ounces of fish a week averaged 33% lower levels of C-reactive protein and had similar reductions in other markers for inflammation. But even smaller intakes were beneficial. Fish (presumably because of its omega-3 fats) also lowers cardiovascular risk by reducing blood clotting, arrhythmia, high blood pressure, and blood triglycerides.

### MEDICAL NEWS

Make your own frozen gel pack for icing injuries by partially filling a heavy-duty plastic freezer bag with a mixture of one-quarter rubbing alcohol and three-quarters water. Seal the bag, and then seal it inside a second plastic bag. Place it in the freezer. The gel will remain soft (the more alcohol you use, the softer it will be), making it gentler on injuries than hard ice packs.

### MASTER PLAN

What could be a better way to end the year than with this story? It's all about Roger Whidden, a dedicated YMAA Tai Chi instructor. Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming recently conferred the highly respected title of "master" on Whidden who is the President of Whidden's School of Fitness, Inc., Marshfield, Mass. Whidden becomes the first YMAA instructor to ever reach that goal. With Whidden's confirmation, Dr. Yang becomes a grand master, a very difficult title to achieve among Tai Chi practitioners. We hope to have more extensive coverage in the March 2006 newsletter.



Roger and Mary Whidden with their children, Karrie, Jocelyn, and Jian Mei



## EDITORIAL

Elisabeth Muys, ([www.delotusbloem.be](http://www.delotusbloem.be)) a YMAA Taiji practitioner writes excellent poetry, so I thought it only fitting to dedicate this month's Editor's Corner to her so she could showcase her talents. Enjoy!

DAN HOOD

### *Life in a Taiji-suit*

*(Ode to Life, ode to Taiji, Ode to all Taiji teachers)*

*Life has given us a suit  
A suit for growing  
To stretch and strengthen  
A Taiji-suit*

*Loose in his smoothness  
Mild and inviting  
A generous coat  
For our soul to stretch out*

*Like the life  
That says:  
You can be big  
You have more space than you think  
No limits, no obstructions,  
Except your own obstacles*

*A suit smooth but not concealing  
Like in life  
The smallest of our movements  
Can have consequences reaching far  
Exciting ripples  
Kilometres away*

*A suit  
To move carefully in life  
But also  
With power  
A suit that can absorb  
Punches and kicks*

*And that is exactly the suit  
That life has given to us  
The life itself  
That gives itself  
At every instant  
Again and again*

*And the dance, we can choose freely  
Wholeheartedly  
As it suits our soul  
Who likes to stretch out  
Happily  
As far as it can  
Always further  
And further*

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