



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

During a recent tai chi seminar at YMAA Headquarters in Boston, I was delighted to look out at the attendees and see a young group of students from a Karate School in Canada. I was even more delighted to know they had signed up for the taiji seminars since most young people are usually more interested in the external rather than the internal martial arts. Much of the credit for their attendance has to be given to their teacher. However, knowing that this seminar would last for three days, I have to extend my congratulations to the students as well. Anyone who thinks that these seminars are simply just "sight seeing tours" are either misinformed or in for a big surprise.

The late Tai Chi Master Jou, Tsung Hwa, a close friend and mentor wrote in Chapter Two of his book, *The Dao of Taijiquan, Way to Rejuvenation*, Imagine yourself trying to peer through a window with the curtains drawn. It is not possible. You cannot judge what is inside because the curtains obscure a clear view. Every taiji movement involves the taiji philosophy of time and space. Likewise to understand taiji by only the outer movement is like trying to look inside a room through drawn curtains. You must go into the room to see clearly; you must understand taiji philosophy to view the full picture of taijiquan.

With all of the turmoil and confusion that exists in the world today, I sincerely feel that young people are beginning to grasp the real meaning of internal martial arts. Many curtains have been drawn around this new generation. Baby boomers are moving into a new time in their lives to make room for them or if you want to allegorically compare it to Master Jou's words: Every taiji movement involves the taiji philosophy of time and space; think of how things have changed both socially and politically since you were a child.

How often have you heard someone ask the question, "What has happened to the world? Things are not like they used to be?" It's so easy to ask the question; finding the answer seems to be very difficult.

As a martial arts teacher, I am asked many questions. I try to answer them as quickly as possible. If I don't know the answer, then I don't "fake" it. That is exactly what I expect my instructors to do. And that's what they are doing. It is now time for everyone to take their social and political question outside of the classroom to someone with influence and someone whom they know they can trust. Perhaps they will be given an answer that will not only satisfy, but help to make the future brighter for all of us.

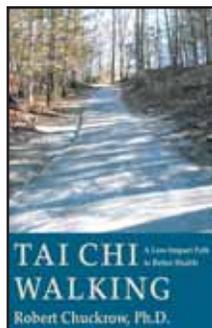
In conclusion, let's all do as Master Jou suggested: *...go into the room to see clearly; understand taiji philosophy to view the full picture of taijiquan.* In the process, we may all become instrumental in changing the world we live in.

BOOK REVIEW

Tai Chi Walking A Low-Impact Path to Better Health

by Robert Chuckrow

\$16.95, ISBN 1-886969-23-X



When your feet are flat and you've walked (or ran) around on them most of your life, isn't it about time that you did something about it? Dr. Robert Chuckrow thinks so.

Chuckrow, who earned his Ph.D in experimental physics from New York University, gives these reasons why so many people suffer from foot problems: they wear improper shoes, model themselves after others whose walking is inefficient and have wrong ideas about how their body works. Although he is the author of three books, he wants people to know from the start that his latest book, *Tai Chi Walking (A Low-Impact Path to Better Health)* neither engages nor renders medical advice. What he does offer, is a well-written and concise book about how people should take care of their feet and I don't mean merely bathing them in warm water to soak out the aches and pains. There's a little bit more to it than that.

Health-wise, you should take very good care of your feet because provided you're in good health, you'll spend more than half of your lifetime standing on them whether it's in the bank, grocery store or waiting in line for a movie. Being a tai chi practitioner, Chuckrow, believes that walking provides an excellent opportunity to augment, refine, and reinforce tai chi principles and bridge the gap between formal practice and everyday life. For non-practitioners, his book provides quite a bit of helpful information on how to improve health, balance, peace-of-mind and safety.

I especially liked how Chuckrow provided different examples of foot problems and what a person can do to cure them. The illustrations and photographs that followed were well placed and the captions well written.

Chuckrow has done something that I don't think any other writer has done, especially where tai chi is concerned. He has written a book in which he states, "I have striven to present facets of walking, an understanding of which will improve your health and enjoyment, lessen your vulnerability to falling, and eliminate harm from faulty body usage."

To that I say, well done.

DAN HOOD

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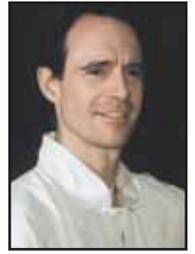
EXCERPT FROM TAI CHI CONNECTIONS

BY JOHN LOUPOS

In this final excerpt from John Loupos' book, Tai Chi Connections, Loupos would like the following information to be experienced by readers as a comprehensive exploration on one very important aspect of T'ai Chi Ch'uan.

Any in-depth exploration of T'ai Chi could focus on its mental/emotional/spiritual component, or its energetic/Chi (Qi) cultivation component, or its technical/mechanical physical component. By my way of thinking each of these components is important to the point of being indispensable. Furthermore, none of these three is inherently more valuable, in the long run, than any other in the pursuit of a full and well-rounded development at T'ai Chi Ch'uan. However, even though these three components share equal prominence in Tai Chi's grand scheme they do not enjoy equal standing in the hierarchy of T'ai Chi skills development. One of these components takes precedence over the others. There are any number—dozens or even hundreds—of viable paths other than T'ai Chi that anyone might follow in the pursuit of mental, emotional, and/or spiritual growth and awareness. And there must be dozens upon dozens of methods designed solely for the purpose of developing and cultivating Chi, life force energy. However, in comparison to the vast range of choices as regards these first two components, there are relatively few modalities designed so deliberately for the purpose of cultivating conscious awareness of precise technical and mechanical details and connections in your body as T'ai Chi Ch'uan. Because T'ai Chi is first and foremost a discipline characterized by movement and motion I feel its technical/mechanical aspects dictate precedence over other components in any student's scheme of learning. Emphasizing T'ai Chi's physical aspects before, but not necessarily over, its energetic or spiritual features offers the opportunity for a grounded foundation from which to then cultivate the full range of Tai Chi's features, including its more cerebral and esoteric aspects.

From Chapter 7, on Momentum: Unfortunately, renouncing momentum is a task more easily said than accomplished. This is a fact that, coincidentally, serves as a premise for the famous saying in the Taijiquan Classics, that "An attack of one thousand catties can be deflected by a force of four *taels." The pound force being referred to is nothing more than some hapless attacker's momentum. The reason such a force can be so predictably deflected has as much to do with the attacker's feckless momentum as it does with the neutralizing skill of the T'ai Chi defender. Note, the operative word in the saying, as it has often been interpreted, is "can be deflected," not "will be deflected." This adage might read very differently if another T'ai Chi master was behind the momentum and his momentum was appropriate to the technique. The more inappropriate momentum there is behind an assault as it hurtles toward you, the less force (perhaps even just four taels) will be



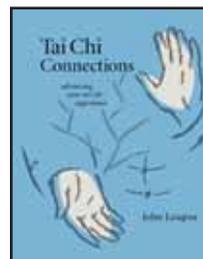
required to deflect it aside. This classic saying is usually interpreted as intended to teach and inspire from the perspective of the defender, the guy with four taels. Naturally, we would all like to be good enough to rely on just four taels. But you also want to take care to not be like that also-ran attacker whose fate seems so prophetically sealed in adage by his unbridled momentum.

Chapter 10, excerpt from Extend, But Don't Reach: Where reach is less concerned with the process of reaching than it is with the goal of what has been reached, extend is all about the process of extending and much less about the bottom line of having finally reached an end result. These nuances are not lost in T'ai Chi. When your teacher asks you to extend your arm he is likely much less concerned with where your arm ends up than with how it gets there.

From Chapter 10, excerpt from What Might You Be a Champion Of: For me, and for many of those whom I teach, what brings T'ai Chi alive to actually improve our perceived quality of life, is the very way T'ai Chi can be employed to develop attributes such as heartfulness and personal congruence. All of T'ai Chi's more technical qualities are important, even vital, but so are its virtues. For by T'ai Chi's virtues, we not only become powerful as practitioners, we become more morally accountable as human beings and closer to becoming as at one with the Tao. Like yin and yang, technique and virtue must harmonize each other in order to offer the prospect of a more meaningful existence. Together, and in balance, these allow us to truly "live" our T'ai Chi.

Chapter 11, excerpt from Thoughts and Musings on Being a Teacher: Martial arts teachers, by my way of thinking, must hold themselves to a higher standard of behavior. We teachers have a mandate to serve as exemplars of right and righteous behavior for those we guide. However, when the standard of excellence we hold for ourselves exceeds the reality of our own psycho-emotional development, the stage is set for incongruent behavior as our shadow side seeks an outlet. Trying to behave as an exemplar is likely to prove nothing short of a facade if we don't pursue our own inner work.

*Asian unit of weight



TAI CHI CONNECTIONS

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

AN AMERICAN MASTER

By Dan Hood

Despite being an exceptional martial artist, Roger Whidden is not the type of person who struts around like a peacock, nor is he boastful, or belligerent. Except for his imposing 6-foot-two inch strong frame, the only other physical characteristics that stand out in my mind are his quiet and friendly manner. But when he's teaching a group of students or practicing tai chi, he draws quite a few admiring stares.

Late last year, I had the pleasure of seeing the title of Tai Chi Master conferred upon him by Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming. Whidden made history by becoming the first student in Dr. Yang's 35-years of teaching throughout the world, to have attained that title. The Tai Chi testing included 50 components including: Long Form, Sword Form, Saber, Staff applications, as well as Push Hands, Chin Na, and sparring. By conferring this title on Whidden, Dr. Yang becomes a Grandmaster. A lifelong dedication, a great system, and a world-wide organization are what Dr. Yang offers to all YMAA students. (See a related story about Dr. Yang by Kevin Galvin, *The Master's Next Move* published in the *Boston Globe* August 16, 2005).

Whidden's final test on Nov. 25, 2005, completed 35-years of martial arts training; 30-years of teaching, and 25-years of Tai Chi. Contrary to our culture of self-promotion, "buy a belt" programs, and "have it your way" martial arts schools, his ranking was truly earned.

Asked what kept him focused Whidden stated, "My lifelong love of learning through martial, internal, and healing arts has been more difficult and more gratifying than I ever imagined."

The testing was truly a *Zen* moment for Whidden. His transcendental experience matched the new moniker. Hopefully, it's a preview of coming attractions, and not just a peak experience. "Maybe the best is yet to come," he said.

I met Roger in 1978 at the YMCA in Needham. He was teaching Karate, I was managing the men's health club. Because we were always busy, we didn't get to know each other that well. But we never forgot each other's names. Two years later, the YMCA closed its doors and I didn't see him again until 1997. It was sort of a strange sight that greeted my eyes; a martial arts teacher holding a paint brush in his hand. "Hi Dan!" he called out from the door of YMAA's Headquarters in Jamaica Plain. "What are you doing here?"

I told him that I just joined YMAA. He simply smiled and said, "You made a very good choice."

I inquired about the paint brush. And he quietly said, "I'm helping to spruce up the place. I've got to get back to work. See you soon."

Since then, I have seen a lot of him in tai chi classes however I still didn't know that much about him on a personal level until recently. I learned that he was sickly as a child, came from a difficult family environment and suffered a serious foot injury when he was 6-years-old. The injury, which required numerous operations and

lifelong rehabilitation, proved to be an auspicious beginning to a lifelong study of martial arts. It also led to his intuitive desire to become a teacher. But things didn't come easy. What really reinforced his commitment to martial arts as a way of life became clear after Roger turned 26. His brother was murdered and he came to the realization there was more to life than the violence that gripped many big American cities.

Reflecting back on his high school and college wrestling days, he decided to take up karate, judo, and yoga. However, it wasn't until he began his Qigong, Tai Chi and meditation study in 1981 with Master John Chueng Li that he began to fully recover from his childhood traumas and sports induced injuries. Prior to studying with Master Li, he was told by a group of medical experts that he'd never have a job that required the full use of his feet and that he'd never be a carpenter. And as far as becoming an athlete, that was simply out of the question. Whidden set out to prove them wrong. However, he still needed expert guidance to fulfill his destiny.

After Master Li died and Whidden earned masters degrees in education and therapy, he found his lifelong teacher, Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming in 1989. "Dr. Yang and YMAA offered a path and a means to synthesize my previous experiences and allowed me to reach my full potential. From my first Taijiquan test with Dr. Yang, I could see that it was a wonderful way to get to know myself. Dr. Yang's clarity of vision and direct feedback provided the ideal opportunities to learn."

And remember what the medical experts told him about becoming a carpenter? Eight years ago he built and owns Whidden's School of Fitness, Inc., (WSFI) where he teaches YMAA (Marshfield) Tai Chi, Karate, Yoga, Wrestling and has a Mind and Body Therapy practice. All of WSFI's programs are global time-tested arts that Roger and his wife Mary teach with adherence to basic common values.

Whidden considers himself an ordinary person who has taken a giant leap of faith to invest his full time and energy into martial arts. "I feel incredibly lucky to have trained with Dr. Yang at YMAA. My mastery has more to do with the expert guidance of Grand Master Yang and his students than through my own ability. I'm grateful to all of those who have helped me and I feel that I represent Dr. Yang and YMAA through all my endeavors."

He and his wife Mary just reached another milestone. This is their 15th year as adoptive parents. Their children are Jocelyn, 15 from the U.S., Cory, 13 from Columbia, and Jian, 11 from China.

Whidden would like to challenge and support all who also choose to follow in his footsteps. "Together we can make it happen," he says.



HAPPINESS IS NOT JUST A WORD

EXCERPT FROM A BOOK

TAI CHI FOR DEPRESSION

BY DR. AIHAN KUHN, CMD

In YMAA Newsletter 76, Aihan Kuhn, in her book, *Tai Chi for Depression*, wrote about the *Ten Secrets of Happiness* and how it can help to improve a person's outlook on life. Kuhn, a well-known Tai Chi and Qigong practitioner is the president of the Tai Chi and Qi Gong Healing Institute in Holliston, MA. She also volunteers much of her spare time to help others who work for this non-profit organization.

I enjoy the group energy. It is a very positive thing for my spirit. I also have learned a lot from this group activity. If you only think, (on a personal level) of what you are going to get out of it, you are not going to be happy. This kind of thinking can weaken your spirit. Life is not just about another day, another dollar."

So how does a volunteer worker adjust their lives to the demands of long hours with no pay? Kuhn offers this advice:

"Try to remember the help you get from other people and appreciate that help. Try to forget what you have done for others; you don't have to remember everything you did for them. Giving is giving; you don't need to get back. Giving is priceless, it is from your heart, and nothing can measure the value of giving. This way you will be a lot happier because you know you have something to offer."

- Avoid over analyzing. There are major differences between western psychology and Daoist psychology. Western psychology tries to analyze everything, looking for a reason for everything. Sometimes, when you try so hard to find a reason for everything or try to find the exact answer, you make your mind work so hard, that you create an ongoing battle within yourself. You may understand the cause of the problems, but may not know how to get rid of them.

- Things happen from many reasons, and for reasons; things solve from reasons and for reasons too. Daoist psychology uses the Daoist philosophy to correct the imbalance in your mind, to help you to let go of whatever is bothering you, and thereby preserve your energy. I have a patient with many mental and emotional issues. She has been seeing a psychotherapist all her life and still has many problems. Her main problem is being unable to let go of the negative thoughts. She still blames whoever caused the damage to her life in the past. She holds onto these negative thoughts and this causes worry that forms a barrier to many positive activities.

- Some people worry about things that might never happen, which is a complete waste of energy. Cautiousness is good to have in order to deal with situations that are unexpected, but being overcautious will create negativities and blockages in the mind and you will lose enjoyment of the event. Our minds are already too busy and that often



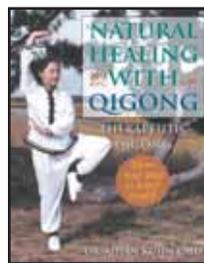
causes trouble in our life. People think too much, worry too much., plan too much, and fear too much. This behavior creates stress and tension, and can trigger depression, anxiety, and panic attack.

Kuhn says that besides not being able to control everything that happens, a person also cannot predict everything that happens. And she added that the more a person tries to analyze the more problems they might have. "Try not to waste your energy (and try to) preserve it to improve your health, happiness, and well-being. When things happen, you will find a way to deal with them."

Above all says Kuhn, forgive others. She quoted noted author Catherine Marshall's words: *True forgiveness includes total acceptance. And out of acceptance, wounds are healed and happiness is possible again.*"

Forgiving others, said Kuhn can create positive energy and help you to let go. She says that everyone, no matter who they are, all make some mistakes in their lives and more often than not they learn from them.

"Love can create forgiveness and forgiveness can nurture love. Let go of unpleasant things that happened in your past. Try to remember that everyday is a new day, a new life. Life is like water constantly flowing with no end and it flows to one direction and does not flow back."



Books by Dr. Aihan Kuhn, CMD.

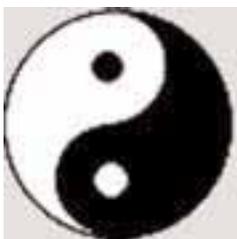
NATURAL HEALING WITH QIGONG

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

YMAA AROUND THE GLOBE

MILESTONES

World Tai Chi and Qigong Day (WTCQD) has recently been linked by the nation's #1 most read pictorial magazine, *Parade*. In the process it is also know linked from best selling natural health author's *Drweil.com* and Dr. Weil's new *HealthyAging.com*. WTCQD has presented at many national and international symposiums as divergent as the *International Fibromyalgia Coalition*, *Acupuncture Society of America*, and the *Girl Scouts of America*. Fore more information go to www.worldtaichiday.org free global school directory.



Here are more insightful, well researched health articles on Tai Chi as an immune system enhancer, calorie burner, stress reliever, and as a therapy for high blood pressure. Burn Calories, Reduce Stress, Boost Immune Function - Without Sweating

<http://worldtaichiday.org/LIBRARYArticles/LIBRARYTaiChiArticles.html>

HEALTH UPDATE

Dietary cholesterol has some effect on blood cholesterol, but it's not an issue unless you eat a lot of eggs, says Bonnie Liebman, director of nutrition at the Center for Science in the Public Interest. "You should be concerned if you're eating two eggs or more a day, because you could increase your risk factors for disease," adds Liebman. In fact, The American Heart Association recommends an intake of 300 milligrams or less of dietary cholesterol a day (one large egg contains 215 milligrams).



A study that tracked more than 35,000 middle aged and older women from Iowa for 17 years, those who consumed the most magnesium (more than 350 mg per day) had about a 25 percent lower risk of colon cancer than those who consumed the least (less than 245 mg per day).

FITNESS

Newsweek Magazine reports that kettlebells are catching on at gyms throughout the nation. Long used by Soviet athletes, they look like cannon balls with handles. Trainers say the melt fat and build muscle quicker than traditional free weights. According to Terry Malone, director of physical therapy at the University of Kentucky, kettlebell users work out by swinging the weights, which range from nine to eighty-eight pounds each, with one or both hands while performing squats and other dynamic movements.

Daily exercise reduces blood levels of C-reactive protein (a marker for inflammation associated with heart disease and diabetes). A recent Finnish study in the *European Heart Journal* found that sedentary people with high CRP had a 24 percent reduction after 20 weeks on a three-day-a-week moderately intense exercise program. This could significantly reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease and diabetes, according to the researchers. Of course, exercise reduces the risk of heart disease in other ways too.

YOU AND YOUR CAR



Here's a way to improve fuel efficiency and thus reduce pollution: Maintain your car properly by having regular tune-ups; replace spark plugs and air filters according to the manufacturer's recommendations. Maintain a steady speed as much as possible; aggressive driving, with lots of accelerating and braking, burns much more gas. And drive slower; speeding cuts gas mileage and increases pollution dramatically.

WORLD TAI CHI AND QIGONG DAY

A reminder: World Tai Chi and Qigong Day will be held the last Saturday of April 2006. Tai Chi schools all around the world will participate. So don't forget to tell your students and anyone else who cares to participate about this yearly event.

YMAA Qualified Active Instructors: 03/31/06

MASTER: Shaolin/Taijiquan
Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming

INSTRUCTORS:**Shaolin**

Jeffery Bolt (Houston, TX)
George Dominguez (Boston, MA)

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Jeffrey Pratt (Boston, MA)
Jeffrey Rosen (Boston, MA)
Roger Whidden (Marshfield, MA)
Vadas Mihaly (Hungary)
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Chin Na

Jim Noble

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Narcyz Latecki (Acton, MA)
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Pedro Rodrigues (Portugal)
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Robert Was (Krakow, Poland)
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Tomir Kaczmarek (Poland)
Victor Casqueiro (Portugal)
Victor Marques (Charenton, France)
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Alex Kiesel (Andover, MA)
Barbara Wypart (Poland)
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Chris Hartgrove (Boston MA)
Corlius Birkill (South Africa)
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EDITORIAL

The April issue of *Tai Chi Magazine* will feature a half page ad for *World Tai Chi & Qigong Day* (WTCQD), on the inside of the back cover, directing readers to find your local school's or group's listing at www.worldtaichiday.org *Schools Directory*.

Bill Douglas, WTCQD founder, informs us that the USA Weekend (circulation 23 million) article has dramatically expanded the membership of World Tai Chi & Qigong Day, and new events are being added worldwide daily. WIKIPEDIA'S TAI CHI article now lists www.worldtaichiday.org as an additional link for Medical Research Citations. Also, Wikipedia encyclopedia now has an entry for World Tai Chi & Qigong Day, at:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tai_chi

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Tai_Chi_and_Qigong_Day

Douglas says that the second stage international media campaign is already underway. His organization is reaching out to hundreds of major media outlets in dozens of nations encouraging them to cover local events.

Douglas has one of the most comprehensive link sites on the internet, freely linking to all quality websites and making them aware of whether they link back to his WTCQD web page. He would like everyone to know that they can make a valuable contribution to global health and healing efforts by providing a link back to <http://www.worldtaichiday.org>. Your participation will provide readers with a valuable resource that will help them get more from not one but all styles of tai chi and qigong instruction. Instructors and students alike will also benefit from WTCQD's extensive listing of Tai Chi and Qigong medical research that they can share with friends, family, and media.

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YMAA Publication Center welcomes manuscripts on Martial Arts and Qigong. If you've got a book in you, let us know.

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