



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,

As the YMAA Retreat Center nears completion, I look forward to it becoming a beacon at the center of today's martial arts society, leading by example to reestablish the model of the traditional training facility. Based on a high level of martial morality education, emphasizing the development of art instead of violence, it will leave future generations the legacy of a discipline of respect, responsibility, confidence, and compassion.

I am attempting to create a clear path toward achieving this goal. In 2004, the first steps were taken to develop the infrastructure: roads were built on the property; a solar array was installed to provide sustainable, off-the-grid electricity; a well was dug; and construction has commenced on the living and training facilities. I have traveled to California at least twice each year, bringing senior students to work and train each day for two weeks, and to continue construction and preparations for the start of the 10-Year Training Program in August 2008.

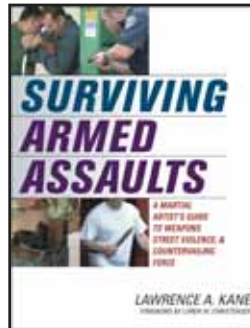
We are working to popularize the traditional Chinese arts worldwide on a large scale, and to see Kung Fu become highly respected once again. The study and practice of Kung Fu offers a meaningful path in life, which teaches one how to lead by example, how to create peace and harmony, and how to embody this ancient wisdom. The success of the YMAA Retreat Center training program will instill confidence in others that the traditional arts can be preserved, and that the spiritual and moral aspects of martial training can be rekindled.

I hope that many more philanthropists will notice what YMAA is trying to do since their input and generosity are very important to the success of the Center. Young people learn and benefit from philanthropy. In many instances they also pass their teachings on to others. We have many dedicated teachers at YMAA centers throughout the world. They stand ready to hand down to their students what I handed down to them. There aren't too many people who are interested in doing this, but I can see from the enthusiasm shown by those who have already visited the YMAA Retreat Center that everyone who has participated will long remember their experiences there.

I thank everyone who has worked so effortlessly to make this project a success.

BOOK REVIEW

Surviving Armed Assaults A Martial Artists Guide to Weapons, Street Violence, & Countervailing Force



by Lawrence A. Kane

\$24.95, ISBN 1-59739-071-1

It saddens me to pick up the newspaper or turn on the TV in the morning. The top story usually focuses on some sort of mayhem. For example, in Boston last week, there were at least five shootings and three stabbing. The latter took place right outside Boston Symphony Hall. In another incident, a man with a restraining order taken out against him pulled a gun and took a shot at his estranged wife. Fortunately, he missed and was later arrested and charged with assault.

When I read books like *Surviving Armed Assaults*, I'm not surprised that it shows in graphic detail what can happen to a person when they're caught off guard or not trained to ward off an attack. Author, Lawrence Kane, for the last 30 years has studied and taught a variety of martial arts. He's been faced with some life threatening situations of his own, but has always managed to walk away, usually unscathed. He says he owes a lot to his martial arts training. Still, Kane doesn't take anything for granted. His motto is: *one should be prepared for any emergency*. Kane covers every imaginable way a person can protect themselves from danger. *Be alert and be cautious*, Kane writes, but also know how to use deadly force if necessary.

There are some pages in Kane's book that are shocking. But I think that's what he intended them to be. It's the shock that sets up the reality and the reality that brings awareness. Not every picture in his book has captions. That sort of caught me off guard, but it all made sense: *One picture is worth a thousand words*. Kane's book is worth the read. For those teaching any type of self-defense, this book is a must. I look forward to seeing more like it.

Review by Dan Hood

IN THIS ISSUE

1. **Foreword:** by Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming
2. **Spotlight:** On Ramel Rones
3. **Martial Arts:** *The Kung Fu Mind*
4. **Taijiquan:** *Theory of Internal Jin Power*
5. **Qigong:** *Regulating Your Breathing*
6. **People, Places & Things:** *Around the globe*
7. **YMAA Schools and Qualified Instructors**

2006 SPOTLIGHT ON RAMEL RONES



Ramel 'Rami' Rones has witnessed first hand the profound long-term benefits of Tai Chi and Qigong practice. Since 1989 he has been working to improve the lives of Cancer and Arthritis patients. He is a Scientific Consultant of Mind/Body Therapies at *Dana Farber Cancer Institute*, and *Harvard and Tufts Medical Schools*. He is co-author of several books, including *Sunrise Tai Chi* with David Silver, and of numerous scientific publications

He is the creator of the exhibit "Tai Chi Chuan - Secrets of Aging" Science Museum traveling exhibition (Boston, Columbus, Los Angeles, Fort Worth, Philadelphia, Minneapolis) 2000-2004.

A senior disciple of renowned teacher and author Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming, PhD in Boston, MA, Ramel is a Gold medalist in Internal and External Martial Arts: Three-Time Gold Medalist in Shanghai China, for Tai Chi, External & Internal Weapons (Grand National Championship 1994) & Gold Medalist for Tai Chi & Kung Fu Sword, 1994. From 1991-1993, Ramel earned Gold Medals for Tai Chi, Pushing Hands and Tai Chi Sword in the International North American Chinese Martial Arts Competition.

From *National Geographic Explorations*.



In 2004, National Geographic filmed a study done on the effects of Meditation and Tai Chi for a program called 'Explorations'.

Ramel Rones, the test subject, was asked to meditate using various methods, while his brain was scanned and vital signs were recorded by researcher Dr. Sarah Lazar at Mass General Hospital, the world's foremost brain research facility.

The data extracted dramatically demonstrated Rami's ability to rapidly modulate his breathing rate and physiological arousal level as he entered a meditative state. This finding complements Lazar's broader study which found that advanced meditators like Rones are able to activate a broad network of cortical and sub cortical areas associated with emotional and cognitive regulation, which has many health benefits.

Rami's first program, *Sunrise Tai Chi* DVD has been in or near the #1 bestselling position for online sales of instruc-

tional Tai Chi DVDs since its publication. It was featured in an article on *MSN* and in *Prevention* magazine in September 2006.

In *Sunrise Tai Chi* DVD, Rones gently guides you through the morning with a series of powerful mind/body exercises that awaken the senses, stimulate the mind, and fill your body and Spirit with abundant energy.

Captured in high-definition in the beautiful Boston Arboretum, this simplified, short Tai Chi sequence is practiced to both the left and right for balance. *Sunrise Tai Chi* was created as a comprehensive introduction to authentic Tai Chi, which will allow you to fine-tune your practice before moving on to more complex Tai Chi. It includes suggestions for intermediate and advanced students, to help you grow and improve over time.

Each day, millions of people worldwide practice Tai Chi Chuan (Taijiquan), which has been known for centuries to promote deep relaxation, excellent health, & to prevent injuries & illness. The movements in *Sunrise Tai Chi* will help you to loosen & build your muscles, tendons & ligaments, which will improve your circulation of blood & Qi energy. The program also teaches you to find balance between strength & flexibility, increase bone density, & massage the internal organs, improving your quality of life & daily physical performance.

- Revitalize your health and well being through deep relaxation, breath, meditation, stretching and strengthening techniques.

- Apply core principles of Tai Chi, Qigong, and Yoga together with Mind/Body Science to tap into the abundant universal energy.

- Prevent injuries and boost your immune system to heal chronic conditions, including Arthritis, Osteoporosis, Sarcopenia, and Cancer.



SUNRISE TAI CHI DVD

by Ramel Rones
\$29.95, 300 minutes, all regions
Code: D0274



TAI CHI ENERGY PATTERNS DVD

Taijiquan Solo & Partner Exercises for Health & Martial Arts
by Ramel Rones
\$39.95, 385 minutes, 2 DVD set, all regions
Code: D0525

THE KUNG FU MIND

By Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming



Life can be compared to walking in the dark. We feel insecure because we cannot see danger around us and we cannot predict the future. Therefore, often we get confused, we get lost, afraid, and we don't know what will happen to us and cannot find a path to our goals.

In our wandering, we may come upon light created by someone who has found a way to make fire. Around the fire, we can see each other and better understand our environment. Then, we follow this enlightened person, and soon we learn how to make our own fire.

We all have the capability to make fire by earning matches. However, it is not easy. To earn a match, we have to conquer ourselves. Every time we conquer our laziness and keep our promises to ourselves, the reward is a match, which offers us the hope of light. However, the wind blows very hard and the weather is cold in the darkness. A single match has very little chance of surviving and enlightening our surroundings.

Even if a match is lit, it will not last long. Therefore, to see better, we have to earn many matches. Not only that but to keep the fire strong we must find wood. Each time we find a sincere friend, it is like finding a piece of wood for our fire. The more we find, the better chance we have of starting a good fire.

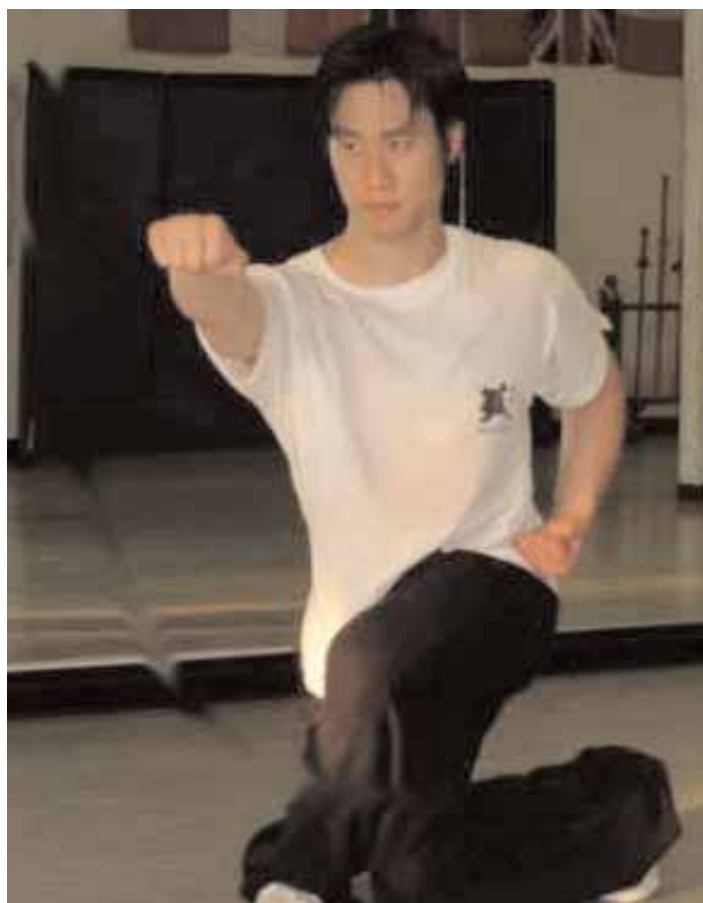
Many people, because of a lack of confidence, courage, or a strong will to conquer themselves, don't earn any matches. Therefore, they look for someone who already has light to keep them warm and help them see. These people need to be led step by step. Without this leading, they will continue to be afraid, be confused, and lack confidence. Many people, unable to find someone to lead them, stay lost forever. Some of them kill themselves to avoid the challenges of the future.

Occasionally; a few people, after they have successfully built a fire, become selfish and will not share with others. Others will share their light even though they have to babysit their followers. However, many enlightened ones will take the opportunity to abuse their followers' spirits and become so-called "spiritual leaders." Sadly, they remain in the emotional mud and continue to struggle in the great darkness even though they have made a light to see. There are also people, after successfully making a fire that will stay in the same place instead of continuing to search for the meaning of the future. They are emotionally trapped by glory, pride, wealth and power, and will stay there until the end of their lives.

However, a few others will carry their fire with them and continue to search for a path that will lead to their goals. Some of these people generously leave some of their

fire along the path to shine in the darkness for others to follow. However, this kind of lighted path is very rare. In addition, if no one cares and no one places more wood on the fire, lighting the way for themselves and others, the fire will go out, and again the path will be lost.

Are you lost in your life? Are you confused, scared, and discouraged? Do you dare to accept the challenge of life even though you are in the darkness and cannot see? Will you learn how to conquer yourself and therefore earn a



match? This match will give you a light to the future. Will you dare to build relationships with other people? They will tell you where you can find wood. Build your will. Set a goal for yourself. Make friends with others. Then, when you carry your fire along life's path, you will have plenty of wood to light your way. Do not let your fire be extinguished. Once it is extinguished, you will have to start again.

THEORY OF INTERNAL JIN POWER

By Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming



What is internal *jin* (*nei jin*)? It is the energy source of the power. What is *qi* (energy) in the body?

It is bioelectricity. What is the *yi* (energy)? It is the source of electromotive force (EMF) in the body, which creates electric potential difference. "The *yi* leads the *qi*."

When the *yi* is strong, the EMF will also be strong, creating greater electrical potential difference. This means that when EMF is strong the flow of bioelectricity will be strong. This is the theory of internal *jin*. When the *qi* (energy) flow is strong, the *jin* manifested will be powerful. From Ohm's law it is known that: $V = I \times R$

V= Electric Potential Difference

I= Current

R= Resistance

From this formula, it is known that the potential difference is proportional to the current. That means when the potential difference is bigger, the current is strong. In martial arts, EMF is generated by the concentrated wisdom mind (*yi*). That means, when *yi* is strong, the bioelectricity is strong. To have strong *yi*, you should start from still meditation. From the practice of still meditation, the gong-fu of the *yi*'s concentration can be trained. When the *yi* is concentrated, the spirit of vitality is high and the EMF is strong; this is the first secret key to internal *jin*.

Though the bioelectric network in the human body is much more complicated than a regular electric network, Ohm's Law can still be adopted to interpret the manifestation of *jin*. When the mind is strong, the power manifested is more powerful and concentrated.

Taiji philosophy has existed for thousands of years. The word taiji means "grand ultimate." When the theory of taiji is applied into the martial art taijiquan, taiji refers to your mind. The mind is the "grand ultimate" of the body. The mind can instantly travel beyond the limits of space and time. This mind is creative and powerful. And it is the mind that initiates and controls the body's movement. Therefore, in taijiquan, the cultivation of mind is always the first priority of training, and it is ultimately a vital aspect of all martial arts training. The key to increasing the mind's power and concentration is through still meditation.

It is also known from the formula that resistance is inversely proportional to current. That means when the resistance is high, the current is small, and when the resistance is low, the current is large. The resistance in humans is related to whether the body is loose or tight. If it is tight and tensed, the resistance is high and the current is weak.

If it is loose and soft, then the resistance is low and the current is strong. From this, it is seen that the second secret key to manifesting internal *jin* is to keep the physical body loose and soft.

Taijiquan is commonly called "moving meditation" in Western society because when you practice, you are using your concentration with a sense of enemy against an imaginary opponent to lead the *qi* to the arms and legs for the *jin*'s manifestation. To lead the *qi* effectively with the mind, the body must be relaxed, loose and soft. Only then can the *jin* circulate without stagnation. The key to keeping the body loose and soft is maintaining movement and agility in the joints. Only then can the *jin* be initiated by the legs, controlled by the waist, shaped by the chest and spine, and finally manifested in the hands. Without a relaxed and soft body, internal arts such as taijiquan lose their meaning and basic principles, and cannot be called internal anymore.



Furthermore, even if the *yi* is strong, you must still know the method of using the *yi* to lead the *qi*. If you do not obtain this method, even though the *qi* is strong, you still cannot use it effectively, and the level of achievement will not be great. In order to learn the method of using the *yi* to lead the *qi*, you must train against an imaginary opponent, while coordinating "reversed abdominal breathing."

"Reverse abdominal breathing" is a natural way of breathing, which we use to manifest power physically. Whenever you wish to manifest your energy into physical power, to push a car or lift a weight for example, without thinking, you change your breathing manner from "normal breathing" to "reverse abdominal breathing."

If you wish to enhance the power manifestation to a higher level, you must also know how to open the ming-men (Gv-4) cavity and lead the *qi* upward along the spine and then out to the arms through the dazhui (Gv-14) cavity. After practicing for a long time, it will become a habit, and you will lead the *qi* through the limbs as needed, resulting in stronger martial power (*Jin*).

We'll discuss external *jin* in a subsequent Newsletter.



REGULATING YOUR BREATHING

By Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming

The keys to regulating the breathing and transporting *qi* (*ki*) are concentrated in two places: the *huiyin* cavity located between the genitals and anus, and the palate of the mouth. The *huiyin* cavity is the connecting point of the four *yin* *qi* vessels and is the controlling and releasing gate for the four *yin* *qi* reservoirs.

When the *huiyin* is pushed out, the *qi* in the *yin* vessels is released, and when the *huiyin* is lifted upward, the *qi* in the *yin* vessels is contained and condensed. For example, when you laugh out loud, your exhalation is longer than your inhalation; when you exhale, the *huiyin* is pushed out naturally; the entire body's *yang* is manifested and the guardian *qi* is strengthened; consequently, the body begins to sweat.

Conversely, when you are sad or depressed, the inhalation is longer than the exhalation, and when you inhale, the *huiyin* is lifted upward naturally, the marrow *qi* is condensed and the guardian *qi* is condensed inward hence the body feels cooler. From these you can see that when you practice *qigong*, coordinating breathing with the *huiyin*'s pushing is one of the keys to governing the body's *qi* status. In the past, it was common that a master would keep to himself these two secret keys of regulating. These secrets would not be revealed to the student until he proved himself to be trustworthy. They were not passed down to those disciples who were not loyal and moral.

One of the secret keys is learning how to control the *huiyin* (i.e., perineum). This place is the controlling gate of the body's *yin* and *yang*. *Huiyin* means, "meet *yin*" in Chinese and is the meeting place of the four *yin* vessels: conception (*ren mai*), thrusting (*chong mai*), *yin* heel (*yingqiao mai*) and *yin*-linking vessels (*yinwei mai*). When this gate is pushed out, the *qi* in these four *yin* vessels is released, and when this gate is held up, the *qi* in the four *yin* vessels is kept in and preserved. Because of this, this gate can control the body's *yin/yang* status. In my experience, this place acts as a pump or a piston to a *qi* chamber that controls the storage and release of *qi*.

The other key is the palate of the mouth. Taoists believe that the palate is the connecting place of the conception and governing vessels. Normally, the palate is not connected to the tip of the tongue, and therefore the *qi* is stagnant at the throat area for uttering sound. Therefore, because of the stagnant *qi*, the mouth is dry. The conception and governing vessels are not well connected in the mouth area.

However, if you practice your martial art or *qigong* without the necessity of making a sound, then you should touch your tongue upward to the palate at all times to connect the conception and governing vessels. When this happens, the root of the tongue will generate saliva to moisten

the throat, calm the *yang* fire and allow the *qi* to be transported between these two main *qi* vessels without stagnation. This is called "releasing the heavenly water."

This connection is also called "building the magpie bridge" (*da que qiao*). According to a Chinese story, long ago a Coward (*Niu Lang*) and a Weaving Maid (*Zhi Nu*) would meet once a year on the seventh day of the seventh moon on a bridge across the Milky Way. The bridge was formed by sympathetic magpies. This story has become a symbol of *yin* and *yang*'s interacting or connecting in *qigong* practice. When *yin* and *yang* meet, the body can be harmonized. When the saliva is generated to a comfortable amount, you should swallow it and use the mind to lead it down to the real *dan tian*. This will help you lead the fire *qi* downward to cool down the body.

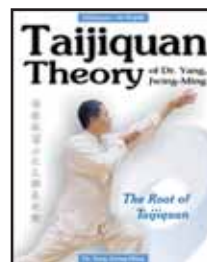
If those who are learning *taiji* can apply the above two keys into their regular natural breathing, then the accomplishments of *taiji* *qigong* can be achieved within days. At the beginning, it is hard to control your *huiyin*'s movement smoothly and naturally. In addition, because of the positioning of the tongue, an uncomfortable and tense feeling may be experienced at the root of the tongue. However, after you practice for some time, you will see it will become easier and more comfortable, and your internal practice will be more efficient and beneficial.

This article also appeared in the October 2006 issue of *Inside Kung Fu*, which Dr. Yang is a frequent contributor.



QIGONG MEDITATION

Embryonic Breathing
\$29.95, 416 pages, ISBN: 1-886969-73-6
Code: B736



TAIJIQUAN THEORY OF DR. YANG, JWING-MING

The Root of Taijiquan
\$29.95, 302 pages, ISBN: 0-940871-43-2
Code: B432

YMAA AROUND THE WORLD

YOUR HEALTH AND YOU

Great news for those rehabilitating from cardiac related illness and for everyone else. The BBC reported on a US study of 30 patients that regular Tai Chi classes gave patients better movement and reduced BNP levels, a measure of heart failure. *The British Heart Foundation* said the study was “excellent news” and Tai Chi could be adopted into treatment programs in the UK in the future. In fact, another study in *The Harvard Women’s Health Watch*, reported, “studies support Tai Chi [use] for heart-attack and cardiac-bypass patients, to improve cardio-respiratory function and reduce blood pressure.”

Way back in 2003, the *Journal of Alternative and Complimentary Medicine’s* Oct. 9th issue reported a study finding that Tai Chi “could decrease blood pressure and results in favorable lipid profile changes and improve subjects’ anxiety status. Therefore, Tai Chi could be used as an alternative modality in treating patients with mild hypertension, with a promising economic effect.” This study laid out a way to save our society, perhaps billions of dollars annually and possibly save some patients with mild chronic hypertension the potential negative side effects of chronic lifelong medication. However, this largely hasn’t occurred.

YOU’RE IN THE ARMY NOW

George Dominguez, one of YMAA’s most talented Shaolin instructors has changed uniforms. He’s now a Pvt., in the US Army. The last report we had was that he completed basic training and was scheduled to ship overseas either to Afghanistan or Iraq. While at YMAA, Dominguez became the first student to complete the rigorous Shaolin training taught by Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming.

UPDATES

Just in time for the New Year is the second printing of *Lobrigolin and the Forest of Fear*. You might recall that this exciting children’s book was published a year ago and met with rave reviews. Written by Daniel Hood, YMAA Tai Chi practitioner, it appears on • www.BooksinPrint.com and • www.GlobalBooksinPrint.com and is available for purchase • www.Amazon.com • www.Abebooks.com • www.Alibris.com • www.Borders.com • www.Target.com.



A group of YMAA Kung Fu practitioners gathered at the Tin Tin restaurant in Allston, Mass., recently to commemorate YMAA’s 25th anniversary and usher in the holiday season.

Ramel Rones, is shown in a photo with Dr. Yang in the 2007 Tai Chi Inspirations calendar. This picturesque calendar features photographs of Tai Chi masters with text by Don Ethan Miller, a long time YMAA disciple. You can purchase this calendar directly from YMAA Publications; www.ymaa.com

The Boston Globe interviewed Chenchen Wang, MD, from *Tufts-NEMCs Division of Rheumatology* on how tai chi is a good form of exercise for older adults. Wang is currently studying the effects of tai chi on patients with knee osteoarthritis.

Researchers have focused on studying the benefits of relaxation and exercise that result from practicing tai chi. Clinical trials suggest that tai chi improves posture, balance, flexibility, muscle mass and tone, stamina, and strength in older adults and may help prevent falls and fractures. A recent randomized clinical trial of people over age 69 compared tai chi to a stretching exercise class. After 6 months, the tai chi group had better balance and fewer falls than the stretching group. Benefits have also been noted for older people with chronic diseases such as arthritis, osteoporosis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and peripheral artery disease. Research has found that tai chi can reduce stress and provide the same cardiovascular benefits as moderate exercise, such as reduced heart rate and blood pressure. In one randomized study, older adults with sleep problems who practiced tai chi were able to fall asleep faster and stay asleep longer than those who did low impact aerobics. Though there is no scientific evidence that tai chi cures cancer or any other disease, it may be useful as a complementary therapy to conventional treatment.

SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT WORLD TAI CHI & QIGONG DAY

If you belong to a local, regional, national, or international Tai Chi or Qigong related organization, encourage their board of directors to become co-creators of *World Tai Chi & Qigong Day*, and to promote it among their schools and branches. Visit to learn more: <http://www.worldtaichiday.org>

EDITORIAL - *Contributing editor Bill Douglas*

WHY IS TAI CHI & QIGONG IMPORTANT TO HUMANITY?

Our planet is sagging from the weight of 6 billion inhabitants, and many more to come soon!

What does this mean, when global resources, like oil, begin to dwindle?

It means that we will need to become flexible enough to open to new ways of living, and approaching problems.

With the advent of the nuclear age, Einstein made the prophetic statement, "Everything has changed, save our way of thinking."

For human beings, change is a stressful thing. Stress tends to make us grip more tightly, even onto old ways of thinking and behaving that no longer work in current and coming reality.

As the digital age sweeps upon us relentlessly and shifting economies are washed by dwindling resources, we are called upon to become more fluid, more creative, and more adaptive so that we as a human race can thrive in the approaching future.

Tai Chi & Qigong have evolved over many centuries, to become perhaps the best model for developing this ability

in people. The effortless ability to allow changing motion to flow through us, and allowing our minds to let go of what they grip, leaving us fresh and open to creative ideas . . . is perhaps the most powerful benefit Tai Chi & Qigong offer the modern man and woman.

According to scientific research, many of the solutions to modern challenges, whether they be environmental, economic, geopolitical, etc., are readily available and can be utilized very quickly to foster a healthier, more peaceful, and abundant planet. What holds us back is not the technology, but our ability as human beings to change.

Psychologists have pointed out that Tai Chi is a perfect microcosmic model to illustrate the macrocosmic changes of life we go through as human beings. By learning how to be more fluid and flowing, by unlocking our physical grip on stresses of the past, we become best equipped to handle the future in a relaxed, clear minded, non-panicked, creative way. This may be the great gift Tai Chi & Qigong offer humanity, and at a time, when it is most needed.

Bill Douglas is the president and founder of World Tai Chi Day

YMAA NEWS STAFF

DIRECTOR

Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming

EDITOR

Dan Hood



YMAA PUBLICATION CENTER

4354 Washington Street
 Roslindale, MA 02131
 Telephone (617) 323-7215
 Fax (617) 323-7417

Website: www.ymaa.com
 e-mail (School) ymaaboston@aol.com
 e-mail (Publishing Office) ymaa@aol.com

EDITOR: Dan Hood

YMAA News
 4354 Washington St.
 Roslindale, MA 02131 USA
 fax: (617) 323-7417

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Write or e-mail
 David Ripianzi/YMAA Publication Center
 4354 Washington St.
 Roslindale, MA. 02131 USA
 e-mail: davidr@ymaa.com