

YMAA NEWS



ISSUE 81 * MARCH 2007



James Noble applies Qin Na

3 Foreword

by Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming

Two years ago, I took on a new and more difficult task; I purchased 240 wooded acres in California's remote Humboldt County, and began building a Retreat Center there.

4 Listening to the Joints Heal

by James Noble

How does a person heal themselves if they suffer a joint injury while practicing Chin Na, or some other physical activity?

6 Respect the Blade

by Lewis Paleias

The knife is a tool that strikes terror in most people, martial artists included. If it doesn't scare you then you are an incredibly good fighter, extremely naive, or dead.

13 A Decade of Kung Fu

by Walter Wong

What actually drew me to Dr. Yang's school was his practical fighting approach to the ancient Chinese arts.

15 Around the World

David Grantham achieves Instructor of Qin Na level. Walter Wong in the movie "The Departed". George Dominguez in a different uniform. Chinese New Year of the Pig.

EDITOR'S CORNER

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.

In its March 5, 2007 issue, USA TODAY reporter Kathleen Fackelmann wrote a very informative article about how tai chi can benefit senior citizens. Her article, titled Get with the tai chi program, said seniors have actually found that tai chi really does improve body and mind. But that's not all that it does. Clinical research has also proven that tai chi can actually increase bone density. This can be beneficial to people, especially seniors who have experienced hip fractures or some other problem with their bones.

On a personal note, I have noticed that since I began practicing tai chi, my balance has improved and I don't go through long recovery periods after pushing hands with a much younger person than myself. Tai chi is good exercise for people of all ages. I have found that it is even more beneficial when some White Crane qigong is added in. Qigong seminars are held at YMAA Headquarters every year. For more information you can look at the seminar schedules posted on the YMAA.com web site.

Dan Hood

YMAA NEWS

ISSUE 81 * MARCH 2007

DIRECTOR: DR. YANG, JWING-MING

EDITOR: DAN HOOD

PUBLISHER: DAVID RIPIANZI

LAYOUT: TONY CHEE

YMAA NEWS is published quarterly. Free download and subscription available on www.ymaa.com

YMAA Publication Center
4354 Washington Street
Roslindale, MA 02131
USA

Phone: (617) 323-7215
Fax: (617) 323-7414
email: ymaa@aol.com

YMAA Schools World Headquarters
38 Hyde Park Avenue
Jamaica Plain, 02131 MA
USA
Phone: (617) 524-8892
Fax: (617) 524-8049
email: ymaaboston@aol.com

The YMAA Newsletter Wants to Hear from You!

As the number of YMAA Schools throughout the world continues to grow, Dr. Yang believes that it is important to promote a spirit of unity. One of the ways we can do this is through the YMAA Newsletter and the YMAA website. We invite all YMAA Schools to submit articles on any Martial Arts and Qigong topics, including moral stories, training ideas, and health information, as well as anything concerning the YMAA organization. Photos to accompany the articles are also encouraged.

Write, fax, or email to:
Dan Hood /YMAA News
4354 Washington Street
Roslindale, MA 02131 USA
Fax: (617) 323-7417
email: dandelomba@aol.com



Foreword

by Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming

Dear Friends and Readers,

Two years ago, I took on a new and more difficult task; I purchased 240 wooded acres in California's remote Humboldt County, and began building a retreat center there. My goal is to recover Chinese martial arts to the same standard as when I was young, or even to my master's level. Since 2004, the infrastructure has been established, including a solar array for sustainable, off-the-grid power, a spring-fed well, and the living and training facilities. The 10-Year Training Program will commence August 2008. When that time arrives, I will lead a small group of students into the mountains to study ancient Chinese martial arts. It is a dream that I've had since I first established YMAA.

As I said in the beginning, this is a difficult task. Therefore, I'm calling on all of my instructors to support me during this transition period. Over the past 25 years my instructors have devoted many long hours to help keep YMAA solvent. They're not afraid to work hard while I tackle the difficult challenges that lie ahead. However, to continue to reap the benefits of our success, we must function as a team. We must continue to maintain our credibility as an efficient martial arts organization. The best way to do that is through communication.

Yang's Martial Arts Association is a multi-faceted organization with branches all over the world. Sometimes it's hard for us to communicate with each other even though the majority of us have computers. Still we must continue to use them effectively so that we can coordinate our training methods and exchange dialogue and ideas. Our students must receive the best instruction available and we must assure that it does not

differ from one YMAA school to another. If you have a message or a question about anything concerning YMAA training, please do not hesitate to ask me first. It is my responsibility to find the right answer, and then relay it to you.

I've been extremely busy trying to get the YMAA Retreat Center completed. Even though it's located in Garberville, Northern California, that doesn't mean I'm out of touch. Whenever I'm traveling or conducting a

“Our students must receive the best instruction available and we must assure that it does not differ from one YMAA school to another.”

seminar, I never cut off communication with YMAA Headquarters. Conversely, when I'm not at school, you can always find me simply by going to YMAA.com and looking under seminars. The information posted there will let everyone know exactly where I am.

If you have an article about your experiences inside or outside the school, please do not hesitate to e-mail it to Dan Hood at DanDeLomba@aol.com or send it to YMAA Headquarters. Thank you.

Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming is a world renowned author and teacher of Chinese martial arts for more than thirty five years. He founded the YMAA organization, with more than 55 schools in 18 countries, and is now building a new project in the mountains of California. For more information about this project, please visit www.ymaa-retreatcenter.org.

Listen to the Joints Heal with Chin Na

by Jim Noble

Anyone who has ever taught or studied martial arts might be inclined to agree that they encompass quite a bit of diversity and philosophy. Within every style; Kung fu, Karate, Tai Chi, etc., there exists a strong connection with regards to healing the body.

I have been a martial arts practitioner for 30 years focusing mainly on Chin Na (or Qin Na, the art of seize and control). Under the tutelage of Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming, I have come to the realization that even though Chin Na can be a very painful martial art, it also offers a certain depth of healing.

Chin Na is well known for its effectiveness in controlling and subduing opponents through the use of a series of joint locks or muscle/tendon grabbing techniques. Just like all martial arts, Chin Na relies a great deal on skill and practice. While training with a partner, the practitioner must be able to sense the proper angle, timing, force and leverage. Without this

“...though Chin Na can be very painful martial art, it also offers certain depth of healing.”

knowledge, the technique will be ineffective and it's quite possible that you could cause an unnecessary injury to your partner. Therefore, learning and practicing under the guidance of an experienced instructor or teacher is essential. But how does a person heal themselves if they suffer a joint injury while practicing Chin Na, or some other physical activity? Here are a few tips.

KNOWLEDGE OF PHYSIOLOGY

Understanding the range of motion or the direction each joint is capable of moving will help you to understand its limitations. For example, the wrist (carpal bones) and ankle joint (tarsal bones) consist of a number of bone joints with a multiple range of motion. They can move circular, linear and from side to side.

Elbow and knee hinge joints: The elbow is located between the humerus, ulna and radius, while the knee rests in a cradle between the femur, tibia and fibula. If you looked at your knee on an X-ray, you'd see that these bones work in coordination with others. It's also important to know that the joints and tendons attached to the knee only have a limit of 180 degrees. Therefore, your leg should never exceed that range of motion, even if you are double jointed. You'll suffer the consequences later in life.

Two joints that have a circular motion are the hip and shoulder. The hip is a ball and socket joint. The femur, located in the upper leg, is set firmly in the pelvis. The humerus, located in the shoulder is held in place by several ligaments and muscles aligned with the scapula and clavicle.

Joints are limited by their flexibility and range when they are twisted thereby causing



Jim Noble applies a Chin Na to Gerard Ash.

subsequent pain or discomfort. This allows a Chin Na practitioner to control an opponent. Here's something that you can try on yourself and it is safe: Twist a joint lightly and "listen" to the movement of the bones, the tautness of the ligaments and tightness of the muscles. You can almost feel the alignment or misalignment of the joint. Feel the muscles that support the joint pulse as they compensate for the twisting. That motion limits the circulation of blood to the muscle. Sense the ligaments attached to that joint as it offers resistance and tries to stabilize the movement.

HEALING A JOINT

Touch the joint lightly. Pull and twist it. Be careful not to apply too much pressure. Use your fingers to locate the soreness in the area. Then slowly draw the joint open as you feel resistance to the initial pull. If you perform this task correctly, with each and every pull, the tenderness or pain should lessen. Warm the area with a firm and comfortable rub. Listen to the body as it allows for the circulation of warmth to fill the sensitive area. You can apply these movements to every joint in the body. Bare in mind, healthy joints allow us to move and enjoy many more pleasures in life. Listening to your body's joints also allows a healing and a deeper, more profound knowledge of martial

arts. Understanding how healing works will not only keep you healthy but will also help to eliminate pain and discomfort.

“Listening to your body's joints also allows a healing and a deeper, more profound knowledge of martial arts.”

ADDITIONAL HEALING TIPS

Along with the above methods the use of herbs and ointments like Dit Da Jow, Qigong massage, acupuncture, etc., could help to heal aching or injured joints. There is also additional information on healing the joints in chapter 11 of Dr. Yang's book, *Analysis of Shaolin Chin Na*. In that chapter, he stresses that it's just as important to heal your opponent as it is to injure him. "A good Chinese martial artist," says Dr. Yang, "must know two things about healing. The first of these is diagnosis, the second is treatment." He emphasized that it's always a good idea to see a doctor if the pain or discomfort continues.

James Noble is a senior student of Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming and a YMAA Chin Na Instructor. He currently teaches classes at YMAA Headquarters and also assist Dr. Yang in teaching the Chin Na courses during the Summer and Winter Boston Seminars.

Respect the Blade

by Lewis Paleias

The knife is a tool that strikes terror in most people, martial artists included. If it doesn't scare you then you are an incredibly good fighter, extremely naive, or dead. Many martial artists have little, if any, knowledge of how to use and defend against an edged weapon.

Most films depict knife combat in a totally unrealistic manner. In fact, a lot of the so-called knife defense techniques practiced in some schools would probably get you killed in an actual self-defense confrontation. Some of the flaws are:

- Assumptions are made that the defender is aware of the knife.
- Techniques are too complicated - you lose sensitivity and fine motor skills under stress.
- Most defenses neglect the free limbs of attacker.
- Techniques are usually taught against static attacks (your partner singly thrusts and freezes).
- X Blocks and Rising Blocks. The knife wielder will slice deeply on retraction.

SCENE 1: The man steps out from the shadows into the glare of the streetlight. He's wearing sunglasses and the collar of his motorcycle jacket hides most of his tattooed face. Lewis, sensing danger, slows his pace. The man steps forward, blocking Lewis's path. Pulling a large knife out of his leather jacket, he shouts, "Give me your money, or die." Lewis, a Master of Chow Mein Kung Fu, steps back into a fighting stance. Suddenly the man lunges forward, thrusting the knife at Lewis's face. Executing a spinning round house kick, Lewis knocks the weapon out of the thug's hand, pulls back his iron palm and Uhhhggg!

This is such unbelievable crap that I'm even making myself sick. Not only is it full of clichés, it's not even remotely believable. For some reason many martial art techniques are based on the supposition that the knife

wielder has no idea how to use it! Well, whether he can use it or not, once he pulls the knife the unarmed man is at a serious disadvantage, and if the attacker has even a little knowledge of how to use the blade, the chances are that he'll cut his victim to pieces. O.K. Let's go back and revise my work of fiction. Instead of the high kick (which would probably have ended with a slashed femoral artery) Lewis deflects the thrust with a mid level block; but his move lacks enough power to either damage his opponent's arm or unbalance him. Before he can continue with a punch or knee, Lewis feels a sudden sharp stinging in his wrist and realizes that while withdrawing his knife, his enemy has cut him deeply. His horror turns to shock as the blood starts pumping through the air. As he clutches his wound, the thug punches the weapon into his stomach. Hold on! But what if the block had worked? What if Lewis was so fast that he saw the knife thrust in time to stop it with a block so powerful that it broke the thug's arm?

O.K. Let's try to rerun this scenario, as it would probably happen. As Lewis is walking past the streetlight, thinking about his miserable boss, he doesn't notice a man approaching, hands at his side. Walking past, the man suddenly grabs Lewis's jacket and hisses, "Your wallet, now! Without waiting, Kung Fu Lew immediately punches the guy's face. OUCH! Lew feels a sharp pain in his hand. The man, holding a hidden blade against the inside of his arm, has blocked Lewis's punch with it. In the same instant, as Lew retracts his spurting wrist, the man slashes forward against Lewis' neck. There are lots of ways to keep the knife out of sight before the first

Lewis demonstrates
knife techniques.

cut. You can use the opposite hand to pull and unbalance your victim or as a screen to hide the knives' approach. In fact, statistics show that most victims never even see the knife: they think that they were punched, not stabbed. I was attacked, many years ago, by a thug wielding a straight edged razor as I was carrying a bag of garbage to a dumpster late at night. No words were spoken: he just approached and struck. Instinctively, I blocked with the garbage bag and, pumped up by the adrenaline rush, proceeded to strike him everywhere I could with my fists. I must have been winning: his face was one bloody mess. He turned and limped away as a car approached. Feeling faint, it took me a while to realize that all his blood (plus a couple of pints more) was spurting from my half-severed finger like a fire hose. I never felt a thing.

So how do you defend against a weapon that you don't see? I remember once, long ago, someone asked that question while my teacher, Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming, was teaching the knife disarms that are part of the YMAA curriculum. He answered; always assume that someone attacking you has a hidden blade in his hand; that way you won't be surprised when it's true. On the other hand, he also told me only a desperate man fights barehanded against a knife. If you are fortunate enough to know that your attacker has a weapon then, as the great Dan Inosanto once said at a workshop, you need to get an equalizer. This might be a chair, stick, garbage lid, a soda can any hard (or hot) object that comes readily to hand. Don't assume that your 10 or so years of martial arts training are a guaranteed solution: without an equalizer you have a life-threatening problem. You see, to be able to kick, hit or



throw your opponent, you first have to get past his knife, and every time you do that you risk having at least your hand, arm or leg cut. Don't assume that you can take a cut to any of these minor areas and still go on to finish the fight. I once had a teacher insist we slash a standing rib roast with a 3" lock blade. Even if you do it only half right, the length and depth of the wound should give you a realistic assessment of how easy, or hard it would be to continue fighting after receiving such a wound.

A knife will cut both on extension and retraction of a movement, so, if he misses,

"I was attacked, many years ago, by a thug wielding a straight edged razor as I was carrying a bag of garbage to a dumpster late at night. No words were spoken: he just approached and struck."



ACCEPTING
APPLICATIONS
UNTIL JULY
2007



YMAA CALIFORNIA RETREAT CENTER

Preserving the Traditional Chinese Arts

Shaolin White Crane * Shaolin Long
Fist * Qin Na * Taijiquan * Qigong
* Meditation * Chinese History &
Culture * Literature & Philosophy *
Management & Leadership

**A 10-Year Study & Training
Program for Exceptional Students**

www.ymaa.com/retreat-center

the knife wielder doesn't have to rechamber his hand and start again. Whether he uses his weapon offensively or defensively to block, parry or jam your attack, the result will always be the same: you will bleed. The speed that a knife moves obviously depends upon the expertise of the person wielding it, but even an amateur will appear fast: for instance, a 6-inch blade is that much closer to you than simply a fist, thus you have to be at least 6-inches quicker to avoid being cut. Police research has proven that, at a range of up to 20 feet, the knife is a faster, more effective weapon than a handgun! On top of that, only 10% of people shot die from their wounds: compare that with 30% of those stabbed. More police research (thanks to John Vazquez, Director, 911 Training Academy): The most popular strike is the hammer strike: either straight down or diagonal. Knife attacks are incredibly accurate, penetrate deeper than bullets, and create remarkable permanent cavities that rip through organs with one stroke. Typical depth of stab wounds in homicide cases is 1 to 10 inches through the rib cage into the heart. Main types of wounds causing death are single stab wounds. Because of the small surface area, the amount of force per unit area is TONS per square inch. Police ballistic armor is not designed to protect against stabs but may afford some defense against slashing. So, let's assume the worst-case scenario: you are unarmed, with no equalizer available and you are about to be attacked by a man with a blade. What are the principles that might help you stay in one piece? Here's my version of a top ten, although in no particular order. Some of these came from my correspondence and discussions with other martial artists, police trainers and combat personnel. Thank you all for sharing.

1) FLEE! RUN AWAY!

Learn to listen to your intuition: if something doesn't feel right, it probably isn't. The best defense is to not be there in the first place. When unarmed, always try to escape. Even during the fight, you don't have to win: if you can "sting" him enough and injure him or get at least 10 feet away from him, research shows that you can escape without him following. Your defensive response should be to create

distance. If it is a robbery, don't hand him the wallet: toss it either left or right and flee in the opposite direction. Let his choice be you or the wallet. If you are still there he may want to eat the next course.

2) BE DECISIVE AND GET THE FIRST-MOVE ADVANTAGE IF POSSIBLE.

If you sense that a fight is inevitable, don't wait to be the first one hit. Watch for initial body language that indicates you are about to be attacked and make your move decisively. A first

“Knife attacks are incredibly accurate, penetrate deeper than bullets, and create remarkable permanent cavities that rip through organs with one stroke.”

move advantage can help you get and stay on top of the fight right from the start, providing the blade is not yet completely out. Danger Cues: Hands in palming position or subtle/furtive motions; Wandering eyes escape route or target glance; Change in demeanor (tightening jaw and hidden hand; Abrupt change in direction toward you; Knife sheath unsnapping (or sound of Velcro) or clicking of blade locking; Stance and kinesics; Subject profile. Once his blade is out, however, let him come to you.

3) REHEARSE

You need a mental plan. Be prepared by thinking through a fight just as you would other tactical scenarios. Where would you hit first? What would you do after you land your first blow? What would you do if you get hit and lose your balance or become momentarily dazed? What would you do if your fight goes to the ground, as many do? Find a couple of serious training partners and practice your knife defenses from all angles, starting from slow speed to combat speed. ONLY practice with people who can control their power and are capable of aborting their attack/throw rather than harming their partners. NEVER practice with real knives. Work up to responding to spontaneous attacks.

4) STAY TRUE TO SAFE DEFENSE PRINCIPLES

Remember the KISS Principle (Keep It Simple, Stupid). If your techniques are complicated or if they depend on your being faster or stronger than your attacker, you're going to get a rude awakening; weaker people usually don't go after stronger people. The attacker already has two advantages: he has already chosen to use the weapon and he probably has the luxury of first move. Master Chan Ching Kai once told me, "An old man with a small knife is younger than a young man with no knife: with every drop of blood the young man ages rapidly." Don't aim to block and counter: unless you are incredibly fast (yes, fear slows us down) you run the risk of having your arms/legs slashed. Instead, look to parry and/or control his knife arm while SIMULTANEOUSLY hitting him. You need to give him, as Dr. John Painter calls it,

"An old man with a small knife is younger than a young man with no knife: with every drop of blood the young man ages rapidly."

a Brain Blink. That's when you can apply chin na, a break or a throw. If you kick, don't kick high. High kicks, unless you are phenomenally talented, will allow the opponent to slash or stab your leg. It's much safer (and just as effective) to kick low, aiming for the knee, shin or ankle. If you (luckily) jam or control his knife hand, a knee to the personal nerve in the thigh or a stomp on his leg would be a welcome addition. While you must pay acute attention to the knife, remember that he can (and will) punch, kick, head butt, elbow, bite and God only knows what. Keep moving; a static stance is called a target. If you're so close to your opponent that he can reach you without stepping (RED ZONE) and he moves first, you'll probably get cut: your brain can't react that fast (Reaction Gap Syndrome). Maneuver so he must take at least 10 steps to reach you (YELLOW ZONE). This gives you reaction time to move OFF the line of attack and counter or flee.

5) HIT WHERE HE'LL BE; NOT WHERE HE IS

If you try and attack through his defenses, he merely has to wait and slice your hands and legs as they come into his range. It's tougher for him to counter if you attack where he's going to be, as it hasn't happened yet. You know where he's going: AT YOU! As you move off line, fire your attack at where you were. Let him run into your fist or leg. Consistent practice with your partners will allow you to get the hang of this trick.

6) MONITOR THE FIGHT'S SEVERITY AND DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO SURVIVE

There are two key things to remember in a fight. First, your life and family don't depend on you fighting fair; they depend on you fighting to win. Second, there's a big difference between fighting for control and fighting to survive. If it's a survival issue, ANYTHING GOES. When your life hangs in the balance, it's crucial for you to think unconventionally and use ANYTHING you can to defend yourself. Slamming a door in the face, stabbing a pen into the hand, neck or eye, throwing someone down the stairs, pounding a phone against the bridge of the nose, biting, kicking, scratching - whatever it takes to survive is what you need to do. Be ready for that and be prepared to kick into survival mode the second you feel it's necessary.

7) DO YOU HAVE THE FIGHTING SPIRIT TO KEEP FIGHTING EVEN IF YOU'RE SHOT, CUT OR HIT?

Shock and panic can be deadly enemies in a fight. Be sure you are prepared to suffer injury and continue fighting. Be prepared for the sight of blood: you probably WILL be cut. Also, learn some basic first aid so that if cut, you know how to treat the injury; serious cuts need immediate attention. You don't want to win the fight only to bleed to death a few minutes later. Stories of officers surviving against tremendous odds, even in the worst situations with the most horrific injuries, abound. Unfortunately, there are also stories of officers who died after being overcome by the shock of suffering comparatively minor injuries. Always hone and feed your survival mind-set. It can be one of your most powerful allies.

8) HIT TO CREATE DYSFUNCTION

Never spar with anyone in a real fight. Poking and jabbing (unless directed to a vital point such as the eye) are not going to end a fight. Full blows delivered in a calculated fashion and designed to deliver the impact necessary to end a threat is what you need to be issuing. Educate yourself on body points that, when attacked, will cause dysfunction in your opponent and restrict - better yet completely eliminate - his ability to continue fighting. This includes strikes to motor points: arms, the lower abdominal area, the legs, etc. I teach all of these points in my Active Countermeasures classes, and I'm consistently surprised at how few martial artists know the most effective dysfunction points. While training security personnel, I noticed that the attacker dropped the knife around 60% of the time when struck simultaneously on the arm/elbow and face. One officer disabled me for hours with a solid strike to my forearm (LI 10 point). 8) Control the Delivery System Don't go for the knife or wrist: they're moving too fast to really see. Learn to control the elbow and arm rather than the wrist/hand. A skilled fighter will fold at the elbow if his wrist is controlled. If you jam or smash at the forearm, elbow or above, you connect directly into his spine and can move and unbalance him. Here's a great exercise: have your partner put a piece of tape on his wrist and elbow (or stand in front

oxygen will cause you to tire more easily, become dizzy and could even lead to passing out. Equally important is the fact that being struck while your breath is held can lead to serious internal injuries. Remember to CONSCIOUSLY tell yourself to breathe throughout the fight. It could make all the difference. Shouting directives ("Get Back! Drop the knife!") will keep you breathing.

10) BECOME A KNIFE FIGHTER

The best way to learn how to defend against a knife is to learn the techniques and strategies that a knife fighter uses. This will greatly improve your survival chances even if you are unarmed. Knife fighting is a highly developed art that requires speed, timing, sensitivity and courage.

Here's an exercise I practice with security forces that will give you a cold reality check (though it's actually a lot of fun): get a couple of red WATER soluble markers (not permanent magic markers or you'll look like Halloween for a month), you and a gung ho partner dress in long sleeved white shirts (eye goggles are a good idea) and just go at it. Even at friendly speeds you'll probably find yourselves covered in red lines. I find that this exercise doesn't work as well when you practice against your own students: out of respect, they rarely come at you with the same power or speed that po-

“Don't be afraid to check out other systems and styles. Find great teachers and be prepared to invest the time it takes to absorb what they have to offer.”

of a mirror). Start slashing while trying to focus on the tape. You'll notice that while the hand is a blur, you'll still be able to track (and hit) the elbow tape. Even if you grab the wrist, the attacker can easily rotate his knife to cut your tendons. The larger the knife, the further up his arm your check/control will have to be to avoid his rotational cuts.

9) KEEP BREATHING!

A common instinct in a fight is holding your breath, which can be very dangerous. Lack of

lice/security force officers do. These guys want to make sure your training works in the street and don't care about your title. Some people think that fighting is natural, that it's hard-wired in the brain. "Fight or Flight", On-Off; it sounds almost instantaneous. In actuality, all humans (and most vertebrates follow a multi-step pattern: 1) We stop what we are doing; 2) we turn toward the source of the threat; 3) we freeze while we try to assess the peril; 4) if we see danger we hide if we can; 5) if we can't hide we flee; and 6) if we can't flee, we fight for our

lives. Reaction and scenario training can greatly speed up your response process.

Also, expand the horizons of your art. Don't be afraid to check out other systems and styles. Find great teachers and be prepared to invest the time it takes to absorb what they have to offer. I've been very fortunate to have been exposed to great teachers, such as my friend Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming, Master Liang Shou Yu and Master Chan Ching Kei, to name a few. Go to workshops and seminars: they're taking place all around the country.

Finally, go beyond the very notion of Oriental Martial Arts. Working with great police/military trainers such as John Vazquez,

Training Director of the 911 Training Academy and William Garrison, Hostage Negotiation Trainer of Crisis Resolution Institute has totally expanded my conceptions and application of my art (plus allowed me the expertise to teach in a different arena). There is a huge body of scientific techniques that can greatly increase our awareness and ability to pick up non-verbal cues, all of which speed up our responses to another level. Train for life and stay safe.

Lewis Paleias teaches Qigong, Tai Chi, Xing Yi & Ba Gua in South Florida. He is also an open hand compliance & escort trainer for various security forces.

The Truth

by A. Reza Farman-Farmaian

A minister and his two young sons were on their annual pilgrimage to the temple of their ancestors. The temple was far and the trip long and arduous. The father was an important man from an old and noble family, but he preferred to travel unannounced with only his two sons accompanying him. For the length of their trip, the father and his sons would be guests of the local people. Villagers along the way would either recognize him, or out of courtesy to strangers would invite them into their homes. The minister welcomed these invitations, for they offered him a unique chance to live with the people of the land, to see the world as they do, and to learn of their grievances. Upon his return to the capital, he would use his influence to help relieve the grievances he had learned of during his trip.

On one particular night, they were invited to be the guests of the head man of a village. As was the

custom, they were offered facilities to wash and rest before dinner, and then they dined with the host and several other guests. With a long day of traveling ahead, as soon as protocol would allow, the minister asked to be permitted to retire.

The next morning, the minister once again ate with his host, while the boys ate and played with their new found local friends. After breakfast, the guests once again washed and began gathering their belongings. As the boys were upstairs washing, the minister went down into the courtyard to take leave of his host, and to thank him for his hospitality. Just then, from a window upstairs, close to where the boys were, the host's wife threw out a bowl of dirty dishwater into the courtyard onto the minister, and returned to her work, oblivious to what she had done.

Having just left his two sons washing up, the embarrassed and startled minister assumed they were responsible. When the boys came down, the father severely reprimanded them in front of the host and the younger brother began to

say that they were not responsible, but he was cut short by his older brother.

Later on in the day, when he was sure that the father was not listening, the younger brother asked the older brother why he had stopped him from explaining; when he knew that they had not been responsible.

His brother replied, "We were guests, it was not correct to embarrass the host and his wife over such an unimportant little accident. They would lose face."

Still confused, the younger brother asked, "Should we not tell our father the truth now, so he knows that it wasn't us, and so he doesn't blame us?"

The older brother replied, "That is unimportant, what matters are that we know we were not to blame." Unknown to either boy, the father had by now realized from their surprised reaction, and the younger brother's few words of defense, that they were not to blame. Although the minister said nothing about this to them, every time he looked at his older son he felt like a king.

A Decade of Kung Fu

by Walter Wong

I started training at Yang's Martial Arts Association (YMAA) in Boston, Mass., in January 1996. At the time I was an energetic 20-year-old man with seven years of training in various martial art styles.

With that type of experience under my belt, I thought it only natural to join a school that taught a rigorous style of Kung Fu. Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming, YMAA's founder and director, had designed an interesting curriculum. It consisted of Shaolin, the study and practice in both Northern Long Fist Kung Fu and Southern White Crane Kung Fu, and Yang style Tai Chi. I chose the Shaolin curriculum because of my interest in external styles. What actually drew me to Dr. Yang's school was his practical fighting approach to the ancient Chinese arts. Unlike many schools that incorporate flowery movements in their styles, Dr. Yang focused on how to use Kung Fu in an uncooperative environment.

As I continued to train, my love for Kung Fu grew stronger. Even when I was exhausted, I looked forward to training. It reached a point where I actually felt a rush from the physical demands placed on my body. Perhaps I pushed myself a little too hard, because 6 months later, I injured both knees. I blamed it on the White Crane stances that I forced myself to do for long periods of time. Although my knees were fairly strong for Long Fist, the Crane stances require time to build up knee strength. This posture caused incredible pain in both knees. I even found it difficult to walk up a few stairs. I still tried to train, but most of the time I ended up sitting down, resting. It was depressing watching my classmates while I remained immobilized.

Eventually I decided to take some time off. My daily routine became boring and I did nothing more than work or hang out with friends. I didn't even consult with a doctor to see if there was a solution to my problem. A few months dragged by and my depression worsened. I missed martial arts and soon found that an answer was

right there in front of my eyes. Although my interest wasn't in Tai Chi, why not give it a try?

I took Tai Chi training for about seven months. Half way through, Master Liang Shou Yu visited YMAA and taught a seminar on Liu He Ba Fa (Six Harmonies Eight Methods). This internal Martial Art, also known as Water Boxing, combines Tai Chi, Hsing Yi and Ba Gua principles into one art. It follows the ways and principles of water and can be as gentle as a stream or as powerful as an incoming tide. I was so impressed with that style that I've practiced it at least once a day along with my Tai Chi.

Although I trained Liu He Ba Fa out of pleasure, I noticed that my knees began to feel better and that both were slowly growing stronger. This motivated me to take Liu He Ba Fa a little more seriously. In addition to using it to repair my knees, I added extra exercises like Ma Bu or Horse Stance and slow squats making sure my knees were properly aligned. I started with a high Ma Bu for a few seconds and did a few squats every day. Over the weeks, I gradually lowered the height of my Ma Bu holding it for longer periods and increasing the number of slow squats. This type of routine plus my Liu He Ba Fa gradually helped repair my knees. Now it was time to switch back to training Shaolin again and depart from Tai Chi. I continue to train Liu He Ba Fa just out of pure enjoyment.

I have injured other parts of my body—my ankles, elbow, wrists, and shoulder and received a few bruises here and there. Although we wore pads and protection when we sparred, I would occasionally get a bloody lip or poked in the eye. Sparring gear just minimizes damage to the kind of full contact sparring that we did.



Walter Wong, an actor and member of SAG (right) in Jin Ji Du Li Long Fist stance (left).

Six years ago, I dislocated my shoulder due to some climbing activity I participated in with a former employer. Fortunately, it popped back into place on its own. However, this made training Kung Fu difficult as it easily popped out during sparring. This time I didn't hesitate to attend physical therapy sessions to rebuild

better for power and alignment to movements and stances.

During the year, I attended my first Annual YMAA Summer Camp in Portugal. It was an unforgettable experience, meeting many YMAA practitioners from other countries and training various styles and weapons.

“My daily routine became boring and I did nothing more than work or hang out with friends. I didn't even consult with a doctor to see if there was a solution to my problem.”

strength in my shoulder. But traditional physical therapy seemed to have been designed for people who are not athletes.

In 2005, I was introduced to Russian Kettlebell training by a certified instructor. Mandla Nkosi explained that this specialized method of strength and flexibility training has helped many athletes recover from severe bodily injuries especially the shoulder. He enrolled at YMAA as a Tai Chi student while teaching Kettlebell classes. Nkosi's unique and effective conditioning program helped me to recover from the shoulder injury. I also noticed that Kettlebell principles were easily adaptable to Kung Fu in that they connected my body

In 2006 I decided to begin independently teaching Martial Arts with Master Yang's blessing. I began offering private lessons in Shaolin to YMAA members and outsiders. At the same time I offered an eight class workshop on Liu He Ba Fa.

Although I didn't have many students, I was still happy to teach those who did show up.

There's an old saying that goes: “You can not say you know how to do something, until you can teach it to someone else.” I can honestly say that YMAA has inspired me to teach others what I have spent a decade learning. Chinese Martial Arts and YMAA have been a big part of my life and have helped me to grow in many ways.

Walter Wong is student at YMAA Boston where he also helps to teach some Shaolin classes.

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. Please let them know the goal is to support global health & healing, by creating a powerful vision, and a wave of positive energy in the over 60 countries, and more, where World Tai Chi & Qigong Day events are held April 28, 2007.

DIFFERENT UNIFORM

George Dominguez has traded in his Shaolin uniform for a uniform of another type. Dominguez is now an Army Private scheduled for shipment overseas, most likely Iraq. He's the only student in YMAA history to complete the rigorous Shaolin training curriculum. He paid a visit to YMAA Headquarters in early March and looked to be in tip-top condition.

UP AND AWAY

David Grantham is the second person to be awarded an Instructor Certificate in Chin Na by Grand Master Yang, Jwing-Ming. Grantham, who originally trained in Liuhebafa, became a dedicated YMAA student 16 years ago. During that time he has trained and taught in Boston, New York, and New Jersey. But that's not his primary job. He's actually a pilot for Continental Airlines. His profession gives him the chance to combine his international trips and train with his YMAA friends abroad. If you wish to contact him, his email is ttgypsies@comast.net.



George Dominguez fully uniformed visits YMAA Boston, February 2007

SELF HEALING

Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming will present a two-day intensive seminar in April 21-22, 2007 at the Heights of Wellness, 1477 Park Street, Hartford Ct. His workshop will focus on Basic Qigong theory and the feeling of Qi, and how it interacts with the human body. Basic Qigong training includes the practices of how to regulate the body, breathing, mind, Qi, and finally Shen (spirit). Naturally, reaching the final stage is not easy. However, with the understanding that comes from doing the basic training, the student will be able to set goals and to know what to expect.

YOUR HEALTH AND YOU

Many societies schedule an official siesta time each afternoon, and for good reason. Research shows that a short nap improves alertness, sharpens memory, and reduces symptoms of fatigue in many people. You can nap a number of ways: Pre-emptive napping for example is beneficial if, for any reason, you'll be losing sleep (a late party in the offing, say, or a long trip), a nap in advance can help. Another is power napping where you're in a position of power such as Winston Churchill, JFK or Reagan. All believed that a napping helps to benefit a nation, a company, family, etc.

WHO KNEW?

Walter Wong, a student of Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming's since 1996, and a Screen Actors Guild member, can now expand his resume. He appears in the Academy Award winning movie, "The Departed" directed by Martin Scorsese. The Warner Brother's film released in October 2006 was up against some tough competition but still managed to cop the award. Wong has studied Long Fist and White Crane under Dr. Yang since 1996. He is available for private lessons in Liu He Ba Fa and can be contacted through the e-mail renblade2000@yahoo.com or 617-470-4468.

CHINESE NEW YEAR

The year of the pig/boar began Feb 18, 2007. Here's the meaning of the Chinese Characters in the accompanying picture (explained using the pinyin):

chun = spring (the season);
Chunjie = Spring Festival (CNY);
jie = festival;
kuaile = happy
Chunjie kuaile = "Happy Chinese New Year"

春節快樂

YMAA SCHOOLS

楊氏武藝協會

For a list of officially recognized YMAA schools, please visit

www.ymaa.com/training/schools

Any school that is not listed on that webpage **IS NOT AFFILIATED NOR RECOGNISED** by the YMAA organization.

All current YMAA school directors are encouraged to open a web account at YMAA.COM to manage their school webpage information autonomously. This will also enable the creation of a good communication channel: keeping you updated with the latest information and events of the organization.

YMAA INSTRUCTORS

To view a list of qualified assistant instructors, instructors, and master of the YMAA program in Shaolin (少林), Taijiquan (太極拳, Tai Chi Chuan), Qin Na (擒拿, Chin Na), and Qigong (氣功), please visit the webpage located at

www.ymaa.com/training/instructors

Only the listed persons have been qualified by Dr. Yang and the YMAA organization. All active qualified instructors are encouraged to maintain an account on the YMAA website.

YMAA SEMINARS

Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming travels extensively throughout the year and around the world offering seminars about martial arts, Qigong and meditation. For the latest information about the location, topics, and person to contact, please visit

www.ymaa.com/seminars

For seminars held twice a year (Summer and Winter) at YMAA Boston Headquarters, please contact Mrs. Mei-Ling Yang.

Phone: +1 617 524-8892

Email: info@ymaaboston.com

YMAA International Headquarters
38 Hyde Park Avenue,
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130 MA
USA

**YMAA CALIFORNIA
RETREAT CENTER**

楊氏武藝協會加州特訓中心

A new project for the preservation of traditional Chinese martial arts has been initiated by Dr. Yang. Currently, the Retreat Center is accepting students applications for the 10-year program. To find more information or view the latest news, please visit

www.ymaa.com/retreat-center

www.ymaa-retreatcenter.org

Email: ymaaboston@aol.com

**YMAA PUBLICATION
CENTER**

楊氏東方文化出版中心

YMAA Publication Center has been a leader in publishing quality books and DVDs about martial arts, qigong, meditation, philosophy, and martial history. With more than 20 years of publishing experience, YMAA Publication Center continues to seek manuscripts on Martial Arts and Qigong. Interested authors can write or email:

David Ripianzi

YMAA Acquisition Dept.

4354 Washington Street

Roslindale, MA 02131 USA

email: davidr@ymaa.com

At the YMAA Publication website

www.ymaa.com/publishing

you can find the latest books and DVDs produced by Dr. Yang, or other renowned authors, teachers and masters of martial arts (Gong Fu, Taijiquan, Karate, Tae Kwon Do, etc.). Every month, the Publication Center promotes a "Deal of the Month" where you can get books, DVDs, videos, traditional Chinese silk training uniforms, music CDs at high discount rates or bundled with other offers.

YMAA NEWS

ISSUE 81 * MARCH 2007