

# Kai Ming Association Newsletter

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## WORLD Tai Chi Day 26<sup>th</sup> April

Thank you everyone who took part in world tai chi day in Birmingham, even if you were only with us in spirit alone. The tai chi gods ensured the forecast weather didn't stop us as it didn't start until we'd finished and everyone was one their way home. It did almost rain towards the end of the event so Mark got to wear his umbrella hat kindly given to him by Heather & Dave. The day was well attended and a video clip can be seen on our [kaimingtaichi](http://www.kaimingtaichi.com) Youtube channel. Lots of people took photos but I have no idea who they were so if you know please help us get copies. At the peak of the event there were around 200 people and there has even been talk by Birmingham Open Spaces Forum and Active Parks about us providing a regular weekly tai chi class in Victoria Square...



## Rainbows End

### What The Tai Chi Journey Is All About

Huang Sheng-Shyan felt that Taijiquan (Tai Chi Chuan) was a living teaching, and that it must grow within each person rather than become stagnant and fixed. He also acknowledged the individual contribution of genuine practitioners of Tai Chi, whatever their level. He believed all teachers of a Martial Art have their strengths and their weaknesses and that if you trained within other disciplines simultaneously you must be sure you learned from each teachers

strong points and not their weak ones as he had always done over his lifetime.

For twenty years from the age of 14 for he trained with three Taoist sages in the art of Fujian White Crane. Some did argue that this training was a major factor in his later success at Tai Chi and he never denied it, but he always attributed his Ta Chi skill to the late grandmaster Cheng Man-Ching, who he met in Taiwan in 1949.

He kneeled to and was accepted by Prof. Cheng as Cheng was the first Tai Chi exponent who had been able to deal comfortably with Huang's White Crane in a friendly test of skills.

Ben Lo Pang Jang of San Francisco (a famous student of Cheng) told Patrick Kelly that in the early days when Huang first attended Cheng's school he was already able to throw normal people ten metres using his White Crane hands, but the relaxed student of Cheng could escape his push to some extent.

Cheng at first refused to believe that he had not learned Tai Chi somewhere before, but then Huang showed Cheng the secret White Crane training manual handed down by his Taoist teachers, which on the first page had the characters : SUNG, SUNG, SUNG; meaning, Relax ,Relax, Relax. On the second page was: YI, YI, YI, meaning, MIND, MIND, MIND.

Cheng could see that the systems were very similar and that Huang had already achieved the first Ten years of Tai Chi through his training in this art.

Huang stayed with Cheng for ten years until 1959 when at Cheng's suggestion he emigrated to Singapore and later to Malaysia, setting up home in Kuching on the island of Borneo, practicing, teaching, and experimenting, developing his training system and opening new schools as well-trained instructors became available. Later travelling far and wide to many countries happy to share his many skills.

Patrick Kelly, one of his senior students, said Huang was exceptional in his teaching in many ways, one of which was his insistence that it was not a person's

race (such as being Chinese) or the family lineage that had any influence on learning Tai Chi, but the person's attitude, practice methods and the help of a good master that led to success.

He also told Patrick that in his experience neither the very rich or the very poor would succeed in learning Tai Chi as they were both too concerned with money.

In his later years when he was comfortably well off, his class charges were low monthly payments for two to three classes a week and if Patrick was short of money he would charge him nothing. Patrick often saw Huang pay the expenses of students who otherwise could not have continued practicing.

\_\_\_\_\_ to be continued in the next newsletter



Information taken from the writings of Patrick Kelly Senior student and devotee of Huang Sheng-Shyan



## Tai Chi Camp 2014

In 2013 we ran a pilot format for the annual tai chi camp and received excellent feedback. With this in mind we have booked this years camp for the first weekend in August. Saturday will be a weapons training day with 2 hour sessions on sword, walking stick and fan. Sunday will be a mix of Prof. Cheng Man Chings Chi-kung exercises for health, form work including 5 animal exercises developed by prof. Cheng and form to function which is an exploration of the structure of body movement for balance and even martial application for those interested. Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> August is suitable for all levels from complete beginner to advanced. Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> August is suitable for anyone

interested in exploring tai chi weapons or those wanting to develop a deeper understanding of the part weapons play in the art of tai chi chuan. More details on the back page, including a booking form.



### Learn To Walk Before You Run

Maybe you remember the old proverb which points to the importance of taking your time to understand something sufficiently before doing it. Here I'd like to work with this concept both metaphorically and literally by exploring the process of correct walking.

Next time you are out on a busy street, look around you and notice the people walking past going about their daily business. But stop for a moment to really watch; hunched over, shoulders tense, arms stiff and unmoving. The simple act of movement seems a struggle for many because they are not walking correctly.



I admit it sounds ludicrous – starting to walk is a milestone most of us pass shortly after our eighth month of life, usually with the help of our parents plus a little self-taught fine-tuning. As adults, a life spent sitting at a desk, struggling around with heavy bags and wearing unforgiving footwear takes its toll on our posture. Just as we often sit incorrectly, we also walk incorrectly.

The knock-on effect? An epidemic of joint pain – in particular bad backs – affecting millions of us. About eight in ten of us have one of more bouts of lower-back pain at some time in our lives.

One Department of Health survey suggested that 15% of adults are in continuous pain from back problems. Sports Scientist Joanna Hall even developed a program which states 'walking daily will help you shed up to 10lbs in less than a month'. Her method is based on the theory of correct alignment of the fascia, the connective tissue in the body.

I fully agree that by aligning the body properly, posture is corrected and movement becomes fluid while discomfort, such as back pain, can lessen.

The body benefits from correct postural alignment in three ways:

- **Functionally:** back, knee, hip and neck discomfort are alleviated as joints are correctly aligned.
- **Posturally:** by targeting the fascia, body shape is streamlined and movement more free flowing.
- **Cosmetically:** as movement quality increases, you look more agile, stand taller and look younger.

The accepted guidelines are we should ideally walk 10,000 steps a day but on average we only walk 4,000 steps a day. It takes around 10 minutes to walk 1,500 steps and before you ask, pressing the accelerator pedal doesn't count. Walking shouldn't be rushed as that is what caused the problem in the first place; the pace should be steady with the focus on technique. Please remember it has taken a lifetime of unconscious effort to create the bad habits you have developed, so please start to pay conscious attention to correct this. If you want to give it a nice name, how about 'mindful walking'.

OK, you've guessed it... You know this is leading into tai chi being the solution.

When I first started my tai chi journey as part of the training we used to practice tai chi running, unfortunately my first teacher, John Higginson, missed the market opportunity as some years later Danny Dreyer combined his expertise as a professional runner with tai chi and marketed chi-running followed by chi-walking.

The thread that connects both Joanna's and Danny's approach is the natural application of human design that lies at the core of tai chi:

- Move as if suspended from above – neck long, spine released, hips free.
- Joints free – William Chen said "I don't move my hands, my body moves my hands". Make use of the shoulder girdle (shoulder blade etc.) rather than just the ball-and-socket shoulder joint.
- Connect to the ground – don't "plonk" your feet, sense the ground as you step and release your foot from

it as you move forwards as if you're peeling Velcro.

- Connect breath and movement – breath and movement find their natural pace in any situation; tension and stress disrupt this flow.
- Relax (Sung) - enable natural compression to propel you. I missed out on a space-hopper as child so play with the idea now.

Tai Chi is a martial art, a sort of self-defence against life. I don't mind if you use it to defend yourself against an external aggressor or the one that actually causes you harm on a daily basis, the one who attacks you when you are unaware...

Yes you guessed it... its YOU...!! maybe you'd like to call it self-defence against wear and tear. Rooting isn't sinking into the ground it is connecting to the ground.

I have been asked many times how often I practice tai chi and the answer actually has two parts

- (1) the forms and techniques associated with the art
- (2) the principles associated with the art.

I practice forms rarely these days but I practice the principles constantly in all areas of my life as to quote Deepak Chopra "***I am a human being not a human doing***" and I strive to be present in mindful movement of which walking is an essential part.

I plan to explore the concept of mindful walking as the main theme to this year's tai chi camp in August. Please see the back page for more details.

My heart in middle age found the Way  
And I came to dwell at the foot of this mountain.  
When the spirit moves, I wander alone  
Amid beauty that is all for me.....

I will walk till the water checks my path.  
Then I will sit and watch the rising clouds-  
And some day meet an old wood-cutter  
And talk and laugh and never return.

WANG WEI



## Club Membership

From time-to-time I get asked what club membership is for and its benefits as it is mandatory for all Kai Ming students. Firstly as a fully qualified and registered tai chi association, the governing body in the UK (BCCMA) specifies that all instructors have coaches insurance and all students have member-to-member insurance. I realise that tai chi, as we mostly practice it, is low risk and that many students may not be interested in the martial aspects or tai chi weapons yet, but it is still essential that we adhere to the requirements of the governing bodies.



We want to ensure that membership is not just a requirement but actually has tangible benefits to everyone so included in your membership fee is the monthly newsletters, discount on workshops, discounts on DVD's, discounts on club clothing and more. In fact as of the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 new members will pay £20 per person which includes a **FREE** red Kai Ming Tai Chi t-shirt (annual renewals will be £18). Please note if you did become a new member after the 1<sup>st</sup> April, and missed out on this new offer, please speak to your instructor as you may be able to pay the difference.

Club t-shirts are normally £10 for members and £15 for non-members. Every new student can attend 4 or 5 classes before taking out membership to ensure you are enjoying tai chi before you commit to paying membership.

Once you have signed up you will start to receive the benefits; the discount on DVD's alone or even the camp in August makes the membership pay for itself.



SOME OF HUANG SHENG-SHYAN'S TAOIST SAYINGS THAT PATRICK KELLY REMEMBERS AND FEELS CHARACTERIZED HIS LIFE:

When you drink water, remember the person who dug the well.

When you water the plant, you water the roots and the flower will appear by itself. Don't be content with being the student of a successful master; you must make a success of your own practice.

It is all in the Taiji form  
If I teach and you don't practice, we are both wasting our time.

Learn less and practice more

All the principles are in the Taiji (Yin/Yang) diagram

The most important concept in Taiji is change

The universe is a big Taiji; inside us is a small Taiji

When assessing people's Taiji, I look 30% at their body and 70% at their psychology  
Taiji is not important; the Tao is important.

Some people think the pushing hands is all technique but they do not understand that unless they are an upright and principled person, they will never get past a certain level.

All Taiji practitioners are brothers and sisters

Even after 70 years of struggle, things do not get easy; it still requires a daily effort to live a worthwhile and successful life

For Taiji to be successful, it must become relaxed and natural.



We had high hopes of Don providing regular recipes for this section and occasional recipes from fellow students and instructors alike but it seems not to be so we have decided to bring you recipes from around the world.

Please do send us any recipes you would like to share as they will always get first dibs on the slot. Here is the first offering in this new series.

### Sichuan-style sea bass with wok-fried vegetables

#### Ingredients

For the Sichuan-style sea bass

- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled, finely diced
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh ginger
- 2 chillies, finely chopped
- 4 spring onions, finely chopped

- 2 tbsp chilli-bean paste
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 2 tbsp rice wine vinegar
- 110ml/4fl oz chicken stock
- 1 tbsp sesame oil
- 4 x 350g/13oz sea bass fillets, cleaned, gutted, skin scored 3 times with a sharp knife

For the wok-fried vegetables

- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 4 spring onions, finely sliced
- 150g/4oz mangetout, finely sliced
- 4 heads bok choy, root removed, leaves separated
- 3 tbsp water
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tbsp sesame oil

#### Preparation method

1. Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6.
2. For the Sichuan-style sea bass, heat the vegetable oil in a wok over a high heat. When the oil is smoking, stir-fry the garlic, ginger, chillies and spring onions for 2-3 minutes, or until softened.
3. Stir in the chilli-bean paste and continue to fry for a further minute. Add the soy sauce, rice wine vinegar and chicken stock and bring the mixture to a simmer. Add the sesame oil and fry for 1-2 minutes, or until the mixture has thickened slightly, then remove the wok from the heat.
4. Place the sea bass fillets onto a baking tray and brush all over with the Sichuan sauce. Transfer to the oven and bake for 15-20 minutes, or until the fish is cooked through.
5. For the wok-fried vegetables, heat the vegetable oil in a wok over a high heat. When the oil is smoking, fry the spring onions for 1-2 minutes, or until softened. Add the mangetout, bok choy and water and stir-fry for a further 2-3 minutes, or until the vegetables are tender, then stir in the soy sauce and sesame oil.
6. To serve, spoon the wok-fried vegetables into the centre of each of 4 serving plates. Top each with a sea bass fillet, then spoon over some of the Sichuan sauce.

# Tai Chi Summer Camp

Saturday 2nd August & Sunday 4th August 2014

## The days will run

10am to 12.30pm with a 10 minute break about 11.30am.

Lunch 12.30 to 1.30pm – light lunch provided

1.30pm to 4pm with a 10 minute break about 2.45pm

## Cost

The cost per day will be £40 per person (Kai-Ming members) £60 (non-members)

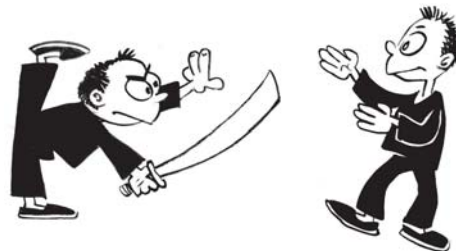
This includes lunch and refreshments.

If you have any special dietary needs please bring your own.

We will provide vegetarian and non-vegetarian options.

## Location

Hopwood Community Centre, Redditch Road  
Hopwood. B48



## Content of the Summer Camp

**Saturday** will be Tai Chi Weapons day with 2 hours on Broadsword/straight sword, 2 hours on Tai Chi walking stick and 2 hours on Fan form. The day is not intended to be 'learn a form day' its intended to focus on understanding and usage. You may choose to attend because you are interested in trying out tai chi weapons to develop a deeper understanding of the art of tai chi or you may choose to attend to refine your appreciation of tai chi weapons, I'll leave that to you.

**Sunday** will include: Cheng Man Chings Eight Exercises For Health, Five Animal Exercises, Silk Reeling Exercises And Mindfulness.

Aspects will feed into form work to include teaching by inches - connecting the form to connect the body.

\*\*\* Read the article earlier in this newsletter regarding tai chi walking as this will be a key theme for the day

We will start the day with some gentle chi-kung; When Prof. Cheng was asked by some of his students for a chi-kung set that contained the important elements of his tai chi yet could be learnt and practiced easily this is the set he developed. Prof Cheng's animal exercises were modelled on the original Dao-Yin five animal frolics developed by Hautuo during Han Dynasty (202 B.C.E - 220 C.E.) - Tiger, Stag, Monkey, Bear and Crane (bird). The *silk reeling exercise* (chan si gong) is an important training method for developing body awareness and coordination. It should have stillness within it and develops the sense of the waist leading the hands 'as if reeling silk from a cocoon'.

## Who can attend

The content is suitable for all levels of tai chi student from complete beginner (just started) to Instructor as you will learn how to apply the content to your developing appreciation of tai chi as a whole art.

## Any questions?

If you have any questions regarding suitability, content, location etc etc please call Mark and Jenny on 0121 251 6172 or mail [markpeters@kaiming.co.uk](mailto:markpeters@kaiming.co.uk)

The Common Cold Centre at the University of Cardiff tested therapies for this common affliction.

Marshmallow, liquorice root, and a hot blackcurrant drink served at 70C rival the over-the-counter remedies for a sore throat and cold, and are usually cheaper. However the centres head, Professor Ron Eccles recommends a HOT SPICY CURRY!

He says it ensures you salivate and reduces your coughing and sore throat symptoms.

Many spices have antiviral effects, which could also be beneficial, it's also his personal favourite treatment for colds and flu!

So if your digestion can take it, it seems a really good excuse for ringing up the take away if you are not up to going out.



## Training Dates

We hold monthly advanced training session in South Birmingham.

9.30 to 12.30 (3 hours) - £25

## **Dates for 2014**

18th May  
29th June

## **Camp is planned for 3rd August**

14th Sept  
12th Oct  
9th Nov  
7th December.