



Pa Kua Chang

JOURNAL

Vol. 7, No. 1

Nov/Dec 1996



How to Find a Good Ba Gua Teacher

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

**Basic Exercises to
Help Develop Palm
Striking Skills**

**The Dimensions of
Teacher Selection
and Training Process
in the Transition
From External To
Internal
by Chris Gundel**

**Biographies of
Liu De Kuan
Geng Ji Shan
Geng Xia Guang**



Pa Kua Chang JOURNAL

Published bi-monthly by High View Publications,
P.O. Box 51967, Pacific Grove, CA 93950
Phone: (408) 622-0789
Fax: (408) 622-0787
Orders: (800) 413-8296
E-Mail: HighView@visionsoft.com
Web: <http://infinity.dorsai.org/highview>
Editor: Dan Miller
ISSN: 1065-2264

About the Pa Kua Chang Journal

The *Pa Kua Chang Journal* is published six times a year. Each issue features an interview with, or article by, one or more Ba Gua Zhang instructor(s) from mainland China, Taiwan, the United States, and/or Canada. The interviews will report on each instructor's background, current program, training methods and teaching philosophy. By utilizing this format, the intention is to give students an opportunity to get to know prospective teachers and to let teachers possibly gain insights and ideas from learning about the activities of their colleagues.

Chinese names and terms will be romanized using the pinyin system of romanization except when an instructor prefers his name romanized differently. The title of the Journal appears in the Wade Giles system of romanization as it was the system we started with and we kept the original title.

The ideas and opinions expressed in this journal are those of the instructors being interviewed and not necessarily the views of the publisher or editor.

We solicit comments and/or suggestions.
All Rights Reserved, High View Publications.

The authors and publisher of this Journal are not responsible for any injury which may result from following the instructions contained herein. Before embarking on any of the physical activities described in this Journal, the reader should consult his or her physician for advice regarding their individual suitability for performing such activity.



Editor's Corner

End of the Road

Well folks, we have nearly reached the end of the road for the *Pa Kua Chang Journal*. The next issue, Volume 7, Number 2, will be our last. After publishing what will be our 38th issue, we have basically run out of material. All of the old photos have been used, the majority of the lineages have been covered, the principles of the art, such as circle walking, single palm change, etc., have been addressed, most of the instructors in the US have been interviewed, and I feel like the *Pa Kua Chang Journal* has run its course. If we kept going, we would only continue to repeat ourselves. So I think it is about time we came to a close.

For those of you who still have time left on your subscription, we will be sending out a notice with the next issue to tell you how much we owe you and we will give you that much credit to purchase any of our products or back issues of the Journal. We are reducing the price of all back issues (see page 13) so that you can all complete your collection. If you want to use your credit before the next issue comes out, just let us know and we will apply your credit to your next order so that you can get those back issue you are missing before we run out of them. We are quite low on some of these issues and we will not be reprinting them. So now is the time to act.

If you would like to use your credit, please do so prior to 1 April 1997. At that time we will be closing our retail business. We will still sell our products to other distributors, so all of our books and videos will still be available. However, we will be closing our catalog business as of 1 April 1997. If you want to order something from us, do it soon. We do not expect to reprint any of our titles.

As some of you already know, we have turned our efforts here to publishing a new guitar magazine called *Flatpicking Guitar*. If you are a guitar player and want to check out the new magazine, please give us a call at 800-413-8296 and we will send you a free sample issue.

On the Cover

**Ba Gua and Xing Yi instructor
Geng Ji Shan (1860 - 1928)**

How Do I Find a Good Ba Gua Teacher?

Ever since the very first issue of the *Pa Kua Chang Newsletter* (now the *Pa Kua Chang Journal*) was published over 6 years ago, the most frequently and most consistently asked question our readers have asked is, "How do I find a good Ba Gua Zhang teacher?" A good question. It is hard enough finding a Ba Gua teacher at all, but finding a good Ba Gua teacher is even harder.

During the first ten years that I spent studying the internal martial arts, I was an officer in the United States Marine Corps. Because my job in the military kept me moving every few years, I had to change martial arts teachers quite frequently. When I got to a new town, I was always hard pressed to find a new internal martial arts teacher of any kind. Although I had begun my study of martial arts with Tai Ji, I would not necessarily look for a Tai Ji teacher, I would look for someone who, in my opinion, was the best internal martial arts teacher, and then study whatever art he claimed to know best. Sometimes I had to travel several hours to attend class because of the lack of good internal arts instructors in some areas of the country. Having spent ten years searching for martial arts instructors, and then the last six years, as editor and publisher of the *Pa Kua Chang Journal*, interviewing teachers all over the world, I will share with you some of my experiences and preferences when it comes to selecting a good Ba Gua Zhang instructor.

In my personal search for martial arts instructors, I have had some very good experiences and some very bad experiences. In my early years, I ran across some instructors who, at first glance, I thought to be good, then later found out that I was either being fooled by the instructor or I was fooling myself. Later, when I began traveling to China, I had several experiences of traveling great distances at great expense in order to locate a "famous" instructor, only to find out that the guy wasn't too good at all, he just had a famous name because he was the last student of some famous teacher.

On one occasion, Vince Black and I traveled from Beijing to Shen County in Hebei in search of a teacher who was recommended to us by some elder practitioners in Beijing. We could not make prior arrangements because they did not have any phones in the village where the instructor lived. We took a three hour train ride and then a murderous two hour car ride out into the country side in Hebei only to find when we reached the instructor's house that he had gone to Beijing for a few days! Sometimes it is a gamble, but you keep searching until you find someone you that suits you.

I've seen a number of people become totally disillusioned with the internal martial arts because they had a bad experience with a bad teacher. I

always tell them not to give up, because there are good teachers out there, they are just not always easy to find. Some of the opinions I will state in this article are based on the fact that my very first Ba Gua instructor was a total fraud. I not only wasted a lot of time and money learning the "Ba Gua" material that he fabricated, I had to spend a couple of years after I left this instructor correcting all of the bad habits that I had acquired while studying with him. Having had the experience of being "taken in" and fooled by a fake while I was in my early years of training, I can hopefully lend some advice here that will allow others the opportunity to avoid some of the mistakes I have made.

I think that one reason the question of finding a good Ba Gua teacher is asked so frequently is because many individuals who want to find a teacher are afraid that they will be ripped off by a fraud. It is definitely a valid concern. I get dozens of calls each year from readers who have spent time and money learning from an instructor only to find out later that the teacher really didn't know much about Ba Gua, was unable to teach beyond the very basic level, or was really teaching something other than Ba Gua Zhang. It is very difficult for a new student to judge the skill of a teacher because there is no real test of skill in martial arts short of an all out fight. Due to this fact, there are a number of teachers in the martial arts community who have become "famous" because of their ability to shamelessly self-promote themselves, sling a lot of BS, and otherwise trick uninitiated students into thinking they have some real skill. Since I have had the experience of being ripped off by one of these "famous" frauds when I first started practicing Ba Gua, I can sympathize with those who have found themselves in this situation.

Frauds and charlatans aside, "How do I find a good Ba Gua Zhang teacher?" is still a very difficult question to answer for a variety of reasons. In this article I will attempt to lend some guidance based on my experiences with Ba Gua Zhang and Ba Gua Zhang instructors so that students who are seeking valid instruction will be better informed.

Know What You Want to Learn

Before you even step out of your door in search of a Ba Gua Zhang teacher, decide why you want to study Ba Gua. Ask yourself, "What is it that I want to learn and why do I want to learn it?" Put some thought into it and consider the question very seriously. Why do you want to study martial arts versus some other kind of physical activity? Why do you want to study Ba Gua versus some other style of martial art? What goals do you want to achieve in your practice, short term and long term? What kind of teacher would be ideal for you? What kind of class schedule and class format

would be right for you? How far are you willing to travel in order to find a good teacher? How much money are you willing to pay for lessons? Write these things down. Have a clear idea about your reasons for studying and what it is that you want to achieve.

Going through the exercise of writing down your goals may help you avoid falling into a fantasy world of unrealistic expectations. It is easy to let your mind float up into the clouds and imagine that by studying internal martial arts you will gain secret *qi* powers, be able to defeat opponents twice your size without breaking a sweat, or attain spiritual enlightenment like the “mystical Daoists who live mysteriously upon mountain tops in China.” Writing things down on paper tends to help bring you back to reality if you tend to be one of those who likes to fantasize. Look at it in black and white and ask yourself if your goals are realistic.

Each person who studies Ba Gua is a unique individual with a unique personality, tastes, and goals. In order to be happy with your teacher, you need to find someone who teaches what you are interested in learning, teaches it the way you are comfortable being taught, and has the type of teaching style and personality that you can respect and admire. I might think one teacher is great and you might not like them at all just because you and I have different goals and are attracted to different kinds of people. So be clear about what it is that you want before you begin your search for a teacher and then stick by your guns. Don't let anyone else influence you, keep your own head and make up your own mind. Carefully weigh all of the information you collect from friends, books, magazines (including this article), promotional flyers, etc., and then follow your own heart.

Ba Gua Zhang is a multi-faceted art and everyone is attracted to it for a different reason. Some want to maintain their health, some want to reduce stress, some want to learn about *qi gong* and meditation, some want to learn how to fight, some are attracted to the beautiful movements, some just want to exercise, and some want it all. Decide what is most important to you. Be honest with yourself. If you are someone who wants to learn it all, that is fine, but then prioritize your list. Decide what is most important to you. This is going to help you find a teacher who is best suited for your goals. Some teachers teach fighting, but don't teach much *qi gong* or meditation. Some teachers are very good at teaching the form movements and health aspects, but don't teach fighting at all. Some teachers are very good at teaching performance style martial arts, but don't teach either the realistic fighting or internal health maintenance aspects. You need to find a teacher who suits your needs and your personality. Are there teachers in Ba Gua who have a very well rounded, traditional, complete Ba Gua system? Yes, but, in my experience there are very few of them. If you want to study with one of these individuals, you need to think hard about your travel and cost factors.

In reference to the travel and cost factors, I have two recommendations. The first is that if you are

really serious about learning good Ba Gua, be willing to travel to find it. I got a call from one guy who was looking for a Ba Gua teacher and I asked where he lived. He told me and I said, you are in luck, there is a really good teacher who lives about an hour away from you. The guy was disappointed, he was looking for someone in his neighborhood! That guy really doesn't want it that bad. So, if you want good instruction, be willing to travel, there are not many people who have a good teacher in their neighborhood.

In reference to cost, do not allow yourself to be ripped off by someone charging an outrageous amount of money for private lessons. All of the really good Ba Gua instructors I know have very reasonable prices. In my opinion, if you are being charged upwards of \$50 dollars for a one hour private lesson, you are being taken to the cleaners. There are some instructors out there who are charging \$75 to \$100 dollars for a one hour Ba Gua lesson. In my opinion, no teacher is worth that much and none of the good teachers I know will charge a good student that much money to learn.

When you begin to list your goals, do not become too unrealistic in creating these goals. Keep your feet on the ground. Do not believe that you are going to gain spiritual enlightenment, mystical *qi* powers, super human strength, or become the ultimate martial artist. Great things can certainly happen when you study these arts, but don't expect too much at the beginning, you will just be fooling yourself. Many of the problems that arise between teachers and students, and why charlatans are so successful in the internal martial arts world, is that many students want to believe in a fantasy. When you come to Ba Gua believing in fairy tales, you are going to eventually be disappointed and you will probably blame that disappointment on your teacher. A bad Ba Gua teacher will encourage your delusions of grandeur because they know that they can charge you a lot of money and string you along forever, a good teacher will discourage your fantasies from day one. Set realistic goals and use common sense.

Use Common Sense

The best rule of thumb to keep in mind when you are out looking for a Ba Gua teacher is to use common sense, and thus a healthy degree of skepticism, regarding what you are told and what you see on your first visit to a prospective teacher's school. It is the same way you would approach buying a new car. Do not automatically believe anything a teacher tells you. Do not blindly believe what is said about certain teachers in kung fu magazines or in their own promotional pamphlets and flyers. Also, be skeptical of what the teacher's students say. Every student thinks his own teacher is the greatest, so they will have a very biased opinion. Don't allow others to convince you of something. Play devil's advocate in your own mind when you are approaching a new teacher.

Over the years I have received many calls from people who want me to validate some teacher's wild

claims. Questions I ask back to the caller are, "What does your common sense tell you?" or "What is your gut feeling?" Usually the caller will say, "I think the guy is full of BS?" I say, "There you go, you answered your own question." It is amazing to me how many people will suspend all rational thought and common sense when someone starts talking about *qi* power and martial arts "secrets." Keep your skeptical mind active. If a teacher knocks over one of his students without touching them and says he is doing it with *qi* power, ask if he could do it to you. If he comes back with something like, "No, your *qi* is not strong enough to handle my power," or some other such lame excuse, turn around and go home, the guy is a fake. Don't be fooled by demonstrations that are not done on you and even when they are performed on you, be skeptical.

What Teachers Should You Visit?

When trying to decide on a teacher, you should probably visit as many schools as possible. Before you make a decision about who to study with, it is best to have as much information as you can about all of the instructors within the area in which you are willing to travel. Do not rely on a teacher's reputation, good or bad. Check everything out for yourself and judge it on your own terms. Do not allow someone else's opinion to influence your own judgement and definitely do not allow the hype written in kung fu magazines and promotional flyers to influence you. Read all promotional material with a tremendously large grain of salt.

In regards to promotional material, here are some things to keep in mind:

1) Question Everything: This may sound extreme, but I would recommend that you be very skeptical about anything someone tells you, whether written or verbal, about their background and their style of Ba Gua. There are certain catch phrases that are used by many that usually don't mean anything. If someone says something like "the first foreigner to be officially accepted in the such-and-such lineage," it doesn't really mean anything. I was the first person in line at the movie theater last night, does that mean I'm special?

I know several old Ba Gua teachers in Beijing who love to have foreign students. It is like a status symbol among many of the martial arts instructors in mainland China to have foreign students. Some of these guys will accept anyone who is foreign into their "lineage." Even if someone was the "first," it is really not a big deal and certainly does not say anything about their skill in Ba Gua. This is not to say that there are not people who have legitimately earned the right to be in a given lineage in China. However, it is so easy to become part of some of the old master's lineages over there (usually all it takes is a little money), that the fact that someone belongs to a lineage in China should not be considered a validation of their skill.

Several of the old instructors I have worked with in mainland China have asked me to become their "inner

door" disciple, go through the acceptance ceremony, and the whole nine yards. I have always politely turned them down because I know that they are doing it just because I am a foreigner and it will give them some status among their friends to have a foreigner as a student. I don't want to be their status symbol and I don't want them to be mine. They have Chinese students who have worked with them everyday for years and have yet to be offered this honor, why should I accept it? It isn't fair to those Chinese students who are better than I am and work harder than I do.

I ran across one brochure in which the instructor stated that he was the "only foreigner" given permission to teach the martial art of a number of the famous Tai Ji instructors in China. All of the instructors he listed taught for the government and were the instructors who taught any foreigner who went to China to study Tai Ji. I had studied with all of the instructors he listed myself on my first trip to China with a group of forty Tai Ji students. These teachers had literally taught hundreds of Americans and I know of numerous people in this country who had worked with these individuals and had been given permission to teach their material. So, immediately I know that this guy is full of BS. You can't always believe what you read.

One well known Ba Gua instructor states in his promotional material, "He is considered one of the few internationally recognized Non-Chinese Master Instructors of both systems of Pa Kua Chang and T'ai Chi Ch'uan in the United States today." My first question would be "who recognizes him as such?" No one I know. Also, don't be fooled by titles such as "Master Instructor" because they are usually self-appointed and don't mean anything. Terms like "international" and "world-wide" or "inner door student" or "lineage disciple" are also used in an attempt to dazzle the uninformed reader, but they rarely mean anything.

In general, be cautious of anyone who seems to be selling himself. Be skeptical about any kind of degree, title, association, or certificate the instructor states that he has earned. Good instructors will generally not list any of this stuff on a school flyer or tell you about it in conversation, even if they have genuinely earned it. Self-promoters will list anything and everything they can think of in order to try and impress the reader or listener. Don't allow yourself to be impressed with anything that is written on paper. If you walk into a school and the teacher has an "I love me" wall full of photographs, trophies, and certificates, or he hands you a two page "biography" listing all of his wonderful accomplishments, in my experience, you are probably dealing with someone of very little martial arts skill. Usually a good rule of thumb to follow is that a martial arts teacher's ability to promote himself is inversely proportional to his skill level in martial arts. The better he is at promoting, the worse his martial arts skill will be.

2) Lineages: The same instructor listed in the example above also writes, "In Pa Kua Chang, his lineage can

be traced back to the Yin Fu, Cheng Ting Hua, Liu Te Kuan, Fu Chen Sung, and Chang Chao-Tung styles of Pa Kua Chang.” Notice that he does not mention any of his own teachers. Very odd. He claims all of these lineages, but does not give his own teachers credit? Be very suspicious. In this particular case, this guy doesn’t list his teachers because none of the teachers who he uses to trace himself back to these famous lineages would claim him as a student. He takes weekend seminars from various instructors and then claims their “lineage.” Do not chose a teacher based on his “lineage” unless all you want out of your martial arts training is to say that you are somehow attached to a “famous” lineage.

Just because someone studied with a famous teacher, does not mean that they have any skill. Some people will travel to China or Taiwan just to say that they have studied there, or they will seek out a famous teacher just so that they can say they studied with “the famous so-and-so.” It doesn’t mean that they learned anything or put in the time to acquire real skill. Don’t buy into someone’s pedigree. If you are seeking out a Ba Gua teacher, find a good teacher who will help you gain real skill. Do not search for a famous lineage just so you can feel wonderful about yourself because you are connected to someone who has a big name.

Do not believe any of the catch phrases that people love to use in regards to lineage, such as, “a secret family style,” or a “hidden system.” It is just hype. If I had a dime for everyone who has told me that they study “a secret Ba Gua system that was only taught to the palace guards,” or “a hidden system from a temple on a mountain in China,” I would be a very wealthy man. There are no “rare,” “secret,” or “hidden” styles of Ba Gua and even if there were, so what? Just because something was only taught to a few people doesn’t mean that it is anything special and certainly doesn’t mean it is better than anything else that is out there. Use common sense. Don’t buy into something because a teacher tries to make it appear secret, rare, hidden, mysterious, or special.

Regarding “rare” systems of Ba Gua, if someone claims that they have studied a system which was different from that taught by Dong Hai Chuan, I would be skeptical. The fact is that a number of very highly respected historians in mainland China have extensively researched the origins of Ba Gua and have found no solid evidence which indicates that any Ba Gua existed prior to that taught by Dong Hai Chuan (see *Pa Kua Chang Journals*, Vol. 3, Number 1, Volume 3, Number 2, and Volume 3, Number 4 for more information about the origins of Ba Gua). However, in an effort to make their art appear special, some will claim that their’s is a secret family style handed down from father to son for thousands of years. I even have one teacher’s promotional material that says (I kid you not) that his system of Ba Gua was invented 2000 years ago by a man named Master Ba Gua. The brochure continues by saying that the art is called “Ba Gua” because the originator’s name was “Ba Gua.”

There is one well known Ba Gua instructor who

claims that his “rare system” of Ba Gua was “said to have been” handed down by a “Daoist sage” who lived to be 250 years old. He tries to validate this claim by referring to a *New York Times* article which reported on this individual. While the *New York Times* did in fact report on this individual, the rest of the story is that research was conducted into the validity of this press release from Beijing and it was discovered that the individual was a fraud. In the 1920’s and 30’s, the Chinese were considered to be “the sick men of Asia” by the rest of the world and, in an attempt to gain face, the Chinese government fabricated this story and released it to the world. Today, that individual, the so-called founder of this “rare” Ba Gua system, is listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the biggest longevity fake in history. When confronted with this information, the instructor stated to me in a fax that, “At this point based largely on your own published research in the Journal I do not believe that a part of what I thought and said about the founding of my art is true.” However, he continues to tell the same story about the founding of his “rare” art. In my opinion, it is just promotional garbage.

The bottom line here is that when searching for an instructor, do not be too concerned with lineages. There are some terrible instructors who come from great lineages and there are some great instructors who come from lineages you may have never heard about. Judge an instructor’s martial arts and teaching skill on his own merit, not by who he has studied with. However, if the instructor is making lineage claims, it is always a good idea to check out his claims. In fact, check out all of his claims. By doing this you might not gain much information about his martial arts skill, however you can find out something about the teacher’s honesty, integrity, and character. If someone is claiming a great lineage, it is always a good idea to find out if the guy is telling the truth just so you can gain some information about his personality and decide if this is someone you want to spend time with. If he is making up false stories about his lineage, how can you believe anything else he says?

3) Initials and Titles: For some reason there are a number of instructors who love to add titles before their name and extend initials out after their name. If someone is calling himself “Sifu,” “Master,” or “Grandmaster,” be skeptical. In Northern China it is considered extremely bad taste to call yourself “Sifu.” Using a title such as “Master” or “Grandmaster” is also an arrogant thing to do. It is OK if others call their teacher by these titles out of respect, but be cautious of those who call themselves by these titles. I know of one teacher who invented an organization, appointed himself a “captain” and “commanding officer” in this organization, and then used these phony titles along with his name in promotional material as if it means something. People who do that sort of thing are trying to scam you and should be ignored.

If someone has earned a degree from an accredited school, I think it is fine if they use the appropriate

initials with their name if that degree is applicable to the field in which they are promoting themselves. But there are martial arts instructors out there who use the title "Dr." and the initials "Ph.D." who have earned their degree in a field totally unrelated to martial arts, medicine, or physical health. When a guy uses the term "Doctor," do not assume he is a medical doctor.

Furthermore, do not assume that the individual using initials and titles along with his name has even rightly earned a degree. There are a few Ba Gua instructors, including the individual mentioned in examples 1 and 2 above, who use the title "Dr." and the initials "Ph.D." and/or "OMD" who have not received these titles from any accredited institution, and/or are not licensed in this country. Be very skeptical when someone claims to have earned a "degree" overseas, especially in China.

Regarding names and titles, the other group I would watch out for are those Americans who use oriental names when they are in the United States and dealing with other English speakers. I know of many Americans who have oriental names and they use those names when they are in the orient. I myself use a Chinese name when I am in China because it is much easier for the Chinese to remember that name. There are others who have been given oriental names in ceremony. Many Ba Gua students, when accepted in a lineage, will be given an honorary Chinese name. I do not see any problem with Americans having an oriental name for sake of convenience when traveling overseas, or having earned such a name as recognition of achievement. However, if an American is in the United States and is using some kind of oriental name in his promotional material, or when otherwise dealing with other English speaking people, it is a bit odd. This is a guy who desperately wants to live his life in a kung fu movie and in my experience, it is best to avoid these individuals.

4) Certificates: There are many martial arts instructors who will fill their schools with all kinds of certificates, mostly written in Chinese, in order to make themselves look impressive. Again, don't be fooled. In both Taiwan and mainland China it is extremely easy to join an association and get a certificate. It is no result of merit, all you have to do is pay some money in order to receive a nice looking martial arts certificate to put on your wall.

In mainland China it is also very easy to gather a bunch of impressive looking certificates just by attending some classes at a medical college, attending an event, or paying some money to a martial arts teacher. There is one well known instructor in the United States, a shameless self-promoter, who has gone to China on a couple of occasions and spent his entire time running around to various martial arts instructors and medical schools paying money to collect certificates. He comes home and plasters the wall of his school with these certificates and photographs of himself with well known marital artists.

Any unknowing prospective student walking in is immediately very impressed by this guys "credentials." But this guy has spent a grand total of about 8 weeks in China and was so busy collecting certificates that he never really learned anything. A guy like this is all fluff and no content. Be skeptical whenever you walk into a school and see an "I love me" wall.

Another Ba Gua instructor told me that he had a "teaching certificate" from a famous instructor in Taiwan and that he was one of only three individuals who had ever received such a certificate. Skeptical, I asked if he would send me a copy of the certificate. When I got the copy, I sent it to a friend who lives in Taiwan. He translated the certificate for me and it basically said nothing more than, "this person came to Taiwan to study martial arts." Further investigation revealed that the famous instructor had given away hundreds of these identical certificates. The guy who sent the certificate to me had no idea what it said, he was told by a shady character in Taiwan, who had collected money from him, that it was an "instructor's certificate" and that he was "only one of three who had ever received one of these certificates from the master." So here is a guy who is falsely promoting himself without even knowing it. But, then again, he is not totally without blame because he should have checked into what that certificate meant before he made claims about it.

Another story from Taiwan is about a guy who grew up in Taiwan and then later came to the United States to teach. When he got here, he claimed to have studied with a famous Ba Gua and Xing Yi instructor in Taiwan. In order to "prove" to his students that he studied with this famous teacher, he produced a copy of this teacher's book which was signed and stamped by the instructor. He told his students that having this signature and stamp meant that he was an "inner door" disciple. Subsequently, I talked with the famous teacher's wife and she said that everyone who got a book from her husband received a copy that had a stamp and signature, even people who had never studied with him at all. She also told me that the instructor in question never studied with her husband, but in fact studied with one of his students.

On one occasion, Vince Black and I went to visit a Xing Yi teacher in Taiyuan, Shanxi Province. We were working with this teacher and some of his students one day when another man, a friend of the Xing Yi teacher, came to visit. It turns out that this man was the president of the Taiyuan Tai Ji Push Hands Association. After we were introduced to him, he produced two very nice certificates for both Vince and myself, with our names on them, which appointed us official advisors to the Taiyuan Push Hands Association. This guy had never even seen us practice push hands! It was a nice gesture of friendship, but when we got home, those certificates went right into a drawer, not on the wall of our schools. They didn't mean anything because we hadn't earned them.

There are certainly some valid certifications in Taiwan and mainland China, do not get me wrong.

However, it is very easy to get certificates that mean nothing and the self-promoters in this business have abused this to the point that no certificates from China can be trusted. If you see certificates on the wall, ask the instructor about them. What did he have to do to earn them? If the certificate is from China, ask how long he studied there. Do not be fooled by appearance and presentation. Look for substance.

5) Tournaments: There are a number of instructors who love to talk about their tournament successes in order to impress prospective students. First of all, realize that fighting tournaments are usually for beginners. Intermediate and advanced fighters rarely enter tournaments, so basically the teacher is telling you that he is better than beginners. Also, do not be impressed with titles such as “National Champion.” There are dozens of tournaments, both in the US and Taiwan, which promote themselves as the “National Championships.” But there really is no organized “national championship” tournament.

There is one teacher who’s claim to fame is that he was the “All-Taiwan Heavyweight Champion.” He is telling the truth. However, what he is not saying is that when he fought in Taiwan, there was only one other heavyweight in his division and that guy was also from the United States. So, although the title looks impressive, the guy basically fought one American to earn his title. Never be impressed with tournament wins unless the only reason you are interested in Ba Gua is because your goal is to win tournaments.

In conclusion, it is best not to believe anything you are told. Let the teacher prove himself, and do not fool yourself into believing the teacher is more than he appears to be. Do not tell yourself, “The guy doesn’t look very good to me, but it says in his flyer that he was national champion, so I must not know what I’m looking at.” Trust your intuition. If the martial arts teacher appears to be trying to hype himself, you probably should look somewhere else. Have him show you what he can do, not tell you all about how wonderful he is. If you directly ask to see something and the instructor keeps slipping your direct questions, you are wasting your time with this guy. You will hear a million excuses from “I cannot show you my skill because my power is so great it will permanently damage you” to “before I can show you that, you have to prove you are worthy.” A good teacher will easily be able to give you a realistic demonstration of his skill while maintaining enough control so that you don’t get hurt.

One last note concerning which teachers to visit: Do not make the mistake of assuming that the best teacher, with the most traditional system, is an individual who is from China or is teaching in China. Again, you will be fooling yourself. If I had to make a list of the top ten Ba Gua instructors in this country, at least eight of those ten would be Americans. It is not easy to learn from an oriental instructor. There

are linguistic and cultural barriers that make learning from oriental instructors inefficient. This is not to say that you can’t learn from them or that they are not good at what they do. However, in my experience, studying with an American who has spent 20 or 30 years with Chinese instructors and has put in the time it takes to figure this stuff out, and knows how to explain it in a systematic way in the English language, is a more efficient way to learn.

Unfortunately, there are many students who believe that having a Chinese instructor will validate them in some way. These individuals want appearance, not real martial arts. Don’t limit yourself by thinking you need to have a Chinese instructor in order to get authentic teaching. Do not think that having a Chinese instructor versus an American instructor will validate you in some way. The only way to validate yourself is with your own skill. Study with an instructor who will help develop your skill, not someone who will merely give you the appearance of being authentic.

Visiting with the Teacher

Now that you have your list of goals defined and you have your common sense and a good dose of skepticism along with you, you want to start visiting teachers. Calling martial arts schools on the phone is not going to give you much information beyond class schedules and prices. You need to visit the schools, talk with the teacher, and observe or participate in a class to gain valid information. When observing classes or talking directly with an instructor, here are some things to consider:

1) A Martial Arts Instructor Should Not Act Like a Used Car Salesman. Again, do not allow the instructor to “sell” himself by telling you about his great achievements, showing you his certificates, walking you past his tournament trophies, explaining his great lineage, showing you his picture on the cover of magazines, showing you photos of him standing with famous martial artists, or giving you several pages of promotional material to read. It doesn’t mean anything if the guy can’t teach and in my experience, the self-promoters usually can’t teach.

2) Chinese Internal Martial Arts Schools Should Not be Run Like Japanese Style Schools, Nor Should They Be Like Military Boot Camp.

Rules and Regulations: In the internal martial arts, discipline comes from within. It is not something that should be forced on you through a long list of school rules and regulations and a teacher who acts like a dictator, guru, or “lord and master” of his own little universe. Chinese martial arts, especially the internal arts, are not traditionally taught in China with the same degree of forced discipline as the Japanese arts, the Korean arts, or the Military Hand-to-Hand combat training. This kind of rigidity in the school runs totally against the grain of the principles of the

internal martial arts. In my experience, the teachers who insist that their students kowtow to them and conform to pages full of “school rules” and “traditional values” are either on their own little power trip and want to control all of their students, or they have watched too many bad Hong Kong kung fu movies and are living in a martial arts fairy land. They always have to be the “master,” and always have to be in complete control. They usually hold their students down and they feel “betrayed” if their students don’t follow all of their petty little rules faithfully. Be leery of any teacher who wants you to run around like a minion in order to “prove your worthiness.”

In Northern China, where the internal martial arts originated, common courtesy and respect are shown to the teacher, but there is not a lot of bowing, saluting, kowtowing, running to fetch water, yes-sir-no-sir-three-bags-full, and this kind of mindless rigidity. The students do not line up in little rows and all wear the exact same uniform, follow the exact same movements one-two-three by the numbers, and otherwise act like little brain-dead robots. This kind of thing might be done in Japan and/or in the military, but it is not an environment conducive to learning an internal martial art where individuality, internal awareness, deep reflective thought, and intensely focused and individually stylized study are required. It might be appropriate for a kids class, however, it is a bit much for adults studying internal martial arts to have to endure. If the teacher tries to tell you that this is “traditional,” he is full of BS. If you don’t believe me, talk to Tim Cartmell, Kent Howard, Bill Tucker, or Ken Fish, all people who have lived and studied in China for over ten years, they will tell you what Chinese “tradition” is all about.

The internal martial arts require a cultivation of self-awareness. Ideally you teach yourself these arts through your self awareness, self-study, reflective thought and individual research. The teacher merely shows you the path. It is up to you to do the rest. You should develop the ability to know your own needs and develop your own training program based on your ability to listen to your body and intuitively know what it needs. This should be your goal. The environment in an internal martial arts school should be one which is conducive to the development of your individual needs and one which enhances your ability to discover these arts on your own terms. If everyone in the school lines up and does the exact same thing and you have to follow the teacher’s every movement, hang on his every word and follow his every order, it will be very difficult for you to develop the self-awareness necessary for your own internal development.

Belt Ranks: The Chinese martial arts that are taught in Northern China do not have belt ranks or sash ranks. Again, these might be appropriate for kids, but it is not part of the tradition of the internal martial arts. Hey, you might be an individual who likes a lot of structure, forced discipline, and belt ranks. I personally have nothing against that sort of thing for those who want it. I point this out only to say that if

you find a teacher who says that he has a “traditional school” because he has these rules, regulations, and belt ranks, this is not the case. Chinese martial arts schools in China are not run like Japanese or Korean martial arts schools unless they have been influenced by the Japanese rigidity and belt rank system as was such at Hong Yi Xiang’s school in Taiwan. Many Chinese martial arts schools in this country are run under these kinds of rules because the instructor studied Japanese or Korean arts or spent time in the military and carried these rules over himself. It is not “traditional” and so don’t allow a teacher to try to authenticate himself by saying that heavily imposed “martial discipline” and ranking systems are the “traditional way.”

Uniforms: I have not been to a martial arts class in China, outside of a government sponsored wushu school, where the students were required to wear uniforms. But, if you attend a school and the teacher requires everyone to wear a school T-shirt and black pants, or something to that effect, that is probably fine. I wouldn’t send flags up if I visited a school and they were all wearing the same thing. However, the more “Chinese” looking the outfits are, the more skeptical I would become. If the teacher requires everyone to buy a Chinese silk kung fu uniform, I’d really begin to wonder. You are Americans, in America, and this is the 1990s. Why dress-up in Chinese “kung fu” outfits that most Chinese don’t even wear when they practice. I would say this teacher is focusing on fluff and not content. He wants to be the star of his own kung fu movie. Usually this kind of thing only occurs in contemporary wushu schools who teach martial arts for performance.

My skepticism about a teacher’s grasp on reality would really be peaked if I saw the instructor wearing, in person or in photographs, one of these long “Daoist” robes. You have found a guy who really wants to be in a kung fu movie. If you look back at photographs of old Chinese martial arts masters, you will indeed see many of them wearing these robes. Why? Because this was the dress of the day. It was not a traditional kung fu practice uniform. Wearing one of these outfits today would be similar to a Chinese baseball player, who’s hero is Babe Ruth, dressing up in a 1920’s vintage outfit when he is playing baseball.

There is one Ba Gua teacher who I had directly told how weird I thought it was that he wore a long “Daoist” robe. This guy actually brought me to his home and showed me a Hong Kong kung fu movie that had martial arts actors wearing these robes and said, “See!” As if this proved that he was authentic in wearing this costume. It is a true story. My thought was, “Exactly, you are living in a kung fu movie.” This would be the same as someone from Asia coming to the United States and expecting everyone to be wearing cowboy outfits because he was basing his reality of the United States on Western movies. Unless it is October 31st, I would be skeptical about teachers who play dress up.

Perhaps I am going a bit overboard here. If you find a teacher who you really like and they impose a lot of discipline, have a ranking system, and play dress up, that is fine. Perhaps that is what you are looking for in the martial arts. If so, go for it! But, it has been my experience that those instructors who do dress up in Daoist robes, run the school like a boot camp, and/or have belt rank systems are usually the ones out there on the lunatic fringe of the internal martial arts and these folks don't usually make really good teachers. Some of them are fairly skilled martial artists themselves and some aren't bad teachers. However, time and time again I have seen these people suck their students into their little martial arts fantasy world and at some point in time the student usually ends up getting disappointed, disillusioned, and disgusted with the teacher's weirdness.

3) There is No "Best, Most Complete, Most Traditional Ba Gua System."

Many instructors want to convince you that their system is the best, the original, the most complete, the rarest, the most secret, etc. Don't believe it. I cannot even count the number of Ba Gua teachers, in every country that I have visited, that have tried to convince me that their system is the most traditional and that their system has things that no other system has, and that their teacher was the only one who got the "inner door" teaching. None of it turned out to be true. I have had teachers in China swear up and down that they have a practice method that is not seen in any other style of Ba Gua, when they reveal it to me I discover that it is something that I'd seen in numerous other systems. I have had teachers pull out old books of Ba Gua "secrets" that they hand copied from their instructor, who had hand copied it from their instructor, etc., only to discover that what they had was the common written transmissions of Ba Gua that everyone else also had. Usually it is not their fault, they just don't know.

Teachers in China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and even here in the United States are usually isolated from each other and on the rare occasion when they do get together, they don't share much information. Everyone thinks that they have more than everyone else and they want to stay in that fantasy world because it makes them feel good about themselves. They look at a book or video that has come out from another system and falsely assume that what is in the book or on the video is everything that system contains. I don't know anyone, from Sun Lu Tang to present day, who has put their whole teaching method in a book or video. Do not ever assume that your system has more than everyone else, that your lineage is more special than anyone else, that your teacher is better than everyone, or that your teacher was the only one to receive the "true teaching." Don't believe it yourself, and certainly do not believe it if someone else tells you any of these things.

4) Do Not Assume that Just Because A Teacher is Chinese, He Knows What He is Doing. I mentioned this point briefly in a previous section. There are a number of very good Chinese Ba Gua teachers. However, there are also some very bad ones. In the last few years, there have been a lot of individuals coming over to the United States from mainland China, mostly between 20 and 40 years of age, who are teaching martial arts here, but really don't have that much to teach. Most of them were only taught the wushu style martial arts in mainland China and know very little about real Ba Gua. The majority of those who practiced modern wushu in mainland China only studied one or two Ba Gua "routines" and have little else to offer. Again, judge the teacher on his merit, not because of appearance.

There are also a number of old Chinese gentlemen who are here teaching martial arts who do not have much martial arts experience and are not very good at martial arts, however, they have a lot of students who follow them just because they are old and Chinese. I met one of these individuals about seven years ago at a martial arts tournament. He told me at that time that he was not really a teacher, he just enjoyed martial arts. He had studied a little bit when he was in college in Taiwan, but then after college he became busy with his professional life. After spending thirty years as a business man, and practicing no martial arts, his health started to deteriorate. His doctor recommended that he exercise and so he sought out some well known internal martial arts teachers in Taiwan and he started practicing martial arts again. Fair enough, nice story, honest guy, so I thought. Several years later I look in a magazine and this guy is now promoting himself as a "Grand Master." I couldn't believe it. Some of his American students have probably been studying martial arts longer than he has.

5) Just Because A Teacher is Skilled at One Martial Art, Do Not Assume He is Good at All Martial Arts.

In the Ba Gua community today we have a lot of skilled martial artists teaching Ba Gua, who are not very skilled at Ba Gua. Some are very good at Shaolin, or Tai Ji, or Xing Yi, but do not really have a clue about Ba Gua. However, because they have students who want to learn Ba Gua, they run out and learn a Ba Gua form and begin teaching Ba Gua.

Internal martial arts are much different than external martial arts. When one of Wang Shu Jin's students in Japan, Buho Jibiki, wanted to study with Wang and also continue to study his external arts, Wang Shu Jin said, "It's not a cup of tea; neither is it a cup of water. Tea is delicious if it is drunk straight; likewise, water tastes good if it is pure. Trying to study both internal and external methods together is like mixing tea and water and expecting the result to taste good. In reality, it tastes like neither; in practice, you get confused and become a specialist in neither."

In the same manner, there are those instructors who think that because they are advanced in Xing Yi or

Tai Ji, they are immediately an advanced level Ba Gua practitioner after they have learned a Ba Gua form or two. This is not the case. To become advanced in Ba Gua, you need to start at the beginning. If a person is good at Xing Yi or Tai Ji already, he or she will probably advance in Ba Gua more rapidly than others, but if they skip steps, assuming that they can just pick up Ba Gua because they know something else, they are mistaken.

When you meet an instructor who is teaching several styles of martial arts, ask him what art he has studied the longest, what art he has personally spent the most time with, and what he considers to be his best art. If he says, my specialty is Tai Ji, but I also teach Ba Gua. You might want to consider studying Tai Ji with this individual.

6) Believe Only What You See, Not What You Hear. Martial artists love to tell stories about the incredible things their teacher can do. If you don't see it, don't believe it and certainly don't repeat the story to someone else, you will just be propagating the BS. In China, the old martial arts masters are like folk heroes. There are many fascinating stories about the grand feats they accomplished. However, the majority of the stories are just not true.

I talked with Sun Lu Tang's daughter in Beijing and she told me that most of the stories told about her father simply are not true. Later, I also spoke with Huang Bo Nian's son in Taiwan and he had the same thing to say about the stories told about his father. Put your BS meter in high gear when students or instructors start with the martial arts "war stories." Don't get wide eyed when a teacher starts talking about how his teacher could jump two stories, never slept, and could knock people across the room without touching them. Instead say, "Well that is all very interesting, but what can you do? Furthermore, if you can do it, lets see you do it now." If they come back with "I'm not warmed up, I just ate, my *qi* is low right now, I only demonstrate that to my senior students, etc., you are looking at a fake. I do know some good instructors who can do some things that they would never demonstrate in front of beginning level students or strangers, but they would also never claim that they could do it in the first place. They would simply keep quite.

7) Even When You See Something Remarkable Occur, Be Skeptical. The charlatans in this business know a lot of little tricks and will use them to try to impress you and make you think they have remarkable "powers." They are a very slippery bunch. A friend of mine visited a Ba Gua teacher who told him he could move objects with his *qi*. He said, "Watch this!" He turned around and there was a tassel hanging from a lamp. The instructor stood between my friend and the lamp, his back to my friend, and extended his hand so that it was several inches from the tassel. He said, "Watch me move this tassel with my *qi*." Sure enough, the tassel started to move and the instructor was not

touching it. However, my friend, being wise to the tricks of these frauds, quietly moved around to where he could see the instructor's face. The guy was silently blowing air up his arm so that the tassel would move. There are lots of tricks like this. I know of at least one Ba Gua instructor who was a performing magician in years gone by and today performs his old magic tricks for his students and other spectators telling them that it is all done with "*qi* power." As mentioned previously, be especially skeptical if an instructor performs something remarkable on one of his students, but refuses to do it to you.

If you see someone perform a strange "skill," yet it really has nothing to do with martial arts, don't allow it to impress you unless you are training for the circus. Someone told a friend of mine that he met a guy who could use his *qi* to make one arm blow up to "about twice the size of the other." My friend said, "What good was it? Did he hit someone with it?" No, he could just do it. So what! The fact that someone can do something out of the ordinary says nothing about his martial arts ability. One guy showed me a photograph of a teacher in Taiwan who could hold his finger a couple of inches away from his own body and "use his *qi*" to form a welt on his body. Big deal! Look in the "Ripley's Believe it or Not" museum and you will find a guy they call the "human chalkboard" who can do the same thing. It doesn't mean he knows anything about martial arts. Another guy in China could swallow a small steel ball all the way down to his stomach and then cough it back up and out his mouth. Very interesting, but what does it have to do with martial arts? If you are looking to study martial arts with someone, look at their skill in the context of martial arts, not freakish side-show tricks.

8) Just Because an Instructor is the Best You Have Seen, Do Not Assume He is Necessarily The Best There Is. This point goes back to the comment I made previously about checking out every teacher you possibly can. Even if you are currently studying under one teacher, continue to visit others if you have the opportunity. If you have only ever had exposure to one or two Ba Gua teachers, you don't really have enough knowledge to be able to judge if the guy is good or not. I like to use an analogy to basketball. If the only basketball you have ever watched was the basketball played in your home town, and you had no knowledge of college or professional basketball, you would probably think that the local high school basketball star was the greatest player that ever lived. However, the first time you saw a professional game and watched Michael Jordan play, you would realize that you were sadly mistaken in your judgement. The same is true in Ba Gua.

Your local teacher may be good. He may even have great things he can teach you. But don't assume that because he is the best you have ever seen, that he is the best there is in the whole world. Keep your wits and common sense about you and don't blow things out of proportion. Even though you think your teacher

is great, and he may be great, there will always be someone else who is as good or better, and there are always others to learn from.

Vince Black is one of the most knowledgeable and highly skilled martial artists I have met and he has studied with some of the best teachers anyone could ever find, yet he continually travels this country and in Asia in search of new instructors in the fields of medicine and martial arts. During one trip Vince and I took to mainland China, I asked him why he still spent so much time and money traveling to meet these old instructors when it usually turns out that most of them don't have that much to offer that he doesn't already know or hasn't already seen. Vince said that he does it because there may be that one guy who does something, or explains something, in a way that he has never seen before and that one thing might open up some new dimension in his training that he might not have discovered otherwise. Tim Cartmell is the exact same way. To these guys, the effort of meeting hundreds of instructors to find the handful who have something valuable is worth all the effort. I think it is wise to never be satisfied and never be complacent in your study, even if you think you have found the world's best instructor, keep looking and searching for more.

9) Just Because A Teacher is A Good Martial Artist, Does Not Mean He is A Good Teacher. There are many people who are very skilled at what they do, but have little or no ability to impart that knowledge to others. Typically, in instances where the teacher is a skilled martial artist but a poor teacher, only the students who have a great aptitude for the art and who are very observant and intuitive will gain real skill. All of the other students will never get it. Unless you are a person who can just learn by watching someone perform, you are not going to get very far with an instructor who does not have a really good teaching method.

There are many famous instructors in China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan who were great martial artists themselves, but of the hundreds of students that they taught, only a small handful really got it. When you visit a school, do not just look at the teachers skill or the skill of the few top students, look at the average ability level in the school and watch the instructor teach. Be aware of the teaching method and ask about the learning sequence. Be sure the teacher has a good systematic method for developing skill in all of his students and that he knows how to explain the details of the art in a manner that you can understand. Do not be fooled by those that say that you "just have to work at it for about ten years before you can understand it."

10) Don't Be Intimidated. When you go to visit a teacher, do not let him or his students intimidate you. Get answers to the questions you want to ask without the instructor trying to intimidate you into being afraid to ask questions. Most good instructors will put you at

ease and be very willing to answer your questions. The disciplinarians will be the ones who try to intimidate you so that you are afraid to ask questions and the frauds will be the ones who try to slip all of your questions and make excuses. Be polite, courteous, and have respect, but do not let the teacher or his senior students bully you.

It is Not Always the Instructor's Fault

The disappointment that students sometimes feel when they discover that their teacher is not everything they thought he or she should be, is not always the teacher's fault. Students like to look up to their martial arts instructors as heroes. Some go so far as to place the instructor up on a pedestal and feel as if this man or woman can do no wrong. Everyone is human and if you worship your instructor, you are setting yourself up for a big disappointment somewhere down the line. A good instructor will discourage hero worship from the first day, a bad instructor will invite it.

Unfortunately, we see many of the individuals coming to martial arts allowing themselves to place a hero's worship on the shoulders of their instructor because they desperately want to have a guru. They want someone in their life who tells them what to do and provides structure and discipline. They walk around like sheep, worshipping the "master" and they fall prey to those teachers who love to be "the Master." Again, good teachers will discourage this behavior and bad teachers will encourage it and thrive on it.

I have one great example of students heaping more on the shoulders of their teacher than the teacher deserved, or even wanted. I was attending a lecture given by a well known Tai Ji instructor. At one point, someone asked the instructor about Ba Gua. The teacher honestly said that he knew very little about Ba Gua, which was very true, and went on to answer more questions about Tai Ji. One guy sitting in front of me, who was a student of the teacher giving the lecture, turned to the person sitting next to him after the comment was made about the teacher knowing little about Ba Gua and said, "He is so humble." As if to say that the teacher was obviously a master of everything in the world and was just being humble about his great knowledge of Ba Gua!

My advice is to never blindly follow what someone else says. Always keep your common sense with you. Always maintain your own personal power and ability to rationally make decisions for yourself. I have seen too many very sad cases of people following a bad instructor's advice, against their own better judgement, and ending up getting permanently damaged. This is especially true in the areas of *qi gong* and power training. *Qi gong* and power training can be very dangerous. Maintain your own ability to think. Do not blindly follow someone else in your search for *qi* power or martial arts skill if the training doesn't feel right in your gut. I know of many, many people who have been seriously damaged by bad *qi gong* training. This is why you really need to seriously investigate

your teacher's background before you embark on any kind of training program. One sad case, in regards to "power" training, that I just recently heard was about a young guy who's teacher had him actually soaking his hand in poison in order to obtain what he called "poison palm." The kid's hand eventually turned into one big puss ball and he almost lost the use of his entire arm.

Do Not Get Wrapped Up in a Fantasy

In martial arts there is no magic, there is no mystery, there are no secrets. Do not choose a teacher based on promises of secret teachings, marvelous powers, or hidden lineages. The only way you are going to get good at Ba Gua is to work very hard everyday. There is no teacher, lineage, or system that holds a magic key. A good teacher will help you learn in an efficient manner, showing you the path, however, even if you had learned from Dong Hai Chuan himself, you would never get anywhere without hard practice and deep reflection.

Do not attach yourself to a "famous" teacher or lineage in an effort to give yourself some credibility or validate your training. Your own performance is the only thing that will validate you. But then again, in martial arts you will rarely have to really perform, so it is easy to fool yourself and everyone around you. If you claim to be good at basketball, I only need to challenge you to a game of one-on-one and then the truth about your ability is revealed. People in this day and age rarely challenge each other to a martial arts death match. Many students take the easy way out. They attach themselves to a famous teacher or lineage and feel as if they are a great martial artist because of their pedigree. Don't fool yourself. Choose a teacher because of his ability to teach the art and develop your skill.

The Bottom Line

When you go looking for a teacher, judge his ability to teach the art objectively, with common sense and a clear mind. Look for someone who you think suits your personality, someone you can get along with, someone who you can respect, and someone you admire. Never blindly follow anyone, you can end up just like a cow being led to slaughter. In your own mind, always question what you are being taught. Does it feel right? Does it feel natural? If you think it is not right, if you think the instructor might be wrong, follow your instincts, not the instructor's word, not the word of the senior students. Don't succumb to the pressure of your school mates either. Maintain your own personal power and walk away if you feel something is not right. Even if you have invested a lot of time and money in a particular instructor, it is better to walk away now then put yourself in harms way.

Six Year Anniversary Back Issue Sale

With the previous issue of the *Pa Kua Chang Journal*, we reached our sixth anniversary. In order to help those of you complete your collection of back-issues, or at least find the back issues that may be of interest to you, we have grouped the back issues into the following categories and are offering them at discount prices as long as supplies last (prices listed **do** include shipping costs):

The Complete Back-Issue Package: All 36 issues for the low price of \$100 (less than \$3.00 per issue). Postage is included in the US. Foreign countries add \$10.

The Complete "Volume" Package: All six issues of any given Volume (Volumes 1 through 6) for \$18.

The Origins of Ba Gua Zhang Package: Three part article covering the origins of Ba Gua: Vol. 3, No. 1; Vol. 3, No. 2; Vol 3, No.4. Three issues: \$9.00

The Foundations Package: Articles covering Circle Walking, Single Palm Change, and Eight Mother Palms: Vol. 4, No. 6; Vol. 5, No. 5; Vol 6, No. 1. Three issues: \$9.00

Ba Gua Weapons Package: Articles covering various Ba Gua weapons: Vol. 6, No. 2, Vol. 6, No. 3; Vol. 6, No. 4. Three issues: \$9.00

The following packages all contain all issue pertaining to the Ba Gua lineages indicated:

The Gao Yi Sheng Package: Vol. 2, No. 3; Vol. 3, No. 5; Vol. 4, No. 2; Vol. 6, No. 5, Four issues: \$12.00

The Liang Zhen Pu Package: Vol. 3, No. 3; Vol 4, No. 3; Vol. 5, No. 1; Vol. 6, No. 3; Vol 6, No. 4. Five Issues: \$15.00.

The Liu Shui Tian Package: Vol. 1, No. 6; Vol. 2, No. 1; Vol. 2, No. 2; Vol. 2, No. 3; Vol. 2, No. 4; Vol. 2, No. 5; Vol. 5, No. 3; Vol. 6, No. 2; Vol. 6, No. 3. Nine issues: \$27.00.

The Fu Zhen Song Package: Vol. 1, No. 3; Vol. 2, No. 6; Vol. 5, No. 2; Vol. 6, No. 6. Four issues, \$12.00.

The Wang Shu Jin Package: Vol. 2, No. 2; Vol. 5, No. 6; Vol. 6, No. 4, Three issues, \$9.00.

The Cheng Ting Hua Package: Vol. 1, No. 1; Vol. 3, No. 2; Vol. 3, No. 4; Vol. 4, No. 3; Vol. 4, No. 4. Five issues, \$15.00.

The Yin Fu Package: Vol. 1, No. 4; Vol. 4, No. 1; Vol. 4, No. 5, Vol. 5, No. 3. Four issues, \$12.00.

The Jiang Rong Chiao Package: Vol. 1, No. 4; Vol. 1, No. 5; Vol. 2, No. 1; Vol. 2, No. 4; Vol. 3, No. 6. Five issues, \$15.00

Basic Exercises to Help Develop Your Palm Striking Skills

In the book, *The Fundamentals of Pa Kua Chang, Volume I*, Park Bok Nam and I presented a few fundamental Ba Gua palm training exercises which are designed to begin to teach the Ba Gua student how to loosen the body and generate power from the ground out to the hands utilizing the body like a whip. These basic exercises, the “shaking palm” and the “dragon back,” were then followed by more advanced exercises in *The Fundamentals of Pa Kua Chang, Volume II*. After having taught these exercises in my school for the past four years, I have found that it has been easier for me to introduce even the most basic exercises in the first book to students after they have first spent time with an even more basic set of drills which are designed to help build a structural foundation for the loose whipping motion of the shaking palm and dragon back exercises. Since we have had thousands of individuals buy *The Fundamentals of Pa Kua Chang* books, I thought I would explain these exercises here so that others, who are learning from these books, might benefit from them. I would like to give credit to Ken Fish for showing me the majority of these exercises while I was studying Xing Yi from him and we were both studying Ba Gua from Park Bok Nam back about six years ago.

While the basic developmental concepts of the shaking palm and dragon back exercises involve learning how to loosen the entire body and be as loose and supple as a whip, the ability to generate power using this kind of body mechanics also depends upon having a very connected and aligned body residing within the suppleness. A whip made of meticulously braided, high quality leather will be far more effective than a whip made of thin, loosely bound string. The premise in the internal martial arts which states that the supple bamboo is stronger than the solid oak in a wind storm because the oak will break and the bamboo will bend and flex and retain its shape only holds true if the bamboo has its roots firmly planted in the ground. Otherwise the bamboo will just blow away. The same is true of the body when one is using it to generate power in the martial arts context.

If the body's basic structural alignments are not correct, then the student will always have problems generating power. I have found that once my students have gained an experiential understanding of correct body alignments and structure through the practice of the exercises outlined below, they then have a much easier time grasping the subtleties and suppleness of the shaking palm and dragon back exercises. They are also able to generate much more power as a result of gaining a correct foundation. The exercises are as follows:

Rotating Around the Center

In order for the beginning student to start to learn how to develop power in the shaking palm exercise, two things must become habit. The student must learn to efficiently and effectively rotate the body around its center axis (a line drawn from the crown of the head down through the perineum), and while doing so, they must learn how to maintain proper shoulder, hip, and knee alignments. Efficient and effective rotation around the centerline means that the student has gained a great deal of flexibility in the area of the hips and pelvis and has learned to keep the centerline perfectly stable while the body rotates. Proper shoulder and hip alignment is acquired when the student can rotate the body around its center axis without the shoulders twisting farther than the hips can rotate. Proper knee alignments occur when the student can fully rotate the hips to the left or right and the knees do not bend or buckle to the sides. This simple exercise helps the student work to gain these skills.

1) The student begins this exercise by assuming the basic horse stance. The lower the stance, the harder the exercise. Beginners should only bend the knees slightly. See photo 1.

2) The student slowly turns the hips to the right as far as possible while still maintaining proper shoulder/hip alignment. Do not twist the shoulders farther than the hips can turn. Keep the knees facing forward. Relax the arms and shoulders. See photo 2.

As an indicator, the student shown in the photo has placed a piece of tape down the center of his shirt. If the student twists his shoulders farther than his hips can rotate, then the tape will no longer appear perfectly vertical on the shirt. This is a good tool to use in order to give yourself visual feedback.

When practicing this exercise, rotate slowly and concentrate on maintaining proper body alignment while trying to stretch and rotate the hips as far as possible. An important point is to always keep the knees facing forward. Do not sacrifice correct knee alignment in order to twist the hips farther.

A beginning student should practice this exercise frequently. There are many other versions of exercises which rotate the trunk, however, many of them involve a swinging of the arms. I find that when beginning students swing their arms with a trunk rotation exercise, they typically allow their arms and/or shoulders to lead the exercise and thus do not learn to generate the motion from the ground up. When the arms are held loosely by the sides and the shoulders remain relaxed, the student can focus on the motion of the hips by themselves and thus become aware of the

Rotating Around the Center



Photo 1



Photo 2

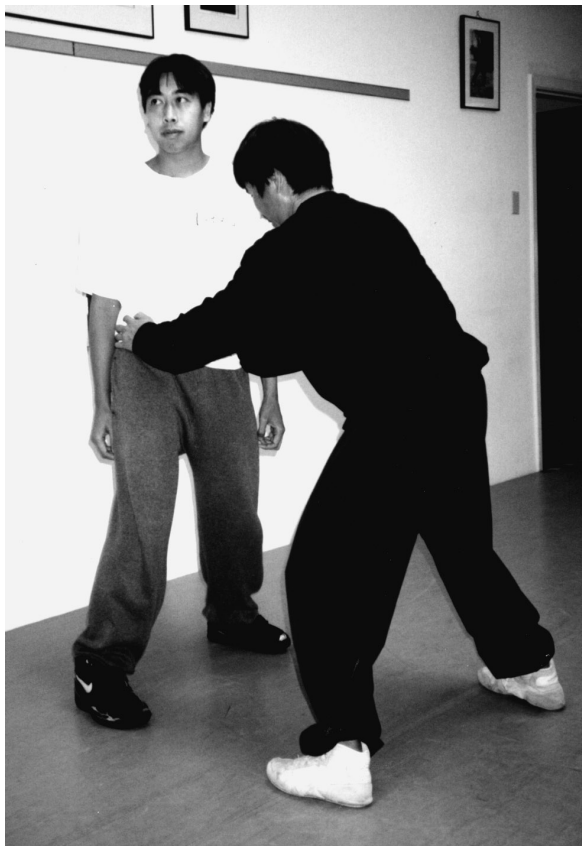
body motion being driven from the legs and generated by the rotation of the hips.

3) Continue the exercise by rotating the body as far as possible to the left. Repeat the exercise again and again, moving very slowly and focusing on body alignment and stretching of the muscles in the groin area. Your attention and awareness should always stay on the motion of your hips. Do not involve your shoulders in the generation of the motion. Allow the shoulders to relax and simply go along for the ride.

If practiced correctly, this exercise should help you gain a great deal of flexibility in the hips, pelvic region, and inner thighs while learning how to keep your hips and shoulders aligned. Remember to keep your knees facing forward, do not allow them to buckle inward as you rotate the hips.

Rotating with Resistance

This exercise is performed in the same manner as the previous exercise, however you are now going to have a partner provide some resistance. While the previous exercise helped you to learn how to rotate the body around the centerline while maintaining correct body alignments and gaining some valuable flexibility, it did not teach you to use the ground to make these movements strong and connected. In this next exercise,



Rotation Exercise with Resistance

you will really be able to feel your ability to use the ground in producing strength.

1) Begin in a horse stance as in the previous exercise.

2) Rotate your hips to the left as in the previous exercise and then allow a partner to grab your hips (see photo on the previous page). As you slowly start to turn back towards the front and continue the motion to the left, the partner provides resistance against the rotation. When this occurs, you will feel your feet lock into the ground and the appropriate leg muscles will begin to engage. Do not lean into the partner, keep your centerline vertical.

3) Repeat the exercise by turning back to the left as the partner provides resistance against the rotation. Continue turning back and forth in this manner while maintaining the alignments and movements of the first exercise. Become very aware of the way your feet grip the ground and which muscles in the legs engage in order to push your hips against the resistance your partner is providing.

After you have practiced this exercise with a partner, try going back to the first exercise again and try to feel the same engagement of the feet and legs as you felt while the partner was providing resistance. You should feel as if you are a lot more grounded, stable, and balanced now. You should also feel that you are able to generate power from the ground up through the hips. Up to this point you are still practicing all of these movements very slowly.

Crisp Hip Rotation

Once you are able to habitually maintain your shoulder and hip alignments while practicing the previous exercises, you are ready to try and add some relaxed, crisp power to the hip rotation.

1) Begin in a horse stance as in the previous exercise.

2) Slowly rotate the hips to the right as in the first exercise. Once your hips are turned as far as they can be turned to the right without sacrificing proper shoulder alignments and knee alignments, quickly and crisply rotate the hips all the way to the left. Allow the upper body to totally relax. The hips should remain very loose while executing the crisp, quick motion. Feel the power being driven from the ground up through the legs. A good image to use is to visualize that your partner is still there holding your hips to the left as in the previous exercise. He is holding them so strongly that you can't move them at all, no matter how hard you push from the ground, then suddenly he lets go. Your hips then quickly rotate to the left. The motion should be very crisp and snappy. It is executed as quickly as the snap of fingers or the blink of an eye. The upper body, abdomen, and hips are very

relaxed.

3) Repeat the exercise by crisply rotating the hips back to the right. Ensure that the upper body always remains relaxed and that you are not trying to throw your shoulders in order to gain power. All of the power for this motion is coming from the legs driving the hips. I even tell my students to imagine that they are trying to hit something with the hip bones. This puts their focus and awareness on their hips and not on their upper body and shoulders.

If you have spent a sufficient amount of time with the previous exercises, you should be able to execute this exercise and remain very stable and centered even though you are moving quickly and with power. If you learn to keep the centerline of the body stable, then the whole body will always remain stable, even when you are generating a lot of power or moving quickly.

Slow Shaking Palm

It is at this point in the sequence that I will usually introduce the student to the slow shaking palm exercise. If the student has spent enough time with all of the previous exercises, then he or she will be able to execute the slow shaking palm exercise while maintaining the proper alignments. As soon as the arm and hand motions are introduced, I continually remind the students to allow the legs to drive the hips and the hips to drive the shoulders. The arms are simply extensions of the shoulders and are not involved in the generation of power. For a complete description of the slow shaking palm exercise, refer to *The Fundamentals of Pa Kua Chang, Volume 1*.

The Staff Exercise

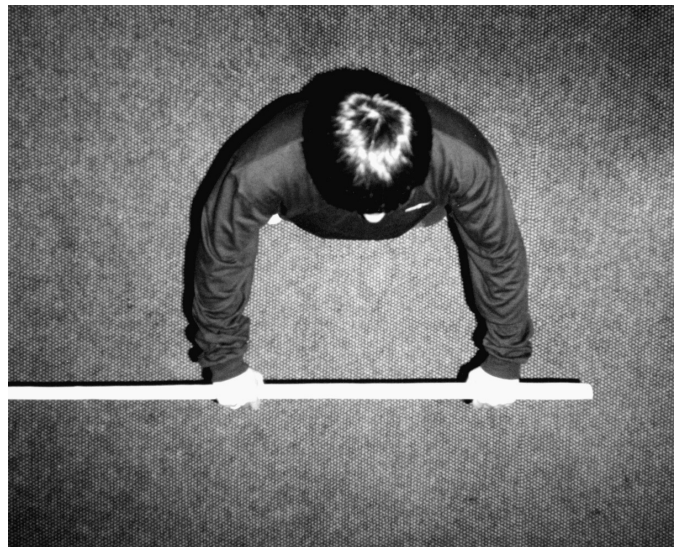
After students in my school have gained experience in the practice of the previous exercises, they are ready to learn how to involve the arms while they are generating quick, crisp power from the legs and hips. The problem that most students encounter is that as soon as they involve the arms in a power exercise, they want to immediately use the shoulder and arm muscles to help generate the power. In learning how to generate the whipping power of the shaking palm or dragon back, engaging the muscles of the shoulders and arms is counterproductive. Students need to experientially learn that the legs can generate far more power than the arms and so I have them practice an exercise with a waxwood staff which isolates the arms in the generation of power. The exercise is executed as follows:

1) Begin in a horse stance as in the previous exercises. Take a long waxwood staff and hold it down on the fat end as shown in Photo 1. The hands should be held out in front of the shoulders just under shoulder height, see top view photo.

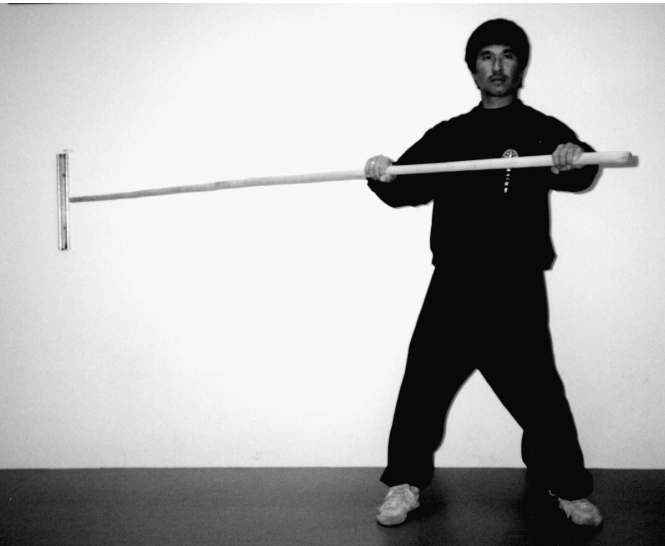
Staff Exercise - Forward Pushing



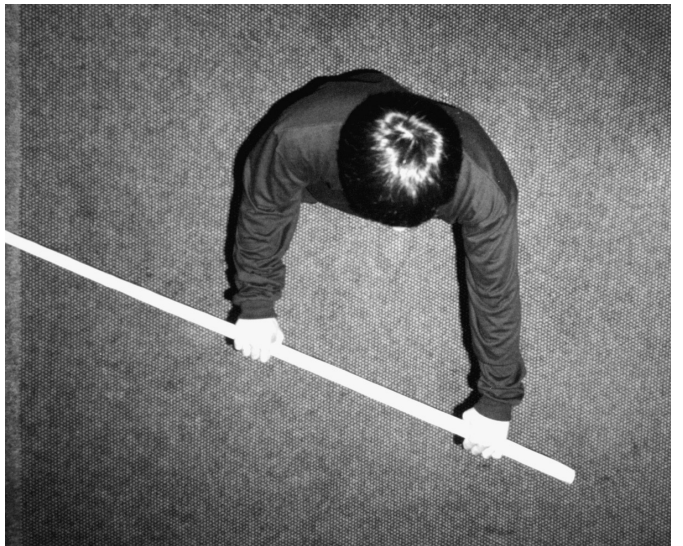
Front View - Photo 1



Top View - Photo 1



Front View - Photo 2

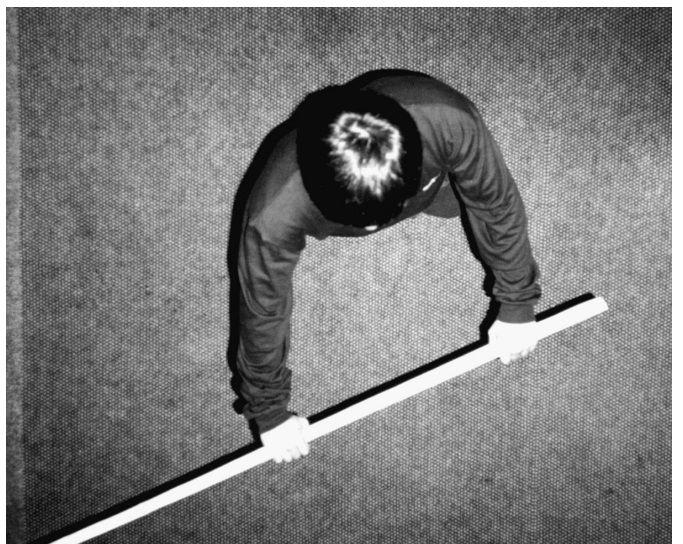


Top View - Photo 2

Staff Exercise Variation - Backward Pulling



Front View - Photo 1



Top View - Photo 1

2) From the starting position, turn your hips to the right just as you did in the previous exercises. The important point to keep in mind here is to allow your hands to continue to travel along lines which are running straight to the front (perpendicular to the original position of the staff). Do not allow the hands to rotate to the right with the turning of the body. Also, do not allow the right elbow to bend very much. We are trying to learn how to generate power from our legs driving our hips. If you bend your right elbow too much, you will have a tendency to try and whip the staff with your arm muscles. Similarly, if you allow your hands to move to the right with the turning of the hips, instead of traveling along forward facing lines, you will tend to muscle the staff with your shoulders when it is whipped back to the original position.

3) Crisply and quickly turn the hips back to the original starting position. Allow the crisp and quick motion of the hips to whip the staff forward. The tip of the staff should vibrate and shake quite a bit if the power generation is correct. Remember that both arms need to work in equal and opposite directions around the center. Some students have a tendency to push hard with one arm and forget about the other arm. When generating power with the shaking palm, both sides of the body need to explode around the center. If you imagine that you are holding one of those big lug wrenches that are shaped like a cross and trying to unscrew and lug nut that is placed directly under the part of the staff that is midway between your hands, this may help you to use both sides of your body equally. When Mike Sigman was showing me a similar exercise, he said that an image he uses when whipping the staff is to imagine that there is a piece of chewing gum stuck on the end of the staff and you are trying to flick it off.

Remember that during this exercise, the hands should travel straight forward and straight back. If they move to the left or right, the movement will be inefficient and the power generation will suffer. Watch yourself in a mirror to ensure that you are not using arm strength to whip the staff, this is a common mistake.

As a variation to this exercise, you can work the staff from a forward position and whip it back. In other words, from the starting position, move the staff forward (as shown in the photographs at the bottom of the previous page) by turning your hips to the left, and then whip the staff backwards, as in rowing a boat, by quickly and crisply turning the hips back to the center position. Additionally, you should practice this exercise and its variation with the staff tip facing towards the left instead of the right.

By working with the staff in both the forward and backwards directions and trying to maintain the proper alignments and body mechanics, you will get a very good feel for the “wing-nut” principle which is described in *The Fundamentals of Pa Kua Chang, Volume II*.

“Short Power” Shaking Palm Exercise

Another exercise which I have found useful in teaching students how to utilize the mechanics of the shaking palm is an exercise in which the palm and arm remain in a static position while the student learns to generate power to the palm with the use of the legs driving the hips. This exercise is a natural follow-on to the staff exercise as it is performed in a similar manner. We will usually introduce this exercise to the student either just before or just after they learn how to execute the shaking palm exercise with power as described in *The Fundamentals of Pa Kua Chang, Volume 1*. This exercise is performed as follows:

1) The student begins in a horse stance as in the previous exercises. The right palm is held up at about shoulder height with the palm facing upwards. The elbow is slightly bent. The left palm is held in beside the ribs with the palm also facing upwards. See photo 1.

2) Without bending the elbow any more than the slight bend it assumes in the beginning posture, twist the body around its center and allow the movement of the hips to move the shoulders and the movement of the shoulders to pull the palm back slightly. The palm remains facing upward. See photo 2.

3) Now crisply rotate the hips around the body's centerline and allow the palm to be thrown forward along a straight path. Do not allow the shoulders to turn farther than the hips. As the palm is thrown, turn the palm over to face forward with a snapping of the wrist. See photo 3.

You can now execute a straight *fan zhang* maneuver (as described in *The Fundamental of Pa Kua Chang, Volume 1*) and then execute the same exercise with the left palm.

This amount of motion, or less, is all that you will actually need when utilizing the shaking palm or dragon back palm in fighting. The movement is very minimal. The full shaking palm and dragon back exercises as they are presented in *The Fundamental of Pa Kua Chang* are executed with large, exaggerated motions in order to help train the body. In reality, when using these strikes in fighting, the motions are very small. This is why it is good to practice the “short power” shaking palm exercise and strive to get your motions very small, but still produce a lot of power.

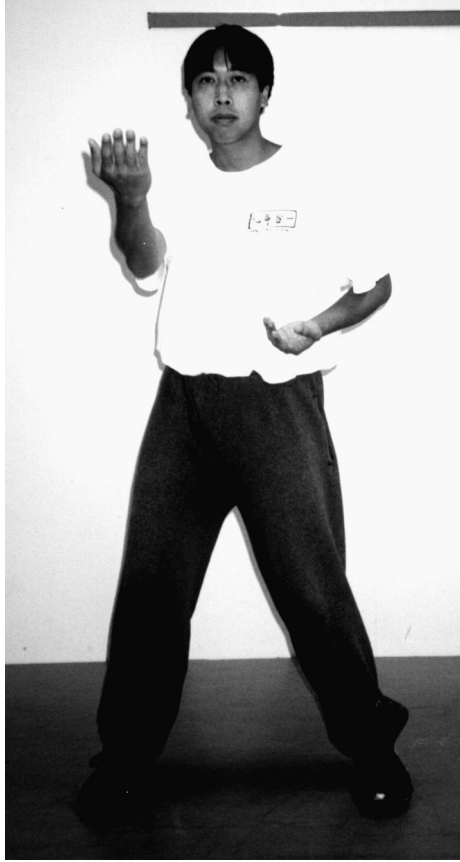
Holding Exercises

Anyone who has ever practiced *Yi Quan* (*Zhan Zhuang*) knows the great value of holding static postures. One of the benefits of holding static postures is gaining a good sense of alignment, stability, and body connection. When my students have trouble with their upper body alignments, I will recommend that

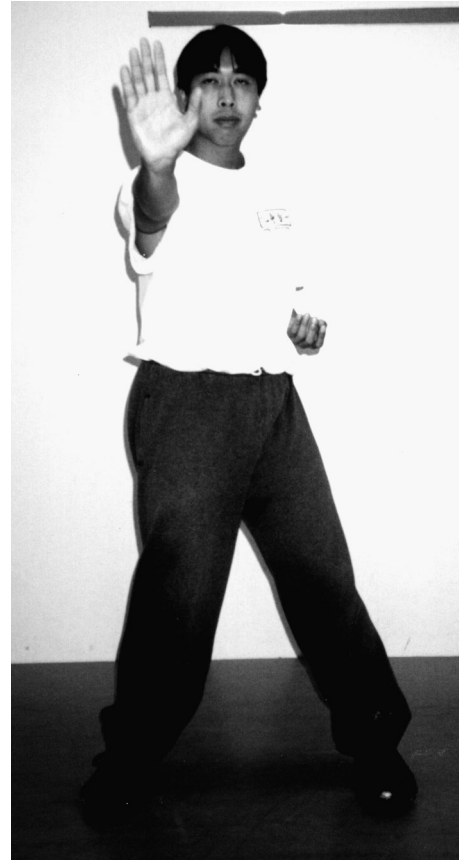
Short Power Exercise



Front View - Photo 1



Front View - Photo 2



Front View - Photo 3



Top View - Photo 1



Top View - Photo 2



Top View - Photo 3

they practice a couple of holding exercises in order to get a good feel for the correct upper body alignments and natural connected strengths. The first is the simple standing posture demonstrated in photo 1. The student holds both palms out at about shoulder height with the palms facing forward. The shoulders are relaxed, the elbow sink down, the spine is straight. The student will hold this posture as long as he or she possibly can in order to gain a feeling for a strong connection between the palms and the ground. The posture is held until the arms feel as if they are going to fall off. The legs are not bent too much because you do not want the legs to give out before the arms.

Being able to maintain a strong, natural connection between the ground and the palm is vitally important. If you are going to strike someone, the optimum amount of force will go into their body only if there is no force returning back into your body. If you have correct natural alignment, then at the moment of impact, all of the force will go from the ground into your opponent, it will not go back into your body and knock you out of alignment. This alignment is important to maintain even when executing the loose, supple whipping motion of the shaking palm.

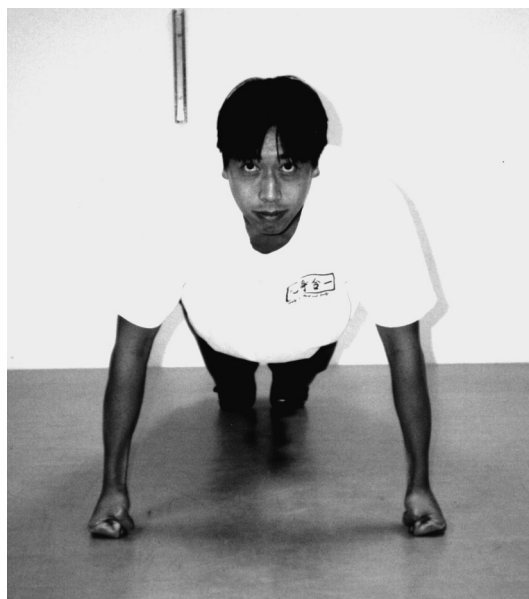
This exercise, if performed long enough, will start to form a very solid connection between the students arms and torso. The student must hold this posture long enough for the major muscle groups to fatigue and then give up. At this point the smaller structure muscle groups become conditioned and the connection between the arms and torso becomes very strong.

The second holding exercise I will have students practice is basically having them hold a push-up position (see photo). The hands are placed under the shoulders, the elbows are slightly bent, not locked. The shoulders are slightly rounded and the back is straight. It is very important that the student executing this exercise remains very relaxed and does not use arm strength to hold himself up. The student should find the correct arm alignments that facilitate being able to relax into the posture and rest on a correctly aligned structure. The breathing is deep and relaxed and all of the principles which pertain to standing exercise are followed. It is a "standing exercise" for the arms.

I have found that once students have spent time practicing these two holding exercises, they are able to execute a "short power" strike with more power and stability because they have learned how to connect the arms into the torso and the torso into the ground. Once the student gains a feeling for these alignments, it is much easier for them to loosen up and be very supple within the framework of those alignments and learn how to really generate good whipping power with the shaking palm, dragon back, and subsequent palm exercise of this system.



Standing Posture



Push-up Posture

The Dimensions of Teacher Selection & Training Process In the Transformation From External To Internal

By R. Chris Gundel

Background Experience

I began a formal study of Wang Shu Jin style Ba Gua Zhang with Kent Howard approximately 14 months ago. At that time, my martial arts experience included over 17 years of study in Uechi Ryu style Okinawan karate and a rank of 4th degree black belt. My interest in the internal arts and specifically Ba Gua was peaked by my Uechi Ryu experience. As I progressed through the black belt ranks, my instructor continued to emphasize naturalness, softness and relaxation. Progress was slow and this is when I turned to the internal arts. My experience attests to the validity of the saying that external styles move from hard to soft while internal styles move from soft to hard. Unfortunately, before I discovered Ba Gua, I spent over 8 years studying Tai Ji and found I was moving from hard to soft to softer. Although the Tai Ji has proved beneficial to my health, it did not help my fighting ability. The scope of this article covers my personal journey from an external style to an internal style and briefly describes the training methods of Huang Jin Sheng as taught by Kent Howard. Huang Jin Sheng studied with Wang Shu Jin for a 26 year period from 1955 until Wang passed away in 1981.

The Search For A Teacher

As the saying goes, " A good martial arts teacher teaches you how to practice, he cannot teach you the art ." It was not an easy process finding someone to teach me how to practice Ba Gua. The search for a competent teacher was a long (2 years) and frustrating task through a maze of jargon and a virtual reality world of "smoke and mirrors." Although it took me almost the same amount of time to find my karate

The search for a competent teacher was a long (2 years) and frustrating task through a maze of jargon and a virtual reality world of "smoke and mirrors."

instructor, the process was very straight forward in comparison; what you saw was what you got. In contrast, many of the internal martial arts instructors I encountered seemed shrouded in the mysterious and lacked clear credentials. Several of the Ba Gua instructors talked a good game but were "short" on realistic application; "hollow" forms without substance. Most of these instructors were reluctant to teach me Ba Gua directly without some probationary period or "rites of passage." All I wanted was competent instruction and I was not interested in wasting time proving my worth before beginning Ba Gua training. Eventually I discovered a few instructors with clear credentials who were open to sharing their knowledge, extremely competent in the combat applications of Ba Gua and



Ba Gua instructor Wang Shu Jin



Wang Shu Jin's student, Huang Jin Sheng

very straight forward in their approach . My final decision to study with Kent Howard was based upon 3 criteria. You may want to consider these as part of your selection criteria:

1) Frequency Of Contact

My instructor resides locally and classes are held weekly. To assure that I gained a solid foundation from the beginning, frequent contact was an absolute necessity.

2) Top-Down Versus Bottom-Up Approach To Teaching

Kent follows Huang Jin Sheng's top down approach using Wang's linking and swimming body forms as the scaffolding upon which combat skills are built . Employing these forms as templates, each of the kuas and each technique within the guas is analyze, dissected and then reassembled. Since I personally learn better inductively, my learning style was synergistic with Kent's approach. You should carefully examine how you learn best and consider this dimension when selecting an instructor.

In contrast, many of the internal martial arts instructors I encountered seemed shrouded in the mysterious and lacked clear credentials.

3) Emphasis On Evasion Versus Striking

After years of working on effective punches and kicks, I was primarily interested in learning evasion, blending, and refining my ability to yield. Kent's emphasis on evasion, connecting with the opponent - or "joining centers" to use Tim Cartmell's terminology, and encircling met my requirements. If you have studied external martial arts you may want to seriously consider finding a teacher who focuses primarily on blending and listening. Experience has shown that although yielding and "soft" blocks are part of the Uechi style and other external systems, the feel and process of application are very different from the feel of connecting blending and evading as applied in Ba Gua.

Transition From External To Internal

External and internal systems of martial arts are similar in their emphasis on body posture, structural alignment, and the development of the psychological state of no-mind. Shared physical principles include: sinking ones weight to the center (lower dan-tian), collapsing the waist, hollowing or rounding the chest, straightening the head and neck, dropping the elbows and shoulders, tucking in and pulling up the pelvis to straighten the back, flexing the knees and grasping the ground with the toes. These principles are expressed in Uechi Ryu's foundation posture Sanchin or three conflicts, Xing Yi Quan's foundation posture San Ti Shi or trinity posture and Ba Gua's dragon posture or guard stance. Through the practice of these foundation postures a state of nonanalytical thinking or "no-mindedness" is achieved. This state of wu-hsin or mushin enables the individual to respond spontaneously in combat to the total configuration of the situation rather than focusing on any single aspect of the opponent.

Although these core physical and psychological principles form the basis of both external and internal arts, the training regimens are radically different. Uechi Ryu focuses on toughening or conditioning the body to absorb strikes (koticki-tai), delivering punishing blocks and executing extremely explosive strikes that are powerful enough to fatally injure an opponent with a single blow . Body toughening is accomplished in conjunction with a partner. The areas of the body that

are most vulnerable to attack such as the arms, legs, stomach, pectorals and latissimus dorsi muscles are strengthened by slightly injurious hitting routines. After several years of conditioning, the body accommodates to getting hit and does not bruise. Strikes and blocks are developed by employing whole body power generated from the legs and the waist. Many years are spent working on the development of short jing or the explosive power required to deliver devastating punches, kicks and blocks from a natural or relaxed state. This combination of body toughening and powerful strikes results in a primary emphasis on aggressively interrupting the opponents technique by absorbing some of the technique in order to achieve a superior position from which a devastating block and or fatal strike could be executed.

In contrast, Wang style Ba Gua places primary focus on body flexibility versus body toughening, and listening, sticking and blending versus interrupting. The underlying principle is the notion of *luo kung* which literally means falling into emptiness (see Kent Howard's article in *Pa Kua Chang Journal* Vol.5, No. 6). Luo kung is Huang Jin Sheng's term to describe Wang Shu Jin's method of entrapping an opponent. Kent describes the feel of *luo kung* as dropping the coccyx, pushing back on the sacrum and absorbing the opponent's attack. In contrast to the Uechi Ryu notion of actually physically absorbing some of the opponent's attack, when you *luo kung* you feel nothing and the opponent feels as if he/she has "fallen into a hole" or is "hitting air."

The best way I have found to conceptually organize, contrast and simplify the combat principles involved in Uechi Ryu and Wang style Ba Gua is through the acronyms BLAST and ACCEPT. Through these acronyms, which are my invention, I hope to convey my experience of the "feel" of the art during application. BLAST as an acronym and yang oriented metaphor encapsulates my experience of defending against an attack using Uechi Ryu karate since, in most situations, you aggressively interrupt the attack by literally attacking the attack. This should not imply that yielding is never stressed. Rather, interrupting is the primary method employed even when one initially yields to the opponents attack. Listening, blending and sticking are part of the Uechi system but are secondary to interrupting and are applied in a harder manner than in Wang style Ba Gua. I will further qualify this by saying that there are "soft" blocks in Uechi Ryu but, as I mentioned above, my experience is that these feel very different from the connecting and blending that are used in Ba Gua.

B stands for a devastating block delivered with full body power.

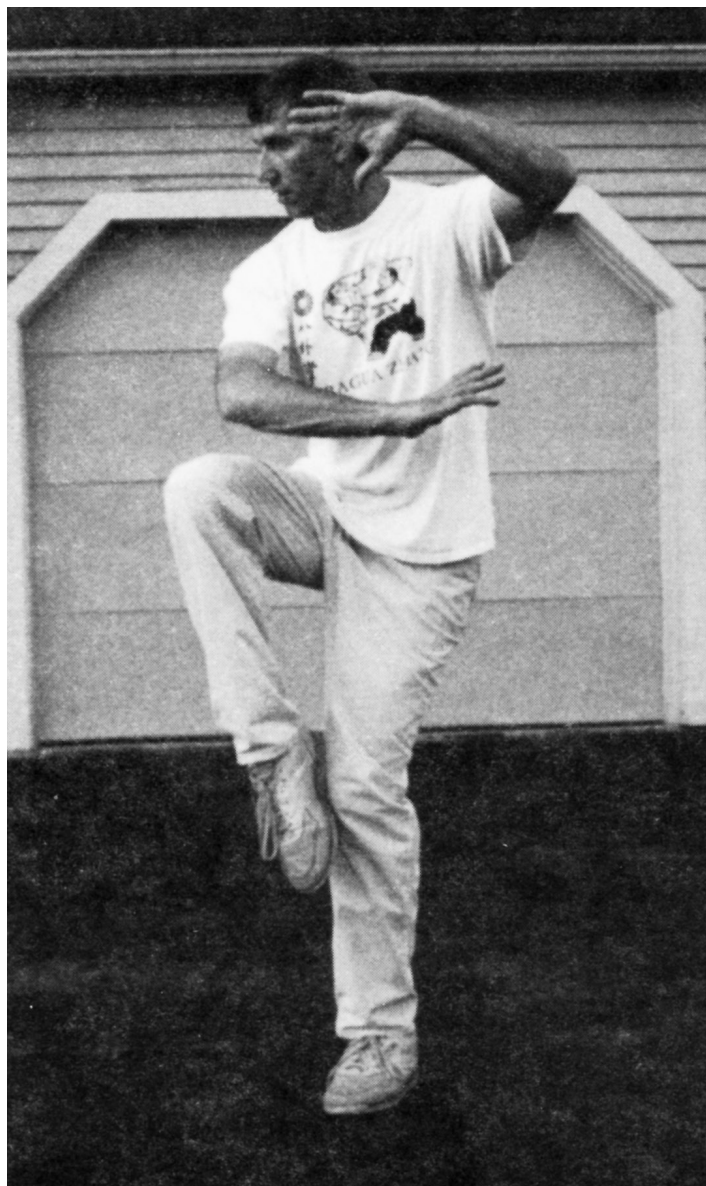
L suggests using leverage to neutralize the attack and achieve a superior position.

A stands for adhering to the attacking appendage to control the attack.

S represents striking back at the opponent using fully body power

T stands for terminate the opponent, throw the opponent, try again, or take off and terminate the encounter.

ACCEPT as an acronym and yin oriented metaphor captures my experience of applying Wang style Pa kua in a combat situation since you literally accept the attacker and let him "fall into a hole". This does not mean that you never aggressively counterattack and try to over-power the opponent.



Huang Jin Sheng's student, Kent Howard

A stands for angle and represents immediately getting off the line of attack.

C stands for connect and contact the opponent lightly.

C represents center, the notion of luo kung falling on your center, or "joining centers".

E stands for encircle the opponent and control his spine or entrap an appendage.

P stands for penetrating his defenses using pulse force in the form of a push or palm strike.

T stands for terminate the opponent, throw the opponent, try again, or take off and terminate the encounter.

The application of ACCEPT on a consistent basis I have found to be the most challenging and difficult aspect of my training. I typically resort to BLAST after the third attack in a series of attacks. The solution involves trusting in my ability to relax, luo kung, let the attack come in and to blend with the opponent rather than meet force with force.

The Process Of Training

Kent teaches Huang Jin Sheng's core curriculum composed of a series of Yi Quan warm-up exercises and standing postures, the linking form (Lian Huan Zhang) and the swimming body form (You Shen Zhang). During my first class I learned the basic movements of the warm-up exercises, the palm positions for the standing postures and immediately began learning the first palm change of the linking form. I spent the first 3 months learning the 8 palm changes of the linking form, converting these 8 changes to linear forms and refining the movements and postures of the Yi Quan exercises. Next, I proceeded to learn the 8 palm changes of the swimming body form both on the circle and as linear forms. From the very first class, Kent has emphasized application through push hands, straight line drills and researching individual movements of each of the guas.

The key to application resides in the Crouching Tiger posture, the first palm change of the linking form, and in the previously mentioned principle of luo kung. Luo kung is the engine, the linking form is the alphabet, the Crouching Tiger is the canonical stance and the ACCEPT sequence is the result. To bridge the gap between form and application, Kent started by teaching a subset of the ACCEPT sequence which I will refer to as ACE. In other words, we initially worked on: getting off the line of attack and gaining an advantageous Angle, relaxing into our Center in order to match or join the opponent's center, and finally Encircling the opponent. After you ACE your opponent you have an almost unlimited choice of options ranging from extreme aggression (yang) to extreme non-aggression (yin). The feeling of ACE is in every part of both forms. In the swimming body form there are waves of ACE. At first the forms are practiced slowly to gain the body memory of falling in and out of luo kung. After I was

able to clearly discriminate when to luo kung and when not to luo kung, I began practicing the forms at combat speed to simulate application. The guas can be practiced in any order in a balanced fashion, first one side then the other, or in an unbalanced fashion, first all 8 guas on one side and then the 8 guas on the other side. Kent recommends practicing the even numbered guas one day and the odd numbered guas the following day to vary the routine.

Recently I have begun to improvise and experiment by converting several of the guas to straight line 2 person combat forms that provide ample opportunity to apply the ACCEPT sequence. To see if I can apply ACCEPT in combat I periodically engage in research sparring with a friend who has a similar background in Uechi Ryu karate and is currently studying Yin style Ba Gua with Park Bok Nam. During these research combat sessions we attack each other with full power attacks and see how we react as we attempt to improvise a defense. This has proven to be extremely valuable. I find that I continually revert back to BLAST after multiple attacks but I am ACCEPTing more often. The hardest transition that I have had to make is allowing the attack to come almost all the way in and trusting in luo kung. This is a continuing struggle.

Conclusion

As I continue to train in both Uechi Ryu and Wang style Ba Gua, I expect the difference in the "feel" of application to diminish since the essence of BLAST and ACCEPT is the same. Both involve neutralizing the opponent (hua), controlling or seizing the opponent (na) and striking (fa). My current experience of dissimilarity may simply be a function of my level of proficiency. In conclusion, I would like to thank Kent Howard for his excellent instruction and his faithful rendering of Wang Shu Jin's style of Ba Gua as taught by Huang Jin Sheng. I would also like to thank my fellow classmates for their tolerance of my lapses into the BLAST mode.

About The Author: Chris Gundel started his martial arts training at the age of 29 after completing a Ph.D. in psychology in 1977. He is interested in martial arts and related disciplines as forms of applied psychology fostering mind/body integration. Chris may be contacted at (508-653-2348)

Special Thanks To: My sparring partner Joe Bellone and my classmates Robert Greenebaum, Lee Taylor and Bryan Williams.

Internal Arts Masters: Liu De Kuan and Geng Ji Shan

In past issues of the Pa Kua Chang Journal, we have covered the life and teaching of numerous early generation Ba Gua Zhang instructors in great detail. However, there are many Ba Gua Zhang teachers of note who taught in the late 1800s and early 1900s we have not covered simply because it has been difficult to obtain information about them. Rather than leave these distinguished instructors out of the Journal all together due to lack of information, we will begin presenting short peices on these individuals by presenting the information which is available. In this issue we will present information about two famous instructors, Liu De Kuan and Geng Ji Shan.

Liu De Kuan (? - 1911)

Liu De Kuan, also known as Liu Jing Yuan, was born in Hebei Province, Cang County. He practice martial arts from his youth. His background in martial arts was varied and through hard practice, he was able to obtain the essence of all that he studied. His first martial arts teacher, Tian Chun Kuei, taught him boxing and weapons. Later, "Golden Spear" Xu Liu, a student of Liu Shi Jun, taught him the "six harmonies" long spear. Liu De Kuan displayed a great talent with the spear and earned the nickname "Long Spear" Liu.

When he was older, Liu took a trip to Yi Chang to visit friends and met a man, surnamed Guan, who taught him a method called "Fang Tian Hua Lance" in six sets. He also learned a concealed weapon called the "Moon Tooth Dart" and a method called the "Eighteen Great Hand Method."

Towards the end of the Qing Dynasty, Liu was summoned to Beijing by a member of the Inner Mongolian Royal family. At that time, Dong Hai Chuan, Liu Shi Jun, and Yang Lu Chan were all teaching in the capitol. Liu De Kuan decided to learn the best of what each teacher had to offer. He studied Ba Gua with Dong, Yue family free fighting methods with Liu and Tai Ji Quan with Yang.

Although Liu De Kuan did study some Ba Gua with Dong Hai Chaun, like his contemporaries Li Cun Yi and Zhang Zhao Dong, most of his instruction came from Dong's student Cheng Ting Hua. Since Liu was already a skilled martial artist by the time he studied with Cheng, their relationship was more one of friends than student and teacher. In addition to Cheng teaching Ba Gua to Liu, Liu taught Cheng Ting Hua some of his weapons skills and Cheng incorporated those skills into his Ba Gua instruction. Liu's "Fan Tian Hua Lance" skills, as handed down in the Cheng family, were recorded in Sun Xi Kun's book,

"The Genuine Transmission of Ba Gua Quan."

Liu De Kuan was said to have been a very generous man who was friends with many martial artists of the day. Guo Gu Min said, "All the elder teachers got along with Master Liu De Kuan." Liu was good friends with many of the famous martial artists of the day, including Zhang Zhao Dong, Li Zhong Yuan, Li Cun Yi, Cheng Ting Hua, Liu Feng Chun, Geng Ji Shan, and various others. He always love to study and compare martial arts with his friends.

In 1894 Liu De Kuan formed an alliance with Cheng Ting Hua, Li Cun Yi and others advocating students of Ba Gua, Xing Yi, and Tai Ji become companions in the martial arts. Students were to put aside their differences, share their techniques and accept students from the other schools. Liu De Kuan enjoyed studying the martial arts and was not tied down by convention. He sought to imporve upon all of the techniques he had learned. For instance, he used the lance method he had learned to improve upon his spear technquies. He took the Yue Family free fighting he learned and expanded it to eight sets, calling it "Yue Family Linked Boxing." He built upon the foundation of the Ba Gua Zhang fighting techniques he had learned and created the "sixty-four hands."

Many martial arts historians in China believe that most of the Ba Gua Zhang sixty-four straight line sets that are taught today in the various systems can trace their roots to Liu De Kuan's Ba Gua "sixty-four" hands. Some report that Liu developed this set when he was employed to teach martial arts to Army soldiers. Since teaching the circular motions of Ba Gua to a large group of soldiers proved impractical, Liu put the Ba Gua techniques on straight lines so it would be easier to teach the soldiers. The sixty-four straight line Ba Gua sets which are now taught as part of Li Zi Ming's Ba Gua came directly from Liu De Kuan via his student Guo Gu Min. Guo was a student of Liang Zhen Pu who also traveled and practiced with Liu De Kuan for a short time. After Liang Zhen Pu passed on, Li Zi Ming studied with his senior brother Guo Gu Min and learned Liu's sixty four straight line Ba Gua sets, as well as his six combined locking methods and seventy-two Chin Na, from Guo.

Like many of the Ba Gua and Xing Yi practitioners of his day, Liu put his skills to practical use as the head of the Zheng Zhou He Sheng Escort/Bodygurad service. Later he was also invited to become the head of the Beijing Hui You Bodyguard service. It was in his capacity as an escort and bodyguard that Liu earned his great reputation with the spear.

Even when Liu De Kuan became old and his eyesight was poor, he could demonstrate superior

martial arts skill. Towards the end of Liu's life, Cheng You Long, Cheng Ting Hua's eldest son, was teaching Ba Gua near the Sui Wen Gate on Xi Mo Street. Ba Gua practitioners would typically come to this area to meet each other and practice. Although Liu would and his eyesight poor, many young student wanted to compare skills with him. Liu used his spear. As soon as the opponent's weapon touched Liu's spear staff, Liu would quickly and effortlessly dis-arm the opponent and throw the opponent aside.

Geng Ji Shan (1860 - 1928) and Geng Xia Guang (1875-1972)

Geng Ji Shan, also known as Cheng Xin, was born in Hebei Province, Shen County. Shen County is probably the most famous area of China, outside of Beijing, known for its internal martial arts. Li Cun Yi, Guo Yun Shen, Liu Qi Lan, Cheng Ting Hua, Cheng Dian Hua, Zhang Zhao Dong, Li Neng Ran, Wang Xiang Jai, Sun Lu Tang, and Geng Ji Shan were all individuals who were either from Shen County, studied martial arts in Shen County, or learned their martial arts there. When Geng Ji Shan was young, he hung out with his friends Li Cun Yi and Zhang Zhao Dong and studied Xing Yi with the same teacher, Liu Qi Lan. In fact, Geng Ji Shan was Li Cun Yi's cousin.

Geng Ji Shan was intellegent and liked to study the martial arts. Geng studied Xing Yi in Shen County with Liu Qi Lan and then later followed his cousin Li Cun Yi to Beijing where he studied Ba Gua Zhang with Dong Hai Quan and another fellow from Shen County, Cheng Ting Hua. It is said that Geng "obtained the essence of the art."

Geng Ji Shan was a large and burly man. His complexion was so fair, it looked as if he powdered his face. He loved to ride horses and carry a long spear. Therefore his nickname was, "powdered face warrior with a long spear."

Geng Ji Shan established the "Si Min Martial Arts Society" and was later hired as the Hebei Province Li Zhao County Middle School martial arts instructor. During his lifetime, Geng taught many students, among the more well know were his son Geng Wen Cai, Zhang Xiu, Deng Yun Feng, and Zhao De Xiang.

Geng Ji Shan's son, Geng Xia Guang (1875-1972) was also born in Shen County and taught martial arts for a living his whole life. It is said that he was a prodigy of the Xing Yi school and after he studied with his father, he also was taught by Li Cun Yi. It is said that he mastered the arts of Xing Yi, Ba Gua, and Tai Ji and was especially skilled with the long spear, splitting broadsword, and stabbing spear.

One of Geng Xia Guang's students, De Shun An, reports, "I saw my teacher practicing the Ba Gua unorthodox spear and the Four Gates Dragon Shape Spear. The methods were singularly impressive, with the long spear being used at close quarters with flawless technique and superhuman speed. It

is hard to describe in words. I was left speechless. Unfortunately, at the time, our skill was not good enough to practice these forms, we were only lucky enough to see them. My teacher often said, 'Trained skill is more important than swords and spears, without skill all else is useless.' "

In 1926 Geng Xia Guang went to Wu Han and began teaching publically in Hong Chun. Together with Xia Xiang, he founded the "body/Mind Clutivation Research Center." Xia taught Twelve Route Tan Tui, Gong Li Quan, Shi Zi Zhan, etc. Geng Xia Guang taught Xing Yi, Ba Gua, and Tai Ji. Later, he also taught in Guan Zhong. Geng Xia Guang was very conscientious when he taught. He taught all students sincerely and refused to teach anyone of bad character. He was famous for saying, "The sages of the past would not teach blindly, not because they were stingy with their knowledge, but because they were afraid of wasting their time."

Although Geng Xia Guang had set down roots in Wu Han, he always enjoyed traveling and made many friends in the martial arts community. he was not used to teaching formal classes and when he was appointed the head of the Han Huo City Martial Arts Academy, he turned hte position over to his younger martial arts brother, Xu Shi Jin. He later also turned over his private students to his brother-in-law, Zhang Fu Qing.

When the Japanese invaded China (1921) and "the country found itself on the brink of collapse," Geng wanted to help save the country and volunteered for the Beijing Army, serving under Zhang Xue Liang. he was given the position of teaching the soldiers martial arts. He taught the stabbing spear and broadsword. His motto was, "learn to cut and stab with the rifle (bayonette) as if it were a spear." Cutting and stabbing techniques were very practical for soldiers on the battlefield and became popular among the soldiers fighting the Japanese invaders.

After the start of the war, Wu Han was occupied and Geng retreated to Han Kou. It was a danerous time. The Japanese had heard of Geng's reputation and offered him a great sum of money to teach them martial arts. Geng thought of the consequences and knew it would be a great source of shame to teach the Japanese. He refused the offer and used the excuse that he was old and sickly and was hard of hearing. Times were very hard in Han Kou. Geng sold firewood so that he and his family could survive. Everyday Geng chopped wood and his son would carry it into town to sell. This is how he survived the extreme adversity of the Japanese occupation.

In 1945, in order to promote the true techniques of martial arts, Geng began teaching in Zhong Shan Park. After he became advanced in age, his student, Chen Xiang Yi, took over responsibility for teaching. Geng then opened a clinic called the "Geng Xia Guang Clinic" and practiced his family's medicine. Unfortunately, his life's experience with the martial and healing arts were never recorded.

Pa Kua Chang Related Periodicals

Qi: The Journal of Traditional Eastern Health and Fitness: Insight Graphics, Inc., P.O. Box 221343, Chantilly, VA 22022 - Steve Rhodes and his crew at Insight Graphics continue to provide readers with interesting information relating to all aspects of Traditional Eastern health and fitness. The magazine is produced in a very high quality format.

Journal of Asian Martial Arts: 821 West 24th Street, Erie, PA 16502 - This is a high quality publication which provides well researched articles in a scholarly fashion.

The Journal of the Chen Style Taijiquan Research Association of Hawaii: Published Quarterly by Great Publishing Company, 761 Isenberg St. #A, Honolulu, HI 96826-4541

1996-97 Calendar of Pa Kua Chang Workshops and Seminars

<u>Instructor</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Contact for Information</u>
Park Bok Nam	Boston, MA	2 November	Craig Dougherty (580) 787-7600
Park Bok Nam	Allendale, NJ	15-16 November	Ray Ahles (201) 385-3130
John Bracy	Houston, TX	6-9 December	Alex Hay (713) 680-3033
James Wu	Orange County, CA	12 January 97	James Wu (714) 454-9507
Xie Pei Qi	Boston, MA	8-12 January	John Lupos (617) 383-6822
Xie Pei Qi	Bangor, PA	16-19 January	Howard Sweeney (602) 252-8186
Xie Pei Qi	Phoenix, AZ	23-26 January	SW Institute/KC Miller (602) 994-9244

**The Next issue of the
Pa Kua Chang Journal
will feature:**

- **The Definition of a Ba Gua "Style"**
- **Glen Moore**

**All Back Issues are
Still Available**
• **\$3.50 per issue**
(for a limited time)



Make Checks Payable to High View Publications
Foreign Orders please add \$0.50 per issue

You can now order **TOLL FREE** by Phone **Phone: (800) 413-8296 (Orders Only)**
or send us a Fax at: (408) 622-0787. Questions? Call - (408) 622-0789

SUBSCRIPTION ORDER FORM

Check One

Please Print Clearly

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ **Zip:** _____

VISA/MASTERCARD(Circle One) Expiration Date: _____

Credit Card Number: _____

Signature: _____

Phone Number: (_____) _____

One Year Subscription: \$20.00

Two Year Subscription: \$38.00

New

Renewal

Send Check or Money Order to:
High View Publications
P. O. Box 51967
Pacific Grove, CA 93950
Foreign Countries: Please submit
International M. O. payable in U.S. funds.
**Foreign Countries also add \$8.00 per year
for postage and handling.**

Pa Kua Chang Instructors Directory

Frank Allen
New York, NY 10003
(212) 533-1751

Ray Ahles
Bergenfield, NJ 07621
(201) 385-3130

Kip Athan
Kennewick, WA 99336
(509) 586-6817

Michael Babin
Ottawa, Ont.
(613) 523-0968

Bai Guang Tao, O.M.D.
Norwich, VT 05055
Glenn.Gurman@VALLEY.NET

Loriano Belluomini
Lucca, Italy
0583/977051

Tom Bisio
New York, NY 10013
(212) 226-3140

Vince Black, O.M.D.
Tucson, AZ 85740
(602) 544-4838

John Bracy
Costa Mesa, CA 92626
(714) 557-8959

Mark Brinkman
Denver, CO
(303) 322-8540

Jim Burchfield
Burton, MI 48529
(313) 743-1450
Clawson, MI 48017
(810) 280-2788

Tim Cartmell
Westminster, CA
(714) 896-9531

Carlos Casados
Woodland Hills, CA
(818) 702-6946

Victor Chao
Ann Arbor, MI
(313) 663-8073

Kwok Chan
Kingston, Ontario
Canada K7L 5C8
(613) 546-2116

Col. (Ret.) Y.W. Chang
New Orleans, LA 70118
(504) 861-4283

Peter Chema
Yonkers, NY 10705
(914) 965-9789

Wai Lun Choi
Chicago, IL 60618
(312) 472-3331

Richard Clear
Tampa, FL
(813) 835-5098

Joseph Crandall
Pinole, CA 94564
(510) 223-9336

James C. Cravens
Oakland Park, FL 33309
(305) 938-6992

Daniel Crawford
Brewster, NY 10509
(914) 278-2558

Kenneth S. Cohen
Nederland, CO 80466
(303) 258-0971

Lisa Davis
Encinitas, CA
(619) 942-1128

Andrew Dale
Seattle, WA 98133
(206) 283-0055

Frank DeMaria
Putnam Valley, NY 10579
(914) 528-3192

Joe Dunphy
Gaithersburg, MD 20877
(301) 921-0003

Joseph Eagar
Phoenix, AZ 85012
(602) 264-4222

Randy Elia
Emerson, NJ
(201) 967-0790

Larry C. Eshelman
Altoona, PA 16602
(814) 941-9998

Rex Eastman
Nelson, B.C., Canada
(604) 352-3714

Dan Farber
Marblehead, MA 01945
(617) 631-6966

Bryant Fong
San Francisco, CA 94121
(415) 753-3838

Robert Fong
P.O. Box 2424
Bellingham, WA 98227

Kumar Frantzis
Fairfax, CA 94930
(415) 454-5243

Cornell Garrett
510 S. 108 St
Omaha, NE

Andrew Glover
Iowa City, IA
(319) 341-0378

Glenn Guerin
Shreveport, LA 71104
(318) 865-3578

Kenny Gong
New York, NY 10013
(212) 966-2406

Nick Gracenin
Sharon, PA 16146
(412) 983-1126

Miles Grody
Bethesda, MD
(301) 983-6830

Chris Gulbrandson
Irvine, CA 96143
(714) 552-5082

Paul Hannah, MD.
Chicago, IL 60615
(312) 268-7339

Jiang Hao-Guan
1490 College View Dr. #1
Monterey Park, CA 91754

Ray Hayward
St. Paul, MN 55114
(612) 331-3122

Benjamin Hill
Bronx, NY 10453
(718) 294-6403

Edward Hines
Leeds, England
0113 287-5906

Adam Hsu
Cupertino, CA 95015
(408) 973-8762

George Hu
Houston, TX 77077
(713) 777-4546

Chien-Liang Huang
Towson, MD 21204
(301) 823-8818

Andy James
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
(416) 465-6122

Scott Jensen
Berkeley, CA
(510) 644-1832

Jang Kui Shi
P.O. Box 1677
Santa Cruz, CA 95061

Jerry Alan Johnson
Pacific Grove, CA 93950
(408) 646-9399

Stanley Johnson
Dallas, TX 75232
(214) 283-9136

H. Kurland
Riverside, CA
(909) 787-5801

Bernard Langan
San Luis Obispo, CA
(805) 927-8053

Jan Lane
New York, NY 10003
(212) 777-3284

Stephen Laurette
New York, NY 10002
(212) 629-2004

Johnny Kwong Ming Lee
Brendantown, FL 34205
747-0123

Leung Kay Chi
Central Square, MA 02139
(617) 497-4459

Shouyu Liang
Richmond, B.C., Canada
(604) 273-9648

Lin Chao Zhen
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 921-6978

Lin Chih-Young
Elmhurst, NY 11373
(718) 779-5909

Lin Chun-Fu
Iowa City, IA
(714) 921-1573

Edgar Livingston
Baltimore, MD 21224
(301) 732-4890

Kevin Lovas
Cleve Hts, OH 44188
(216) 397-9693

Ron Loving
Oklahoma City, OK 73132
(405) 728-8462

Nan Lu, O.M.D.
New York, NY 10013
(212) 274-0999

Lu Xiao Ling
Alexandria, VA 22312
(703) 658-0580

Ron Matthews
Lowell, MA 01852
(508) 459-1604

Kieth McCrear
Vallejo, CA
(707) 558-8765

Ray McRae
Tempe, AZ 85282
(602) 345-1831

Bow Sim Mark
Boston, MA 02111
(617) 426-0958

Thomas Miles
Philadelphia, PA
(609) 261-8251

Dan Miller
Pacific Grove, CA 93950
(408) 655-2990

Harrison Moretz
Seattle, WA 98103
(206) 784-5632

Glen Moore
Newport News, VA
(804) 379-0397

Charles Morris
Minneapolis, MN
612-522-0265

Al-Waalee Muhammad
Houston, TX 77230-1216
(713) 661-2107

Bonnie Newman
Sandy, OR 97055
(503) 622-4041

Larry Owens
Flint, MI
(810) 686-0906

John Painter
Arlington, TX 76004-1777
(817) 860-0129

William Palmeri
16404 North Aspen Dr.
Fountain Hills, AZ 85268

Frank Paolillo
Ponte Verda Beach, FL
(904) 273-4919

Park Bok Nam
Richmond, VA 23235
(804) 794-8384

Mike Patterson
La Mesa, CA 92041
(619) 698-6389

Richard & Iva Peck
Plano, TX 75025
(214) 380-9070

Shannon Kawika Phelps
Del Mar, CA 92014
(619) 792-8026

Steven Pilot
Gilbert, SC
(803) 892-2781

Allen Pittman
Atlanta, GA 31145
(404) 270-1642

John Price
Anderson, CA 96007
(916) 365-6851

Chris Quayle
Flagstaff, AZ 86001
(602) 774-6702

Rocky Richardson
Osseo, MN
(612) 493-9596

Dominick Ruggieri
Brick, NJ
(908) 920-0605

George Saby
France
16 40 65 55 01

Larry Sanders
Austin, TX
(512) 389-1551

Mario Saucedo
Denver, CO 80222
(303) 782-9171

Russell Sauls
Rowlett, TX
(214) 475-1268

Rick Schmoyer
1907 Electric St.
Dunmore, PA 18512

Sheng Lung Fu
Vancouver, B.C. Canada
(604) 879-1449

Jacopo Silicani
Padova, Italy
39-49-65-6028

Michael Smit
Richmond, B.C. Canada
(604) 241-0172

Edward Star
1220 Market, N.E.
Salem, OR 97301

Tuey Staples
St. Louis, MO
(314) 533-1756

Ronald Statler
Yonkers, NY 10710
(914) 969-6667

Gary Stier, O.M.D.
Austin, TX 78703
(512) 445-1950

Jeff Thornbloom
Santee, CA
(619) 448-1752

G. S. Torres
932 15th St. Suite #4
Miami Beach, FL 33139

Carl Totton
No. Hollywood, CA 91601
(818) 760-4219

Jason Tsou
San Gabriel, CA 91776
(818) 287-0811

Eric Tuttle
Kingston, Ontario
Canada K7L-5J9
(613) 542-9025

Richard Upton
Rohnert Park, CA
(707) 585-7411

Larry Walden
Tacoma, WA 98466
(206) 564-6600

Li Wang
Iowa City, IA 52246
(319) 353-4599

Timothy Warfield
Lebanon, PA 17046
(717) 274-9840

Alex Wang
Vancouver, B.C. Canada
(604) 251-1809

Fred and Sandy Weaver
Kansas City, MO
(816) 333-4842

Brian Weatherly
Bonita Springs, FL 33923
(813) 495-3919

Martin Werner
Mesa, AZ 85201-5458
(602) 969-9471

Y.C. Wong
San Francisco, CA 94108
(415) 781-4682

Glenn Wright
Tacoma, WA 98411
(206) 584-4647

Dr. Fred Wu, Ph.D.
Worthington, OH 43085
(614) 885-7512

Grace Wu
Wichita, KS 67202
(316) 264-9640

James Wu
Lake Forest, CA
(714) 454-9507

Wen-Ching Wu
East Providence, RI 02914
(401) 435-6502

George Xu
San Francisco, CA 94122
(415) 664-4578

Yang Shu-Ton
Tallmadge, OH 44278
(216) 633-1914

Jane Yao
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 771-7380

Robert Lin-I Yu
Madison, WI 53704
(608) 241-5506
St. Paul, MN 55101
(612) 291-1080

Yu Cheng Huang
Chicago, IL 60616-6851
(708) 679-3113

Xue Zhi Wang, O.M.D., C.A.
Seattle, WA 98105
(206) 547-2435

Luigi Zanini
I - 36100 Vicenza
ITALY 0039 444 563696

Ronald Zenga
St. Paul, MN
(612) 962-8887

Zhang Gui-Feng
Falls Church, VA 22043
(703) 698-8182

Zhang Jie
Seattle, WA 98155
(206) 368-0699

Zhang Hong Mei
San Francisco, CA 94127
(415) 334-8658

Zhang Hong-Chao
Chicago, IL 60613
(312) 883-1016

Please note: The *Pa Kua Chang Journal* does not validate the authenticity or qualifications of the instructors listed in the Directory. Any instructor who requests a listing will appear on the list. We leave it to the reader to validate the instructor's authenticity on his/her own terms. We print this list so that readers who are looking for an instructor have a starting place.