

Part 1 of 4

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YIQUAN

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MODULE 1

1. 1

CHENGBAO ZHUANG EXPANDING - EMBRACING POST

Chengbao Zhuang is one of the most important postures in the Yangsheng Zhuang (Nourishing Life Post) postures. Zhuang means standing like a wooden post planted in the ground. Yangsheng Zhuang postures are basic post standing exercises with feet shoulderwidth apart.



Figure 1.1.1

While practicing Yangsheng Zhuang, you should imagine some beautiful nature scenes that you may have experienced, such as standing on top of a mountain (feeling the wind), wading slowly in a flowing river or shallow sea (feeling the resistance of the water), or walking in a beautiful forest or grassland. Gradually you develop a feeling of being naturally relaxed and very comfortable as if you were really standing in those beautiful natural surroundings (you are feeling not like practicing, but rather like resting and enjoying it!). At first, your muscles will not be able to relax for long periods while holding these static postures.

You need your imagination to help you achieve the state of relaxation and also to learn how to control your mental activities. Step by step, you will learn how to use your mental activities to control your strength. Gradually you learn to adjust and harmonize the aspects of tension and

relaxation in your mind and muscles. The tension-relaxation of mind is most important.

In later Fa Li practice (issuing explosive force), you can control your muscles, rapidly tensing and relaxing them almost at the same time. Any muscular activity is controlled by the neural system and the neural system is affected by mental activity. That's why mental training is most important.

The requirements of Chengbao Zhuang are as follows:

1. Start with both feet shoulder-width apart. The centers of the soles of your feet are “hollow” (it is so naturally, so you don't have to do anything special). Your toes feel as if they are slightly grasping the ground (this will be described later, so don't be concerned about it too much now). Your whole body is standing erect, not inclining forward or backward. Your body feels comfortable and is naturally expanded. Your head is as if suspended and lifted by a wire connected to the top of the head. Your head, at the



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same time, is as if it was slightly supporting something and (but not supporting really, not using force). Your knees are slightly bent and as if they were being slightly lifted upwards. Your backbone is naturally straightened. Your shoulders must not be lifted. Your buttocks feel as if they are sitting on the edge of a table. Your back, waist, and backs of legs all feel as if they are slightly pressing against a tree or wall behind you.



Figure 1.1.2

2. Slowly raise your hands in front of your chest. You should imagine as if there were small cotton balls between your fingers. The distance between opposite fingers should be about 2-3 fist widths. Both hands are about 1 foot apart from your chest. Imagine holding a paper ball or balloon between your hands, arms, and chest. The balloon touches lightly against your arms, chest, belly, hands and fingers. Feel its roundness. Imagine that if you use force while embracing the balloon, it will become flattened. But if you loose feeling of keeping it, it will escape. Keep testing the feeling of keeping the balloon with your arms, chest, and belly. Please note that you should only use the mind to imagine everything that was described above and you must not use force. It's the same with the visualizations described below.

3. Relax your shoulders and open your armpits a little (as if you were holding small ball balls below them). Imagine that wooden boards support your elbows and hands or that you are standing in water, waist high and the balloon is floating on the water and supports your elbows and hands. You could also imagine wooden boards floating on the water and supporting your hands. You might ask yourself, what do these floating boards feel like? Do they bob up and down? Do they drift slightly? Relax your arms as much as possible. Do not use clumsy force (i.e. unnecessary force). Just use the amount of strength needed to keep your arms lifted in front of you.

4. Part your lips a little, smiling slightly ("as if smiling, but not smiling"). Relax your face and neck muscles. Breathe naturally, evenly, and delicately. Eyes gaze in front of you and slightly upward (as if gazing, but not gazing). Don't tilt your head forward or backward. Don't face the sun or strong wind. Imagine looking beyond a mist where objects seem indistinct.

Be calm and listen attentively as if you were able to hear the very indistinct sound of raindrops falling on the ground or on tree branches. You should try to accomplish all the



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above requirements, but in a gradual and natural way without undue effort.

5. You can keep your eyes open or closed, depending on what feels better for you. To enable the beginner to better understand the use of visualization during standing post, I'll give some examples:

a) Imagine that your body is standing in a sea or in a lake and you are a giant tall as a mountain. How do you think you would feel?. The water is billowing and pushing your body from the front. Carefully feel the pressure of the water. What would you feel if the water were flowing through your body, arms and fingers? Imagine that your toes are grasping the ground so that the water doesn't carry you away. At the same time feel the water pressing against your back, waist, and the back of your arms and legs due to your body slightly moving backward. Then try feeling water pushing you from behind. It pushes your body slightly forward so that your chest, belly, and arms also feel the resistance of water against your body's movement. Imagine both situations happening again and again, slowly, naturally, calmly and comfortably. You can also imagine moving your body intentionally slightly forward and backward to feel the resistance of the water. Or you can imagine walking in the water, first moving forward slowly, then after a while, going backward slowly. Again, in general, you want to feel the resistance of the water while imagining your body's forward and backward movements. Feel this resistance on your whole body and in particular your shoulders, arms, hands, fingers, chest, waist and legs. Please note that it is about using the mind and not force.

b) Imagine that you are on board of a ship. The ship is sailing on the ocean, the board moving up and down. Sun gently warms up your body. A gentle breeze is blowing. You feel very comfortable.

c) You stand on the top of a big mountain and imagine yourself as a giant admiring the other beautiful high mountains, streams, rivers and lakes. You feel pleased, bright, and serene with no concerns.

d) Imagine that you are standing in a beautiful paradise garden with green trees and colorful blossom. Water is flowing and there are high mountains in the distance. Listen to the birds singing and smell the fragrance of flowers. The air is very crisp. The sun is rising and half of the sky is red. In such beautiful surroundings you feel very comfortable. Above are only some examples of mental activity in Yiquan Yangsheng Zhuang. There are also many others you could use. Remember, you should do them naturally without excessive effort. Learn step by step, one thing at a time. Carefully examine your experiences again and again. Trying to achieve too much in too short time will not bring desired results.



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1. 2

TUO BAO ZHUANG **LIFTING-EMBRACING POST**

Tuo Bao Zhuang is also an important posture in Yangsheng Zhuang. The students learning directly from Master Yao in Beijing practice Chengbao Zhuang for at least 40 minutes once or more everyday. Tuo Bao Zhuang is always done whenever they feel muscular tension in their arms. As you will gather from the following section, they just lower their arms to change to Tuo Bao Zhuang. When their arms feel comfortable again, they return to Chengbao Zhuang by raising their arms.



Figure 1.2.1

Basic requirements of Tuo Bao Zhuang are the same as of Chengbao Zhuang. While in Chengbao Zhuang your arms are at shoulder level, in Tuo Bao Zhuang you keep them at both sides of your belly about 1 foot in front of you. The distance between your hands is about 3 fists widths.

Imagine that there are 2 small balloons below your armpits, lightly supporting your upper arms. Your elbows have the intention of pushing outwards like the feeling of a round inflated balloon.

Elbows, forearms, and wrists are resting on imaginary wooden boards floating on the surface of water, or as if resting on a table. Direct your palms upwards and toward your body. Curve your fingers slightly. Imagine embracing a balloon between your arms, chest, and belly just like in Chengbao Zhuang except that your arms and hands are lower. The balloon is supported gently with your hands, the section of your

palms closest to the wrists, and the middle section of your arms. Feel the balloon as if it was there and at the same time as if it wasn't. Don't use force. Imagine holding the balloon so that it doesn't fly away if the wind suddenly blows.

You can use the same mental visualizations as in Chengbao Zhuang. Tuo Bao Zhuang can be used as a supplemental exercise to Chengbao Zhuang. You can use it to lower the intensity of training when you feel pain in your arms, shoulders or back while doing Chengbao Zhuang. It is also suitable for beginners or people weak or with poor health.

When you get tired of doing Chengbao Zhuang or are feeling uncomfortable, you can change to doing Tuo Bao Zhuang. A beginner should practice these two exercises twice a day, 10-15 minutes each time is acceptable. You can practice longer according to your condition. You should feel comfortable and graduallimprovement will come with time.



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1.3

PING BU KAI HE SHI LI

EVEN STEP OPENING-CLOSING TESTING FORCE

After practicing Yangsheng Zhuang for some time you, when you already have some basic knowledge and experience, you can proceed to practicing basic Shi Li (testing strength) in an even step position (feet shoulder width apart). Why should we practice Shi Li? What result does Shi Li practice bring? Yangsheng Zhuang is the most basic form of Yiquan practice. It teaches how to use mental activity, the visualizations. Although Yangsheng Zhuang appears to be a non-movement exercise, it is actually full of internal movement and activity of body, muscles, and the neural system. This is a unique practice of seeking movement in tranquility and seeking slight movement in non-movement. This concept of slight movement will be expanded in Shi Li and Mo Ca Bu (friction steps). "Movement in non-movement is the endless and unceasing movement". This means that from Zhan Zhuang, you can achieve mental movement and develop feeling of force in non-movement. Next, through Shi Li and Mo Ca Bu, you check this feeling in slow movement. Gradually, your brain, muscles, and neural system will become familiar with the different types of switching from non-movement to movement and your capability to quickly switch will improve. Finally, through Fa Li you will learn to switch very quickly. During this refinement of strength, you also learn to eliminate any unnecessary strength. Your force can be then issued in explosive way, with power, speed and efficiency. Therefore, movement in non-movement indicates a potential switch.

Every non-movement posture, whatever it is and whenever you want, can be switched to an effective movement. We cannot only stand and not move. We should transfer all the feelings developed in Zhan Zhuang (like the feeling of resisting the pressure from water or air or the feeling of wind blowing against you) to moving practice. The aim of Shi Li is strengthening the feelings developed through Zhan Zhuang through slow movement practice. In other words, while physically moving your body and limbs in any direction, you still try to have a very strong feeling of resistance, which you developed using the method of feeling subtle movements in Zhan Zhuang. You can also say that Shi Li is a method of checking the feeling of resistance developed in Zhan Zhuang. Shi Li is an extension of Zhan Zhuang in space. All the feelings of resistance developed in Zhan Zhuang should be fully expressed in Shi Li.

That's why we say that Shi Li is very important and indispensable part of Yiquan.

Begin with feet shoulder width apart, knees slightly bent, body standing erect, head as if suspended by a delicate wire, and buttocks as if sitting on a high chair. Your back, waist, backs of legs, and neck all feel as if they are pressing slightly against a tree or a wall behind you. Imagine that you are a giant standing in the deep water of a river. Both your arms are raised in front of you on chest level. Your palms face towards each other, distance between them being about 2-3 fist widths apart. Your fingers are straight, but with just a slight curve and tend to point forward.

Imagine that there are 10 delicate springs between your fingers and a tree on the riverside.



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There are also springs between the corresponding fingers of both hands, between both palms, wrists, elbows, arms, and legs. Begin to separate your hands very slowly. Your wrists and elbows remain pointing outward and because of the springs between your fingers and tree, your fingers keep pointing forward. You must pull the springs between your fingers, palms, wrists, elbows, arms and legs slowly. You also slowly pull the springs between your fingers and the tree far in front of you. When both palms are about 50 cm (about 1.5 feet) apart, imagine that the springs changed into almost straight wires. They would break if you pulled them any further. You should experience 3 directions of forces at this time: opening to the sides, pulling back, and lifting upwards. At the same time your body is slightly sitting down, it shifts backward and you feel as if it was slightly pressing a wall or tree behind you. You can also feel that the springs between your legs are slowly being stretched. Here too, there are 3 directions of forces: opening outward, pulling back, and your head slightly lifting upward.



Figure 1.3.1



Figure 1.3.2



Figure 1.3.3

Above was the procedure for opening, below follows that for closing. In closing, the section of palm closest to the wrist should lead the movement. Slowly press the springs between your arms, elbows, wrists, palms, and fingers. Here too, there are 3 directions of forces: closing inward, pressing down and fingers pointing forward. Your body is now moving forward to feel the resistance of the water. Imagine pressing the springs between your legs and shift forward slightly so that the front part of the soles of your feet is pressing slightly into the ground. This way there are 3 directional forces in your legs: closing together, forward and downward. While doing Kai He Shi Li, you should not only pay attention to the 3 directions of forces in the arms, but also to feeling the resistance of the water with your body and the 3 directions of forces in your legs. Start all movements at the same time and finish them together.

Shi Li must be done slowly and carefully experienced. Use your mind and don't force



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things. It's useless to try to learn too quickly. Various kinds of imagination can be used when practicing Ping Bu Kai He Shi Li. For instance, besides the above example of standing in deep water, you might imagine you were standing in a heap of mud and moving against the resistance of the mud. In all cases, imagine that there is nothing you could not move through.

1. 4

PING BU PING TUI SHI LI EVEN STEP EVEN LEVEL PUSHING TESTING FORCE



Figure 1.4.1



Figure 1.4.2



Figure 1.4.3

The position is like in Ping Bu Kai He Shi Li. Raise your hands in front of you to the chest level. The distance between both hands is 2-3 fists widths. Your palms are facing downward with fingers pointing forward and slightly curved. Imagine that you are standing in water.

Your palms, arms, and elbows rest and relax, slightly pressing down on a large board floating on the surface of water. Imagine that there are springs between your fingers and a tree on the riverside. You feel the resistance of the springs when you slowly pull them backward. Your elbows part outward as you pull the board towards your chest. Trust that you can pull the large board without using force and that it ends up in front of your chest once your hands have finished moving. There should be a slight feeling as if you were lifting the board, since your hands are pulling back and a little upwards. There are 3 directions of forces: pulling back, parting outward and lifting up. Use your mind and don't force your movements. Imagine yourself slightly pressing your body backward and feeling the resistance of the water. At the same time part slightly your legs as if to stretch the springs between them. Toes lightly grasp the ground. Your body sits down a little



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while at the same time your head is as if moving slightly upward. Pull your hands back until they are about 1 foot apart from your chest.

Please note that all movements should begin at the same time and end at the same time. This is a rule applicable to almost all Yiquan training. Here for example, most movements are quite short, except for the hands and arms, and they all must be synchronized. If you find it difficult, it could be helpful if you put some more effort into the correct practice of Chengbao Zhuang. This is a very important rule and understanding it will help you to learn how to “shock” your opponent with your whole body.

Now start to push slowly forward, pressing the springs between your fingers and the tree. Your palms and forearms press downwards slightly as they slowly push the floating board forward. Both arms close inward as they push forward. There are 3 directions of forces: forward, downward and closing. Your body moves forward slightly and feels the resistance of the water. There are also 3 directions of forces in your legs area: forward, closing (pressing the springs between them) and the front part of the sole of your front foot is pressing into the ground slightly. Use your mind and don't force your movements. Note that the movement of pressing down is almost not visible.

Mental activity in Ping Bu Ping Tui Shi Li can take many forms, and it is important that it conforms with the basic Yiquan principles mentioned before.

Practice the two kinds of Shi Li (Ping Bu Kai He and Ping Bu Ping Tui) after practicing Zhan Zhuang for 10 minutes each.

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MODULE 2

Yiquan yangsheng zhuang (nourishing life post) practice is the basic method in the first stage of learning Yiquan. It can be used as a health practice, helping to get rid of illnesses or to strengthen the body. There are no age or sex limits, and it doesn't matter if you are strong or weak. You can practice in any place and at any time.

Yiquan zhan zhuang can be divided into two groups: yangsheng zhuang and jiji zhuang (combat post). During the first stage of training, yangsheng zhuang focuses on improving body functions and mental activity. It allows the central nervous system to rest and adjust, and also to strengthen blood circulation and improve cellular metabolism. The word 'yi' (mind, mental activity, or mental visualization) is stressed in zhan zhuang practice. It is not only a mental exercise, but also an exercise of the nervous system, limbs and muscles. It has positive effects on neural functions, breathing, strengthening blood movement and cellular metabolism. It particularly helps in cases of illnesses of the nervous, circulatory, digestive, and muscle systems as well as other kinds of diseases. Especially good results are obtained with some acute illnesses that have turned into chronic ones. If you properly learn the method of yangsheng zhuang, you will achieve numerous benefits with no side effects. The practice of yangsheng zhuang is like the foundation of a high building. Each beginner must go through this path, gradually from easy to difficult, from basic to advanced. As my father Yao Zongxun used to say: "If you want to know the essence of martial art, you must start by practicing zhan zhuang."

2. 1

PINGBU TICHA ZHUANG EVEN STEP LIFTING-INSERTING POST

Ticha zhuang is one of the yangsheng zhuang postures. Ticha zhuang and tuituo zhuang, which are both described in this module, are not as important as the two described in Module 1.

Begin with both feet shoulder-width apart. The centers of the soles of your feet are "hollow." Imagine that your toes are slightly grasping the ground. Your whole body is standing naturally and comfortably erect with a feeling of expansion and neither leaning forward or backward. Your head feels as if a wire connected to its top was lifting it. It's like supporting or balancing something with your head and yet not supporting it at the same time.

Your knees are slightly bent, and as if slightly being lifted upward. Your backbone is naturally straightened, shoulders relaxed and not raised. Shift your hips backward as if you were sitting with your buttocks on the edge of a high chair. Imagine that your back, back of neck, waist, and backs of legs are slightly pressing against a tree or wall behind you.

Both hands hang down, about 15 cm (6 inches) away from your body. Your palms face toward each other. Imagine inserting your fingers into soft sand on a beach. Use mind and not force. At the same time, your elbows, slightly bent, are being lifted slowly,



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slightly sideways and backward.



Figure 2.1.1



Figure 2.1.2

Your armpits are held naturally and slightly open. Imagine that there are two balloons floating on water nestled between your arms and body on both sides. Use mind and not force. Relax your whole body, especially your chest and belly. On your face there should be a slight smiling expression ("as if smiling, but not smiling"), your lips slightly open. Your face and neck should be comfortably relaxed. Breathing is natural, even and delicate. Eyes look forward and slightly upward. Don't tilt your head either forward or backward. The area in front of you that you are looking at, appears somewhat indistinct as if being viewed through a mist, you can hardly see it. You should be calm and listen attentively as if you were able to hear the very indistinct sound of raindrops falling on the ground or branches of trees. Imagine that your body is standing in a shallow sea or in a river and you are a giant standing tall as a mountain. The water billows and your body below your chest is submerged under water. Imagine inserting your fingers gently into the sand. The water begins to push your body from the front. Carefully examine the feeling of the resistance of the water. You have the intention of your toes grasping the ground. Your back, waist, and back of legs feel resistance of water from behind. Carefully experience the 3 directions of forces being generated by the slight motions of your: legs parting, head lifting upward and legs moving backward. The back of your arms can feel the resistance of water as your arms move slightly backward. Your fingers push the sand lightly aside as your arms move and you can feel the resistance of the sand. At the same time, your arms are lifted slightly upward, backward, and separate outwards. Use the mind for all these slight movements and don't use force. When water is pushing you from behind, you feel the resistance of water in front of you against your forward movement. Imagine that at the same time, some springs between your legs are being



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slightly compressed, legs move forward, and the front part of the soles of your feet press downward. Your arms can feel the resistance of water and you can also feel your fingers pushing sand inwards as they move forward. Note that your arms are closing slightly and your fingers maintain the feeling of slightly inserting themselves into the sand. Carefully observe that during the forward movement, there are 3 directional forces: forward, closing and pressing downward. Carefully observe that all your body: the legs, buttocks, waist, back, hands, and fingers are moving in coordination and synchronized as a whole.

2. 2

PINGBU TUITUO ZHUANG EVEN STEP PUSHING-SUPPORTING POST

Tuituo Zhuang is a basic training method for forward moving fa li practice as you will see later.



Figure 2.2.1



Figure 2.2.2

The basic requirements of tuituo zhuang are the same as for ticha zhuang. Raise your hands slowly in front of you, slightly lower than your eyebrows, and about 30 cm (1 foot) from your chest. Keep the distance between your hands about 2-3 fist widths with your palms slightly hollowed and directed forward. Your fingers are slightly curved and naturally expanded. Imagine that your palms are half pushing forward and half supporting an imaginary object in an upward direction. It's as if both hands are half pushing and half lifting a big paper ball. The ball lightly rests on your palms and your fingers are lightly grasping it. If the wind blows, you do not want to let the ball fly away, but you also do not want to squeeze it too much so as to avoid crushing it.

Imagine that your arms and elbows are as if supported by a wooden shelf from below or resting on balls floating on the surface of water. Use your mind to relax your hands and



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shoulders. At the same time imagine that you are embracing a paper ball or balloon inside your arms, with the wrists and backs of your hands. Don't use force. Imagine that you are standing in a river or a shallow sea. The water is slowly pushing you from the front and you can feel the resistance of water. Your toes feel as if they are slightly grasping the ground. Carefully observe the resistance of the water behind your back, waist, buttocks, and legs as your body moves backward. At the same time imagine that springs between your fingers, wrists, arms, and elbows are being stretched slightly. Your arms and elbows both move backward and slightly downward (be sure to use only the mind and almost not moving). Imagine that springs between your legs and feet are also being stretched slightly apart. Your buttocks should sit down slightly and shift backward with toes slightly grasping the ground. Use only the mind.

Next, when you feel the water pushing you from behind, the water in front of you creates some resistance. Your legs begin closing and moving forward slightly with the front part of the soles of your feet pressing the ground lightly. Use only the mind. Springs between your arms, wrists, and fingers are being compressed as your arms move forward and slightly upward. Your forehead moves forward and head lifts slightly upward. Use only the mind with these subtle movements.

2.3

PINGBU BOSHUI SHI LI

EVEN STEP "STIRRING WATER" TESTING STRENGTH

My father, Yao Zongxun, said: "The quality of zhan zhuang practice directly affects the quality of shi li practice, and the quality of shi li practice directly affects the quality of zhan zhuang practice. They complement and influence each other." Shi li is one of the most important parts of yiquan training. Wang Xiangzhai said: "You can gain knowledge of strength (li) from testing it (shi li). From this knowledge comes knowing how to use it."

Stand like in pingbu kaihe shili. Evenly distribute your weight on both feet. Position your hands on both sides of your thighs, 4-5 fist widths away. Your palms are directed forward on the level of about the height of the upper part of your thighs. Your fingers are slightly curved and expanded naturally.

Imagine standing in water up to your chest level. Begin to move your arms forward. As your arms stir the water forward, the base of your palms should lead the movement. Carefully observe when slowly pushing the water forward with your arms, palms, and fingers that you can feel the resistance of the water.

Your arms are pushing forward, lifting upwards and slowly closing toward each other. At the same time your body is moving forward and feeling the resistance of water. Your legs move forward and close slightly with the front part of the soles of your feet slightly pressing into the ground. Continue moving until both your hands are at the same height between your chest and belly. 60% of your weight is on the front part of the soles of your feet. The distance between your hands is about 2-3 fists widths, with both palms directed obliquely upward and fingers pointing forward.



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Figure 2.3.1



Figure 2.3.2



Figure 2.3.3

Now, change the direction of movement and lead it with your wrists. Your elbows and arms should slowly part outward, backward, and downward as you stir the water backwards. Carefully observe the water resistance on your arms, wrists, and back of your hands. You feel your body moving slightly backward and can feel the resistance of the water. At the same time, your legs are pressing backward and open slightly. Your toes lightly grasp the ground and your head is slightly lifted upward. The movement is complete when your hands reach the same position they started from. Doing this movement slowly is helpful in testing your strength conscientiously.

2. 4.

DINGBABU KAIHE SHI LI

T-8 (T-V) STEP OPENING-CLOSING TESTING STRENGTH

Although similar in movement to pingbu kaihe shili, dingbabu kaihe shili uses a different stance. This Shi Li practice should be done after hunyuan zhuang which is described in module 3, but you can try it now if you like.

Dingbabu is a stance described by a combination of the Chinese characters that look like the letter 'T' (ding) and the number 'eight' (ba), which looks like the figure \wedge .

See the foot position in the photo for a better idea of how it should look. Begin by standing with both heels touching together. Make the angle between your feet about 45 degrees so that they look like they form the figure \wedge when viewed from the front. Move your left foot one-foot length in the direction it is pointing and then move the same foot to the left one foot width. You are now in the dingbabu position as seen in the photo.

The heel of your left leg is slightly lifted and doesn't touch the ground. You should be able to lift the front foot up easily.

The step cannot be too big or too small. When it is too big, your steps are not agile. When it is too small, it affects body's balance and agility. Begin with distribution of weight 50/50 on both legs



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Figure 2.4.1



Figure 2.4.2



Figure 2.4.3

Slowly raise your hands in front of your chest with palms facing each other. The distance between your palms is 2-3 fists widths. Your fingers are slightly curved and point forward. When your left leg is in front, your left hand is also in front and on level with your shoulders. Note that the base of your palm should never go forward further than the toes of your front foot. Your right hand is half a palm-length behind and half a palm-width lower than your left hand.

Imagine that you are a giant standing in a deep river. There are springs between your fingers and a tree on the riverside. Slightly hook your wrists inwardly. There are also many springs between your fingers, palms, wrists, elbows, arms and legs. Begin to separate your arms. As your arms separate, your wrists lead the way and your elbows point outward. Slowly stretch the springs and carefully observe your arms moving outward, backward and rising upward. Your body is slightly pressing backward and downward. Carefully feel the water or a tree pressing against you from behind on your back, waist, buttocks, thighs and legs. Feel the springs between your two legs slowly stretching apart both to the front and back as well as from side to side. The front part of the left sole grasps the ground. When your hands are 40-50 cm (16-20 inches) apart, imagine that the springs between your arms and fingers are stretched straight and cannot stretch any further. Your weight is now distributed 70% on the rear leg and 30% on the front leg.

Now you begin the closing movement with the base of your palms leading. Slowly compress the springs between your fingers, palms, wrists, elbows, and arms. Your fingers point forward and arms press downward slightly. At the same time feel the resistance of the water in front of you with your body. Slowly compress the springs between your legs as they move forward with the front part of the left sole pressing down on the ground slightly. Continue moving until your palms are 2-3 fist-widths apart and your weight is distributed 50/50 or 60/40 on the front and rear legs.

While doing dingbabu kaihe shi li, you must use only the mind. Pay attention that your fingers have intention of pointing forward at all times. When closing, you are slowly



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compressing the springs between your fingers and the tree far in front of you. These 3 directions of forces form a triangle. When opening, you are slowly pulling the springs, so that these 3 directions of forces also form a triangle. Repeat these movements without interrupting your strength (li) and intention (yi).

Do the same as described above for the right side where you place your right foot in front instead of the left.

Described above two kinds of shi li you can practice for 10 minutes after practicing zhan zhuang. If you have time, you can practice them longer. Remember that you should practice them slowly, in a relaxed manner, carefully examining the feeling in your arms, legs and whole body. Pay attention to whether or not you've changed your posture in an improper way when moving. If you have, carefully and naturally realign yourself. If you still feel something is not right, you should improve it through zhan zhuang practice.

The difference between yangsheng zhuang (nourishing life post) and jiji zhuang (combat post) can first be noticed in the type of step used. As you have seen, yangsheng zhuang postures are all in "even step" (pingbu), while jiji zhuang are in T-V (or T-8) step (dingbabu). For a detailed explanation of dingbabu, see dingbabu kaihe shili in Module 2. Another difference is apparent in their mental visualizations. While holding the postures of yangsheng zhuang, we imagine standing in beautiful surroundings, watching the forest, feeling the sunshine and gentle wind, floating on the water and relaxing. This gradually develops the feeling of comfort, relaxation and being in a pleasant mood. However, for jiji zhuang, at first you should extend the scope of your mental activities. Imagine being a giant with the courage and the attitude of being so great in size that your body has even extended beyond the atmosphere. In fact, you feel your body encompassing the universe. This is a concept from Taoism and describes the lofty sensation that you and all the world are now merged into one. It is an excellent method to help develop your psyche to overwhelm your opponent and stimulate your potential capacity to make "explosive force" possible. With this feeling, even if you are a thin and weak-looking person like masters Wang Xiangzhai and Yao Zongxun were, you can face a strong and larger opponent without fear. For example, when practicing jiji zhuang, you can imagine you have the ability to move a skyscraper standing before you or to slightly rip it open without difficulty. Note that this is just to develop the feeling; be sure to practice in a natural relaxed manner. The feelings felt in jiji zhuang are much more intense than those in yangsheng zhuang. Your mental activity should now be concentrated on the feeling of the hunyuan li (primordial unity force) of combat. This hunyuan li is experienced through the use of contradictive forces. This means vectors of force in different directions existing at the same time. For example, when you try to pry open the skyscraper, you feel there is a strong force in the opposite direction trying to hold it together and when you try to lift it, something tries to hold it down. It would be best to begin the practice of hunyuan zhuang, which is a jiji zhuang posture, after you have already had some foundation in the practice of yangsheng zhuang. If you start practicing hunyuan zhuang too early in your training, it can cause excess mental tension, tension in your breathing, muscle pains, and excess tension in the body. If you want to achieve something too quickly, before you are ready, you will be unable to achieve it, no matter what you do. Keep this in mind.



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MODULE 3

3.1.

PINGBU FU'AN ZHUANG

EVEN STEP RESTING-PRESSING POST

Fu'an zhuang is also a yangsheng zhuang posture. You don't need to practice it all the time, do it once in a while until you get to understand the feelings and visualizations in it. Start with both feet shoulder width apart. The centers of the soles of your feet feel hollow. Your toes feel as if they are slightly grasping the ground. Your entire body is standing erect, not inclining forward or backward. It feels comfortable and naturally expanded. Your head feels as if it was being lifted by a wire connected to its top. At the same time, your head feels as if it was supporting something and yet not using force. Your knees are slightly bent and feel as if they are being slightly lifted upward. Your backbone is naturally straightened and your shoulders must not be raised. Your buttocks feel as if they were sitting on the edge of a table. Your back, waist, and backs of legs all feel as if they are slightly pressing against a tree or wall behind you. Slowly place your hands 30 cm (1 foot) in front of you on level between your chest and belly. Your palms are turned downward, fingers slightly curved and pointing forward.



Figure 3.1.1



Figure 3.1.2

The distance between your hands is about three fists-widths. It is as if you are propping up your body by pressing your palms down on a table. Imagine that you are standing in a



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river and the water is up to your chest. Both of your hands rest on a board floating on the surface of the river with your fingers, palms, and forearms lightly pressing down on it. Next, imagine that there are springs between your fingers and a tree far away on the riverside, and there are also many springs between both your arms. Imagine that when your body moves slightly backward and downward due to the moving current, you can feel the water resistance against your back, waist, buttocks and legs. Slightly pull the springs between your fingers and the tree, stretching them a little. Also, begin pulling the floating board toward you slightly, but after the initial pull, stop at once. Now in reverse, imagine that your body is moving forward. Feel the water resistance against your chest, belly and legs. Begin compressing the springs between your fingers and the tree while at the same time, move the floating board forward slightly. Note that all movements are extremely slight in order to practice mo jin (seeking force). Feel for this force as if it was faint and tenuous. You should only use the mind and not employ any clumsy force. You can repeat this mental activity many times as often as you wish. When you feel tired or weary, you should stop and take a rest from these visualizations. You can then use some of the mental imagery from yangsheng zhuang and after you feel relaxed, you can start all over again.

3. 2.

HUNYUAN ZHUANG (QIAN HOU MO JIN) **PRIMORDIAL UNITY POST (SEEKING FORCE FORWARD-BACKWARD)**



Figure 3.2.1



Figure 3.2.2

Hunyuan zhuang is the most important exercise in yiquan combat training and also the



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main posture of jiji zhuang. Nearly all the varieties of jin (force) are obtained from it. Begin by stepping into dingbabu. First, both your heels touch together and you stand at attention (the foot position looks like 'V') with the angle between your feet about 45 degrees. Step out with your left foot the length of the foot in the direction your left toes are pointing. Then move your left foot to its left the width of your foot. Your current foot position is dingbabu. The heel of your left foot should be slightly lifted off the ground. You should be able to lift up this front foot easily. Your step cannot be too long or too short. If it is too long, your stepping will not be agile enough to change quickly. If it is too short, your body's balance and agility get affected. You can stand with your weight distributed 30% on the front (left) foot and 70% on the rear (right) foot. This position enables you to quickly move forward or backward, so it is used often in actual combat. After assuming this position, adjust the following parts of the body with your mind. Your left knee should be slightly bent and "pointing" forward. At the same time you feel as if your left knee is being lifted up by a rope. The toes of your left foot feel as if they are grasping the ground. Imagine that there is a spring between your front and rear knees. The force in your rear knee is aimed backward. You also feel as if your rear knee was being lifted upward. The outer areas of both thighs feel as if they were trying to wrap inwardly. At the same time your knees and shins feel as if they are stretching to the sides. Now you can move on to adjusting the upper parts of your body. Begin by slowly raising your arms. The front (left) hand stops moving when it is at the same height as your mouth. The rear (right) hand stops moving when it is at the same height as your shoulders. Your palms are directed toward your body. The left palm is positioned above the left foot, while the right palm is opposite the right breast. The angle of your elbow joints should not be smaller than 90 degrees. The left hand is about half a palm-width higher than the right hand. The distance between the fingers of both hands is about 2-3 fists-widths. Your fingers are outstretched as if there were cotton balls between them. The thumbs are also outstretched, bent and with the fingertips feeling as if they are being held back. The centers of your palms feel as if you were holding something and not letting it go off. There is a feeling of pulling something into the centers of your palms, yet at the same time your fingers feel as if they were slightly bending outward in the opposite direction. They feel as if they were wrapped up and although you want to bend them outward, you cannot. At the same time, there is a pulling in and pushing out within your palm. Your left palm cannot move to the right side of your body and your right palm cannot move to the left side of your body (that is to say, to either side of the central line determined by where your nose is pointing). Your head feels as if it was suspended from above and as if supporting, but not supporting (not using force) an object. Your neck is straight and turned slightly to the left without using force. Look straight ahead. The "tiger mouth" of the left hand (area between the thumb and index finger) is turned upward. The three points: your head, front hand and front foot are in one line. If the left foot is in front, your head is turned to the left; if the right foot is in front, then your head is turned to the right. Your chin is slightly tucked in as if you were holding a small ball between your chin and throat. Your shoulders should be relaxed and slightly curved, with some intention of comfortably expanding to the sides. Your backbone should be naturally straightened.



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There is a sensation of a wall or tree pressing against your neck, back, waist, buttocks and legs. You feel as if you are holding small balls under your armpits.

Your chest is slightly withdrawn and “empty” with your back slightly curved. Your upper and lower teeth are lightly clenched together without any force. Breathe naturally and relax your body. Imagine that you are a giant who is embracing a gigantic tree. The tree is merged into one with the insides of your arms, wrists, fingers, chest, belly and legs. Your back, waist, outsides of your legs and arms feel as if they were being embraced by the outer layers of the tree. You are one with the tree. Imagine that there is a spring being stretched between your head and front foot. There is also a spring between both wrists and springs between the fingers of both hands. Next, a spring is being stretched between your front knee and back (right) hip. The front (left) hip is as if being slightly lifted. Now, start feeling for force in the backward direction (backward mo jin). You feel as if you were slightly sitting down and pressing backward with your rear leg. Both legs part slightly and the toes of your front leg slightly grasp the ground while its knee is being slightly lifted. The spring between your front leg and your head is being stretched both downward and upward in opposite directions. Be aware of the three directions of forces in your legs: backward, opening and upward. While you embrace the tree, the insides of your arms, fingers and wrists feel three directions of forces: pulling backward, opening and lifting upward. Because your right leg is slightly pressing backward and sitting down, this causes the tree to move slightly backward with you. You should feel that there is a force of resistance while moving the tree (both forward and backward, in opening-closing, and both upward and downward). Just does a slight movement then stop. Next, your right leg shifts forward slightly and presses down. The toes of your front foot press against the ground. In this way, there are three directions of forces between your legs: forward, closing and downward. Within your arms, there are also three directional forces: forward, closing and downward. You can feel the resistance of the tree on your body when trying to move forward. At the same time the spring between your front foot and head is being compressed. As for the mental visualizations being described here, remember you should only use your mind during practice. Don't use force.

3. 3.

HUNYUAN ZHUANG (KAIHE MO JIN)

PRIMORDIAL UNITY POST (SEEKING FORCE IN OPENING-CLOSING)

After you have some basis in forward-backward seeking force, you can start kaihe mo jin (seeking force in opening-closing). The position is the same as before. Imagine that you are one with a tree. You begin to split it with your "opening" movement and a small crack appears. The insides of your fingers, palms, wrists, and elbows all take part in this opening movement. Slightly sit down on your rear leg and move your hips slightly back. The toes of your front leg are as if they were slightly grasping the ground and the front knee feels as if it was being lifted. You should experience three directions of forces in your legs: opening, backward and lifting. There is also a slight feeling of opening in your chest and belly area. Imagine that there is a spring being stretched between your head and



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front foot. There is also an intention of moving your head backward and upward. You experience feeling of three directions of forces in your body: opening (left-right direction), pulling back (forward-backward direction), and lifting (upward-downward direction). Just as the tree begins to split, stop the movement. Now imagine squeezing the tree from both sides so that it goes back to its previous appearance without any cracks. You are pressing with the insides of your fingers, palms, wrists, arms and elbows. You should feel that there is closing (pressing toward the inside), pushing forward and pressing down. There is also some pressing between the insides of both legs. Your rear foot is pushing forward, while your front foot slightly presses down. In the front knee there is intention of pointing forward. You should feel in your legs three directions of forces: closing, pushing forward and pressing down. There is also a slight closing feeling in your chest and belly area. The spring between your head and front foot is being compressed. In your entire body, there is closing (left-right direction), pushing forward (forward-backward direction), and pressing down (upward-downward direction). In practicing kaihe mo jin, the kaihe (opening-closing) is stressed.



Figure 3.3.1



Figure 3.3.2

In yiquan zhan zhuang practice, the most important thing is mastering the use of mind. My father Yao Zongxun repeated many times that yiquan is the spirit of the art of the fist. Mind is the commander of strength. All the types of yiquan zhan zhuang are about unifying the mind, unifying one's movements, unifying strength, and unifying body and heart. It's a training method in which all parts of the body are exercised at the same time.



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This is the great law of the science of combat. It's not some "18 combat techniques" or "36 techniques" that some mention elsewhere.

Thus, for dingbabu hunyuan zhuang, the forward-backward and opening-closing mo jin variants are described above. Upward-downward mo jin, composite mo jin (feeling forces in different directions alternately in one exercise) and six-sided strength mo jin (feeling forces in 6 directions simultaneously) will gradually and systematically be described.

3. 4.

DINGBABU PINGTUI SHILI

T-V STEP LEVEN PUSHING TESTING FORCE



Figure 3.4.1



Figure 3.4.2



Figure 3.4.3



Figure 3.4.4



Figure 3.4.5



Figure 3.4.6



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Place your heels together with the angle between the toes of both feet about 45 degrees. Step out with your left foot in the direction in which the toes of this foot are pointing. Next move the same foot sideways to the left about the width of your foot. The heel of your left foot should be slightly lifted. This position is what was traditionally called dingbabu. Your weight is distributed evenly between both legs. After assuming this position, lift both hands to chest level. The distance between your hands should be about 2-3 fists-widths. The insides of your palms are directed downward. Your fingers are slightly curved and point forward. Adjust the following parts of your body. The knee of the front leg should be slightly bent and pointing forward. It is as if there was a wooden stick supporting your knee. Your toes are as if grasping the ground. At the same time, there is the intention of your knee pointing backward and a slight lifting in your rear (right side) hip. It is as if there were the contrary forces of a spring between your legs. The outside of your legs feel as if they are "wrapping" inwardly. At the same time, both knees are being stretched to the sides. Imagine that you are standing in water up to your chest. Imagine springs stretched between the tips of your fingers and a wall or tree far in front of you. Both palms, forearms and elbows are resting on a board floating on the surface of the water. It is as if your arms can stay relaxed because they are being supported by the floating board or even merged together with the board. Imagine that you are pulling backward, and slowly stretching the springs between your fingers and a tree or wall in front of you. Feel the resistance of the springs. At the same time there is an opening movement between your elbows, your fingers, palms and forearms. In this pulling back movement, you experience three directions of forces: pulling back, opening and lifting up. Because you are pulling back and at the same time your elbows are moving to the sides, your palms turn a bit inwardly as your wrists move a little to the sides. The distance between both hands remains at two or three fists-widths. When your body is moving backward and sitting down, you feel the resistance of the water against your back, waist, buttocks and legs. At the same time, there is a parting between the back and front legs. The toes of your front leg are as if slightly grasping the ground. A spring between your front leg and your head is being stretched. Stop pulling back when your hands are about 1 foot apart from your chest. The imaginary board slightly touches your body. Now, the weight distribution is 70% on your rear leg and 30% on your front leg. Next, start pushing with your hands forward, compressing the springs with your fingers. Your palms and forearms are slightly pressing against the board. You are slowly pushing the board forward. There is closing (inward compression) between your arms. There are three directions of forces here: pushing forward, pressing down and closing. Your body is slightly moving forward; feel the resistance of the water against it. Your rear leg is pressing down as you shift forward. Your front foot is slightly being pressed down. You feel the compression between your front and rear leg. You experience three directions of forces in your legs. When the base of your front palm is above the toes of your front foot, stop your forward movement. Your front knee shouldn't bend too much when pushing forward. The distribution of your weight is 60% on your front leg and 40% on the rear leg (or 50/50). Practice slowly, use the mind, and not force. You can repeat the movement many times, all the while carefully examining the feeling of resistance on all parts of your



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body.

3.5.

PINGBU YAOFA SHILI

EVEN STEP SWAYING METHOD TESTING FORCE

Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and knees slightly bent. Your body is straight and erect with the top of your head as if suspended from above. Your buttocks feel as if



Figure 3.5.1



Figure 3.5.2



Figure 3.5.3



Figure 3.5.4



Figure 3.5.5



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you were sitting on a high bench. There is the intention of pressing against a wall or tree behind your legs, buttocks, waist, back and neck. Imagine that you are a giant, standing in deep water. Slowly move your hands to a position in front of you about one foot apart from your body and below your eyebrows. The distance between your hands is two or three fists widths. Your palms are directed forward and their centers are slightly concave. Your fingers are slightly curved and naturally outstretched. Your hands feel as if they are half pushing, half lifting an iron ball. There is the intention of embracing a big tree between your arms. You are unable to split it with an opening movement or budge it with a wrapping movement of your arms. There is a feeling as if there were springs between the fingers of both hands, wrists, forearms and elbows. You feel springs being stretched between your fingers and wrists and a tree far in front of you. Feel the springs being stretched between your head and both feet and the springs between your head and both wrists. There are also springs between both your legs. Use the mind, don't use physical force. After assuming the position above, imagine that the iron ball is slowly rolling toward you. Your legs sit down and press backward with your body pressing to the right side. You have the sensation of moving inside mud and earth or pressing against a tree or wall. At this time there is a feeling of stretching a spring between your head and left foot and feeling the stretching springs between both legs. Your hands are slightly pulling back. Feel stretching a spring between your head and left hand. There is a sensation of tearing springs between the fingers of both hands, wrists, elbows and arms. As your elbows separate apart, your arms move backward and downward. Your hands move slightly from the left to the right side. You oppose the ball slightly as it moves towards you and your body escapes it from the right side. The weight distribution is 70% on the right leg and 30% on the left leg. Now the ball starts to roll forward. Your right foot presses down. The springs between both legs are being compressed. Your right leg has a forward force. There are three directions of forces in your legs. In your arms, there are also three directions of forces: pushing the ball forward, upward, and closing between the fingers of both hands, wrists and forearms. While pushing the ball, your body has moved from right to left with the feeling of the resistance of water or mud. Continue until the center of your body has moved to the left and 70% of your weight is on the left leg and 30% on the right leg. After the pushing stops, return to the starting position. While practicing yaofa shi li, the movements must be slow. You must carefully examine all the kinds of contradictory forces. You can repeat it many times. Your shoulders should be relaxed. Only by practicing in a relaxed manner is it possible to achieve real results. Yaofa shi li serves mainly to train "body method." In combat you use your hands for protection and the body can move in many ways. Using the changes of "body method," you can attack your opponent with hands at any time, and your opponent cannot easily attack you. Yaofa shi li is a very important basic exercise of combat training. You should practice and try to understand it deeply.



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After practicing hunyuan zhuang for some time you can start practicing gougua zhuang. Although there are different names as hunyuan zhuang and jiji zhuang, actually they all belong to jiji zhuang. My late father Yao Zongxun used to say that the exercise is named hunyuan zhuang because it is designed for seeking hunyuan li, it is the first position of jiji zhuang positions. Hunyuan zhuang is basic combat preparatory position, the position in which you are preparing to issue force forward. You palms are turned towards your body, as if embracing something. There is intention of expanding and embracing at the same time. There is 30% of expanding and 70% of embracing. It's the stage of "accumulating force". Issuing force forward usually starts from position where your palms are turned towards your body, then you turn your palms downward, like in pingbao zhuang position, and then your forearms press outwards, "wrap" inside and move forwards and upwards to issuing force position, the chengtuo zhuang position. There are over 10 jiji zhuang positions, but they are all designed to seek, develop and strengthen the hunyuan li. There are various positions, because they have their own goals. They are not differentiated because of being beginning or advanced. In real combat body is moving upward, downward, forward, backward, to the right and to the left, and you lift you leg to kick in various ways, which cannot be separated from yiquan combat positions practice. They are designed to enable seeking force in different positions and at different angles, so in real combat you can fully use the hunyuan li achieved in zhan zhuang practice. Hunyuan zhuang is jiji zhuang. Those concepts cannot be separated.

MODULE 4

4.1.

GOUGUA ZHUANG (QIAN HOU MO JIN) HOOKING-PULLING POST (FORWARD-BACKWARD SEEKING FORCE)

Stand in dingbabu position like in hunyuan zhuang, the demands of mental intentions and contradictory forces in legs are the same as in hunyuan zhuang. Slowly raise both hands, insides of palms facing each other, distance between both hands about 2 or 3 fist-widths. Your thumb is slightly curved and pointing forwards. It is as if being slightly lifted at the point of bending. Index finger is slightly lifted and pointing forward. Third and fourth fingers are slightly curved and pointing forward. Little finger is pointing slightly downward, as if there was a spring between it and the ground. Thumb slightly outstretched, and insides of palms slightly "sucked in". There is slight hook at your wrists (the angle between lower part of your forearm and edge of palm), as if there was a ball there. Right foot in front, right hand also in front. Your right wrist and the base of palm is straight above middle of your right foot or above toes of your right foot. Your right hand shouldn't be stretched to much to the front. If it is, it is easy to lose balance, and front leg has no force. If it is too close to your body, the position is not "full", when the angle of your elbows (between forearm and upper arm) is acute, it's not favorable for issuing force. Both hands should be at about 70% of their full range and the angle at elbow joint should be over 90 degrees. Left hand should be half palm length behind right (front) hand. Front



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hand should be at your mouth level, and back hand at about shoulder level. Front hand half palm-width higher than back hand.



Figure 4.1.1



Figure 4.1.2

With insides of your forearms you are embracing a big tree, like in hunyuan zhuang. There is 30% of expanding and 70 % of embracing. (don't use force, just imagine). Both elbows are slightly pressing outwards. Imagine that there are big springs between your wrists and a tree far in front of you. Imagine keeping (pressing) a ball between your both palms or lifting a big pot. As if pressing but not pressing, as if lifting, but not lifting. Use mind only, don't use force. Imagine embracing a tree with insides of your forearms, and lifting something with your wrists, keeping a ball below your wrists. You should have feeling of being one with the tree (it is in front and back of you, above and below, on your right and left). After assuming the position, start feeling the force while trying moving backwards. When you embrace the tree and slightly move it backwards, there should be feeling of resistance (pressing on the tree) on your neck, back, buttocks, legs, feeling of contradictory forces between your head and front leg, between insides of your forearms. The demands are the same as in feeling force forward backward in hunyuan zhuang. The difference is that in gougua zhuang you imagine springs between your fingers and a tree far in front of you, which you are stretching while moving slightly backward (the springs between your little fingers and



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ground are being stretched backward and upward). You also feel resistance of the springs between your wrists and a tree far in front of you and resistance of springs between fingers of both hands (stretching them). There are springs between both wrists and forearms. Stretching of those springs must be coordinated with pressing of your body backwards. Generally, when you do feeling the force backward in gougua zhuang, there are the same three directions of forces like in feeling force backward in hunyuan zhuang (backward, opening, upward. Use mind only, don't use force. Don't make the form of movement visible. Seek the feeling of resisting force in a very subtle movement. When you do feeling force forwards, imagine pushing the tree back to original position. Feel the three directions of forces in your legs. Like in hunyuan zhuang, while pushing the tree forwards there are three directions of forces in your arms - forearms are pushing forward, closing and slightly pressing down. In gougua zhuang while moving forward you are pressing springs between tips of your fingers and a tree far in front of you. You are pressing springs between your fingers and hands, at the same time pointing forward and slightly pressing down. Legs and body are slightly moving forward, you just move a bit and stop. You can continuously do feeling force backward and forward.

My late father Yao Zongxun told me that while doing feeling force (mo jin), we should use mind, not force. It's enough when muscles of whole body tense only a little. You should seek force in relax. You seek mental feeling of resistance outside your body. It should be done between intention and no intention. You shouldn't strain mentally.

4.2.

GOUGUA ZHUANG (KAI HE MO JIN)

HOOING-PULLING POST (OPENING-CLOSING SEEKING FORCE)



Figure 4.2.1



Figure 4.2.2



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The legs, body and hands position doesn't change. You imagine being inside a big tree, but the difference from qian hou mo jin is that while starting opening movement of your hands you imagine that there appears a small split in the tree from the upper to the lower part of it. There is also opening between your legs. There is opening, slight leaning backwards, and catching ground (and lifting) with your toes. Here we also have three directions of forces, but opening is the main direction, and pulling back and lifting are supplementary directions. You experience slightly pushing and moving the tree. You stretch the springs between your fingers and a tree far in front of you, and the springs between your fingers, wrists, arms. There are three directions of forces: opening, pulling back and lifting upward, opening is main direction, pulling back and lifting upward are supplementary directions. While doing opening, you can also imagine, that being inside the big tree, your hands are also inside the tree, and doing opening movement you split the tree into two parts. You just make a very small split and you stop. Then you start closing movement with your legs (pressing inside), you push your body forward with your back foot, and toes of front foot are slightly pressing down. There are three directions of forces: closing, forward and pressing down. Closing is most important, forward and downward are supplementary directions. You put the tree to original form, without split. At this time body is pushing the tree forward. Your fingers, palms, wrists, arms are doing closing movement and pushing forwards and pressing down. Closing is main direction, forward and downward are supplementary directions. Together with legs closing movement you slowly press the tree from both sides in closing movement, bringing it to original shape, just do very little closing movement and stop. You can continuously practice opening and closing. In gougua zhuang qian hou mo jin the main direction is forward-backward, and two other directions are supplementary. In gougua zhuang kai he mo jin the main direction is opening-closing, and two other directions are supplementary. The idea of gougua zhuang qian hou mo jin and zuo you mo jin (kai he mo jin) is the same as of hunyuan zhuang qian hou mo jin and zuo you mo jin (kai he mo jin), the difference is only in how your palms are placed and shaped. In gougua zhuang mo jin (feeling force) practice, it's not only important to use your whole body, but position of hands should be also stressed. Only when you really master the proper principles of zhan zhuang, the changes of form of your hands, legs and body (which all is because of demands of combat) you can develop basis for combat practice. That's why we say that zhan zhuang is most important. You must deeper and deeper ponder it and experience it.

4.3.

DING BU DING BA BU BOSHUI SHI LI **T-V STEP PLAYING WITH WATER TESTING FORCE**

Stand in position like in dingbabu pingtui shili. 70% of your weight is on rear leg and 30% on front leg. Heel of front leg is about 1 cm above ground. Toes of front leg are slightly catching ground. Then place your both palms (with fingers parted) on both sides



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of your hips (4 or 5 fist-widths from your hips). Palms turned forward, fingers slightly curved. When you push forwards, accent pushing with base of your palm. Imagine that you are a giant standing in a big river or in sea and the water reaches your chest level.



Figure 4.3.1



Figure 4.3.2



Figure 4.3.3

You feel contact with water with your chest, abdomen and legs. You feel contact with water with your fingers, palms, wrists, arms. You are slowly pushing with your hands forwards and at this time you carefully experience three directions of forces: pushing forward, upward and closing (the force "wrapping" inside). You feel resistance of water and also have feeling of water flowing between your fingers, outside your palms and arms. When you finish this movement, your hands reach about chest level. The distance between both hands is about 2 or 3 fist-widths, and palms are directed upwards (obliquely). Fingers pointing obliquely forwards and slightly curved. While pushing forward, body is also slightly pressing forward, with feeling of resistance of water. And legs are moving forward and pressing downward. There are three directions of movement. When you finish the movement forward, the weight is distributed evenly on front and rear leg. Then you start slowly moving backward. Your wrists are leading movement, centers of palms slightly sucked in. The intention of opening movement with elbows is very important. Carefully experience three directions of forces: backward, downward, opening. Feel the water being parted and flowing on both sides of your arms and wrists. Hands slowly move to the original position. At the same time body is slightly pressing backwards. You feel the resistance of water with your body (including shoulders, back, waist, buttocks, legs). When body and hands are moving backward, at the same time legs are moving backward and downward, doing opening movement, the toes of front foot are catching ground, head is slightly moving upward. While practicing shi li, you must do it slowly, when you are doing it quickly the feeling of resistance is not strong. The key points of shi li practice are slowness and relax. Only when you do it slowly and in relaxed manner, you can experience the feeling developed in zhan zhuang while doing long



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movement. Carefully experience the feeling of resistance on your whole body (above and below, in front and in back, on right and on left side). You shouldn't be impatient while practicing.

4.4.

DING BU MOCA BU LIANXI FIXED STEP FRICTION STEP PRACTICE



Figure 4.4.1



Figure 4.4.2



Figure 4.4.3



Figure 4.4.4



Figure 4.4.5



Figure 4.4.6

You can start from the standing erect position. First focus your mind, looking at some point in front of you. Here we give example of moving right foot first. The knees of both legs are slightly bent. Buttocks are as if sitting on high bench. Back of your body is as if pressing on a tree or a wall behind you. Both hands are on both sides of your body, with palms directed downward and fingers pointing to the sides and slightly forward. Imagine



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that your hands are resting on balustrades or tables on both sides of you. You feel fingers, palms, forearms resting on balustrades or tables. Use mind to be relaxed. Use mind only, don't use force.



Figure 4.4.7



Figure 4.4.8



Figure 4.4.9



Figure 4.4.10



Figure 4.4.11



Figure 4.4.12

After assuming the basic posture, start moving right foot forward. When you are lifting foot, imagine that your whole body is leading foot. The foot should be lifted about one centimeter above ground and moving horizontally (it shouldn't touch or rub ground). At the same time imagine that your right knee is being slightly pulled upward. You drag your right foot out of mud and move in the direction forwards, inside your left foot. Imagine that both legs are in mud or in a heap of sand. Imagine that your right foot is moving on a round stick below it (and the stick is being rolled and moving on uneven surface). When right leg and foot are moving forward, at the same time the hip, knee, toes of the supporting leg have also some intention of moving forward. There is intention of left leg supporting movement of right leg. When right leg is moving forward, it is



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accompanied by intention of hip, knee and toes pointing forwards. Use toes of right foot as leading point (as if checking if there is free way forwards), slowly moving forward. Carefully experience that right leg, knee, toes slowly wade through the mud. Imagine that you move the round stick under your right foot on not even ground and with some difficulty. At this time your right foot is about one step apart from left foot. When right leg is straightened, but not completely (it must be bent slightly), don't move it further forward. Then move your right leg and foot slowly to the outside. At this time imagine that you move slowly your right leg and foot through the mud obliquely to the side in front of you. The round stick below your foot is being rolled to the side now. There is some feeling of spring between your head and foot. When your right foot already reached position of dingbabu (T-V), you start moving it slowly backward. At this time you imagine moving through the mud, feeling resistance on back of your leg and on your heel. You move the round stick backward, rolling it on not even ground. Carefully observe the resistance of mud while moving your right leg backwards. Observe the resistance of round stick being rolled. Carefully observe the tension of spring between your head and right foot. At this time body remains in natural, erect position. Left knee is bent, so it is easier to keep balance. At this time right foot has moved to the dingbabu position, with weight on front leg. From this position right leg is starting moving toward left foot, with toes leading, obliquely forward and to the inside. At this time there should be supporting the right leg movement with hip, knee and toes of left leg pointing forwards. When right leg is moving forward you should feel like moving in mud or sand. You are also slowly rolling the round stick in the direction forward. At this time intention of right hip, knee, toes pointing forwards should be stressed. You are moving as if through the mud with whole body. Right foot slowly comes back to original position. When right leg is moving there is tension of spring being stretched between your head and foot. Fixed position friction steps is actually moving one foot in kind of circles, while standing in one position. While doing the circles you must feel the resistance made by mud all the time. There is always tension of spring being pulled between your head and foot. No matter how you move, you should always have the feeling of resistance.

With practice, you should gradually make the feeling stronger. But you must use mind and not force. Fixed position friction step can be done on right and left side, changing sides. You should move slowly and use mind. Both hands and arms are slightly pressing down in relaxed manner.

4.5.

ZOUBU MOCA BU **MOVING STEPS FRICTION STEPS**

The position of legs is dingba bu, exactly like in gougua zhuang. Palms directed downwards, fingers pointing to the outsides and slightly forwards. Imagine that both hands and arms are relaxed and resting on balustrades. Use the visualization to help balance. Use mind only, don't use force to press balustrades. Imagine that your legs and feet are standing in mud or high grass. The body above legs is as if in water. When left foot is in front and right foot is in back, your body slowly moves forward and to the left.



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Imagine that you are as if moving through water or high grass. Right foot is pressing ground and moving your body forward. Imagine the force of resistance as if really moving through water or high grass. The knee of left leg is bent and you slowly move your weight onto left leg. Imagine that a rope is slightly lifting your right knee, use body to pull your right foot out of mud or grass (sole of foot 1 or 2 cm above ground).



Figure 4.5.1



Figure 4.5.2



Figure 4.5.3



Figure 4.5.4



Figure 4.5.5



Figure 4.5.6



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Figure 4.5.7



Figure 4.5.8



Figure 4.5.9



Figure 4.5.10



Figure 4.5.11



Figure 4.5.12



Figure 4.5.13



Figure 4.5.14



Figure 4.5.15



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Figure 4.5.16

Right leg and foot is slowly moving in direction of heel of left foot. There is tension of spring between head and right foot. When you are moving forwards the demands of mental feelings regarding your legs are the same as in fixed step friction steps practice. Right leg and foot is moving straight forward to the point when the distance between right foot and toes of left foot is about one foot. Then there is oblique movement to the side with the same demands and mind activity as in fixed step practice. At this time you are again in dingba bu position. Front part of sole of right foot is slightly pressing ground, heel is slightly above ground. The distribution of weight is 70% on rear

and 30% on front leg. Then body moves forward onto the right leg and you place whole sole of your right foot on the ground. The weight is slowly moving to the right foot. Then knee of right leg is bending and right foot is pressing ground, pushing your body forward. Use body to pull your rear leg and foot out of mud. Whole foot is evenly parting from the ground. All demands are exactly the same as with moving right foot, which was described above. You can practice it continuously, changing right and left leg.

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MODULE 5

5.1.

HUNYUAN ZHUANG (SHANG XIA MO JIN) UNIVERSAL COMBAT POST (SEEKING FORCE UPWARDS-DOWNWARDS)

After practicing hunyuan zhuang (universal combat post) with seeking force forwards backwards and in opening-closing for some time, you can start seeking force upwardsdownwards.



Figure 5.1.1



Figure 5.1.2

Stand in hunyuan zhuang position like before. Imagine that your body is merged into one with a big tree. Imagine that you are lifting the tree a bit. The tree is as if moving slightly upwards but not moving actually. At this time there is pressing inwards with fingers, palms, arms, elbows, lifting upwards and pushing forwards, so there are three directions of forces. The force directed upwards is the main force. The forces of closing and pushing forwards are supplementary. At the same time the rear foot is pressing ground and rear leg is straightening. There is pressing of springs between rear and front leg. Toes of front leg are slightly pressing ground - there are three directions of forces in legs area. The force of lifting is main, pressing down and closing are supplementary forces. There is imagination of spring being pulled between head and front foot and also between head and rear heel. When lifting upwards, head is pressing upwards and slightly forwards.



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There should be lifting, closing, pushing forwards in all parts of body and on all sides. When you are lifting the imagined tree, just make a very short movement and stop. Then make a little movement in opposite direction. At this time imagine that you are moving the tree downwards to original position. You embrace the tree with fingers, palms, arms and slightly moving it downwards. You are slightly sitting down with your buttocks. There is slight opening movement between front and rear leg. At the same time your whole body is making a slight movement downwards, opening and backwards (3 directions of forces). The main is the force downwards, the forces backwards and of opening are supplementary. There is tension of spring being pulled between rear hip and front knee. There as if was tension of spring being pulled between head and front foot. Described here is hunyuan zhuang with seeking force upwards-downwards. In third part of the course it was already said that in hunyuan zhuang there is also seeking force forwards-backwards, opening-closing, six surfaces seeking-force (or combined seeking force) and seeking force on six surfaces at the same time. The last two will be introduced in eleventh and twelfth part of this course. You should practice seeking force in basic directions in the meantime, because it is very important. The other combat posts, which you will learn later are very much alike, if we talk about seeking force (mo jin). Thanks to learning and practicing hunyuan zhuang you will have good basis for further yiquan study. It will make the path of study more even and straight.

5.2.

XIUXI ZHUANG

RESTING POST

Standing post in resting position (xiuxi zhuang) is quite relaxed position among the yiquan health posts. It helps beginner to relax body and limbs. It helps you to feel relaxed, as if standing in beautiful surroundings, in warm rays of sun and in gentle wind. So you are relaxed and happy, which helps to develop basic mind activities. For people practicing combat methods it helps to rest and recuperate. At the same time it adjusts brain and central nervous system, which is very favorable for health. It is a method of standing post, which is resting and training at the same time.

Legs are in the same position as in chengbao zhuang. Buttocks are as if sitting on high bench. Both legs are slightly bent. Torso straight. Top of head is as if being slightly lifted by a string. Back of body is as if slightly pressing on a wall or a tree behind you. Demands regarding facial expression are exactly the same as in chengbao zhuang. Raise your hands and place them with wrists on your waist. Both arms are bent naturally, creating half circles, with armpits half open. Fingers naturally parted. Imagine that you keep small balls in your both hands. Use mind, don't use force. Other demands regarding relax of whole body, natural breathing, concentration of mind etc., are exactly the same as in chengbao zhuang.



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Figure 5.2.1



Figure 5.2.2

5.3.

DINGBU FENGUA SHI LI

FIXED STEP PARTING-PULLING TESTING FORCE

After practicing dingbabu boshui shili for some time, you can start learning fen gua shi li (parting-pulling shi li). The goal of all kinds of shi li exercises in yiquan is to experience in big movement the forces of resistance forwards-backwards, opening-closing, upwards downwards,

which you developed through zhan zhuang. Through shi li slow movements and quick movements you can fully express them. Thanks to this kind of practice you can later, control your opponent and protect yourself efficiently in tui shou and san shou. Thanks to yiquan shi li practice you will be able to hit when there is distance and will also be able to fight in very close range. In pushing hands there is free fighting and in free fighting there is pushing hands. So, shi li is supplementing tui shou and tui shou is supplementing san shou. You should practice seriously.

Stand in dingbabu (T-8 or T-V step) like in dingbabu boshui shili. Imagine a spring between left hip and right (front) knee (tension in directions forwards-backwards and upwards -downwards). All visualizations and demands regarding the area between legs are the same as in dingbabu boshui shili. Distribution of weight is 50% on the front and 50% on the rear leg. Right foot and right hand are in front. Front and rear arms are extended to 80% of their length. Palm of front hand is directed obliquely to the inside, slightly curved fingers pointing obliquely forwards, as if there were springs between fingers and a tree far in front of you. There is also feeling as if there was a spring between your wrist and the tree. Your palm is on your mouth level. Your rear (left) palm is



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directed downwards, with fingers slightly curved and pointing obliquely forwards and to the inside. Imagine that there is tension of springs between fingers of rear and front palm, of springs between both wrists and between both arms. Distance between front and rear palms is about 2-3 fist-widths. The rear (left) hand is on shoulder level. Palm is directed downwards, wrist slightly hooked, as if you kept something below your wrist joint. Elbows are lower than hands. Another mental activity is: imagine standing inside soft maltose. Your fingers, palms, arms are all stuck into soft maltose. Now your rear leg is bending and you are sitting down and backwards. Heel of your front foot is "empty" and toes are "catching" ground. The imaginations and feeling between your both legs are exactly the same as in dingbabu boshui shili. Because body moves backwards, pulling arms, you are slowly pulling your arms backwards, out of maltose. In front hand there is intention of moving backwards, to the outside and upwards. While pulling back, accentuate pressing with elbows to the outsides. The thumb and wrist of front hand are as if pulling a spring to the outside, upwards and backwards. At the same time rear hand is pulling backwards, to the outside and you are as if pressing down with your elbow. Fingers of front palm are as if pulling springs, and you are slowly pulling the springs between your both arms, trying to break them. When body is moving downwards and backwards there is feeling as if there was a tree or a wall behind you. There is a feeling of a spring being pulled between your head and front foot. At this time your both palms are about one feet apart from your chest. The angle at your elbow is about 120%. Now you are turning your front palm downwards, with fingers pointing forwards. Imagine that your front palm and arm are as if tied and wrapped with rope. While turning palm, you are breaking the rope. At the same time left (back) hand is pulling back, moving to outside, "wrapping" inwards and pressing down. Your right palm is at this time already turned downwards, fingers pointing forwards. It's the same position as in the last moment of pulling back in dingbabu pingtui shili. Distribution of weight is 30% on front and 70% on rear leg. Then start thinking of slowly pushing forwards, putting your hands into maltose. While pushing forwards, there is intention of pushing forwards, closing between arms and slightly pressing downwards. You should carefully observe the feeling of resistance while pushing your fingers and hands into maltose. The imaginations and demands regarding legs are the same as in dingbabu pingtui shili. When you finish the movement of pushing forwards you are in the same position like in pingtui shili. Weight distribution is 50/50. At this time you have already pushed your hands into maltose. Now you turn your right hand, leading the movement with small finger, base of palm and elbow, and with your fingers pointing forwards, so that eventually your palm is directed obliquely upwards. Imagine pressing between both arms. Left wrist and thumb are moving to inside making a hook. At this time both arms are at the basic position of fengua shili. You can continue doing fengua shili repeatedly.



Figure 5.3.1



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Figure 5.3.2



Figure 5.3.3



Figure 5.3.4



Figure 5.3.5



Figure 5.3.6



Figure 5.3.7



Figure 5.3.8



Figure 5.3.9



Figure 5.3.10

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5.4.

ZOUBU FENGUA SHI LI

MOVING STEP PARTING-PULLING TESTING FORCE

After practicing dingbabu fengua shili for some time, you can start doing fengua shili with steps. In combat situations steps, body and hands movements supplement each other. So thanks to complementing shi li with steps you get good basis for further combat practice.

Stand like in dingbu fengua shili. All the demands regarding forces between rear hip and front knee, between legs are the same as in dingbu fengua shili. Distribution of weight is 50/50. Left foot and left hand are in front. The position of hands and body are the same as in dingbu fengua shili. Slowly straighten your rear leg, moving your weight to front foot. When your body is moving, you don't change the shape and position of hands. Imagine that your left and right arms are slightly pressing (lightly, in relaxed manner) a board floating on surface of water and feel the resistance of mud and water when you are moving forwards. Then front leg is pushing ground and straightening. Body is pulling rear foot out of mud, so the sole of feet is about 1 cm from ground, so you don't rub the ground with your foot. Your rear foot is moving obliquely forwards and towards your supporting feet, with toes of rear foot turning forwards. There is feeling of spring being pulled between your head and heel of your moving foot. There is intention of pointing forward in your left (supporting) leg, knee, hip, and the same is in your right (moving) leg. When you right leg and foot are moving forwards, imagine moving it through mud or high, thick grass. You start movement of left hand pulling back, parting and slightly lifting upwards and of right hand pulling back, parting (with elbow) pressing down (with palm) at the same moment when you started movement of right (rear) leg, pulling it out of mud. Right foot is moving forwards until it is a foot-length in front of toes of your left foot. At this time your both hands are at one-foot distance from your chest, and you don't pull them closer, but you still have intention of pulling the springs (the angle between forearm and upper arm is about 120 degrees). Your right leg and foot are pointing forwards and moving through the mud to the side, until you reach the dingbabu position, putting front part of your right foot on the ground, with heel "empty" (about 1 cm above ground). While your right foot is moving to the side, your left hand and forearm are turning with your fingers pointing forwards, with feeling of breaking ropes in which your palms and forearms are wrapped. At the same time in your right hand there is intention of moving to the side, pulling back and slightly pressing down. At the same time there is feeling of pressing and "wrapping" between your both arms. At this time your left palm is directed downwards, with fingers pointing forwards. It's the same position as in dingbabu pingtui shili, when you finished the movement of pulling back. The characteristic of this exercise is that when you are moving your foot to the side at the same time your palm which was turned upwards is turning downwards, the movement of turning your palm downwards is finished at the same moment when you put your foot down, and in this moment it's the same position as in pingtui shili (when you



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start pushing forwards). Now you start slowly pushing forwards, imagining that you are pushing your palms and arms into maltose. Carefully observe the feelings of resistance while pushing forwards, pressing down and inwards. While pulling forwards, all demands are the same as in pingtui shili. When you finish the pushing forwards, the position is the basic position of pingtui shili. Now your right leg is front leg and left leg is rear leg. Your hands are pushing in the direction where your central line is pointing (where your nose is), and not in the direction when toes of right foot are pointing. At this moment distribution of weight is 50/50. Now continue shi li with moving your left leg. Push down with your left leg, pushing your body forwards, slowly moving your weight to your front foot. While moving weight to front foot, you are slowly turning your front hand (inside the maltose), with your fingers pointing forwards, leading the turning movement with small finger and base of palm, forearm and elbow, until your palm is directed obliquely upwards. At the same time there is some pressing inwards inside your left arm, and hooking of your wrist and thumb inwards, so you are in the basic fengua shili position. At this time your right leg is pushing ground and straightening. Your body is pulling your rear leg out of mud. Your back foot is moving obliquely forwards, towards heel of your right foot. All demands are exactly the same as while making the first step. While left foot is moving to the side, your right palm is turning like previously. When you put your left foot down, your hands are in the same position like in pingtui shili (when finished pulling back). There are forces forwards, pressing ground, and pressing inwards in your legs and hands are pushing forwards and your body is moving through the mud. If you continue next steps all demands are the same as described above.



Figure 5.4.1



Figure 5.4.2



Figure 5.4.3



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Figure 5.4.4



Figure 5.4.5



Figure 5.4.6



Figure 5.4.7



Figure 5.4.8



Figure 5.4.9



Figure 5.4.10



Figure 5.4.11



Figure 5.4.12



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Figure 5.4.13



Figure 5.4.14



Figure 5.4.15



Figure 5.4.16



Figure 5.4.17

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MODULE 6

6.1.

GOUGUA ZHUANG (SHANG XIA MO JIN) HOOKING-PULLING POST (SEEKING FORCE UPWARDS-DOWNWARDS)

After practicing gougua zhuang with qian hou mo jin and zuo you mo jin for some time, you can start learning gougua zhuang with shang xia mo jin.



Figure 6.1.1



Figure 6.1.2

Stand like in previously learned versions of gougua zhuang. All demands regarding mind activity and contradictory forces in your legs area are the same. After assuming the legs position, slowly raise both hands. Left foot and left hand are at front. All demands are the same as previously. Like previously you have intention of being inside a big tree and being one with the tree, feeling it from front and from back, from left and from right, from above and from below. When you practice seeking force in upward direction, imagine that you are slightly lifting the tree. It's like if the roots are starting to slightly come up from earth. But it's like lifting and not lifting at the same time. Back leg is slightly straightening. There is pressing (closing) between rear and front leg. Toes of front foot are slightly pressing ground. Both rear and front leg have forces pointing forwards. The main is force upwards, the closing force and force downwards are supplementary. When you direct your force upwards, there should be forces of lifting, closing and pushing forwards in all parts of body. There is feeling of spring being stretched between your head and heel of your rear leg. At the same time there is feeling of a spring being pressed between your head and front foot. There is feeling of a force upwards and forwards, and at the same time slightly downwards in your head area. When



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lifting at the same time there is force of pressing inwards with your arms, palms and fingers. So there are three directions of forces: lifting, slightly closing and slightly pushing forwards. The force upwards is main. The forces of closing and pushing are supplementary. You just move slightly, and when the imagined tree moves just a bit, it's enough, and you stop moving upwards. Then you start moving in opposite direction, imagining that you put the big tree back to its original position. During this movement, your buttocks are sitting down. There is stretching of springs between your both legs. Toes of front leg are as if catching ground and pulling back. There are three directions of forces in your body: downwards, opening and backwards. The main is the force directed downwards. The forces backwards and of opening are supplementary. In this time you carefully observe force of spring being stretched between knee of your front leg and your rear hip. There is feeling of spring being stretched between your head and front foot. At the same time there is pulling back and stretching between your arms, palms and fingers. So there are three directions of forces. The main force is the force downwards. The forces backwards and of opening are supplementary. You just move slightly downwards, putting the tree to the original position and you stop. When you practice you must use mind and not force. When your spirit is exhausted, your body becomes too stiff, you can temporarily cease the kind of mind activity described above. After you relax in spirit and body, you can again start "seeking force".

Above described is gougua zhuang with seeking force in upwards-downwards direction. In further parts of this course you will learn seeking force in six directions and seeking force in all six directions at the same time. You should practice patiently and diligently, trying to master what you learn and to understand the principles of zhan zhuang. My father Yao Zongxun used to say: "When you understand principles of zhan zhuang, you already understand half o yiquan." You can see how important is zhan zhuang. The second half of yiquan will be gradually introduced to you.

6.2.

ZOUBU KAI HE SHI LI

OPENING-CLOSING TESTING FORCE WITH STEPS

After you practiced dingbabu kaihe shili for some time, you can also practice kaihe shili with steps. Practice of hands and body movements together with steps is reflecting extension in space of the seeking force movements, which you practice in zhan zhuang.

Position is the same as in dingbabu kaihe shili (see second part of this course). Left foot and left hand are in front. Distribution of weight is 50/50. Imagine that your legs are in mud or grass, and there is feeling of resistance of water on your belly and chest. Your hands are in front of your body. Distance between hands about 2-3 fist-widths. Imagine that there are springs being stretched between your fingers and your wrists and a tree or a wall far in front of you. The demands regarding mind activity and forces between your fingers, palms, wrists, elbows, arms are the same as in dingbabu kaihe shili. Then your rear leg is slowly straightening, pushing your body forwards, so your weight is moving to front foot. You should have feeling that your both legs are moving through mud or grass,



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feeling the resistance. While body moves forwards, the shape of your hands doesn't change. Imagine that your arms are lightly resting on a board floating on the surface of water. At this time your front leg is slowly straightening, and body is leading the movement of rear leg, pulling your foot out of mud, so sole of your foot moves about 1 cm above ground. Your foot shouldn't rub ground. Your rear foot is moving towards heel of front leg and then forwards and to the side. You have feeling of a spring stretched between your head and your moving foot. You have intention of your left hip and left knee pointing forwards and at the same time there is intention of pointing forwards in your right hip, knee and foot. When your right leg is moving, you have feeling of resistance when wading through mud or high grass. When rear foot starts to move, leaving ground, at the same time you start opening movement with your hands. Your wrists and elbows should lead the movement. You are stretching all the imagined springs between arms, wrists, palms and fingers.



Figure 6.2.1



Figure 6.2.2



Figure 6.2.3



Figure 6.2.4



Figure 6.2.5



Figure 6.2.6



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Figure 6.2.7



Figure 6.2.8



Figure 6.2.9



Figure 6.2.10



Figure 6.2.11



Figure 6.2.12



Figure 6.2.13



Figure 6.2.14



Figure 6.2.15



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Figure 6.2.16



Figure 6.2.17



Figure 6.2.18



Figure 6.2.19

At the same time you are stretching springs between your fingers and a tree or wall far in front of you. There should be three directions of forces: opening, backwards and upwards in your arms. The force of opening is main and the forces backwards and upwards are supplementary. When your right foot is one foot in front of your supporting foot, don't step further forwards. Move your right foot and leg to the side, feeling like wading in mud or high grass. There is feeling of spring being stretched between your head and right foot. Now, when you moved your right foot and leg to dingbabu position, slowly put toes of your front foot to ground with heel slightly lifted. At this time your hands are about 40-50 cm apart, and you don't continue the opening movement. Then start closing movement, leading it with base of your palm, and at the same time having feeling of pressing inwards with your

fingers, palms, arms and elbows. There are three directions of forces: closing, forwards, downwards. The force of closing is main, and the forces forwards and downwards are supplementary. At the same time body is moving forwards, feeling resistance of water. Left leg is straightening and pushing body forwards. There is feeling of pressing springs between both legs. Front foot is slightly pressing ground. At this time your weight has already moved to 50/50 position, and your hands moved to position where distance between your hands is 2 or 3 fist-widths. You feel like if you pressed springs between your arms so they changed in one metal block, so you don't press further. If you want to continue, and you lift rear foot (left foot), all demands are exactly the same as while moving right foot. Demands regarding body and hands are the same. When you put your left foot down and do the closing movement, the demands are the same as described above.



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6.3.

ZOUBU BOSHUI SHILI

PLAYING WITH WATER TESTING FORCE WITH STEPS

Stand like in dingbu boshui shili. Distribution of weight is 50/50. Both palms are directed obliquely upwards. Fingers are slightly curved and pointing forwards. Your palms are at chest level. Distance between both palms is about 2-3 fist-widths. Imagine that your legs are in mud or high grass. Your upper parts, like belly and chest are as if in water, so you feel the resistance. After assuming the position, you start slowly pressing ground with your right (back) foot, straightening back leg and pushing your body forwards. The demands and mind intentions regarding legs and body are the same as in zoubu kaihe shili. When you are lifting your back foot (leading the movement with your body), the movement is the same as in zoubu kaihe shili. At the same time you start moving your hands downwards, backwards and to the sides, as if doing it in water, leading the movement with wrists and elbows. You should have feeling of water flowing between your fingers, outside your palms and arms, and creating some resistance. When your palms moved to sides of your hips your back foot already moved forwards, and became front foot in dingbabu position, slightly pressing ground. During this movement, all demands regarding directions of forces in legs area, force between head and foot etc. are the same as in zoubu kaihe shili. While you move your hands backwards, the main force is directed backwards, the forces outwards and downwards are supplementary. Then you straighten your left leg, having feeling of closing between legs and pressing down with front part of front foot. When your hands are moving forwards, you lead the movement with base of your palms. The directions of forces are: forwards, upwards and inwards. The force forwards is main. The forces upwards and inwards are supplementary. When your hands are in position from which you started the exercise, distribution of weight is 50/50. Your palms are directed obliquely upwards. Distance between palms is about 2-3 fist-widths. While moving hands forwards, you should have feeling of moving big masses of water. You can continue exercise, moving your weight to front foot, without changing the shape of your hands. Then you start lifting your left (back) foot and moving hands backwards, downwards and outwards. The demands are the same as described above.



Figure 6.3.1



Figure 6.3.2



Figure 6.3.3



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Figure 6.3.4



Figure 6.3.5



Figure 6.3.6



Figure 6.3.7



Figure 6.3.8



Figure 6.3.9



Figure 6.3.10



Figure 6.3.11



Figure 5.3.12



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Figure 6.3.13



Figure 6.3.14



Figure 6.3.15



Figure 6.3.16



Figure 6.3.17



Figure 6.3.18



Figure 6.3.19



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6.4.

DING BU GOU GUA SHI LI

FIXED STEP HOOKING-PULLING TESTING FORCE

Stand in position like in gougua zhuang. Left foot and left hand are at front. The demands and mind intentions regarding legs area and feeling of spring being stretched between head and front foot are the same. You imagine springs between your fingers and wrists and a wall or tree far in front of you. The intention between your arms is the same as in gougua zhuang. You feel like being one with a tree inside which you are. Distribution of weight is 50/50. You start from pulling back. Knee of your back (right) leg is bending, buttocks are sitting down, toes of front foot are slightly catching ground. You have feeling of springs being stretched between your legs. There are forces: backwards, downwards, outwards and your toes are catching ground (as if lifting). The force in your right (back) hip is pointing backwards. The force in your front knee is pointing forwards. So you have feeling of forces of springs in directions upwards-downwards and forwards-backwards. You feel some resistance from behind as if pressing big tree or a wall with backs of your legs, your buttocks, waist, back, neck and back of your head. When body and legs are moving, you also pull your hands backwards. Your elbows are pulling outwards and obliquely downwards. Imagine that you are stretching the springs between your fingers and wrists and a tree or wall far in front of you. There is intention of pulling back, opening and lifting. You have feeling of stretching the springs between your arms to the point of breaking. Now your weight moved backwards to where distribution of weight is 70% on rear leg and your hands are about 1 feet in front of your chest (the angle between your arm and forearm is about 120 degrees). Now turn your palms, with fingers slightly curved and pointing forwards, so eventually your palms are directed downwards. Imagine that your palms and forearms are tied with ropes and during turning palms and forearms you have feeling of breaking the ropes. You should have feeling of turning your palms, forearms elbows and arms. But you shouldn't lift your elbows to level with your palms or shoulders. When your palms are already directed downwards (you don't pull them closer to your body), the angle between your forearm and arm shouldn't be less than 90 degrees. Then you start straightening your back leg, pushing your body forwards, slightly pressing ground with front part of front foot. In your legs area there are forces directed forwards, closing and downwards and slightly upwards (lifting). When body is moving forwards, you should feel as if you were moving a big tree. Your hands are also pushing forwards. You have feeling of pressing springs with your fingers. At the same time you imagine that you are slightly pressing down and moving forwards a board floating on surface of water or sticking your fingers and arms into thick syrup. When you are pushing forwards, there are forces: forwards, downwards and inwards and slightly pointing upwards. When you finish the movement forwards, distribution of weight is 50/50. It the same position like in pingtui shili, when you finish moving forwards. Imagine that your fingers and arms are turning inside the thick syrup, with fingers pointing forwards, stressing the movement of your little finger, palm, elbow and arm, until your palms are directed towards each other. You are in the same position like when you started this exercise. You can repeat it many times.



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Figure 6.4.1



Figure 6.4.2



Figure 6.4.3

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MODULE 7

7.1.

GOUGUA ZHUANG (ZONGHE MOJIN) **HOOING-PULLING POST (SEEKING FORCE WITH CHANGING DIRECTIONS)**



Figure 7.1.1



Figure 7.1.2

After practicing gougua zhuang with seeking force in directions forward-backward, pening-closing and upward downward for some time, you can start practicing it with changing directions of forces. Here we move from the stage of comparatively simple seeking force in determined direction (like forwards-backwards, opening-closing, upwardsdownwards) to seeking force in the direction you want, changing it at will, and still maintaining the feeling of holistic force. For example you can start from directing your force downwards, and then change to pushing forwards. After pushing you can start opening to the sides. After opening, you can do pulling back. After pulling back you can do lifting, after lifting do closing. You can change the direction of seeking force at will, but you should remember about all demands of seeking force that you learned earlier. Regardless of how you change direction, you should have the feeling of relax and feeling of the forces of resistance at the same time. You should carefully check whether while changing directions you can still maintain the same feelings of resistance like in exercises with determined direction of seeking force. When you start practicing it, you must do it very slowly, so you are clearly aware of the forces in all directions. The feeling of resistance should be gradually reinforced, but at the same time you should maintain relax of body. The relax of body is influenced by neural system. When you are standing in gougua zhuang posture, like being inside a tree and being one with the tree, and you



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imagine pulling the whole tree backward, you first use your mind (imagination). Your mind first “tenses”. Mind is leading body, which is as if pulling the imagined tree backward. At this time the “internal movement” in all parts of body is being reinforced. When body is pulling the tree backwards, it means very slight tensing of whole body. After pulling a bit, you stop. Stopping it means temporary stopping the intention of pulling, it means “relaxing” your intention. When intention is relaxing, body is also relaxing. It is the meaning of changes between tension and relax in zhan zhuang exercises. Then, when you are starting pushing the tree forward, your mind is first pushing the imagined tree (it means temporary “tensing” intention). Mind leads body _ straightening of rear leg, pushing forwards with whole body and arms, and pressing with arms downwards and inwards, and the imagined tree is as if slightly moving. This “movement” means temporary slight tensing of whole body. Just tense and stop it. When you stop it, means that mind is stopping “pushing”, so when mind “relaxes”, whole body also relaxes. When you are doing seeking force upwards-downwards, the principles of changes between tension and relax are the same. My father Yao Zongxun used to say: “If you want to know the true essence of yiquan, you must start from zhan zhuang. The myriads of changes cannot be separated from the principles of zhan zhuang”. I hope that you will practice zhan zhuang seriously. You should practice with understanding of the principles. You shouldn’t blindly follow some patterns. You shouldn’t accept erroneous theories. Otherwise you will never really learn yiquan.

7.2.

PINGBU FUBAO ZHUANG

EVEN STEP PRESSING BALL AND EMBRACING POST



Figure 7.2.1

Stand like in chengbao zhuang. Your body is standing naturally straight, comfortable. Your head is as if suspended from above. Your knees are slightly bent, with some feeling as if they were being lifted upward. Your backbone is naturally straightened. Don’t raise your shoulders. Your buttocks are as if sitting on edge of a table. Imagine as there was a wall or tree behind you on which you are slightly pressing and it is supporting you from behind. Slowly raise your hands to shoulder level. Your palms should be directed downward. Fingers of each hand pointing to each other, slightly curved and parted. Your hands should be in the same distance from your chest like in chengbao zhuang. Distance between both palms _ two or three palm widths. There should be some “hooking” intention below your wrists. Elbows



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should be lower than palms. Shoulders should be relaxed. Look straight forward. You can also keep your eyes closed if you prefer it. After assuming the posture imagine that you are embracing a ball or balloon in your arms, trying not to damage it but at the same time not let it fly away, using very little amount of force. Imagine that you are standing in water and your fingers, palms, wrists and forearms are lightly resting on a big ball floating in water. Use your mind to help relax your arms. Relax them as far as possible, while keeping the described position. Don't use more force than it is necessary. While standing in fubao zhuang position you can use the same kinds of mind activity that were described in first module of this course (while describing chengbao zhuang). Don't force mind activity. Do it in relaxed manner, to feel relaxed, happy, breathing naturally.

7.3.

ZOUBU PINGTUI SHILI

TESTING FORCE IN EVEN PUSHING WITH STEPS

The basic position of body and hands is like in dingbabu pingtui shili with left foot in front. All imaginations and feelings should be the same as in dingbabu pingtui shili (please check

module 3 of this course). Start from position when distribution of weight on both feet is 50/50. Move forwards by straightening your back leg. Front knee is slightly bending. Your weight is moving onto your front foot. The shape of your hands shouldn't change during this movement. Imagine that your palms and forearms are resting relaxed on a board floating on surface of water. Imagine that you are moving in water and feeling resistance of water on your body. Then your left leg is straightening and pushing your body further forwards. Your body is pulling your back leg, pulling it out from imagined mud. Your foot should move evenly about 1 cm above ground, not touching it. Toes of back foot are gradually moving towards the supporting leg, then move your foot forwards and next to the outside. All demands of mind activity regarding all parts of body are the same like in zoubu fengua shi li which was described in module 5. When you started the movement of pulling your back foot out of mud, at the same time you should start slowly pulling your hands back. Imagine that you are stretching springs between your fingers and wrists and a tree far in front of you. You have feeling as if pulling back the board floating on surface of water. There is pulling back, parting between elbows and as if lifting the board upwards so there are three directions of forces. The main is force of pulling back. Opening and lifting are supplementary directions of forces. Because your elbows are moving outwards, your palms are turning in the inward direction (fingers pointing slightly inwards). When your right foot is moving forwards and to the side you have feeling as if moving through mud or high grass. Put your right foot down, so you are in dingbabu position. You stop pulling your hands back. You are in the same position like in dingbu pingtui shili when you finish the movement backward. Then start slowly pushing forwards, pressing the imagined springs between your fingers and wrists and a tree far in front of you, and slowly moving forwards the imagined board below your palms and forearms. While pushing forwards, there should be also closing and pressing



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downward forces and opposite forces of resistance. The force of pushing forward is main, the forces of closing and pressing down are supplementary. While pushing forward, the demands of mind activity regarding body and legs is the same as in dingbabu pingtui shili while pushing forward. When you finish this movement you are in similar position like in dingbabu pingtui shili when finishing movement forwards. Now your right foot is in front and left foot in back. When pushing, you are pushing in direction in which your nose is pointing, not in direction in which your right foot is pointing. Now your weight distribution is 50/50. You are pushing your body forwards, so the weight is slowly moving onto your right foot. Then your right leg is straightening and pushing your body forward. And your body is pulling your back leg. You are as if pulling it out of mud. Left foot is first moving towards inside of your right (supporting) foot, and then forwards and outwards. All demands are the same as when making the first step. When you are putting your left foot on the ground, you first put down front part of your sole, with heel remaining “empty”. Your arms are in the position when you already finished the movement of pulling back. And then you start pushing forwards once more, with all the demands remaining the same as in dingbabu pingtui shili. You can repeat it many times.



Figure 7.3.1



Figure 7.3.2



Figure 7.3.3



Figure 7.3.4



Figure 7.3.5



Figure 7.3.6



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Figure 7.3.7



Figure 7.3.8



Figure 7.3.9



Figure 7.3.10



Figure 7.3.11



Figure 7.3.12



Figure 7.3.13



Figure 7.3.14



Figure 7.3.15



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Figure 7.3.16



Figure 7.3.17



Figure 7.3.18



Figure 7.3.19



Figure 7.3.20



Figure 7.3.21

7.4.

ZOUBU GOUGUA SHILI

TESTING FORCE IN HOOKING-PULLING WITH STEPS

Stand in the same position like in dingbabu gougua shili. All the intentions and feelings should be the same (see module 6 of this course). Distribution of weight is 50/50. Now you slowly start straightening your back leg, pushing your body forward and slightly bending knee of front leg at the same time. Don't change shape of your hands. Imagine you're your palms, wrists and forearms are resting on a board floating on the surface of water. Imagine that your body is as if moving through water. When you moved your weight onto front (left

foot), start straightening left leg, pushing your body forward. Your body is pulling back (right) foot out of mud. Your right foot is moving about 1 cm above ground, not touching it. It is moving towards inside of your left foot, and then forwards and outwards. Demands regarding body and legs are the same as in zoubu fengua shili. When you are



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pulling your back foot out of mud, at the same time start pulling your hands back (like if pulling them out from thick syrup). There are three directions of forces: pulling back, opening and lifting upwards. Pulling back is main direction, opening and lifting are supplementary. When you moved your right foot forward, so it is about one foot in front of your supporting foot, start moving it outwards, and at the same time start turning your palms (thumbs inwards, edges of palms outwards) feeling resistance as if they were tied by some ropes and trying to break them. Your palms are turned downwards and fingers pointing forwards. The position is the same like in pingtui shili when you finished movement of pulling back. Then start pushing forwards (pushing your hands into thick syrup). At this time you should feel three directions of forces: pushing forwards, closing and pressing down. All demands regarding body and legs are the same as in dingbabu pingtui shili or dingbabu gougua shili. When you finish pushing forwards, you are in the same position like in pingtui shi li, when you finish pushing forwards. Now your right foot is in front and left foot in back. Distribution of weight is 50/50. The pushing is in direction where you nose is pointing and not in direction when your front foot is pointing. Move you weight onto your right foot. During this movement turn your hands outwards (thumb outwards, edge of palm inwards). Imagine as if you were turning your hands in thick syrup. Your palms become directed towards each other _ it's the basic shape of hands in gougua shili. When you shifted your weight onto right foot, start straightening right leg, pushing your body forwards, and pulling your back foot out of mud. Your back foot is moving towards inside of your supporting foot, and then forwards and outwards. All demands are the same as while doing first step. Your hands are moving in the same way as while doing first step. When you put your left foot down (on front part of sole), your hands are in the same position like in pingtui shi li when you finished the movement of pulling back. At this time there is intention in your legs area of pointing forwards, closing, stepping down. At the same time your hands are starting pushing forwards, closing, pressing down. You have feeling as if your body was moving in water, feeling resistance. When you finish this part of movement, your weight distribution is 50/50. Your hands are in the same position as when you finish the same movement of pingtui shili. You can repeat it many times.



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Figure 7.4.1



Figure 7.4.2



Figure 7.4.3



Figure 7.4.4



Figure 7.4.5



Figure 7.4.6



Figure 7.4.7



Figure 7.4.8



Figure 7.4.9



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Figure 7.4.10



Figure 7.4.11



Figure 7.4.12



Figure 7.4.13



Figure 7.4.14



Figure 7.4.15



Figure 7.4.16



Figure 7.4.17



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MODULE 8

8.1.

CHENGTUO ZHUANG (QIAN HOU MOJIN)

EXPANDING-LIFTING POST (SEEKING FORCE FORWARD-BACKWARD)

After practicing hunyuan zhuang and gougua zhuang for some time, you can start practicing chengtuo zhuang. It is one of yiquan jiji zhuang postures (combat postures). It prepares you for further combat practice, when you should be able to use hunyuan li (holistic force) in various situations. Practicing chengtuo zhuang is very important.



Figure 8.1.1



Figure 8.1.2

Position of your legs is the same as in hunyuan zhuang or gougua zhuang. All demands regarding intentions and feelings in legs area are the same as in gougua zhuang. Left foot and left hand will be at front. Slowly raise your hands, so that tips of your fingers are at your eyebrows level. Insides of your palms should be directed obliquely forward and upwards, with slightly curved fingers pointing obliquely upward and backward. You have feeling as if pushing something forward with your fingers and lifting it with base of your palms. The “tiger mouth” (place between thumb and index finger) is curved. Imagine as if there was a spring between your left index finger and right eyebrow and between right index finger and left eyebrow. There is also a feeling of force between both index fingers, as if trying to move them to the sides, but not moving. This is the training method which was traditionally named “linking two fingers with eyebrows”. Distance between both hands is about 2 or 3 fist-widths. You have feeling as if there were many springs between both wrists, forearms, elbows, upper arms. Elbows are slightly pointing to the sides. Shoulders are relaxed. Imagine that your elbows and upper arms are resting on boards



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floating on surface of water. In this way you can better relax your shoulders and arms. Imagine that you are a giant inside a gigantic tree, and merged into one with the tree. Imagine as if there were springs between your head and your both feet. Now start pulling the big tree backward. At the same time you are as if sitting down, bending your rear leg. You have feeling as if the spring between your head and front foot was pulled. At the same time the imagined spring between front knee and back hip is being pulled. There are forces: backward, opening, downward (and at the same time upward). Carefully observe the feeling of resistance created by imagined tree. You are slightly sitting down and moving the tree with your body backward. At the same time your arms are pulling the tree backward and slightly opening (pulling to the sides) and pulling backward and downward with your elbows and upper arms, while there is some intention of lifting with your forearms. There is feeling of force between both index fingers and eyebrows. You only make very short movement. Like if starting it and stopping. Then start slight straightening of your back leg, pushing your body forwards (pressing ground with your foot). There is pressing of springs between your both legs, and your front knee is pointing forward. Front part of your front foot is as if pressing into ground. So in your legs area there are forces: forward, closing, downward (and at the same time upward - standing up). You should carefully observe the feeling of pushing the tree forward. In your arms area you should have feeling of pushing forward, closing, lifting (but at the same time also some pressing down). At the same time you should have feeling of slightly pressing the springs between your index fingers and eyebrows. And feeling of pressing the spring between your head and your front foot. You should use your mind to imagine the feelings. You shouldn't use too much force. Do it very lightly and with very slight movement.

8.2.

ZUO SHI CHENGBAO ZHUANG (QIAN HOU MO JIN) **SITTING EXPANDING-EMBRACING POST (SEEKING FORCE FORWARDBACKWARD)**



Figure 8.2.1

This exercise should be done sitting on a bed or chair. Your legs should be in position similar to that in standing dingbabu hunyuan zhuang, but with soles of your feet about 2 or 3 cm above ground. Distance between your both feet should be two times longer than in standing position. This is so called big dingbabu position. Your torso should be straight. Your hands should be in chengbao zhuang (hunyuan zhuang) position. Imagine as if your feet were standing on the ground. In your back hip you have intention of pointing backward and slightly upward, as if there was a spring between it and your front knee. Another imagined spring is between your head and front foot. Imagine that you are inside



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a big tree, merged with it into one (just like in dingbabu hunyuan zhuang). Start pulling the tree backward. Your back and buttocks are slightly moving backward. All demands regarding hands, legs and whole body are exactly the same as in standing hunyuan zhuang. You pull the tree slightly and stop. Then start slowly pushing the tree forward. Your back foot is as if pressing ground (but not touching it actually) and pushing your body forward. All demands regarding hands, legs and whole body are exactly the same as in standing hunyuan zhuang. Your body must be relaxed. While doing sitting position, you should have the same feelings of resistance like in standing hunyuan zhuang. Although your both feet are above ground, you should have feeling as if they were standing on ground. When trying the slight movement forward you should have feeling as if pressing with front part of sole of your front foot into ground (but still keeping it above ground). Thanks to this exercise you can better feel and understand the principles of yiquan. You shouldn't practice blindly or hastily. Don't use any "clumsy" force, otherwise you won't be able to learn more advanced yiquan.

INTRODUCTION TO YIQUAN FA LI (ISSUING FORCE)

Zhan zhuang, shi li and moca bu all serve to create conditions for issuing force (fa li). If you want to practice fa li, you must first practice zhan zhuang, shi li and steps. After you have some basics, you can start learning fa li. It can be said that fa li is synthesized expression of zhan zhuang, shi li and moca bu. The better you master the basic methods, the easier will be fa li practice. My father Yao Zongxun wrote in his book: "Will you be able after learning the zhan zhuang, shi li and steps to issue force? Maybe not. From practice we know that some people practiced basic methods for years and they are still not able to do fa li, or are not able to do it properly. This is because they don't have clear knowledge about fa li and there are some problems in their training method". In my personal opinion, the kernel of yiquan is zhan zhuang as basis. With help of mind activity you are seeking force in non force, seeking slight movement in non movement, developing and mastering holistic force (feeling of slight elastic tension in whole body). Zhan zhuang and shi li serve to solve the problem how to use force. The mental practice in zhan zhuang and shi li serves to prepare basis for practicing fa li. In zhan zhuang and shi li we seek the feeling of elastic tension, and part of this are changes between relaxation and tension. And most important is mental feeling of relax and tension. If you are able to master the relation between relaxation and tension in zhan zhuang it will be of great help for fa li practice. Presently there are some people in yiquan circles who think that only by practicing zhan zhuang they will be able to develop the explosive power of Wang Xiangzhai and Yao Zongxun. They think that by practicing more of zhan zhuang they will be able to achieve all skill of yiquan. Actually it is blind and superficial thinking. They don't really understand the principles of yiquan. Zhan zhuang, shi li and moca bu serve to create conditions for fa li practice. It is like with a store full of machine parts. You can use them to build a machine, but you must understand function and structure of this machine. Otherwise you won't be able to build it, and you won't be able to use it. It's the same with yiquan. If you want to practice fa li, you must first practice zhan zhuang, shi li



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and steps and understand the principles. Only when you understand the principles, mastering fa li will be possible. There is saying: “Enlightened teacher has good students”. When even your teacher doesn’t understand the actual principles of basic exercises, how can you learn fa li, not even mentioning using fa li? There must be special instruction for fa li practice. Teacher must explain to you the very close relation between basic training methods and fa li, so you can comparatively quickly develop fa li skill. Generally fa li can be divided into two kinds: hitting (da) and projecting (fa). Hitting means passing whole energy to some part of opponents body in very short time and on very short distance. This is penetrating force. It creates injuries, and force of moving opponents body is small. When knuckles of your fist hit opponent suddenly, he should have feeling that your force is penetrating him. Projecting is different. It means that after you connect opponents body, you continue long range movement with contact with opponents body on quite big surface. The time of contact is also long. Force of moving opponent’s body is big, and penetrating force is small, so it doesn’t create big injuries. In yiquan hitting and projecting are kinds of fa li. Regardless of whether you are hitting or projecting, it is all based on true mastering of fa li. After you mastered fa li, you can hit or project at will, naturally.

8.3.

DINGBU XIANG QIAN FA LI FIXED STEP ISSUING FORCE FORWARD

It is the most basic of fa li exercises. The starting position is hunyuan zhuang. Your feet are in dingbabu position. Your weight is 70% on back and 30% on front leg. You have feeling of springs between your both legs, between back hip and front knee, between your head and front foot. Imagine that you are standing inside a big tree, as if merged with it into one. All the basic demands are the same as in hunyuan zhuang. Start with your left foot in front. You should suddenly press down with your back foot. Your front knee is pointing forward, and front part of sole of your front foot is suddenly pressing into ground. There is feeling of suddenly pressing springs between your both legs. When both legs are moving forward, your hips and buttock are suddenly sitting down, slightly pointing backward, and knees are bending. This way you are strengthening the force of your back leg. More weight is put on your front leg. Then there is feeling of stretching a spring between back hip and front knee. There begins opening movement between both legs. Back leg is urging fa li of front leg and whole body is suddenly hitting forward. Your body is like a big hammer and your arms, elbows and hands are like big nails. When your body is hitting the nails, you should also have feeling of hitting forward with shoulders and forehead, and your head should be as if leading the movement forward and upward. When you are issuing force forward, you should do it like if there was a big, red hot iron plate in front of you. You are trying to make it fly away, but at the same time trying to prevent your hands being burned by the hot plate. Or you can have a feeling of suddenly hitting a big nail and making it to go into a big stone. In the moment of issuing force you have feeling of opening between forearms and elbows and at the same time of



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wrapping inwards (kind of closing). There is movement forward and turning forearms inward. You have feeling as if breaking ropes in which your forearms are wrapped. Don't straighten your arms when issuing force. "Form is curved and force is straight". Your palms are directed forward, issuing force with base of your palms, suddenly straightening fingers, with feeling as if pointing with them into sky. At this time 70% of your weight is on your front leg. Just issue force and stop. Tense and relax. Body should immediately come back to the position with 70% of weight on your back leg (position of hunyuan zhuang). You should be relaxed to the same extent as in hunyuan zhuang. When practicing fa li, you can also imagine as if there was a lot of sand sticking to your body all over (or that your body is all wet with water). When issuing force, you make the sand or water suddenly go off your body. There can be various imaginations used. It is only important if they help to do this exercise properly. Later many other variants of issuing force and using fa li in actual combat will be gradually explained.



Figure 8.3.1



Figure 8.3.2



Figure 8.3.3



Figure 8.3.4



Figure 8.3.5



Figure 8.3.6



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8.4.

DAN TUI SHOU HUANRAO

SINGLE PUSHING HANDS CIRCLING

Both partners stand in position similar to hunyuan zhuang with right feet and right hands in front. Right palms are at shoulder or mouth level. Shoulders relaxed, elbows bent. The point of contact is usually on outside of forearm. Left palms are at chest level and directed downward, with fingers pointing forward, towards opponents center line (to be able to counter opponent's attack with both hands). Front feet of both partners touch (not necessarily) each other with inside front parts. It is convenient for you if you try to contact your opponents forearm at point close to his wrist, but using middle section of your forearm. The point where arms of opponents contact each other is called point of contact. Using the point of contact you can feel opponents force, and you can attack opponent. One partner (A) is turning his palm downward with fingers pointing forward, towards opponents center line (to chest or throat), getting control over the point of contact. During this turning movement of hand and forearm, A is pressing down with back leg, pushing body forward, pressing springs between legs. Whole body is turning slightly (moving your left shoulder and hip forward), supporting the force of your forearm. Your front foot is pressing ground. And your front leg is as if pressing outward on a tree or wall. The movement of front leg shouldn't be too big. Front knee is pointing forward (it is slightly bent, but not moving). Left hand is moving circularly to the right. The other partner (B) is absorbing A's attack. He should keep the hands position of chengbao (hunyuan), not losing the force at the point of contact. He is sitting down on the back leg, moving body backward. There is feeling of opening between both legs. You have feeling as if catching ground with toes of your front foot and feeling of a spring being stretched between your head and front foot. There is also a feeling of a spring being



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stretched between your back hip and front knee. You use movement backward and downward (sitting down) to absorb opponents force of pushing and pressing. B's forearm is slightly turning outward, slightly raising and somewhat pressing forwards, changing direction of opponent's force (to outside). Then B is starting turning his forearm in opposite direction, pushing forward and pressing down, with elbow pointing outward. There is also intention of force directed upward in your palm. Now B changed from passive to active. When B's forearm is turning, he is pushing ground with back foot, having feeling of pressing springs between both legs. Front foot is pressing ground. Front knee is pointing forward. Body is supporting the movement of forearm toward A's center line. At the same time B's left hand is moving circularly to the right. This is the most basic single pushing hands exercise. You can repeat it many times. Don't use too much force (especially at beginning). Concentrate on proper circling harmonized with movement of body, and legs, with mind activity. Do it slowly and in relaxed manner.



Figure 8.4.1



Figure 8.4.2



Figure 8.4.3



Figure 8.4.4



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Figure 8.4.5



Figure 8.4.6

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MODULE 9

Zhan zhuang is a basic training method of yiquan. In first stage of practice stress is put to developing “quality” of body. At the same time “yi” (mind, intention) is stressed. Although it is usually called zhan zhuang (standing post), actually all kinds of standing, sitting and lying positions are used. The standing positions are main, while sitting and lying positions are supplementary. Mind activities used here are comparatively gentle, natural. You should feel like being in beautiful surroundings, very comfortable. Position pingbu (with feet in one line, shoulder-width apart) is used. It is practiced with hands in high, middle and low position. This is “health” practice. It can help you get rid of illnesses and improve health. It is kind of exercise which can be practiced by everyone, even people with weak body and poor health.

9.1.

ZUO SHI CAI MIAN ZHUANG (TIBAO SHI) STEPPING ON COTTON SITTING POST (POSITION OF LIFTING-EMBRACING)



Figure 9.1.1

Sit on a bed or chair with your torso straight. Your waist and back is slightly leaning against back of the chair (not necessarily). Your thighs are resting on surface of the chair. The angle between your shins and the floor is 90°. Your feet are resting on the floor, shoulder-width apart, in shape of “\ /”. Your wrists and backs of your palms are lightly resting on your thighs, with centers of your palms directed upward. Fingers are pointing obliquely forward. Your arms are rounded, armpits “hollow”. Your whole body should be relaxed. You should feel like in the standing position. Imagine that your feet are resting on very soft cotton-wool. There should be slight expression of relax and happiness on your face. You should have feeling of having a rest and not of training. After assuming the posture, imagine that you are in water up to chest level.

The water is waving slightly, massaging your body and as if making your body move slightly. Your body feels very comfortable. When water is slightly moving your body you can feel some resistance of water and have a feeling of floating in water. You can use the same forms of mind activity like in standing chengbao zhuang. You shouldn't blindly stick to some method, without checking out if it is good for you or not. You should use those forms of mind activity which make you feel relaxed and comfortable. You should breath naturally. You can keep your eyes closed or open.



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9.2. BAN FU SHI ZHUANG HALF BENT POST



Figure 9.2.1

This is one of basic “nourishing life” posts. It is helpful in cases of acute problems with digestive system. Both arms should be resting supported on something on level of your chest or shoulders. Your arms should make the same shape like in chengbao zhuang. Your body is half bent, with your backbone straight and your head in line with it and as if supporting something with top of your head. Your buttocks are as if slightly sitting down and pressing backward. Your weight is on your feet. Avoid using strength of your arms.

Your feet should be in one line, shoulder width apart (or wider), making shape of “\ /”. Relax your chest and belly. Imagine that your internal organs are resting on the surface of your chest and belly. Relax your neck.

You can keep your eyes closed or open looking straight onto the floor. Your forehead can rest on something,

together with your arms (but not necessarily). If you feel that surface on which your arms and forehead rest is too hard, you can put there something soft, like a blanket or a pillow. Feeling comfortable is most important. You can use the same mind activities as in chengbao zhuang. Use mind, don't use force. You are feeling like being one with beautiful nature, as if forgetting about yourself.

After you practiced “life nourishing” posts for some time, you can use mind activities of “waving” and of “whirling” to seek slight internal holistic movement the holistic movement in non-movement.

9.3. YAO FA METHOD OF SWAYING

Stand in one of the pingbu posts. Imagine that you are standing in water up to your chest level. Then slightly move your body to the left. You should have feeling of resistance of water from your left side. At the same time you have feeling as if there was a spring being stretched between your head and your right foot. Then move your body slightly to the right, feeling resistance of water. At this time you have feeling of a spring being stretched between your head and your left



Figure 9.3.1



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foot. The movement should be very slow and even, you should have feeling as if really moving slightly in water. Beginners can slightly “show form”. After you developed the feeling of resistance you can practice without “showing form”, more with your mind (it means very slight movement, not visible from outside).

This is the principle about which my father Yao Zongxun was saying: “*Movement in non-movement is always being born and never ceasing*”.

9.4.

XUAN FA

METHOD OF WHIRLING



Figure 9.4.1



Figure 9.4.2

When you have some experience with yao fa, which was described above, you can start practicing xuan fa. Imagine that you are standing in water. Move your body in circular way from left to right. At the same time body is slightly moving backward and buttocks are slightly sitting down. Your left foot is pressing ground and pushing your body to the right. When your body is pressing to the right, you should carefully observe the feeling of stretching a spring between your head and left foot. Your legs, buttocks, waist and back are pressing backward and downward, feeling resistance of water in which you are moving. Right sides of legs, hip, ribs area are pressing to the right. At this moment you have feeling that you moved through a half of a circle from left, backward and to the right. Then start slightly circling to the left. Carefully observe pressing ground with your right foot and stretching a spring between your head and right foot. Your body is moving slightly forward, upward and to the left. You have feeling of resistance on your chest, belly, legs. Left side of body has feeling of pressing to the left. You feel that you moved



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through second half of a circle. You should practice it slowly and evenly, and the movement must be very slight.

While practicing two methods described above, you must use mind and whole body. You must seek slight movement in non-movement. The key point is feeling the resistance of water. How big is this resistance depends on your skill level. Those who deeply understand intention (yi), can have feeling of very strong resistance and use their mind only, without revealing form. "Movement in non-movement is always being born and never ceasing". This is a state which is achieved on advanced level. When you start practicing, you should practice slowly, softly, your intention should be agile, you shouldn't use force. You shouldn't force anything. You should have feeling of agility and emptiness, of comfort and unity of whole body, of commanding body with your mind.

9.5.

DING BU FU AN QIU SHI LI

FIXED STEP PRESSING A BALL TESTING FORCE



Figure 9.5.1

Stand in dingbabu, with 70% of your weight on your back leg. Position of legs and distribution of strength is the same as in hunyuan zhuang. The demands of visualizations regarding your legs are also the same as in hunyuan zhuang. Your right foot and right hand are in front. Both your palms are turned downward. Fingers are slightly curved and pointing forward. Distance between both palms is two or three fist-widths. Base of your right palm is above your right foot. Your head is slightly turned to the right, so your head, palm and foot are in one line. Your back palm is half a palm-length behind the front palm and half a palm-width below your front palm. Your hand is stretched forward to 70% of its full length. Palm is higher than elbow. Both palms and forearms are on level between your belly and chest.

Your shoulders should be naturally relaxed, body naturally erect, like in hunyuan zhuang. Imagine standing in water up to your chest level. Your fingers and forearms are as if pressing on top of a big ball full of water. You have feeling as if your palms and forearms merged into one with surface of the ball, not losing contact. Then start slowly lifting the heavy ball. You are pressing ground with your back foot, standing up on your back leg. Head is leading upward and forward. You are raising both hands, accenting wrists, with your elbows lower than palms. In front knee there is force pointing forward, but it shouldn't move too much forward. Front foot is pressing ground. There is intention of closing (pressing springs) between your both legs. When your hands are lifting the ball, there is force upward, inward (pressing springs between hands) and forward. The main is the force upward. The forces inward and forward are supplementary. You have feeling as if the ball is touching your arms, chest, belly and legs.



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You are moving forward to position when 70% of your weight is on your front leg. Your hands are above head, on it's both sides. Your body is inclined 30 degrees forward. You should have feeling as if stretching a spring between your head and heel of your back foot. You feel like as if you raised the ball above surface of water and you don't raise it higher. Now suddenly you feel that the ball which was full of water becomes empty, and floating on surface of water. Next, you should have feeling of trying to press the ball again under water, feeling big resistance. Your front foot is pressing down and pushing your body back. You are sitting down on your back leg, as if trying to press a big stone with your buttocks and move it into ground. You have feeling of opening (stretching springs) between your both legs. There is feeling of stretching between your back hip and front knee. Toes of your front foot are as if catching ground. Now you are pressing the ball down, accenting pressing with base of palms and with elbows. Your fingers are pointing slightly upward. You are pressing the ball down with your fingers, palms and forearms. When your palms, forearms and elbows are pressing down, there is also some opening and pulling back. The main is force of pressing down, opening and pulling back are supplementary. When you are sitting down, your body is pressing backward, as if trying to push a tree. You should have feeling of trying to push the tree with back of your head, neck, back, backs of legs. You also have feeling of stretching a spring between your head and front foot. Now 70% or your weight is on your back leg. Your both hands have pressed the ball to the starting position. You can repeat the movement of lifting and pressing many times. You should feel the resistance of the ball, the contradictory forces between your arms and between legs. Your arms, legs and whole body should work as one. You should have feeling of springs between your head and front and back foot. You should practice slowly and without unnecessary tension. You shouldn't hurry and use clumsy force or you won't get the proper feeling. You can practice this dingbabu fu'an qiu shi li on both sides.



Figure 9.5.2



Figure 9.5.3



Figure 9.5.4



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Figure 9.5.5



Figure 9.5.6



Figure 9.5.7



Figure 9.5.8



Figure 9.5.9



Figure 9.5.10

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MODULE 10

In module 9 we introduced 4 kinds of health posts (yiquan basic posts). Those posts can bring many profits to all practitioners, also those with weak body and poor health, both manual workers and those using their brains in work. Course participants can better understand yiquan, using different postures and mind activities, better use their mind in practice, with nervous system, limbs, muscles, all working together, supported by brain. If health posts are practiced correctly, they can help to get rid of many illnesses, improve health, regain body strength, improve working of nervous system. At the same time it gives basis for further yiquan practice, so you can go deeper into study of yiquan, improving health and developing combat ability.

10.1.

ZUO SHI GOU TIAO ZHUANG **SITTING HOOKING FEET POST**



Figure 10.1.1



Figure 10.1.1

Sit on a bed or a chair, so that your buttocks and whole thighs are resting on the surface of the bed or chair. Your back can slightly lean against back of the chair. Stretch you both legs forward in V shape. Back of your knee should rest on the edge of bed or chair. There is feeling of straightening in the knees. Your feet are “hooked”, with toes pointing upward. Your heels are 4-5 inches above ground. Your both hands are in the same position as in chengbao zhuang. You can use the same kinds of mind activity as in zuo shi cai mian zhuang or pingbu chengbao zhuang. If your arms get tired, you can move them lower to tibao zhuang position. If your legs get tired, you can put your heels on the



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ground, with your feet still slightly “hooked”. You shouldn’t stick too much to fixed methods. Use those imaginations which make you feel relaxed and comfortable. Your whole body should be relaxed, you should breathe naturally. You can keep your eyes open or closed.

10.2

ZOU BU XIANG QIAN FA LI ISSUING FORCE FORWARD WITH STEPS

After practicing dingbu xiang qian fa li for some time, you should start practicing it with steps. After assuming the basic position for issuing force forward (see module 8), start the exercise. Back foot is suddenly pressing ground, and pushing your body forward. Front leg is relaxed. When your body is suddenly pushed forward, front foot suddenly moves forward and steps down on ground, with intention of pressing it into ground. Kneecap is pointing forward. Knee is slightly bent all the time. Heel of front foot is slightly lifted. When back foot presses ground, body moves forward 30-40 cm, and front foot also makes 30-40 cm step. When front foot suddenly steps on ground, whole body is suddenly hitting forward. You can imagine that your body is a big hammer. And your hands and elbows are like big nails. When “the hammer hits nails” your shoulders and head are also hitting forward and upward. Insides of your forearms are turning outward with feeling as if ropes in which your forearms are tied are breaking. At the moment of issuing force, your arms shouldn’t be straightened, according to the principle of “form is curved but intention is straight”. You are using base of your palms to hit. Fingers are suddenly stretching and pointing upwards, with intention of piercing through something. In this moment distribution of weight/force is 70% on front leg. After issuing force, immediately relax. Back foot should naturally make a step toward front foot, so you are again in dingbabu position with 70% of weight on your back leg.



Figure 10.2.3



Figure 10.2.4



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Figure 10.2.5



Figure 10.2.6



Figure 10.2.7



Figure 10.2.8

10.3

DAN TUI SHOU JIN TUI BU LIANXI

SINGLE PUSHING HANDS FORWARD-BACKWARD STEPS PRACTICE

After you practiced fixed position single pushing hands for some time and you are quite familiar with it, you can start practicing it with steps. The aim is practicing not only hands and body but also steps. If in confrontation (pushing hands or free fighting) you only stand in one position, it doesn't conform to demands of real combat. My late father Yao Zongxun used to tell us: "When hands arrive, but steps don't arrive, it is not called skillful, when hands and steps arrive together, fighting is as easy as joking". You can see how important in combat are steps. I hope that course participants will pay attention to steps practice.

Both partners are standing in the same position like in dingbu dan tui shou which was described in module 8. Right feet are at front. A presses ground with his back foot, pushing body forward and making about 30 cm step forward. Front foot steps on ground, with heel slightly lifted. Then back foot also makes a 30 cm step forward. While making the step, A is turning his arm, pushing forward, and slightly pressing downward with



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palm directed downward and fingers pointing forward, towards B's central line. He has control over the point of contact. B's front foot is pressing ground, pushing his body backward, and making about 30 cm step backward with back foot. When back foot steps on ground, front foot makes a 30 cm step toward back foot. So he is in dingbabu position. When B steps back, his arm keeps the position of chengbao. He shouldn't relax his arm too much, having some opposing force, at the same time moving back. Then B makes step forward, pushing towards A. B's back foot is pressing ground and he makes about 30 cm step forward with front foot. When front foot steps on ground, back foot also makes a 30 cm step forward. When B steps forward, he is turning his arm, pushing forward and slightly pressing down, with palm directed downward and fingers pointing forward, towards A's central line. He has control over the point of contact. A's front foot is pressing ground, pushing his body backward, and making about 30 cm step backward with back foot. When back foot steps on ground, front foot makes a 30 cm step toward back foot. So he is again in dingbabu position. When A steps back, his arm keeps the position of chengbao. He shouldn't relax his arm too much, having some opposing force, at the same time moving back.

Above described is forward-backward steps single pushing hands practice. During the exercise you should keep balance and coordination of whole body. The demands of contradictory forces are like those in hunyuan zhuang. You should practice slowly and in relaxed manner, to make the movements correctly. Don't use "wild" force. It's better to practice slower than quicker. After some time of practice, you can do it quicker, but beginners shouldn't hasten, or they won't be able to achieve the coordination of steps and hand methods.



Figure 10.3.1



Figure 10.3.2



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Figure 10.3.3



Figure 10.3.4



Figure 10.3.5



Figure 10.3.6

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MODULE 11

It is 10 months since you started practicing hunyuan zhuang. You already practiced seeking force forward-backward, in opening-closing and upward-downward. You should have some experience and understanding with basic seeking force, so you can practice hunyuan zhuang with mixed seeking force. Why you should practice it? In first stage of practicing hunyuan zhuang you carefully experience and check if you can keep the feeling of being as one with the imagined tree and all surroundings, feeling unity. After getting feeling of this unity, you should also check if you confirm to all demands of intentions and forces in relation between both hands, head and feet, both legs, back hip and front knee, front and back of your body, left and right side etc. In fact all those basic versions of seeking force are designed in order that you can learn seeking force gradually in a systematic way. After having some basis, to make next step toward combat practice, you should start practice with mixing the directions of seeking force without any prearranged order. In combat the changes of forces are extremely fast, so if you practice only seeking force in arranged order, it would be difficult to adjust yourself to changing conditions. I'm introducing here hunyuan zhuang with seeking force in mixed directions, so you can make another step toward the great gate of combat. It should be of big help to your seeking force practice, enabling the study of all aspects of various forces of hunyuan zhuang.

11.1

HUNYUAN ZHUANG (ZONGHE MOJIN)

UNIVERSAL COMBAT POST (SEEKING FORCE IN MIXED DIRECTIONS)



Figure 11.1.1



Figure 11.1.1



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The position is the same as before (see module 3). Body is as if merged into one with imagined tree. After assuming position start mind work. For example imagine that you are pressing the big tree downward. Then stop it. Next you could imagine “opening” and appearing of a crevice in the tree from top to the roots. Stop it, and then imagine pushing the tree forward. Stop it, and next imagine lifting the tree (it’s roots are as if starting to come out of ground). Stop it. Next you could imagine “closing” _ pressing inward and putting the two parts of tree together. Then you can pull the tree back. And then you could for example do “closing”, lifting, pulling, pressing down, opening, pushing. It doesn’t matter from which direction you start and to which direction you change (above is just some example, you can change the directions freely), but you should conform to the same principles as in those basic versions of seeking force, which you learned previously. You should feel comfortable and “getting strength”, with unity and co-ordination, “fullness of force in mind”, ‘using mind and not force”, breathing naturally. While practicing hunyuan zhuang with mixed directions of seeking force, the movement should be small and slow. You should seek the feeling of “force in mind” while being relaxed. You should check whether with changing directions of seeking force you still have the same feelings like practicing with determined direction of seeking force. You shouldn’t be impatient, you should calmly and patiently experience the internal feeling of resistance. If when doing seeking force you get tense and mentally exhausted, you can stop this kind of mind activity for a while, and instead pay attention to relaxing body (but there is no need to lower position of hands). After some time needed for rest, you can start seeking the force again. The time of exercise can be determined individually. Usually (after practicing for 10 months) you can practice 30 minutes on each side. What is important is quality of exercise. Then you can think about extending time of exercise.

Jianshen zhuang (health posts) is a kind of exercise of both spirit and body. It enables resting and regulation of central nervous system, and improves blood circulation. When nervous system is harmonized, all functions get improved. When blood circulation is improved, it improves metabolism. Lying fu’an zhuang and lying chengbao zhuang both belong to yiquan health posts. Those are basic posts. They are very convenient for people weak and sick. They help to get rid of illnesses and to improve health. But also for those who practice combat, it helps to harmonize spirit, recover strength. It can be said that yiquan is kind of medical exercise. If practiced properly it brings many benefits to your health.

11.2

WO SHI FU’AN ZHUANG **LYING PRESSING DOWN POST**

Lye with your back on a bed. You can put something under your head, so you feel comfortable (there should be expression of slight smile on your face). Both legs are straight, both feet are shoulder width apart. Toes slightly hooked back. Both hands are resting on the surface of bed on both sides of your body. Bases of your palms are



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touching bed, your fingers are outstretched and as if pressing down on something. Whole body should be relaxed, breath should flow naturally. Imagine that your whole body is resting on soft cotton wool, having feeling of great comfort. You could also imagine that your body is floating in water with feeling of moving according to the movement of water. Or you can imagine that you are lying on a flying cloud, admiring beautiful nature, forgetting that you are doing any exercise. You can use the same kinds of imaginations which were introduced in module 1 and 2.



Figure 11.2.1

11.3.

WO SHI CHENGBAO ZHUANG

LYING EXPANDING-EMBRACING POST



Figure 11.3.1



Figure 13.3.2

Lie with your back on a bed, with both legs bent and your heels resting on the bed. Toes are slightly hooked back. Both hands are raised, centers of palms directed downward, fingers are slightly outstretched. Elbows are resting on the bed. It's like you hold a ball (it's like in chengbao zhuang described in module 1). You can imagine that there is no bed below your body. You can use the same kind of mind activity as in woshi fu'an zhuang. You can determine the time of practice yourself. Feeling relax and comfort is the main point.

11.4.

DABU LIANXI

BIG STEP PRACTICE

Stand like when preparing for moca bu practice which was described in module 4. Front



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foot steps softly on ground. When moving in the left and forward direction, suddenly issue force with your right foot on ground, making your body and front foot move suddenly forward. Your left foot moves 1-2 cm above ground making a step twice as long as dingbabu position and stepping evenly on ground. Then back foot moves toward front foot, so you are again like in fixed position moca bu, when moving foot is close to supporting foot. Then suddenly issue force with your left foot, pushing your body and right foot forward. At beginning of movement your leg should be bent. Then you are like standing up. There is force of foot pressing down, leg pushing forward and slightly upward. Your right foot moves 1-2 cm above ground, making a step twice as long as dingbabu position and stepping evenly on ground. Your left foot moves toward right foot, so you are again like in fixed position moca bu, when moving foot is close to supporting foot. When back foot issues force, you should have feeling as if your body bumps into something and makes it fly. When front foot moves forward, you should have feeling as if of breaking springs between your both legs. When front foot steps on ground you should have feeling of stability of whole body, as if you were standing in some zhan zhuang position. After practicing big steps forward, you can practice big steps backward. Right foot is issuing force. At beginning your leg is bent. Then there is force of stepping down, pushing with the leg backward and slightly upward. Your body and left foot are moving backward (and to the side). Your left foot is moving 1-2 cm above ground, making step twice as long as dingbabu position. Then right foot moves toward left foot. When making the step and bumping with your body backward, you can imagine breaking springs between your both legs. You body is as if bumping into something and making it fly. When left foot steps on the ground, you should keep balance, as if you were standing in some zhan zhuang position. After making this step you can make another by issuing force with your left foot and making big step with your right foot in the same way as was described above. No matter if you are making steps forward or backward, you should practice seriously. At beginning you should practice comparatively slowly. If you move to quickly it is difficult to control balance of your body and balance of forces. You should learn it gradually, using mind to lead the movement, carefully observing body as a unity, the co-ordination of legs and body.



Figure 11.4.1



Figure 11.4.2



Figure 11.4.3



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Figure 11.4.4



Figure 11.4.5



Figure 11.4.6



Figure 11.4.7



Figure 11.4.8



Figure 11.4.9



Figure 11.4.10

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MODULE 12

12.1

CHENGTUO ZHUANG (ZUO YOU MOJIN) EXPANDING-LIFTING COMBAT POST (SEEKING FORCE IN LEFT-RIGHT DIRECTION)

After you practiced chengtuo zhuang with seeking force forward-backward, and you already have some understanding of it, you can start practicing it with opening-closing seeking force. Although there are several of jiji zhuang (combat postures) they are all based on the same principles. As there are differences in postures, there are also differences in use of mental imaginations. Each posture has its most important way of seeking force. Thanks to all of them you should be able to use the hunyuan li (primeval unity force) of yiquan in different positions, at different angles. So it serves combat needs, where you should be able to issue great power in different situations. Zhan zhuang is yiquan basic training method. It serves the needs of combat practice.

Stand in the same position like practicing chengtuo zhuang with forward-backward seeking force (see module 8). The demands of mind activity are the same. After assuming the position imagine that you are as if splitting the big tree trunk into two, and a crevice appears at the middle. While doing this slight opening, you are slightly sitting down on your back leg. At the same time there should be opening force between your legs. Toes of your front foot are as if “catching ground”. The opening force is here the main force, and other forces are supplemental. When your body presses slightly backward, you have feeling of overcoming some resistance. The main is force of opening, pressing backward. Sitting down and catching ground with toes are supplementary. When there is pressing with body back, there is opening between both palms, forearms, elbows, as if you are splitting the trunk of the tree in two and a crevice of your index finger width appears. There is feeling of stretching springs between your index fingers and opposite eyebrows. The force of opening is main, and forces of pulling back and down are supplementary. Just do slight opening and stop. Then start pressing the two parts of imagined tree together. At this time your back foot presses ground, pushing your body forward. Also between your both legs there is feeling of pressing the two parts of imagined tree together. Front part of your front foot is pressing ground. The main is force directed inward, forces forward and pressing downward are supplementary. When there is some closing between both legs (and at the same time pressing with both legs forward), and pressing down with front foot, your body also presses forward. You should have feeling of overcoming of the resistance of the big tree. You should have feeling of pressing the tree inward with left and right sides of your chest and belly. When legs and body are pressing inward there is also pressing inward between both index fingers, wrists, forearms, upper arms. There is pressing inward, forward and upward. Pressing inward is the main direction, forward and upward are supplementary directions. Now you have put the two parts of tree together. While doing opening, there should be feeling of stretching spring between your front foot and head and stretching of spring between your front knee and back hip. While doing closing there should be feeling of compressing the spring between front foot and head and between front knee and back hip. There is feeling of



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wrapping (embracing) the tree with elbows. Just start the movement and stop it. You can repeat seeking force in opening and closing many times. You should practice slowly and in relax, use mind and not force, breath naturally, carefully observe what is happening. If you feel weary, or your body gets too tense, you can stop the exercise for a moment or use some less demanding mind activity (like those which you use in health posts). When you feel relaxed again, you can continue the mind activity of seeking force. Usually the posture is practiced 30 minutes on each side, but it can be adjusted according to your need



Figure 12.1.1



Figure 12.1.2

12.2

DAN TUI SHOU DING BU XIA YA FA LI FIXED STEP SINGLE PUSHING HANDS ISSUING FORCE DOWNWARD

After you practiced basic single pushing hands exercise for some time, and have some basis, you can start learning various kinds of changes of forces in single pushing hands, steps and issuing force.

Both partners stand like while practicing basic single pushing hands (module 8). A's hand is over B's hand. A uses the moment when B directs force in his arm upward (like trying to lift A's arm) and suddenly is doing movement of sitting down and backward with his body (there is sudden opening between both legs), with body adding force to hand movement. He is pressing on B's arm (making his under wrist area into kind of hook shape), making him move forward and loose balance. There is pressing down and pulling back. In wrist and elbow there is some force directed outward. This way A takes control over B. Then A suddenly presses ground with his back foot (this way pushing his body forward), also suddenly pressing down with front foot. There is feeling of closing between both legs, hitting with both legs forward and pressing ground with front foot. It feels like if body hits front hand and the hand pushes forward. There is pushing forward,



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some pressing down with forearm (controlling opponents forearm) and at the same time there is some force directed upward (in palm area). A uses mainly base of his palm and use of fingers is supplementary. A should have intention of penetrating opponent with his force or of pushing him far away. In moment of contact force is issued, making opponent fly back. In the moment of issuing force, 70% of A's weight is on his front leg. After issuing force it immediately comes back to typical position of more weight being on back leg. Please be careful while practicing any issuing force with partner, and put a lot of attention to your partners safety.



Figure 12.2.1



Figure 12.2.2



Figure 12.2.3



Figure 12.2.4



Figure 12.2.5



Figure 12.2.6



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12.3.

DAN TUI SHOU ZOU BU XIA YA FA LI

SINGLE PUSHING HANDS ISSUING FORCE DOWNWARD WITH STEP

Both partners stand like while practicing basic single pushing hands (module 8). A's hand is over B's hand. A uses the moment when B directs force in his arm upward (like trying to lift A's arm) and suddenly presses ground with his front foot, pushing his body backward and making about 30 cm step back with his back foot. After back foot steps down, front foot makes step about 30 cm backward, toward back foot. This is again dingbabu position. When A moves back, he makes kind of hook shape below his wrist area and using force of his whole body suddenly unbalances B. When B loses balance and moves forward, A suddenly presses ground with his back foot, pushing his body forward. He makes about 30 cm step forward with his front foot. When he steps down with front part of his front foot, at the same time he suddenly issues force forward (there is pushing forward, some pressing down with forearm, and pushing upward with palm). The force is issued mainly with base of the palm, fingers are supplementary. A has intention of making B fly back. In the moment of contact there is issuing of force. In the moment of issuing force, 70% of A's weight is on his front leg. After issuing force it immediately comes back to typical position of more weight being on back leg (before this your back foot makes a 30 cm step forward). Please be careful while practicing any issuing force with partner, and put a lot of attention to your partner's safety.



Figure 12.3.1



Figure 12.3.2



Figure 12.3.3



Figure 12.3.4



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Figure 12.3.5



Figure 12.3.6

12.4.

DING BU DAN TUI SHOU CE MIAN FA LI **FIXED STEP SINGLE PUSHING HANDS ISSUING FORCE FROM THE SIDE**

Both partners stand like in two previous exercises. B actively pushes toward A. A is suddenly sitting down and moving back. There is sudden tension of springs being stretched between both legs. There is feeling of a spring being stretched between head and front foot and between back hip and front knee. A uses his whole body to unbalance B. He presses down on B's forearm, pulls back and makes a circular movement outward. Turning of palm and wrist is accented. The force of outward whirling is bigger than the force of pressing down. Now B is unbalanced, with body turned to the left, and as if falling obliquely forward and to the right. A uses this situation, pressing ground with back foot and straightening back leg, using body to add force to hand movement. His hand is moving inward, forward, as if slightly pressing down and turning inward and moving upward. His palm suddenly issues force from the side to center of B's chest. A should have intention of force penetrating B or making him fly away. In the moment of issuing force 70% of A's weight is on his front leg. Then it immediately comes back to standard position with more weight on back leg, when it is easy to repeat issuing force.

In yiquan pushing hands with issuing force, without steps or with steps, when you just start practicing it, you shouldn't use too much force opponent. Both partners shouldn't use more than 40% of their force. After you are able to practice with some co-ordination, you can use bigger force. It should be practiced on both sides. Your body should work as one. Steps, body, hands should be coordinated. This is a minimum demand. Hope that you will practice seriously.



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Figure 12.4.1



Figure 12.4.2



Figure 12.4.3



Figure 12.4.4



Figure 12.4.5



Figure 12.4.6

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