



GUANG PING
YANG T'AI CHI ASSOCIATION

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FROM THE PRESIDENT



As we are all experiencing, this is a very difficult and challenging time, with our uncertain and suffering economy and the political turmoil of the 2008 Presidential election. These major life-changing events can be overwhelming and no doubt affect our well being by adding a great deal of stress to our lives. Some good advice at these stressful times is to take a step away from what is happening externally and take a moment to feel your feet

rooted to the earth. This is the time of year where we need to become more rooted and start conserving our energy; instead of looking at one tree, look at all the trees--this is the Tao. Stay in touch with your body and remember to keep body and mind together as one. This season I have indeed found that my Tai chi classes are the most attended in the last fifteen years, which tells me something. It tells me that people are looking for help, looking for an outlet to help disperse their anxiety and anger. Nothing is more important than your health and spirit. Nothing external should be able to influence that, no matter what is happening around you. Tai chi will bring all things to a respected order. In nature, water flows down the mountain and creates its own path. When the path is blocked it redirects and continues its path another way down the mountain; this is nature's way. Everything returns back to the way so don't be discouraged, follow your spirit. Invest in loss!

Think about it.
Your President,
Randy Elia

Year
of the
Rat

鼠



GPYTCA

Lifetime Memberships Available!

If you are interested in supporting our organization by becoming a Lifetime Member please contact:

Julie Li @ membership@guangpingyang.org

for more information. The dues for a lifetime membership are **\$750.00** and a flexible quarterly installment plan is available.

Mark your calendar

The 2009 Guang Ping Yang Tai Chi Association Conference will be held in San Francisco, Ca. on **June 19-21, 2009.**

Editor's Corner

Editor: Sifu Thomas Carney
207 Kinderkamack Road, Emerson NJ 07630
Email: Editor@GuangPingYang.org

We need articles from members and especially teachers. Please email me above and include pictures I may use.

The editor reserves the right to edit any material or article submitted for publication.

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WHAT'S INSIDE

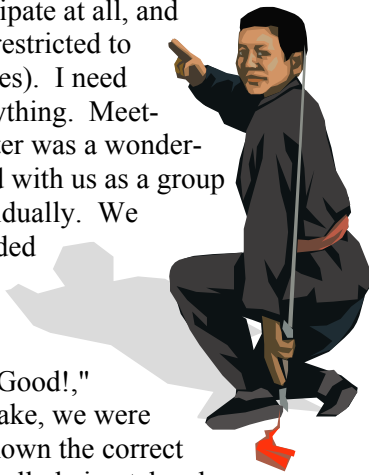
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MEETING THE GRANDMASTER

Meeting the Grandmaster

by Kia Hanning

Recently, my Shaolin Kung Fu instructor hosted his Grandmaster as he came through the United States for an extended visit and my classmates and I were fortunate enough to be offered a special seminar with him. I was extremely nervous in the days leading up to the seminar for a number of reasons. There was the concern that I would not perform well and would embarrass my teacher. I was also worried that the Grandmaster would be very strict and difficult to work with. Finally, I was worried because I have a broken collar bone and that I would not be able to participate at all, and would spend the morning restricted to the sidelines (well, mat-lines). I need not have worried about anything. Meeting my Shaolin Grandmaster was a wonderful experience. He worked with us as a group as well as each of us individually. We were gently but firmly guided and corrected. We were enthusiastically encouraged when we got something right with a: "YES! Good!," and, when we made a mistake, we were corrected positively and shown the correct movement, sometimes literally being taken by the hand and guided to the correct position. It was also helpful to get a slightly different approach and method to the study of the style. We all have our issues that we need to work on and the details which we seem unable to "get." Yet when we have a new set of eyes working with us, this new person may explain or guide us in a slightly different way, and everything clicks; or at least gives us a different perspective so we can understand what we are doing wrong, and begin to correct ourselves. Not only did he talk about the form and style, but the Grandmaster also spoke to us about the importance of martial arts as a way of life, particularly this style of Shaolin. Being a Tai Chi student as well, I think his teachings ring true with Tai Chi also. He pointed out that our greatest opponent is ourselves.



As we study over the years, we can get to the point where we can easily defend ourselves against most opponents, but still we are defeated by ourselves. We must constantly fight against our own laziness, anger, and selfishness. Once we can defeat those aspects of ourselves, we can achieve a significantly higher level of inner strength and energy; to the point that it affects our entire

lives. When we can let go of these negative aspects, we are free to focus on the important things of love, respect for others, open-mindedness, and keeping an open heart. It will help us to live longer and happier lives.

The other thing which really struck me was an analogy he used. He said that many martial arts outside of his system are big and flowery and pretty . . . big beautiful kicks . . . soaring punches. We were told a story of a challenge by four other Masters, three from another style of martial arts altogether, and one from another form of Kung Fu. All four arrived in beautiful, pristine uniforms and began elaborate stretches and warm-ups, as though preparing for a marathon. My Grandmaster was there in a t-shirt and comfortable pants. He squared off with the first opponent, feet parallel, hands held gently in front of him. His opponent went into an elaborate, stiff "en garde" stance and began to circle. My Grandmaster waited. The opponent became puzzled. Finally, my Grandmaster stepped forward, the opponent hesitated, then went in for a kick. My Grandmaster sidestepped (very similar to Hsing-I) closer to his opponent, and pushed him over. The opponent recovered his balance and attacked again. My Grandmaster stepped to the side and behind his opponent, and pushed him down again. This went on again and again with each opponent. Only one opponent realized what was going on and decided he wanted to stay and study; the other three plotted to "win." They argued that he really didn't have any martial arts, he was just pushing them. These men had no idea that this was the whole point. Their bodies were being used against them to defeat them, with minimal expenditure of energy on the part of their opponent. Also, he was determined not to actually hit them or at least not to hit them hard. He did not want to hurt them, but they wanted to hurt him. The point of this story was two-pronged. First, these styles of martial arts should be purely defensive, as we all know. You should wait until you are attacked, and, leading up to that, it is essential that we try to verbally diffuse the situation. Secondly, he said: "Be the fruit, not the flower. The flower is pretty, but gets you nowhere. The fruit will take you where you want to go." I had heard analogies similar to this before, referring to the big beautiful movements, but never had I heard the more subtle styles which we practice referred to as the fruit. It made perfect sense

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OUT OF NICK'S LIBRARY



Out of the Library By Nick D'Antoni

Tao: The Watercourse Way

By: Alan Watts with the collaboration of Al Chung-Liang Huang

© 1975 by: Mary Jane Yates Watts

Foreword by Al Chung-Liang Huang

publ: Pantheon Books, New York

ISBN: 0-394-73311-8

Hello again! Alan Watts, for those who may not know him, was an important member of a relatively small group of scholars, philosophers, and writers whose teachings and writings were of tremendous significance in the West's popular re-discovery of the Eastern Wisdom Tradition in the latter part of the 20th century. The writings and teachings of folks like Watts, Thomas Merton, Richard Wilhelm, Thomas Cleary, and Arthur Waley among others awakened the interest and spurred the curiosity of an entire generation or two. The list of titles written by Alan Watts devoted to the topics of Buddhism, Zen Studies, Taoism, Religion, Meditation, Philosophy and related matters is not just impressive for its length and breadth, but also for the importance many of his works have assumed in the field.

I first came across Alan Watts writing in the late 1965 or 1966 and he was certainly a force in my continuing curiosity about, and ongoing exploration of Eastern thought. The first time I read *The Watercourse Way* was more than twenty-five years ago and I recall enjoying it but not much else. I never purchased my own copy to re-read and make notes in so I didn't have a copy in my library until a couple years ago when I noticed it on a shelf in the bookstore and bought it. It's taken me too long to get around to reading it, but ... Wow!

Tao: The Watercourse Way, was Alan Watts' last book project before he died in November, 1973. It was left nearly done, yet not complete. The man who, as one of Watts' closest friends and fellow students of life at the time, was asked to pull the nearly finished manuscript together and prepare it for publication was Al Chung-liang Huang, a name familiar to many in the world of Chinese Martial Arts. Huang and Watts had a comfort-

able working relationship, each read and commented on the other's manuscripts while working on their respective books. They spent time together teaching at the Esalen Institute. Alan Watts also wrote a foreword for Al Huang's book, *Embrace Tiger, Return to Mountain*. Their last morning together is wonderfully described in Huang's foreword to this volume. This foreword provides not only an insight into the circumstances of its creation and how the book was brought to completion, but is a sincere tribute to the deep mutual respect, love, and admiration of two friends and fellow travelers.

Watts' project is to lead his readers on the journey toward what he hopes will be a personal insight into the meaning of the *Tao* and the way of thinking and being in which it evolved. His first step is to take us on a short exploration of how Chinese written language evolved. No, he doesn't try in a single chapter to teach us Chinese. Instead his goal is to provide a glimpse of, and insight into, how the non-alphabetic development of a picture and concept, mnemonic oriented written language works. He gives us a ground on which to begin to understand a little of the different way of seeing and thinking about things that results from such a way of relating to something as developmentally fundamental to us as language. He wants us to begin to be able to "see" a bit that way ourselves, to broaden our perspective, and to give us a new, less rigidly structured, view of the *Watercourse Way*.

In his chapter on language Watts provides one of the most intriguing and effective demonstrations of how the western world already includes this way of communicating – symbolic versus alphabetic – I've ever seen. In a "Table 1. A Selection of Western Ideograms" he lists some common symbols as examples, astronomical, mathematical, etc., all readily understood. In "Table 2. Western Ideograms used as Language" he then takes a selection of those common symbols, mixes in a few others and tells us a story in great detail with no accompanying alphabetic words at all. He also illustrates how compounds used to express more sophisticated or complex meaning might be created using his basic symbols as a starting point. It's quite fun and quite successfully breaks us out of our preconceptions about what sort of language we need to convey meaning. Pointing out the vastly different levels of complexity in grammatical and syntactic construction, Watts shows us how, "*In other words, Chinese is simpler than it looks ...*"

For Watts the image of a smoothly flowing body of water which unperturbedly rolls with, in,

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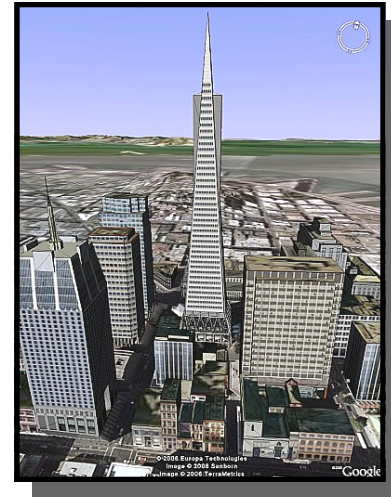
IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Dear Members,

The Guang Ping Yang Tai Chi Association is pleased to announce that our **2009 Conference will be held in...**

San Francisco on June 19-21, 2009.

It's been a year of trying to find the right location that can accommodate our group while also keeping in mind these difficult economic times. What we have found are reasonably-priced private accommodations and meals, along with registration fees; details to follow shortly. This may be our biggest conference ever as the date chosen was based on the annual Kuo Memorial service held in Portsmouth Square, held simultaneously with our conference so that we all may attend both of these exciting events!



(Continued from page 3 - Nick's Library)

through, and around the contour of its banks and the geography of the terrain is a clear representation of how a life lived in the way of the *Tao* behaves. It seeks its own level. It flows smoothly along and effortlessly finds its way around obstacles. It remains soft but can be amazingly forceful in flood. It seeps through cracks and remains calm in containment. All these and many more. But before trying to explain more about his notion of the *Tao* he wants us to look more deeply into "... *the very roots of Chinese thinking and feeling, ... the principal of polarity.*" He uses examples from writings of ancients both east and west, as well as some more modern scientific tracts, to lead us through discussion of "*The Yin-Yang Polarity.*" All the selections from Chinese sources that are translated, not just here but throughout the book, are also included in Chinese script in one of two separate sections. We're encouraged to look to them for what the rhythm and flow of the calligraphy can add to our grasp of the spirit or meaning.

One of the devices Watts uses to help guide his readers to understanding is detailed analysis of specific

Chinese characters that represent key principles or ideas – such as *Tao*, *wu-wei*, *te* – and their elemental units. Breaking down the symbols into the component parts and historical antecedents he opens up a world of depth and thoughtful interpretation for us to see. Each of these ventures into the depths of a character's meaning is accompanied by explicit calligraphic illustrations in the margins of the text, so the visual imagery is clear and readily accessible. Watts carefully builds from one example, one concept, to the next, skillfully showing us how to follow where he has already gone – not in a didactic or pedantic way and certainly not dry at all. Watts is a good story teller and guide. In a way, reading this book is like taking a walk in the woods with a careful, caring, and knowledgeable guide, one capable of helping us see all the details and nuances – pointing out the nearly hidden deer tracks that cross our path, the small edible mushroom at the base of that tree, the call of the rare bird – as we move through forest. He brings us along and allows us to see clearly what he sees, as he takes us step by step along the way. For Watts the *Tao*

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LIFETIME MEMBER

The Guang Ping Yang Tai Chi Association wishes to thank Mary Sturtevant for becoming our newest Lifetime Member!

Mary considers being a Lifetime Member of GPYTCA "a way of giving back to the Universe for all the gifts and blessings that Spirit provides along this journey."



Mary Sturtevant M. Ed., M. B. A., Associate Professor Emerita, Tufts University, Medford, MA.; certified Reiki Master; certified Taiji instructor, certified Qigong instructor; certified Hospice volunteer; student and practitioner of eastern philosophy, healing modalities and movement forms for over 30 years; embraced "Path of Harmony" as her work and spiritual path in 1994; teaches Reiki, Qigong, Medita-

tion and Taiji; offers Reiki and Qigong healing treatments; practices Reiki and Qigong on a daily basis for health, healing and well-being; presents workshops nationally on the energies of Reiki and of Qigong; served on the Boards of Directors of the National Qigong Association and Guang Ping Yang Tai Chi Association. Presently, she serves as chairperson of the Ethics and Integrity Committee of the National Qigong Association. As well as teaching workshops and classes in Qigong, Reiki and Taiji, Mary is a Hospice volunteer, and served on the Hospice Board of Directors of the Littleton, New Hampshire area. She is also a volunteer with the Appalachian Mountain Club.

If you would like more information on becoming a Lifetime Member of GPYTCA you may contact Julie Li, our Membership Coordinator, at...

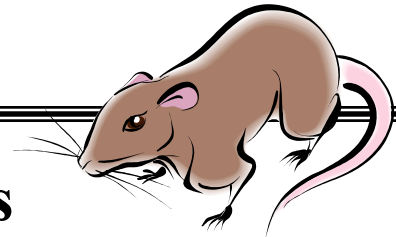
membership@guangpingyang.org.

A convenient, quarterly installment payment plan for lifetime dues is now available.

(Continued from page 2 - Meeting the Grandmaster)

to me. The styles we study, where we use the actions and momentum of our opponents against them, can be so much more effective because they are the fruit. The flowers fade away, but the fruit sustains us.

The seminar as a whole was wonderful. He gave us new approaches to "correct ourselves" so that when we are working at home we can be sure we are maintaining the proper form. I came away with new tips and suggestions on how to improve, as well as new ways to work on my footwork. He even altered a few of the forms for me so that I could continue to practice at home as I heal from my injury. This approach to teaching is definitely my favorite. He is the kind of teacher I aspire to be. I want to be inspiring but respected; encouraging, but firm. I want my students to rush home from class to practice what they have learned. I was lucky enough to have a Sifu like this when I began my study of Tai Chi, and I have come across a few others along my path, including my current Tai Chi teacher, as well as my Shaolin instructor. He learned well from his Grandmaster, not only the forms and the style, but the method of teaching and best ways to treat your students. We should all be so lucky to have the kinds of teachers I have had.



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General Fund

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(Continued from page 4 - Nick's Library)

is powerful and gentle, serious and playful, serene and joyous and the many other things he shows us in this book. Some of the sights he points out along the way may be surprising and "marvelous" while others elicit more of an "oh, of course!" response from us, but it's all worth taking in.

Among other things, Watts looks at the juxtaposition of Confucian and Taoist thought, as primarily represented by Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu, and how they provide a balance and complement to one another. He points to many similarities and agreement between both Buddhist and Taoist philosophies. For example: the notion common to both that a sage is "... *one who has no desires* ..." is held by both. But he also points out the differences as well, for instance, reminding us that Taoist tradition also speaks of the sage as a person whose "... *joy and anger occur as naturally as the four seasons*..." Watts is convinced that true Virtue, like the true Tao, cannot be forced, contrived, or prescribed, and thus neither can the truly virtuous life be attained by force, striving, or desire. He would have us come to realize that the true *te*, which he calls "Virtuality", is something different from, greater than, and yet less than, a "... *sense of moral rectitude*." He asks us to remind ourselves "... *that Taoism is based on the recognition that the world as described is included in but not the same as the world as it is. As a way of contemplation, it is being aware of life without thinking about it, and then carrying this on even while one is thinking, so that thoughts are not confused with nature.*"



Well, I've rambled on at some length, but I just can't finish without sharing with you one of my favorite quotes, Watts' definition of the Taoist concept of *wu-wei* (often translated, "non-action") as he describes it to his readers. I can't imagine a more succinct way of putting what I believe is the basic philosophy guiding the practice of taiji and a way of life that embodies taiji principles. "*Wu-wei is thus the life-style of one who follows the Tao, and must be understood primarily as a form of intelligence – that is, or knowing the principles, structures, and trends of human and natural affairs so well that one uses the least amount of energy in dealing with them.*" What better way to describe the taiji lifestyle?

Rating: No stars, just ... Buy it!

Until next time ...

Take care, be well, and happy reading. *-Nick*



Like Father, Like Daughter

Larry and Kristina Riddle's young daughter Tara Colleen proves to be as flexible as her father during their rigorous Tai Chi warm-up stretches!

Certified

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Mission Statement Guang Ping Yang T'ai Chi Association



To promote, perpetuate, develop interest in, and preserve the quality of Guang Ping Yang style T'ai Chi Chuan throughout the world, and to provide support for research and education in Guang Ping Yang T'ai Chi in honor of the memory of Sifu Kuo Lien Ying, who brought Guang Ping to the United States, and in commemoration of his unselfish sharing of his many skills.

We strive to develop and honor the life-enhancing qualities of respect, humility, integrity, honesty, loyalty, and kindness. We manifest our commitment to this process by honoring our teachers, students, each other, and the practice of Internal Arts.

Calendar of Events

Action Martial Arts Magazine Hall of Honors

Tropicana Casino & Resort, Atlantic City, NJ.

January 9, & 10th 2009

World's largest assembly of Celebrities, Champions, Suppliers and Movers and Shakers in Martial Arts Over 1300 in attendance; with a full day of seminars.

Information contact: Master Alan Goldberg

Phone: 718-856-68070

Online: 4martialarts@earthlink.net

www.ActionMagStore.com



WORLD TAI CHI & QIGONG DAY

Saturday, April 25, 2009

11th Annual International Chinese Martial Arts Championship

May 22-24, 2009

Gaylord Palms Resort & Convention Center

Kissimmee, Florida

kungfu@usa.com

www.kungfuchampionship.com

Kungfu/Taichi Trip to China

June 24 – July 7, 2009

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Information contact: Donald

Phone: 330-671-1917

Event Address: 89 First Street Suite 204-120

Hudson, OH, 44236 USA

info@nuvutraveler.com

www.nuvutraveler.com

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July 17,18 & 19 2009 (3 days)

Competitions include external and internal forms, weapons, sparring, push hands, and sanshou. Seminars are also featured by Masters and Grandmasters.

Information contact: Jimmy Wong

Phone: 972-680-7888

Event Address: 1350 E. Arapaho Rd. Ste 110

Richardson, TX, 75081 USA

usachinwoo@gmail.com

www.legendsofkungfu.com

Disclaimer: The events listed are provided as a resource. They are not sponsored or endorsed by the GPYTC.A.



GUANG PING

YANG T'AI CHI ASSOCIATION

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c/o Peter Kwok's Kung Fu Academy
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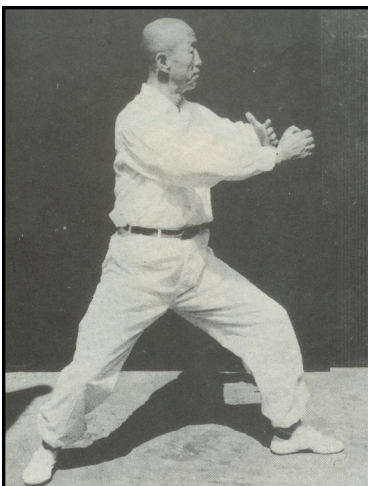


Photo and description taken from:
"Tai Chi Chuan in Theory and Practice"
By: Kuo Lien Ying

Movement 6

Deflect Downward, Parry, and Punch

Pan, Lan, Ch'ui