



Yang Cheng Fu's

Ten Important

Principles

Yang Cheng fu was the grandson of Yang Lu Chan the founder of Yang style Tai Chi. It was Yang Cheng Fu's methods and teaching that allowed Yang style Tai Chi to be disseminated throughout China openly and therefore beyond China's often-restrictive borders to the rest of the world.

As a young boy it was said Yang Cheng Fu was not that interested in his families' Tai Chi as it was taught exclusively for martial purposes and he had no real interest in fighting. It was only later through talking and training with his uncle Yang Ban Hou that he realised that Tai Chi had the ability to strengthen and energise the body and considered it useful as a health practice.

Yang Cheng fu is credited with the development of the Yang large frame. This practice was better for the tendons joints and chi circulation. Because of the popularity of his large frame Tai Chi and the numbers of students he is said to have taught, he simplified Tai Chi's principles into ten important points.

1. Emptying the thoughts and raising the head as if the crown of the head is pushing up against heaven.

The neck must be straightened to allow the head to be raised. This allows chi to arrive at the crown of the head. Do not use physical force or the neck will be stiff and chi and blood will not be able to flow through it is important to have a natural lively feeling and emptiness in the mind.

2. Hollowing the chest to raise the back

When you depress the chest naturally chi will sink down to the Dan tian.

If you lift the chest then chi cannot sink and gets stuck in the chest the body becomes light and will not be able to root. When you raise the back, chi will go to the back. Sink the chest and you will be able to raise the back then one can project chi from the spine.

3. Loosen the waist

The waist is the commander of the whole body when one can loosen the waist chi will increase in the legs and have power thus providing a stable platform for rooting. Changes of movement from substantial to insubstantial and vice versa are derived from the turning of the waist. It is said that the source of chi is in the waist if you lack power look for the defect in the waist

4. Differentiate between substantial and insubstantial.

The weight of the whole body should rest on one leg then the leg becomes substantial and the other insubstantial. When one is able to distinguish and separate substantial with insubstantial in your practice

you can turn and move with lightness and effortlessnes. If not then the steps will be sluggish slow and unstable and you will easily be thrown off balance.

5. Sink the shoulders and weight down the elbows

Sinking the shoulders is to let the shoulders loosen up and drop downwards if you cannot relax and sink then you shoulders will be uptight this causes the chi to rise and you will not be able to exert strength from the body.

Weigh down the elbows means to let the elbows drop and hang loose. If the elbows are raised then the shoulders will have great difficulty in sinking and will affect the strength of you internal power.

6. Use Yi or intention and not physical force.

In using Tai Chi the whole body must remain relaxed so that not one ounce of physical strength remains in the muscles and tendons to restrict ones power. Only then will you be light, flexible and agile enough to turn and change and move freely and easily.

One might doubt how one can develop such power without using physical strength. It is because the body has meridians pathways, which enable chi to flow. When physical strength is used then chi gets stuck in the muscles blocking energy flow and results in sluggish movement, what is sometimes called in internal schools clumsy force.

A small movement in any part of the body will affect the whole.

If you use mind or the Yi then chi will flow where it is directed; chi and blood circulate together if there is no Yi then there is no chi and blood

circulation is poor. If you practice this method everyday and never stop then after along time you will develop real internal force.

7. Co-ordinate the upper body with the lower body

The Tai Chi classics say that movement should be rooted in the feet, stabilised through the legs, controlled by the waist and expressed and released through the hands. When the movement of the feet legs waist and hands are in unison then intention will follow in the eyes. This is the complete co-ordination of above and below if one of these is missing then the body becomes disordered and fragmented.

8. Internal and external co-ordinate

Training in Tai Chi predominately is in the spirit, hence spirit is the commander and the body is the subordinate and should move as directed.

When the spirit is raised and the body becomes light then the form will open and close open means not only opening the hands and legs but also the mind when closing it should be the same when you can make the inside and the outside become one then it becomes complete.

9. Continuity without breakage

In external schools the power used is only physical strength and therefore it has a start and a finish to it, it has connections and breaks the point between the old force becoming exhausted and the issuing of new force is a weak point and can be exploited an taken advantage of.

Because Tai Chi uses Yi and not physical strength the movements become continuous without breaks or ending like a great river rolling on unceasingly. When in circulation the chi is described as like drawing silk from a cocoon.

10. Seeking stillness within movement

In external martial arts power is generated by jumping punching and kicking as hard as possible. Hence after prolonged practice one is panting for breath and the blood vessels become enlarged having used up all their energy.

By contrast Tai Chi emphasises stillness over movement. Even though in motion the form appears tranquil, therefore when practicing the form the slower it is the better with long deep breathing to allow the chi to sink to the Dan tian to replenish the lost energy so as not to over exert themselves physically.

