

Chi-kung

Development and Practical

Application



In

WING CHUN

Kung Fu

By
Dr. Scott Baker

Cautionary Note to the Reader

The principles and techniques presented in this book are your information purposes only. The reader should not attempt any of the techniques and exercises in this book without the supervision of a qualified instructor. This is most especially true regarding the principles of Dim Mak. It is the strong recommendation of the author that you DO NOT attempt to apply the Dim Mak techniques on another person without a qualified instructor who is experienced in Dim Mak and revival techniques being present. As always, it is wise to consult your physician before undertaking any stressful exercise routine.

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Foreword For "Chi Kung, Development and Practical Application in Wing Chun Kung-Fu"

By Erle Montaigne (Master Degree, China)

Having read many books on Wing Chun over my 35 years in the martial arts business, it is with great pleasure that I now write the foreword for Scott Baker's book. This book is an attempt to bring Wing Chun out of the purely physical domain and in to the internal area including such things as Chi Kung (Qigong) and Dim-Mak. There have been other books that include Dim-Mak, however, these have been sketchy to say the least. Scott attempts to delve deeper into the area of point striking, covering acupuncture points and their effects etc. This book will be a great inclusion in any Wing Chun player's library.

Erle Montaigne

January 23, 2001

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Chapter 1

Introduction:

What is Kung Fu

This book is about kung fu, specifically the Wing Chun system of kung fu. Even more specifically, it is about the often mystical or secretive internal Chi-kung skills of Wing Chun kung fu. It is written specifically to those who currently practice Wing Chun, or have an invested interest in Wing Chun kung fu specifically. Kung fu is a term that has become synonymous with Martial Arts in both the West and the East. Even in mainland China today the martial arts are referred to frequently as gung fu (Mandarin pronunciation). Originally the term kung fu was used to refer to any skill or ability that had been developed through persistent effort over time. This understanding is helpful to those who have chosen to embark on the life journey of learning a martial art. Not all systems of combat are as difficult to learn as others, but then not all are as effective as others are either. Wing Chun Kung Fu is one of the most notable, effective martial systems available. When Wing Chun is practiced fully, with its secretive foundation of deep energy skills intact, then it truly becomes a system of skills that require unique and diligent effort over time to master. It is truly a kung fu system in the literal meaning of the phrase, as well as the modern meaning.

What it takes to Master Internal Kung Fu

When one begins training in a kung fu style he or she often is unaware of the degree of discipline that will be required of them to progress to the point they desire. This is especially true among western students. It is common for a teacher to hear the question, “how long will it take for me to get to...?” It is not an unfair question, but it is impossible to answer. There is an old

story told in the halls where kung fu was taught anciently that symbolizes the irony of the student’s desire to progress through skills quickly.

The student asks the master how long it takes most students to master their system. The master replies, “15 years”. The student is shocked, then asks “how long would it take me if I work twice as hard”? The master replies, “30 years”! The student protests, “but what if I practice 3 times longer and harder than all the other students, then how long will it take me”? The master smiles and answers, “then it will take you 45 years”.

The moral of this story should be obvious. It illustrates that to learn a valuable skill, one has to be willing to practice for however long it takes to gain that skill. By trying to shorten that time, either by practicing harder or more often doesn’t always mean you will learn it faster. The obsession with being first, or getting to a certain skill level quickly, most often negates the attainment of the very skill desired. This is most certainly the case when learning Wing Chun’s deep energy skills. A focus on learning these abilities by a certain deadline often gets in the way of understanding the true nature of the skill being practiced. With energy skills, one has to let go of time frames and fall in love with the path. One has to learn to enjoy the journey and focus his attention on what is going on where he is currently, rather than always looking ahead to what is down the road. In learning today’s lessons well, tomorrow’s lessons will come much quicker than anticipated.

Kung fu requires a specific quality of personality for one to pay the price of mastery. You must fall in love with learning the skills, and forsake the modern tendency to cram more stuff into less time. Kung Fu

mastery requires a lifetime commitment to learning and developing quality skills. Wing Chun was said to take from 7 to 15 years to master by the monks who first developed it. That is an ambitious time frame, but given that the monks lived their kung fu 24 hours a day, year round it is not entirely unrealistic. True mastery is nothing short of a lifetime endeavor. Sometimes some people may set their idea of what mastery is at a level less than true mastery. Such people may believe and even claim to have mastered a kung fu skill or system, but those who understand the path and know their abilities also know they are not true masters. Such people may puff up their egos with grand titles but the truth sooner or later shows up through their mediocre skills.

Those desiring true mastery, not only learn to master the kung fu skills of their chosen system, but also develop considerable mastery over their human failings and personality. One's nature is refined and developed as a by-product of the years of discipline invested in walking the kung fu path. Those who practice a martial system that has demanding and difficult skill sets (like Wing Chun) will notice many students come and go. Only the very few will ever acquire the discipline to travel the path of kung fu to its enlightened possibilities. Those who train, but do not discipline themselves in the kung fu way will surely benefit from their brief encounter with the arts, but lacking the commitment and discipline to unlock its secrets they will never know the mysteries they may have discovered about themselves, life, and our magical universe.

Wing Chun with or without Chi Energy?

The internal or Chi-kung side of Wing Chun is one of the last great secrets of the art. Many schools do not teach, or even

discuss this internal side. Others pay it lip service but do little to bring its power into their training. It should be no surprise to western students of Wing Chun to realize that their kung fu lineage will always return to a Chinese root. In China, I quickly realized that for the Chinese people all styles of kung fu have a significant Chi-kung component. For the Chinese to practice kung fu without any energy skills as part of the training is absurd. For them martial arts are always taught and practiced with chi energy.

Most of modern Wing Chun has come through grandmaster Yip Man's line. Grandmaster Yip himself was somewhat reluctant to teach the chi side of the system to students who were less dedicated or gifted. But there are many stories of Grandmaster Yip's Chi-kung abilities. One that is common is that he would sometimes spend up to an hour to perform the Sil Num Tao form. It has been reported that he sometimes put a wet piece of paper on his shoulders and that after finishing the form the warmth generated from the energy would dry the paper. Anybody familiar with Chi-kung training would recognize these as typical chi building practices.

For some reason those who became skilled in the chi development that is an essential part of Wing Chun became somewhat reluctant to pass these skills on. Perhaps it was due to a cultural problem where Chinese teachers often chose not to teach chi to non-Chinese students. Or perhaps it was due to a lack of a workable understanding of chi in the West that made it difficult for Chinese teachers to pass this knowledge on. Even today some teachers are reluctant to discuss chi openly or publicly with their students. In Western Wing Chun circles in general, the idea of chi is often thought of as more mythical than real. Those who know about it still follow the closed mouth tradition passed down to them from their Wing Chun parentage.

Another reason many Wing Chun practitioners are unfamiliar with the internal aspect of their art is the fact that Wing Chun can be an effective fighting system without learning the difficult internal side. Aikido is similar in this regard. Many law enforcement officers learn Aikido techniques to help them control and subdue a difficult individual. These techniques work effectively, but possess only a small portion of the true power they can manifest when learned with the internal side of Aikido. One only has to watch footage of the great Founder of Aikido, O'Sensai Uyeshiba demonstrating his skills to see the difference between Aikido done with chi (ki) energy and the Aikido given to law enforcement as techniques. The same is true with Wing Chun. Its techniques work because they are scientific principle centered motions designed to be efficient and effective. Even done poorly Wing Chun is more than a match for many other Martial systems. But when Wing Chun is performed with its full essence intact, with Chi-kung skills behind the framework of quality techniques, it is many, many times more effective, powerful and even magical.

Like Aikido, Wing Chun is an internal, Chi-kung art. All its principles, stances, techniques and philosophies point to this. It is so obvious it almost seems ridiculous to need to point it out! But also like Aikido in Wing Chun there are those who learn the techniques only, and then there are some who train the energy. Why then is it difficult to find a teacher who can and will teach the internal side of Wing Chun? Any who know Chi-kung will know the answer. Any martial system is much easier to teach without the seemingly mystical internal side included. This is the reason two versions of Aikido have evolved, one with and one without the internal skills. It seems Wing Chun also as an internal version and a technique based version. It is

so much easier to learn both Aikido and Wing Chun without the internal side.

Today martial arts have become very commercial. Teachers try to attract more students to bigger schools so they can make more money. Students are pushed through the training quickly, and thus they may not develop quality skills. Teaching Chi-kung properly requires a dedicated patient student and a wise teacher who can point the way. There is no way to rush this essential aspect of kung fu! Those who still attempt to teach the internal side find that it is most difficult to teach. In fact you can not teach it! All a good teacher can do is point the way. He can invite the student to experience his chi, but it is up to the student to learn it. It is much easier to teach a technique or a motion. Techniques you can see, you can correct, you can drill them and practice them. The student can also imitate it easily. But with internal skills they can not be seen outwardly, they can only be felt, experienced, and this is most difficult to teach to another. These are some of the reasons we see less real Chi-kung development in Wing Chun, or any of the martial arts today.

A Principle Centered System

Perhaps one reason Wing Chun is still very effective even when taught without the more difficult internal skills is because it is a principle based system. The story of my friend Mark is a perfect example of this. Mark had no martial training but was often in situations where he was required to defend himself. He worked in many dangerous situations doing security work, providing care for the criminally insane and as a police officer. I remember the first time I introduced Mark to any kung fu I decided to teach him a series of fighting principles, which are the base of Wing Chun. I taught him no techniques per say, but demonstrated

and drilled these principles. Mark took to them quickly and found they greatly improved his fighting ability. Later when he wanted to learn more I gave him some of the Wing Chun techniques, the boxing forms and some drills to work the footwork and hand coordination. Mark practiced and became very proficient at using these skills. After only about 3 months of practicing these drills he was able to test them in combat.

While working security for a courthouse in Arizona Mark's attention was drawn to a loud angry man across the street who was beating on someone outside of a bar. As the man was yelling and swearing in public Mark shone his flashlight in the direction of the commotion and told the man to stop it. Well he was not having any of that. He came charging across the street and confronted Mark directly telling him how he was going to kick this rent a cop's ass up and down the road. The man was very large, about 6'8", 280lbs and built like Arnold Schwarzenegger! Mark is 5'7" and 180lbs. The guy was very intimidating so when he started poking Mark in the chest he flew into action. Mark fired off a stream of chain punches into this monster's face and throat, which knocked him to the ground, where Mark kept attacking as he followed the guy down. Then he noticed the guy wasn't

putting up much resistance, in fact he wasn't putting up any resistance. He was unconscious! A few minutes later the police showed up and came running over to help, having been told that some giant guy was kicking the shit out of a security guard. What they found was Mark completely unharmed and the Goliath guy was KOed! When they finally brought him around he was very polite and wanted to shake Mark's hand, saying he was the toughest little bastard that he'd ever met!

How could Mark have become so proficient after only 3 months training? Not because he knew the secrets of the internal side, he did not. It was simply because he had drilled the principles of Wing Chun and they were locked into his subconscious. Wing Chun works well because of these principles, and because it has a scientific technique structure to support the application of these principles. Not everyone who trains will be as able as my friend Mark, he has a particular gift at being able to pick up and apply these principles and techniques naturally. Plus he worked constantly in the 3 months to drill and practice these things. Also he has the personality of a pit bull once he is threatened, and that gives him a real fighting spirit.

Wing Chun fighting principles are the core of Wing Chun's practical success. What is a principle? In its simplest form a principle is a rule of thumb. For example in English a principle for correct sentence structure is you put the noun before the verb. I.e. the dog (noun) jumped (verb) over the cat. This principle will apply to any number of word combinations. In combat a principle will likewise apply to any number of technique combinations. Principles are not limited by technique. In fact the correct technique combination is dictated by the principle. For example Wing Chun's principle of simultaneously attacking and defending. This can be used with any combination of techniques imaginable, so long as an attacking function and a defending function are accomplished by the techniques.

It is because of this scientific principle centered nature of the Wing Chun system that it is a most effective combat art even when it is done poorly. One big reason many are unaware of, or unbelievers in the internal skills of Wing Chun is because Wing Chun is a very effective and powerful combat system even when practiced without these deep and often mystical internal skills. Wing Chun works just as a system of techniques and principles, but it is so much more when it is taught with the chi skills that are truly a fundamental part of the original system. It is this internal energy aspect of Wing Chun that we will explore in this book. If the reader is interested in understanding the fighting principles of Wing Chun better, then you should study the 25 fighting principles video and book that we have also produced.

Si-Fu Scott Baker at the Great Wall of China in May 2000





Chapter 2

Learning about your chi

Teacher as a guide: An invitation to learn

Wing Chun students come in many shapes and sizes. They also come with a variety of attitudes and dispositions. The student's attitude is the most significant aspect of their personality that contributes to either their success or failure in learning the difficult internal skills. The student must be willing to become diligently engaged in the process of practicing to learn to control his chi. You cannot put a time limit on that practice. You cannot set time bound goals to gage your progress. Internal skills come to each person a little differently. A skillful teacher will create an opportunity for you to experience chi. He will guide you and assist you through the path, but you must walk the path yourself to unlock the secrets of the internal arts. A teacher of chi must teach differently than a teacher of techniques. Techniques are easier to demonstrate; the student can see them and mimic them. But with energy you cannot see what is going on internally. You may see the result of chi, but you will see very little about what caused that result. To teach these internal skills the teacher can only invite the student to have an experience. He can then help the student make sense of that experience and begin to understand it and control it. But until the

student actually starts to have the experiences of energy, all the teacher can do is invite them to keep trying and sooner or later it will come. That is why the student's attitude has a greater impact upon his success than natural ability or physical capacity. One can build capacity and endurance, and one can teach techniques and motions, but one can only invite and guide a student to experience their own energy.

Many who will read this book will not know anything about internal skills. Hopefully this will be an enlightening introduction to them. Other will read it that know a little and still other who know a great deal. To you who know something of energy I ask you to consider this parable:

There is an old Taoist story about a student who comes to a master and asks him to teach him. The master invites the student to sit with him and have tea. While they are sitting the master starts to converse with the eager young student. But every time the master starts to explain a point the student would interrupt him and say, "Oh I know that, I do this when that happens, or I don't have that problem because..." Soon the master stopped talking and picked up the teapot. He began pouring tea into the student's cup, as the cup filled he continued pouring until the cup overflowed and spilled out. The student shouted stop! It is enough my cup is full! With that the old master smiled and replied, yes your cup is full, therefore I can teach you nothing until you empty your cup.

The moral of the story should be clear. The student had an un-teachable attitude. Instead of listening to the master he wanted to show how much he already knew. He was not open to learning anything new about what he believed he had already learned. His cup of knowledge was full. He had to empty that cup before he could learn

from the new master. Emptying your cup does not mean you must give up all you have learned, forget all that you know. That would be absurd. To empty your cup simply means to adopt a teachable attitude. To put what you know about something out of your mind and listen to a new explanation, a new insight. There is always more than one way to teach energy skills. Some ways work better than others on certain people. What follows in these pages is just one way. It is what I have learned as the Wing Chun way, but there are many different interpretations of the Wing Chun way. Mine is just one, yours is just as valid so long as it produces the desired results.



Energy – Learn by doing

Because of the nature of energy, one really ends up teaching themselves about it. The instructor can act as a guide and can help you practice correctly so that you may develop skill with your energy, but the real learning about chi comes as you experience it yourself. Don't get me wrong, a good instructor who understands the energy path and has progressed along it himself is essential. There are many pitfalls with working with energy and the unwise often can do serious harm to themselves because they didn't have a teacher who could guide them away from such pit falls. For example, I was once associated with another Wing Chun man who claimed to understand the internal or energy side of the art. I watched

as he taught his students the energy building exercises hidden within the Sil Num Tao boxing form. The students he was teaching this exercise to had little to no prior knowledge or experience with chi. They did not understand it, or even recognize it, and none of them could control it. This now self-proclaimed master had them breathing with a harsh forced breath; the students would sweat profusely and bounce all around the room. When this instructor demonstrated the exercise himself he too would have these responses. He would tell his students that to bounce and jerk showed progress and was a good sign and that sweating profusely was also desirable. Anyone who knows even a little about energy will recognize these manifestation as warnings! There was something very wrong with what this man was teaching. It was hurting his students. They were building energy without any control over it and it was injuring their bodies, their health. This particular exercise within the first boxing form is a very advanced exercise for building and controlling energy. It should never be practiced by a novice, and assumes an intermediate to advanced level of chi skills before it is taught. Anything less than this is a disaster, as was the case with this man I witnessed teaching so called internal skills without understanding.

Relaxation

The beginning of developing control over your chi energy comes from learning to relax and calm the mind and body. Relaxation is important and does not occur all at once. Through training you will learn that deeper and deeper levels of relaxation are possible over time. Learning to calm the mind and the breathing are essential aspects of relaxation. Correct meditation practices should teach the student to control the breath and calm the mind. There are many different

types of meditation taught today and for the beginner any legitimate method will work as a starting point for training the mind. As the beginner progresses he may wish to focus upon the exercise implicit within the Wing Chun system. Wing Chun has its history from Shaolin and therefore contains many of the Shaolin temple meditation and Chi-kung practices. A standing meditation is part of the expression of the first form, and is useful from a martial point of view, as it also is an excellent exercise for deepening the energy root. There are many versions of standing meditation; we will discuss several later in this book.

Meditation itself is important because it trains the mind to move into a different conscious state where it is quiet and able to connect with chi. It also established a deep mind body connection and enables the practitioner to move through the deeper levels of relaxation essential for the correct expression of chi skills within the techniques of kung fu. A relaxed body is needed to utilize the powers within soft chi skills.

Two Keys: Attending and Intending

There are two key abilities that all Chi-kung training develops within the practitioner. They are the ability to “attend” and to “intend”. Attending is focusing ones attention on something. With Chi-kung that something is often a feeling or sensation, or a specific part of your body. This skill is developed over time through all of the Chi-kung exercises one practices. Intending is similar. When you intend you “will” something to happen. You take what your attention is focused upon and you intend or will it to do something. Attending is passive; it is simply noticing and watching something relevant to chi. Intention is active; it is willing or changing something relative to chi. These abilities of the mind must be

developed and trained. The mind (Yi) directs the energy (chi). Attending and intending is how the mind directs and controls the chi. As these mental skills are refined through much practice the practitioner develops the ability to shift into an altered state of consciousness that greatly facilitates his Chi-kung skills. One noted aspect of this altered state of consciousness is the quite mind, or “Mu-Shin” state that the Japanese arts speak of. This Mu-Shin state is a state of internal quite, where the constant chatter of the mind’s voice is silent, enabling one to interact with the reality of his experience directly, without interpretation by the mind. This Mu-Shin state of consciousness puts one in a deeper level of awareness and thus enables the practitioner to connect with his chi, the chi of his opponent, and the universal chi of the cosmos.

Every exercise that develops chi skills will purposefully and specifically be designed to train these two key mental abilities. That is why those who just watch someone practicing Chi-kung exercises do not pick up on the real key to those exercises. They can not see what the practitioner is attending to, nor can they tell what he is intending with his mind. As the Chi-kung exercises get more advanced the intending and attending skills become more and more difficult. In the most advanced exercises like that found within the Sil Num Tao form the practitioner should be attending to many different sensations and places within his body while also intending several different things at the same time. To the novice this is impossible, but to the seasoned practitioner it is not. That is why it is essential to start with simple Chi-kung exercises first and then build on your abilities to attend and intend effectively.

Hard and Soft Chi-kung

Within the different Martial systems there are two distinct and different approaches to teaching internal or energy skills. Simply put they are hard and soft. For those who have invested some time and effort in the martial way it is usually easy to discern which of these two approaches an individual or style has adapted. Essentially the hard approach will include physical tension to some degree while the soft approach emphasizes the importance of staying relaxed. Many of the systems that become known for demonstrating breaking skills are utilizing hard Chi-kung methodologies to achieve these ends. Soft Chi-kung's skills are most often demonstrated upon other people as is the case in most good Tai Chi demonstrations. Wing Chun is like Tai Chi in this respect.

HARD CHI-KUNG TRAINING

Within the spectrum of hard Chi-kung skills breaking objects is undoubtedly the most common skill demonstrated and one of the easiest to develop. Breaking demonstrations where boards, bricks, or large blocks of ice are broken by a blow from a practitioner require a specific type of internal training that is typical of the training needed to develop most hard Chi-kung skills. The methodology for developing these skills has two steps. 1) The student learns to place energy into his hand (or any other part of his body he intends to strike with) in order to build up the strength or force of the blow. To do this he must tense that hand, thus locking the energy within the tissues while he uses his intent to direct or focus the chi into the hand. The tension blocks the energy from flowing out of the hand and acts much like a dam allowing the chi to accumulate and build up. Chi naturally flows within the universe, and

within the human body. It's natural state is fluid not static. The ability to direct your chi to your hand is really something everyone already does, but most of us do it unconsciously and do not control it. Hard and soft Chi-kung training teaches the student to use his mind to direct the chi to a specific place with more force or pressure than that of the natural chi flow. The tension then causes the energy to build up in the hand giving the hand greater strength and the blow greater force. 2) The second aspect of breaking skills is mental focus. The student is taught how to focus his mind through the object he is about to break. If he fears injury, doubts his ability to break it, or wavers in his focus in any way he will most often fail. He must believe his hand will pass through the object, that the object will break from his strike. The most successful way to develop this mental focus is through practice. As the student becomes successful at breaking a relatively easy board he will move to two then three and so on until he has progressed from boards to bricks and ice. Breaking is the most common way hard Chi-kung skills are demonstrated.

Breaking is also one of the easiest hard chi skills to develop. One of the more difficult hard Chi-kung skills would be the iron shirt skill. This is rarely seen in the west, as it requires some very serious and difficult training to develop the iron shirt effectively. The essence of iron shirt training is similar to that described above regarding breaking. The student learns to direct his chi to his skin. In the beginning the chi is directed to certain parts of his body, but eventually all over his body. He tenses his body to lock the energy into the tissues thus making his body hard like iron. The packed-in layers of chi within the body tissues, and the mental intent of the practitioner, repel the effects of a blow allowing the practitioner to withstand tremendous abuse without injury. His body will not be bruised

or damaged from the attacks. The true masters of iron shirt are said to be able to withstand a sharp blade without being cut or damaged. Both the mental focus and discipline needed to develop this skill to this level requires arduous, painful training over many years. But the key aspects of the training are the same as for learning breaking skills; 1) directing and locking chi into your body tissues, and 2) focusing the mind's intent.

SOFT CHI-KUNG TRAINING

Soft Chi-kung skills are somewhat more subtle and therefore not as easy to demonstrate as hard Chi-kung skills. Usually demonstrations of soft skills include a smaller weak looking old man throwing around several young large men who are trying to move or strike the old master. Uyeshiba, the great master and founder of Aikido, would often give such demonstrations. Also many of the renowned Tai Chi masters have been seen demonstrating skill in this way. There are some demonstrations of breaking ability using soft chi skills but they are uncommon.

The approach that soft chi training takes is based upon the idea that energy flows naturally in the universe, and that the mind can control and direct that flow. Hard Chi-kung also use this approach but with some notable differences. Soft training emphasizes a relaxed body rather than a tense one. Tension locks chi and stops or reduces the natural flow, while a relaxed body opens the flow and allows the chi to move, as it should. Learning to truly relax the mind and body takes some years of training and practice. Focusing the mind's intent is also a key factor in soft training just as it is in hard. However, there seems to be a wider range of potential skills that fit in the soft Chi-kung spectrum than those within the hard Chi-kung spectrum.

All the listening, feeling or sensing skills are part of the soft Chi-kung repertoire. Tension, as used in hard Chi-kung, negates ones ability to use these listening/feeling abilities of fluid energy. The reason is simply that tension blocks the flow of energy thereby eliminating the ability to sense or listen to that energy flow. Both Tai Chi and Wing Chun have elaborate exercises designed to develop these soft listening skills (i.e. Chi sau and Push hands). Soft or internal strikes are also characteristic of this soft chi training. The difference between a soft internal blow and a hard blow is extreme. When one is hit with a hard Chi-kung blow like that used to break bricks, the damage is readily apparent. The area that was struck suffers obvious damage. The bones may be broken, the flesh bruised and even torn. A hard blow damages where it hits. On the other hand a soft Chi-kung blow has a very different effect. The point or surface where contact is made is not the place where the most damage is done. A soft internal blow releases chi into the target sending a shock wave through the mostly liquid substance of the body creating internal damage.

Because soft chi training emphasizes and uses the flow of energy, a blow will essentially release a flow of strong energy into the target. Hard chi training uses pooled, or blocked energy accumulation to increase the strength and power of a blow, thereby hitting onto a target with more power or force. Hard Chi-kung hits onto the target, soft Chi-kung hits into the target. A soft chi blow penetrates into the body cavity damaging the mostly liquid internal organs. A hard blow seeks to break the outside body defenses of muscle and bone to cause injury that disables from the outside in. A soft blow shuts down the internal organs that drive the body by sending shock waves of chi through the outer body defenses and into the vital organs, thus disabling from the

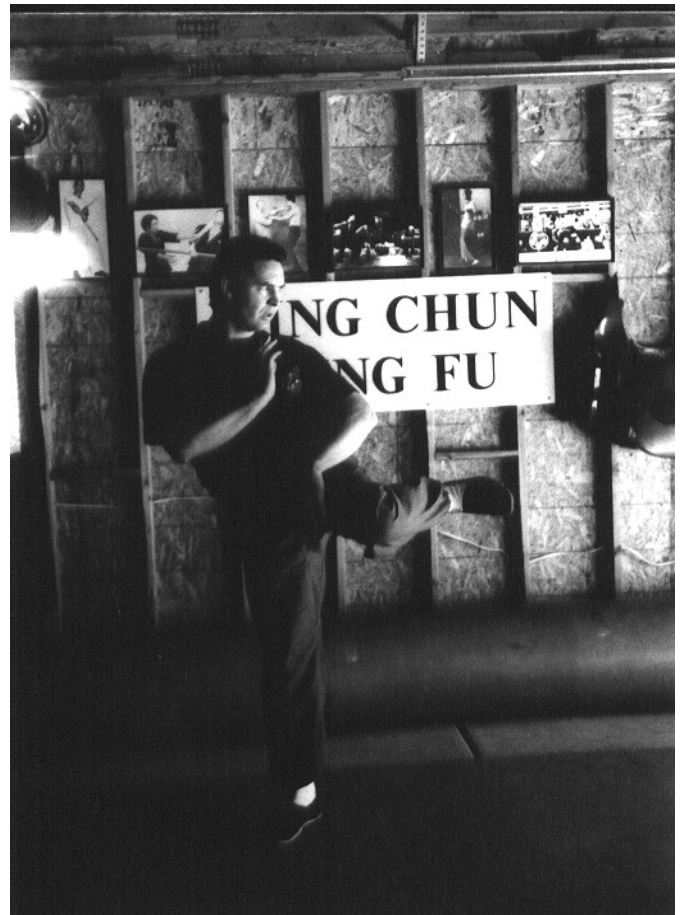
inside out. You get hit with a hard blow it hurts where it hit you. You get hit with a soft blow it hurts inside; your internal organs will ache.

The other emphasis in soft training is in developing control over ones mind, by training your ability to focus your attention, and to strengthen your intention. Attention and intention are the two key mental attributes that are trained in both hard and soft Chi-kung training. However, the outcomes of these two approaches to chi development are very different. Soft chi training aims at producing the ability to sense and control the chi in and around you, including that of your attacker. Hard chi training aims at developing powerful weapons to break up and damage the body and energy of your attacker or anything else you may hit. It builds up chi and uses it as a tool of force. Soft Chi-kung strengthens the flow of chi that occurs naturally, locks you into that flow so you can sense, feel and direct it, enabling you to use whatever is available in a harmonious response to the flow that already exists. Both systems of training develop the mind's ability to attend or focus, and its ability to intend or will something. However what they do with those abilities is quite different. Again Wing Chun is a soft Chi-kung system.

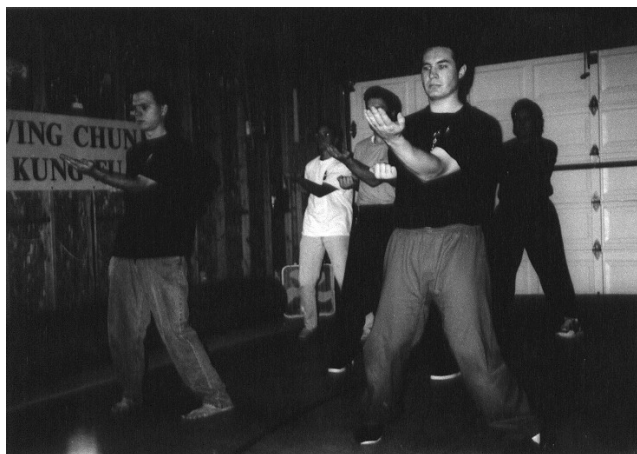
Four Levels of Relaxation

Soft training focuses on teaching deeper and deeper levels of relaxation. The saying goes that the first level of relaxation is to feel your muscles and tendons relax. This is as far as the average person ever goes. The second level of relaxation is where you can feel your skin and hair relax. The third level is where you can feel your internal organs relax. The fourth level is where you can feel the marrow of your bones relax. They say that when you are

able to feel into the marrow of your bones you will feel transparent.



Si-Fi Scott Baker holding the side kick chamber position



Chapter 3 Wing Chun an Energy System

The typical pattern for teaching Wing Chun is a perfect example of how internal Wing Chun really is. First the student is traditionally taught the Sil Num Tao boxing form. In learning Sil Num Tao correctly the initial obstacle that most beginning students struggle with is the idea of performing the movements while staying very relaxed. Relaxed motion is a common component of soft internal chi development. Perhaps the most noticeable aspect of Wing Chun's first form is that it is performed in a stationary standing posture. There is no stepping to speak of. Once the stance is set up the student stands in that position until the form is completed. The relaxed and stationary components of the first form are essential factors in many traditional chi development exercises. This relaxed stationary posture allows the student to learn to sink into the ground, relaxing and yielding his energy to the ever-present force of gravity. In this way the student begins to develop the "root" fundamental to a strong expression of energy skill. The first form is essentially an energy building form that can take up to an hour to perform correctly.

After sufficiently mastering Sil Num Tao the student then learns the Chum Ku

form. Now the student learns to move his body from the root through correct legwork and postural expression. The second form teaches the student the essentials of moving or placing energy in the four limbs as a dynamic expression of the energy root.

Third the student is taught the Biu Tze form. Once considered secret the Biu Tze form is entirely an energy form. Each of the strikes map out specific points which when combined have a devastating effect on the recipients energy system. The movements are done with relaxed focus, resulting in a deep expression of chi skill as the practitioner releases chi in a dramatic display of power. Biu Tze means thrusting fingers which signifies the releasing of energy through the body's extremities.

The student then is traditionally taught the wooden dummy form (Muk-Yan-Chong-Fa). Now he learns to release his chi into the dummy. A skilled practitioner can see the depth of energy expressed in both the sound and movement of the dummy while it is being worked.

Once the dummy is mastered the student learns the Wing Chun weapons. First he learns the six and a half point pole (Luk-Dim-Boon-Kwun) where he further polishes his energy abilities by learning to both stick with and release energy through the pole into whatever he strikes using the seven key motions of the pole form.

Finally he learns the eight-slash sword form (Bart-Chum-Dao). Here he learns to express energy through the short metal blade of the swords in the eight specific slashing sequences. A quick glance of the six major stages of Wing Chun training shows us that each stage has a unique and specific energy purpose. Just as in Tai Chi and the other internal systems, Wing Chun is purposefully designed to produce progressive chi skills in its practitioners.

Assumptions of energy skills

The history of Wing Chun is clear about a few key points. Wing Chun was developed from out of the Shaolin system. It came from Shaolin kung fu and therefore contains much of what was the best of Shaolin. The first boxing form of Wing Chun (Sil Num Tao) contains only advanced Chi-kung exercises that represent the best from the Shaolin temple. Therefore, to learn the energy exercises in the Wing Chun system you must already have an intermediate to advanced skill level with Chi-kung. A beginner to Chi-kung would find the Wing Chun exercises very difficult, they would need to learn some basic Chi-kung exercises and master their energy skills before learning the more difficult exercises within Wing Chun. This is why we say that there is an assumption of energy skill within Wing Chun.

Many different stories exist around the development of Wing Chun kung fu. The one I like goes something like this: The Ching government was threatened by the fighting skills of the Shaolin monks who opposed their political views. They planned to attack the temple to wipe out the monks and their political opposition. The monks knew this and felt they needed to develop a fast track fighting system so they could get the novice monk's fighting skills up to a high enough level quickly so they could help defend the temple. One version of the story says that the 5 masters of the temple, including Ng Mui the accredited founder of Wing Chun, met in a conference hall called Wing Chun hall (some call it Weng Chun Hall) within the temple to offer their particular expertise in the development of this system. Out of these meetings the 5 masters developed the Wing Chun system but before they could teach it the temple fell and Ng Mui survived to finish developing the system and pass it along. Other stories

disagree that this happened and give all the credit to Ng Mui alone. Either way it can be assumed that the best or most advanced skills of Shaolin were included in the Wing Chun system. Given this we can see why the Wing Chun energy training exercises within the forms are very advanced exercises.

Because Wing Chun is comprised of the most advanced and best skills from the Shaolin system there is an implicit assumption that those who are learning the energy skills of Wing Chun already know the basics about building and controlling chi energy. Another important historical point is that each story about the beginnings of Wing Chun agrees that its development in most part is credited to a woman who designed it to defeat men who were also very skillful and strong. For a woman to be successful at defeating a stronger and martially skilled man, she would without doubt need to learn internal Chi-kung skills.

When in China I was invited to compare with 6 different masters, many of tai chi some of other systems. I enjoyed these friendly exchanges very much. Two of these masters were women. One in particular was remarkably skillful. All of the others with the exception of two old men, I found I was able to unbalance and control to some degree, however this woman was an exception. I was much stronger and larger than she was. But I found it most difficult to corner her balance so that I could uproot and throw her. I got close several times but she was skillful enough to slip out at the last minute. She was not able to uproot me either, but her skills at avoiding my efforts were impressive. In teaching Wing Chun I often say to my students when asked if a move is correct, that if a woman couldn't use it on them, then it is not good Wing Chun.

Wing Chun: An advanced energy system

Everything about Wing Chun is advanced. Even the sun punch is an advanced punch. You can learn the motion in a day but you must train and practice it for months before you have any real power with it. This is the characteristic trademark of an advanced skill. A basic skill is something that is easy to learn and quick to use. A basic karate punch can be learned in a day and if you hit someone with it that evening you would do some damage. Granted you would not have as much power as a seasoned practitioner, but it is a simple or basic enough skill that you would not find it difficult to use it right after learning it. The Wing Chun punch is not so easy to acquire. To do it correctly and with power takes time to train it. The same is true with every skill and technique within the system. Hence we can conclude that Wing Chun is an advanced system of combat, and really contains no basic techniques. This also follows with the energy skills, they are all quite advanced, there are no beginning level energy exercises or skills within the system.

My feeling is that this came about because Wing Chun contains the most advanced combat specific skills from Shaolin. They cut out all the basics for two reasons; first because the novice monks already had some training in basic skills, and second for the sake of speeding up the training process of the monks so they could defend the temple.

In Wing Chun a novice to energy work will benefit from learning some basic energy exercises before attempting to learn the difficult exercises that are classic Wing Chun Chi-kung exercises. When I teach new students I start their energy work with the 8 pieces of Brocade. This is a simple moving and breathing series that I have found to be excellent as an introduction to energy. The 8 pieces of brocade are a common Chi-kung

exercise that are utilized by many different Chinese martial systems. I also teach them some basic standing postures to help them begin to develop the energy root and to notice the sensations characteristic of chi. Once they have acquired some degree of proficiency with these more basic chi exercises and skills then I introduce them to the more advanced Chi-kung exercises within the Wing Chun forms.



The Summer Place, Beijing China



Si-Fu Baker in traditional Wing Chun pose. Age 29



Chapter 4 Beginning with the Root

The first essential Chi-kung skill to be developed is that of the energy root. There are several things that effect the quality or depth of the root: The stance or posture, the level of relaxation in the body and mind, and the practitioners ability to intend his energy down into the earth. The energy root is basically an energy version of a tree's root structure. You develop it through learning to sink your energy into the earth much the same way as a tree sinks its roots into the earth. When done well the practitioner will seem very solid and heavy to any that are trying to move him.

This skill can be tested through some simple exercises that determine "root depth" in a novice student. The deeper the Chi-kung skills of a student the deeper he will be able to sink his energy root. One of the first tests that can be used to check and practice this rooting skill is to have the student kneel on the ground. Then standing in front of him the teacher would place his hands on the student's shoulders. The student then places the palms of his hands softly under the teacher's elbows. In this position the student must relax and root into the ground. Then the teacher attempts to push the student over backwards. If he is rooting correctly the teacher should not be able to push him over.

1) Si-Fu Baker kneeling



2) He is pushed by 2 large men.



3) By using root depth he redirects the push which lifts the first man up.



4) The first man is thrown to the side



On one occasion I was asked to demonstrate this skill by a friend of mine at a small outdoor party. He challenged a large line backer for the University of Utah to push me over while I knelt down in front of him. Naturally he accepted. Being a line

backer he pushed people over professionally, and usually the people he pushed over were a whole lot bigger than I was. This guy was at least twice my weight! He began to push, and push, and push. He tried so hard he dug a ditch with his shoes in the grass! He tried 3 or 4 separate times, each time he was more determined than the last. Finally he gave up in despair when after pushing for several minutes I stood up and threw him away. Naturally he was embarrassed! He asked how I was able to do that? I could tell he was looking at me trying to determine where someone my size could have gotten so much strength. I tried to explain to him that it wasn't physical but internal strength. Finally my friend told him I practice kung fu, and that seemed to satisfy him.

If the person kneeling does not know how to root and present that root against the push properly he will usually try to fight the push by leaning in and in doing so will often injure his back. When one gets competent at this test he can have three or more people line up behind the first pusher all pushing on each other's backs, and still they should not be able to move his root. One test for root depth that Master Tam use to use in grading his students is the leg-pull test in the character-two-adduction stance. The idea is to hold the pull force for up to a minute. When four men are pulling earnestly on your legs this is very difficult.



Si-Fu Baker performing the leg pulling root test.

Other tests of the energy root can be shown from the front stance or the forward leaning stance out of the pole form. From the stance the student puts his arms forward and braces them. The pusher places his hands on the wrists of the student's arms and tries to push him backwards.



Si-Fu Baker in the root test of the immovable stance

If he has a good energy root and is able to presence that root through his body he will feel as solid as a tree. The arms will often move if the pusher's force has inconsistent direction, but the stance will not move. A third and more difficult test of rooting skills is the un-liftable stance. The skilled practitioner stands in a wide horse stance with his arms hanging wide to his sides. Two people position themselves, one at each side and place their hands under the practitioner's arms. Then they attempt to lift him together. As they try to lift the practitioner can sink his root deeper, if he is skillful he will cause the two lifters to loose their strength and force them to either disengage or collapse as he sinks.



Sifu Jeffcoat showing the un-liftable stance

Four Standing Exercise

The static standing posture of the Sil Num Tao form is one of the primary exercises used to enhance the endurance and strength of a student's legs and begin the development of the energy root. Students may begin this exercise by standing for only 10 minutes at first then slowly building up the time to an hour over the course of about six months. The purpose of this standing posture is to build considerable endurance and strength in the leg muscles, and work the chi energy into the legs as the student learns to relax into the position of the Yee Chi Kim Yeung Ma (character-two-adduction stance), sinking his chi through his legs and into the ground. This stance further teaches the student good posture, body alignment and deepens the stance root, as it continues to be practiced it will also strengthen and tone important muscle groups. Together these qualities offer a solid base from which the techniques of Wing Chun can be unleashed with great power.



It is not a coincidence that the first form in Wing Chun is a stationary standing form. From an energy development point of view this makes perfect sense. The

stationary posture of Sil Num Tao is a key exercise in developing the rooting skills. If the stance is uncomfortable to the novice then he can gain comparable results by standing naturally, with his feet shoulder width apart, knees slightly bent, back and neck straight, and his arms hanging relaxed at his side. The first key is to relax in whatever stance you choose. The next key is to stand as quite and still as a tree. Just stand there and notice what sensations come up. Do not try to do anything except relax and watch with your mind the feelings. This “watching” or noticing of sensations is the beginning of training the attending skills of the mind. It is best to start with 10 minutes and slowly build the time standing to an hour over about a six-month period. Some may progress faster than this, others may take longer depending upon the condition of your body and your level of personal discipline. The exercise should not be painful. Usually, if it becomes painful, it is the result of poor posture, or a bad stance, or perhaps an existing injury.

As you progress in the standing exercise your attention should be drawn to your hands and lower legs. This is where the energy will “pool” as you relax and release it to the force of gravity. Energy sinks naturally. Once you can notice or attend to these feelings of pooled energy then you can start intending that same feeling down through your feet into the earth. One image that is often helpful in intending the root down is to picture yourself standing on top of two twenty foot high posts. In imagining that you will naturally intend your feelings down the twenty feet to where you imagine the ground is. Another image that can be useful is to imagine you are buried in the ground up to your waist. A third is to create a void or vacuum within the ground several feet below you. A sensation of a vacuum can be achieved by intending a relaxed feeling within the ground under the feet. This

relaxed feeling opens an energy space that essentially sucks your energy root down into the earth. This works well as you draw the relaxed, open space from the ground, up into the feet, legs, and body in progressive waves of relaxation. Imagery is a key part of training the intent. The more vivid you can create the image the greater the effect it has on producing the intended effect on your energy and intending skills. By using your imagination to “image” the feeling sensation you are utilizing the right feeling side of your brain. The right side of the brain houses more of the artistic intuitive skills and abilities while the left side is more dedicated to logical through process, reason and language.

Other postures can be employed as the standing progresses and the root becomes noticeable to the student. Each posture increases the challenge to your attending and intending. The second posture is done by standing in the same stance you have been using, bring your hands forward, palms facing up as if holding a large ball in front of your belly. The image used in this posture, which should be added to the other image you use to intend down for the root, is that of holding a large ball that has no weight. In fact the ball can be intended as a relaxed space that sucks energy, as would a vacuum. The ball will rest against your stomach and in your hands and arms. As you imagine it there, begin to feel it holding your arms out, this is a form of intending. But at the same time you need to keep intending your root down into the earth. So you will be simultaneously attending to the relaxed void feelings of the root and the same relaxed feelings of the ball energy in your arms and hands. At the same time you are also intending the root deeper and intending the energy ball in your arms and against your Dan-Tien, just below your navel.

A third posture is to bring the arm up in front of your chest with the palms facing towards you. The same intending image can be used to build the energy in the arms and hold them up.



A fourth position is to bring them up to your forehead height with the palm turned out as if you are throwing a large beach ball. This is the most challenging of the standing postures, as the arms tend to tire quickly. It is important to relax deeply and to focus your attending on the root and the energy ball not the pain in the shoulders and arms. By intending down into the root and out into the hands and ball at the same time you begin to develop the important ability to attend and intend simultaneously, and in different directions and ways.

Energy rooting is the first level of Chi-kung skill. Once this has been achieved to some level of proficiency the student must also learn how to move with this root. A static root is one thing, but a dynamic root is quite another. The dynamic root comes from first learning the static root and then refining this skill until he is naturally centered and sunk. Then with correct footwork and in chi sau training the student learns to maintain that sunken energy while in motion. If done correctly the moving root can produce surprisingly fast body motions.

A dynamic root is essential when you are in contact with your partner. If you are unable to maintain your sunken energy when moving, all your opponent needs to do is step to gain the advantage. Fighting is motion; a dynamic root is therefore essential. Learning to throw the energy into the legs and spring from the stance while maintaining the down/forward presence is the key to being able to move with the energy root. Also presenting a relaxed void or vacuum out towards the space you wish to move to can have the effect of creating an energy suck that draws you forward quickly. The test for this skill is in chi sau.



Si-Fu baker & Sifi Jeffcoat exchanging in chi sau

The teacher should be able to feel when the root is lifted and test the student with a pull or thrust at the right time to unbalance him. If you find yourself unbalanced often in chi sau practice then your dynamic root needs work. The other key test of the dynamic root is in entering or closing the gap between you and your partner. The moment of entering is the key to winning an exchange and there is a great advantage achieved when you learn to enter from presenting the drawing energy onto your opponent as described above. We will address the dynamic root in greater depth in the chapter on Learning to Move with chi.

8 Pieces of Brocade

The 8 pieces of brocade are a series of 8 moving breathing exercises which are very easy to learn and are quick to produce results. Many kung fu systems use them as part of their breathing and meditation training. There are of course several different variations of these 8 exercises, but on the most part they are the same. When practicing them the student should focus on being relaxed, moving the arms in time with the breath. The first part of the motion is usually done as you inhale slowly through the nose, and the second part of each motion is done as you exhale through the mouth.

The first motion of the 8 pieces.
Inhale as hands move up.



Begin to exhale as hands move out.



Return to starting position while exhaling.

The movement should be timed to begin and end with the duration of the breath. The breath itself is very revealing.

Breathing

There is a clear connection between the quality of one's breath and the state of one's mind. When your mind is agitated and racing your breath will be high, short and forced. When your breath is calm, smooth, and slow then your mind will be quiet, relaxed and focused. It should take about 20 minutes to perform all 8 motions, doing each with 10 repetitions. Stay relaxed, move slowly and smoothly, and breathe deep into your abdomen with slow comfortable breaths. Never try to fill or empty your lungs completely. This always produces tension. Just breathe naturally and comfortably. The breath should be audible. The correct sound is the sound you would hear as a child breathes when sound asleep. It is not a forced harsh sound, but smooth and deep. This is the sound desired when doing breathing exercises. Children breath correctly, as they grow into adulthood and begin to feel the stresses and pressures of life they create considerable residual tension in the body and mind and hence they begin to breath incorrectly. A deep meditative state of quite peacefulness can be achieved by performing the 8 pieces of Brocade correctly.

Standing meditation from Shaolin Dissolving and Marrow Washing

The story of Chi-kung development and practice in the Shaolin Temple relates that the Buddhist Monk Dao Ma arrived at the temple and noticed the monks in poor physical condition. He went into a cave for solitude for a number of years and when he came out he gave the monks two types of exercise that related to health and Chi-kung skills. Research has shown that the Chinese had Kung fu and Chi-kung long before the time of Dao Ma, however he is often attributed with being the originator of these shaolin exercises. The first and most basic

was muscle tendon changing. This essentially was a series of exercises that focused chi into the body tissues through dynamic tension and mental focus. It appears that the Hard type of Chi-kung skills often demonstrated in the hard martial arts have evolved from these exercises. The second set of exercises were much different. They were known as Bone Marrow Washing exercises. These were taught only to the most advanced disciples and masters of the system. Down through the years many versions of Bone Marrow Washing have evolved. Some versions utilize the capturing of the essential sexual jing from the sexual organs and require some rather strange and dangerous practices to capture that energy. Others are less bizarre and yet still effective and considerably advanced. In Wing Chun these less bizarre exercises are an important part of deepening the practitioners Chi-kung abilities. Often these bone marrow washing exercises were practiced during the well-known Shaolin standing wall meditation. It has been said that monks would stand for hours facing a wall practicing this meditation. It is this exercise that has been kept within the Wing Chun Chi-kung repertoire. Again the stationary stance of the Sil Num Tao form hints to these practices.

To begin training in the more difficult standing meditation practices one starts by taking up the stance used to develop the energy root. Then roll the shoulders slightly forward and straightening the back, letting the hands hang at your sides with the palms facing to the rear. The head and neck should be comfortably held straight also.



Normal and Reverse Breathing Techniques

Remember the three key points discussed in the 8 pieces of brocade section about breathing. 1) When training your breathing never try to fill or empty your lungs completely. This always produces tension. Just breathe naturally and comfortably. 2) The breath should be audible. The correct sound is the sound you would hear as a child breathes when sound asleep. It is not a forced harsh sound, but smooth and deep. This is the sound desired when doing breathing exercises. 3) Children breath correctly, as they grow into adulthood and begin to feel the stresses and pressures of life they create considerable residual tension in the body and mind and hence they begin to breath incorrectly.

At first the novice to standing meditation will use the normal breathing process, inhaling through the nose and exhaling through the mouth. The tongue is placed lightly on the roof of the mouth and the jaw relaxed. The inhalation causes the belly to swell and the exhalation causes it to contract. After a few months of practicing standing meditation, the student can be taught the reverse breathing technique. With reverse breathing when you inhale through the nose you lightly draw the Dan-Tien in (instead of letting the belly swell out) and you draw the air up your back letting the back swell and fill. Then when you exhale you relax the belly and allow it to drop or swell out while you are exhaling. So your abdomen will do the opposite or reverse of what it does during natural breathing.

It is important not to force this though. The breath should remain soft and relaxed. The pulling in of the Dan-Tien is subtle and gentle, not tense. It is often easier to think about drawing the breath up the spine and filling the back than it is to think about pulling in your belly. Again the practice of reverse breathing is an advanced

skill that is added to the standing meditation after the student has become proficient at it. The reason for it is that it increases the intending strength of the mind and has the effect of adding more pressure to the natural flow of chi within the body. Because of this the student needs to be able to presence and direct his chi before doing reverse breathing or the added pressure may damage some of his internal organs and processes. Increasing pressure is not always desirable, so again this is an advanced addition to the normal standing meditation practices.

Beginning the Standing Meditation

Now we have talked about the posture, and the two methods of breathing, let's now explain the practice of the meditation. There are several levels or parts to this exercise also. The first part is to help improve the focus of ones attention and intention through developing a deep ability to relax. It is often called opening the energy gates. Throughout the body, often around joints but also other places, there are gates, or places where energy tends to accumulate and stagnate over time. This meditation is designed to unlock that stagnant energy and release it. I will not take the time to identify every gate in the body, but will start with some of the most important ones.

While standing in the described stance the student closes his eyes to help him focus internally. Then once the breathing is relaxed and set he puts his attention on the crown chackra at the top of the head. As he focuses his attention there he will begin to get a feeling sense of the area about the size of a hen's egg. In fact it is often suggested you imagine a block of ice the size of an egg burred half in and half out of the top of your head.

As you get a real feeling sense with your attention then you will progressively relax that energy. As it releases you will feel

it change from a solid to a relaxed liquid feel, or from ice to water. This intention of dissolving the tense energy at that gate will result in a relaxing of the energy there and when you do it correctly you will actually feel a real change, as if it has dissolved into water, then you keep relaxing/dissolving the point turning the water to steam or gas. This is when the gate really opens and you release the energy out as it washes over your entire body. At first it may take 20 minute to half an hour to just get this one point to relax. There may be times that the point just doesn't relax, in such cases it is fine to move to the next point and attempt the same process of intending it to dissolve and release through relaxing deeply. The 10 gates in the head are; 1) the crown or top, 2) the center of the forehead or third eye, 3) the eye balls themselves, 4) the roof of the mouth and the tip of the tongue together, 5) under the tongue, 6) the hollow in the throat just above the collar bone, 7) the temples, 8) the ear canals, 9) the jaw hinge and the jaw bone, and 10) the base of the skull where the neck bone connects to the skull. Then you go down the spine dissolving each vertebra to the tailbone. From there you can move to the major joints in the arms, the shoulders and shoulder blades, the elbows, wrists and each of the finger joints. Then the esophagus including your mouth, throat and tongue, and center of your chest down the sternum but inside where the food goes. Then each of the ribs, the whole abdominal cavity, the hip joints, knees, ankles and feet, and finally dissolve down into the root.

Each of these gates is relaxed deeply through the focused use of attention and intention. Intention is guided by the imagination, using the image of ice melting to water and then to steam. It can take some time to get through all these points. As you improve your ability to attend and intend you will find you will spend less time on each point to get it to release and

relax deeply. It will often take a year or more to be able to get your intention to the skill level where you can go through the whole body within an hour. At first it is not important how long it takes for the first points. You are still training your attention and intention even if you only focus on one or two points for the whole time. This meditation should last from 30 minutes to about an hour or a little more. As you work through these points releasing the energy you will often begin to feel a very fine shaking or vibration occur within your body. This is a good sign, however if the vibration turns to harsh jumping or obvious body gyrations then you have too much tension in your body that is causing the energy to clash with the tension. The effect is similar to a small electric shock that causes the arm to twitch. You chi shouldn't do this if you are relaxed enough. If this begins to occur then focus on relaxing deeper the parts of the body effected and you should notice the gyrations go away while the high level fine vibration continues.

Advanced Standing Meditation: Bone Marrow Washing

After some time has been spent becoming proficient at the dissolving standing meditation the student may be ready to take on a more difficult meditation - the Bone Marrow Washing. It requires some considerable proficiency to be able to feel and intend into the marrow of your bones. You must be deeply relaxed both mentally and physically. You will use the same stance, posture, and the reverse breathing techniques used in the dissolving exercises. However, with this exercise you will be focusing on different parts of your body.

A good starting point is to take the first 10 minutes to focus your attention on the 5 yin organs for a few minutes each. The

order is important because they go from easiest to feel to the most difficult. You should attempt to place your attention clearly on the organ, get a clear sense of its size, shape and position in your body and intend it to relax. Start with the lungs, they are the easiest to feel. Then the heart is next, then the liver, the forth is the kidneys, and the last one is the spleen.

Once you have attended to each of these internal organs and relaxed them for a few minutes you can turn your attention to your bones. In bone marrow washing the object is to draw chi into your hands and feet up the arm and leg bones into the shoulders and hips, up the spine and through the ribs where both hand and foot energy will meet in the spine at the shoulders. It is then drawn up the neck into the skull and washes over the brain down the face and jaw. It will take patient practice over many months to be able to truly get this energy that far. But it is worth it! There are no words to describe the sense of oneness and power that comes when you have successfully washed all your marrow and your brain with chi.

To start the exercise it is often easiest to start with the hands or the feet, rather than both together. Draw in the energy through the fingertips into the center of the bones of the fingers and hands. You do this again by intending it, and using your imagination as the tool to help this intention. Using the intention to create a void or vacuum through deeply relaxing the inside of the bones is a good beginning point. Then you can use an image of drawing light into the fingers to fill that vacuum and relax it even more. It is a good practice to time the drawing in of the light as you inhale and then hold the energy still as you exhale. It is also important not to focus on the bones themselves, but the marrow inside the bones. If your attention is on the bones themselves the energy will wrap around the bones rather

than wash through the inside of them. Stay relaxed, breathe deep into the belly and smoothly. The breath is a key in this exercise. You must be proficient at the reverse breathing before you try marrow washing. You can do this exercise using the regular breath cycle but it does not progress very fast and it is difficult to get the energy past the shoulders or hips. The reverse breathing is needed to draw the energy into the center of the spine and up into the brain. There is an important “serpent like” energy that resides at the base of the spine. The ancients believed that you would achieve enlightenment when you could draw that energy up the inside of the spine and into your head. In fact some say that once this is obtained you will hear a distinct sound, like the sound of trumpets blasting. In eastern India the Yogi’s say this occurs the first time you succeed in drawing the “Kundalini” or serpent energy into your head. In my personal practice I can verify that this does occur. However, to me it sounded more like a crowd of people shouting together than a trumpet blast. This is another example of how different minds will interpret similar sensations and experiences in different ways. You may well miss this experience if you are looking for one particular sound rather than being open to the experience however it occurs to you.

This exercise of drawing up the serpent energy is also a form of bone marrow washing where you start at the tailbone and draw the energy into the spine through the tailbone and wash it up the spine into the head. It is important to lightly and gently contract the sphincter muscle as you exhale and release it as you inhale during this exercise. This seems to help keep the chi within the spine and prevents it from falling out of your ass!

The Advanced Standing Chi-kung Exercise of Sil Num Tao

Although the Sil Num Tao boxing form is the first form taught to new students of Wing Chun it is NOT a basic form. In fact it is the most advanced of the three forms when understood from a Chi-kung perspective. Those who are disciples of Chi-kung will know that the best, most advanced, and sometimes most difficult Chi-kung exercises often appear to be simplistic and unspectacular to the uninitiated. This is because the real exercise is what goes on internally, not the motions or postures that can be seen externally. The Sil Num Tao form is a perfect example of this. But then so are the exercises we have already discussed. The 8 pieces of brocade can become a very deep and quite advanced series of Chi-kung exercises when understood. Likewise with the standing postures and standing meditations. All can increase in their internal difficulty as the skills of the practitioner develop.

I frequently observed this fact when I regularly practiced Chi-kung while in China and watched the old men and woman of China who I found each morning in the parks practicing what appears to be very basic, simplistic Chi-kung exercises. Many of these old timers were very advanced in their skills, as they had practiced for many years which was evident by observing them. Even with years of proficient practice these old masters were still working their Chi-kung by practicing what appears to be “basic” exercises. The truth is the exercises they are doing are very advanced, because these exercises evolve with the practitioner’s skill level.

The unique thing about the Chi-kung sequences in the Sil Num Tao form is that they are quite complex even in their simplest form. The energy generated is strong, and if the practitioner does not have the skills to

channel it then the exercise can harm them by unbalancing their chi system or overloading a vital organ. However, if you have learned to attend to, or notice your energy, and intend or direct it to do something specific then you are at a level where the Sil Num Tao exercise can be practiced without the likelihood of harm. Although the whole boxing form has an energy component to it, the specific chi building exercise within the form is in the sam pai fut sequences where we start with the tan sau and perform three fook sau/wu sau combinations. This is the building part of the form, and is the only part done slowly.



Many Wing Chun practitioners do this sequence of motions significantly slower than the rest of the form without understanding why. The truth is they are doing it that way because that’s what they were told to do. Many do not understand the reasoning beyond that. In fact there is no reason to perform this part of the form any slower than the rest of the form if you are not doing the Chi-kung with it. When you are practicing the Chi-kung aspect this sequence alone will take anything from 20 minutes to almost an hour to complete. The rest of the form is always done at the regular speed. However, it should be done at a Biu Tze level of expression. What I mean by this

is that the practitioner should use the releasing skills taught in Biu Tze to work the excess energy through his system and out.

It is important to finish the form when you complete the slow Chi-kung sequence, as the motions in the rest of the form take the built up energy and flush it through the entire meridian system of the body. This will strengthen the chi system, clean it out and balance it again. To get this benefit fully the practitioner needs to be able to release his chi during the rest of the form.

Four keys: Relax, Root, Breathe, and Focus

To practice the Chi-kung within Sil Num Tao you will start the form as usual. It is essential to remain relaxed and calm the mind throughout the exercise. Wing Chun is a soft Chi-kung system not a hard Chi-kung system. Relaxation is essential to allow the energy to flow naturally through the body. As you set up the stance, relax and allow your attention to sink into the earth. At the same time lift very slightly from the top of the head. The feeling should be one of having your head suspended from a string, while your lower body is buried in the earth.

When you sink your chi deeply with a natural flow downward you will find that there will be a responding flow upwards. This raising energy is often called yang raising while the rooting energy is called yin sinking. It is this combination of sinking and raising that you want to attend to by relaxing deeply and lightly lifting the head from the crown shakra which in turn relaxes the neck and spine and opens it gently. This invites the yang raising energy that is the natural balance to your root, to flow up the spine into the crown of your head.

As soon as you open your left hand to start the first tan sau motion on its way forward you begin to focus and build energy deeply. Everything now is done extremely slowly. The saying is that you will move at

the speed of a flower opening. That is not very fast, in fact it is very difficult to see any motion at all. However, as a novice to this exercise you will want to move a little faster at first. The ideal speed for an advanced practitioner of this exercise is the speed of a flower opening. At that speed the form will take an hour to complete. When you start out you should shoot for a 20 to 30 minute exercise. The speed of your motions is what will determine the difference in how long you perform the exercise.

Even the opening of the hand from the chambered fist is done slowly. The thumb should be pulled in slightly, and the little finger elevated to create a very slight tension in the palm that will help to focus the chi for the ball. The attention goes to two places right away. You sink into your root attending and intending your energy feelings down deep into the earth. A focus of relaxing the energy beneath you, creating a vacuum that draws or sucks your energy root deep into the earth is useful. This enhances the natural sinking flow (continuum) of energy, which exists in the cosmos. At the same time your attention will go to the palm of your left hand. The pulling of the thumb and lifting of the little finger help to focus the chi in the palm. But do not tense the thumb and finger, just slightly and softly pull them, with a very soft pressure.

As the hand slowly and softly opens you should notice or attend to the sensations of chi within your hand by presencing a deep relaxed vacuum feeling there. The fact that you are opening it very slowly will magnify these sensations. As this occurs, and you notice the energy in the hand, you should begin intending it to increase and strengthen. As with all intending an image is helpful. You should imagine a ball of light building within the void or vacuum created within the palm. To start this you can use the dissolving imagery from the standing meditations to open up the energy gate in the

center of the palm and build the void. Then start the ball out small in size, and dim in brightness, drawn from you by this relaxed vacuum. As the hand opens fully you will intend it to grow larger and brighter. This intention will remain as a focus point as you slowly press your hand forward to the full tan sau position. By the time your hand is in the tan sau position the ball should fill the hand and be as bright as the sun.

A good instructor will be able to sense this ball and get a good idea of the

strength of your intention skills by the quality of the ball you build. Also as you begin opening the hand you will place the tongue on the roof of your mouth and focus on breathing. The reverse breathing (see standing meditation exercises) is preferred but if you have not mastered this skill you can also perform the exercise with the regular breathing cycle. The breath is very revealing. It is a physical manifestation of your mental state. The breath should NOT be forced, harsh, or tight in any way. Rather it should be deep, gentile, and smooth.



Si-Fu Baker at age 21 doing a flying kung fu kick at a beach in New Zealand

The Tan Sau



Once the hand is fully open and the ball is beginning to build you will add another focal point to the two (your root and the palm) you are currently holding. You will now notice (attend to) the energy in your left elbow. Relax it deeply without losing your position. Again use the dissolving exercise to open the gates of the elbow energy and create a vacuum there. Once the energy there is relaxed and open intend the elbow to get heavier, use an image of heavy water pooling in and around your elbow. As you add this focus to the hand and root, begin to presence the arm forward very slowly. You do this by imagining that the water building in the elbow is creating a soft pressure which gently pushes the arm forward. Once the arm starts to move do not stop and start it. Keep the motion continuous, smooth and very slow.

You can connect the image of the ball in the palm with the one of the heavy water in and around the elbow by intending the water to flow up the inside of the forearm into the hand to fill the ball. The ball in the hand should have a heavy feel to

it. The image of the vacuum in the hand sucking or drawing the elbow energy to it is useful. Allow the energy to move within the arm and the body in distinct waves of relaxation and peace. It is useful to presence these waves with the inhalation of the breath. As you bring the elbow energy forward towards the hand draw the wave of chi through the forearm bones, entering at the opening at the back of the elbow. This is where your practice of bone marrow washing in previous exercise will be valuable. The water energy at the elbow will flow through the bones of the forearm into the wrist, hand and fingers filling the bones and then entering the ball through the center of the palm. Allow the connection of these two images to occur slowly. Intend the water from the elbow into the bones and up the forearm gradually. You must deeply attend to the sensations these images create as they will support and strengthen your intending.

The waves of heavy water should fill the hand and enter the ball in the palm just before you complete the full tan sau. You may be wondering where the elbow energy is drawn from. For beginners it is not important to imagine its source, the beginners attention and intention will be challenged enough with simply feeling energy to the elbow. But more advanced practitioners can presence this elbow energy from the waves of yang rising energy coming up from the root into the Dan-Tien. This will be explained later in this exercise.

You will be holding all four images (sinking yin root, yang raising waves, heavy elbow, & the ball in the palm), attending and intending to each simultaneously throughout the motion of the tan sau. By the end of the tan sau your breathing should be gentle, deep and smooth. It must sound relaxed but full, similar to the sound of someone breathing who is in a deep sleep. Also by the end of the tan sau you will likely notice a

vibration beginning within your body. Often it will start within your legs but not always. The vibration should resonate at a high frequency and should not cause your body to jerk or move from its still, standing position.

If jerking occurs it is a manifestation of either incorrect posture or tension, or a lack of control over your energy. When you correct either of these, the jerking will stop and the vibration will be imperceptible to another person, unless they touch you. At this point simply notice the vibration; realize it is a good sign indicating that you are building significant chi and that all is going well. As you progress through the exercise the vibration will increase somewhat in strength and will spread throughout your body. If you are not experiencing this vibration do not worry, it will come in time as it is a physical manifestation of the yang raising chi that balances the yin root. Just continue with the rest of the exercise.

The Wu Sau



At the end of the tan sau position, begin to rotate the hand in the huen sau maneuver to end up in an extended wu sau. This motion is also done slowly, but not as slowly as the tan sau. The rotation or huen should take about a minute to complete. As
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you are huening you should slowly raise in your stance an inch or so. You will sink back down when you begin the fook sau motion. Still maintain the rooting intention; you are just raising up in the stance a small amount. For more advanced practitioners this raising is the result of the yang raising chi which balances the sinking root. This raising energy comes in waves similar to waves of water on a shore line. These raising waves of chi can be utilized as a form of fa-jing issuing of energy within the Chum Ku and Bil Tze forms.

Maintain the image of the ball of light stuck to your palm. As you rotate the hand the ball remains stuck to the palm and the flow of energy from the pool at the elbow also continues. As you lock back the wrist in the wu sau you will sink/relax the arm's weight into the elbow and at this point reverse the direction of the flow of chi so that now it flows into the elbow from the ball in the hand. To do this, again create a relaxed vacuum in the elbow. As you slowly draw the wu sau back towards you the elbow gets heavier as the energy flows from the hand through the bones into the elbow area. This helps to generate the image of the elbow heaviness pulling the whole arm back towards the body with a gentle, slow, and consistent pressure.

The wu should move at the same slow speed as the tan sau. Breathing remains the same, deep and relaxed. The energy being drawn from the ball stuck to the palm is added to by drawing energy in through the fingers of the wu hand. The image of drawing in light through the fingers can be used to intend this. The feeling of the ball will often change to the hand feeling more like it is wrapped within energy. This is because your intention is now on the flow to the elbow rather than on building the ball in the palm. You may notice the sensation of chi all around the wu hand, both on the palm side and the back of the hand. Your attention

will be on the hand, the flow of chi down the marrow in the forearm bones, and the accumulating pool of chi at the elbow, while still maintaining the deep energy root.

You should also start attending to the vibration in your body. As you repeat the cycle three times you will intend this vibration up into your spine and into your head, as well as down into the hand and arm. As you get more advanced in your practice the drawing of energy through the hand to the elbow will continue by further drawing it from the elbow to the Dan-Tien and then down into the root. This connects the wu sau with the root on an energy level. This again is done using the intended image of a sucking vacuum or relaxed void first in the elbow, then the Dan-Tien, and finally in the earth itself.

The Fook Sau



Once the hand has moved back to the finishing point for the wu sau you begin to turn it down into the fook sau position. This transition is done at the same slow speed of the tan and wu. As you lower the hand also slowly sink an inch or so in your stance. You would lower the hand to the fook position and sink in your stance simultaneously. This further compresses the root energy which results in a stronger yang

raising chi response. The fook sau position is the strongest building phase of the exercise. Lower your root intention and reverse the attending focus so that you are now attending more to the yang raising energy up from your root. You should intend to draw the energy of the earth in rhythmic waves through your legs into your Dan-Tien and up the front of your body along the conception vessel path (See an acupuncture chart) to your solar plexus. If you seem unable to get the energy past a certain part of your body use the dissolving exercise to unlock the energy at that point and presence a void to suck the energy past the blockage.

As the palm of the fook hand folds in towards your chest and the fingers come together grip the energy building at your solar plexus and draw it into your hand. You now have a flow coming from the root in the earth up the legs, through the Dan-Tien, up and out of the solar plexus, into the fingers and palm of your fook sau hand and through the marrow of the forearm bones into the elbow. As you slowly extend the fook sau out envision the image of the chi (think of it as water or light) flowing from the chest into the hand, pressing the hand out, while the accumulation of energy weight at the elbow draws the elbow into the centered position. What was the image of the ball of light stuck to the palm of the tan and wu sau is now a stream or beam of light extending from the chest into the palm of the hand.

As the arm slowly extends the pooled energy at the elbow is now drawn up the arm bone into the shoulder and the neck. You should start this by dissolving the gates at the shoulder and neck bone. Although you will often feel the energy all around your arm and hand, it is important to focus your intent to drawing it through the inside of your bones. The bone marrow washing requires a deep attention and intending ability.

In addition to drawing the energy from the root into the solar plexus and fook sau arm you will also draw that same raising root energy into the hips. Actually you pool it in the Dan-Tien and then divide it with part of it going up the conception vessel to the solar plexus and part of it flowing the other direction along the governing vessel and into the center of the spine through the tailbone. From there you draw it through the tailbone and up the inside of the spine to eventually meet the elbow energy at the neck. It then is brought into the brain and wash over the brain.

To do this effectively you need to use the dissolving exercise to unlock the energy gate at the tailbone that allows the energy to enter there. You can further draw the energy up the spine by progressively relaxing and generating the vacuum within each vertebra from the tailbone up to the skull. Holding the lifting feeling in the crown of your head throughout this exercise is essential. The drawing up of energy from the ground should be done by drawing it into the bones of the feet and through the marrow of the leg bones. When it gets to the hipbones you will draw it into the Dan-Tien along with a drawing intention from your gonads. This enables the sexual energy housed there to be added to the root energy to fill the Dan-Tien and then flow up to the chest area to be drawn into your fook sau hand. Once the Dan-Tien is filled, and the connection is made with the fook hand the root energy can then be divided, half going to the fook hand and the rest going to the tailbone and up the spine. A gentle contraction of the sphincter muscle is helpful in directing the chi into the tailbone.

The vibration within the body will intensify during the fook sau phase, do not let it get away from you and start causing you to jerk and jump around. Focus it within the abdominal area and allow it to fill the chest, arms, and head. Relaxation and

correct posture are the keys to keeping it under control, although if you become fatigued you may be unable to relax sufficiently, or focus your energy intention strong enough to channel the energy you are generating. That is why it is important not to attempt this exercise before you have developed the needed intention skills. Also when you first start this exercise aim for 20 to 30 minutes the first few times. As you get use to the exercise you will be able to hold the mental focus longer and you can increase the time by slowing down the motions. You do not increase the time by adding more sequences; this would change the dynamic of the form. Always do each sequence three times on both arms, no more, no less.

Once you have finished the fook sau you rotate the hand to a tan sau, presence the ball in the palm again and then huen to the wu sau as before. On the second and third repetitions you want to maintain the attention on the drawing root rather than just intending down, and maintain the flow of energy from the root up the spine into the head. This was started with the first fook sau and should be maintained throughout the three repetitions. Upon completing the final wu sau, you can relax the focus for a moment as you change to normal speed to do the side palm and thrusting palm and chamber the left hand.

Repeat the same process on the right side. However, with the right tan sau you should maintain the focus attention on the drawing root. This will add the yang raising root energy to your hand as you focus on building the ball in the palm. You should keep the wave flow going up from the root once you establish it, focusing it within the arm and hand and drawing it up the spine as well. As the vibration intensifies you can begin to focus it deep into the bones by drawing or intending it into them. This also helps calm the vibration if it gets too strong.

Upon completion of the form you should feel a deep peacefulness and calm. You should also feel energized; your mind should not be tense but relaxed and surprisingly quiet. It may be a little fatigued from the prolonged intense focus required, but your body should feel invigorated. Standing for some time can tire the legs a little at first, but as you practice regularly your body will soon become conditioned so that this is not a permanent condition. At first some people experience muscular pain in the shoulders from holding the arm in position so long. This will also stop once you are conditioned better. The important thing is to relax, try to maintain the position because there is an important energy reason for the postures and techniques, but do not do it by tensing. You are better off being slightly out of position yet remaining relaxed than being in position but tense.

Summary of Focus Points

The following focus points are accumulative, each point is added to the preceding points.

Set up the stance, focus on the sinking yin root.

Tan sau, focus on a ball of energy in the palm, pooling chi in the elbow, yang raising waves, chi flow from elbow to palm, chi flow from root to the elbow.

Wu sau, strong focus on raising yang chi, chi flow from hand through the bones into the elbow, from the elbow up to the spine.

Fook sau, Focus on the yang raising waves up through the bones into the Dan Tien, divide it to go up the spine through the tail bone, and simultaneously up the front of the body to the solar plexus, out along the center line into the fook sau hand, through the bones to the elbow, up into the spine where it joins with the spine chi and washes over the brain.

As you can see there are multiple simultaneous things to focus your attention

and intention upon. This is why the Sil Num Tao exercise is a very advanced exercise and assumes the practitioner has already acquired significant energy skills. This is also why the Sil Num Tao boxing form is considered an advanced form rather than a beginning form. If you have ever heard the stories of Grandmaster Yip Man taking an hour to complete the first form, you will now understand a little better why it took so long and what he was doing for that hour. You can also see that this exercise contains the deep aspects of all the preceding exercises combined into one. Once you have completed the last of the slow wu sau motions you should perform the remainder of the form at normal speed with the releasing skills in each motion taught in Biu Tze. This is very important; the form is an entire unit of Chi-kung and performing only the slow portion is only a piece of the exercise. By releasing through the remainder of the form you will flush out the chi and rebalance your system. Therefore the rest of the form is essential and should be performed with dynamic releasing skills.



Chapter 5 Learning to Move with Chi

As important as the energy root is, it does one little good if he is unable to move with it. A dynamic or moving root is essential because fighting is the art of moving. The next progressive step from the stationary rooting skills is to make them dynamic. I remember seeing an old Tai Chi master demonstrate just how powerful it is to move your body with your energy. He was in his 80s, and had practiced the characteristic slow movements of Tai Chi for most of his life. But I didn't see how much the energy was moving his old frail body until he moved quickly. As part of a demonstration he showed the classical Tai Chi form and then to help dispel the myth that Tai Chi is only done slowly he made a series of very quick turns, much like the stance turning in the Chum Ku form. His body whipped around from one side to the next, yet he stayed perfectly balanced and still. I knew even a younger man could not turn like that, and here was a frail looking old master doing it, how? He wasn't using his body to move his energy; he was using his chi to move his body! In fact while in the parks in China during the early morning hours I regularly observed Tai Chi being practiced at a rather medium to fast pace. Of course the classic slow Tai Chi forms were also regularly practiced, but it was not uncommon to see the forms practiced quickly.



Tai Chi in Beijing's Bamboo Park



Practice in the park

As I visited with many different masters of Tai Chi I found that I had much in common with them. I became friendly with an elderly gentleman named Zhang Shuji who could speak some English and who enjoyed taking me around. It seemed he wanted to show me the real high masters of kung fu because he called me frequently stating that he had arranged for me to meet with this famous teacher or that famous master.



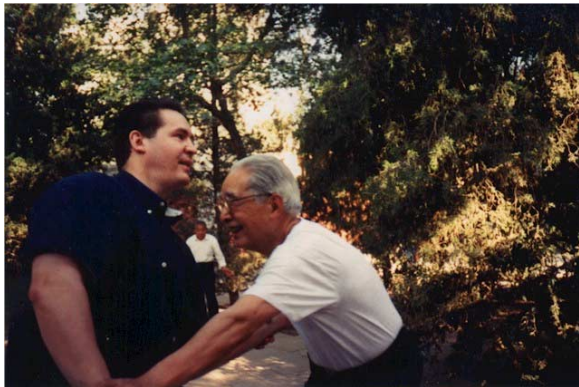
Scott Baker with his friend Zhang Shuji

For me he was a God sent, I always went with him and he often talked the master into comparing skills with me. I think he wanted to have them show me up, but each time he became more impressed with my kung fu skills. On the final meeting he took me to Yue Tan Park where a great old master that was very well respected as having expert skills taught each morning.



Master Yang teaching in the Yue Tan Park

His name was master Yang Da Hou and I found him to be most humble and genuine, like most of the masters I encountered. We began comparing upon the agreement that we would reframe from injuring each other and I was most impressed with his skills. He was 81 years old and small in stature, about 100 lbs. at best, yet he moved with a solid root and I found him very skillful at resisting and countering my efforts to unbalance him.



However, I also was able to counter his efforts to throw or unbalance me, which greatly impressed the audience as well as the old master, who later stated that my skills were very good.



Master Yang & Si-Fu Baker testing each other's skills.



As in most schools of martial arts, this wise master had one student who was one of those characters who thinks he knows more than he really does. He wanted to try his hand at unbalancing me, but he also failed while I was able to throw him several times. He then declared that it was only because I was too big and strong physically. He invited me to stay for another master to come who he was confident could throw me

easily. I naturally agreed, they said this master was a big man who had great skills and had beaten many challengers. He was skilled in Tai Chi as well as a version of Shaolin. Naturally I was excited to see what he had.

After about an hour or so he arrived and the group eagerly took me over to him and introduced us. His name was Lu Jian Guo and he was a large man, somewhat larger than I am, and I'm not exactly petite. He was in his late 40's and looked very strong, he had the eyes of an experienced fighter. I was eager to feel his skills. When they told him I practiced Wing Chun master Lu commented that Wing Chun injures people. I quickly informed him I was not there to injure anyone and so we agreed to compare without injuring each other, but to simply unbalance each other.



Master Lu with Si-Fu Baker

A large crowd gathered, 30 to 50 people, to watch the master throw me. We started in a push hands sequence and quickly moved to directly attempting to unbalance each other by applying presses and pulls in free form. He was solidly rooted and I found the exchange most enjoyable. We went back and forth for several minutes without either getting an advantage, then when he applied a strong press to my body I slipped it and was able to jerk him out of his stance and throw him about 12 feet. This greatly impressed the crowd who let out an audible gasp.

Master Lu was very gracious and acknowledged that I had gotten him, but then returned with zeal in an effort to redeem himself. We continued for an additional 3 or 4 minutes without either getting a real advantage.

Upon stopping the exchange master Lu declared to the crowd that I was most formidable and had a great ability with energy. This was a great compliment and the crowd began to respect my skills more than my size, even though I was not Chinese. I was very impressed with his skills and we parted as good friends. Although he and master Yang, as well as two other masters who I had compared with that morning commented together that I would be almost unbeatable if I studied Tai Chi to better refine my Chi-kung skills.



Si-Fu Baker with master Yang.

I took this as a great compliment, as I have the uttermost respect for Tai Chi. To have these masters of China encourage me to take their preferred style to improve was a high compliment. I truly felt honored. And in truth I believe that if I was able to study under some of these masters I would truly improve considerably.

The ability to move while rooted is what is taught in the Chum Ku boxing form. It is one thing to be able to root, it is quite another level of skill to keep that root while moving, and it is an even deeper skill level to move the body from the rooting energy!

So how does one progress through these levels of skill?

A fundamental truth about the nature of chi is that it is fluid. In its natural state it is alive and moving. The fact that it naturally moves is a key to being able to move with it. However, chi also wants to be led; to be told where to go. If it isn't told by the intent of the person then it simple moves and cycles naturally within the grand sinking continuum that is chi. The first level skill of rooting your energy is accomplished simply by relaxing and quieting the mind and body enough to release the energy and allow it to sink due to the force of gravity. (Energy is effected by gravity, in fact gravity is an effect caused by the flow of the earth's chi, but that's another book). Then you begin to presence down and draw the chi into the earth, to essentially direct the chi to sink deeper. This is done through training your attention and intention, two mental aspects that bring control over chi. It's not enough to just wish, or think about moving the energy here or there, you have to really presence the feeling through intent.

Stepping

These same skills then are used to make the root dynamic. Essentially what you do is presence or "send out your energy feelings" to where you want to be. To do this you must apply several key principles. First and foremost Relax and create a feeling of a void or vacuum, you can not move energy without relaxation. The feelings of energy that you will presence or intend out are these relaxed void feelings. Also center your body motion from the Dan-Tien; move from there. If you are stepping forward you step as if someone has a rope around your hips and pulls you forward. You move from the Dan-Tien first by presenting the energy from there. The third key would be to use the dynamic of shooting energy and springing energy into the feet.

When you are relaxed energy can feel heavy, like it has weight. As you throw the front foot out to step, drop the heavy energy feeling down the leg and into the foot so it feels like a heavy metal ball rolling down a sealed tube and hitting the bottom with a thud. Your chi shoots down your leg from your Dan-Tien and hits your foot with a thud too. This Thud feel will pull you forward somewhat. At the same time the energy ball hits your foot you shoot a spring like energy down your back leg to fire you forward. All this happens in a split second, and is all about presencing feelings, relaxing, and intending from the Dan-Tien. The leg and feet must be relaxed.

You do not lift up your root to do this. In fact you are still presencing down by centering your motion in the Dan-Tien and intending into your feet as you step with the relaxed void feeling. The motion is initiated by presencing from the Dan-Tien towards your target, while keeping rooted simultaneously. As you create a vacuum within the Dan-Tien you will draw energy up from the root which loads the spring energy in the rear leg. This drawing root enables you to shoot from the Dan-Tien and move with the root intact.

Notice when you step that you do not move both feet in the same moment. Rather you move the front leg out then you push off from the back leg and move it up. The front leg draws the back leg behind it as if a large rubber band was around your legs at the knees. This is what is often called the abduction stance, or abduction stepping. The timing of your intending down into the foot should be to capitalize on this. As the ball thuds into the lead foot you will shoot by releasing the spring in the rear leg. The coordination of this energy interplay will result in a very quick shooting step. At first you will be moving your body and energy together. But as you become more adept at this you will eventually move you body

from your energy, just as the old Tai Chi master did.

Turning



One of the great downfalls of many Wing Chun practitioners is that they spend so much time working their hand skills and to little time on their feet. Stepping drills are tiring, but are absolutely essential. You can only master the deep timing need to step with the energy root by drilling and drilling those movements. Chum Ku has many repetitive motions within it. This is to hint to you that these motions need to be drilled! In fact the Chum Ku form is a series of drills. You can take a small section of the form and repeat it over and over as a drill. Turning is a key skill to drill. Some people turn on their heels, others on their toes, and others around the center of their foot. Which is correct? From a dynamic root point of view I have found that turning around the center of the foot is preferable.

When you turn on your heel or toe there is a tendency to lift up your root as you turn, thus losing your sunken strength. This is due to several factors; one is the energy point on the bottom of the foot, which is the kidney meridian 1 point on an acupuncture chart. This is the gate at the bottom of the foot that sends the chi down into the root. When you turn on your toes or

heels you tend to lift this up. Turning around the center keeps this down. Also you tend to place your balance back on the heels or forward on the toes, when turning on the heels or toes. This also weakens the root strength considerably. To turn well you need to have expert control over your balance. Keeping it centered and firm. Balance is in reality an energy skill. One's balance can be taken and kept by controlling chi. This became obvious to me when working to unbalance the Tai Chi masters in China. Balance has little to do with the physical, and everything to do with your internal controls and skills.

When you turn around the center of the foot you should also turn one foot at a time, just like when you step; you move one foot at a time. This also keeps the root deep while turning. Those who turn on their heels or toes tend to move both feet together which weakens the root. When you turn you throw your body weight down into the rear leg root and presence intent (not body weight) into the front foot. Again this requires timing and timing requires practice.



As you improve your ability to stay rooted while in motion you will find that the strength of the energy root begins to be manifest through the whole body. Your posture settles and the body becomes a single unit. As you express a technique with your arms, it is expressed by the whole body working in unison in a single moment. Thus the root will be felt through the arm and hand techniques. This is one of the grand energy skills taught through the Chum Ku form. Unifying the body so that each motion comes from the root and manifests that root.

Wing Chun Kicking



Si-Fu Baker holding a side kick pose

As with most of the fighting arts Wing Chun employs kicking techniques as an important part of its weapon arsenal. However, there are some important and significant differences between the kicking method of Wing Chun and the many other arts. These differences set Wing Chun's kicking skills apart, making them a distinct tool within the system.

1. Kicking Seeds

It has been said by some that Wing Chun only has one punch and three kicks. Although this is not completely accurate it is easy to understand how some people may have developed such an opinion. Wing Chun does rely heavily upon the Sun punch, but it also possesses other punching techniques

like the lifting punch and the hooking punch found in the second and third boxing forms. The perception that Wing Chun only has three kicks is also inaccurate; it comes from a limited understanding of the three foundation or "seed" kicking techniques within the system. These three kicks are NOT the only kicks Wing Chun employees, but rather are the basis upon which all of the Wing Chun kicking motions are built. These three seed kicks are: front kick, sidekick, and round kick. Each of these techniques are basic to any martial system that employees kicking. They are not unique by any means. However, Wing Chun uses the distinct body alignment and motions of these three kicks as building blocks from which to create an unlimited variety of potential kicking techniques.



Si-Fu Baker and Sifu Jeffcoat in chi sau practice

The basic front kick requires that you face your opponent, lift your kicking leg at the knee, and thrust the ball or soul of your foot straight out striking your target with a straight front kick. There is nothing special about that. Now let us look at the round kick. The round or hooking kick can be thrown from any body alignment with your opponent. You can be facing him, standing sideways to him, or even have your back to him and you can still deliver an effective round kick. Depending on what part of the foot you are using to strike with a round kick may look like a different technique each time.



Si-Fu Baker using the circling kick from the Biu Tze form

A spinning heel kick is a round kick, it comes in a curved line of attack rather than a straight line like a front kick. A crescent kick is also a round kick, in fact all kicks are either straight or round in their line of attack. In Wing Chun all kicks that arc or curve into the target are considered round kicks. Now if you combine the round kick principle of arcing in with the simple front kick we get some interesting, and somewhat unique kicking techniques.



kicking is an important component of advanced chi sau practice

One example of this is the Wing Chun “facade” kick often seen towards the end of the Chum Ku boxing form. The facade kick is a front kick that arcs to the outside as the body turns to face the target. You strike with the soul of the foot with a straight thrusting motion, but the line of attack is definitely an arc. In the same way

by combining the three simple kicking seeds Wing Chun can create many possible kicking techniques.

2. Kicking Principles



Si-Fu Baker and Troy Sperry in chi sau practice

In combining the three seeds Wing Chun takes the principles of alignment, motion, and striking area represented by the three seed kicks and recombines them to create any number of different kicking techniques. Remember Wing Chun is a principle based system, not a technique based system. Therefore, we have an endless variety of techniques we can use, so long as they conform to correct kicking principles. Those correct kicking principles are represented within the three kicking seeds. These principles include lifting, thrusting, stomping, skipping, huening, jerking, and pressing. They also embrace straight line and circular principles of motion. The alignment principles of facing and standing sideways to your opponent, or turning towards or away from your opponent are also represented.



The weapons or striking areas of the soul, heel, and top of the foot are clearly illustrated. But the seeds also include the side of the foot, the toes, the ball, back of the heel, inside of the foot, the shin, and the knee. Which of these striking areas you use depends upon your alignment with your target and the principles of motion used to get your foot onto that target. Once those have been determined it is simple logic that determines which striking area or weapon will be used to make contact with the target. Other general Wing Chun principles also apply to correct kicking. Principles of economy in motion or closest weapon to closest target will often be illustrated in the kicks used. Also principles of continuous attacking will show up as Wing Chun fires off multiple kicks instead of only one or two.

3. Soft, Internal Kicking Power



Blind folded chi gerk training, to improve leg sensitivity, control, and balance

Principles of sticking, and using motion are also heavenly relied upon to help the Wing Chun practitioner determine which seed principles will best respond to the current situation. To be able to utilize the characteristic Wing Chun sticking skills one will need to learn to kick with a very relaxed leg. The principle of relaxation is inseparable from the skills of flowing and feeling. Here Wing Chun is different from

many kicking systems in that most systems use strength and tension in the leg to generate great power. Wing Chun however, must remain soft and relaxed while kicking so as to feel and flow effectively. The Wing Chun kick releases soft internal power through the leg rather than kicking with physical strength.



The power of Wing Chun kicks come from the correct releasing of chi through the limb, just as the power of the hand strikes use the release of energy through the hand to damage the opponent internally. It would be incongruent for Wing Chun to emphasis soft-relaxed motions with the hands and arm strikes, but then employ hard, tense motions with the legs and feet! That does not make sense, and does not work. As an internal system the whole of Wing Chun is soft and filled with energy. That includes the kicks.

When practiced correctly the soft, fast kicking motions of Wing Chun are extremely powerful. The student must learn how to relax and release energy through the legs, just as he did with his arms. However, with the legs there is a great deal more mass to relax, so to some it is easier to just kick the tense, hard way. This is a grave mistake as it will not only result in damage to the kickers legs in time, but effectively isolates

him from the important rooting energy skills that give stability and power to the rest of his art. A tense Wing Chun kicker essential stops doing Wing Chun when he kicks. He is employing two completely different systems of attacking and generating power. In doing so he will use neither of them fully or effectively.

To release energy through the kick you employ the same intending feeling you use when stepping. Throwing the “energy ball” down the leg and into the foot as you kick. Placing your intent strongly through the target. This was powerfully demonstrated once when I was teaching a class about the circular heel kick that strikes the opponents kidneys. Tim, one of my more advanced students, was curious to see if I could generate any power with this seemingly flimsy kick. I had him hold a thick kicking shield across his left kidney as I stood facing him so that I wouldn’t injure his kidneys. I turned to a side kick position and then hooked my left leg around and struck the pad with the back of the heel. I really wasn’t trying to kick him hard, in fact I didn’t expect it to have much of an effect because it is not a particularly powerful feeling kick and he had that thick pad. All we were both expecting was that he would feel that it has some impact. My intent was to make a solid pop on the pad, however the energy from the kick penetrated the pad and Tim dropped like a rock. He was in agony for several minutes holding his kidney and expressing his concern using some rather colorful metaphors! I was able to help him recover; however, he has never asked me to demonstrate a kick on him again!

4. Kicking Targets



Si-Fu Baker with Sifu Tim Jeffcoat

Wing Chun utilizes the principle of economy in motion. With kicking the application of this principle guides the student to attack lower targets with his kicks while using his hands to strike at the higher targets. To put it simply we attack the open target with the weapon that is closest to that target. It is seldom that the head of your opponent is closer to your feet than to your hands. Unless of course he has already been knocked down. To raise your foot from the ground up the approximate 6 feet to your opponents head makes little sense when your hands were only two or three feet from his head! It would be unthinkable for most martial artists to bend down and punch their opponent in the foot, rather they would simply stomp on that foot with the heel. That is sensible. Well the same logic applies to hitting him in the head with the hands instead of your feet. Wing Chun seldom will kick above the abdominal cavity. Most high kicking systems developed high kicking techniques around a set of rules that forbade someone from kicking them “below the belt”. This rule makes it safer to kick high, until you get into a real fight where there are NO rules!

The most vulnerable target on a high kicker is his supporting leg. It is wide open, he can’t move it while his other leg is waving around in the air, and his knee is the most commonly, and easily injured joint in

his body. A short fast snapping kick to this target will finish the fight instantly! This was well illustrated by another situation that developed with my friend Mark. After only about 6 months of practicing on his own a situation developed between him and another martial arts instructor from a kicking system. Given Marks personality he quickly offended this gentleman by saying something about learning a real martial art rather than the partial art he was teaching. Well nothing came of it until several weeks later when the instructor's master called Mark and confronted him regarding this not too respectful statement. This master was the head over a whole series of schools throughout California, Arizona Washington and a few other western states. He forcefully informed Mark he would be in Mark's area next week and would meet him to teach him some respect. Being that Mark is never one to back down he agreed to the meeting.

When the time came they met at a YMCA gym, Mark alone wearing a basic Tee shirt and some kung fu pants and this master in his crisp white GI with patches and a black belt covered in red stripes. The man was in his early 40's and had been training all his life. Mark was in his late 20's and had been training at Wing Chun basics for 6 months. It was not an even match. To further add to the intimidation factor the Master had brought two of his black belt students to "watch" him teach Mark some manners.

There was not much discussion, Mark walked in and the master was doing some stretching exercises to limber up for the fight. He asked if Mark was ready, said something about teaching him manners and they commenced. The master came at Mark with a series of spinning wheel kicks, which Mark avoided. Then he planted and fired of a rear leg round house kick to Marks head. Mark simply caught the kick as Wing Chun does using the lao sau motion from Sil Num

Tao, and then he stomped on the master's supporting knee. As the knee bent back the wrong way it made a terrible sound and the master went into shock as they both fell to the ground with Mark on top. Mark landed on the masters elbow and bruised a rib, his only injury, and then commenced to chain punch and lan sau the master in the face until he was unconscious and the master's two black belt students pulled Mark off declaring that it was enough.

Mark had won against a 40 plus year veteran in less than a minute and with only 6 months of training in Wing Chun techniques and principles! Before walking away Mark tore off the master's logo patch and kept it as a memento. He now has the blood stained patched framed along with a cryptic statement about facing your fears.



Mark in the white shirt

Wing Chun works to both attack and defend the lower gates with the legs. We stand on the rear leg leaving the front leg to float, freeing it to attack and defend the lower areas with the same ease as the hands have to attack and defend the higher gates.



Si-Fu Baker and Richard Kennely in chi sau practice. By skillful application of the sticking principles learned within the chi gerk practice the student can flow with and defeat the kicking techniques of his attacker. There are many effective targets to strike on the legs, and because many fighters put weight on the forward leg they are unable to move to defend these open targets. Wing Chun employs the one legged stance so that our forward leg is free to attack and defend with comparable speed to that of the hands.



Some may feel that using the closest weapon to attack a target sounds fine with regards to being economical, but sacrifices the devastating power that kicks can generate. This criticism is valid for those using tension, weight, and strength to generate power. But as we have said Wing Chun does not generate power in this way. Wing Chun's short power has been well illustrated in the one-inch punch. The same explosive short power can be generated with

the Wing Chun kicks. We do not sacrifice power for speed and economy.

The defense of the lower gates also employs the principles of the three kicking seeds. The chamber positions for the front and sidekicks make up the basis of the Wing Chun leg defense techniques.



Si-Fu Baker holding the sidekick chamber position

These blocking or parrying skills with the lead leg are learned in the chi gerk training. By keeping either the foot or knee on the centerline the Wing Chun kicker learns to control his attacker's legs and can devastate them with repeated chain kicking techniques.



Blindfolded Chi Gerk training.

5. Kicking as Stepping



Three examples of advancing while kicking in actual combat.

A final significant distinction between most kicking arts and the kicking methodology of Wing Chun is that Wing Chun uses the kick as a step. This is well illustrated in the Chum Ku boxing form and on the Wooden dummy. In Wing Chun you do not kick then retract you leg, rather you kick then step down and advance forward. The kick is part of the step. We seldom will stand in one place and throw kicks. Wing Chun prefers to press in on the opponent, and when kicking that means advancing with each kick. To do this the foot is put down on the ground where it strikes the target. It is not retracted and put back where it started from. In advanced kicking skills one can step after the kick without putting the leg down, thus enabling them to chain kick while still stepping forward. It looks a little like you are hopping on one leg while kicking with the other, however, you are not hopping so long as you maintain a strong energy root. This skill requires strong presence and use of energy in both the kicking and standing legs.

The kicking skills of Wing Chun are often understated and under utilized. Most students work so long and hard at developing the intricate feeling skills with the hands that when they get to kicking they gloss over this training. The truth is the kicking skills of Wing Chun are as equally complex and sophisticated as the hand skills. Grandmaster Yip Man was known to have said that if you go up against another skilled Wing Chun person, you will have to beat him with your feet. If students would devote

equal time and effort to training the legs as they do to their hands Wing Chun would probably become better known for its devastating leg skills! But the truth is that the legs tire easily, they are heavy and difficult to work with, and we have not learned to feel as well with them as we do with our arms. Because of these reasons most students do not give the legs the training time needed to truly develop the deep kicking skills of Wing Chun.

The Different Energy Expressions of the Three Boxing Forms

The forms in Wing Chun each have a specific and significant energy function. Sil Num Tao teaches an advanced chi building process. It contains the unique Wing Chun Chi kung exercise for the building and focusing of chi energy. Chum Ku contains a series of coordinated motions that are to be timed into a unified expression. These sequences are drills that can be repeated or drilled in order to learn the simultaneous expression of technique. Within these combination motions the energy is expressed through learning to “place” it within the expressive limb. Placing energy then is the Chum Ku Chi-kung expression. It doesn’t take a very skilled individual to notice that Chum Ku contains a lot more complexity in its motions than those in Sil Num Tao.

Footwork is a dominant aspect of the second form. Turning or stepping motions need to be timed with hand techniques so as to synergies the movements together into a single expression. It is from out of this context of coordinated and combined motion that we learn how to place the intent, and thereby the chi, within the technique at the exact time needed. Again it is essential to remain relaxed. The energy will not flow from the root into the arm or leg expressing the technique if there is tension.

A distinct and observable characteristic of correctly placing energy is the rubbery type of vibration that occurs in the limb at the moment it is placed.



Sifu Jeffcoat demonstrating placing chi in the arm

The arm or leg must be relaxed to enable this vibration. The placing intent can be trained by using imagery and imagination once again. For example the bong sau technique is featured prominently within the Chum Ku form. To express it correctly it must be positioned exactly within the center line theory taught in Sil Num Tao. Also it must occur at the exact time the turn or step is completed, so the timing of the bong motion occurs with the timing of the end of the step or turn. It is at this moment that you place the energy within the forearm of the bong sau. The image used is that of having a hollow arm and as the bong is executed a heavy ball of energy shoots from the shoulder and lands in the center of the forearm with a thud. It is that thud that creates the vibration or rubbery appearance that is characteristic of placing energy. A similar image can be used in each technique expressed within the form.

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Of the three boxing forms in the system the Chum Ku form is in fact the easiest or simplest to perform well. Many may hold that the Sil Num Tao form is obviously simpler, and in appearance I would agree. But the Sil Num Tao form is very difficult to do with a high level of skill expression simply because it is so simple in its structure. It takes a very skilled practitioner to manifest the Chum Ku placing energy and the Biu Tze releasing energy skills within the Sil Num Tao form. One reason is that you have to learn to draw up the root energy to place and release it in the hand technique being executed without any motion from the body. This is an advanced skill. Therefore Sil Num Tao becomes the most difficult to do at a high level of skill. Chum Ku however gives you a lot to work with to generate the placing and even some releasing skills.



Si-Fu Baker releasing energy in the Biu Tze form

Although the releasing of energy is the Chi-kung expression of the Biu Tze form, once one has mastered it he should be able to express it in all three forms. Chum Ku is the easiest to do this within. It is easier than Biu Tze because the structure of the Chum Ku form is that of simple techniques combined together. The structure of the Biu Tze form is that of difficult or complex techniques combined together. Therefore the

easiest form to express higher level skills within is the Chum Ku form. Next would be the Bui Tze form, and the most difficult is the Sil Num Tao form because of its fixed stance and still body position.



Bamboo Park Beijing

Chapter 6 Using Chi as a Weapon



Si-Fu Baker holding the long pole in the difficult one handed chamber position

Chi-kung training works the whole mind and body as a single unit. Rooting skills are the foundation for all Chi-kung skills. As the student progresses from rooting skills he will begin to learn how to release energy through his hands. The wall bag training drills are an essential part of this practice. The wall bag should be used regularly over long periods of time to deepen the ability to release energy.



The punching practice on the wall bag must be done correctly, with a good stance and without tension. If the student is trying to hit the bag hard he will gain little benefit from the practice. He needs to relax and let his energy flow through the fist into the wall.

Remember Wing Chun was first developed and practiced by two women, Ng

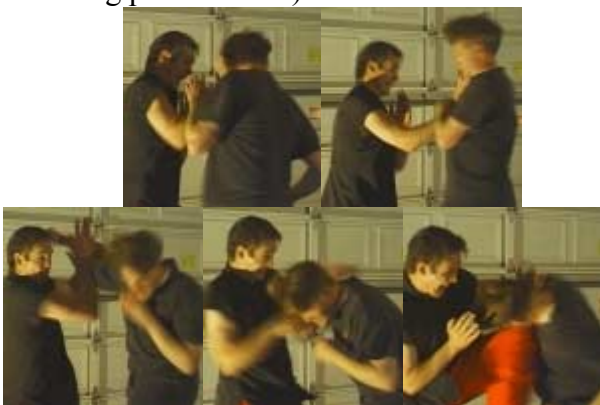
Mui and Yim Wing Chun. Do you think they would have been able to defeat the larger and much stronger men who also possessed kung fu skills by learning to hit with physical strength and tension? The idea is obviously absurd, they did not match strength with the men. They could not. They did not hit with their smaller bodies. Ng Mui and her star student Yim Wing Chun learned to hit with chi, with energy. They were able to defeat physical strength through developing deep and powerful energy skills. This is how Wing Chun was originally practiced and taught. Always ask yourself when you are practicing... "Could a woman use this skill or technique in the same way I am using it to defeat a larger man?" If not, then it is not good Wing Chun!

Correctly practicing the punching drills over many months will bring the short explosive power found in the one-inch punch. Also by training the palm strikes and kicks in a similar way will produce other manifestations of powerful blows that release energy.



Releasing energy from the arms can be greatly enhanced by learning to release with the whole body. Fa-Jing is the correct term to refer to such explosive power. Once the student has developed the root depth, and learned to release energy through the limbs he then will learn Fa-Jing. Fa-Jing is manifest by a characteristic body shake just

as the blow is executed. This strange shake is a characteristic of the chi energy released through the blow. This shaking is centered around the waist, not the hips. A natural form of Fa-Jing occurs when one lets out a loud sneeze! Often the whole body shakes as the sneeze is released. For a split second the body is completely out of control. This letting go is a characteristic of good Fa-Jing. This can be demonstrated by striking on the hand pad. A strike using just the energy of the arm can be impressive, but with Fa-Jing added it is extra ordinarily powerful. (see the sinking palm section).



Si-Fi Baker using explosive fa-jing combinations

A Fa-Jing strike is an amazingly powerful strike! It is the kind of blow that one does not get up from! It takes years of practice to master chi sufficiently to be able to refine these skills. But once these skills have begun the student will realize his Wing Chun is so much more than he had ever anticipated. Fa-jing is far more than just a simple body shake however. The shake is only the observable manifestation of an explosive release of energy through the body. Shaking alone will not produce this. To acquire the Fa-jing release one needs to develop a deep mind body connection. This brings the ability to command your chi, to sense and direct it within your body and even draw it from the earth through the root. A deeply relaxed quality must be present in

the physical body to allow the energy to flow freely through it.



All the Chi-kung exercises previously described are designed to train the necessary mental, physical, and energy components necessary to produce the Fa-jing release of power. The shake is simply the observable manifestation of this internal skill. The other obvious manifestation is the undeniable power of the blow, which is manifest by the dramatic effect it has upon the person getting hit.

Many internal skills do not produce explosive power. In fact some of the more refined and difficult skills are the listening and reading skills of energy. Often called listening Jing, these sensing skills are practiced extensively in Wing Chun's chi sau exercises.



The truly deep chi sau skills can only come when energy is taught along with this exercise. Even as the body gets old and weak, these internal skills will not. The old master with great power has that power

because he learned Chi-kung skills as he practiced through the years. In time the Chi-kung skills have become his greatest weapon, they are the accumulation of all his skills.

In some internal systems chi is often trained and developed to enhance the health of the practitioner. Some mistakenly believe that Chi-kung work is only for the improvement of ones health. In Wing Chun the health benefits of Chi-kung are secondary, almost a side effect of the true martial benefits that using chi brings. It is almost impossible to describe the difference between being struck by chi, and being hit by a good strong physical blow. It really is something you have to experience to appreciate.

When I decided to accept students and opened a school many people would accept the open invitation to come and check it out. I would go to great lengths to attempt to describe to them how Wing Chun gains its power from a different source than the size and strength of the body. That it gets its power from chi or energy. The people were always polite but very few ever came back. I could sense that they just didn't believe me, so I began demonstrating it on them. To demonstrate chi in the Wing Chun system you really have to strike the person you are attempting to convince.



Sifu Tim Jeffcoat demonstrating the internal thrusting palm

Hitting someone else does not convince the observer. He must experience it first hand. I was at first reluctant to strike people, but soon realized no one would believe that chi was real and that it can be an extremely powerful weapon unless they felt it. So I would perform a medium powered sinking palm strike on the chest of each potential student. I would explain to them that the energy would sink into their stomach area and that they would feel it inside rather than on the surface where my hand made contact. Then I would slap them; always they were stunned at the power of the seemingly innocent slap. Always they were dumfounded by the feelings of the energy moving inside there body, and bewildered at how it kept on hurting for several minutes. It was after I started hitting people that I got many more students. In the west, even experienced martial artists do not believe in chi and do not understand how it can be used as a weapon.

At one point I was interested in competing in full contact martial arts. I met with a former kick boxer who was willing to coach me and manage my fights. The first time we meet we put on some gear and spared a little so he could see what I had. He seemed impressed and agreed to be my trainer and promoter. Then he started asking me about my art. I could tell he did not understand internal systems and did not believe in chi. So I asked him if I could demonstrate it on him with a simple slap to the chest. He was a tough looking guy, a police officer, and had a square jaw and a military style hair cut. He really looked intimidating and as hard as nails. So I let him have it. Instead of giving him the usual $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ power slap I gave him just over $\frac{3}{4}$ of what I had. I felt the energy release and sink deep into his body. He stumbled back and was quite pale, he coughed twice and then after a few seconds looked at me and said,

“wow that has a lot of power”. I kicked myself for not giving him all of it! He then quickly dismissed me with an agreement to meet again. After about three months had past and we had become good friends he finally mentioned the time I palmed him. He said that he’d never been hit so hard in his life and that it was all he could do to stop from passing out. He said he felt that I had knocked his shoulders into his ass and that his guts had fallen out on the floor! He had dismissed me so he could go inside and lay down for a few hours. I had perceived that I hadn’t impressed him, but I had. He was so tough and proud that he was not going to let me see how much I had hurt him with a simple slap. He asked repeatedly that I show him how to hit like that. This guy had taken allot of shots in his training. He’d trained with some world class boxers and kickboxers and knew how to take a blow. But it is always impressive when you are first hit with chi. It changes everything. Chi is a very powerful weapon.

The slap or sinking palm



Si-Fu Baker demonstrates the sinking palm strike with a short palm strike to the hand mitt

There are two different methods of releasing chi in the palm strikes of Wing Chun. The thrusting palm and the sinking palm which is also known as the soft palm or slap. Of these two the easiest to learn and execute is the sinking palm. The physical keys for performing a good sinking palm strike are to relax the arm and hand completely, to strike in a slapping manner using the whole of the inside of the hand including the palm and fingers, and to stick to the target when contact is made without tensing at all. In addition to these physical keys the palm becomes dramatically more effective when the student is able to focus his attention on the wave of energy in the arm and hand and also presence his intent into the target area. Usually a strike will take either a downward direction or a lateral direction so that the energy sinks into the target deeply. Often the individual will not be thrown away by the power of the blow because the power is directed in a downward direction and is completely absorbed by the body itself.

The energy flowing in the arm itself is sufficient to cause significant damage to the target when released properly. Advanced practitioners can add a great deal more force to the palm strike by learning to release the energy from the root and the entire body into the blow. This skill is the Fa-jing release discussed before and is very powerful. At high levels of releasing skill the palm can become a very close short distance blow similar to the short punch and still release great power.

A curious characteristic of the sinking palm is that you can strike someone making contact with one part of the body and direct the chi into another part of the body that is somewhere beneath the contact point. This becomes obvious to any recipient of the sinking palm, as he will feel the most discomfort in an area other than the point of contact. For example we often demonstrate a

sinking palm on the chest area and sink the energy into the belly area. So even though the hand doesn't make contact with the belly that is where the most discomfort is felt.

The slap of the strike often will leave a hand impression at the point of contact. As the energy transfers it creates a sensation of heat, so the person receiving the blow will initially feel the sting of the slap at the point of contact. However, usually about 1 or 2 seconds after the blow makes contact he will feel the penetrating effect of the sinking energy in his stomach. This is where the blow gets the name sinking palm from. The energy sinks from the point of contact into the body area according to the intent of the striker. Few people will be willing to take more than one of these demonstrations. The slap or sinking palm is also used in the pak sau block where considerable power is released often knocking the arm or leg of the attacker away and even rupturing some blood vessels causing instant bruising. One of the most effective targets for this energy weapon is the side of the face just under or forward of the ear. There are a large number of meridian points located here and it is not difficult to knock your opponent out cold with a seemingly simple slap.

I was once pushed into a confrontation with a self proclaimed master of a kung fu style whom had been making claims against me that were not accurate. During the lively discussion this person became hostile and began poking me in the chest. I pushed his hand away several times as I was sitting on the arm of a couch in the office we were meeting in. He became so angry that he turned away and then swung back with a right "hay-maker" swing trying to land a sucker punch on me. (Like I said this guy was a fraud). Anyway before I knew it I had stood up and used a tan sau to block his attack with my left hand and then soft palmed him on the side of the face with the same hand. The sound of the slap was

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deafening, (my students got it on tape) and he went completely unconscious. I proceeded to strike him several more times to ensure he had learned his lesson as he crumpled to the ground. He ended up with a ruptured ear drum, broken nose and teeth and needing several stitches. He also had a permanent headache for about a week. The palm strike was most effective in changing his attitude. (However not permanently as he still is a Self-proclaimed master and deceives many people into believing him).

The best way to practice the sinking palm is on a heavy bag. Simply relax the arm and hand and slap it until your hand makes a thunder clap sound upon contact. The sound of thunder, or a bullwhip cracking is a sign that you are correctly releasing the energy into the bag. With a small amount of effort, and some time practicing, almost anyone can learn to slap and release energy. As your Chi-kung abilities deepen you will find the power released in your palm strike will also greatly increase. At the highest level of skills with the palm you can direct the energy to a specific area of the body (i.e. To a specific internal organ) and you can release a great amount of power with a short 12 inch or so motion of the arm. The use of a short striking distance and the Fa-jing release of power is an advanced skill and requires significant internal skills to perform well.

Thrusting palm

The second type of palm strike is the thrusting palm of Wing Chun. This is more difficult to learn and demonstrate than the sinking or soft palm. The thrusting palm will release a powerful flow of chi through your opponent knocking him back with its force.



Sifu Tim Jeffcoat demonstrating the internal thrusting palm

When demonstrating this palm strike it is wise to have the recipient hold a thick pad or phone book in front of their chest for you to strike through. This will protect the recipient from being severely damaged by the force released. If you were to demonstrate the thrusting palm without a book or pad to protect the chest then the recipient would be

seriously injured, that is unless the demonstrator is not able to release well.

When I first began to demonstrate the power of the thrusting palm I was not sure how effective a demonstration it would be. I was talking about it with several students and asked Mark, my stocky police officer friend, to hold a thick phone book to his chest while I attempt to demonstrate the thrusting palm. He willingly held the book and the other students watched with anticipation. Given that I had not performed this strike on a person before I was unsure how he would respond and how much energy to release so I just released it all. The blow hit the book and knocked Mark back about 12 feet, he dropped the book and looked at me with horror as he whispered “you bastard!” When he had sufficiently recovered he said that he felt like he’d been hit with a shotgun blast at close range. That the energy blew a hole right through him, knocked the wind out of him, and almost collapsed his chest. It was an effective demonstration! Now when I demonstrate it I only release about half the power I did that first time, and it is still enough to knock the recipient back and take their breath away for a moment.



The thrusting palm is best trained by practicing palm strikes on the traditional Wing Chun wall bag. It is here that you learn to draw from your stance root and thrust your intention through the bag into the wall behind it. Through many thousands of palm strikes on the bag you will learn to release the energy in a strong focused beam out of the palm of the hand. The method of striking is a thrust. It is a similar motion to the Wing Chun sun punch. The physical keys are: to relax the hand and arm, thrust from behind the elbow, strike with the whole of the palm and the fingers at the same time.

It is important not to tense the wrist and hand upon impact. This prevents the chi from flowing out of your hand into the target. You must stay relaxed and strike with all of the palm and fingers. This is not a palm heel strike, but more like a thrusting slap. Also because of the shape of the wrist bones it is important to strike just to the side of the center of the pad so that if both hands were on the bag the thumbs would be on the centerline not the palms themselves. If you palm right on the center it tends to twist your wrist unnaturally and cause injury, it also weakens the strike.

The energy keys are to root solidly, to thrust with a drawing feeling from the Dan-Tien, to imagine a ball of energy stuck to the palm which you are smashing into the target and sending it through the wall. This image helps to presence the intent in a focused beam through the target. It is important not to lean in or push with your body weight when palming. Remember you are hitting with energy not physical force. In many ways the thrusting palm is a percussive version of the famous tai chi push. It has a similar effect with the addition of causing damage internally. In China I found that the true masters of Tai Chi use a slap palm that is very similar to the Wing Chun thrusting palm.

One of the big differences between striking with energy and striking with the body is the damage these different blows cause. When working with master Yang in China, I asked him several times to use his energy to thrust me away as Tai Chi is known for. He refused saying that he could not do it without causing internal injury to me, and that it was a moral point for him not to damage people with his skills. I understood given my understanding of Fa-jing power and the effect it can have on the body. If you get hit with a strong blow that is a traditional non-chi type physical blow you will be bruised or even have bones broken at and near the point of impact. These hard type blows where you are hitting with your body cause damage from the outside. They bruise the skin, and muscle tissues in a way that you can easily see the damage. The only exception to this is when the hand is padded with a boxing glove, which tends to prevent most of the surface damage.

With internal blows where you are striking with chi the damage is on the inside. Often the marks on the skin at the point of contact are minor and insignificant. The energy travels through the mostly liquid mass of the body like a shock wave. It passes through the bodies natural defenses of muscle and bone and explodes where it is focused most. When this hydro-shock energy wave hits the mostly liquid vital organs it causes them to rip and rupture. The damage is internal. These vital organs do not respond well to being struck directly, that is why they are hidden in the body armor of bone and muscles. But energy strikes bypass this armor and cause considerable damage internally to these organs. Whereas the physical blows essentially attack the body armor itself.

Releasing energy through the fingers and toes (Biu Tze)

The Biu Tze boxing form teaches these releasing energy skills we are discussing. Unique to Biu Tze is the releasing of energy through the fingers.



Si-Fu Baker showing the characteristic vibrations in the hands as he releases chi using fa-jing in the Biu Tze boxing form.

That is why the form was named the thrusting fingers form. Once you have mastered the coordination and placing skills of Chum Ku it is a natural step to move to the releasing of energy found within the principles of Biu Tze. To release one must be able to attend to (notice) the feelings of energy and intend, (presence) those feelings within the motion and out of your fingers beyond the boundaries of your physical body.

To release energy well you must have a formidable root. The energy root is the foundation to all the other Chi-kung skills that have a martial application. If you wish to learn to use chi as a powerful weapon, you must have a developed energy root from which to work. A simple tool that will help you learn how to release a powerful stream of energy through your fingers is a standard piece of paper. Hang the paper by the top two corners about face height. Then you use the thrusting fingers

motions from the form to strike the surface of the paper.



Sifu Tim Jeffcoat using the Bui Tze releasing skills to slice a piece of paper with a Biu energy thrust.

As you practice you will notice that occasionally the sound of the strike is similar to a whip cracking. At first this will take some time to get, listen to the sound and notice what you are doing when it cracks like a whip. In fact the motion of the

Biu is similar to how you crack a whip. Right at the point of impact you pull back at the shoulder very slightly and shoot the energy up the arm and out the fingers, similar to how you pull back the handle of a whip to crack it. As you practice you will be able to produce the crack more often until you can do it every time. As you intensify your focus and the strength of the release you will find you can tear a hole in the page. Be sure you are not cheating by dragging your fingers down the page. Your fingers should thrust directly into the surface of the page only and the energy will make the hole. Depending upon the quality of the paper you use it may take several tries before the Biu makes a hole. As you improve your skills you can add two sheets together and try to Biu a whole through the center of both pieces with a single strike. This is a difficult feat, and shows considerable depth of skill in releasing.

There are several ways to demonstrate the Bui release on a person to allow them to feel the power in it. One is to Biu into the palm of their hand. Usually they will feel the heat of the energy and will pull their hand away. The hand is tough and will not be damaged. Another demonstration is to Biu into their chest. This will usually leave two or three deep bruises where the fingertips struck. This is a bit more painful than the hand but shows that there is a deep penetrating power in the finger release. In combat you would use this technique on any soft tissue areas of the body. The most devastating targets for the Biu is the throat area. Also the eyes can be ruptured by this penetrating energy, however the eyes are surrounded by bone and if you miss and hit the forehead you may injure your fingers.

An extension of the releasing of chi through the fingers skill is to be able to release it through the feet and toes when kicking. This is more difficult because we are so much less coordinated with our legs

than we are with our arms. The releasing motion requires some refined small motor skills and therefore will take some time to practice. However the same type of feeling and motion used in the hand is repeated with the legs. To be able to release energy through the toes is significant. It allows for a deeper root and more dynamic stepping skills. Also there are some points in the inside of the thigh that when kicked with the toes while releasing energy through them can disable your opponent quickly. The kicking techniques of Wing Chun are energy strikes just as the palm and finger strikes are.

The short punch



Sifu Tim Jeffcoat performing the one inch punch

Another noted ability of a good Wing Chun practitioner is the one inch punch, which when done correctly doesn't merely push a person back several feet but explodes chi into them causing definite damage and pain unless the recipient's chest is significantly padded. The inch punch is a deep expression of the Wing Chun practitioner's ability to build, place and release his chi. If done correctly the inch punch should never be done on the bare chest of the recipient because serious damage will result. To perform the Wing Chun inch punch well requires considerable energy abilities. Anyone who demonstrates the inch punch on someone without having

them hold a book or pad is irresponsible, or incompetent in performing the technique. If they can do the punch well, and do it on a bare chest, then the recipient will be injured.

A soft covered thick book or firm pad is essential to ensure safety. Those who perform this technique on an unprotected chest and do not cause injury do not know how to release correctly. Most of the time they are simply pushing. This is quite a difficult skill to demonstrate well. Bruce Lee made it famous by demonstrating it in a spectacular manner at the Large Ed Parker Karate tournament in California. Bruce was very proficient at the inch punch, but he did modify it somewhat to fit with his evolving style.

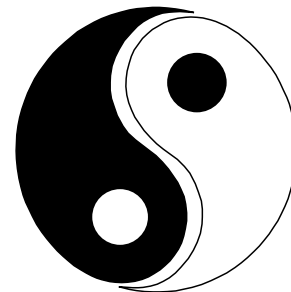
When a Wing Chun practitioner demonstrates the inch punch he will stand facing the target in the Sil Num Tao stance. You then place your fist on the pad to ensure you are distanced correctly so that your arm does not straighten until after impact. Then a common tool to get the inch distance from the target is to extend the index finger and bend it placing the first knuckle on the target. This positions the knuckles of the fist about an inch from the target. Now sink deep into your root and load the energy in the elbow. Also presence the feeling of heavy energy in the hand. Relax and focus your attention on the root, elbow and hand energy. Clear your mind of all concerns and thoughts.

Now draw a wave of energy from out of the root up the legs and into the Dan-Tien. As it gets to the Dan-Tien you will rock forward towards the target from the Dan-Tien. The wave continues to flow up into the arm and through the elbow gathering the pooled energy there and shoots up the arm into the hand. The wave hits the hand just as the punch shoots the inch distance forward into the target. Then you continue the image of the wave flowing through the hand, through the target to the

chair or wall behind the target. This follow through intention is very important.

Often Bruce would place a chair four or five feet behind the person he was punching. This was to give him something tangible to presence his intent to. It assists you in the follow through intention, which causes the energy to flow and takes the person with it. The impact of the blow should be explosive. It should sound and feel like a blow not a push. Often the recipient will feel the punch through the pad or book, and will feel the energy ball in his chest for several minutes or even hours after the demonstration. The best exercise to train the inch punch is the wall bag punching drill.

The Yin and Yang manifestations of energy



Both yin and yang energies are used in Wing Chun. There really isn't two different types of energy, but rather different manifestations of the same energy. Within the body half of the meridians or energy channels are considered yin meridians and half are yang. The front of the body, inside of the arms and legs are all yin while the back and outside are yang. In reality the same energy cycles through all the meridians just like the same blood flows through all your arteries and veins. The energy just has a different characteristic to it when it is in a yang state than a yin state.

For example the thrusting palm is more of a yang manifestation, it is strong, and blows right through the target, whereas

the soft or sinking palm is more yin in its manifestation, it sinks inside the target and move things around. Both palm strikes hurt, but in a different way. Generally yin is considered softer, gentler, feminine, more passive in its energy manifestation while yang is direct, aggressive, masculine, a harsher energy manifestation.

It is not really possible to divide the two; every yin type manifestation has some yang aspects within it and visa versa. Hence the yin/yang symbol. Neither the yin or yang manifestation is stronger or preferred over the other. A balance is the strongest, where both manifest aspects of energy work in combination with each other.

The position (technique) or shape of the hand, arm, or leg does have an influence upon the yin or yang nature of the motion, as does the intent, body condition (degree of relaxation), and skill level of the practitioner. All of these factors have a big effect upon the yin or yang manifestation of any given technique or situation. Often pressing or pushing motions are more yin type attacks, while a punch is more yang. All of the motions in Wing Chun, all of the techniques in the forms have both a yin and yang application. It may take many years before a skillful practitioner of Wing Chun understands both the yin and yang applications for every technique and movement within the system's forms. It is a most worthwhile endeavor to examine each technique in the Sil Num Tao form in an effort to understand both a yin and a yang type of application for that technique. This can also be carried through to the Chum Ku and Biu Tze boxing forms, the dummy set, and the weapons sets of the system to give a much deeper comprehension of the duality that exists in the application of the principles and motions of Wing Chun. For example within the single chi sau exchange we have a top and a bottom position each employing 3 distinct techniques.

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The bottom position uses the tan sau, thrusting palm, and bong sau techniques. The top position utilizes the fook sau, jum sau, and sun punch techniques. Each of these techniques can be executed with both a yin and a yang energy manifestation. The jum sau technique is one of the most obvious. In the single chi sau exchange the jum sau is used to respond to the thrusting palm of your partner. If you jum by sinking forward, toward your partner, you will cut off the thrusting palm attack and stop his technique. This is a yang manifestation of the jum sau technique. However, if you sink the jum sau back, toward yourself, riding on the thrusting motion and then sinking down on his arm towards the end of his thrust you will use his motion and draw his energy up causing his shoulders to move forward slightly. This is a yin manifestation of the jum sau technique. Both are correct uses of the jum sau depending upon what you are wanting to do within the exchange.



Because the thrusting palm is a yang type technique, it is often preferred to use the yin jum sau to respond to the palm within the single chi sau exchange. In this way the student learns how to balance the yin and yang within an exchange, how to use softness to counter hardness, and how to

use his partner's motion rather than stopping that motion. Essentially a yang jum sau on a yang thrusting palm is a clashing type exchange and is not properly balanced. If your partner is more skilled and executes a thrusting palm and then feels or reads your yang jum sau response he may change the yang palm strike to a yin palm so as not to clash with your yang energy manifestation.

He would do this simply by changing to a yin intent in offering the thrusting palm. This is done by presenting the thrusting palm with a passive yielding yin energy rather than a forceful yang energy.

In Chi sau practice there is an emphasis upon the listening Chi-kung skills which are a typical yin manifestation of chi. The power or striking skills are typically a yang manifestation, so within chi sau both are employed equally. One uses the yin listening skills to connect with, follow, and read his partners motions within the conversation of techniques that make up the exchange. Then upon reading an opening or invitation one would apply some type of attack or strike by utilizing the yang skills which manifest power in the blows. Wing Chun's characteristic short, seemingly ineffective striking techniques are in reality devastating, so long as the practitioner has learned to release energy through the techniques.

Learning to use your partners motion is also a manifestation of yin type energy

skills. It requires a softness while maintaining the necessary sticking skills to move with his motion, without resisting, yet turn that motion to your advantage. These are subtle skills that give a smaller person a great advantage over a larger stronger person. Such yin manifestations of Chi-kung skills are developed over years of practicing and refining the more subtle feeling senses. To develop them deeply one must "inherit" them from his teacher by practicing with that teacher and learning the "feel" of the yin energy.

The yang energy skills also require patient practice to develop. However, a dedicated student can develop these abilities with minimal guidance or instruction. Working persistently on the wall bag will bring good results in yang energy manifestations through the short Wing Chun punch and the damaging thrusting palm strikes. The kicking techniques also are developed in this same way. All of the yang energy manifestations within the striking techniques of Wing Chun can be developed with solo practice so long as the keys of correct positioning, relaxation, and mental focus or intent are maintained during practice. However, the development of the yin manifest skills requires long hours of practice with a skilled teacher. The Yang skills can be acquired through solo practice, while the yin skills must be passed from teacher to student.

Chapter 7

Chi Sau Purpose and Attitude



Chi sau is without a doubt the most important exercise within Wing Chun, when it is understood correctly. Many seem to misunderstand the purpose of this exercise. Some seem to use it as a Wing Chun form of sparring or even beating up on another practitioner. This is absolutely incorrect. Chi sau was never meant for that. If you want to compete or fight then put on some protective equipment and go at it! Chi sau has a far greater purpose than simply comparing skills. It is within the chi sau exercise that the student learns the deep and essential yin energy skills of connectivity to another person. It is here that you practice and develop the ability to read motion and express your art in unique and creative responses. It is in correct chi sau practice that you actually join with another person at a deep, fundamentally spiritual level and experience a oneness that is metaphysical.

The attitude that is held by practitioners who practice chi sau correctly is one of peaceful expression. It is an open inviting of another to join with you in creating a connection that will teach both parties the deep subtleties of being in the moment. It is in chi sau that you will learn how to move beyond the endless chatter of the mind and into the Mu-Shin state of quite being that enables you to connect, express, and create in an instant the perfect response to what is.

Learning a language or competing

One of the best metaphors I have found to express what chi sau teaches is that of learning to speak a new language. This is essentially exactly what we are doing in chi sau. You are learning to speak a language of motion not of sound. You have to understand how motion works, you must learn to listen to motion so as to understand how to move in response to it. If you speak another language other than your native one then you must have gone through a process of learning to acquire the language skills for the new tongue. That process is what chi sau is. To practice chi sau you must first have mastered your techniques. Techniques are like words, the first thing you do when learning a new language is memorize the words for chair, house, dog, eat, run jump, etc. These words are the tools you will use to express yourself within the new language.

Your Wing Chun techniques are likewise the tools you use to express yourself within the language of motion. Once you have your words memorized adequately then you start learning the principles that dictate the correct way to combine those words into a coherent and sensible phrase. This is what chi sau is all about. You learn in chi sau practice the correct principles of motion so that when you move, it “makes sense” given the situation. This is the most difficult stage of learning another language. Anyone can memorize a bunch of words to represent objects and actions, but it takes a lot more effort to learn how the structure of that language works so you can express an idea correctly to others who know the language.

You usually start with the most fundamental and essential principles, like the verb noun order, use of tense, and differences in gender expression. In the language of fighting (motion) you learn first the importance of moving around the

centerline, of alignment to your partner, of correct postures and the transitioning motions from one position to another. All these principles you will find represented within Wing Chun's boxing forms.

As you begin to "get the language" you find you can express yourself in a slow, patient conversation with a native speaker. So long as they use basic words and phrases you can understand and respond to. Likewise in the first stages of learning chi sau you should practice it slowly, almost in slow motion, so that it is an easy, simple exchange of movements done patiently and without any sense of competition. You can not debate or argue with a well-educated native of another language when you are only just starting to pick up that language! You will not be able to keep up, you will not be able to answer his questions because they will be formed in complex ways and presented at a speed that you can not understand yet. Likewise in learning the language of fighting (motion), you are not going to succeed in exchanging techniques correctly at a medium or fast speed if you are still "learning" the fundamental principles that govern the language of motion.

There should be no competing within chi sau until you reach the intermediate to advanced stages outlined below. Once the fundamental principles become a part of how you move, then you move to deeper principles of motion that enable you to express more sophisticated questions and responses within the conversational exchange of chi sau. As you approach this level you will find that these deeper principles are principles about chi, and how to use it to connect, read, and control the motions of another.

Putting the Chi back into Chi Sau



The exercise of chi sau in Wing Chun is an evolving process where two practitioners learn to move with each other as if they were stuck together. At the most elementary level it appears that the exercise is designed to teach the student to stick to his partner's arms, moving as they move. However, the real purpose of chi sau becomes apparent in the more advanced stages, when the practitioners have learned to perform the exercise while extending chi into their limbs and onto each other. While developing proficiency with the chi skills within the chi sau exercise one notices that there is an inherent sticky nature to chi.

Perhaps the appearance of the exercise, and the inherent stickiness of energy, has produced the common understanding that the chi sau exercise is an exercise in "sticky hands", a simple exchange where the participants stick to each other's arms. Although the appearance of the exercise may support this assumption, the experience of performing chi sau as a Chi-kung exercise does not.

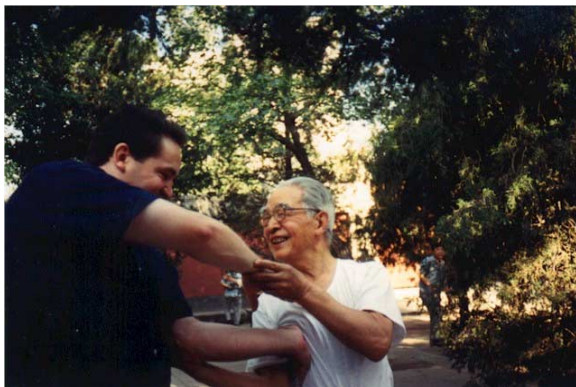
Even though the characters utilized to represent the exercise are correctly translated as "Sticky Hands" the exercise itself is much deeper than the relatively simple skill of sticking or following another's arm motions. My feeling is that the originators of Wing Chun chose the rather unusual Chinese character "Chi, for Stick" to hint to the insightful student that this is much more than an exercise in

sticking. So our interpretation of “chi sau” would be more congruent with the true purpose of the exercise if we understand it to include the concept of “energy arms” or “energy in the arms” as an implied meaning in addition to the direct translation of the characters as “sticky hands”.



Si-Fu Baker in chi sau with Richard Kennerly

An unfortunate byproduct resulting from the common misunderstanding of Wing Chun’s key exercise is that many practitioners of the art have not experienced the exercise of chi sau with the working of chi or energy as the main purpose. For most Western practitioners of Wing Chun the practice of chi sau has largely become an exercise in the physicality of movement, rather than the development and expression of chi.



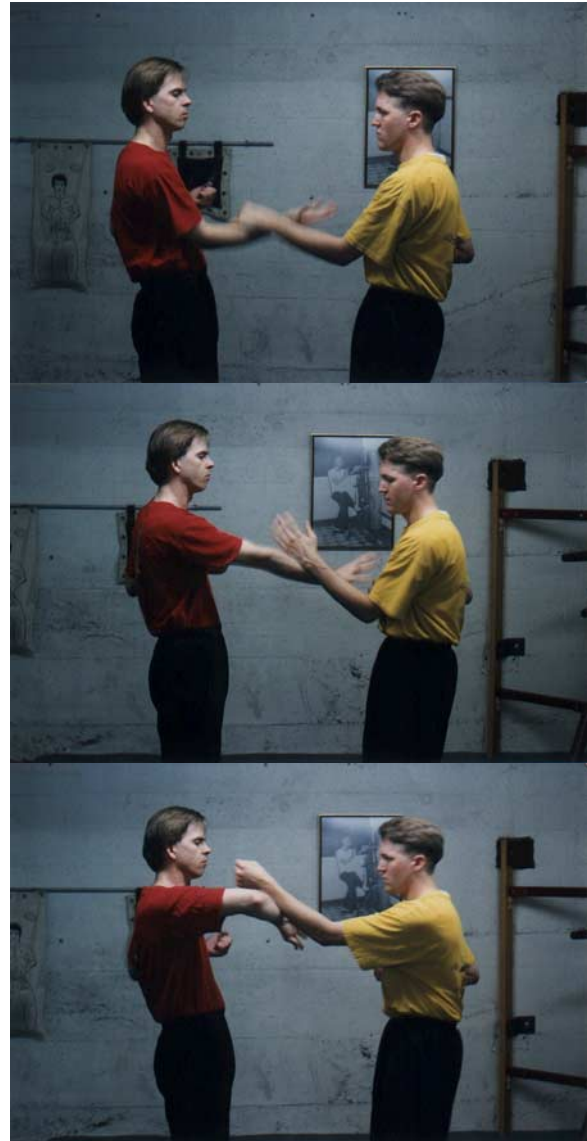
Si-Fu Baker and Master Yang enjoying a friendly exchange

Woven throughout the entire Wing Chun journey we find the chi sau exercise.

As the practitioner learns to control and express his energy from the forms and drills in the system he also learns to recognize, read and control both his own and his partners chi during the chi sau exercise.

Single Chi Sau the most important

The key exercise for the development and expression of deep chi abilities within the dynamic relationship of combat is the single chi sau exercise. Often overlooked as simplistic, mundane or redundant the chi dan sau exercise is the hub from which all chi sau skill will flow.



The simplicity of the synchronized movements allows the practitioner to concentrate his full attention to the subtlety of the exercise. During the practice of chi dan sau the Wing Chun practitioner further develops the ability to direct his chi by the gentle manipulation of both his attention and intention. It is in chi dan sau that the Yi or mind of the student is taught to read and direct chi through subtle adjustments of the will. It is in this exercise that the practitioner learns to feel and read the intent of his partner.

There are 12 progressive phases or stages of connective skill that are learned and practiced first in the single chi sau exercise. These stages of connectivity are also called the stages of “being” interaction. This term is used purposefully to represent that the progressive stages of interaction learned within the chi sau exchange require a fundamental shift in your way of being, perceiving, and understanding in the world. They enable you to literally “be” in the present moment completely and fully. This is very significant when you consider that very few people live in the present moment at all, let alone fully.

To be able to “be” fully present in the now demands a suspension of the “homunculus”, or mental narrator who interprets and evaluates the world outside of you. This mental chatter is ever present in modern man, and essentially removes us from the “now” of our experience. Essentially the stages of “being” interaction teach you to suspend this narration about the world of experience and enable you to interact and experience it purely, directly, and literally. Thus, a key component, and a milestone event in your progression within these stages of being interaction is the “Mu-Shin” or quite state of mind.

These 12 stages are arranged into four groupings or sets with three stages in each. These stages in each set work in

combination to produce a specific quality and condition of being. Hence, we call them the stages of “Being Interaction”.

The first three stages teach the correct physical context necessary to enable the student to presence his chi. The second set of three teaches the correct qualities within the physical context that need to be present to enable chi to be effectively expressed and controlled. The third set of three enlivens the exchange with chi. The fourth set of three teach the practitioner how to manipulate and control his own and his partner’s chi throughout the exchange.

These progressive stages are outlined here. It is important to note that these stages of skill are cumulative, or in other words they build on each other. Therefore, a practitioner would be unsuccessful in learning or practicing the 7th stage of “ku” or bridge control if any of the first 6 stages are not correctly expressed already.

Developing Deep Connectivity Through Chi Sau



THE 12 PROGRESSIVE STAGES OF "BEING" INTERACTION

1) POSITIONING: To occupy a strategic advantage.

Being interaction within Wing Chun Kung Fu requires the correct understanding and application of positioning skills. This is the most basic level of being interaction. Positioning is achieved by correctly and

accurately applying the techniques and positions of the system in relationship with the positions and techniques of your opponent. Positioning includes all hand/arm techniques, stances, leg techniques, body orientation or alignment, and use of correct centerline principles. Positioning not only demands that these techniques are correctly placed, but they must also be contextually correct. Contextual integrity includes the correct texture or relaxation levels, correct transitioning motions from one position to another and correct position with regards to the context of the opponent. Positioning is the chief cornerstone; the foundation upon which all of the other being interaction skills are built. If positioning is incorrect then all other skills inevitably fail. Therefore, if one is unable to connect with ones opponent the first place to look for the problem is positioning.

2) BALANCING: To maintain continuity and integrity.

Balancing is the second foundation principle of being interaction. Once positioning is established and mastered to a proficient level one begins to focus upon balancing. To balance correctly one must look to correctly balance A) within the position, B) between the opponents position and your own, and C) between the different positions as you transition from one to another, and as you hold one position with one limb and another with a different limb. Thus balance has three perspectives within which it is to be applied.

To balance within the position requires an in-depth understanding of the position or technique being used. The shoulder elbow and hand must have the correct relaxed presence within them for the specific position being used, or the technique will be out of balance. The heaviness of the feel, or pressure on the opponent must be able to balance the

heaviness or pressure he exerts upon you. At first this is accomplished by equaling his pressure with your own. However, at more advanced levels one learns to balance pressure with intent rather than physical weight. To balance the pressure or weight of your opponent is to achieve a balance between you and your partner. Then to maintain the same internal balance within the limb and between you and your partner while changing positions and from one arm to the other is to be balanced in the third perspective. Balance should also apply to the level of resolve, intensity of desire, speed of motion, and the force or power of the attack. Essentially one balances himself internally, and then mirrors or reflects the opponent's feel exactly. To achieve this one must learn to sense or feel these aspects of the opponent and then reflect them back. If you notice that the opponent is out of balance in some way then you have found a weakness and can exploit it to defeat him.

3) STICKING: To stay with what is.

Sticking is the third key and solidifies the foundation for true being interaction within the Wing Chun system. Once positioning and balancing are achieved and mastered to an adequate level of proficiency then we can deepen the connection with your partner by applying the principle of sticking. To stick effectively the contextual relaxation level of each position must be high. One's limb should essentially "melt" into the limb of your partner. The intent within the technique that is "melting" into your partner should be to balance his light pressure with an equally light (4 ounce) pressure forward towards his mother line.

With this established we then feel his movements and move with him. My motions should exactly mirror his. I move at the same speed and in the same direction as his movement to maintain the connection and

balance. By so doing our limbs stay stuck together. There should be no sliding on each other. If this occurs then one person is not moving at the right speed or direction or he is starting his movement after or before his partner instead of with his partner. When sticking is done correctly an observer would not be able to tell who initiated the motion. It would appear that both parties just began moving at the same time, and the motions are in perfect harmony with each other.

The correct application of the first set of three principles will produce: LOCKING



POSITIONING, BALANCING, and STICKING are the three foundation principles which establish a connection with your opponent. When applied as described these keys result in "LOCKING" you into your opponent. These foundation principles establish a LOCK.

4) SPRINGING: To awaken and enliven the connection.

Once the three foundation keys have been mastered and produce a locked connection, the next step is to awaken and enliven that connection. The principle of springing achieves this result. To spring you apply a light (4 ounce) constant forward pressure within each technique towards the opponent's mother line or point of balance.

At first this may appear to be very difficult but with practice it becomes a natural state. Every technique, from the stance to the hand position that connects with the arm of your partner, will have a light 4-ounce "spring" pressure within it. This spring pressure will yield to a stronger force, but will always be intending forward.

Even when the arm is pushed back it is trying to go forward with a constant, even 4 ounce pressure. If the arm is released unexpectedly it will spring forward instantly, without any delay. The spring in the stance comes from the rear leg and the waist. The combination of all the body springs can produce an effortless release of impressive force when coordinated together.

Each limb must be trained to spring independently from other limbs. Each position will have a slightly different spring motion, which must be balanced within itself and between the limbs. The ability to have independent springs in each limb requires some dedicated effort to obtain, but is an invaluable asset once obtained. It is not uncommon for a practitioner with independent springs to be just as surprised that he hit you, as you are that you have been hit. With springs the limbs begin to "think" for themselves and find openings all by themselves.

5) DIRECTION: To close your shield and open his.

To fine tune the beneficial effects of springs and to negate any negative effects one must then focus on accurately directing those springs. If your opponent has the skills to keep his pressure constantly towards your mother line then you must likewise direct your spring pressure towards his. This then becomes a deeper application of balancing. The direction of the spring pressure needs to be specifically understood for each individual technique. Although they all generally aim towards the opponent's

mother line there is specific fine-tuning needed for each position.

If your position is correct, and matches and balances your opponent's position then the direction of the spring force will also match your opponent's force. If it does not you will become open and he will spring into you. For example if he holds a Tan Sau with a slight forward and upward spring pressure then you must apply a Fook Sau onto his Tan with a slight forward and down pressure into his elbow area. The fine-tuning of direction is the key to Wing Chun's famous impenetrable defenses, and is the key to opening up your partner's defenses. If your opponent is pressing away from your mother line then you release his pressure because it poses no threat to you. You spring into his mother line taking advantage of the opening created when his hand goes off his line.

6) WEIGHTING: To presence energy into the weapons

Weighting the limb correctly will add chi to the connection. This does not mean just pushing harder or heavier. Weighting the limb is done through applying relaxed intent. The weighting must also be done with out breaking the balancing principle. Each position may be weighted differently depending upon how it is applied and what the opponent is doing. The three weighting points of the arm are the shoulder, elbow and hand. The hip, knee and foot are the corresponding points in the legs. The immovable elbow principle of Wing Chun is a demonstration of weighting the elbow in the Fook Sau technique.

One weights a specific part of a limb by first relaxing the whole limb deeply, then applying direction to that relaxed weight and placing your intention in that point to be weighted. Deeper skills are needed to weight several points simultaneously. Weighting positions chi into the limbs at key points

readying the chi to be released explosively as is taught in the Biu Tze boxing form.

The correct application of the second set of three principles will produce: FLOWING



SPRINGING, DIRECTION and WEIGHTING when combined over the foundation of the LOCKING principles produce a fluidity to that locked connection. This fluidity enables the dynamic exchange between two practitioners to flow with a soft, effortless energy.

7) KU: To control the bridge

Once intent is directed into the limbs to weight the arm or leg we can begin to see a deeper aspect to our connection with our partner. The directed forward intent can be changed from one side of the connection to the other without any physical movement at all. This change is intended from within the mind. As this is done we notice that the connecting bridge (Ku) has several gates within it. These gates are either opened or closed depending on where the intent is placed. Within each limb there are three gates; the shoulder, elbow and hand in the arm, and the hip, knee and foot in the leg.

It requires great skill and ability to keep all three gates closed at any one

moment. This is even difficult when static positions are held, it becomes almost impossible when in motion. Ku is the art of listening to the bridge and noticing which gates are opened or closed. Once you notice which gate is open then that is the invitation to attack. An open gate is an invitation in, if you attack on a closed gate you will always be blocked. Attacking a closed gate is like walking from one room to another by going through the wall instead of going through an open door. By reading the shifts in intent, while the arms are charged with chi, we learn to discover when and where to attack. This is the art of controlling the bridge, or Ku.

8) LISTENING: To Know what is.

In Wing Chun the fundamental focus of listening is to experience someone else's experience in the present moment. It is not anticipating what he may do, nor is it figuring out or judging what might be happening. Listening is simply being open to experience him without filtering that experience through the categories of the ego mind.

The first thing we listen to is our own body, energy, and the condition of the physical forces around us. By listening to these we blend and align with these conditions. Then we move to listening to the movement, intention and energy of others. This requires a quiet attentive state of mind. This is a non-thinking state known as a state of no mindedness or Mu-Shin.

Any attempt to rationalize, dissect or apply meaning and understanding to what is received is in the way of true listening. Any evaluation of the moment must be reserved for a later time so as not to replace the moment of listening with a moment of contemplation or reflection. Listening may be compared to hearing in a conversation. However, in Kung Fu it is felt within the

whole body as your body receives another body's experience. This includes all that the other feels, intends, thinks, emotes, holds as a view, or does in any one instant. In listening all this is received at once as the total experience of the other. To listen in this way you must first quiet the mind, and then focus its stillness upon the following connection, being fully attentive and present in the now.

When listening is preformed at its best or deepest level an inherent sense of connection develops between you and what is received. As the ability develops you learn to respond to another's energy without any mental analysis of what you have heard. Listening is not something mystical or magical, it is found in the very obvious, the very person or condition that is present before you. Listening is receiving what is simply the case. We must listen to what is and not to some notion or belief about listening. Listening is done to know what is there in the relationship between you and your partner.

9) EXTENDING: To connect with what is.

This is the connection between listening and joining. When listening is in place the first type of extending or outreaching has occurred. Extending is to reach out with our feeling attention to connect with the other person. Once we have made a feeling connection with every part of another's being (the body, mind and energy) then we are extending. This can be done at first with physical touch and then without a physical connection. When you can feel every part of the others whole body through the part with which you have made contact then you have extended.

The Chi Kwun exercise with the long pole greatly aids in developing this long range extending skill. The ability to stay in feeling and physical connection to the entire

body, motion, and intention of your partner as he changes is the fundamental component of effective chi sau. Extending is key to the practice of Wing Chun. Whenever the mechanics have become familiar then the practice of reaching out with your feeling attention should dominate your kung fu performance.

Extending is done to connect with what is there in the relationship between you and your partner.

The correct application of the third set of three principles will produce: READING



KU, LISTENING and EXTENDING when placed within the fluid connection previously established enable you to read and experience your partners movements and intentions from within his energy framework, and in the instant they occur. Now the fluid connection is established we use the READING keys to get inside our opponent and be with what he is doing as it occurs.

10) FOLLOWING: To stay with what is.

Following is to move with the partner-- sticking to him if he moves away and yielding to him if he comes forward. Following can be done in countless ways, but all are done in relation to your partner

and are determined by your partner's actions. All action must be based upon the actions and intentions of the partner. To follow completely you must not only follow the physical movements of your partner, but the intention of his mind and the direction of his energy. To succeed at doing this you must learn to sense intention and energy and follow it as it changes. You follow within the balance of the conversation. If his energy becomes unbalanced, and openings are apparent then you follow the openings and find the advantage. Listen to know what's there, extend to connect with what's there, and following to stay with what's there.

11) JOINING: To interact with what is.

Joining is the result produced within the context of following. Once listening, extending, and balance is our constant state, then we follow and join whatever is present in the exchange. When we begin to think of producing a result or volitional act we become susceptible to one of the biggest dangers in chi sau practice. By pursuing a desire to produce a result, we leave behind the principles of being interaction and override our ability to clearly include the true condition in that very moment. Thus by focusing on doing what is necessary to produce the result we come from a disconnected state in the relationship and are no longer connected and fully present in the "now" moment of the interaction. This unbalanced state is ineffective and produces openings and opportunities for your partner to get in on you.

True joining comes from a different mental state to that of the competitive win/lose dynamic fostered by the intention to produce a result through exertion and effort. Joining can only come from a state of cooperation, which is balanced and effortless.

An implicit component of the principle of joining is the principle of neutralizing. Neutralizing is listening to and balancing with the changing conditions as they occur within the conversational exchange. In joining we implicitly neutralize the intentions of the other person in order to maintain the same balanced state that existed before motion or change occurred. In neutralizing we simply maintain a harmonious balance as we follow and join with the changes of our partner. This is not necessarily an act of volition, nor is it necessarily passive, but is simply a response that returns balance to imbalance, harmony to disharmony. Neutralizing is implicit in joining and encompasses joining completely, as it is the observable product of a joined exchange.

Joining returns the activity to its balanced state and blends the motivation of the other's activity with your expressions. For example if the others activity is motivated by an intent to do harm, this same intent to harm will be blended in the response which serves to balance the exchange. In order to engage in this level of exchange and still remain in a balanced state of being, we must give up any desire towards results other than abiding in, or returning to, harmony and balance in the whole interaction. In joining we merge our energy and tissue with our partners drawing his tension into our root, enabling us to issue the yang raising chi with effortless power.

12) LEADING: To influence what is

Leading comes out of joining. Once the tissues and energy of two are joined their motions, intentions and feelings become one. From this condition one of the partners can begin leading without disrupting the established harmony or balance. By extending the feeling intention of the mind/energy in response to and in harmony

with the motions and intentions of the partner a deeper merging occurs which will allow the intention/energy of the one to lead that of the other.

At first this seems to contradict the important principle of not having an intention to produce a result, which is essential to joining. But it does not. Leading is not forced into the exchange, but drawn out as a result of the exchange. You do not "decide" to lead another's chi, but rather your rooted flow of raising yang chi within the exchange entices the others chi to follow because that is the nature of chi. It will always follow energy that is directed with clear balance and a deeper disciplined mind. Therefore, your energy and mind will lead without you purposefully intending such a result within the flow of the exchange.

The Mu-Shin no mindedness state is essential to the successful application of this skill without falling into the "intention to produce results" trap. Leading can occur initially on the physical level when tissue is joined and balanced. All actions and motions are in relation and connection with the movements and intentions of the partner. In this balanced exchange leading comes by listening to, embracing, and joining with slight initiations or imbalances produced by the changing dynamic in the joined context.

In listening to the truth of the exchange and perceiving these imbalances one may project his intention into these imbalance areas to lead the motion, intention and energy of your partner into directions which ultimately manifest these openings in physical consequences.

The correct application of the fourth set of three principles will produce: CONTROLLING



FOLLOWING, JOINING and LEADING combine with the **READING** keys to enable the skilled practitioner to **CONTROL** his opponent completely. Such control is the ultimate accomplishment in the combat arts and enables the master to face any situation without fear, and to deal with any attack with little effort.

To succeed with chi expression in chi sau practice the practitioner must be willing to work patiently for many long hours in both the practice of chi sau and in the correct development of consciousness through the meditation and breathing practices previously discussed. The transition from the normal everyday state of consciousness, that is often represented by the constant chattering of the mind, to the transcendental state of consciousness which enables a oneness with things, often represented as the quiet stillness of the mind (“Mu-Shin” in Japanese), is an evolutionary process that requires patient diligence and quality instruction. This quiet “Mu-Shin” consciousness is essential to the skilled expression of chi, and is fundamental to the exchange of chi that can and should occur between two skilled participants during chi sau practice.

Once the practitioner is able to succeed in maintain consistency within each set of three stages during single chi sau practice then he can begin practicing those

same connectivity skills in double chi sau. So each one of the 4 sets of three stages are learned first in single chi sau, and then transferred into the more complex and unpredictable structure of double chi sau.

While the practitioner is learning to adapt and express the first set of three in double chi sau exchanges, he would also be working on acquiring proficiency with the second set of three in single chi sau practice. In this way single chi sau leads the way in developing the advanced connectivity skills.

Double chi sau a conversational exchange



Si-Fu Baker with Troy Sperry using the entire body as part of the chi sau exchange

Although single chi sau is the most important exercise for learning and practicing the deep connectivity skills fundamental to chi sau, the double chi sau practice is the key exercise for learning to apply those skills in a “conversational” exchange. The metaphor of a conversation is perfect for illustrating what should occur in a double chi sau exchange. When two people know a language they are able to converse freely and express openly their ideas and thoughts through that language. They do not speak in memorized fixed patterns, nor do they need to prepare for the conversation by trying to anticipate what questions will be asked and how they will answer them. Such concerns are only for those who do not know a language well

enough to freely express themselves. As we said before **chi sau is a conversation between two people using the language of motion.** Our techniques or positions are our words, and the principles of connectivity and alignment are the structure of the language. The exchanges are free expressions within that conversation.



If you are practicing chi sau as a set of memorized patterns only then you are not learning this language. All you are doing is pretending you know it, which only gets you by until you try to converse with someone who does speak that language. One exception is that it can be beneficial to begin learning the feel of the correct application of the principles of motion by performing patterns of exchange. These are not unlike memorizing example sentences and phrases within a foreign language you are attempting to learn. However, they are only examples of correct exchanges and should be left behind once they have served the purpose of illustrating the correct application of principles. Once a student understands the feel of a principle he should be able to abstract that principle and apply it using any number of techniques freely. The principles are not locked into one or two patterns of motion. In fact the principles free the practitioner to be able to creatively express themselves with an unlimited possible number of combination and techniques.

How do we learn to freely exchange and express ourselves within chi sau? The key is in practicing it slowly for many months, even years before attempting to go full speed. Why? Because you are learning a new language, and the best way to learn how to converse in a new language is to speak with someone who knows the language in a slow paced conversation. Then you have time to understand what he has said and to formulate a response that uses the correct words and structures of that language. When you do say something that is not correct, you can easily examine it and learn why it is not correct so you can learn not to repeat the same mistakes with other expressions.

Chi sau is the same. Double chi sau should be practiced slowly, even in slow motion. This removes the competition that naturally arises between people and enables some real conversational skills to be practiced and polished. As it becomes natural and comfortable to exchange motions, and the student is able to converse within the language of motion for several minutes without stopping or making a mistake then the speed can be increased gradually. Only at the most advanced stages of chi sau skills should it be practiced regularly at full speed.

Practice is not the same as demonstrating. When you are demonstrating chi sau it is usually done very fast. You are not learning deeper skills in a demonstration, you are showing off what skill you already have. To learn deeper skills you start by practicing slowly. A real fight is like a demonstration. You are not developing new skills in a real fight, you are performing what skills you have to overcome your opponent. It is important to separate sparring training from chi sau training in Wing Chun. This is especially true with beginning and intermediate level students. They are two totally different

exercises and should not be mixed or confused.

Double chi sau is traditionally started by the poon sau or rolling arms structure. Poon sau is an important part of the full exchange and expression within chi sau. Poon sau is a dynamic ready position where neither party has an advantage over the other. A static ready position would not invite very much of an opportunity to start the exchange. It would not be a very difficult skill to position yourself with your hands touching in such a way that there were no real openings unless you move first and then you would create opening on yourself. Because you are learning a language of motion in chi sau, we start from a moving neutral position. This is the rolling or poon sau motion.



Sifu Jeffcoat and Dave Grosbeck doing poon sau

The energy exchange that occurs in the rolling arms is significant at the more advanced levels of skill. The fook sau position draws or gathers the energy presented in the partner's tan sau. By learning to read and feel with the deep softness of chi you are able to find in the rolling exchange openings resulting from mistakes your partner will make in correctly balancing the rolling motion. These openings are invitations for you to break from the rolling and offer an attack. Then as he responds to your attack you further respond to his response just as in a

conversation. The exchange flows and evolves naturally and unpredictably.

The quiet Mu-Shin state of consciousness should be evoked as part of chi sau practice. The rhythmic soft rolling exchange of poon sau is helpful in making this conscious shift. In this state the mind is free to experience what occurs in the moment it occurs. No translating interpretation by the chattering monkey in your head is needed or desired. With the Mu-Shin consciousness the powerful connecting and “knowing” of the subconscious mind is free to express, respond and create in the moment it is need. As two people join in such a flowing conversational exchange they merge into a oneness of expression and being.



Many Wing Chun practitioners develop a few tricks, which they use to get in on their partner and “score points”. Often these tricks are ineffective against a partner who knows the language of motion. They may work the first or second time but then the skilled conversationalist is able to read them and defeat them. Relying on a few tricks like speed, a specifically deceptive trap or slipping motion that has been rehearsed well is a poor substitute for the true connection and conversational skills that chi sau offers.

The connectivity skills learned in the single chi sau exercise govern the whole of the conversation that is double chi sau. These connectivity abilities enable the

practitioner to read and use the motion, intention, and energy of his partner to his benefit within the exchange. Being able to perform a tricky move quickly may allow a student to feel superior at first, but those who develop true connections within chi sau will soon surpass the students who utilize the quick fix of tricks instead of true skills.

I have had several experiences with Wing Chun practitioners who, at first, appear very skilled, but in chi sau I find their skills consist mostly of only a few cheap tricks. On one occasion I met with a very nice man I will call Robert. Robert had trained for many years under a well-known teacher and was recognized as one of his teachers head students in the USA. He had a school and many students of his own. I expected him to be at least my equal in Wing Chun skills. As we began a friendly exchange I could feel he had a nice soft feel in his roll, which impressed me and hinted that he understood the chi side somewhat. However, as the exchange developed I found he had two or three tricks he used to get in with, and that was about it. The first time he performed his main tricky move on me he managed to get in. Quickly he tried to repeat it, but he was unsuccessful as I now had felt the motion and could easily counter it.

Our exchange lasted about 20 to 30 minutes. He must have attempted to repeat his tricky move 30 to 40 times and was never again successful. On the other hand I was able to get through on him without effort. Robert seemed impressed with my skills; however, all I was doing was conversing with the language of motion I had supposed he also knew. It turned out that he hadn't learned to converse with motion, but only had a few parroted phrases he repeated without success. I find it sad when I meet good Wing Chun people like Robert, who have worked hard in their training and yet have never really been

taught how to converse within chi sau; how to speak with the language of motion. You can never really tell if someone can converse with motion until you touch arms and begin a conversation. Once connected it shows up within the first 30 seconds of the exchange if they know the language of motion, or if they are simply parroting back some memorized phrases (moves and tricks) in a sad imitation of a deeply rich language.

Freeing technique through principles

The principles of motion are key to effective flowing conversations within chi sau. To practice a technique only as a counter to another technique is limiting and ineffective. It is illogical to believe there is only one correct response to any situation. If this were true then we would all do Wing Chun exactly the same way. We would all look like Wing Chun clones! But we don't. Wing Chun is a system that allows for a great deal of individual expression within its framework. That is because there are many different responses to any given attack and all of them are correct. However, that does not mean that any response would be correct. There are many incorrect responses too. So what makes a response correct or incorrect? The answer is principles.

The principles of motion, alignment, connectivity, and power, which are imbedded within Wing Chun, are what determine which responses are correct and which are not. Incorrect responses will break the fundamental and essential principles of good motion. In doing so they will leave the practitioner vulnerable or worse. But within the framework of these principles there are many options, all of which are correct. Which one you happen to use will depend upon what you are intending to do, how skillful you are, how well you understand the principles and can adapt your techniques within them, and your personal preferences, body type and personality.

If you have been taught that there is only one correct response to a specific situation then you have been taught techniques not principles. This is poor Wing Chun. The foundation that makes Wing Chun so powerful and effective is the principles of motion woven throughout the entire system. When these principles are correctly understood they free the practitioner to respond with any number of options rather than confine him to one or two moves. The flowing exchange of chi sau is where you learn how to fit your techniques within the principles. Chi sau allows you to experience how the principles work off each other and adapt to allow your motions to fit perfectly with the motion of your partner.



This usually happens at a subconscious level. You learn the feel of the correct exchange more than reasoning it out. The conscious reasoning understanding of principles comes along much later. It is the same with any language. Your native language is governed by principles which tell you when a phrase is expressed correctly or incorrectly. However, you are usually not conscious of these principles when you talk, you simply express yourself and usually it is done correctly. These principles are subconscious until someone expresses themselves incorrectly and instantly you are conscious of why that was not expressed properly. In the chi sau conversation this works much the same way. The principles of motion are trained into the subconscious mind through slow chi sau exchanges. Most of the time you are unaware of them. When something is expressed through a motion incorrectly you instinctively know it. As you examine why it was incorrect, you will soon become aware of the principle that was broken by that particular mistake. Just as with speaking, in chi sau you do not have to be conscious of these principles to have them enable a flowing conversation of motion to occur.



Chapter 8
**Advanced Wing Chun Energy
Training With the Wooden Dummy,
Long Pole, & Butterfly Swords**



Si-Fu Baker showing the Quan-Do movement from the Bart-Jum-Do form.

There is a purposeful and distinct connection between the progressive development of the Chi-kung skills in the Wing Chun system, and the final advanced training offered with the Wooden dummy, 6 & ½ point long pole, and the 8 slash knives. For those uninitiated to the vast Chi-kung skills woven throughout the whole Wing Chun system the idea that the dummy and weapons have anything to teach regarding chi is most likely absurd. However, the insightful practitioner will realize that the advanced training given through the dummy

and weapons is fundamental to acquiring deeper Chi-kung skills and application.

Traditionally the dummy, pole, and knives constitute the last three phases of a disciple's path within Wing Chun. They have been taught last for very good reasons. Obviously one needs to have previously acquired solid skills in foundation aspects of the art in order to benefit from investing in the advanced training offered. But this is not the most important reason. When one understands the deep importance of Chi-kung within Wing Chun skills one can see that the advanced training offered in the dummy and weapons requires solid competence with all the other internal skills given prior to this point. Without demonstrable abilities in these other internal skills, the training on the dummy and with the weapons will be superficial and will not contribute much at all to the student's overall abilities.

It is essential that the student has already developed considerable skills in rooting, placing, and releasing energy through his body. His stance should be solid and the energy deep. He should have learned how to draw energy from that root through correct practice of the Sil Num Tao form. He should be fluid and coordinated with his motions. Complex motions should fit together with perfect timing and correct alignment, and his mental focus should be such as to be able to place his energy within the desired limb at the precise moment.

These skills are obtained first in the Chum Ku form and further developed by correct practice of the Bui Tze form. Comprehensive and correct Chi Sau practice also deepens these abilities. Additionally the student should be able to use chi to strike with. He should be able to demonstrate a significant manifest power through the short punch, the thrusting and sinking palm strikes, and the thrusting fingers motions.

More adept students will also be able to manifest releasing skills within the kicking techniques. These skills are acquired through correct practice and understanding of the Bui Tze boxing form, advanced Chi Sau practice, and the in depth Chi-kung power training we have discussed in this book. If the student has adequate abilities with these Chi-kung skills then training on the dummy and with the weapons will bring a significant increase in martial skills.

Unlocking the secrets of the Dummy



Grandmaster Yip Man on the wooden dummy

The Wing Chun Wooden Dummy Set is intimately associated with Chi-kung skill development and understanding. The essence of the dummy set is found only in understanding it from the perspective of chi. Many misunderstand the significance of this training tool. The dummy is not about hardening or toughening up your body. It is not a punching bag, and it is not designed to be “bashed” upon. The dummy is for increased sensitivity. It is about learning how to hit with energy or chi rather than just your body. The dummy teaches the disciple

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how to use Fa-Jing correctly. It is about refining and combining all the Chi-kung skills developed to this point and using them synergistically. And at its most secretive level the dummy is about understanding the principles and practicing the application of Dim Mak.

Stages of dummy skills

As with any new skill one acquires proficiency with the dummy by progressing through a series of 5 phases.

- 1) The Sequenced Set. First one learns the order of the movements for the dummy set. Once the practitioner can perform the dummy set without having to stop and think he can then move to the second phase:
- 2) Perfecting Technique This phase focuses on polishing and correcting each sequence. Here he begins to correct the timing of combined motions and the speed of the dummy movements as well as the exactness of each position. In this second phase he also gains some understanding of the application of the dummy techniques.
- 3) Fa-jing Power. Once stage 2 is mastered he can move to the third phase of focusing upon using the movement of the dummy. Here he must learn to hit the dummy with the right energy, with a Fa-jing release rather than simply hitting it with his body. He must learn the precise time to strike the dummy within each sequence. This requires that he “listen” to the dummy both with his feelings, to catch the rhythm of its movement, and with his ears to hear the crisp sound the hardwood makes when hit correctly.
- 4) Living Dummy. Upon mastering these accumulative skills sufficiently he can move to the forth phase where he will be able to perform the dummy set with

seeming effortless, yet the dummy's motion and sound will show that great power is being released. It is also at this stage that the practitioner learns to place energy in the dummy and draw it out at key times throughout the set. In this way the dummy becomes almost a living partner as the advanced practitioner embraces it with his chi. At this level of skill and understanding the practitioner is doing an advanced form of chi Sau with the "living" dummy. Then when his teacher feels his student is ready he can be initiated into the fifth and final phase of the dummy Chi-kung skills.

- 5) Dim Mak. The fifth phase is to unlock and understand the abstract applications of the sequences as they pertain to meridian point attacks relative to Dim Mak. The dummy is the perfect tool to teach Dim Mak. The dummy set is full of Dim Mak theory and techniques. The truth is one never really appreciates or understands the Wing Chun dummy set until the Dim Mak knowledge within it is opened up. Each sequence represents very specific strikes and patterns of attacking the energy of your opponent to switch him off.

As one learns to strike the dummy with energy one also learns how to strike the key Dim Mak points correctly. This is the apex of knowledge and skill on the wooden dummy.

Energy in the WC weapons *The 6 ½ point long pole*



From the wooden dummy the disciple progresses on to training with the long pole. Some schools do not emphasize or even teach the long pole. Perhaps it is because they feel it is an obsolete weapon and too long and clumsy for modern man. Or perhaps because in the Wing Chun history they learn that the pole was added several generations after Ng Mui the founder, by Leung Yee Tei a shaolin master (who was taught by Chi Shin one of the 5 Shaolin elders). Leung Tee Tai traded the pole skills for some Wing Chun skills from Wong Wah Bo. Some feel because the pole is based upon a different kung fu system it really doesn't belong in Wing Chun. This is a mistake.

The long pole may have originated from Shaolin, but then so did Wing Chun. While I was in China I communicated many times to the old masters in the parks that I practiced Wing Chun (Young Tsun Gung Fu in Mandarin), and without exception it was recognized as a branch of Shaolin kung fu. So even today Wing Chun is closely tied to Shaolin in China.

The long pole adds significant value to any person's Wing Chun skills, especially when you understand that the long pole is a magnificent energy weapon. It both challenges and improves your already quite advanced Chi-kung abilities. The pole

teaches you to really extend your energy along its length and beyond. Its weight adds to the development of significant wrist and forearm strength in a way that packs your arms with chi. And the long pole form teaches a great deal about leverage, rooting, hiding your lines, and releasing chi into the tip of the pole.



The Chi Kwun or pole clinging exercises greatly challenge and improve ones sensitivity and the use of deep listening Jing Chi-kung skills. Plus the pole further maps out Dim Mak points that are to be tapped with the energy at the point of the pole to switch off your opponent. Some of the key milestones in learning to use chi with this weapon are; first performing the exercises correctly, which pack the energy into your arms. Second learning to generate the characteristic vibration along the length of the pole.



Third taking that vibration and refining its application within each of the 6 striking

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motion from the form. This includes learning to Bui with the pole so that the chi can be heard shooting down the length of the weapon and releasing out of the end.



Forth learning to place listening intent or chi within the weapon so as to feel another weapon sliding and moving along the pole, and also to feel when the tip of the pole makes contact. This skill is sometimes seen demonstrated by an advanced practitioner performing blindfolded pole clinging. These progressive Chi-kung skills will develop as the disciples physical long pole skills are refined.



It is important that the pole is fashioned from a strong hard wood so that it can hold and carry the energy within it. Some poles made of lighter softwoods do not avail themselves to developing these advanced energy skills. The length and weight of the pole is also significant. 8 to 9 feet long is the usual length, although some have worked with poles up to 12 feet in

length. The weight will depend upon the type and quality of hardwood. Both the weight and the length of the hardwood pole aid in the development of chi skills as the practitioner learns to place his energy into the weapon, and feel with it as if it were a part of his body.

The 8 Slash swords of Wing Chun



After working towards mastery of the dummy and pole skills the final stage of advanced internal skills is introduced through Wing Chun's 8-slash sword form. The swords of Wing Chun have been known by several different names. Some call them knives and the form the knife set. The term butterfly knives is often used to refer to this weapon. Twin swords are another way some refer to the Wing Chun swords. Some confusion may exist regarding these terms because there are other kung fu systems that use two swords that are very similar to the ones used in Wing Chun. These weapons are not unique to Wing Chun only. However, Wing Chun does use them in a way that is unique and singular to the system.

The sword form and training is obviously an extension of the whole of the Wing Chun system. The motions and exercises are characteristically Wing Chun in appearance. The principles and strategies of combat taught in the knife set are also

characteristically Wing Chun and fit perfectly with all that has been established in the Wing Chun training previous to learning the swords. Other systems often perform their skills with similar sword but it does not resemble the Wing Chun sword form much at all.

Wing Chun is a practical system, it is not showy or flashy. The same holds true for the weapons in the system. The pole form is not a showy form, but a very practical exercise. The 8-slash sword form is also not very spectacular from a demonstration point of view. It is a very practical training sequence, just like the three boxing forms in the Wing Chun system.



Even within the Wing Chun family there are differences between sword forms, and there seems to have developed two slightly different sword designs. Both

designs have far more in common than they do differences. However, the specific design difference is seen in the width of the blade just before it curves up to make the point. One design of swords has a parallel width from the handle up to where the edge curves up to the point. In the other design the width gets thicker so that the blade is widest just before it curves up to the point. This is a minor difference, but it is significant when you are learning to express chi within the swords. With the wider blade it is easier to outwardly manifest the chi. It has more weight towards the tip and the energy will cause a resonance within the blade that can be heard audibly. Hence, it is sometimes said that the skilled practitioner can make the swords sing.

With the narrower bladed swords this sound is less obvious. In fact, often the vibration will be present but the tone is at a pitch that is beyond human hearing. The wider blades make a deeper vibration with the energy and therefore, can be heard. Also the extra weight makes it somewhat easier to generate this vibratory expression of energy at the beginning stages. Other than this distinction the energy skills can be expressed in either sword design, but are less obvious with the narrower bladed swords.

The skill required to be able to presence the chi into the blades is advanced. The short metal blades of the swords are much more difficult to feel the chi into than the long hardwood pole. It requires a deeper releasing skill to generate this energetic vibration. Essentially the student learns to release energy from the hands and fingers in the Bui Tze boxing form. Then practices to deepen that skill with the dummy and the pole. Then the final challenge is to further refine this vibratory chi release to be able to presence it into the short blades of the swords.

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Many practice for years before they can successfully manifest this skill with the short swords. The benefit of this skill is that when it is practiced and done correctly there is great power generated in the cutting motions of the blades. With the vibratory energy in the blades a slash from one of the swords will be devastatingly powerful. A skilled practitioner can slice deep into his target with a seemingly short effortless motion. Much like the deceptive short punch; a seemingly insignificant gesture with the sword can carry some impressive cutting power. It is not unlikely that a skilled practitioner could easily slice through a limb, dividing both flesh and bone using these energetic skills with the swords.

In addition to this Chi-kung skill the sword form teaches the disciple to use significant energy skills in the advanced footwork of the sword form. He must learn Bui Ma or shooting stance skills. This requires him to be able to shoot his chi from his feet as he steps with great acceleration and agility. All of these skills add significantly to the practitioners overall skills. The refined ability to presence energy into the dummy and the weapons enhances the skillful practitioner's ability to extend his chi and influence others from a distance.



WARNING

It should be stressed here that practicing the Dim Mak skills upon another person is dangerous, and should not be done without an instructor experienced in Dim Mak supervising the practice. An accumulative effect can easily build up during practice that may result in serious injury or death.

Chapter 9 Wing Chun and Dim Mak



This action sequence was taken from a full speed luk sau (free fighting) exchange. It illustrates the application and devastation of multiple Dim Mak strikes in a real time exchange.

The pinnacle or apex skills within any traditional oriental martial system are the secret skills known as Dim Mak or death touch. Wing Chun is certainly no exception. There is so much mystical outright bullshit
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spread around about these skills that it is often dismissed outright as myth. Much of what is talked about regarding Dim Mak skills is phony. In fact most people who seem to be claiming these skills know nothing about them and are feeding their own egos with their own propaganda. This fact has given Dim Mak a tarnished reputation as being all fable and hype with no substance. This is partially intentional on the part of those who do know about these skills, and it is in part unfortunate. Often these skills were only taught to a very select few who had proven to their Si-Fu that they have the right nature and character.

Anciently among the Japanese systems there was an unwritten tradition that you would only teach these skills to students after they had reached the age of 55. Within some of the Chinese systems it was only to be taught once a student was even older. The mythical stigma around Dim Mak gave the teacher the ability to dismiss it as a good story if he didn't want to teach a particular student, or if that student inquired about it before he was ready. These skills were extremely closed door, and kept among the elite few of any particular style. Wing Chun traditionally has been much the same in its secretiveness regarding these highest level skills. I was once contacted by a Wing Chun student from England regarding the Dim Mak skills. After reading an article I had written he had asked his teacher if Dim Mak was part of Wing Chun. His teacher's answer was both interesting and revealing. The student said to me, "I asked my Sifu about this and he said that Dim Mak is no longer a part of Wing Chun, and that master Ip Chun no longer passes this knowledge to his students". The answer directly acknowledges that master Ip knows the Dim Mak skills, and has chosen not to teach them anymore. Obviously these skills are still an essential part of the Wing Chun system.

Often the secrets of these skills are found hidden within the forms, katas, or patterned sequences of a particular system. Practicing forms gave the knowing disciple the ability to practice the mapping and sequencing of point strikes in front of a large crowd without them knowing what he was doing. An understanding of the forms becomes so much more profound once one learns the secrets regarding Dim Mak contained within these sequences. This is also true within the Wing Chun forms. Specifically the Bui Tze form, which was traditionally said to be never shown outside of the door, meaning never demonstrated before non-Wing Chun family member. Bui Tze contains many of these patterned point sequences. The wooden dummy however has perhaps the most profound Dim Mak training principles. The dummy is perfect for practicing these skills because you can actually strike the dummy using the correct angle and direction to effectively activate the meridian points without causing harm or injury to a training partner.

Dim Mak within the whole of Wing Chun

Anyone who carefully examines the history of Wing Chun from the traditional founder down the family line to the great Grandmaster Yip Man will notice that more than a few of the masters in the Yip line are also noted doctors of Chinese medicine. This is significant because even today Chinese medicine is centered around the concepts of acupuncture and meridian energy. Some of the same principles and knowledge needed to heal with the needles can also be used to harm or even kill. Chinese doctors were often possessors of both types of knowledge, especially those who were also practitioners of kung fu. It seems intuitively obvious that these masters, using their collective knowledge of the

hurting and healing arts, practiced the secretive art of Dim Mak and incorporated it into their kung fu system. Especially given that Wing Chun was designed from the very beginning to possess the best, highest level combat skills within the Shaolin mother system. Hence Wing Chun is specifically and purposefully designed to teach the secret skills of Dim Mak.

From Ug Mui, the Shaolin nun, down to the great Yip Man these skills were present, taught and refined by the collective evolving knowledge of the great masters who inherited and transferred such skills. Wing Chun is so obviously filled with Dim Mak techniques, principles and theory that if it wasn't called Wing Chun it perhaps should have been called the art of Dim Mak! Everything about the training, techniques, principles and internal energy within Wing Chun kung fu has a direct and purposeful relationship to these hidden Dim Mak skills.

More than a touch?

One of the pieces of myth that surrounds the Dim Mak skills is that a practitioner can kill with a simple touch. This is not really correct. There are varying levels of skill with this ability as there are with any difficult skill in kung fu. At its highest level of expression it can be executed with what may appear to be a light tap, touch or rub, but very few ever get this proficient with these skills. Most often the skills are demonstrated with a medium to light strike on the desired points. As a practitioner becomes more skilled he will find less and less physical effort is needed to activate these energy switches. But, like training the short punch of Wing Chun, these skills require considerable practice to refine down to a tap. More will be said on this later in this chapter.

When you begin learning Dim Mak you will practice activating the points with medium level strikes, similar to that used when working on the dummy. It is possible to strike a point with too much power, in such cases the point doesn't activate because the force of the blow goes past the point rather than into it, so a medium level strike is the most that would be used. It should be stressed here that practicing these skills upon another person is dangerous, and should not be done without an experienced instructor supervising the practice. An accumulative effect can easily build up during practice that may result in serious injury or death if the practice is done incorrectly. Another important point to make is that these skills do not replace the preceding Wing Chun skills, they are more like the icing on the cake. You must be proficient with all the other Wing Chun skills before you are able to utilize the Dim Mak skills effectively, that is why they are the apex, or final completing skills in the system. If you can not intercept your attacker's blows then you will not be able to apply Dim Mak. If you can not strike your opponent then you can not use Dim Mak. Essentially Dim Mak alone is of little use to anyone. You must first have a high level of competency with the traditional techniques and abilities of your style, and then the Dim Mak becomes a powerful tool.

Moving beyond the dummy

The dummy is the perfect tool to teach and refine the Dim Mak skills. This is one of the main reasons for working with the dummy. Contained within the Wing Chun Wooden Dummy Form are the principles and secrets of the Dim Mak skills. Each sequenced set teaches something specific about this skill, while mapping out a series of point combinations which, when applied

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together, completely disable your attacker, often to the point of death. The final level of understanding the dummy set is to see it from the point of view of Dim Mak.

The arms of your attacker are used extensively within Dim Mak skills. There are key points along the meridian channels of the arms, which you will use to activate, or charge the whole meridian system of your opponent so that the subsequent strikes will have a dramatic effect. This is why each sequence of the dummy set starts with some kind of connection with the arms of the dummy. However, not every technique done upon the dummy arm is representative of a Dim Mak technique on your opponent's arm. Often there are several correct ways to interpret the dummy sequence.

There are several sequences where one Dim Mak interpretation of a movement done on the dummies arms, like the high and low garn sau, is actually representing points located on the body and head or neck of your opponent rather than his arms. Also, it is obvious that during the dummy set you never go around behind the dummy and attack the back. However, it is common knowledge in Wing Chun that the back of your opponent is one of the best places to get and is very vulnerable.

There are many points on the back that are good Dim Mak attacking points. These are represented in the dummy form in a slightly more abstract way. During the dummy form you frequently move to the side of the dummy. Sometimes these motion are indicating attacking points on the back, but because you can not step behind the dummy easily, these points are included in the form abstractly.

There are 361 regular points found along the 12 meridian channels and 2 vessels that make up the energy system of the body (actually there are 8 other vessels that are not well known in acupuncture, but

are used regularly in Dim Mak). Each of these meridians and vessels are connected to make a complete energy system. It is not difficult to obtain an acupuncture chart that illustrates these main meridians. The Dim Mak within Wing Chun begins to be understood when one has some knowledge of the principles that govern how Dim Mak works.

Principles that Govern Dim Mak within the Dummy Form

Within the wooden dummy form we will discuss seven principles that work to govern and reveal the use of Dim Mak point strikes and why they work. These principles are:

- 1) Every motion is an attack.
- 2) Correct angle and direction.
- 3) Attack along a single meridian channel.
- 4) Using the Yin and Yang relationships.
- 5) The 24 hour energy cycle & the “inner” reverse flow.
- 6) Attacking the special points.
- 7) Utilizing the Fa-jing energy release.

Every motion is an attack

At the beginning level you learn the dummy form as a set of sequenced blocks, strikes and steps. Once you understand the Dim Mak application of the dummy form you realize that every motion is attacking a point in some way. In this sense then, there are no block, but rather what appears first to be a blocking motion, a pak sau, garn sau or tan sau, is in reality a subtle point attack.

Wing Chun is renowned for its economy of motion. This principle is used to perfection within the Dim Mak applications of the dummy sequences. An attack does not need to be a kick or a punch, or even a palm strike. In Dim Mak you can attack with a seemingly gentle rub, a press or a squeeze.

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Whenever you make contact with the dummy, you are attacking in some way the energy system of your opponent.

This is one of the main reasons the dummy is such a powerful training tool when you are learning the Dim Mak applications. You can actually attack the points on the dummy without doing harm to anyone. Other systems that practice Dim Mak at their advanced levels quickly realize that it is very difficult to actually work this stuff without endangering another person seriously. You can go through the motions, indicating the points to be hit and the method of activation, but you can not actually get the feel of doing the move on them. With the dummy, you can get that feel. You can develop the important Fa-jing energy release that is used to disrupt an attacker’s energy flow. You can simultaneously attack multiple points, practicing the timing of difficult motions. If you did this even once on a real person the results may well be fatal. For this reason the dummy is a most powerful tool for honing these skills to a high level of proficiency.

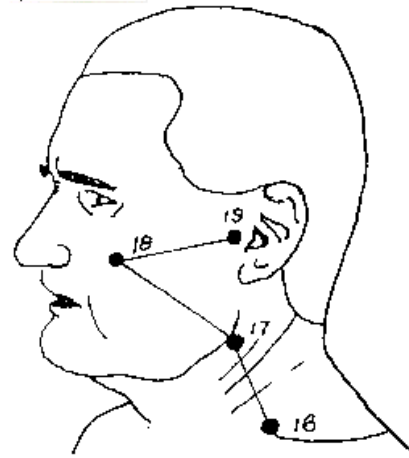
Correct Angle and Direction

Although in acupuncture the points are located precisely and seem very small, when it comes to point striking you do not need to be nearly as accurate. You are not trying to hit a spot the size of the point of a needle, but rather each point has an activation area about the size of the tip of a long pole (slightly larger than a man’s thumbnail). This is not too difficult to hit.

Not every point you see in an acupuncture chart is useful for striking, although most of them are. Some points respond only to a press or even a rub, but the majority of points respond to strikes if you know the correct angle and the right direct of the strike for that particular point. If you

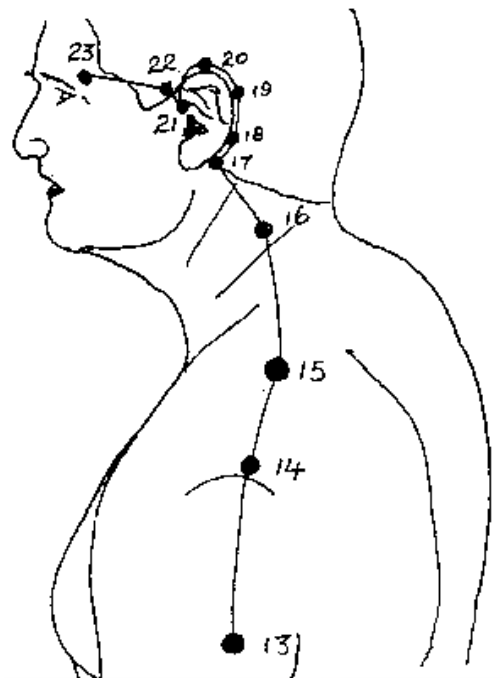
understand the dummy form correctly and are practicing it accurately then the angle and direction of your strikes on the dummy will help you to know which points are being used.

For many points on the body and head the correct angle and direction for striking is from the location on the skin into the core central plan (often called the mother-line) of the subject. However, there are some key points used in Wing Chun that do not follow this general rule. For example a glancing blow from the back towards the front activates Triple Warmer 23, the terminating point of this meridian located on the outside edge of the eyebrow. This is also true for Small Intestine 17 located beneath the ear lobe on the back of the jawbone.

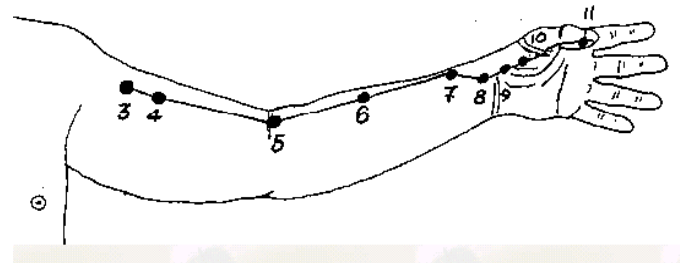


Small Intestine Meridian points on the neck & head (Diagrams with permission from Erle Montaigue)

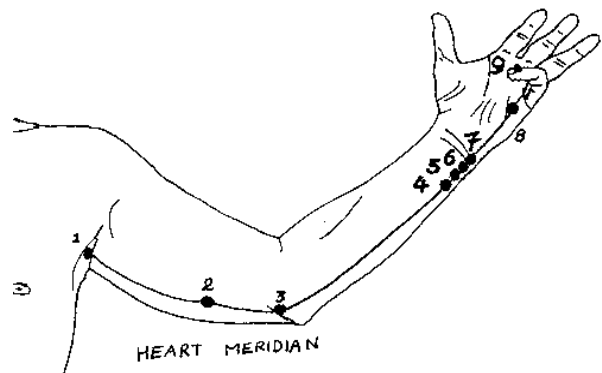
These points are only activated by striking them from the back in a direction toward the chin. Also points located on the arms are often activated by striking them or pressing them towards the subject's hand as well as into the central axis of the limb.



Triple Warmer Meridian Points on the neck & head

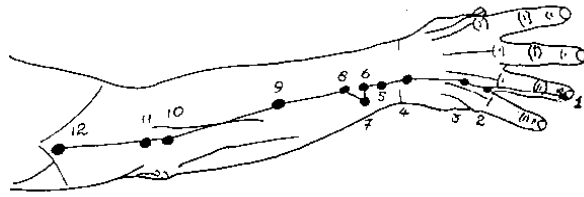


The Lung & Heart Yin Meridians on the Arm



By paying close attention to how the dummy arms react when different techniques are executed upon them you can see that many of the Wing Chun moves upon the arms work upon these points on the wrist and arm. The grabbing motions latter in the form are specifically designed to twist activate the lung and heart points. The bong sau motion will also activate the heart points correctly and can be used to attack the pericardium 6 point. There are many times you rub up the arms towards the dummy body. These are motions that often attack the yin meridians along the inside of the arm to set up an adverse energy flow and causes energy to back up within the system.

Often these types of motions are used as set up techniques to charge the energy meridians making them more vulnerable to strikes. A rub along the dummy arm that moves away from the dummy body, as found in the pak sau sequence (2nd section), and towards yourself is creating the same adverse energy field within the yang meridians on the outside of the arm.



Triple Warmer Yang Meridian points on the arm (Diagrams with permission from Erle Montaigne)

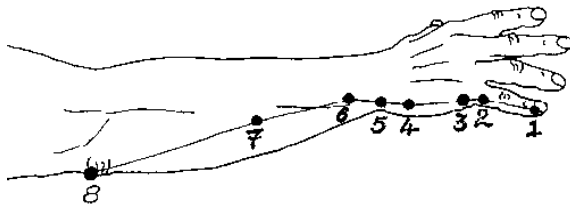
Many of the points on the Yang meridians you will attack in a direction that is directly into the core axis of the arm and slightly toward the hand. The frequently repeated double garn sau movement is also attacking the large Intestine cluster on the forearm in this way. However, sometimes this same move will be attacking the points on the back of the head, neck, and jawbone, which are also activated from back to front.

Whether you are grabbing the wrist, rubbing up or down the arm, or striking the arm, you are attacking the energy system and priming it for additional attacks. The dummy form is full of such motions; in fact they are in every sequence.

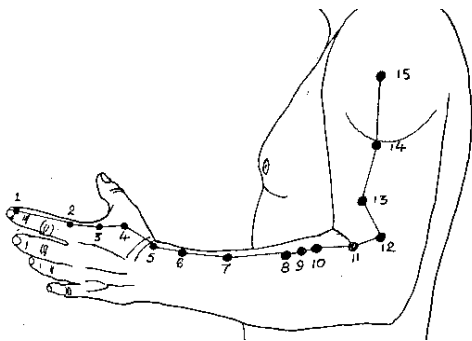
Attack along a Single Meridian

A simple way to understand many of the combined sequences within the dummy form is to see if they attack along a single meridian. Attacking on one meridian is an effective Dim Mak principle and will cause serious damage to your opponent.

Remember that each meridian is mirrored on the left and right side of the body. You can attack one meridian on one side, or you can switch from points on that single meridian on the left and on the right sides of the body. Either way you are still attacking along the same meridian. By switching from left to right sides along a single meridian you are also using an aspect of the Yin and Yang relationship principle



Small Intestine Yang Meridian points on the arm

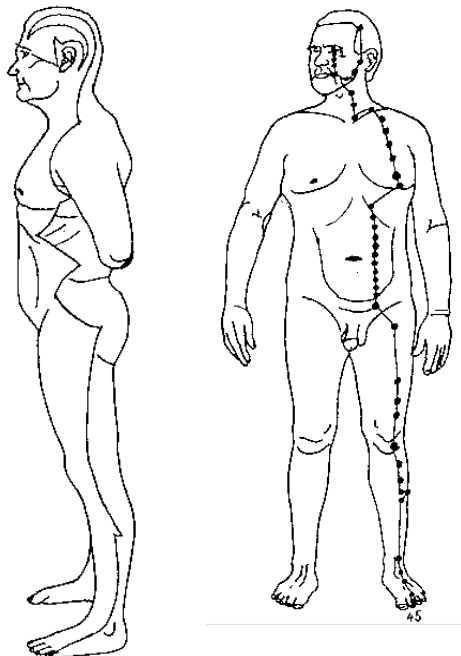


Large Intestine Yang Meridian points on the arm

because the left of the body is seen as Yin and the right as Yang.

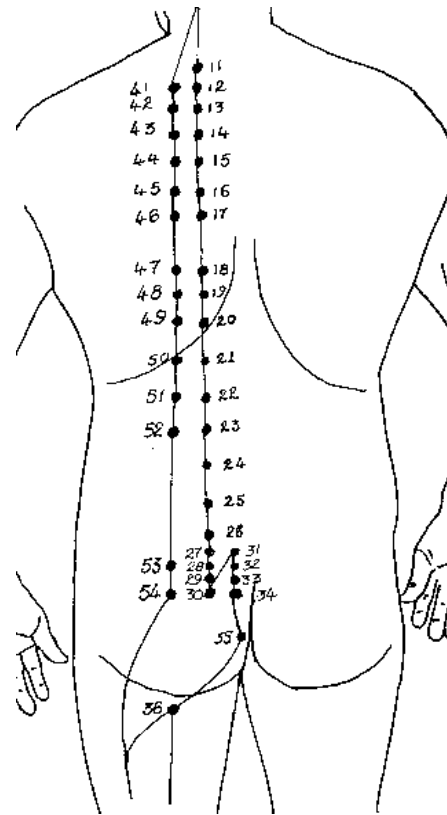
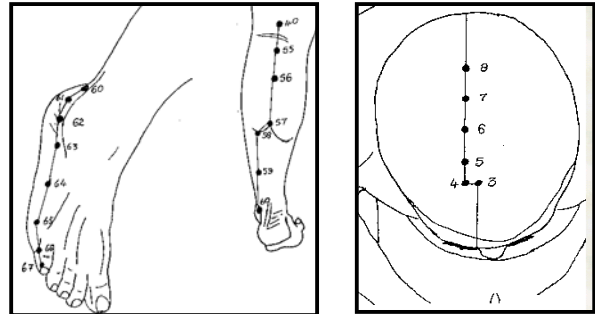
Any acupuncture chart will show you that several meridians span the whole body. In fact each meridian either starts or ends in the hands or feet. To attack along a single meridian is therefore not difficult, once you understand the path of the meridian and the location of key points along that meridian.

Most of the sequences in the dummy form combine different meridian channels in accordance with the other principles of Dim Mak, but several attack along a single meridian channel. For example the Gallbladder meridian has 44 points that start at the outside edge of the eye and end on the outside edge of the forth toe (next to the little toe). Likewise the stomach meridian has 45 points that start just under the eye and finish at the end of the second toe. The bladder meridian has 67 points starting at the inside edge of the eye, going over the head and down the back to finish at the little toe.



Gallbladder Meridian. Stomach Meridian.
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Even though the other meridians do not span from head to toe, they do cover some distance and are easily accessible. For example the large intestine meridian has 20 points that start at the tip of the index finger and end right beside the nose. These three meridians span the entire body.



The Bladder Meridian (Starts inside of eyebrow, ends at the little toe). Diagrams with permission from Erle Montaigne.

Each of the 12 meridians can be targeted and attacked specifically. One example of attacking along a single meridian found within the dummy form is the 5th set with all the Po-Pai techniques within it. Many of these attacks are along the Gallbladder meridian, attacking it on both the left and right sides of the body.

The Gallbladder, Stomach and Spleen meridians all produce unconsciousness or death by fooling the brain into thinking the bodies blood pressure is too high and therefore causes the brain to quickly lower that pressure. This causes the individual to faint, or pass out because the blood pressure is not really high at all and when the brain lowers the pressure quickly, it reduces the blood flow to the head causing unconsciousness, or in severe cases death. Again these points are practiced upon the dummy so as not to injure or put at risk nother person. Do not strike these points on another person without a competent

instructor who understands Dim Mak strikes and revival techniques being present.



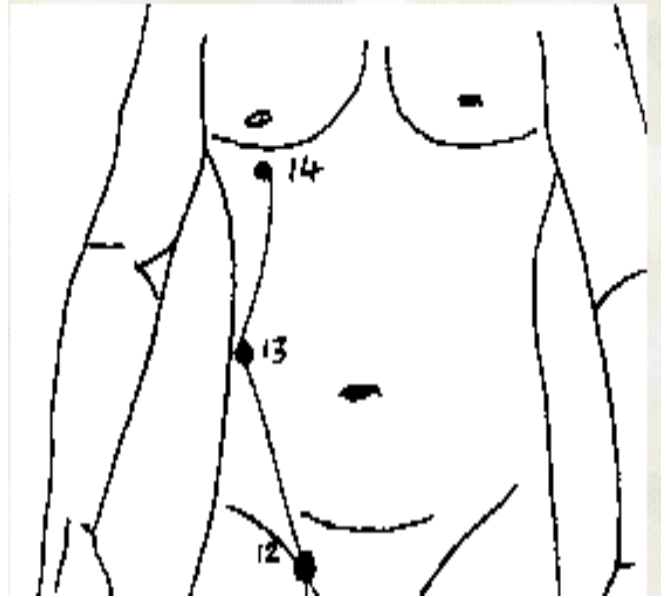
Using the Yin and Yang Relationships

Using the principle of Yin and Yang to execute Dim Mak attacks can be accomplished in several ways. Each meridian is paired with another meridian; both being represented by the same element.

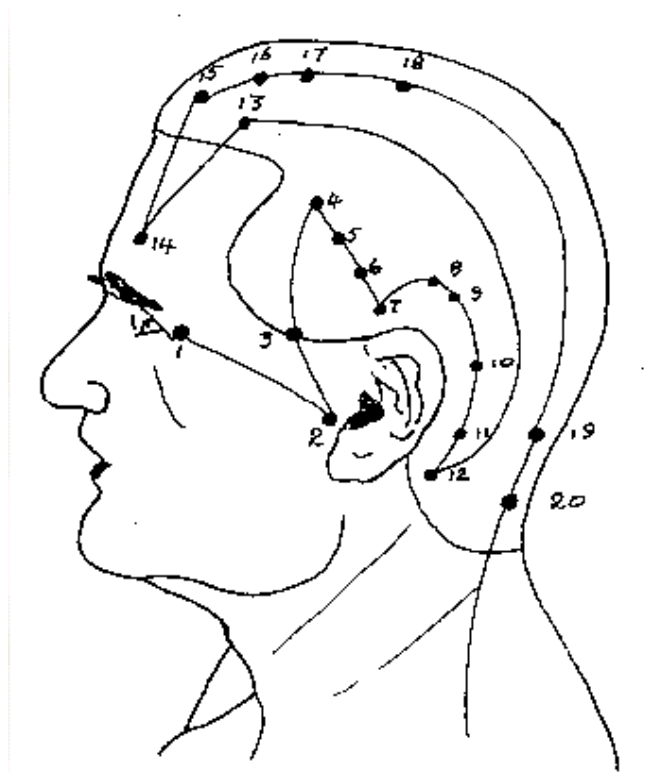
YIN Meridians	YANG Meridians	Element
Lung	Large Intestine	Metal
Spleen	Stomach	Earth
Heart	Small Intestine	Fire
Kidney	Bladder	Water
Pericardium	Triple Warmer	Fire
Liver	Gallbladder	Wood

For example the kidney and bladder meridians are paired under the water element with the kidney as the Yin and the bladder as the Yang meridian. Using the Yin Yang principle you can successfully attack points on both the Kidney and bladder meridians for a successful Dim Mak effect. It is not important to attack the Yin first and then the Yang; it will work either way irrespective of the order you attack the paired Yin/Yang meridians. Some of the finishing moves in the dummy set illustrate this principle. For example the double strikes used to finish the 5th sequence is attacking Liver 14 on the edge of the rib cage (both left and right side) and then either GB 1 (the outside corner of the eye), or GB 14 (approx. 1 inch above the center of the eyebrow), or GB 12 (behind the ear) using this principle (see diagram below). As you can see from the chart above the liver and Gallbladder meridians are paired together under the wood element.

There are other ways to apply the Yin/Yang principle. As previously mentioned the left side of the body is considered Yin and the right side is considered Yang. By crossing the body with point attacks you can cause a serious Dim Mak effect. This is especially true within the head and neck region. It is possible to attack the same point on the same meridian located on opposite sides of the head, and cause a type of energy short circuit in the system producing unconsciousness.



Liver Meridian points on the torso



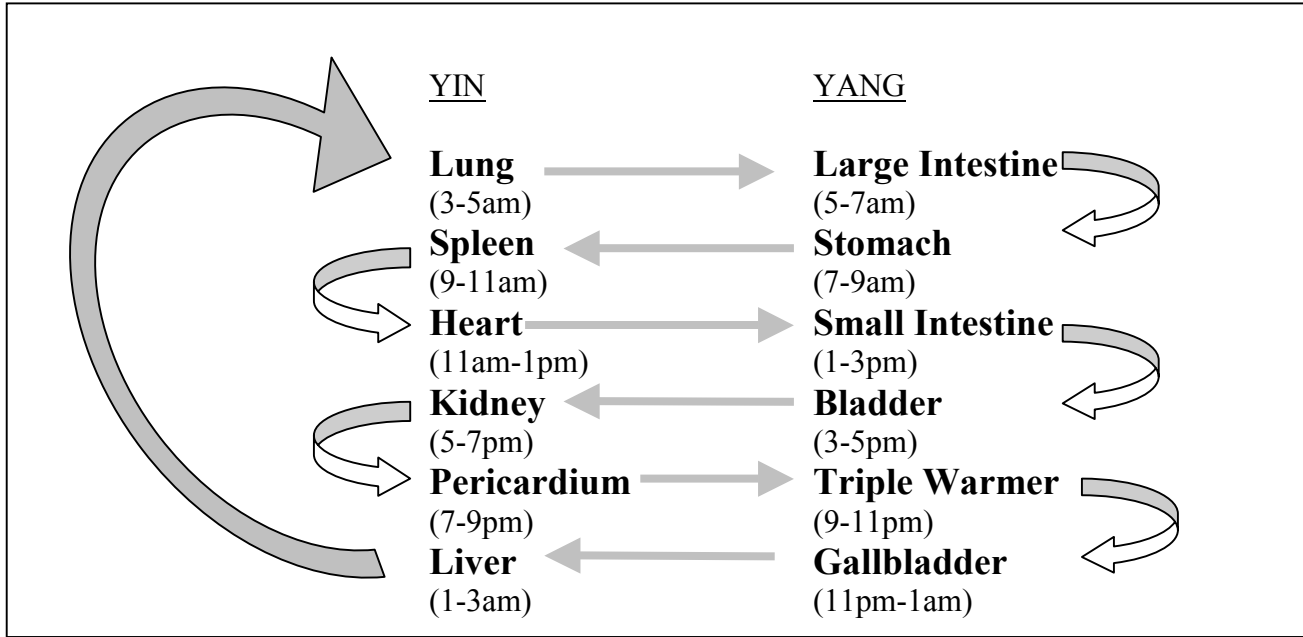
Gallbladder Meridian points on the head.
(Diagrams with permission from Erle Montaigne)

This effect can also be accomplished by attacking different meridian points that are approximately opposite each other (from left to right sides of the central plan) in location on the head and neck. Also attacking either front or back works like this as well. The front of the body is Yin and the back is Yang. Another application of this principle is to use a Yin attack, a press or squeeze, on one point and a Yang attack, a strike on another, thus using again a Yin/Yang combination. By grabbing an opponents hair it is easy to press on the many meridian points of the head while striking another point that is approximately opposite to the location of the pressed point. This principle of pressing and striking is represented within the dummy sequences.

The 24 Hour Energy Cycle & the “Inner” Reverse Flow

The chi cycles through all 12 meridians every 24 hours. This is the natural

flow of life. Each meridian is considered active with chi for 2 hours in every 24-hour day. If that meridian is attacked during that 2-hour period the effect is somewhat magnified. The 24-hour cycle flows in the following order:



There is a whole pile of bullshit written and spoken about this aspect of Dim Mak. The myths about needing to know the time of day for each meridian are not true. Other stories about needing to know what someone has eaten and when they ate are also a load of crap. Knowing the time of day the meridians are active is not that important when using Dim Mak, as the meridians are vulnerable to attack all the time. The 2-hour active window is a time when they are slightly more vulnerable, but not significantly. The order of the strike is not that important either, for example you can attack the bladder points first and small intestine points second, or visa versa and still produce the same result. The myth that the order of strikes should follow the direction of flow is incorrect.

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In fact the ability to strike the meridians without concern for the direction of flow points to a little understood reality among those who have only studied acupuncture in an effort to understand Dim Mak. Acupuncture uses the flow of energy diagramed above. However in Dim Mak an opposite energy flow is utilized. When an acupuncturist places a needle into a meridian point the needle effects the energy that flows around the meridian, on the out layer of the channel. This is all the needles will effect. However there is a very real counter flow of energy on the inside of the meridian. This energy flows in the opposite direction to that on the outside and thus balances the energy system perfectly.

In Dim Mak we use pressure and blows which effect this inner flow of energy.

So even though we may be using the same points and the same meridian channels as those used in acupuncture, in Dim Mak we are using a different inner energy flow to disturb the balance of the system. When this inner energy is disturbed then the outer energy used in acupuncture is also disturbed.

In describing Tai Chi Dim Mak practices Erle Montague refers to this inner flow of energy as that used for Dim Mak strikes. In Wing Chun we often strike against this reverse flow when we strike the Yin meridian set up points on the inside of the arms and legs.

We use the direction of flow principle to pair the meridians which pass the energy to each other. Whether it is in the direction of the acupuncture outer energy or the inner Dim Mak energy it is not important because the same meridian channels are paired. Therefore, we can find strikes which attack these paired organs, not just the Yin Yang pairs but also the meridians that transfer energy from one element pair to another.

An example of this from the dummy set is found in some versions of the 7th sequence: A palm strike to the high outside dummy arm represents an attack to Large Intestine 10 on your opponent's forearm. Following the palm closely is an elbow strike to the face, striking your opponent at stomach 2 just under the eye (or stomach 7, just forward of the center of the ear) while you hook the leg striking it on spleen 6. This sequence follows the cycle of chi from large intestine to stomach, to spleen.

NOTE: The spleen 6 point on the inside of the shin bone of the leg is a very significant striking point and is used frequently within Wing Chun's kicking. It is often called the "meeting of the Yins" because at spleen 6 the liver, spleen, and kidney meridians intersect. These three meridians are Yin energy meridians and

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attacking this point effects all three meridians making this spot specifically vulnerable. Spleen 6 should be struck against the bone and in an upward direction against the inner Dim Mak energy flow. Thus the lifting kick of Wing Chun found in both the Chum Ku and Bui Tze boxing forms, as well as the dummy set, is perfect for attacking this point on the lower leg.

Attacking the Special Points

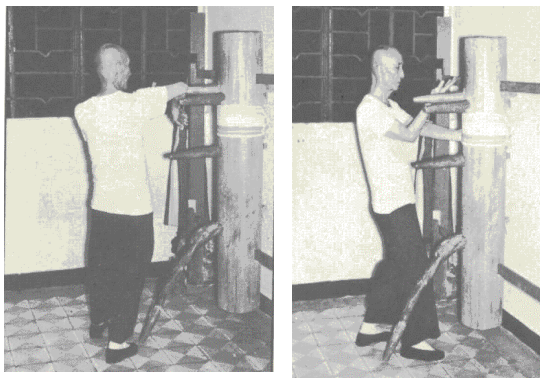
There are five types of special points used in Dim Mak. The first type is what is often called alarm points and they are usually found on the front of the body. Alarm points are used in acupuncture to help diagnose problems; they are tender when a problem exists with the organ with which that point is an indicator for. Associated points are the second type of special points. They are located on the bladder meridian on the back of the body. Again there is one for each organ. Both alarm and associate points can be used to set up a specific meridian. By striking the alarm or associated point for a particular organ, and then attacking the meridian for that organ you can successfully bring about a knock out. This can also be done in reverse by striking the meridian first and then the special point for that meridian.

A third type of special point is the interaction points where several meridians intersect. For example the spleen 6 point called the meeting of the yins is such a point. These points can be used to successfully effect the energy in all the meridians that are connected to it. Also the Yang or Yin meridians that balance those meridians connected to the special point are likewise effected when this special point is struck.

A fourth type of point is the free points that do not seem to be associated with a particular meridian or organ. One example

of this is the mind point found on the side of the face just forward of the center of the ear. Striking the mind point correctly can cause sever disorientation and confusion. It can also produce unconsciousness. A fifth type of special points are those found on the extra ordinary vessels or channels. These are used regularly in Dim Mak and are points and channels that are very rarely found on acupuncture charts. An example of this is the girdle channel, which is located around the waist like a belt. It is the channel that the Dan-Tien is actually found on. By striking points on the girdle meridian you successful disconnect the energy from the top half of the body and the bottom half. The girdle meridian is attacked in the low spade hand strikes of the Bui Tze boxing form. It is useful against large opponents as it causes them to bend over and it breaks their body's integrity making it easier to control them.

An example of a special point combination is the associate point for the heart meridian, which is Bladder 15, located on the back just to the side of the spine right between the shoulder blades.



Grandmaster Yip man performing the discussed sequence on the wooden dummy

One of the common motions in the dummy can be understood as using the heart meridian with this associate point to cause unconsciousness. In the first set of the

dummy as well as in many of the subsequent sets there is a combination of motions where you change from an inside bong sau to a tan or wu sau as you step to the side and do a low palm strike with the other hand. The bong on the inside of the wrist is attacking the heart 4, 5 & 6 points, then you step behind your attacker and palm at bladder 15 to effectively utilize this principle in manipulating your attackers energy system and induce unconsciousness.

Utilizing the Fa-jing Energy Release-- Releasing energy to block energy

The Fa-jing energy release is taught in progressive steps through the entire course of Wing Chun training. In Sil Num Tao you first learn to hold specific postures and techniques while relaxing deeply at the same time. Then in Chum Ku you learn to move with these related postures while combining them into a single synchronized motion. In Biu Tze you begin to actually throw or release energy out of these motions and techniques. These are the progressive stages in learning to use the explosive energy striking skills known as Fa-jing.

On the dummy all the preparatory Fa-jing skills are brought together as you learn to release energy into the dummy correctly. There are some important characteristics of using Fa-jing. In China, after having compared with several recognized masters of Tai Chi and Shaolin, I offered to demonstrate some Wing Chun for the gathered crowd of kung fu people. No one present had seen Wing Chun before, although many were familiar with its reputation. I performed Chum Ku, and then the master named Lu Jian Guo, whom I had pushed with, also demonstrated one of his forms. Although the techniques were quite different between our two systems, there was a notable commonality in how those

techniques were expressed. At key points in the form I noticed that master Lu would shake as he executed a strike. This was Fa-jing. They likewise noted that I too would shake during my expression of Chum Ku.

The Fa-jing release draws up the energy through the root into the waist where it is focused and released through the limb by using strong intending and a whip-like shaking at the waist. As the physical shake occurs a wave like surge of chi is drawn from the earth and focused through the body and out of the limb. It is this energy that does the damage. It is this wave of chi that strikes into the body and produced damage to the recipient's internal organs.



Sifu Tim Jeffcoat demonstrating the Fa-jing vibration with the bong sau in the Chum ku form.

When you have truly learned to do this on the dummy your performance of the dummy set will change significantly. You will appear to be barely trying, as you express the motions seemingly without any

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effort. However, the dummy itself will be moving with loud crisp cracks and violent vibrations due to the Fa-jing release of chi into it. There really is no way to fake this on a good hardwood dummy. To beat on it with this much physical power would only bruise and damage your arms, and the dummy still wouldn't sound or move in the same way.

In Dim Mak it is this type of Fa-jing energy strike that drives the activation of the points. Sometimes Fa-jing is referred to as "putting in the adverse chi". In many ways this is precisely what occurs with a Fa-jing strike. You essentially inject your chi into your opponents energy system to cause an adverse condition. As your Fa-jing skills deepen you will require less and less physical motion to release more and more extraordinary power in your blows. The short thrusting palms and the inch punch of Wing Chun are a perfect example of this. With truly dedicated practice this skill can be refined down to what may appear to others as a simple rub or touch.

Refining to a touch (Uncle David)

I have had the privilege of training with an old Hawaiian master who had almost magical skills. We who know him simply call him Uncle David. Uncle has a well-known reputation within the martial arts circles in Southern California and Hawaii as one having truly credible skills. In working with him I came to realize this reputation was well founded. Uncle demonstrated a great ability with energy both in healing and in the Dim Mak side. His Dim Mak skills are deep, and is one of very, very few who has refined his abilities to an actual touch. For the most part he would still use small taps and rubs, but he did put out a close friend of mine with a simple light touch. My friend told me that Uncle simply put his hand on his shoulder

and with his thumb lightly pressed a point close to the neck, before my friend realized it he was beginning to slump over as if falling asleep.

Now most of the stories I have heard about masters who can supposedly just touch you and knock you out or kill you are bull without doubt. But the skills of Uncle David are legitimate, and have been demonstrated in front of hundreds of people throughout his life. They are undeniable.

I recall an interesting story about a rather senior 7th or 8th Dan Karate black belt who was taking a seminar uncle was asked to give in Las Vegas several years ago. Several hours into the seminar this person piped up and rudely declared that what uncle was teaching was crap and it didn't work. He then proceeded to attempt to man handle the much older and wiser Uncle David. While he had grabbed Uncle by the lapel of his GI top and was shaking him, uncle simply rubbed his hand up either side of this fellow's neck knocking him unconscious instantly. Uncle then left this man "sleeping" in the center of the floor while he proceeded with his instruction, to a now much more attentive audience. About 20 minutes later this individual woke up and began apologizing to uncle most humbly. I guess its amazing what a little nap will do for some people's attitude.

The skills that uncle David possesses are rare, and require years of skillful practice and training to refine to the high degree that uncle possesses. However, they are the natural apex of the often secretive Dim Mak strikes we have discussed. As one is able to release energy with less and less physical motion and effort, one slowly approaches the ability to release it with an apparent touch. This is the apex skill within Wing Chun and is pointed to by the short one-inch punch and other strikes Wing Chun uses that have very minimal physical motions. To

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punch from only one inch away seems amazing to many people, until you find someone who can place his hand upon you and without removing it can strike you without the hand ever leaving your body. There are many varying levels of skill with these energy abilities. To know what is possible is often enough to encourage some of us to press forth and keep refining and perfecting these almost magical abilities.

Combining point Sequences from the Dummy Form. **Which motions do what?**

Because almost no two Wing Chun teachers seem to teach the wooden dummy set exactly the same way, I have chosen to discuss some of the common motions that appear in most versions of the dummy sequences I have seen. In doing so the explanations of the Dim Mak aspects of these motions will hopefully be easily transferable across a variety of dummy sets. I have already outlined several point sequences from the dummy form while giving examples of the principles of Dim Mak. Almost every sequence has more than one or two correct Dim Mak applications. The descriptions that follow offer one of these possible applications for the ten sequence pieces that I have selected from each of the dummy sections.

First Sequence:

The opening move of the dummy set seems to be fairly common in most versions of the form. In the opening there is an intercept rub motion up the inside arm with a palm strike to the face of the dummy and a grab behind the head.



In this sequence the inside man sau strikes to Pericardium 6 point on the inside of the wrist and rubs up the forearm charging the energy system. Then the palm strike to the face is attacking the mind point located just forward of the jaw hinge. Because of the size of the palm, and the strength of the energy that can be released from the hand many points can be struck simultaneously with this attack. But the mind point is the focus of the palm strike, looking at an acupuncture chart will show that you cannot help but strike several other points as well. At the same time the other hand grabs the arm and twist grabs the lung and hart points on the wrist. The attacking hand then rubs around the neck to pull on the back of the neck pressing into the GB 12 & 20 points that are close together behind the ear lobe. The grab may also press lower on the neck at GB 21. These movements, sequenced together as indicated in this part of the dummy set, will easily incapacitate an opponent producing unconsciousness.

Second Sequence:

In the second sequence of many versions of the dummy set we find the first kick.

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It begins with an attack with a low bong sau to the inside of the low dummy arm, striking Pericardium 6 on the inside of the wrist.



This is an energy drainage point which “primes” all the other meridian points, making them more vulnerable. Also striking the arm here will tend to through the opponent’s arm out setting him up for the next bui motion that attacks at the Heart 1 point in the armpit. This is a very dangerous point and will usually stop the heart momentarily. However, in the sequence we add another attack with a sidekick to GB 32 on the outside of the thigh. Combining these points produces severe unconsciousness or death.

Third Sequence:

The third section seems to vary a great deal between versions of the dummy

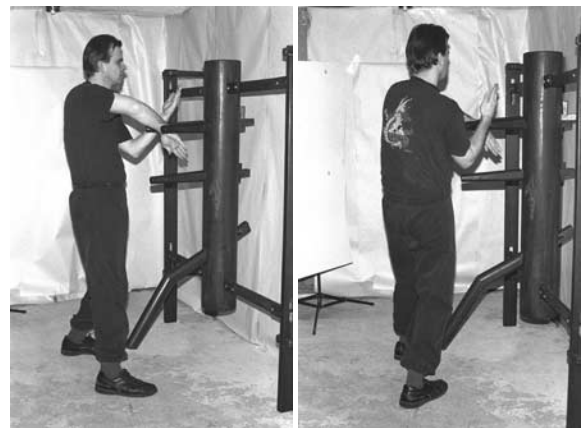
form. The most common motions in the third section are the high/low garn sau followed by the bong sau on the opposite arm. This sequence can be easily understood if you picture doing it on someone who is attempting to strike or grab you around the waist. Your low garn sau attacks on the outside of his arm at the Large Intestine



cluster high on the forearm while the high garn sau strikes to GB 12 and 20 located low on the skull behind the ear. If he is not leaning over enough to reach these points with the high garn then a good substitute is Small Intestine 16 located on the side of the neck (where Frankenstein's bolt went). SI 16 is attacked using a straight in direction, while GB 12 & 20 are struck from the back toward the forehead. Either of these attacks are then followed by a bong sau which would attack under the jawbone with the elbow striking either SI 17, or Triple Warmer 17 on the back of the jaw-hinge. The forearm of the bong sau will rub up under the jawbone striking Stomach 5 and, if the angle is correct, Stomach 9 on the side of the throat also. This is a lethal combination; it will at least put your opponent into deep unconsciousness or coma, but most likely will be fatal.

Fourth Sequence:

A common motion that follows the third section is the huening motions of the cow sau techniques. These are combined with a high garn sau and are usually repeated three times. The huen motion rolls over the lung points of the wrist and presses in on the pericardium 6 point in towards the hand. At the same time your other arm strikes on the large intestine cluster on the top of the forearm (LI 8, 9, 10) using your forearm or elbow while the hand strikes into Small intestine 16 on the side of the neck.



This combination will produce unconsciousness. To be able to strike the LI points on the forearm and the SI 16 point on the side of the neck with one strike requires the opponent's arm to be held in a defensive ready position. If the arm is not positioned to enable this combination then the strike to the SI 16 point will still produce unconsciousness after being set up by the Pericardium 6 point on the wrist.

Fifth Sequence:

The double palm strikes in the fifth sequence are common in all versions of the dummy form I have seen.



The po pai sequences can be understood as attacking along the Gallbladder meridian. The double palm strikes (po pai) with the top hand striking in a vertical palm to the head at GB 14, and the bottom hand attacking using either an inverted/reverse palm, or a horizontal/laying palm attacking to GB 24.

GB 14 is either struck with a sinking downward slapping palm causing energy to drain from the head quickly, or an upward thrusting palm which causes “toping,” were too much chi is forced into the head. The lower palm strikes GB 24 on the rib cage with a slight inward twisting motion. Often attacks to GB 24 also strike Liver 14, which is just above it. These two points combined are enough to cause serious damage to most people. The bong sau motion that follows the first high low po pai move on the dummy is also an attack to the Gallbladder meridian. The elbow of the bong sau attacks GB 22 just under the arm.



Then the step to the side with another high/low po pai further attacks GB 3 on the side of the head just in front of the ear with the top hand. At the same time the lower palm attacks GB 25 on the side of the body on the lower edge of the floating rib.

Sixth Sequence:

In the sixth sequence there is a fak sau motion followed by a spade hand strike that is found in many versions of the form.



This combination is often set up with a high/low garn sau motion which attacks the triple warmer meridian with the high hand attacking TW 17 behind the ear in a back to front direction.

This is exactly how the movement is represented in the dummy set. The low garn sau attacks the TW 9 point on the outside of the forearm in a straight in direction.

The next motion in the set is a bong sau. Here the bong sau is a transition technique. By that I mean it can be understood as either the finishing move of the last sequence, or the first motion of the next sequence. As the finishing motion to the preceding techniques the bong sau uses the forearm to attack stomach 9 point on the side of the Adam's apple of the throat.

The other application of this technique is as the beginning motion for the next sequence. In this sense this motion can be understood as attacking the Pericardium 6 point on the inside of the wrist as a set up point for the next two motions. After attacking the PC 6 point with the bong sau you step to the outside of the dummy and change the bong to a tan sau.



The tan presses on the lung 7 point on the thumb side of the wrist, or on the large intestine 8, 9, & 10 points higher up on the top of the forearm. As you do this you are also striking with the other hand using a fak sau technique. This attack strikes the stomach 9 point on the throat. The hand is then quickly returned to strike down on the large intestine 8, 9, & 10 points on the

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forearm with a pak sau. At the same time the other hand strikes up with a spade hand to Triple warmer 23 and Gall bladder 1 at the same time. Triple warmer 23 is located on the outside edge of the eyebrow while Gallbladder 1 is located at the outside crease of the eye just below TW 23. Both can be struck together with the spade hand technique, or you can just target TW 23. Both of these points are struck with the spade hand strike from a position to the side of your opponent, which would strike them from a back to front direction. Both of these points are very dangerous when struck in this manner. This sequence will cause serious unconsciousness or fatality.

Seventh Sequence:

One series of motions that seems to be relatively common after the sixth sequence is the lifting tan sau combined



with a front kick and followed by a side stomping kick. In this sequence the tan sau press the arm of the opponent up opening his lower gate area. Pressing behind the elbow on the triple warmer 11 point will lift the arms. The alternative to this is to strike with a double lifting tan sau on the forearm at TW 9 point on the outside of the forearm. The lifting front kick strikes at the Liver 10, 11, & 12 points and the spleen 12 & 13 points located just above the liver points. It is not difficult to strike all these points

simultaneously with the foot. The Liver 10, 11, & 12 points are located high on the inside of the thigh to the side of the groin area, while SP 12 & 13 are a few inches above them on the lower abdomen.

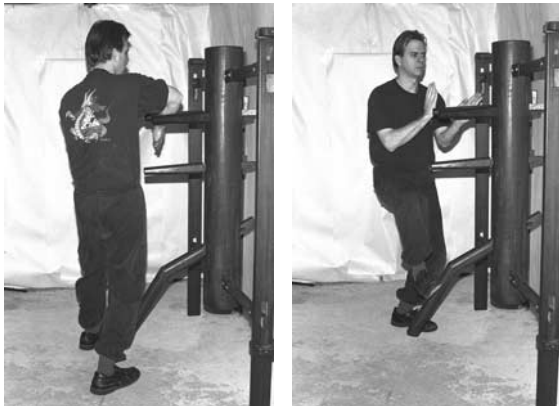
This is followed by a side stomping kick to the inside of the leg. This kick scrapes down the inside leg attacking the spleen and liver points focusing specifically on spleen 6 which is the point where the liver, spleen, and kidney meridians intersect. This combination will severely disable your opponent, often producing unconsciousness.

Eighth Sequence:

The eighth sequence are motions that are often found towards the end section of the dummy set.



After a series of three high/low garn sau combinations you bong across to the opposite dummy arm and then you step to the outside with a palm strike to the arm as you stomp kick the dummy leg.



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The double garn sau attack the GB 12 & 20 points behind the ear with the large intestine cluster on the forearm. The garn saus are followed by a bong sau to stomach 9 to the side of the Adam's apple. Then with a step to the outside you use a twisting palm strike to stomach 5 under the jaw while simultaneously stomping down on stomach 35 just above the knee on the outside of the leg. This attacking sequence will easily cause unconsciousness, and can be fatal.

Ninth Sequence:



One of the most common motions from the latter sections of the dummy is the step through swing kick from the rear leg onto the lower dummy body, combined with a palm strike and a tan sau. The stomping kick from the rear leg onto the dummy body represents a kick to the supporting leg of the opponent. There are several point options for this attack. For our purposes we will say this kick attacks at bladder points 38, 39 & 40 located together at the back of the knee. Simultaneously the palm strikes to bladder 23 & 24 located just over the kidneys, while

the tan sau presses forward on the TW 9 point on the outside of the forearm. This combination works with the cycles of energy flow to produce a knock out.

Tenth Sequence:

The ending sections of the dummy often vary somewhat between different schools.



A relatively common sequence of techniques from this set starts with a crossed bong sau followed by the double grabbing motion on the dummy arm with a step to the side and a stomp kick to the leg. The crossed bong sau attacks Pericardium 6 on the inside of the wrist to set up the system for the remaining attacks. The bong hand then grabs the wrist with a twisting press to activate the heart and lung meridian points on the bottom and top sides of the wrist. This is done to further prime the system for the stomping attack to stomach 34 just above the kneecap. This stomp combined with the pull on the arm will bring your attacker forward and down while dislocating the knee.



The next motion is a high/low garn sau which strikes into Gallbladder 20 on the back of the head with the high hand while the low hand strikes into TW 12 on the back of the upper arm. This combination will cause a knock out, and can be fatal.

Concluding Remarks

My purpose here was not to explain every motion on the dummy in terms of Dim Mak applications. However, each motion, no matter how seemingly insignificant does have a Dim Mak application. All I have done here is introduce the Dim Mak concepts that are hidden in the dummy set of Wing Chun. As I stated previously most of the dummy sequences described have 3 or more different Dim Mak applications for the same set of motions. Here we have described only one for each combination.

Dim Mak in Wing Chun is the icing on the cake so to speak. All the other skills regarding the use of energy or chi in Wing Chun are just as important and impressive. To be able to perform Dim Mak effectively these other skills need to be developed first. It is true that any fool can strike a few points and knock someone out, but this really is not Dim Mak. To use Dim Mak effectively and

skillfully you need to be able to control the release of energy. The exercises and training methods described in this book introduce you to the process for developing this Chi-kung control. Once you are in the process of progressing with these skills then the Dim Mak skills are a natural compliment, and an important addition to enable you to use chi energy as a real weapon. This book is not a text on Dim Mak per say. Its focus is on the development and use of Chi energy within Wing Chun kung fu. Dim Mak is simply one part of this bigger picture. If you make it any more or less than that you will likely miss the most important and impressive Chi-kung skills of the Wing Chun system.

A Final Invitation:

Those of you who have invested the time and effort to obtain and read this text will undoubtedly have many questions. Questions are the beginning of wisdom, and of learning. I invite you to continue to question, respectfully of course, but ask, seek and inquire for a richer more complete understanding. If the things I have introduced within this book are strange, new, or confusing to you, then I ask that you keep your mind open to the possibilities of energy use. Those of you who have been

previously initiated into the skillful use of Chi-kung, I encourage you to continue to grow in your skills. My hope is that this book has added to your knowledge and invited further experience and progress.

Wing Chun is a very advanced kung fu system. Its physical motions are effective and practical. Hopeful you now see that Wing Chun also possess very practical and effective Chi-kung skills. To begin to experience these deeply rich skills, all you need to do is start along the path. Chi is learned through experience, a competent guide is helpful, and in the more advanced levels even essential, but anyone can begin by taking the first few steps into the realms of Chi-kung skills. Yes there are many charlatans out there who make claims that are both incredible and unverifiable. In my experience, such individuals are never able to demonstrate these skills. What I have suggested and outlined in this book are real, practical, demonstrable Chi-kung skills that are an intimate component of the complete Wing Chun system. My desire is to bring Wing Chun people together in harmony, to share our collective understanding of this great kung fu system. This work is an effort to begin such sharing, and to invite others to likewise share what they have.



Si-Fu Baker comparing skills with Master Yang in Beijing China.

About the author:

Born in New Zealand, Scott Baker began his training in Wing Chun around the age of 12. He studied under Master Tam Hung Fun of Hong Kong and under the guidance of Si-Fu Peter Yu. Scott practiced diligently for many years and after moving further away from the school he began feeling the need to test his kung fu skills. He visited with and compared with many other martial artists often agreeing to engage in combat with them. He was never disappointed and would write to his Si-Fu about some of these encounters. Si-Fu Peter Yu would even read some of these letters to Scott's kung fu brothers at the Wing Chun school. At 22 Scott ventured out into the world and traveled to the United States of America. He again compared with other martial artists

there, and found that he was attracted to full contact competitions. He began training as a kickboxer and competed successfully throughout the western United States. At the same time Scott was studying at Brigham Young University in Utah for a Ph.D. in Psychology, which he completed in 1995.

Soon after arriving in the USA Scott was asked to teach Wing Chun by a few close friends. In addition to teaching privately and publicly he was also asked to instruct law enforcement and military personal in the use of both lethal and non-lethal techniques. In 1998 Scott moved to the Chicago area where he continues to teach privately and periodically travels to conduct seminars on the internal skills of Wing Chun. As part of his work as an international leadership/management consultant Scott has traveled to China and

was further able to compare with many masters of different kung fu systems while there. One of the most skillful masters he encountered was Master Yang, an 81 year old Tai Chi master who praised Si-Fu Baker again and again both in public and privately. Master Yang is quoted to have said,

“... Scott is the best foreign master of Chinese Gung Fu I had ever met...”
A wonderful compliment indeed.

For further information contact Si-Fu Scott Baker at: www.wingchungkungfu.com

Master Yang Beijing China May 2000

