



Kung Fu. An excellent style. I have also studied other great arts along the way. I love all arts and the way they work so well together.

*Q: When did you start Chen Style Tai Chi?*

**A**bout five years ago I saw an advert of Master Liming Yue's. I spoke with him and bought some of his videos. I learned intensively, as much as I could, from the tapes and then visited him and had a lesson. I was hooked. I have continued to see him five or six times a year. It varies but I consider him my master."

*Q: How has Tai Chi benefitted you in terms of health?*

**T**he stance work has helped my lower back problems. Helping me to relax. As at that time I was in a lot of pain. Master Liming Yue, also gave me some exercises to do, additionally. This helped a great deal.

*Q: Any related health benefits?*

**Y**es. My lower back and inner groin feel much better. I now have a new allover feeling of goodness.

*Q: So Chen Style Tai Chi is proving a good complementary system for you?*

**C**hen Style is an excellent complementary system for me and works so well with my training in other styles.

**Steven Burton, aged 33, Professional Martial Arts Instructor based in Accrington Lancashire.**

*Q: Background?*

**I** started martial arts when I was eight years old and I settled with Shaolin Kung Fu, the Southern Kung Fu style Lau Gar. I'm currently a guardian of that style making sure that standards are maintained. I have been studying that for 20 years. I also hold a black belt grade in kick boxing and an Okinawan art called Torite Jutsu.

*Q: Tai Chi?*

**I**'d had some exposure of Yang Style Tai Chi through my Lau Gar Kung Fu master. And once I'd studied the Yang Style I wanted to find a tai chi master and I came across Liming. I started Chen Style around 1998 studying with Liming. I started with one of his intensive courses then started classes and branched into having private lessons with Liming. More recently I've also studied with Grandmaster Gou and I've gone over to China, studying with Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei.

*Q: So given that you're a professional martial arts instructor, what attracted you to Chen Style?*

**T**ai Chi attracted me for the philosophical side and the health aspect. I was fortunate in coming across Liming as once I'd trained with him, and having experience of training with other highly skilled Chinese Masters in other Chinese arts, I was aware that he really knew what he was talking about and his level of skill was just fantastic. Liming had some background in Shaolin Kung Fu so we were both talking the same language as it were. I just really liked Liming's approach to teaching, the way he portrayed the knowledge and his attention to detail.

I was also aware of the health aspects to Tai Chi, so more recently I've studied specific aspects of Qigong with Liming as well. He just seemed to have the whole package: the quality of teaching and the level of knowledge and understanding of the art, also having the direct recognition, the credibility of the lineage in which he's trained. Liming has a very credible lineage because his teachers have been Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei and Grandmaster Kongjie Gou.

*Q: have you joyed good health?*

**M**y good level of health has been relatively consistent. Through my gaining of Chinese concepts through Liming, and my other teachers, I actually lecture on Chinese medical concepts regarding to Tai Chi at the University of Central Lancashire, the honours degree course in Complimentary Medicine. But my understanding has been developed a lot more since training with Liming.

*Q: So as an instructor of Chen Style, what are the health benefits you've observed in others?*

**I** have some 200 plus students in Tai Chi around East Lancashire, varying in age from teenagers. Recently we had a lady who was 107. I do modified versions in a seated form. And I work quite closely with the Health and Fitness Development Department of Blackburn Borough Council improving balance, flexibility, coordination and mobility. People find that through practicing it also helps boost the immune system -through some of the Qigong breathing exercises. It's a general sense of well being. People who suffer depression and various things like that tend to find that it gives them lift. Some of the exercises, on the medical implication side of things, cause the body to produce certain hormones such as serotonin and dopamines, the things which basically make you happy. Certain Qigong exercises can cause that 'happy' effect in people so I find that people who suffer depression have had great benefit from practicing the exercises. I could go on and on with the number of people I've trained. People who suffer arthritis have had



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tremendous gain. Particularly, in my experience, people with osteoarthritis seem to gain quicker results. Although everybody with arthritis can gain some results people with rheumatoid arthritis gain benefits but it just takes a little bit longer.

*Q: How do you advise on the practice of Chen Style in our busy world?*

I would definitely say to practice as little and often as is available. Even if it is five or 10 minutes a day, it'll certainly contribute towards people's health. I mean I like to look at medical principles and that perspective but, generally, a sense of well being is what people find from practicing. The sense of feeling calm and collected. Certainly the Qigong and Tai Chi tends to give you that calming type of feeling so that you learn to step back in a difficult situation, take a few breaths, and then look at it objectively. Like clearing your head before you go and solve problems. Personally, I'm so hectic with the school that I have and I dash round the country teaching, I tend to find that it keeps my head clear and it keeps me from getting stressed. One of the phrases I always use is that 'Tai Chi is keeping your body young as you get older.'

*Q: Could you expand on that?*

It just keeps you young. It keeps everything mobile. For me, I genuinely want to live in excess of 100, but I want my health to go with it and I personally believe that Tai Chi will do that.

**Aamir Rafi, 22, Chen Style Instructor, completing BSc (Hons) Exercise & Health Sciences at Salford University, based in Manchester**



*Q: Did you have a background in martial arts before taking up Chen Style?*

I started in 1998 with traditional Shaolin Kung Fu and I dabbled a bit in Chang Chuan. I've done bits of Western boxing and mixed martial arts. But basically I've got a lot of my foundation from the Shaolin Kung Fu.

*Q: How did you make the transition to Chen Style Tai Chi?*

Well one of my Shaolin teachers had practiced Chen Style with Chen Zhenglei. But he was more on the external side of things. So I found Liming and went to one of his classes in 2001. And I've stuck with him ever since.

*Q: How do you find training with Master Liming?*

He's opened up a lot of stuff, especially relating to the Shaolin forms as well as the martial applications. So it's not just the Chen Style.

*Q: How do you personally define Chen Style?*

I see it as a martial art. I understand it's been portrayed as a health exercise because it has many health benefits. For example, correct practice of it doesn't stress the body. Actually it heals the body, by correcting the alignment of the bones and improving your breathing. But, overall, I see it as an art form, a martial art form.

*Q: Have you always had good health?*

Generally, yeah. I've had my medial cartilage removed from my left knee. That was caused by a lot of jumping, landing, twisting and kicking. I don't feel it at all since I've done Tai Chi. Actually I sort of used the Tai Chi as rehabilitation to get me back to my strenuous Shaolin training but I've stayed with the Tai Chi. And my leg's a lot better, a lot stronger.

*Q: What everyday health benefits have you experienced with Chen Style?*

I'm more aware of my body. It sounds strange because I've always been quite active and aware. But, still, I'm more aware of bad things like slouching and good things like 'sinking down'. I'm just more sensitive about parts of my body, like relaxing my shoulders. A common cause of stress is tense shoulders causing headaches. I feel more energetic generally, just more fresh every day. If I lack sleep certain nights, I still feel quite energetic the next day.

*Q: And can you pinpoint any longer term benefits?*

The Qigong breathing massages your internal organs so it increases their function. So as you practice more, and as you grow older, your health stays more balanced rather than fluctuating.

*Q: So how would you personally sum up Chen Style?*

Basically, Tai Chi is a philosophy which is based on certain principles. So it doesn't really matter about the certain moves that you do. As long as the principles are correct, so that they can be applicable to martial arts and health.

**Grandmaster Kongjie Gou, aged 60; Full-time Instructor of Chen Style Tai Chi based in Manchester, UK**

*Q: Could you start by recounting, in brief, your personal story and experience of Tai Chi?*

Tai Chi to me is the unforgettable exercise of my life. I would never give it up. I did try other Martial Arts in the past but I found that Tai Chi has the most effective benefits for me - particularly when I had cancer when I was young. I had a strong belief I could use Tai Chi to fight the cancer and stay alive, keeping a good health for the future. I very strongly believed this. It comes from the Tai Chi philosophy which is to believe sincerely and strive for higher motivation, otherwise you won't have any chance to win against something like cancer. I convinced myself that I had such good Tai Chi that I would not die. I believed that I wouldn't die. I just kept practicing. This is why I've practiced for 35 years. I have had very good health and a very good mental state - a happy

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mood. A further benefit is that although my body is small compared to the average person, I have been able to use intelligent application of Tai Chi skill. And though I have been challenged by many other Martial Artists in the past I have never been beaten. This is the Martial Arts benefit of the Tai Chi skill.

*Q: And now, how are you personally gaining from Chen Style Tai Chi?*

I have a very healthy mental state. This is a crucial point, the psychological side. When you practice Tai Chi you should pay more attention to the mental and spiritual side, not the muscular side. You use the mental to control the physical, that is your body's movements. I have a very settled mental state. I use mind control.

*Q: What, other than mind control, is key to someone beginning to understand Chen Style Tai Chi?*

The circular movements in Tai Chi. The spiral shapes. These help you to relax the body so you have no blockages. So everything is flowing smoothly: Blood, breath, energy and Qi. This is key. You will have better health. And everything is based on good health.

*Q: How do you explain Tai Chi and its health benefits?*

Tai Chi is one kind of Martial Arts exercise. It has great Martial Arts applications and benefits. But all the Martial Arts application is based around having good health and body condition. This is fundamental to Tai Chi. All the skill is based on good health. For example, how can you fly to China if you don't have the ticket? How can you practice so hard and not have benefits to everything, breathing, muscles, relaxation. Those kinds of benefits come from harder training. But if it's harder, it's also harder to catch cold, and other sicknesses because your body is stronger.

*Q: Could you explain further about the movements and exercises?*

Tai Chi movements are soft and flowing, and the benefits from this are that it makes your body very flexible and relaxed, with more sensitivity. This describes the top half of the body. The lower half of the body is very settled and solid. It looks like a tree with the tops blowing in the wind and the trunks rooted.

*Q: So does the tree metaphor summarize the actual benefits as well as 'the look' of Tai Chi?*

Yes in terms of development. Tai Chi perfectly suits the natural human growth of getting old, older and weaker, because Tai Chi offers the opposite benefits as you age. You get fitter and younger. The reverse of getting old. Whereas the natural procedure of aging is getting stiff, Tai Chi keeps you flexible. My conclusion is that Tai Chi 'fights age back'.

*Q: What about the ostensibly 'invisible', internal benefits?*

Another benefit is a change in the way of breathing. Normal breathing uses the lung and Tai Chi breathing goes lower, to the Dantian. As deeper, longer breathing equals more oxygen supply and increased lung capacity. More efficiency. This ties in with all of Tai Chi's open-and-close movements. Plus the breathing, coupled with the movements, actually massages all your internal organs.

*Q: What are your conclusions, at this stage of your life, regarding Chen Style Tai Chi?*

First, Tai Chi can change your motivation - your mental state. You always look forward. I never become very depressed. Second are the body functions. Joints, muscles, everything is improved. Third is the breathing system, breathing is improved. These are the key benefits gained from Tai Chi that lead to a very good health and mental state with no external physical sickness at all. Such that, overall, people are getting fitter, gaining increased resistance and living longer, healthier lives.

*Q: What's your general view of Tai Chi practice among people in the UK and beyond?*

I notice a lot of people love Martial Arts and practice Tai Chi but it still has not been brought out, and explained, widely enough. Still a lot of people do not recognize the benefits of Tai Chi: its health and self-defence benefits. In particular, most people don't understand the deep meaning of Tai Chi and the real benefit you can get from it. People misconstrue the surface representation of Tai Chi, the waving of arms. This is just the basic understanding of it. There's more beneath the surface, great benefits. Tai Chi is a great exercise. No other sports exercise can replace it. It's so unique as the whole body works together: internal, external, extremities and roots, surface and deeper, and so on. All is together in one unit, even your hair with your internal organs. When one part of your body moves, all other parts move together simultaneously. When one part stays still, the others are still. All the movements are in harmony. But if many people here don't realize or know what Tai Chi is, then this just leads us to do more promotion to let everybody understand the Tai Chi philosophy to a higher level. My wish is for most people to recognize the great benefits of Tai Chi for health, self-defence and fitness. Tai Chi is growing healthily and it will prove beneficial to more and more people in the future. I treat the Tai Chi as seeds, hopefully growing up with flowers and good results in the future.





*Q: Now that you are based in Manchester, UK, how do you foresee your work here?*

**M**y emphasis will be on training the younger generation from a young age in a very good system. Serious training starts from very young. Everybody will become very professionally, skillful. So one aim is to build a group of young people so that those people can spread the benefits of Tai Chi and influence others. That's a key focus. Also I aim to train a group talented and interested students to become instructors. I wish to help more people become qualified to teach Chen Style Tai Chi, again to help promote Tai Chi. I also hope to create a core group of Tai Chi practitioners in the Chen Style Tai Chi Centre who will go around and do demonstrations and performances as part of the promotion of Tai Chi. To let people see Tai Chi in a straightforward way and to spread its teachings.

Plus, of course, this work opportunity benefits me as I get older. Having moved from China to Manchester, UK, I have come to a good environment. I can work as a full-time instructor in the Chen Style Tai Chi Centre and this is very good for my retirement.

*What of the future?*

**I**'m doing a job I'm interested in. And as I can train so much, I can expect myself to improve my own Tai Chi to even higher standards!

### BRIEF INTERVIEWS WITH PRACTITIONERS

The following interviews were conducted during an afternoon session of Tai Chi at the Age Concern Centre, Ashton, Tameside with Master Liming Yue.



A group photo taken during the demonstration by Grandmaster Kongjie Gou and Master Liming Yue whilst the interviews took place with a group of students from AGE Concern in 2004

#### **Dora Garlick, aged 74, retired actress.**

*When did you start Chen Style Tai Chi?*

In 2003. Sixteen years ago I lost my husband with cancer and I had to get out so I joined a Tai Chi class and an art class. It was a different form of Tai Chi. I did it about three years and then they closed the school down unfortunately. It's over 10 years since I've done any Tai Chi. So I had to start over when I came to Age Concern, to the Tai Chi class here.



*How does Tai Chi benefit you?*

I feel much better since I joined it. My bones don't crack the same. When I come out of this class I feel buoyant and, you know, really well. It's good for your mind and bones and everything. We're all old but I find everyone has a similar experience of Tai Chi's benefits.

#### **Ms Peebles, Age 65, Voluntary Worker for Age Concern.**

*When did you start Chen Style Tai Chi?*

I came to do the classes first of all and then I got roped into being a volunteer. This is my third session, we do 12 week sessions.



*How does Tai Chi benefit you?*

I'm a lot better since we started doing it. I have arthritis of the spine so it's helped me such a lot. I hardly have any pain with it now. My pain was very bad in the lower part of the back but since I've been doing this I've hardly suffered with it at all. It also shows you how to relax so it benefits you in a lot of ways. And I enjoy it!

#### **Mary Johnson, retired Local Government Officer.**

*When did you start Chen Style Tai Chi?*

I started four years ago but the class was discontinued. So I came to Liming's class last September [2003].



*How does Tai Chi benefit you?*

Well I've got very bad arthritic knees and feet and it helps with that because the exercise that we do helps the fluid that runs down the side of your knee and that helps. They don't hurt as much. Some of the other benefits I feel are in the things Liming teaches. He taught us a specific exercise with your ears which is good for inner balance. It sounds silly but this [tapping behind the ears] affects your spinal column - it reverberates right down your back. Now I used that on a plane and my ears didn't hurt. Also I like the calming influence that Tai Chi brings. I like the fluid movement. I've certainly got a lot more flexible since I did it. My feet and my knees don't hurt anything like as much.



**Irene Beech, retired Personal Assistant, UMIST.**

*When did you start Chen Style Tai Chi?*

I used to go to a gym when I was working and I did a little bit of it. And now I'm retired I want to keep fit. I've only just joined.

*How does Tai Chi benefit you?*

I was surprised at its gentleness at first, yet these movements were using muscles. My legs ached a bit. But I'm really getting into the flowing movements and enjoying them. I feel that my co-ordination, even though I've only been doing this a little while, has improved. I mean, when I first started I couldn't do a thing like Liming did, but now I find that the movements are becoming natural. I want to get more into that flow.



**Sylvia Dearden, Age 64, retired Word Processor Operator.**

*When did you start Chen Style Tai Chi?*

I went to another class for about two and a half years before coming to Liming. I've been here six months or something like that.

*How does Tai Chi benefit you?*

It helps me because I've got rheumatoid arthritis and I'm very stiff in the morning and I get quite a lot of pain at different times. But the movement of Tai Chi helps you, gently, to work all through your body, your muscles and tendons and everything. It just helps you to move better. Mobility is a key thing, for me, and Tai Chi has really helped. Plus, I go for blood tests every six months and when I was measured last he [the health practitioner] said, 'you've grown.' I said, 'I haven't', you shrink when you're getting older. But he was right. I'm 64 now but I'm standing better, my posture is better, I look like I've grown a bit. But it's the alignment of my spine. With standing better and getting everything in its right place I've grown a bit! All through doing Tai Chi. Alignment of your body is very important in Tai Chi. You do it unconsciously after you've been doing Tai Chi a while and you don't realize, perhaps, what bad posture you had before. I mean, in my thirties I couldn't walk about very well because of my knees being so painful. But I'm better in my sixties, quite honestly, for mobility, through Tai Chi I think. There are benefits that you don't realize until you think back, perhaps, before you started doing it. Balance, for example. I can go and try a shoe on now and balance on one leg. So my balance has improved tremendously because, with my knees, I'd have had to have sat down to try a shoe on before Tai Chi.



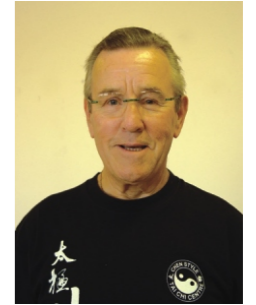
**Iain Campbell, aged 68.**

*When did you start Chen Style Tai Chi?*

I was starting to have problems with arterial blockage, and problems with balance, like staggering. In general, bad health, you know. So I started Tai Chi just over two years ago, incredible difference.

*How does Tai Chi benefit you?*

Well I'd had a heart attack in 1997 and became diabetic. But what an amazing recovery I've made since starting Tai Chi, you know. I've been back for several heart scans and the improvement has been tremendous. I've not said anything to them about Tai Chi but I know where the benefits are coming from, what with the meditation as well. My health has improved enormously.



**Gwyn Fleetwood, aged 71, Professional Singer and Actor.**

*When did you start Chen Style Tai Chi?*

About twelve months ago. I have done a lot of keep-fit and weight training in the past but I have never done Tai Chi.

*How does Tai Chi benefit you?*

The benefits are that I have lost 2 stone and I just love it. I feel much healthier. My bones are much better. I can walk further. You see I joined Age Concern to go and see my brother, who is 84 to sit with him and have a cup of tea, you know. So then he told me about the Tai Chi and so I joined and it went on from there. I mean it is not only the things Liming teaches you. How can I say it? You just feel better relaxed, a life is worth living sort of feeling. You just feel good. And I feel great!



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## Chapter Seven

### Dialogues with Master Liming Yue

All the answers to the questions you want to ask  
by Master Liming Yue with Danny Chisholm  
Nick Taylor and Anthony Rushton

**Q1:** You have a very close professional relationship with Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei. What are the main ingredients required to strengthen the bond / relationship between student and teacher?

**A:** The main ingredients that will form the basis of a good relationship with not only your teacher, but with any other people are: honesty, trust and respect. With your teacher you also require learning skills, capability, dedication and motivation. One of the main reasons that Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei and I have such a strong bond is because we think very much along the same lines. We do everything that we can, with wholehearted dedication, to promote the art of Chen Style Taijiquan to let people across the world receive the unique benefits of the authentic Chen Style Taijiquan.

**Q2:** Is the training in the Chen family village very different from any other parts of the world that practice Chen Style Taijiquan?

**A:** There is quite a big difference. In the Chen Tai Chi village the training is very strict and a lot of emphasis is placed on the Martial Arts fighting application of the movements. This is combined with the great internal Qigong sensation feeling within the body for both health and self-defense. The instructors will come straight over to you and correct you on the spot.

In the village, everything has to be exactly right, being repeated over and over again until the master is happy.



Then, and only then, you are allowed to go on and learn the next movement. This is what impressed me the most, the level of intensity. Outside of the Chen village this is only shown when a person has been training for quite some time, wishing to obtain a higher level. Before you are taught at this intensity, the teacher will correct your movements and postures very gently and softly.

**Q3:** Please could you explain the best way to train Fajing (energy release) and why Chen Taijiquan places so much emphasis on it.

**A:** When training for Fajing (energy release), the movements must always be done in a relaxed way with an instant tensing at the end, followed by an instant relaxation. This is all done within a split second. Starting off with long strikes and working down to just one inch away to releasing energy.

Fajing (energy release) requires all the power to come from the ground in a spiral twisting motion. Travailing up through the legs to the waist, then out to the extremities. Being released in a rolling in and rolling out motion with elastic shaking strength.

There are many ways to practice Fajing (energy release) in Chen Style Tai Chi and the following training methods are just some samples.

If you train empty handed Fajing (energy release) then practice striking a piece of cloth hanging up, using long and short strikes on the cloth. This will help to speed up and sharpen your Fajing striking ability. You can see and feel exactly what is going on as the energy of your strikes penetrate the cloth.

If you train with weapons then the three meter long pole is the best for Fajing (energy release). Using the same method of release as the empty hand by feeling the wave of power from the root to the very end of the pole.

Because Fajing (energy release) belongs to Yang aspect of Tai Chi, which is the opposite of Yin, it is very important to show both and understand them equally and know how to blend them at the right time.

Fajing (energy release) is very important for self-defense, as it is very powerful and direct. This is why Chen Style places so much emphasis on Fajing (energy release). On a lot of occasions an attacker can be stopped with only one Fajing strike movement. The shoulder and elbows are the most effective strikes that can be used on an attacker, as this is especially devastating when striking the chest area.

Apart from the Martial Arts benefits of Fajing (energy release), the Fajing (energy release) exercises will also help you to remove the blockages inside of your body along the acupuncture channels, free your inner energy with blood circulation and make your breathing system more efficient. It is also a good way to keep fit and maintain your body in good shape. That is why the Chen Style Tai Chi puts so much emphasis on the Fajing (energy release).



**Q4:** *Chen Style Taijiquan has a very good selection of weapons to train in. Which of these is your favorite and why?*

**A:** That will depend on what purpose you are intending to train for. For Fajing (energy release) I prefer the three-meter long flexible white wax pole.

For graceful, flexible and sensitivity Fajing (energy release) movements, I prefer sword and spear. The sword is called the king of the short weapons. It incorporates fast and slow continuous movements and can change direction very quickly as it is an extension of your arm and looks very beautiful in demonstrations. It is also an excellent defense weapon when you are situated in a limited space. The spear also requires the whole body to co-operate together but it needs much more space to practice.



**Q5:** *What is Tai Chi Push Hands*

**A:** Push Hands is a practice method of traditional Tai Chi martial arts and a bridge connecting the movements with their applications. Two people with their arms in contact practice twining and sticking actions to develop the sense of touch, awareness and balance within the body. This is the training method where Tai Chi movements connect with martial arts applications and develops the

understanding of how small forces can defeat strong physical power. There are five types of Push Hands method, which are Single Hand, Double Hand with fixed step, One Step forward and backward, Dalu (large step with low position) and Free-style Push Hands. It contains Peng, Lu, Ji, An and Cai, Lie, Zhou, Kao eight major Energy releasing methods, known in the West as Ward Off, Roll Back, Squeeze, Press and Pull Down, Cross Strike, Elbow, Shoulder.

**Q6:** *What should a person aim to achieve when first starting out in Taijiquan practicing Push Hands?*

**A:** For people who are interested in learning Push Hands, the first step is starting from Single Hand circling exercises then move onto the Double Hands Push Hands. The Double Hands Push Hands uses touching, turning and circling movements in the exercises, which will lead you to the stage of completion of the five main methods of Push Hands in the system.

At this level you should start to know the components of Push Hands while keeping in mind the mechanics of your own body. You learn the ‘sticky’ skills with the ‘follow up’ ability by rooting your own strength into the ground. Always make sure to balance yourself in a firm, strong and rooted stance for different positions or situations. You stay in touch with your opponent’s arm by sticking whilst moving during the Push Hands exercise. This should increase your sensitivity to discover an opponent's strengths and weaknesses, creating attack or defense opportunities.

**Q7:** *What are the important issues for advanced level of practice Push Hands and applications?*

**A:** Use the mind to manage the body and movements without stiffness and any over-use of strength. The strength has to be no more than enough and no less than needed, just enough to support your movement and application. At this stage the following tips are highly recommended to Tai Chi practitioners:

**Bend and Straight movements:** Every time when you bend a limb (arm or leg) you immediately straighten it out again. The bend movements normally coincides with collecting and gathering energy, along with breathing in. Once the energy has been increased to the limit then this is the time to release it. You can do this quickly and with power by extending your arms out in a strike movement. Alternatively, extending your arm out in a strike but this time slowly, with mind, intent and consciousness playing a much bigger part. This will give the appearance of a slow gentle exercise characteristic of Tai Chi. N.B. Arms are never fully straightened.

**Open and Close movements:** In Tai Chi the Open movements mean stretching out your body or limbs and Close movements the opposite. Open is the beginning of the Close and Close is the beginning of the Open. When you open it will be followed by closing, and when you close it will be followed by



opening. Both open and close change into each other. Always push out or release energy whilst you are just closing.

**Sticky and following up movements:** Sticky means using your limbs (such as arms or legs) to stay in contact with your opponent all the time whilst you use your skin to feel or detect the opponent's strength and intention of movement. This is the best way to get to know your opponent and yourself which may create an opportunity to defeat your opponent. In order to maintain sticking with your opponent it requires you to follow your opponent's movements smoothly without using strong stiff strength against it until you detect a weakness or bad posture. It is at this moment when an attack or defense movement with energy release is going to have maximum impact.

**Solid and Empty:** This is a perfect sample of using the principle of Yin and Yang. Empty is considered as Yin and Solid is considered as Yang. In the movements when you put your physical weight mostly on one leg or there is real intension of attack it is called Yang. Where there is less weight on one leg or a false intention of attack it is called Yin i.e. Opponent uses right hand and pushes your left shoulder. You decide to use empty Yin to follow the push. You simultaneously rotate your body with the push, combining Yang/Solid on your right shoulder to follow through for attack. Yin/Yang are simultaneously present at all times. During Push Hands you should always be highly alert and use your intelligence to play with your opponents. By constantly changing the Solid and Empty states of the movements it makes it difficult for your opponents to find out where your real intention or weight is and lose track of you. This brings you even more opportunities to win the game during Push Hands.

**Skills and Strength:** Tai Chi is an intelligent self-defense system and requires more skill than brute physical strength. Tai Chi attempts to use less strength to skillfully overcome strong strength, like a matador skillfully evading a bulls attack. Tai Chi attempts to lead a persons line of strength or attack to a safe empty place (where you will not be hurt!) then use that momentum, along with your energy release to throw or push the opponent even further down that line of attack e.g. somebody wants to shoulder charge a door open. At the last second you open the door. The opponent meets no resistance, whereby you help them fly through the door even more. Having said all that, it is good to have enough strength within yourself to withstand the initial attack, just in case your skill is not sufficient yet or you meet a higher level Tai Chi practitioner. In cases where the skill levels of the practitioners is equal, strength is the deciding factor. Do not ignore strength training during tai chi practise. It takes years to skillfully throw a much stronger bigger opponent around! When your skill reaches a high enough level, it can seem supernatural to the untrained eye.

**Q8:** *What is your average day of training, teaching and work?*

**A:** I train whenever I can throughout the day on a flexible basis, having no set time. Sometimes I will go to bed at 2am in the morning and get up seven hours later at 9am. Then in the day I will work on the computer for the Web site, DVDs





and Video production, also doing bookwork and administration if there are no day time classes.

Later I will teach my evening classes, which are always run on a regular time schedule. Between teaching each class I always meditate or hold the Taijiquan stance for a while, which makes me feel full of energy.

The training I do usually lasts for around two to three hours at a time. Starting with warm ups, silk reeling and stance practice, then the new frame of 83 form and Cannon Fist. I follow this with the straight sword form which I always practice with or without the sword in my hand, depending on if I have it with me or not.

Finally, Fajing (energy release), stance holding and meditation. After sweating so much I usually have a short rest then go for a shower to help me freshen up, leaving me with a nice feeling all over.

**Q9:** *Is competition in Push Hands much different to traditional Push Hands? If so, please could you tell us why?*

**A:** Yes, there is a big difference between the two. In competition Push Hands there are many rules for safety reasons, restricting many very effective techniques used in real combat. You have a very limited chance to perform authentic Chen Style Taijiquan Push Hands as it is traditionally supposed to be in the real world. As a result, many powerful Chen Style Taijiquan Push Hands techniques cannot be used as intended.

Push Hands is used as a bridge between form practice and real fighting. Based on sticking skill and body sensitivity. There are many hand, foot and leg



movements involved including the eight methods of fighting skill. Which are Ward off, Roll back, Squeeze, Press, Pull, Cross strike, Elbow and Shoulder.

In real traditional Push Hands, energy can be released instantly at any time with any part of your body being able to attack.

**Q10:** *How do you see Chen Style Tai Chi in the next 30 years?*

**A:** Thirty years ago Chen Style Tai Chi was only mainly taught in the Chen village and most people did not have the opportunity to train in it. But now they are able to be exposed to the original style of Tai Chi and learn to understand the Yin-Yang balance with soft and hard in unity. The great health benefits are combined with the self-defence skills involved in the form. I think that Chen Style Tai Chi will continue to grow very quickly. Particularly the shorter introductory Tai Chi for Health exercises and 18 Form which help people to learn more easily, which will bring more people in to learn authentic original Taijiquan.

**Q11:** *What is the difference between Old and New frame?*

**A:** The original ancient Chen style Tai Chi evolved about 350 years ago and was created by Grandmaster Chen Wangting, of the 9th generation of Chen family.

Old frame (Laojia), originating around 180 years ago, was created by the 14th generation Grandmaster Chen Changxing (Yang Luchan's Master). Old frame (Laojia) is much more simple and more straight forward. There are less twining and circling movements with less martial arts applications shown within the form, such as grasp and arm lock. It is suitable for people who are just starting in Tai Chi and it is much easier to learn.

New frame is an evolving version of the Old frame (Laojia) and is only around 100 years old.

Around 30 years after the Old frame (Laojia) was created, Grandmaster Chen Changxing's son, 15th generation of Chen family, Grandmaster Chen Genyun started to work on his father's Old frame (Laojia) and modified it gradually. Finally he created the new frame with a lot of Silk Reeling Energy twining and twisting movements. Also more applications were added to the form, whereas in the old frame it was hidden and are not so obvious to see. This development process has been carried until the 17th generation, the head and heir, Grandmaster Chen Fake mixed more Qin Na (catching, grasping and arm locks) and modern martial art applications into the new frame, finalizing it. He started to teach it in Beijing and passed on his skill to his students.

The New frame is very comprehensive so it is normally only taught after students have finished the old frame, or to dedicated and hard working students.



**Q12:** You just mentioned ancient Chen Style Taijiquan. What is it?

**A:** Ancient Chen Style Taijiquan is based on the ancient Chinese martial arts routines - Chang Quan (Long Fist). The Chang Quan (Long Fist) were created by a very famous martial art Grandmaster, Qi Jiguang, who was a head martial arts general in the Chinese Army. Based on this very powerful and inspired ancient Chang Quan (Long Fist), the founder of Chen Style Tai Chi, Grandmaster Chen Wang Ting, created a series of the Chen Style Tai Chi short sets using an understanding of Yin Yang philosophy mixed with the Taoist breathing techniques.

Each set consists of only a few movements. They are a small combination of techniques practiced with the breathing techniques. Later, all those small sections were linked into the two long series that you see today. The first one is more gentle, soft and smooth. It is considered as the Yin aspect of Tai Chi. The second one is powerful, dynamic, hard and with broken energy releasing movements for martial arts. It is considered as the Yang aspect of Tai Chi and usually has been called Cannon Fist.



**Q13:** Which form do you teach and why?

**A:** I teach my senior students the New frame as it is the definitive guide for Chen Style Tai Chi.

I choose the New frame of 83 Form as an overall form to enhance my Tai Chi and Kung Fu skill. For me it shows more real Kung Fu. In the Chen village, Old frame (Laojia) is taught first. Later, only the most dedicated and hard working students will be taught the New frame.

So I choose the New frame, which I feel is the most comprehensive of the Chen Style Tai Chi forms and contains the most exciting and attractive movements to perform and watch. I am happy to say that I have taught over a thousand students the New frame Chen Tai Chi 83 Form. I only teach the Short Form to beginners as it is much easier for people who are just starting Tai Chi exercises.

**Q14:** Do you have to wear a Tai Chi suit to train Chen Style Tai Chi?

**A:** The Tai Chi suit is normally very good and usually only worn for demonstration purposes and photographic opportunities.

I have received many phone calls from people asking what they should wear to their Tai Chi classes. I always tell them to wear whatever they feel the most comfortable in provided that it is loose fitting and does not restrict their movements. We have no standard uniform.

To achieve the best benefit from the practice, we recommend that students wear loose comfortable clothes with soft shoes as Tai Chi is a very relaxed, quiet and a soft exercise. A Kung Fu suit is the

best clothing to wear for practice and demonstration purposes. However it is only an optional requirement, not always necessary.

**Q15:** Does Chen Style Taijiquan work well together when training in any other style of martial arts?

**A:** Yes. Chen Style Taijiquan works excellently with any other type of martial arts. I have many students that still do other martial arts styles along side their Tai Chi training. All of them have gained great benefits by adding Tai Chi practice to their existing training. It has helped them a lot and makes them feel more balanced, sensitive and flexible in their movements. In addition, they feel more energetic in their daily life.





**Q16:** *What is the Foundation Exercise for Chen Style Tai Chi?*

**A:** The Foundation Exercises for the beginners who have no experience in Tai Chi at all should include:

**Warm up exercises** - a series of joint relaxing and limb stretching exercises. Qigong & Silk Reeling exercises - Breathing exercises go along with arm spiraling and circling movements.

**Tai Chi Stance with breathing exercise** - Body standing upright with both arms placed in front of the chest with all body relaxed and using deep breathing technique from your lower abdomen.

**Foot Step with Arms co-ordination exercises** - Step exercises go with both or single arm exercise in harmony.

Ending with a small set of simple Tai Chi movements which will help you move to a beginner's level.

**Q17:** *What are the Beginners Exercises for Chen Style Tai Chi?*

**A:** The beginners exercises are for people who have done some relevant Tai Chi or other martial arts exercises in the past. They should start by learning the 18 Short Form.

The 18 Short Form movements are simple to learn and easy to follow, especially for those people who have done the foundation course or have an appropriate level of martial arts studies experience. It is very easy to learn and to catch up in the classes before you take up the long form studies.

**Q18:** *Is there any grading system in Tai Chi?*

**A:** Not traditionally, but there is now a central grading system in China. It is called Duan Wei, in Chinese, and was introduced by the Chinese Wushu (martial arts) Association. In general, this is an optional service provided to Tai Chi practitioners who need it for a particular purpose. The Duan Wei is similar to the Dan system used in the Japanese martial arts system and the highest grade is 9th Duan Wei. 1st to 3rd Duan Wei are lower range grades, normally awarded to dedicated students. 4th to 6th Duan Wei are intermediate grades and normally awarded to the higher skilled martial artists who have been instructors or professionals for years. In particular the 6th Duan Wei holders would have won the national championship in China or equivalent level of skills. 7th to 9th Duan

Wei are the advanced grades and normally awarded to people who are respected experts in the martial arts field with a well known reputation, having contributed to Chinese martial arts development, such as with publications, papers, videos and DVDs. I currently hold a 7th Duan Wei and Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei holds a 8th Duan Wei.



The photography was taken at the ceremony of the first overseas Chinese Duan Wei training and grading course in October 2004 in China.

**Q19:** *What is Tai Chi?*

**A:** Tai Chi is a philosophy and is also called Taiji in Chinese mandarin. In theory, it is an ancient Chinese philosophy of Yin and Yang, which comes from the 'Yijing'. Yijing is called 'I Ching' or 'Book of Changes' in the West and has existed over a few thousand years. Basically, Yin and Yang philosophy teaches that everything has an opposite, such as left and right, soft and hard, fast and slow, internal and external, etc...;

The philosophy of Tai Chi was then applied to a series of Chinese Martial Arts movements in the late eighteenth century, which happened to be the Chen family style of fighting in Chenjiagou village, China. The martial movements followed the principles of the 'I Ching'. i.e. the theory of opposing and yet interdependent principles in nature (Yin and Yang).



The full name of what we now see today is Taijiquan i.e. Taji philosophy plus martial arts (and Qigong breathing exercises). Basically somebody had a lot of time on their hands in retirement and a passion for martial arts, producing the wonderful complete martial system that we benefit from today!

**Q20:** *What is Chen Style Tai Chi?*

**A:** Modern academics place the origins of Tai Chi in the Chen village in Henan province of mainland China about 350 years ago. Chen Style Tai Chi is practiced both for its health and exercise benefits and as an effective method for self-defense. It can be seen as a series of coordinated movements which flow smoothly and gracefully into each other combined with Qigong breathing techniques and applications. Chen Style Tai Chi is both a complete martial system and a comprehensive form of exercise that promotes fitness, coordination, confidence and relaxation. It is a sequence of dynamic movements that combine soft and hard, with fast and slow actions in a balanced and natural way that adhere to the philosophical Taoist principles of Yin and Yang from the "Yijing" (Book of Changes, Western called I-Ching). Contained within its framework are spiraling, twining, twisting, and unique silk reeling energy movements, jumps, leaps and explosive energy releases. During practice, the body remains relaxed with the practitioner's consciousness, breathing and actions all closely connected. These unique features enhance benefits to health, fitness, and weight-loss and are just a few of the reasons why so many people, regardless of age and level of fitness, regularly practice Chen Style Tai Chi throughout the world today. Chen Style Tai Chi continues to remain true to its original meaning and application since its creation with the current head of the Chen Family, Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei, internationally recognized as one of the highest level masters within the art.



**Q21:** *What is the relationship between Tai Chi and Health*

**A:** Tai Chi exercise regulates all systems within the body improving digestion, respiration and also circulation. Since the movements are performed in a relaxed manner, this can also lead to a reduction in stress-related disorders. The low-impact nature of the routines improves the condition of bones, joints and muscles without strain whilst encouraging balance, flexibility and co-ordination to promote health and vitality within the individual.

Tai Chi is recognized by the Chinese Government and many health institutes around the world as the form of exercise that offers one of the greatest all-round health benefits.

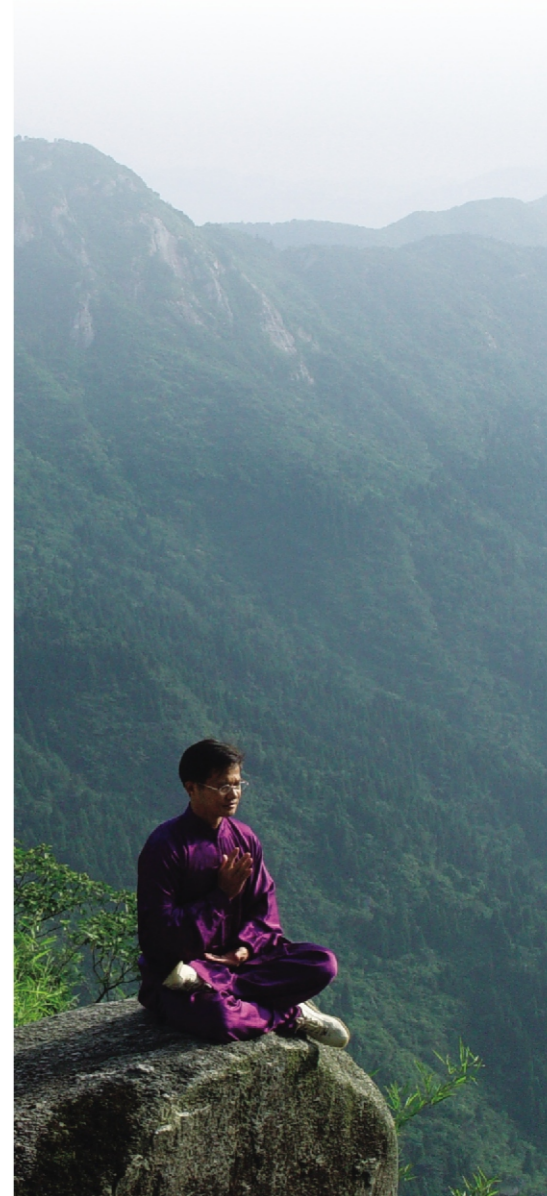
**Q22:** *Who can practice Tai Chi?*

**A:** Tai Chi is suitable for people of all ages and levels of physical fitness. The movements can be performed slowly and gently in higher postures for health benefits or faster and more powerfully in lower postures for self defense applications and for fitness. The amount of exercise to practice is also totally controlled by the practitioner according to personal fitness levels. No matter how many times you practice a week or how hard you train, as long as you are committed you will gain the great health benefits and enjoyment of Tai Chi.

**Q23:** *What are the recommended learning procedures for Chen Style Taijiquan?*

**A:** According to our teaching experiences we would like to suggest the following procedures for beginners to take up in order:

- To learn the Hands Forms**  
Foundation course  
11 Short Form  
18 Short Form  
Old Frame - Laojia





83 Form - New Frame and Laojia Cannon Fist  
New Frame Cannon Fist

**To learn the Weapons**

Sabre  
Sword  
Long Pole  
Halberd  
Spear  
Double Sabre  
Double Sword

**To Learn Push Hands and Applications**

Single Hand  
Double Hands  
Moving Steps  
Lower Position - Dalu  
Free Step  
Application - Full contact combat

**Q24:** *Why does Tai Chi put so much emphasis on relaxation? What is the meaning of proper relaxation? And how can you achieve it when you practice the Tai Chi forms?*

**A:** Relaxation benefits both health and the ability to perform martial arts. According to ancient traditional Chinese Medicine theory, there are many energy channels running throughout the body. When the channels are free, the energy flows smoothly, the body is in good health and it is hard for sickness or diseases to enter the body. However many people have problems relaxing due to mental stress, poor posture (raised shoulders, over bended knees and tense muscles) and incorrect body movements. If the body is not relaxed, the blockages of the energy channels occur slowing down the energy flow inside the body. This stops the blood circulating freely as well as limiting internal energy.

In order to solve these problems, Chen Style Tai Chi exercises require people to relax their whole body. This can be done by putting every single joint and every part of the body in a specific relaxed position or posture allowing the internal energy to flow freely. The simple example is when you bend your elbows too much the blood circulating through your arm will become weak and less blood will be delivered to the tips of your fingers. Less energy will be flowing through your arm. That is the reason that Tai Chi requires people to bend the arm slightly, only in a rounded circle shape, all the time. The positions and postures in the form were created and tested by the highly skilled Chen family masters in the past based on their own experience from generation to generation. That is why Chen Style Tai Chi puts so much emphasis on relaxation. Particularly, it is

important to get the postures and positions altered and fixed with hands-on manipulation by skilled masters in person (in Chinese called Tiao Jia Zhi).

For the Martial Arts, when the body is not relaxed the ability of sensitivity and stamina decrease. A tense body leaves you vulnerable to your opponent's arm lock or releasing energy. If you are tense their Fajing (energy release) can damage you and if you are relaxed you can absorb it more easily. Be relaxed, but not floppy in Tai Chi along with a stress free mental state during application movements. These conditions are necessary to perform high level skills not only in Tai Chi, but any physical sport.

**Q25:** *Why should you ask for the Tai Chi position or postures to be adjusted with personal manipulation by the masters? Can you learn it from watching a video or reading a book?*

**A:** The tiny adjustments on your Tai Chi positions or postures by an experienced master make a great difference on the inner effect of your practice. The slightest adjustment can make a huge difference which has to be experienced to be believed. The internal energy increases rapidly followed by a huge amount of heat spreading and flowing all over your body. Your legs will shake and your body will sweat. Those effects are not easy to get from a book or video. You have to attend a class and let the master adjust you in person by hand. These adjustments have to be patiently and consistently repeated until the student can replicate these adjustments for themselves. This takes a lot of time and effort, but will reap great rewards in the long term. It will also unravel the so called mysterious abilities Tai Chi people poses. I will go further to say that this type of training is the key to unlock Chen Style Tai Chi from just being a beautiful form, to being used in real combat. An old Chinese saying goes, "One adjustment by a high level master is worth three years hard training by yourself!" This is why in my class I always encourage students to stay in a fixed position after adjustments to experience it for themselves. Internal Energy and feeling are so difficult to describe and there are many books which attempt to do so. It is much quicker to make the student feel it for themselves, then I do not have to explain it to them. They understand completely by experience, not by reading hundreds of books. I open the door, the student must walk through by themselves.

**Q26:** *What are the most important issues for people practicing Chen Style Tai Chi?*

**A:** In general, the following tips are highly recommended to the Tai Chi practitioners:

- 1). Relaxation
- 2). Softness balanced with hardness
- 3). Circling movements
- 4). Flexibility
- 5). Quiet and calm
- 6). Smooth and continuous movements
- 7). Co-ordination



- 8). Sensitivity of foot work - "Walk as a cat to catch the mouse".
- 9). Light body movements
- 10). Flick movements with elastic and shaking energy release.

**Q27:** *Does it matter when the arm and shoulder muscles feel sore?*

**A:** That is fine and is a good sign. It means you have exercised well. You feel pain because the muscles you use in Tai Chi are different from those you use normally. For example, nobody will normally hang their arms in the mid air for as long as you do when practicing Tai Chi exercises. Also nobody will squat down that deep, shifting their weight between two legs. Therefore, different types of muscles are involved during the exercise. It is similar to when you are climbing a mountain and you feel sore muscles afterwards. All I can say is "no pain no gain". As long you can handle the pain, just go for it. The benefits come from hard training and it always comes with a little bit of pain or discomfort (sorry, no short cuts). But the results are great after you keep practicing Chen Style Tai Chi exercises.

**Q28:** *Is it normal to have both legs shaking and vibrating during the Tai Chi stance when you are only a beginner level?*

**A:** Yes, it is very normal and an excellent result to come out of your practice. I would like to say congratulations to you, because your internal energy is getting very strong and will start running throughout your body freely. The reason your legs are shaking and vibrating, according to Chinese Medical terms, is similar to acupuncture needle treatment. People who have experienced acupuncture notice similar body reactions caused by the needles. This is the energy running through the channels of a relaxed body during Tai Chi practice. Once the energy flow gets strong enough to run through the acupuncture points and channels within your body, your body shakes less and less. All this with no needles involved, just your body's internal energy.

**Q29:** *Do you need to practice the energy releasing exercise even if you are just looking for the health benefits of Tai Chi and should you stamp your foot on the floor in the form during the practice?*

**A:** Yes, it has great benefits for your health. Tai Chi is considered Yin and Yang. The balance and change between the Yin and Yang are the key points of the philosophy of Tai Chi. Any exercises without Yang or missing Yin, are not a complete set of exercises and the benefits will be reduced. The energy releasing movements, in particular, can help your body relax and free all the blockages remaining within your body, as well as making your body more fit. Of course the intensity of the energy releasing will be adjusted according to the individual's level of fitness.

The stamping movements in the form help remove blockages and flushes the Qi energy running over the top of your head, the Baihui point. However, for the beginners and people who have weak knees it is not always suitable at the beginning stages. Gradually build up to stronger energy releases.

**Q30:** *What are the key requirements for energy releasing?*

**A:** Energy release is a very important part of the Tai Chi training in Chen Style. It has great benefits for your practice, however there is the potential risk of damaging your body's joints and accidentally blocking your internal circulation if you do it incorrectly. So the following are the requirements for practitioners to remember.





- 1) Relaxing your body and start with soft and gentle movements.
- 2) Root yourself on the ground properly.
- 3) Use your waist as a central axis.
- 4) Limbs are led by your waist and the strength starts from both feet, passes onto both your legs, then distributes to the shoulder and finally reaches both your fists for the strike through your waist.
- 5) Free your breath and let it go with your energy releasing at the same time.
- 6) Do not use stiff strength at all.

**Q31:** *How long should I stand in the Tai Chi Stance or a fixed position for? Why is there so much pain and discomfort during the practice and how can you get rid of it?*

**A:** For beginners we recommend that two to five minutes of practice each time should be long enough. Once you get more fit, 15 minutes or half an hour are highly recommended for serious students or Martial Arts purposes. All the Tai Chi Stance or fixed position training always comes with pain and discomfort after you have held the position for a while. Normally you should take it and fight with the pain and discomfort at the beginning stage. Gradually, the pain and soreness will disappear once the level of your fitness and status of your relaxation improves. The more relaxed you are the better your circulation, the more Lactic-acid can be removed away from your pain or sore muscles. Eventually you will feel less pain and be able to stand in low, difficult postures for much longer. There is still pain, but it is bearable, the same as how a long distance runner can keep going much longer than normal people. Again, this takes time and personal effort, like any sport.

**Q32:** *Do you need to change the speed of the movements when you practice Chen Style Taijiquan?*

**A:** Yes, it is very necessary to change the speed whilst you practice the Chen Style Taijiquan movements. When the original form was created it was designed under the Yin Yang philosophy, which means everything is based on both the Yin and Yang which changes and complements each other. That is why the Chen Style Tai Chi masters always demonstrate and perform the movements in a speed-change format. The change of the speed varies and purely depends on the person and the circumstances. It is very creative and personal. Another advantage of changing speed is that it makes the practice of Tai Chi exercise more interesting and attractive for demonstration.

**Q33:** *Is it OK for people with chronic illness, such as arthritic knee and shoulders to practice the Tai Chi exercise and what should they pay attention to?*

**A:** Yes, it is a good solution to take Tai Chi as a recovery exercise. However, the



type of exercises, intensity of the exercises and the amount of the practicing time are the main issues to pay attention to. In general, take the soft, slow, light and easy going movements to start with, then gradually practice more and train harder.

**Q34:** *Where should your eyes look whilst you are practicing Tai Chi exercise?*

**A:** The eye's movements are very important in Tai Chi practice. The eyes are the window of your mind and it shows your spirit. The following are the key points where your eyes should normally look.

- 1) Look at the intention, the meaning of the movements.
- 2) Look sideways using the corner of your eyes with very limited head turning and pay a great attention to the internal feeling inside of your body
- 3) Look in the direction of the main moving hand.

**Q35:** *What are the rule and principles of the breathing technique whilst practicing Tai*



*Chi exercise?*

**A:** The breathing technique is one of the main features of Chen Style Tai Chi exercise. Tai Chi uses lower abdomen (Dantian) to breath in and out. Which in turn deepens your breath and enables your internal organs to involve the breathing movements and gain benefits from them.

For beginners just breath in and out naturally, do not strain in any way. Try and use your lower abdomen as this allows for deeper and more efficient breathing, but do not strain. For experienced people the reverse breathing method is recommended, where your lower abdomen goes in and lifts up a bit when you breath in, goes out and sinks down a bit when you breath out.

During the Tai Chi practice, the breaths are always co-operating with the movements simultaneously. It is a very complex training method and it is hard to say exactly where and when you should breath in or out as most of movements in the form can be performed or practiced in various ways or formats depending on the Tai Chi skill of individual and the purpose of using the movements. Therefore, in general, I offer the following tips:

- 1) Hands rising up, breathing in.
- 2) Hands sinking down, breathing out.
- 3) Opening posture, breathing in.
- 4) Closing posture, breathing out.

Gentle, smooth, deep and long breaths are the main requirements during the Tai Chi exercises. When you practice Tai Chi for health benefits with very soft and gentle exercises you should only use your nose to breathe in and out. When you practice Tai Chi for the purpose of Martial Arts and releasing energy you should use both the nose and mouth at the same time with sound effect.

**Q36:** *Does Tai Chi have the ability for self-defense apart from the health benefits?*

**A:** Yes, the original purpose of creating the Tai Chi movements was for self-defense and it has been implemented in wars and self-defense throughout history! The health benefits have just been recognized recently. Many people have recognized the value of the health benefits from all of the Tai Chi practitioners in real life. This is because Tai Chi practitioners are always in very good health and have a long life with a relaxed and happy mind.

**Q37:** *Why there are so many turning, twining, twisting and spiraling movements remaining in the Chen Style Tai Chi exercise and what are the particular benefits?*

**A:** 1) Stretching muscles and lengthening tendons creating flexibility in the

joints. It makes your limbs reach further distances and your body become more flexible. The ability of your limbs improves when attacking opponents, and it is also good for defending against arm locks.

2) It twists the muscles and helps with getting rid of fat, and improves the elastic function of your muscles and tendons.

3) All of the turning, twisting and spiraling movements are the foundation to form a spinning motion of defense. It is the perfect reaction against attack from an opponent's powerful strength. Think of Tai Chi as a way of employing an opponent's strength to your advantage, defeating them with little effort. 4) It also helps to remove the blockages in the body.

**Q38:** *Do you need to pay attention to the change of the body's weight and what is the problem if you put the weight or strength equally on both sides of the body?*

**A:** Yes, it is very necessary to differentiate your weight whilst you are practicing Tai Chi exercise as Tai Chi is the combination of Yin and Yang. The Yin and Yang are always changing and complement each other. More weight or strength is considered as Yang. The opposite, less weight or less strength are considered as Yin. When you shift weight or move strength from one leg to another it can be seen as changing from Yin to Yang or Yang to Yin. If the weight or strength is equal in both legs that shows no Yin and no Yang, it is called Wuji.

**Q39:** *Does Tai Chi really have functional practical martial art applications? It is so soft and slow...etc. How can you implement the Tai Chi application skill in a real situation? Such as four ounces against one thousand pounds?*

**A:** I must stress that Tai Chi was invented initially, solely for combat purposes only. In the days before guns, your life and the Chen family's occupation (who







were hired for security purposes to protect trade and money transportation across China) depended on your ability to fight. If you had no skill, you could not survive in this dangerous occupation. How could you compete against Shaolin, Wudang, Praying Mantis, Xing Yi, Bagua or all the other martial artists

Master Liming Yue, Sifu Steven Burton and Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei with Film Crew in Xuchang, China 2005



Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei, Master Liming Yue and TV Crew in China during the filming of the instructional DVDs March 2005

with no combat ability? Training for health reasons (other than survival) was not a priority in those days!

Tai Chi movements in general are very slow and soft compared to other types of Martial Arts. It makes many people doubt the ability of Tai Chi to be applied. They think it is so slow, soft, gentle and in a circle, like a dance. How does it work in a fight or competition?

The Chen Style Tai Chi practicing of soft and slow is a unique method of training. It is easy to make your body become completely relaxed, making movements precise and coordinated. Training slowly also allows you to try and combine consciousness with breathing into the movements whilst building up the level of your fitness and sensitivity. Training fast without having trained

slow first means you will easily omit all the essential details of the movement. It is just a good step by step training method that ultimately brings efficient and quick results. It is the foundation of high level Tai Chi self defense skill. Without training slowly and soft, you will never be able to produce the fast and powerful energy releases of Tai Chi. This curriculum was realized after much experience in training and teaching by the high level Chen masters. Can you ignore this advice?

In real live combat situations, Tai Chi movements are very fast and powerful. There is nothing slow about it at all. In the Tai Chi fighting song it says, "Your enemy attacks first, but you get him first!" The truth is, speed is essential in combat. I do not know of anybody who can fight slowly.

**Q40:** What is the meaning of "bring the opponents in" and then lead them to the "empty place"?

**A:** When the opponent attacks you with very strong strength the Tai Chi way to deal with this situation is to never use strength against your opponent to stop his attack. Instead, get in touch with your opponent and use soft contact to stick with your opponent's arm, leg or body first whilst maintaining an effective defense line with minimum strength needed. Once you touch the opponent's attack movements, try to use the sensation of your skin to listen to the route of the opponent's strength and follow its intended direction to bring his movement in and lead to a place where your opponent's attack does not affect your safety at all, as if your opponent's attack goes to an empty target.

This is why Tai Chi always allows the attack to come close to your body but use circling movements with soft touching or sticking skill to redirect the strength of your opponent to a useless position or empty place. Again, this takes time to develop.

**Q41:** What is the exact meaning of using any parts of the body to implement the Martial Arts application within the Tai Chi movements and how can you be like that?

**A:** Tai Chi training requires all parts of the body to be involved in the movements with relaxed internal energy flowing inside the body. Once the energy is full up and the body is relaxed and sensitive, it will be good against the attack and can release the energy in whatever direction the attack takes place. For the high skilled masters, their bodies have been trained to be like a full ball of energy and it looks like an explosion once the energy is released. Every single point of the body should be able to release the energy. That is why the Tai Chi practitioners pay so much attention to relaxation and making the body work as a whole unit.

**Q42:** When is a good age to practice Tai Chi exercises?

**A:** You can practice Tai Chi exercises at any age. In general, as long as you can walk freely and manage to move your arm and legs, the safe and gentle Tai Chi



exercises for health are OK to practice. The youngest child who demonstrated Chen Style Tai Chi form movements on the stage at the International Tai Chi Festival held in China 1999 was only three-and-a-half years old and one of the oldest students who is still alive and practicing Chen Style Tai Chi in the UK is 108-years old.

**Q43:** *Do you need to use the punch bag and practice weight lifting as complementary training for Tai Chi exercise?*

**A:** It is not necessary, but weight training can be a complement . The Tai Chi training system can do it all.

Tai Chi usually touches the opponent first by sticking to the body of the opponent then taking control, before energy release. So, in most of the strikes you are actually already touching the opponent, before releasing energy from a short distance. That type of energy release does not require you to train your knuckles on a hard surface or repeatedly hit your fist or palm on punch bags. Tai Chi energy is always penetrating into the opponent's body and not just superficial damage. The highest level is when the opponent's surface is unblemished, but everything inside the body is damaged. You touch the opponent first then release energy with an one inch punch strike (like Bruce Lee's famous one inch punch). This type of energy release is very powerful but also very protective of your hand, muscle, tendons and bone joints.

Some hard training practitioners may eventually use weight training and the punch bags. It has obvious benefits, but is not necessary in Chen Style Tai Chi. Most high level Tai Chi masters have very soft hands. Tai Chi training ensures that your hands will not suffer from arthritis, stiff fingers and poor finger sensitivity which is very likely through hard conditioning training. So I acknowledge hard training, but do not encourage it. In the past people trained for survival, even if it meant damaging your limbs in the long run! In modern times, this training is rarely necessary.

**Q44:** *The living room space is limited, how can you practice Tai Chi regularly at home for the convenience?*

**A:** The amount of space needed for Tai Chi practice is very small. Basically, you need a space where you can walk two steps forward and three steps across. That space should be big enough to practice Tai Chi. The movements in the form can be altered accordingly to the available space you have, particularly for the Eleven Short Form created by myself.

**Q45:** *Why is there so much emphasis placed on form practices in Taijiquan and why are they so long?*

**A:** When Taijiquan was created, it was not only just for health but also as a self-defense skill. The form gives you a unique series of individual movements for Martial Arts and self-defense training. All movements in the Form have their own meaning and applications. It is a full collection of useful and practical Martial Arts movements which have been linked smoothly and logically under the principle of Tai Chi philosophy. This offers a daily training programme of comprehensive exercises. It includes stances, hand form, footwork, body exercise and spiritual training. Yin-Yang principles and internal spiraling energy have been used in all of these exercises. People need to practice repeatedly as much as possible to improve their movements and get to know the hidden meaning of the movements. The form is the physical blueprint the masters passed down so the next generation would not lose what was learnt. It is a lifelong journey of practice to enable you to reach the highest levels of Taijiquan.



**Q46:** *When can I graduate in Tai Chi ?*

**A:** Tai Chi is life long exercise to learn and practice. People work on one layer to another layer and never end the journey of study. So “keep going and never stop” would be the answer to graduating in Tai Chi.

**Q47:** *Is Tai Chi suitable for kids to take up as a general exercise?*

**A:** Yes, It is a very good exercises for kids to take up as it helps kids to calm down and be more self-controlled. It encourages self-discipline, patience, balance, co-ordination and a high level of fitness. However the type of training methods applied to the kids are slightly different to normal adult classes. We normally start with the hard and fast exercises to keep their interest, while mixing with soft and slow movements in between.

**Q48:** *What is the Tai Chi Well-being exercises about and how does it work?*

**A:** The Tai Chi Well-being exercises is specially set out and designed for those companies, colleges and government departments who wish to host an introductory taster session or away day for members of staff to relax and de-

stress. It is very easy for people to participate in the exercises and very effective as well. We had very good positive feedback from various organizations in the past. It is a set of Tai Chi Foundation exercises covering Warm Up exercises, Hands with Foot Step exercises, Qigong Breathing exercises, Tai Chi stance and simple form exercises. All exercises together take about 40-50 minutes to finish and it is very easy to follow the instructor during the sessions, with no experience required at all. These are perfect exercises to help people have a break during the middle of a hard working day and recharge the body.

**Q49:** *Why do the movements seem different when performed by different masters? How does it affect the practice and how should students cope with it?*

**A:** Each movement in the form had a lot of application meaning when it was designed initially. By default, when you break the movement down into applications, the ways of practice are obviously different. Also different people have different body shapes and individual preferences, which result in performing the same movement in slightly different ways. This is analogous to one mother having 10 sons and they are all different. So once you put the application meaning and personal preferences together you can imagine how different it could be. However, whatever changes or differences of format of movement there are, the central core principle of the movement always stays the same. Once you understand the multiple applications possible from each movement and figure out your individual preferences, everything will become very clear and simple. Eventually, you can even form your own individual style or way to practice.



As you progress your movements will be performed differently. With experience, the movements naturally become more detailed and your consciousness, breathing and spirit will be built into the form, along with stronger internal energy. Beginners follow the outward frame of the movements in a very big and square way. As you get more experienced you will follow the feeling of the internal energy and practice with more precision. The movements will become smaller and more circular.

At different stages, even for the same person, the movements will be different. This is the same for all levels and even Grandmasters, everybody has their own personal way of performing Tai Chi, but the principles of the movements always stay the same.

**Q50:** *What should I do when I practice at home but forget the movements?*

**A:** The best way to is just try to practice as much as you can remember from the classes and ignore the forgotten bit of the movement. As the teaching session is a continuous activity you will have plenty of opportunities to catch up on the details later on. In other words, the benefits of Tai Chi is not from the individual movement but from continuous and dedicated practice. As long as you practice the exercises you will definitely receive great benefits.

Alternatively, the instructional DVDs and Videos that accompany this book would be another solution. They should remind you and refresh your mind enabling you to catch up on the bits you have missed or forgotten.

**The end of the dialogues**





## Chapter Eight

### Biography of the Authors

#### Biography of Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei

**G**randmaster Chen Zhenglei was born in May 1949 at the birth place of Tai Chi - Chenjiagou Village, Wenxian County, Henan Province, China. He is the 19th generation inheritor of the Chen family and 11th generation direct-line successor of Chen Style Taijiquan. He has held the position of Head Instructor and Principal of Chen Village Taijiquan School, Head Instructor of Wen County Taijiquan Promotion and Development Centre and Vice Director of Henan Province Martial Arts Administration.



He has been officially recognized as one of the Top Ten Foremost Martial Artists by the Chinese State Government and has been awarded the honor of National Martial Arts Senior Instructor holding of 8th Duan Wei of Chinese Wushu (Martial Arts) Grading System. He is also a Committee Member of China Physical Culture & Science Institute.

He has recently established the Chen Zhenglei Tai Chi Culture Co. Ltd. in Zhengzhou City, Henan Province, China to promote Chen Style Tai Chi and help the Tai Chi practitioner worldwide to access his unique training skills. Anyone taking part in his training courses will have the opportunity to learn directly from one of the most skillful Tai Chi Grandmasters in the world.

As part of his Tai Chi life Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei has been invited to visit and teach Tai Chi in nearly 30 countries and has published many books and a series of Videos, VCD and DVDs on Tai Chi by the Chinese State Sports and Education Publishing House. It includes Tai Chi Qigong, Silk Reeling Energy, Warm up Exercises, Forms, Weapons, Push Hands and Applications. Many of those publications have also been translated into other languages such as English, French, Japanese, Korean, Spanish.

Grandmaster Chen has been studying Chen Style Tai Chi Old Frame since he was eight years old with his older uncle, Grandmaster Chen Zhaopi, until 1972 when Grandmaster Chen Zhaopi passed away. Grandmaster Chen Zhaopi was a Martial Arts Professor in Nanjing Martial Arts Academy until he retired in 1957.

Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei then has carried on to study Chen Style Tai Chi New Frame with his young uncle, Grandmaster Chen Zhaokui, who was the son of Grandmaster Chen Fake. He was so dedicated to work on the goal of achieving the highest level of Tai Chi that he studied extremely hard and put a lot of effort into his training.

He started to take part in competitions from 1974 and by the end of 1987 he had won over ten gold medals in Henan Province and China National Martial Arts Competitions.

Because of his great success and excellent skill, he has held the position of Senior Instructor at the Henan Provincial Martial Arts Academy since 1983. Under his successful unique training method his students have taken part in the China National Martial Arts Competitions and won 15 gold medals and 12 silver medals over two years in 1988 and 1989, which is a really good outcome. Not only that, he himself has taught thousands of students worldwide to let more and more people enjoy the authentic Chen Style Tai Chi exercises.

#### Biography of Master Liming Yue

**M**aster Liming Yue originally began the study of Shaolin martial arts as a child in China in 1972. Eleven years later, amazed by the skills of a young student from the famous village of Chenjiagou he began his journey to understand the internal arts by studying orthodox Chen Style Tai Chi under the 11th generation Chen Masters in the village.



Having learnt from the most skillful and experienced Tai Chi masters in China and having extensively studied Internal Qigong with masters from the monastery on Nanyue Mountain, Master Yue moved from mainland China to the United Kingdom and founded the Chen Style Tai Chi Centre in Manchester in 1995.

Since 1982, Master Liming Yue has helped many students to begin a journey of their own and he now spends his time teaching seminars and training instructors throughout Europe, and producing instructional Books, DVDs and Videos. Through his teaching, Master Yue has helped to develop a deeper understanding of the principles and philosophy of Tai Chi that is accessible and valuable to all students and scholars.

In addition to his work for the Centre, Master Liming Yue also teaches Tai Chi skills for Age Concern, the Workers Education Association, and the Manchester City Council Adult Education Service and previously was a part time Tai Chi lecturer for the University of Salford. Master Liming Yue is officially awarded the 7th Duan Wei by Chinese Wushu (Martial Arts) Association China.



**Biography of Tim Birch**

Tim Birch is an experienced freelance journalist. During the past decade he has been retained by Greater Manchester Newspapers Ltd while also writing for national newspapers and various magazines.



**Biography of Danny Chisholm**

Principal Instructor: Dan Chisholm  
Chen Style Tai Chi Centre - South East Region  
Website: [www.chentaichi.co.uk](http://www.chentaichi.co.uk) ,  
E-mail: [dan@chentaichi.co.uk](mailto:dan@chentaichi.co.uk)

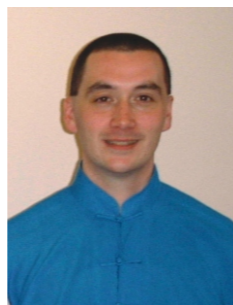
Dan Chisholm is a full-time Tai Chi instructor and Tui Na practitioner based in East Sussex and has studied Chen Style Tai Chi since 1996. Dan is an indoor student of Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei and a senior indoor student of Master Liming Yue.



Early in his training Dan spent 3 years living in China developing his understanding of Chinese culture and Tai Chi. During this time he began his training in TCM, studying Tui Na techniques from a group of highly experienced blind practitioners.

**Biography of Anthony Rushton**

Anthony Rushton has over 21 years of experience in Martial Arts and has been studying Chen Style Tai Chi from Master Liming Yue. The founder of Anthony Rushton Internal Kung Fu Association and he also teaches Tai Chi and Kung Fu in Worcester area in the UK and run seminars in other European countries.



Achieving - Honorary Master of Sha Guozheng Martial Art Academy. Awarded by Headmaster Sha jin jie (son of the late grandmaster Sha Guozheng).

**Biography of Nick Taylor**

Instructor Nick Taylor - the founder of Devon Tai Chi Centre Having studied under the direct tuition of Master Liming Yue since 1996, Nick is a senior Indoor Student of Master Liming Yue, and has recently been accepted as an Indoor Student of Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei. In 2000 Nick qualified as a Chen Style Tai Chi Instructor in Chenjiagou, Wen County, Henan Province, China. Nick has also furthered his studies in the U.K., Europe and China with leading Chen Style Tai Chi Masters.



Through 9 years of training Nick has emerged as a talented and dedicated instructor,

continuously studying and increasing his knowledge of this ancient art. This understanding of Chinese culture has been complemented with training in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) leading to qualification as a Tui Na Master Practitioner of Chinese Medical Massage, BhTEC ITEC.

[www.devontaichicentre.com](http://www.devontaichicentre.com); [info@devontaichicentre.com](mailto:info@devontaichicentre.com)

**Biography of Bill Wilkinson**

Bill Wilkinson is a senior student of Master Liming Yue and indoor student of Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei, a qualified Chen Style Tai Chi instructor in Blackburn, Lancashire. Bill has been studying Tai Chi with Master Liming Yue for five years and previously with Steve Burton in Accrington. He has complemented his study in the UK with visits to China and seminars in Europe with Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei. Bill is employed as a Senior Manager with Abbey National Bank in the North West England. He is working closely with Master Liming Yue and other senior students to promote the benefits of Tai Chi to Companies and Schools in the UK.



**Biography of Shulan Tang**

Prof. Shulan Tang, BSc, MSc degrees in Medicine at TCM Universities in China, has held Head practitioner of Shulan Clinics; Managing Director of SHULAN UK LTD; Principle of Shulan College of Chinese Medicine; Lecturer at number of UK Universities with specializing in Gynecology and supervisor at Salford University; Academic Executive of ATCM UK, Fellow member of Register of Chinese Herbal Medicine, UK, Member of the British Acupuncture Council, UK; Prof. Tang has also published 60 articles in a variety of popular and professional journals.



Contact details: [www.shulan.uk.com](http://www.shulan.uk.com); Tel: +44 (0)161 2279888

**Biography of Steven Burton**

Steven Burton is an indoor student of Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei and senior indoor student of Master Liming Yue, one of only a few people in the United Kingdom to be certified to teach original Chen Style Tai Chi and certified by Master Jeremy Yau for Lau Gar Kung Fu. He is the founder of Dragon Society School of Chinese Martial Arts.

Gold medallist on Chen Style Tai Chi Form and Silver Medallist on Chen Style Tai Chi Weapons in China August 2004. Five Times British Silver Medallist

Taught and certified in Chen Style Tai Chi by Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei - Henan, China, also Grandmaster Kongjie Gou and Master Liming Yue of the Chen Style Tai Chi Centre UK.

Contact details: <http://www.laugar.co.uk>





## APPENDIX

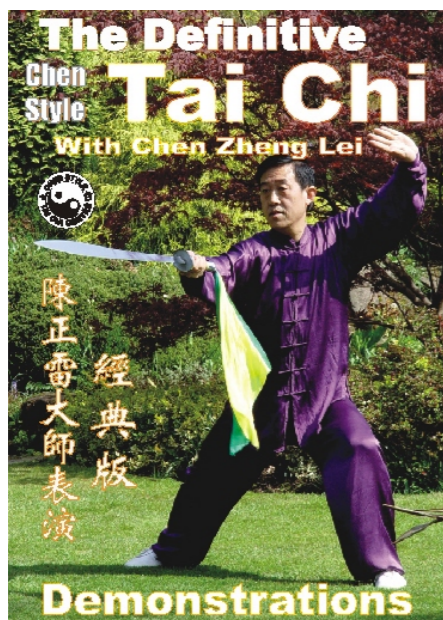
### Catalogue of Chen Style Taijiquan DVDs/Videos/Books/Musics

Online shop: [www.shop.taichicentre.com](http://www.shop.taichicentre.com)

#### The Definitive Chen Style Tai Chi DVD & Video by Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei

The Definitive Chen Style Tai Chi Demonstration Video is by Grandmaster Chen Zheng Lei, one of The Top Ten Foremost Martial Artist in China who is considered as one of the best Tai Chi Grandmasters in the world.

The video includes Chen Style Tai Chi Short Form, Long Forms (New Frame, Xinjia and Old Frame, Laojia), Cannon Fist, Sword, Sabre, Double Sabre, Spear, Halberd, Push Hands, Applications and an extract of Tai Chi Festivals. The footage has been filmed over the last five years by the Chen Style Tai Chi Centre UK and all the excellent shows have been collected into this video. It is a really valuable asset for all Tai Chi practitioners regardless of what style.



The Tai Chi movements demonstrated by Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei in the video are so graceful, peaceful and powerful whilst the energy releasing is explosive and dynamic.

The movements are clear and precise making this an excellent example of Chen Style Tai Chi demonstrations suitable for both beginners and experienced practitioners. Chen Zhenglei performs the standardized movements as recognized by the State Sports and Education Department of China. This recording makes an excellent reference of Definitive Chen Style Tai Chi.

#### Tai Chi Silk Reeling Energy DVD



These exercises have been designed for beginners of Chen Style Tai Chi and are a complete health system. It is also part of the book Tai Chi for Health. The video footage was filmed in a professional studio in China with the latest DVD authoring techniques enabling you to navigate and watch the DVD easily and efficiently.

The DVD covers Tai Chi Qigong exercises, Meditation, Silk Reeling exercises and Warm Up exercises. The demonstration of each exercise is repeated from different camera perspectives and at different speeds with detailed commentary to maximize the benefits of practice and implementation.

#### Tai Chi 18 Short Form DVD

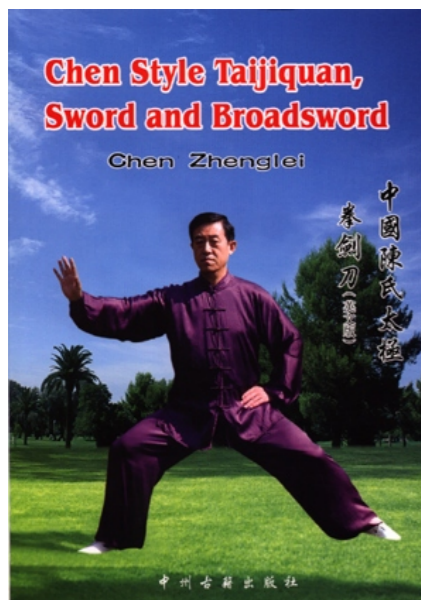


Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei is the foremost authority on Chen Style Tai Chi and the creator of the 18 Short Form. This form has been designed for beginners of Chen Style Tai Chi, and is part of the book Tai Chi for Health. The DVD includes an introduction, followed by a demonstration of the 18 Short Form with step by step instructions for each individual movement as well as explanations and breakdowns repeated from different camera perspectives and at different speeds with detailed commentary to maximize the benefits of practice and implementation. The video footage was filmed in a professional studio in China with the latest DVD authoring techniques enabling you to navigate and watch the DVD easily and efficiently.

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## Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei Laojia book



### Description:

Written by Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei and translated into English, this new 368 page instructional reference on the Chen Style Old Frame (Laojia), Sword and Broadsword forms is excellent and detailed and offers an insight and depth difficult to find from other sources



- Table of Contents
- Author's Preface
- Chen Wangting and Jiang Fa
- The Main Lines of Transmission of Chen Family Taijiquan
- The Chen Family code of Ethics
- Special Characteristics of Chen Style Taijiquan
- Chen Style Requirements
- The Method and Progression of Chen Style Taijiquan Training
- Hand Forms and Stances of Chen Style Taijiquan
- Basic Movements and Chan Si Jin (Silk Reeling Energy) Exercises
- Standing Meditation Postures
- The Fist Routine of Chen Style Laojia Taijiquan
- The Name of the 74 Forms (Laojia)
- 74 Small Forms Divided into 13 Large Forms (after Chen Xin)
- The First Routine of Chen Style Laojia Taijiquan
- Chen Style Single Sword Routine
- Chen Style Taiji Single Broadsword Routine
- Afterward
- A Brief Biography of Chen Zhenglei
- A Brief Introduction to the Translators and Designer
- Dedication

## Music CD for Tai Chi Practice

A collection of tradition chinese folk music, recorded in China, that is an excellent accompaniment to practicing Tai Chi. The music contained on this CD is used by our instructors during our classes. We have published the music in response to the many requests from our students. Buy online at [www.shop.taichicentre.com](http://www.shop.taichicentre.com)

## Tai Chi Foundation DVD by Master Liming Yue

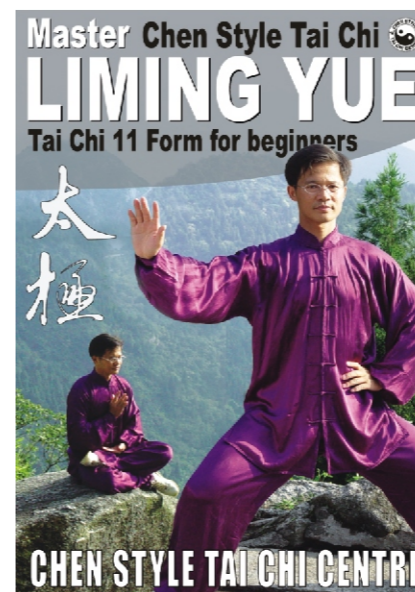
These foundation exercises have been designed for beginners to Chen Style Tai Chi and are a complete health system. It is a follow up (or workout) of simple exercises for people to practice at home or in a gym.



The video footage was filmed in a professional studio in China with the latest DVD authoring techniques enabling you to navigate and watch the DVD easily and efficiently.

The DVD covers introduction, Tai Chi Qigong exercises, Meditation, Silk Reeling exercises, Warm Up exercises and Demonstrations (11 Short Form, Sword, Halberd and 18 Short Form). The demonstration of each foundation exercise is repeated from different camera perspectives and at different speeds with detailed commentary to maximize the benefits of practice and implementation.

## Tai Chi 11 Short Form DVD by Master Liming Yue



The Tai Chi 11 Short Form was created by Master Liming Yue after many years of study with Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei and Grandmaster Kongjie Gou. The Tai Chi 11 is a simplified form based on the authentic Chen Style Tai Chi Old Frame or Laojia and holds true to all the principles and philosophy of this, the original form of Tai Chi. The Tai Chi 11 is short, easy to follow, and easy to learn, making it excellent for beginners and people who have limited time. Despite its simplicity, the form does not compromise any of the principles that have made the practice of Tai Chi famous throughout the world and can be practiced within a two-by-three steps area comfortably.

It includes an Introduction, Demonstrations (11 Form, Sword, Halberd and 18 Short Form) and Instruction of the 11 Short Form in detailed broken down movements with clear commentary.



# Annual China Trip

## Sightseeing, Entertainment and Training



### Chen Style Tai Chi Centre

PO Box 137, Manchester, UK, Postcode: M60 1WL  
Tel: +44 (0) 161 2737138; Fax: +44 (0) 161 2744967  
Web site: [www.taichicentre.com](http://www.taichicentre.com)  
E-mail: [info@www.taichicentre.com](mailto:info@www.taichicentre.com)



Group picture with Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei at the end of the competition hosted by Chenjiagou Taijiquan Centre in Zhengzhou, China 2004.



Individual instruction given to the students from Chen Style Tai Chi Centre UK by Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei during the trip in 2004.

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養生功





Postural corrections or Tiaojiashi are the unique training method used in the Tai Chi village.

### Introduce to China Trip

The trip is open to all Tai Chi students and friends to develop a greater understanding of this wonderful art with some of the highest level masters in China. As part of the China trip there will be:

A few days in Beijing visiting many of the incredible attractions including; the Great Wall of China, Temple of Heaven, Summer Palace, Tiananmen Square and the amazing Forbidden City. Evening entertainment will include performances of Beijing Opera and Chinese Circus.



Great wall at Badaling on the outskirts of Beijing



Statue of General Yue Fei – Ancestor of Master Liming Yue



Terracotta Army in Xian



Practice with local Tai Chi people outside the city wall in Xian



Beijing Opera and Acrobatic show



Morning practice in the park



An evening meal in Beijing during the trip.



Typical hotel room during the trip.

A few days International Tai Chi Festival in Jiaozhuo City, Henan Province; this includes entrance to the opening ceremony and access to all competitions. There will be plenty of opportunities during the festival to meet and train with many Chinese Tai Chi and Kung-Fu students bringing with it excellent photo opportunities for all.

A series of training with Master Liming Yue and Masters from the Shaolin Martial Arts School. Students will receive a certificate from Master Liming Yue following completion of the training and will also be eligible for assessment and instructor certification by the Shaolin Martial Arts School and Chenjiagou Tai Chi Centre. (Examination fees are not included in the China Trip price).

There will also be an optional training with Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei, head of the Chen family and recognized by the Chinese government as one of the top10 foremost martial artists of present China. A visit to the famous Chenjiagou, Chen Tai Chi village, the birthplace of Tai Chi.

One day training with the monks at the Shaolin Temple including an overnight stay in the temple and morning meditation with the monks.

## Details of the China Trip

**Date of Trip:** 18 days trip over the summer (Departure date to be confirmed).  
**Payment of Trip:** Deposit will be required with the application form and the remaining balance of the trip can be paid by installments. The last installment should be paid 60 days prior to the departure date.

**Insurance:** General insurance for travel and martial arts training will be provided under the cost of the trip (excludes Push Hands competitions). Anybody who is not covered under this general insurance certificate (due to age or medical condition or living outside the UK) will be required to provide their own insurance at their own expense.

**Visa Application:** Two passport sized photographs will be required for the visa application. These are to be supplied to the Centre with a completed visa form. (Excludes clients living outside the UK)

### Departure & Arrival:

Students will be able to fly from their nearest available airport depending on their geographic location. This is likely to be Manchester or London Heathrow. All Flights will be to Beijing International Airport.

**Hotel:** All hotels during the trip will be of 4-Star standard with typical facilities including: on-suite shower and bath, hair dryer, TV, \*internet access, \*telephone, \*refrigerator with mini bar and \*safety deposit box. (\*Additional charges may apply). Rooms are for two people sharing (twin room or double bed). A single supplement is available upon request



Tai Chi Festival opening ceremony 2000



Fun transportation in China



Wild Goose Tower in Xian



Relaxing on the boat in the lake at Summer Palace, Beijing.



Tai Chi Festival opening ceremony 2000



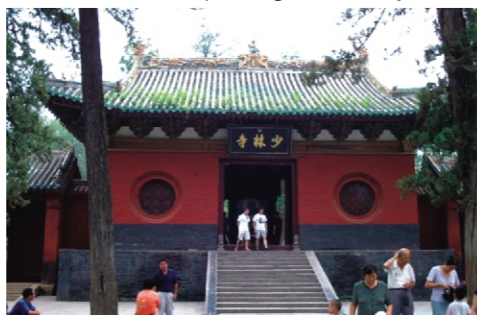
Top mountain of Shaolin Temple



Tai Chi Festival opening ceremony 2002



Pagoda of Shaolin Temple



Main entrance of Shaolin Temple



at additional cost.

**Transportation:** All coaches used during the trip are air-conditioned and of typical western standard. Train journeys are with sleep bed.

**Meals:** All meals are provided during the trip with plenty of fantastic local Chinese delights including many varieties of meat and vegetable dishes suitable for everyone on the trip. Soft drinks supplied during the meals are included in the price of the trip. Personal requests for specialty dishes and alcohol are excluded in the price of the trip.

**Money:** Most expenses are covered by the cost of the Trip. However you will need some cash for personal purchases for gifts and entertainment. English currency or travelers cheque should be taken with you to exchange whilst traveling. Credit cards are accepted in some locations (Beijing) but many areas do not have these facilities, so be warned.

**Shopping:** There will be many opportunities to buy gifts, etc. during the trip as everything is cheap and of good quality - but please be aware of the weight restriction for your return flight. Shipping & Post can be difficult and expensive with many products due to government restrictions. The best advise is take an empty suitcase with limited personal belongings and gradually fill it during the trip.

**Training:** We will arrange training throughout the trip with much of the intensive training held locally to the Tai Chi Festival.

**Competition & performance:** Everybody is welcome to take part in the Tai Chi Festival Form competition and performance at an additional cost.



Visit to the traditional Chinese shopping Centre in Shanghai.



First China Trip in 1997 (below) and second China Trip in 1998 (above).



**Personal Assistance:** Whilst you are on the trip if you need a local interpreter

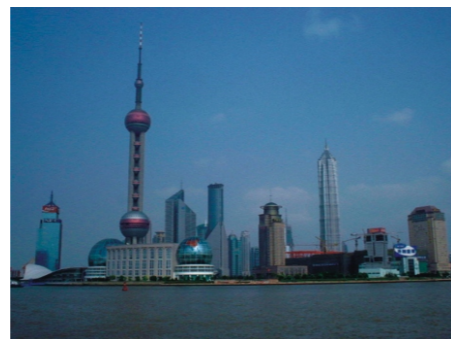
or guidance in making purchases or to participate in personal activities that fall beyond the scope of the trip we can arrange for you at an additional charge.



Demonstration by the Monks



Historic Buddha cave in Luoyang city



View of modern Shanghai City.

**Certification:** There will be many opportunities to receive certification during the trip; competitions, instructor and grading certificates issued by some of the leading Chinese Martial Art organizations plus a China Trip Attendance Certificate issued by the Chen Style Tai Chi Centre U.K.. Please bring plenty of photographs for those certificates.

**Trip T-shirt:** Two T-shirts will be provided by the Chen Style Tai Chi Centre free of charge. The colours available are white, red and black. Please indicate size and colour preference.

**Entertainment:** Throughout the trip you will have the opportunity to relax and unwind after a hard days training with Chinese massage (feet or fullbody), Jacuzzi, Sauna and Spa, or even experience an authentic treatment of traditional Chinese medicine including diagnosis and healthcare advice. During the evening you will have the chance to eat in some of the most luxurious restaurants in China, go out partying and perform Karoke. All of the above are optional activities and will be at the individuals expense.

**Health Warning:** It is recommended that nobody should drink the tap water during the trip. Bottle water is readily available (at low cost) and is highly recommended. Individual activities (such as individual tours or personal appointments etc) are allowed but please report to the trip leader prior to leaving (all such activities are at your own risk). Please take care of your own passport and all personal belongs during the trip. The Centre cannot be held responsible for any losses incurred and special care should be taken to ensure all travel documentation is kept safe place at all times.

**Other requirements:** Activities such as learning Chinese calligraphy or painting will be a available by request in advance with separate charge applied.



Training with Shaolin Master Geng Jun.



Training with Shaolin Master Geng Jun.



Group photo with the Mengzhou Shaolin Martial Arts school during the China Trip 2004. [www.mzshaolin.com](http://www.mzshaolin.com)



Spear learning with Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei in 1997



## Chen Zhenglei Taijiquan Culture Ltd.

Also trading as Chenjiagou Village Tai Chi Center of China

Authentic Tai Chi Martial Arts  
Excellent Teaching facilities and instructors  
Deep and vast knowledge of Culture and Art

Chenjiagou Tai Chi Centre (originally Henan Tai Chi Health Training Centre) is a legally registered Centre under the administration of Henan Chen Zhenglei Taijiquan Culture Ltd.

The head of Chenjiagou Tai Chi Centre is Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei, 19th generation of the Chen family in Chenjiagou village, Wenxian County, Henan Province (the birth-place of Taijiquan) and 11th generation successor of Chen Style Tai Chi.

The instructors at the Chenjiagou Tai Chi Centre are outstanding and personally led by Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei, who is one of the "Top Ten Famous Martial Artist" in modern China. The Senior Instructors are Mr. Zhang Dongwu and Mr. Chen Xiaobin, who have won several Tai Chi championships in China.

Chenjiagou Tai Chi Centre was established in 2001. It has been developed rapidly under the great support from Tai Chi practitioners and friends worldwide and over 10,000 students have been trained here since it was established. The Centre is often invited to participate in Martial Arts events and to give Tai Chi performances in China and abroad. It also successfully hosted several international intensive training courses. The students from the Centre have won many championships in China and International Tai Chi competitions. Several instructors and senior students have also been invited many times to teach abroad, with some accepting permanent positions. The Centre is well known and is an influence to Tai Chi around the world.

Chenjiagou Tai Chi Centre has a very nice environment and is well equipped with a very strong cultural Chinese atmosphere. There is a culture gallery and a Tai Chi Art corner where students can express and discuss their feelings, experiences and understanding of the practice. There are also over ten precious pictures of Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei with people from around the world. The 600 square meter training hall is large, wide and very bright with comfortable wooden floors and a mirror wall, which creates a wonderful practice environment.

Chenjiagou Tai Chi Centre is located on the South of Wenhua Road, Zhengzhou City. It is in a very good location with convenient access to public transportation,

the ideal place for students and all Tai Chi enthusiasts.

The Centre can arrange accommodation and meals for long distance students and visitors upon request. There are three different ranges of accommodation, high quality (luxury), medium quality (standard) and low cost (economic). The classes in the Centre are set for students of different levels but at the same time are very flexible as well. Students can become members or just pay as you go at a daily rate. Additionally, we hold "the International Chen Style Taijiquan Training Course" in Zhengzhou city (the principle city of Henan province) in August every year.

Tai Chi is a Martial Art that works both internally and externally. In the Centre, students are not only asked to perform all the forms and movements accurately, but they are also required to grasp Tai Chi theory and internal energy in order to applying in daily life.

Tai Chi is an amazing flower in the Chinese Martial Arts garden, that is deeply rooted in the rich soil of Chinese traditional art. Researching, developing and promoting this precious Chinese art is the duty of the Centre and everyone who loves Chinese traditional culture.

Contact details:

Address: 7 floor, Wen Hua Jia Yuan Business Tower, 112 Wenhua Road  
Zhengzhou City, Henan, P.R. China

Tel: +86 (0) 371 63219626; Fax: +86 (0) 371 63219625

Web: [www.cstjq.com](http://www.cstjq.com); E-mail: [taiji@cstjq.com](mailto:taiji@cstjq.com)



The forth international Chen Style Taijiquan Training course 2002.



## Introduce to Jiaozuo City

Jiaozuo City is located in the northwest region of Henan Province and next to the Taihang Mountains in the north and close to the Yellow River in the south. It includes two cities, four counties and five districts. The total size of the area is 4,071 square kilometers and there is a population of 3.4 million.

Chen Style Taijiquan was created in Chenjiagou village, Wen County, Jiaozuo City nearly 400 years ago. In the past few hundreds years it has been developed and promoted into many other styles by many famous masters. With all the characteristics of Tai Chi such as mixed Yin and Yang, Hard and Soft, Health aspects with Martial Arts application, Chen Style Taijiquan has been spread throughout the world. The Chinese International Tai Chi Exchange Competition in Jiaozuo has created a great opportunity for learning and competing with other Tai Chi practitioners in the world.

Jiaozuo is one of the three highest rice producing areas in China. They also produce four types of worldwide famous medicines, such as Dihuang, Niuqi, Juhua, Shangyue. There is plenty of water and mineral resources. It is a perfect place to develop industrial businesses. The road system is highly developed and is considered some of the best in China. The natural landscape is beautifully preserved and a wonder to see. In Particular the Yuntai Mountains with four sights of interest included in the World Geology Park. It hides ancient architecture built in the Shang Dynasty and is the hometown of many famous historic people such as Shimayi, Hanyu etc. There are six places in total in Jiaozuo city that have been classified as having the highest national level for a preserved cultural asset.

Jiaozuo city was founded in 1956 and it has been developed as an advanced, modern and integrated city. Its beginnings were rooted in coal mining from which it prospered. Now it has evolved to contain power, chemical engineering, mechanics, metallurgy, material sciences, medicines, textiles, food and tourism industries. Jiaozuo is a destination for fun and entertainment too, earning the titles Excellent Tourism City in China, national basketball city and Garden City etc...

### The International Taijiquan Exchange competition Jiaozuo City, China

In order to develop Taijiquan culture, promote the international Taijiquan academic exchanges, make new friends and make progress, the bi-annual International Taijiquan Exchange Competition in Jiaozuo city, China will be held in August in Jiaozuo City, Henan Province, China, the birthplace of Chen Style Taijiquan. The competition is organized by the Chinese Wushu

Association, and undertaken by the Henan Provincial Sports Bureau and the City Council of Jiaozuo. During the competition, there will be various activities, such as the grand opening ceremony, Taijiquan contests, lectures on Taijiquan and assessment of papers, performances of different styles of Taijiquan presented by well known Grandmasters. The people in Jiaozuo city are very friendly and hospitable. We will be honored to have your presence along with your team and friends.

Address: The Contest Department of International Taijiquan Exchange Competition, 401 Jiefangzhong Road, Jiaozuo City, Henan Province, P.R. China  
Postcode: 454002; Telephone: +86 (0)391-3934492 / 3936439 / 3935343  
Fax: +86 (0) 391 - 3933192; Email: fxb520cj@sina.com  
Contact: Ms. Ji Cuiming Mr. Xu Zhaolun

The above information was officially provided by The City Council of Jiaozuo in June 2005. For English speaking countries please feel free to contact the Chen Style Tai Chi Centre UK if you experience difficulties.

## Introduce to Chinese Wushu Duan Wei System

Chinese Wushu Duan Wei System was officially introduced and is implemented by the Chinese Wushu Association in China. It is a complete official system of assessing and grading the Chinese Wushu practitioners worldwide.

In order to develop and promote the Chinese Wushu and the Duan Wei System worldwide the Chinese Wushu Association China will hold regular "Grading and Training Courses for the Chinese Wushu Duan Wei System". The courses and grading are open to overseas Wushu practitioners several times a year in a variety of venues in China and abroad if appropriate.

Requirements for applicants of Duan Wei: Those Overseas Chinese and foreign practitioners who love Chinese Wushu and have practiced Wushu for over two years are qualified to apply for the training course and grading.

For further details please contact:

Mr. Kang Gewu or Ms Li Xiao Jie  
Scientific Research Department  
Chinese Wushu Association China  
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P.R. China, Postcode: 100101;  
Web site: www.wushu.com.cn  
Email: wushuxue@sina.com;  
Tel: +86 (0)10-64927457  
Fax: +86 (0)10-64947202



The logo of Chinese Wushu Duan Wei



## Chen Style Tai Chi Centre UK

Teaching Tai Chi to its full potential



Senior Instructor: Master  
Liming Yue



arrange specialised male/female only classes if requested, please contact the Centre for further information.

The Chen Style Tai Chi Centre is based in Manchester teaching and promoting the principles and philosophy of authentic Chen Style Tai Chi. The aim of the Centre is to encourage an understanding of all aspects of Tai Chi that is accessible and valuable to all students and scholars throughout the U.K and Europe.

We have three full-time and two part-time instructors, with our senior instructors considered by many as the most highly qualified Tai Chi instructors in the U.K.

The Centre holds regular classes in Manchester and the North West Region teaching the full range of authentic Chen Style Tai Chi routines including; Tai Chi Foundation Exercises, Qigong Breathing Techniques, Silk Reeling Exercises, Hand Forms (11 Short Form, 18 Short Form, 83 Form, Laojia and Cannon Fist), Weapons (Sword, Sabre, Staff, Fan, Halberd, Spear), Push Hands and Applications for students of all levels.

For dedicated students wishing to approach the highest levels, the Centre provides tuition for competition entry and intensive instructor-training programs to become officially certified Chen Style Tai Chi Instructors.

Complimenting the extensive training offered in the U.K. the Centre regularly organizes seminars throughout the world, arranges annual student study trips in Europe and China, and produces a wide range of instructional DVD's, Videos and Books

In addition to the regular adults classes, the Centre also offers a range of classes for children (aged 5+) and can



### Chen Style Tai Chi Centre

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