

# CLASSICAL TAI CHI FORUM

**VOLUME 1**  
**February, 2003**

On behalf of Master Hwa, I am happy to welcome you to the Classical Tai Chi Forum.

It is his hope that through the Forum, his students will have a venue in which to ask questions of him and discuss their experiences with Classical Tai Chi. Master Hwa will also devote time to developing points he feels are essential in helping his students master Classical Tai Chi.

Send your questions and comments or if you wish to be excluded from further mailings please contact me at [pareal10@yahoo.com](mailto:pareal10@yahoo.com).

We are **especially** interested in hearing about your experiences learning from the tapes.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Em K.,  
Editor



**AND HAPPY NEW YEAR**

## **MASTER HWA'S PRACTICE REMINDERS**

I wish to reemphasize some of the points in the video to help you visualize and think about key elements of practice.

### **BODY POSITIONS:**

In the instructional video one has to be concerned with many aspects of the position of the body. Two of primary importance are the “tuck in” and the “knee over toe”

**Tuck in** or bringing the pelvis forward and up is easy to forget when you are thinking about all the other aspects of practicing tai chi. Yet it is of utmost

importance. If done correctly then the practice of tai chi will alleviate lower back problems. If not done, then the movement can exacerbate lower back problems.

Knee over toe eventually can harm or injure the knee. Your step size can more or less determine whether your knee will go over the toe.

The step size in the video with the front foot heel even with the back foot toe should normally avoid the problem of unconsciously bending the knee over the toe.

If you have a knee problem to start with,, you should try to use an even smaller step size...keep the front foot heel just behind the back foot toe until your knee feels more comfortable. With such small step size you can still learn the form movements and develop the Internal Discipline.

## QUESTIONS FOR MASTER HWA

### *What is the relationship between Tai Chi and Taoism?*

Tai Chi is often associated with Taoism but there is no recorded history that tai chi originated from Taoism. Some say that the Taoist, Zhang Sen Fung developed tai chi but the story about him is more in the realm of legend rather than established history.

But both Taoism and Tai Chi are based on the same philosophy of Lao Tse and the I Ching, the Book of Changes.

The early masters always used the sayings of the I Ching, Lao Tse and Sun Tse (the Art of War) to explain the movements and strategies in Tai Chi. In the video tapes, I have not covered this aspect. In future issues of the Forum I will supplement the application of the philosophy to the practice of the Internal Discipline.

### *Do you have video lessons on push hands?*

No I do not have video lesson on push hands yet. I intend to do it in the near future.

However, push hands is really an application of Tai Chi form practice.

Usually, a student is not taught push hands until the student has practiced tai chi form for a while and has a feel about the form movements, in particular:

- a. The sitting back movement (see for example Vol. II Lesson 1, walking backwards)- appears very frequently in the tai chi form, and is not easy to master. It is the defensive position in the push hands.
- b. The forward movement when you move your body weight to the front foot, such as in the walking forward brush knee is the offensive position in the push hand.
- c. Turn of the upper body with pelvis essentially not moving as shown in the section of Internal Discipline in the Tai Chi Overview is the ward off move in the defensive position and push off move in the offensive position.
- d. There are several other more subtle moves.

All these moves you will learn in the form practice. What is unique about the push hands is that it provides the opportunity for extended contact time with your opponent, so-called 'stick to your opponent', when you can learn how to control your emotions, your body, and how to detect your opponents' intention and respond accordingly. Other kinds of sparring exercises all have such short contact time with the opponent. There is no time to learn such subtle aspects about yourself and your opponent. In addition, push hands is a very good exercise.