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Yangjia Michuan Taiji



Taipei Notes
and Commentaries
On Tuishou

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Contents

| | |
|---|--------------|
| Dedication..... | 2 |
| Journal Notes..... | 3-10 |
| Pushing Sequences..... | 10-37 |
| Practice Methods..... | 37-48 |
| Push Hands Basic Exercises..... | 49-50 |
| Seven Important Tuishou Concepts..... | 51-52 |
| Commentary on the Basic Exercises..... | 53-72 |
| Looking for Opportunities..... | 72-79 |
| The Hands in Tuishou..... | 79-83 |
| Yi, Li and Ting Jing..... | 83-89 |
| Glossary..... | 90-93 |

Dedication

These notes and commentaries are dedicated to Wang Laoshi's teaching as well as to the teachers and practitioners who carry on and develop the practice of Yang Jia Michuan T'ai Ji Quan. There must be a word of deep gratitude to Wang Laoshi for his teaching. The notes certainly speak for themselves as to the depth and breadth of his teaching.



Many thanks to Julia Fairchild for her translation during the workshops and to my wife Wendy for her help in editing and translating the text into Chinese. Also, thanks to Noelle Kasai for her encouragement and advice.

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Taipei 2023

Journal Notes

Over the years that I have practice Yang Jia Michuan Tái Chi, I have been keeping journals with notes of lessons and comments that Laoshi made during our classes. Many of the notes were taken after I had returned home and scoured my memory for the treasure trove of wisdom and information that Laoshi gave us during our Tuishou and form classes. I have laid out the information in much the same way that I first jotted it down in my journals. Hopefully my fellow practitioners with a strong interested in Tuishou will find some use for the information in their practice or at the very least use it as food for thought.

I will be referring to Push Hands as Tuishou. Anyone familiar with Wang Laoshi's teaching will know that he often repeated information that was important and worth our attention.

There may be some repetition in the notes. Perhaps bear in mind that if it is repeated it is well-worth recalling and putting into practice.



In the first section, the *italicized* print indicates my comments. In the second section, I will be adding my commentaries on the basic exercises and Wang Laoshi's reflections will be in *italics*.

In Tuishou, as soon as the hands meet a partner, start to change. Do not stand and wait to be pushed. Use one hand then the other to push and channel energy. **Hands are lively, rotating, sticking, and changing.** Hands are be light and listening and work together. They are constantly listening and transforming. Allow the hands to rise and to make contact with the partner. Also, use the body to listen to your partner's hands while looking for the partner's center. Changes and transformation become manifest through familiarity and the movements become so familiar that the hands move without thinking. Practicing sticking to your partner and it feels like there are suction cups on your hands.

Move out of the realm of hard external strength (**Li**) and resistance and be in the realm of internal strength (**Nei Li**) and relaxation. This is the path, which leads to real **Gongfu (skill achieved through hard work and practice)**. If you use strength and resistance, you will become strong to a point, but if you stop practicing you will regress quickly.

Being relaxed and soft enhances yielding and the ability to deflect an incoming push. In deflecting, meet the incoming force with soft listening energy; Song (relaxation) and Ro (softness), not losing contact, absorbing and sticking.

The whole body moves together from ankle to the wrist.

Empty, and entice your partner to fall into the void, temporarily losing balance and root. Be ready for that moment.

Being out of breath indicates the use of **Li (external strength)** rather than **Nei Li (internal strength)**. There is a limit to **hard strength** but there is no limit to **internal strength**.

The partner feels controlled even without being pushed. Start to build a web from where your partner cannot escape. You are controlling him/her. As soon as there is a break, energy can be expressed (**Fa Jing**). Keep the heart and mind on the straight.

Sticking is soft, with no resistance or use of hard strength. Use the mind and chi and when pushing, look for the straight line into your partner's center*.

**Connecting to a person's center requires a degree of listening skill, as well as a fair bit of experience and practice. With the first push one rarely finds the center of the partner. It requires several pushes. Laoshi often spoke of a soft agile hand on the body of partner; with a soft hand one can gently find the center of the partner. This is the moment of opportunity to push. The idea is to continuously search for the partner's center, looking for opportunities and not to push before finding one.*

Using **Li (hard strength)** is going off on a tangent. Outside is soft, calm and relaxed. Remove **Li (hard strength)** from your vocabulary. **Nei Li (Internal strength)** comes from the **Dantian** and the whole-body channels energy. The arms and waist move as one. **With the waist moving and turning, naturally, circularity will appear.** The chi and the body become like a ball with the

Dantian as the center. All movements are circular with the upper and lower body working together.

Keep the chi in the **Dantian** and move the chi to the point where you come in contact with the partner. The chi is flowing in a circle. Moving slowly is OK, but do not stop or break the flow of chi. He compared the flow of chi to a tornado. It moves in a circle with no stopping. Even breaking your partner's root is done with a circular movement. Use **Yi (mind intent)** to lead the Chi. Chi leads the body.

In April of 1993 Laoshi taught a class in which we practiced rooting. During this class students were first asked to push at the **Dantian** of our partner and then at the **Ming Men***

* (A gate where energy **Yuan Qi, (Prenatal Chi)** is stored. It is located between the kidneys in the lower back in a direct line from the **Zhong Dantian, (Middle Dantian)**).

Laoshi instructed us not to hold our breath during the push. The person being pushed naturally breathes out, absorbing the incoming push. But it is important not to completely breathe out, keeping some **Chi** in the **Dantian**. While meditating, emptying the **Dantian** is not a problem, but while practicing **Tuishou**, some **Chi** should remain in the **Dantian**.

Also, we practiced **Nei Li (internal force)** facing our partner in **Peng (ward off)** position. There is no movement in this position. Partners remain in **Peng** position without moving. Then slowly and mindfully move in a horizontal circular pattern while maintaining the **Peng (ward off)** position. As the partner adds

force, absorb it by sinking deeper onto the back leg, relaxing, and **Hang Xiong Ba Bei*** (slightly bow the back and hollow the chest).

In this position the goal is not to push your partner but to stay in contact without using **Li (hard strength); not being too hard or too soft. Giving enough internal strength to remain in contact with the partner and listening. This is an excellent way to practice **Ting Jing (listening energy)**.*

The challenge is to maintain a root in the midst of an incoming push and to remember when being pushed at the chest; the front knee has to remain relaxed and bent. If the front knee is straight then once a push comes, it is difficult to maintain the root on the back leg. Also remember to keep the head straight, relaxing, hollowing the chest and tucking the **Wei-Lu point (tailbone) in the lower back. When a push comes quickly there are times when we need to separate the shoulder from the waist in order to yield. In most situations, however, we want to move the waist and the shoulder as one unit.*

Laoshi described the movement of **Jing (internal energy)**. The **Jing (internal energy)** from the legs and the waist meet at the **Ming Men** point, which is then expressed through the arms and hands. **Jing** is generated in the legs and expressed through the arms and hands. Everything moves together.

*When practicing Tuishou, the initial push often comes from the attacking partner's back leg. The partner doing the pushing uses one hand to do the pushing (**An**).*

If you are standing on the right leg as the back leg then push with the left hand, the right hand is empty but not completely empty. The empty hand can be used to prevent the partner from turning after the first push is applied. If the subsequent push comes from the front leg, then the opposite hand becomes the pushing hand.

Hands are soft and agile. Hands are always moving and searching for possibilities to push. Hands are alert to whatever comes.

Laoshi frequently reminded us to think of the body as a hand, constantly turning, and changing. As soon as we start to push the hands become alive and ready. The hands are brought up in a ready position. If the hands remain at the side, then there is not enough time to respond to a push to the body.

The hands begin to explore with soft but penetrating pushes to gauge the reaction of the partner. The hands intelligently looking for different parts of the body which may be exposed and open to a push. For example, if the partner turns the waist too much in response to a push, then an opportunity is presented for a push. If a push comes at the chest and the defending partner bends backward onto the back leg then his/her **Dantian** is exposed. Then it is possible to run the pushing hand down the chest from the first push to his/her **Dantian** and push again. If in response to a push to the chest, the defending partner turns the body, then the attacking partner can use his/her other hand to push. The hands are constantly in motion, looking and exploring.

Using the hands for **Ting Jing (listening)**, and listen with the entire body. The hands have to be in close contact with the

partner's body. If there is any distance then it is more difficult to really understand your partner's intention. Actually, contact enables the practitioner to feel the slightest movement that the partner makes. If there is a feeling of trembling or vibration in the partner's body, then he/she is using **Li (hard strength)** rather than **Yi (mind intent)** to push.

When the partner pushes, know the direction, force and intention of it. If you begin to gather this information when he/she has pushed, it is too late. **Ting Jing (listening energy)** provides you with this information **before** the push is actually made. This can be accomplished with soft hands and whole-body integration. But, it is necessary to listen with the **Yi (mind intent)**. Listen with the palms. The chi is turning in the center of the palm. Stay soft and listen with the entire body and mind.

We practiced three different ways to respond to a push to the chest; as the arms rise up it is possible for the palms to either face down, to face inward or face upward. The best method is for the palms to face downward so that deflecting and pushing become one movement. Otherwise, it is necessary to use two movements, separately deflecting and then pushing.

Turn the waist to yield and listen for full and empty. Sink and then turn when the push comes; listening and bonding to your partner, constantly looking for opportunities to discharge energy*.

**Discharging of energy can come from rising or sinking on the front leg or the back leg. The push coming from sinking onto the*

legs can be more stable, although most often practitioners tend to push from the rising position.

Pushing Sequences

The following notes were taken from a Push hands class on 10/19/93... These notes may be helpful to teachers of Yangjia Michuan Push hands as well as to intermediate and advanced practitioners.

The first 5 Push hands exercises are connected into one flowing movement:

- 1. Twist the Waist from left to right/right to left**
- 2. Right /Left /Twist the Waist** (the body's center moves to the front leg when pushing)
- 3. Right/Left Bend Backward from the Waist**
- 4. Right/left Bend Forward from the Waist**
- 5. Right/ Left Twist Down on One Leg in a Kneeling Position** In this exercise one partner is pushing while the other is yielding.

In this practice, one partner is the pusher while the other is the yielding partner. After a period of practice, they switch roles. One becomes the pushing partner and the other becomes the yielding partner. All five movements are practiced in succession and with pausing.

First, we practiced **Basic exercise #1 (Twist the Waist from Left to Right/Right to Left)**. The pusher begins in a sitting down on his/her back leg. We began by sinking and standing on our left

leg, and the right-hand push comes to the partner's left shoulder. The pusher's weight remains on the back leg and the front leg turns along with the turning of the waist.

Basic Exercise #2 (Twist the Waist Right/left, center is on the front leg). In this second movement, the push comes from the back leg and he/she moves down onto the front leg to push to the partner's opposite shoulder*.

**The push here is in a downward direction since the pusher is sinking onto to his/her front leg. From the back leg, the push is can be an upward or downward direction.*

Basic exercise #3 (Bend Backward from the Waist) The partner doing the pushing starts on his/her back leg in the downward sitting position and rises to push up toward the center of the chest. The receiving partner bends backward from the waist.

Basic exercise #4, (Bend Forward from the Waist). The fourth push in the sequence comes the pusher starts by standing up and sits down to push out to his/her partner's **Dantian**. The receiving partner sits down on his/her back leg.

Basic exercise #5, (Twist down on one leg in a kneeling position). The final push in the sequence is a push to the side of the body of the partner as in This push comes again from the front leg to the side of the body of the partner.

In another class, we practiced **Push hands exercises 7,8 and 9 in one flowing movement:**

7. Hold off(up) Bending Backward from the Waist

8. Hold off (down) Bending Forward from the Waist

9. Hold Off Stroke from the Side

One partner starts off pushing while the other is the yielding and defending partner. The **first movement (Hold off down, bending backward from the waist)** is a one hand push (**An**) to the chest.

When yielding to this push the defender/yielding partner raises his/her **Peng (Ward Off)** and brings up the non-pushing hand in preparation for a push to the chest while sinking back on his/her back leg. (Left hand **Peng**/right hand push, right hand **Peng**, left hand push.

The **second movement (Hold off upward Bending forward from the waist)** in the sequence begins with a downward one hand push (**An**) to the **Dantian** (the pusher is standing up and sinks down onto his/her back leg to push). The yielding partner sinks down on his/her back leg receiving the push in **Peng (Ward Off)**. The non-pushing hand comes up making contact with the pusher's elbow with the palm of his empty hand. If the incoming push is too deep and difficult to yield to, the yielding partner can easily turn the waist and move attacking partner's elbow to the side.

The **third movement** in this sequence is a push (**An**) to the partner's **Peng (Ward Off)**. The non-pushing hand of the yielding partner comes up in **Lu (Rollback)**

Next, we practice **Two Hands Moving in Vertical Circles (Basic Exercise #12)** First, we practice pushing and moving forward onto

the front leg and then returning to the back leg. In this movement there is no stepping.

The next part of the sequence is stepping up and then back (front foot stepping up (push) and then moving onto the back foot in **Lu (Rollback)**) continuing with the **Two Hands Vertical Circles** exercise.

And finally, we continue practicing **Shuang Shou Li Yuan Tuishou (Two Hands Moving in Vertical Circles)** by stepping 5 steps forward and 5 steps back while remaining in contact with the partner.

In practicing **Ding Jing (the practice of rooting Jing)**, there is no yielding, only rooting the incoming force. Both practitioners stand facing each other in **Peng** position. Both partners are motionless and listen to each other, not exerting any force but maintaining light contact. There is no movement in this position. As the partners first come into contact, they listen with their **Yi (mind intention)** to each other's Chi. Their arms are relaxed with as little tension as possible. Ideally, if one partner drops his/her arm and releases his/her **Peng** position, there should be little or no arm movement on the part of the other partner.

Next, both partners in **Peng** begin to slowly move in a horizontal circular movement, maintaining contact but not exerting **Li (hard strength)** into their **Peng** arm. This is an excellent exercise for developing and strengthening the root as well developing finer and finer listening skills. (**Ting Jing**)

Here are two exercises when practicing **Peng Fa Jing (expressing energy in Peng)**, one with no movement(stepping) of the feet

and the other stepping up and drawing back. While moving forward with one step, lightly maintaining contact with the elbow of the partner but being careful not to grab the elbow. There is some **Nei Li (internal strength)** when pushing out. When **expressing energy (Fa Jing)**, tuck the **Wei-Lu**, relax the chest. Be aware of both back and front.

1. Being in the **advantageous** position means that you are sitting back on the left leg with the left arm in **Ward Off (Peng)** position **or** sitting back on the right leg with the right arm in **Peng** position.

The receiving partner connects to the elbow of the attacking partner with **Lu (Rollback)**. When in the advantageous position the **yielding partner** turns his/her **Peng** at **waist level**.

2. When the receiving partner has his/her weight on the left leg and the right arm is in **Peng** or when the weight is on the right leg, and the left arm is in **Peng**, then you are in the **disadvantageous position**. The **Rollback (Lu)** connects to the elbow of the attacking partner and yields at **shoulder level**.

When a push comes to the **Dantian**, the yielding partner sinks on the back leg, and connects to the attacking elbow and deflects.

Fa Jing Practice: Peng Fa Jing, Lu Fa Jing, An Fa Jing, Ji Fa Jing, Cai Fa Jing, Lie Fa Jing, Zhou Fa Jing, Kao Fa Jing

Peng Fa Jing, Peng (expressing energy with ward off) energy can be expressed by either standing up or sinking down the weight is resting on the back leg or the front leg. The arm in **Peng** position pushes out between the elbow and the shoulder of the partner

(the upper arm area). In this practice the yielding partner is not directly facing the partner but is standing sideways. The partner receiving the push is cautioned not to turn the body to yield to the **Peng Fa Jing** and listen to the push and allow it.

** Expressing energy in **Peng** can be practiced on both the front or back leg, being aware which arm and leg is full and which is empty. For example, pushing on the **left rear leg** the right arm is in **Peng** while on the **front right leg** the **left arm** would be expressing the **Jing**.*

An Fa Jing Attacking partner pushes out with **one hand** at the chest while the defending partner's hands are crosses over his/her chest for protection from the push. The push comes from the back leg. If the defending partner turns to yield to the push, the attacking partner uses his/her empty/non-pushing hand to prevent the defender from yielding and turning his/her body*.

When practicing the two hand (An**) push in the form, it appears that both hands are pushing but in practice **one hand** is doing the pushing, (Left back leg/right hand push, right back leg/left hand push) while the other is preventing the partner from turning to yield.*

Lu Fa Jing In the **first Duan** we practice **Wield the Pipa**. The attacker punches at the chest and the defending partner covers the fist, from on top or underneath the fist and steps back and around with **Rollback (Lu)** to ward off the attack. The defending partner then expresses **Jing** to the chest or upper arm of the partner with **Lu**.

Ji Fa Jing- (Squeeze the two hands with Energy) The attacking partner connects with **Peng** to the defender's crossed arms. The attacking partner, borrows the energy of the defender and sinks down on the front leg and expresses **Jing** with **Ji (squeeze)**

Cai Fa Jing- the attacking partner throws a slow punch at the defender. The defender connects to the elbow and pushes from the back-leg at **Dantian** level. When a partner attacks with a fist and the defender uses **Peng**. He/she transforms and intercepts with **Cai** and then pushes the partner at **Dantian**.

Lie Fa Jing- Attacking partner punches and the defender turns over his **Peng** and connects to the attacker's wrist, with the other hand, the defender controls the elbow. Then the defending partner then steps up and connects the attacker's wrist to his partner's waist and pushes. Control of the attacker's elbow is very important here. Also be aware that the attacker may attempt to yield to the push to his waist by turning to avoid the push. This would open up an excellent opportunity for the attacker to send the defending partner into the void (**Yin Jin Luo Kong**).

When practicing **Peng Lu An Ji**, look for resistances. One person does the pushing and the other does the yielding, then switch. Gradually move into free pushing.

In the third of a series of Tuishou workshops, we began our practice with **Lu Fa Jing (expressing energy with rollback)**.

The attacker comes with a punch and the defender uses **Peng** and then **Lu (rollback)**, on the back leg. Control the elbow with

the **Lu (rollback)** connecting to partner's arm between the elbow and the shoulder turning of the attacking partner's wrist and continuing to control the elbow in the same movement.

An to Peng The pusher starts with both hands on the yielding partner's **Peng** arm on his/her back leg. With the weight is on the left leg, push with the right hand, the left hand is relaxed and aware. When standing on the right leg, push out with the left hand while the right hand is relaxed and aware.

The partner doing the pushing, sinks down onto the front leg and pushes out with **An (One hand push)**. He/she tucks the **Wei Lu (tailbone)** point in the lower back and turns the waist.

Ji Fa Jing- (Squeezing the two hands to express energy) The pusher attacks with **Ji** on the back leg to the defending partner's **Peng**. **Ji** can be practiced with either hand on either foot, but it is important to be clear about which hand/leg is **full** and which is **empty**. If we practice with our weight on the left leg, then the right arm is full and the left hand which pushing out at the wrist is empty. If the attacking partner comes onto his/her front leg(right) then the left hand becomes full and the right hand becomes empty. Conversely, when all the weight is on the right leg, then the left arm is full and the right arm is empty. Coming onto the left front leg, the right hand becomes full and the left becomes empty. The change is made in the mind.

*One can defend with the spiral and then send it back to the partner breaking his root with it. This is one way to use the spiral. First rooting the energy into the ground as it comes in and then spiraling it back in the form of **Jing***.*

Use a straight-line push, finding the line into the partner's center. If the center of the body is found, then no strength or force is necessary to push. This requires **Yi (mind intent). The intention is clear and straight so if the partner turns and deflects, the line of attack to the center continues. The pusher attacks without going beyond the point where he/she loses his/her equilibrium or center.*

Root the push by relaxing the **Weilu point(tailbone)** in the lower back. Stick to the partner like chewing gum, that is very difficult to get rid of.

In Tuishou, use the arms less and the legs more and do not allow the knees to collapse in. The weight is on the back leg and be able to lift the front leg without moving the body. Practice rooting by standing on one leg. Relax the arms by the side of the body and tuck the **Weilu point(tailbone)**. Breathe deep into the **Dantian**. Relax and listen to your partner's energy. If the partner is not relaxed you will know when he is going to push. Being on the back leg while practicing Push hands enables the practitioner to use the waist. Being on the front foot may give the partner the opportunity to trip you.

**If your partner doesn't push, then don't move
Develop and practice the **Yi (mind intent)****

Laoshi pushed at the **Dantian** of each student and then pushed at the back to see if we were stable.

Laoshi talked about the breath. Breathing through the nose and out the nose cools the body. This breath is preferably used during the summer. Breathing in through the nose and out the mouth

can be trained all year, but better in the autumn. Breathing in through the mouth and out the mouth is a breath used to warm the body. A breath for the winter.

Here we are practicing moving and refining chi.

Moving chi around the back for men and around the front for women. For men the front of the body is **Yin** and the back is **Yang**. While for women the front of the body is **Yang** and the back is **Yin**.

Breath has to be long and quiet; long enough to move chi a long way. During the in breath the tongue touches the roof of the mouth and on the out breathe the tongue comes between the teeth and splits the breath so there is no loss of Chi. Breathing is a purifying and refining process. The chi from the air moves down to the **Dantian** and impurities leave the body through the lungs. The **Yi** shows the way for the Chi like a guide which shows the way. With practice the chi moves on its own.

Movement of the **Chi to Dantian**; particularly to the **Chi Hai (Sea of Chi)** in the Kidney area in the back. Breathing into the **Dantian** filling the **Sea of Chi**. It takes all the Chi you can give it. Then empty half the chi on the out breath. When sitting in meditation all the Chi can be expelled but when doing Tuishou the Sea of Chi should retain some chi.

The body becomes like a hard rubber ball that can bounce your partner away; no matter where the push comes.

Whether to the **Dantian** or the shoulder, absorb the push into the root and the opponent will be pushed away. The whole body

becomes filled with **Chi** and the internal and external becomes one chi.

When sitting in meditation or doing T'ai Chi, the **Weilu(tailbone)** point is tucked so that the **Bai Hui** and the **Huiyin** points are in alignment. This allows the **Chi Hai (Sea of Chi)** to relax and fill up with Chi.

Be more and more relaxed and be in the center, which is stillness.

When being pushed at the **Dantian** be rooted and do not resist. If there is any resistance, then when the person doing the pushing pulls his or her hand away, the person being pushed will move. Try not to resist any push. Most people respond to their partner; if he/she is relaxed, they will relax, if he/she is using hard strength, they will use hard strength. Do not respond to the environment but remain in the center, which is stillness.

Do not use brittle **Li** (hard strength). Brittle hard strength against soft strength will break like a bat hitting a rubber tire. The bat will get bounced away. **Ding Jing** is not always yielding **Jing**. It is a non-yielding kind of **Jing**, which is another weapon we have. It is not to be used all the time. When using **Ding Jing**, fill up the **Dantian** and the **Chi Hai** with Chi. The **Chi** also protects these areas from attack.

When doing the form, the body moves together. The arms or any part of the body do not move alone but as one unit.

Fa Jing

The push comes from the **Chi Hai (Sea of Chi)** When pushing, relax the **Weilu (tailbone)** point in the lower back.

When standing up or sitting, the back or **Chi Hai** pushes out with the same force as the front. This is the way to balance the forces. Breathe out as the push is applied. **Yi** is focused on the back. It is important not to use external **Li (hard strength)**. Arm is open a small bit. We are trying to achieve a unity of body and mind. One line of energy from the back leg to the waist up the back. **Weilu** sinks and moves forward while the **Chi Hai** moves back. the arms and the back create this strong egg shape. All forces are balanced. No matter whatever part of the body moves, we learn to understand where a person's center is and where his weight is.

First you must have backward, and then you can have forward, first downward then upward. The elbows are not pointed out but down. The energy will be directed out if the elbows are pointed out.

Even if one pushes straight, that push may not be effective. First, move them (often this is forgotten), then you can use 4 ounces to push.

The push comes like lightning and the partner does not know what hit him.

Relax the upper part of the body so chi can flow up the spine and out the legs. You can sink deeper into the legs if the upper body is relaxed. The back is smooth and rounded when filled with Chi, **Tiger back, Bear waist.**

With **Ji Fa Jing** it is possible to create vibrating power to break your partner's root. When doing **Ji (squeeze)** practice on the front and back leg with a straight push into the body of the partner.

1. Lu Fa jing on the advantageous side

2. Ji Fa Jing after doing the **Lu** to deflect

3. Cai Pull to the side. First pull then move the hand to the side and pull again.

Keep empty and full (**Yin and Yang**) clear. The sides of the body are also full and empty.

Pulling exercise is practicing **Ting Jing**, Intercept with soft energy. When intercepting, the fingers facing up, **Lu (Rollback)** is in contact with the arm between the elbow and the shoulder

When practicing **Lu (Rollback)**, pull the arm down to the side otherwise there won't be enough room to express energy with **Lu Fa Jing**.

If you defend with **Lu** and the defending partner is in the **disadvantageous position**, he/she can defend by stepping back, then he/she is in the **advantageous position**. If you defend with **Lu** and you are in the **disadvantageous position**, you can switch to the **advantageous position** by stepping back.

When doing **Pull Down (Cai)**, pay attention to which leg is full or empty. The **Cai** movements may seem easy to practice but by practicing **Cai**, it can develop **Ting Jing (listening energy)** which can lead to understanding **Jing**. If you cannot find an opening,

give a tug (**Cai**) to find one. then give a tug (**Cai**) and push. When the partner falls into the void with the tug then you can push.

Remember that the arms do move alone but follow the waist. Open the shoulder; the partner will feel that the arm is very heavy.

When meeting hard energy, meet it with soft listening energy turn the body naturally. When turning the body strike with the palm, and empty the waist.

Take in the incoming energy, circle and return it.

The circle deflects, then use the spiral to push. The body first goes down then there is a spiraling up to push. The arm is connected to the whole body. **Learn how to spiral your partner up with his own energy.**

Yang Lu Chan used the whole body when pushing. Use one hand to keep your partner off balance and the other to push.

Watching the shoulder of your partner can tell you when a push is coming. if someone cocks their arm back in preparation to push, then there is even more time.

Find ways to use the movements in the form and look for opportunities. Whatever the partner throws at you, you can use. There is no time to think.

Begin to see how to use **four ounces to move a thousand pounds** and to move your partner without using hard strength*.

*Laoshi discussed that there are different ways to interpret using four ounces to move a thousand pounds. He said that the way we move a thousand pounds was to first break the root of the partner and to get them moving and unstable, Then, it is possible to use 4 ounces to move them.

If your partner changes you change. If he changes the rules, you change. Upwards, downwards. Work on the individual movements and then work on them in combinations.

When your partner uses a two-hand push to the chest, catch his/her incoming energy and move his arms behind him/her then twist the waist to the left or the right. This movement comes from **Embrace Tiger Return to Mountain (Bao Hu Guai Shan)** If the right leg is forward, twist the waist to the right, if left leg is forward, twist the waist to the left.

When shifting weight from back leg to front leg or vice versa. It is a matter of being able to lift the heel. The whole body does not move. When sinking on the front leg, be able to lift the back heel.

Advantageous Position.... right leg forward, left arm in **Peng** position or left leg forward, right arm in **Peng** position).

Disadvantageous Position...Right leg forward, right arm in **Peng** position or left leg forward, left arm in **Peng** position.

When using **Peng (Ward off)** to catch energy, the opposite hand connects to incoming partner's elbow. If he doesn't push, don't move, **be one with your partner**. If he deflects do something new but know whether you are in an **advantageous** or **disadvantageous position**.

Use the **Peng** hand as a leader. Catching the partner's incoming energy and lead him into the void, look for directions to change. Know when to change directions. Pushing to the side saves energy and it is easy to do. Straight pushes take time to deflect.

Being soft without the use of **Nei Li (hard strength)**, slowly moving in circles using internal energy, staying centered and connecting the waist with the arm. Neither partner lets up pressure all around the circle. Connecting the shoulder-hip-waist-leg. Feeling the root through the connection, then no matter how much strength or energy comes in it cannot enter. Bounce away the partner away as he adds more pressure. Sink the shoulder, drop the elbow and make the connection between the back, hip, waist, legs and then transfer energy. The structure helps you maintain balance.

Use the **Dantian** as a pushing off place. You will be able to bounce away any incoming energy because the partner doesn't feel they're being pushed away. **Imagine a tire being inflated.**

Practice understanding energy and the need to be relaxed. Making full the internal energy, so you can transfer. If it is not full enough you will not be able to transfer energy. It comes down to staying relaxed. The shoulder and elbow being one. When the shoulder relaxes and opens, the energy can open up and be expressed. Start putting the mind intent (**Yi**) into it.

Both partners are in **Peng** position: The first movement is very light, like a feather. The second movement is very heavy and strong from the inside This is getting the root into the mind. If

you have internal energy, there is no need to be afraid; even pushing with someone who is very strong. Slowly build up **Nei Jing, (internal strength)**. Use internal strength to deflect. Imagine fullness from the inside. Arms are heavy and sunk. Take **Li or hard strength** out of the practice. When we use **(Li) hard strength**, the shoulders will come up.

In another practice, one partner directs a slow punch at his/her partner's chest. It is met and deflected with **Peng Lu**. Gently meeting the incoming punch off to the side. Use **Shou Pipa (Wield the Pipa)** movement.

In Tuishou, move out of the realm of hard external strength (Li) and resistance and be in the realm of internal strength (Nei Li) and relaxation. This is the path, which leads to real **Gongfu (skill achieved through hard work and practice)**. If you use strength and resistance, you will become strong to a point, but if you stop practicing you will regress quickly. Being relaxed and soft enables yielding and the ability to deflect an incoming push. When deflecting meet the incoming force with soft listening energy. Deflect with **Song (relaxation)** and **Ro (softness)**, not losing contact, absorbing and sticking.

As soon as the hands meet a partner, start to change. **Listening energy (ting Jing)** is crucial. Do not stand and wait to be pushed. Use one hand then the other to push and channel energy. Hands are lively, rotating, sticking, and changing. Hands are be light and listening and work together. They are constantly listening and transforming. Allow the hands to rise and to make contact with

the partner. Also, use the body to listen to your partner's hands while looking for the partner's center.

Changes and transformation become manifest through familiarity and the movements become so familiar that the hands move without thinking. Practicing sticking to your partner and it feels like there are suction cups on your hands.

The whole body is moving together from ankle to the wrist. Use leg strength. not just the arms.

Be empty, and entice your partner to fall into the void, temporarily losing balance and root. Be ready for that moment.

Being out of breath indicates the use of **Li (external strength)** rather than internal strength. There is a limit to **Li (hard strength)** but there is no limit to **Nei Li (internal strength)**

The partner feels controlled even without being pushed. Start to build a web from where your partner cannot escape. You are controlling him/her. As soon as there is a break, energy can be expressed (**Fa Jing**). Keep the heart and mind on the straight.

Sticking is soft, with no resistance or use of hard strength. Use the mind and chi and when pushing, look for the straight line into your partner's center*.

**Connecting to a person's center requires a degree of listening skill, as well as a fair bit of experience and practice. With the first push one rarely finds the center of the partner. It requires several*

pushes. Laoshi often spoke of a soft agile hand on the body of partner; with a soft hand one can gently find the center of the partner. This is the moment of opportunity to push. Continuously search for the partner's center, looking for opportunities and not pushing before finding one.

Using **Li** (hard strength) is going off on a tangent. Outside is soft, calm and relaxed. Remove **Li** from your vocabulary. **Nel Li** (Internal strength) comes from the **Dantian** and the whole body channels energy. The arms and waist move as one. With the waist moving and turning, naturally, circularity will appear. The chi and the body become like a ball with the Dantian as the center. All movements are circular.

Remember the **Chi Hai**, (Sea of Chi) in the lower back. Allow the lower back to relax, little by little it becomes a habit. Coordinate everything. **Use your mind to transfer force. Using the mind to create like an explosion, like an earthquake.**

Disadvantageous position looks for ways to get back to **advantageous** position. The back needs to have spring and flexibility. When being pushed the flexibility helps to gather the energy and push back. Elasticity. Exercises 3 or 10-help us exercise flexibility in the back-gather energy in the bend.

When **shifting weight**, lift the heel shifting from the front leg to back leg or back to front leg. There is just a slight movement of the body. It can be done very quickly.

When a push comes to the **Dantian**, first spiral down, then **Cai** using the side of the hand, (as in a chop) to meet the wrist the



other hand to the elbow, The weight is on the back leg. The other hand connects to the elbow, the weight is on the back leg. Create the void. Give a push to the partner he/she is in the void. A quick jerk, then give a push, little

things make a difference.

Review Class

Practiced beginning Push Hands. **Peng Fa Jing** off the back leg, then taking a half step forward. Right hand is in **Peng** and the left hand deflects in an angular direction. The back leg remains in place but the front leg moves forward and back, receiving and transferring energy.

First catch the energy and throw it back (**Jie Jing**). If done well, the partner will jump. Feed the partner, don't block your partner's energy.

The back leg does not move or come off the ground. Shift the weight to the front leg. Two half-steps back and shift the weight to front leg. keep still and plunge down on the front leg and wait for the partner then step back. The **Peng** hand is not doing the pushing. Draw the partner's energy into nothing and catch the energy and throw it back.

Wait for the energy to come to you, catch it and sink then push from the front leg. A back-leg push is very quick.

Look for opportunities. The empty hand connects at the elbow. Full body pushes forward together. Try to imagine this and work on it. The **Peng** arm is relaxed with no stiffness.

Peng in small circles using **Nei Li**, being sure not to give up contact. Stay with your center and puff up the back. Chi is circulating in all parts of the body. Stay within the chest area and not give your partner an opening. Do not move too much.

Peng Lu An Ji First changing legs then changing arms then changing both. **You can change from disadvantageous to advantageous just by stepping back.** Stepping forward doing **An Lu.**

The person who is deflecting, does not turn too far. If he/she turns too far then the partner may have an opening. Do not go beyond your center. It is not necessary to follow your partner too much. Don't lose your center. It is also a waste of energy to deflect too much. Listen carefully so that when your partner changes you can change. Arms stay relaxed so you can listen to whatever is coming. Be ready to change. Arms should stay relaxed. Take the stiffness out of the arms.

One person is in **An (push)** position and one is in **Peng (advantageous position)**. The person in **Peng** has his/her hand on the outside of the elbow of the person in **An** position.

Person in **Peng** takes two half steps back to receive and the person in **An** position takes two half steps forward to transfer energy. The person in **Peng** grounds the energy that is incoming. Receives it, catches it and transfers it back. Don't block the energy, catch it and throw it back. If you are practicing well, your partner might jump up when being pushed.

Feeding your partner energy is much like throwing your partner a ball. Use the back leg to catch and use the back leg to throw and use it as a spring. Do not shift or move the back leg.

Two half steps back and two half steps up. Sink onto the front leg. Catch the energy and then throw it back. It should be quite natural. Wait to see what the partner does.

Yin Jing Luo Kong (Drop the incoming energy into nothingness) catching the energy. It is not a matter of how hard the incoming energy is. Be able to catch it. Timing has to be right! Adjust yourself to the energy that is coming. Sinking on the front leg to remain stable. Your partner should not feel anything is going on. The whole body moves forward as a unit. Ground the energy that is coming. The more relaxed and natural the better.

When your partner comes at you, sink down. In effect, you are waiting for him, **so sinking means waiting**. Sink and extend the arm to open up the shoulder, Then, if he pushes turn the waist to yield. So, sink then turn. To yield. Sink to root the push then turn to yield to the push. For small pushes the shoulder separates from the rest of the body. But stronger pushes require then we wait.

Listen with the mind and not the ears

When the body moves, the whole body moves. The joints fold when pushed. knees, elbows, waist, chest use the folding ability. If the partner is lightly pushed, listen to your partner's energy. Every place can stick to the partner and don't resist.

At the beginning of June, we began working in groups of three, one person pushing in turn with all three in the group. We started with **Ding Bu** (stationary push hands)

Laoshi encouraged us to use all the pushing methods. He reminded us to stabilize ourselves before attempting a push. We need to have a foundation and **Ding Bu** is our foundation. It is important to remember to stay soft, listening with the entire body and mind, and use the **Yi (mind intent)** to listen to our partner's energy. Hands are lively and responding to our partner's attack. Use the waist to yield giving ourselves to our partner listening for fullness and emptiness using various attacking methods moving in different directions, sink, waiting for someone to come, then turning if the push comes, listening and sticking (bonding) to your partner, constantly looking for opportunities using sinking or sitting as well as rising to discharge energy.

If someone pushes hard go down on the back leg. Working on bricks helps our stability. The heart needs to be quiet. Bring the heart/mind into your foot. Varying your hand movements, catch the strong push and turn the waist. Use many different hand movements so your partner doesn't know what to expect.

He/she will have to change with your movements. As soon as you are in a difficult position the best thing to do is release and relax.

Do more **Bao Hu Guai Shan (Embrace Tiger Return to the Mountain)**, to get more spring in the legs. Be able to squat and yield and pushed at the shoulder. The basis of Tuishou is **Ding Bu (stationary Push hands)**. To channel energy you have to fix your step before you discharge energy. You have to put your mind into your feet. Stand lower and vary the height of the stance up and down. When you practice the form, practice low, strong and hard. Variation is good.

When doing **Single Whip**, the energy comes out of the back leg. Stretch open. Reach the point where the legs are shaking. Ligaments need to be stretched open. The basic exercises are crucial.

We practiced pushing while the partner yields. Yielding partner stays in contact with his/her arms when being pushed. The yielding partner follows the pusher and the pusher looks for stuck points. The pusher continues to push until the yielding partner is completely closed up. Almost like pushing him/her into a corner, where there is less and less room to maneuver. When being pushed at the **Dantian** or other parts of the chest or when someone keeps doing the same push, find a different way to yield. That will surprise them. Sometimes it takes five or more pushes. First controlling the elbow then pushing to one side or the other, then pulling to the side then (**Ban Lan**), (**twisting the joint**), then coming up and pushing at the chest, the partner

yields and then a soft push to the hip joint. Keep looking for the opportunity to push.

Place Ting Jing (listening Jing) on the shoulder when it is pushed and also put the shoulder on Ting Jing.

Laoshi cautioned us not to grab when doing **Cai** (Pull down). Just a light grab below the elbow or slightly below the elbow. The energy should be flowing, changing soft continuous, looking for opportunities. One hand blocking at the same time pushing out (if there is a good chance). Pushes should not be too easily seen, not hard or slapping.

Application and practice should be one

Work inwardly and externally simultaneously. Practice the form, which is the outward work and work inwardly by practicing **Neigong** which is **Yi** and **Chi**.

Inward strength must be matched with outward relaxation, pliancy and softness.

Once your listening improves, your sensitivity increases. Relaxed, pliant ad soft. Try not to use hard strength when deflecting. When being pushed follow the push into the body. Not a quick fearful reaction. Use the whole body as a hand. Sticking and bonding to the incoming push. Catch and bonding and yielding at the same time. **Not a sudden movement to deflect.** Investigate bonding and yielding.

Changes should become natural. The mystery becomes apparent through familiarity. Movements need to be so familiar that the hands move without thinking about them. If you are in the **disadvantageous** position then there is no choice about yielding and listening to the push. You are not in a position to push, yield and wait for a better opportunity to push.

When doing **Peng Lu An ji** changes take place in the stepping and in the hands. Pusher steps forward with **An** and then **Ji**, stepping back in **Peng Lu**. This is a **sticking** practice. Imagine that there are suction cups on your hands. Change takes place on **An**.

One step back-**Peng Lu An Ji** at the end change hands and walk back—**Peng Peng Lu.....An An Ji**

Change direction goes with changing arms

Changing legs (not changing arms) you change from **advantageous to disadvantageous** or the other way, but not directions.

When changing **both** arms and legs, no change from **advantageous** or **disadvantageous** happens.

4. Just changing arms...disadvantageous to advantageous or advantageous to disadvantageous. **Disadvantageous** position looks for ways to get back to **advantageous** position-the back needs to have spring and flexibility. When being pushed the flexibility helps to gather the energy and push back.

Try to move out of the realm of strength and resistance and be in the realm of internal strength and relaxation, which leads to real Gongfu. The more practice the better one gets. If you use strength and resistance, you will get strong to a point but if you stop practicing you will regress quickly. You can never have too much internal strength. There is a limit to hard strength but no limit to internal strength.

Use internal strength then you will not get out of breath.

Don't depend on strength but be relaxed and soft then you will be better able to deflect and yield. If you can deflect and yield then you do not need that much strength when pushing.

In the deflection, empty and allow the partner fall into the void, temporarily losing his/her balance and root. Be ready for that moment.

Deflect with **Song (relaxation)** and **Ro(softness)**. Never lose contact, absorb and stick. The partner feels controlled even without a push. Little by little learn to ground a push.

You start to build a web that your partner cannot escape from. As soon as there is a break, energy can be transferred. Sticking must be soft, don't use resistance or strength, Use the mind and chi.

Using strength is going off on a tangent. Keep the heart and mind on the straight. Outside is soft, calm and relaxed. When you are ready to transfer, now comes the steel.

Cut **Li** or **external strength** out of your vocabulary. Internal strength comes from the **Dantian** and the whole body helps channel energy. **Peng Lu** needs to be lively. Looks like soft circles with fewer angles. The arms and the waist are one. Everything works together. Naturally circularity will appear. The chi and the body become like a ball.

There is no rest when studying Gongfu. Constant investigation, clear the thoughts, the body listens to the mind.

Chi is in the feet (the root). The leg that has the weight should not move, unless you change weight. Put the weight and root in your feet, so that the upper body can relax and be agile. Relax the upper body so the movements can be round.

Practice Methods

In this **Tui Shou** class we practiced different methods of expressing internal energy (**Fa Jing**): **Peng Fa Jing**, **Lu Fa Jing**, **An Fa Jing**, **Ji Fa Jing**, **Cai Fa Jing**, **Lie Fa Jing**, and **Kao Fa Jing**

We began by practicing **Peng Fa Ji** The pushing partner begins in a sitting position on his/her back leg in **Peng** position. Rising up on the back leg to push, the push is directed at the upper forearm of the partner.

The receiving partner is not directly facing the partner but stands sideways. The partner receiving the push is instructed not to turn or yield to the push. Laoshi explained the importance of the role of the person who was receiving the push.

An Fajing One hand pushes at the chest of the yielding partner. The yielding partner's hands are crossed over his/her chest.

While the weight remains on the back leg, the push comes from a rising movement.

On a front leg push, if the weight is on the right leg in front, the push is with the left hand, if the weight is on the left front leg, then the push comes from the right hand.

It is important to wait for the right moment when the weight has completely shifted to the front leg before doing the push. Wait for the change from the back leg to the front leg.

Lu Fa Jing (using Rollback to express energy) This movement is the application of **Wield the Pipa** in the first Duan. The attacker slowly punches at the chest of the defender. The defending partner come from above and places his hand on top of the wrist of the attacker and cover the fist or comes from underneath to control the fist. The defender then steps around (as in the form) and pushes with **Lu (Rollback)** to the chest of his/her partner. The push comes from the back leg.

Ji Fa Jing The partner practicing **Ji** places his/her **Peng** arm on his partner's crossed arms while being on his/her back leg. He/borrows the energy of the partner and expresses **Ji** by moving his weight onto the front leg.

Cai Fa Jing (Pull Down) The attacking partner slowly punches toward the **Dantian** of the defender who intercepts with **Peng**. The defender **Peng** hand turns and connect to the attacker's wrist while the other hand connects to the attacker's elbow and

pulls down. The defender then continues by pushing out at the attacker's **Dantian**.

Lie Fa Jing (Twist the joint) The attacking partner slowly punches at chest level and the defending partner connects to the wrist and turns it down and the free hand connects it to the attacker's elbow and pushes out on the front leg.

Kou Fa Jing (Shoulder strike) is practiced into the cupped hands of the defending partner.

Peng Lu An Ji In this movement, we are looking for resistance. One person does the pushing and the other does the yielding, then the defender does the pushing and the pusher defends. The back leg does not move.

Yeh ma Fen zong (Part the Wild Horse's Mane) Laoshi instructed us to go down on the back leg when doing a slice to the neck. Then a half step and then there is an attack with a shoulder stroke (**Kou Fa Jing**)

Then we practiced deflecting an incoming punch at the elbow and then punching underneath the elbow. The deflecting movement is quick and we must be sure the elbow has been cleanly deflected or the attacker can use his/her elbow to attack the chest. **Zhou Di Tui (Punch Underneath the Elbow)**

The body being full of **Chi** increases the ability to listen and understand the partner. Also, it is a way to guard the body.

It is not just an arm that one puts up in Peng, it is an arm connected to an entire body of Chi.

Peng Lie as practiced in **Cloud hands (Yuen Shou)** **Peng** hand blocks an incoming push. Turning the **Peng** hand and connecting to the wrist and with the free hand connecting to the elbow of the attacker. Holding the elbow against the side of the attacker's body and **Fa Jing (expressing energy)**. Again, one hand covers the wrist as a punch is coming. the other hand controls the elbow turning inside toward the body.

*We can practice **Ji** (Squeezing the palms together to express energy) on the back leg or on the front leg. When doing **Ji** on the left/ back leg then the right arm is in **Peng** position. When doing **Ji** with the right leg/ back leg then the left arm is in **Peng** position. The power of the movement comes from squeezing the palms together. **Ji** can be practiced with either hand, on either foot. When moving onto the front leg in **Ji**, the full arm become empty and the empty arm become full, making the change in the mind.*

In practicing **Peng Lu**, the attacking partner comes at the defending partner with a slow punch. The defending partner who is in **Peng** position connects to the wrist of the attacker and twist (**Lie**) and controls the partner's upper arm by doing **Lu**.

Borrow the partner's energy to push

One pushes and the other partner defends. Yield and watch where the hands are going. Yielding in the place where the push goes, and emptying. 30% of the **Dantian** is full so person can **Ding or root** but the breathing remains relaxed, continue to breathe. Also, when pushed, go to the back leg then onto the

front leg and push. Importantly, remember to relax the **Weilu** point in the lower back in order to stay rooted.

Stick to the partner like chewing gum that is impossible to get rid of. Work slowly with a partner

Use the legs more

When pressure is applied to the chest sink down onto the back leg. Being on the back leg when doing Push hands makes it easier to use the waist, while being on the front foot allows the partner to trip you more easily.

Emphasis is on the development and practice of the Yi. (Mind intent)

Wait for a push, if he/she does not move do not move. If he/she moves, be the first to move and wait for the right opportunity and use multiple pushes.

Push to shoulder and stay on the back leg. Move to the front leg, combining first two basic Tuishou exercises.

Practice rooting by standing on one leg with the weight is on the back leg. The arms are relaxed by the side of the body. Tuck the **Weilu(tailbone)** point, relax the **sternum** and breathe from the **Dantian**.

Be able to lift the front leg without moving the body

To defend against a **two- hand push** to the upper chest: Raise the arms in three possible positions:

- 1) Raise the arms connecting to the attacking partner's elbows with the top of the palms. The palms are facing **downward**.
- 2) Palms are facing one another, connecting to the **outside** of the elbows of the attacking partner.
- 3) The palms are facing **upward** connecting to the attacking partner elbows from underneath.

The best method is for the palms to face **downward** toward the floor since it is possible to both **deflect and push in the same movement**. Using the other defensive positions of the hands, requires that you make two movements, first to deflect the incoming push and then to push.

Laoshi talked about the breath: Breathing in through the nose and out the mouth can be used all year-but better in the autumn. In through the mouth and out the mouth is a breath can warm the body in the winter. Breathe through the nose and out the mouth is a regulating breath which can warm the body.

Here we are practicing both moving and refining chi.

Moving chi up along the back for men, from the lower **Dantian** chi moves to **Hui Yin in the Perineum** then to the **Weilu in the lower back**. Then to **Jia Ji**, (the gate in the center of the back).

For women, Chi moves from the **Dantian** up the front of the body. For men the front of the body is **Yin** and the back is **Yang**.

While for women the front of the body is **Yang** and the back is **Yin**.

The **Jia Ji** gate absorbs the purified Chi from the **Dantian**. This point is connected to all the vital organs.

In T'ai Chi, we slightly round the back and fill the **Jia Ji** gate. The goal is to move enough purified chi in this area so that it can make the crossing to the **Weilu** point. The kidneys are on either side of the **Weilu**. The spinal cord is made up of 24 bones.

The breath has to be long and quiet. Long enough to move Chi a long way. During the **in** breath, the tongue touches the roof of the mouth and on the **out** breath the tongue comes between the teeth and splits the breath so there is no loss of Chi.

Breathing is a purifying and refining process. The chi from the air goes down to the **Dantian** and impurities leave the body through the lungs. The **Yi (mind intent)** shows the way for the Chi like a guide that shows the way. With practice the chi knows where to go and it goes by itself. Use as little **Li (hard strength)** as possible.

Movement of the Chi to **Dantian**, particularly to the **Chi Hai (Sea of Chi)** in the Kidney area in the back.

Breathing into the **Dantian**. It can take all the Chi you can give it. Then empty half the chi on the out breath. When sitting in meditation all the Chi can be expelled but when doing **Tuishou** some chi should be retained in the **Dantian**.

The body becomes like a hard rubber ball that can bounce your partner away; no matter where the push comes whether to the

Dantian or to the shoulder. Absorb the push into the root and the opponent will be pushed away. The whole body becomes filled with Chi so internal and external becomes one chi.

When sitting in meditation or doing T'ai Chi the **Wei Lu (tailbone)** point is tucked so that the **Bai Hui (an acupuncture cavity located at the top of the head)** and the **Huiyin (an acupuncture cavity located in the perineum area)** points are in alignment.

Relax more and more and be in the center which is stillness.

When being pushed at the **Dantian** be rooted and do not resist. If there is any resistance then when someone pulls their hand away, the person being pushed will move. So, try not to resist any push.

Most people will respond to their partner. If the partner is relaxed, they will relax, if the partner is using hard strength they will respond with hard strength.

Do not respond to the environment but remain in the center, which is stillness.

Do not use brittle hard strength. Brittle hard strength against soft strength will break like a bat hitting a rubber tire. The bat will get bounced away. Fill up the **Dantian**. Chi should be full here to protect this area from attack.

When doing form, the body moves together. The arms or any part of the body do not move alone. Move as one unit.

Fa Jing

When preparing to push, relax the **Weilu(tailbone)** point in the lower back. The back is straight. When you stand up, the back or

Chi Hai pushes out with the same force as the front. This is the way to balance the forces. We breathe out as the push is applied.

The **Yi** is focused on the back. It is important not to use (**Li**) external strength.

Achieve a unity of body and mind.

One line of energy from the back leg to the waist up the back.

When pushing on the front foot, the **Weilu (tailbone)** sinks and moves forward while the **Chi Hai** moves back. The arms and back create a strong egg shape. First moving backward, and then forward, first downward then upward. The elbows are not pointed out but down. The energy will be directed out if the elbows are pointed out.

The push comes like lightning the person does not know what hit him.

Relax the upper part of the body so chi can flow up the spine and out the legs. The chi can sink deeper into the legs if the upper body is relaxed. The back (**Tiger back**) is smooth and rounded when filled with Chi.

Ji Fa Jing after doing **Lu (sweep to the side)** to deflect. With **Ji (Press)**, it is possible to create vibrating power to break someone's root.

Cai Jing (pulling to the side) The pull is quick and soft (without the use of hard strength). Be sure to pull on an angle to the body or else the partner can use this pull as an opportunity to push or uproot you. Pay attention to which leg is full or empty. Create the

void by giving a quick tug. While the partner is in the void, that is the moment to push.

The sides of the body are full and empty.

This pulling exercise is practicing **Ting Jing (listening energy)** intercept with soft energy-not hard energy.

When doing **Lu**, pull the arm down to the side so that there is room to do **Lu Fa Jing**. When intercepting with **Lu** the fingers are pointing up. The **Lu (sweep to the side)** is connected to the partner's arm between the elbow and the shoulder.

Always try to find the **advantageous position**. If you do **Lu** and they are in the **disadvantageous position**, they can defend by stepping back. then they are in the **advantageous position**.

When meeting hard energy, meet it with soft listening energy.

Become familiar with the movements. Analyze them and use them in in your Tuishou practice.

If you are using **Peng** in the advantageous position, yield in the **downward** direction. **Peng** moves **upward** to yield in the **disadvantageous** position.

The arm should be relaxed with no stiffness. **Peng** sticks to the partner's hand. Upward **Peng** can catch the partner's incoming force. Use the **Peng** hand as a leader. Catch the partner's incoming energy and lead him into the void.

If he/she does not push, do not move. Be one with your partner. If he/she deflects do something new. Be aware of who is in the **advantageous** or **disadvantageous position**. **Disadvantageous**

position looks for ways to get back to **advantageous** position. The back leg needs to have spring and flexibility.

If the partner moves to get a better position, arrive first since you are the better listener.

Look for directions to change and know when to change direction.

Push to the side saves energy It is much easier than to do straight pushes. Try to discover circular pushes.

Exercises #3 and Exercise #10 practice flexibility in the back and gathering energy in the bend.

To shift the weight, it is not necessary to completely move the body. The difference is the movement of the heel. The body doesn't move.

Lie (twist the joint) One hand is at the elbow. Turn the waist and control the wrist and elbow, line up shoulders, then push.

Tensing up is a natural reaction. The elbow is pressured downward and outward. The downward movement breaks the root. Meet an arm gently, softly with no external force. If the partner relaxes, give a tug.

If you cannot push a person any further, then give a tug. If you cannot find an opening, use a tug to create an opening.

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Review Class

Practiced beginning Push Hands. **Peng Fa Jing** off the back leg, half step forward. The left hand deflects in an angular direction.

The back leg remains in place, front leg moves in and out, receive and transfer energy.

First catch energy and throw it back. If it is done well, then the partner will jump back. The yielding partner should try not to block the pushing partner's energy. The spring comes from the back leg is important and the back leg should not move or come off the ground.

One person is in **An** position and the other is in **Peng** advantageous position.

Take two half steps back to receive and take two half steps forward to transfer energy. Ground the energy that is coming. Receive it, catch it and transfer it back. Don't block the energy, catch it and throw it back. If you are practicing well, your partner might jump up when being pushed. Feed your partner energy like throwing a partner a ball, use the back leg to catch and use the back to push. Use the back leg to throw. The left hand comes up to the outside of the elbow ad use the leg as a spring. Try not to shift or move the back leg. Wait for the person to come to you.

Two half steps back and to half steps up. Sink onto the front leg. Catch the energy and then throw it back. It should be quite natural wait to see what the partner does.

Catching energy is not a matter of how hard the energy is. Be able to catch it. Timing has to be right! Adjust yourself to the energy that is coming. Be stable by sinking on the front leg. Partner should not feel anything is going on. The whole body moves forward as a unit. Ground the energy that is incoming.

The more relaxed and natural the better.

TUISHOU JI BEN DONG ZUO PUSH HANDS BASIC EXERCISES

1. ZUO, YOU ZHUAN YAO (HOU TUI)

Left/RightTwist the Waist (the body's center remains on the back leg when pushing)

2. YOU, ZUO ZHUAN YAO (QIAN TUI)

Right//Left... Twist the Waist (the body's center shifts to the front leg when pushing)

3. XIANG HOU WAN YAO Bending Backward from the Waist

4. XIANG QIAN WAN YAO

Bending Forward from the Waist

5. ZUO, YOU DANTUI GUI HUA

Left/Right Twist Down on One Leg in a Kneeling Position

6. DAN SHOU HUA YUAN TUISHOU

One Arm Moves in a Horizontal Circular Movement

7. XIANG HOU PENG SHOU WAN YAO

Ward Off (up) Bending Backward from the Waist

8. XIANG QIAN PENG SHOU WAN YAO

Ward Off (Down) Bending Forward from the Waist

9. PENG LU Ward Off Stroke from the Side

10. AN FA JIN

Press Down and Out with Energy

11. JI FA JING

Squeeze Two hands Together with Energy

12. SHUANG SHOU LI YUAN TUISHOU

Two Hands Move in a Vertical Circular motion

13. PENG LU AN JI SI SHOU LIANXU

TUISHOU FA

The Four Hands, Hold off, Stroke, Press. Squeeze
Moving in Succession

14. DALU TUISHOU FA

The Big Stroke Method of Push Hands

15. BA FA

Eight Hand/Leg Movements

Seven Important Tuishou Concepts

by Wang Yen-Nien

March 20, 1995

Once the Taiji form is learned, and the martial and practical applications are thoroughly familiar, then practice Tuishou, which is a method of responding to other people in an appropriate and timely way; strengthening the body and lengthening one's life and for reaching a realm of Daoist practice aimed at developing one's sixth sense and a higher level of awareness.

Tuishou Essential concepts

- 1. Stay relaxed, pliable** a function of Yin and Yang-full and empty- entire body should be relaxed thoroughly without the least bit of crude strength so pliable that the whole body will seem to be without bones and yet elastic, resilient and without bounce.
- 2. Build up Qi (life force)-** a function of your ability to draw the Qi deeply into the Dantian. Circulate Qi stored in the Dantian around the entire body in an unimpeded, continuous flow. Use prenatal breathing to circulate Qi in the Microcosmic orbit.”
- 3. Develop Will-** will comes by means of concentration or focus of one's attention aided by the inspiration of the sixth

sense. Do not neglect this nor be indolent. Maintain an unhurried manner.

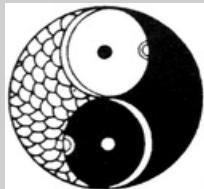
4. Develop Catching Ability Develop the ability to lead incoming force into the void. Use your arm or other parts of the body, which remain pliant. Take advantage of the right moment causing your partner to be emptied of his force.

5. Develop Bonding, sticking ability A function of your ability to expand and contract, extend and contract, freely and unhindered. Coming into contact with the partner, use the do not resist, do not let go method. Then the partner will have no place to apply his force and be unable to release his energy or escape.

6. Develop Grounding Ability is a function of your ability to use softness to overcome hardness-it can be achieved with the round and lively application of the pull or push with four ounces to topple a thousand pounds. Grounding ability causes your partner's center of gravity to rise finding himself rootless or voided of energy.

7. Develop Channeling Ability Use slowness to control fastness. If the partner does not move you do not move. If he moves even slightly, you should have already moved. Coordinate your movements with Dantian energy. When pushing aim correctly at your partner's center of gravity, using your whole body.

This will produce an outward flow of energy that feels like pure steel yet has bounce.



COMENTARY ON THE PUSH HANDS BASIC EXERCISES

Wang Laoshi said that when doing the basic push hands exercises, practice mindfully. We practice the basic exercises to help us look at the resistances in the body. The body moves as if there are no bones, no edges. Tuishou is really a practice of the mind...

Of course, we can all agree that there is absolutely no substitute for practice and for working with a qualified teacher, but I recall Wang Laoshi often repeating important points for us to keeping in mind as we practiced. I am hoping that these commentaries will be serve as a kind of reminder to practice with awareness and thoughtfulness. Some explanations may sound quite simple and others will assume a deeper, more advanced understanding of the movements and the practice of Push Hands in general. So hopefully our discussion will be of interest and value for both beginners and more advanced practitioners.

First, it is important to emphasize the value and the benefit of practicing the **Yang Jia Michuan Push Hands Basic Exercises**. Practicing the exercises frequently and practicing them correctly is fundamental.

Many people venture into the practice of Push Hands without first having practiced the basic exercises or the form. Wang Laoshi cautioned us not to move into free Push Hands without first having a deep familiarity* with the basic exercises. They provide both a structure and a foundation from which to develop a deep understanding of both the Push Hands practice and the form practice.

** Wang Laoshi taught that when you are totally familiar with the postures, you can respond and defend yourself. Changes should come naturally. The movements need to be so familiar that the hands move without thinking about them. Learn the form well so you can use the movements in Tuishou.*

When doing the form, all parts of the body move together. The arms, legs, and torso or any part of the body do not move alone, but as one unit.

Generally speaking, beginning students of Tai Chi naturally begin their practice by learning and correcting the movements and the applications of the form. The form provides an excellent foundation for the practice since in a way we are learning a new language.

The form provides the grammar, vocabulary and phrases, which are a prerequisite to developing fluency. Push Hands practice is a method by which we develop fluency and fluidity as well as a method of deepening and broadening the practice of the form.

Wang Laoshi asked us at the beginning of each Push Hands class to first practice the form, sometimes in its entirety, and then to go through the basic Tuishou exercises. In some cases, he asked

us to practice some of the exercises for an extended period, with the idea that the movements needed to become natural and automatic and to be more and more relaxed and concentrated in the practice. Only after going through the basic exercises did we move on to free pushing.

One of the reasons to practice Push Hands is to develop the confidence, softness and skill to receive a push and to become fully prepared for any push. Being pushed can be interpreted as aggressive and threatening. Also, many practitioners are fearful* of being injured.

**Wang Laoshi instructed us to take away the fear in the heart and not be afraid to relax. The more we relax the less the partner can do with us. Like a tree, push it and it straightens up again. It returns to its neutral position. Imagine catching a ball. We use a round movement to catch and return. If a straight movement is used to catch the ball , then the force will bounce us back.*

Additionally, in the Push Hands practice we work on many of the elements found in the form such as yielding, turning and controlling the waist*

** Think of the body as a ball. The center is the **Dantian**, the waist is the key. If you want to get the ball rolling it comes from the **Dantian** area. The phrase in the classics has the meaning, how can you make the **Dantian** your center?? You need to turn the body so as not get stuck. The skill is in the waist. We need to practice how to turn, how to keep the center and how to make the body whole.*

In the practice of the basic exercises, we learn to use a soft hand to gather information about our partner. We start to feel where there is resistance, tension and stiffness. These are naturally the places to push.

**Hands must be lively, light and listening as well as working together. As soon as the hands meet your partners start to change and use listening energy (Ting Jing) is crucial. Do not just stand and wait to be pushed. Use one hand then the other to channel energy. Try not to use both hands to push. Lively hands, rotating, sticking and constantly changing. Use the body to listen to your partner's hands. Always looking for his center point. Allow the hands to rise and to make contact with the pushing hand. The hands should not be dead but constantly listening and transforming. Hands do not move alone.*

They are constantly transforming.

Basic Exercise #1 Zuo, You Zhuan Yao (Hou Tui) Twist the Waist From Left to Right (The body's center stays on the back leg when pushing)

The first movement is one of the most frequent pushes we either give or receive. When receiving a push remain balanced and stable while turning the waist, keeping your center and weight on the back leg, slowly rising with the push and relaxing the lower back.

In this exercise, it is important to remember to rise onto the rear leg so that the front foot is both empty and relaxed. Relax the Achilles tendon and the ankle. Relaxing and emptying the front

leg also makes it easier to turn the waist and more difficult for your partner to sweep the front leg.

When pushing in this first exercise, start from the down position and slowly rising and turning the waist, relaxing the shoulder and having the **Yi (mind intent)** of expressing energy with the hand. Maintain a connection from the foot to the palm of the pushing hand and softly push with as little hard strength as possible. The push is mostly done with the palm of the hand and the fingers serve to gather information about your partner. Gently and softly feel whether the partner is turning or if he is resisting your push. If you feel any resistance or if he separates (moves on his own) from your hand then this is a moment of opportunity to either continue the push or to use the opposite hand to push. Feel what kind of response you are getting from your partner.

If you are the defending partner, maintain your root and control the turning of the waist; then yielding and warding off the push will not present a problem. Use the legs and the waist to help yield to the push and relax the shoulder as you receive the push.

If there is tension or resistance, this will give your partner a place to push. Try not to offer any place of resistance. Since your partner is rising his/her push will obviously be in upward direction. Be aware of how he/she is using the pushing hand. Is his/her hand soft and listening to your movements? Is the push high on the shoulder or is it on a straight line into the chest/shoulder area? If it is a straight line push, it will be more difficult to yield to it. If your partner is pushing up, then spiral up going along with his push; the movement originates from the

waist. If he/she is skilled he may push in two or more directions in the same push. First pushing to the shoulder in an upward direction and then pushing down and to the side. Try not to break off from his/her hand (lose contact), but listen (**Ting Jing**) and understanding the direction and force of the push.

2. You, Zou Zhuan Yao (Chien Tui)

Right /Left, Twist the Waist (the body's center moves to the front leg when pushing)

This movement is similar to the first movement except the person receiving the push sinks down on the rear leg and turns the waist in the direction of the front leg rather than rising up to yield to the push. (As in **Exercise #1**) If the push comes to the right shoulder turn the waist to the right. If the push is to the left turn the waist to the left.

The person pushing has to move from the back leg and come down onto the front leg while turning the waist 45 degrees and squaring the waist. It is important to square the waist so that we do not go too far with the push. Using the momentum of the movement onto the front leg and the turning of the waist gives power to the push. Connecting the pushing arm to the waist and the legs is essential here. Also, it is important for the pusher to gently tuck the back as he/she is making the push.

But the person who is doing the pushing must first create an opportunity before making the push since he can easily be pulled as he/she comes onto the front leg to make the push. When coming down on the right leg, use the left hand to push while

moving onto the left leg. Use the right hand to push with the left leg forward. This push is similar to the one in exercise #12, **Two Hands Move in Vertical Circular Movements (Shuang Shou Li Yuan Tuishou)**

Additionally, the pusher needs to stay in contact (**Ting Jing**) with the body of your partner while making the push to see what your partner's response is. Is there turning and yielding to your push or is there resistance? If there is turning and yielding then just follow and apply a second push. This is quite a stable push and it allows the pusher to get closer to the partner. Usually it is necessary to

develop an opportunity or an opening before pushing on the front leg. It is rarely used as a first push. For example, the pusher can do a **Pull Down (Cai)** to open up the shoulder or side of the body, then this front leg push can be tried. The danger with this push is that it is very easy to broadcast that you are doing this push since it is a bit of a distance from the back leg on to the front leg. When attempting this push, one needs to be aware that if the partner is skilled and experienced, he may understand your intention and wind up pushing or pulling you down. Develop power on the front leg and to feel the connection between the front foot and the opposite hand.

It is possible to practice this in one of two ways, standing in front of a wall with the back foot facing 45 degrees and the front foot gently touching the wall with all your weight on the back leg. Slowly move onto the front leg gently and mindfully pushing on the wall. While pushing, lift the back foot to be sure that the push is genuinely coming from the front leg and feel that the power of

the push is generated from the foot leg and the waist rather than from just the arm. Also check to see whether the waist is square and on a horizontal plane. It can also be practiced by first standing with all your weight on the front leg with the opposite hand gently being in contact with the wall, feeling the connection between the opposite palm and the leg. Hold that posture continuing to feel the connection. It is not a push and release but a touch and hold position.

Finally, Wang Laoshi reminded us that in pushing, first we have to connect and bond with the partner. When pushing, be relaxed; use the mind, and chi. Be soft. The purpose of first bonding is to send the partner's energy into the void. Find a way to round the pusher's energy. Imagine catching a ball. We use a round movement because if a straight movement is used, the force will be bounced .Your partner will want to get away from you once you stick to him. Just like gum, he/she will want to get rid of it once it sticks to him.

Deflect with Song (relaxation) and Ro (softness), never losing contact, absorbing and sticking. The partner feels controlled even without making a push. Be ready for that moment.

3. Xiang Hou Wan Yao

Bend Backward from the Waist

In the third basic exercise, we practice absorbing a push to the chest by sinking the chest and relaxing and tucking the lower back. To maintain our root, the lower back and the chest have to be relaxed so that there is a connection with the back foot. Relaxing the chest from inside out is the key here. If the receiver of the push

maintains a stiff and tense chest then it is quite an easy proposition for the pusher. Slowly practice rooting a direct push to the chest into the back leg. If the push is long and deep, then it might be necessary to turn the waist. If we bend back too far back, though, it may be too difficult to return a push. It is better to return to a neutral position before attempting a return push.

In T'ai Ch, too little and too much are both considered errors.

There are three possibilities for the position of the hands when you are being pushed at the chest and bending back with the arms raised. The palms can either face down or up. With the palms up, it is possible when bending back to lightly take hold of the elbows of the attacking partner and turn the waist to yield lead his/her partner into the void. By moving in this way, we are practicing **Cai (pull down)**. If the palms are down then you are in a better position to connect to your partner's arms. Then yielding and pushing can be accomplished in one motion. It is obviously much slower to have to do two movements but with the palms down, the yielding upward and the pushing can be done in one continuous movement. By bringing both arms up in the way we generally practice this movement we are creating balance in the movement.

The third possibility way to respond to an attack to the chest is to place both hands on the outside of the elbows of the attacking partner. The initial movement is to break the power of the incoming push by moving the attacker's elbow together toward the center of his/her chest and then pushing. Here it is very important to relax the chest in **Hang Shiung Bau Bei**. This looks like two movements but it is really one movement. Try not to

break off or separate from his push but follow his/her push and to listen to the direction and force of it.

If you are the partner who is doing the pushing, look closely at how your partner absorbs your push. Is your partner absorbing or resisting your push? You can tell if he is resisting since you will feel a hardness. This hardness is the point where you can push off from.

Practice the turning of the waist so that it becomes a habit.

Practicing **Bending Backward from the Waist** helps to improve the flexibility in the back and to gather energy in the bend.

4. XIANG QIAN WAN YAO

Bend Forward from the Waist

This is a passive yielding movement in which we root an incoming push to the **Dantian** by sinking down on the back foot. Here we do not want to resist the push while the body or the arms remain in contact with the push at the Dantian level. As we descend on the back leg, the arms naturally rise up to help maintain balance. If the push is too deep and too powerful to yield to it, we have an option. We can gently take hold of the pusher's elbow and gently move it to the side by turning the waist. It is important here not to use any strength in your yielding movement so as not to telegraph your intention. When you move his/her arm to the side, you are creating an opportunity for yourself since your partner will be falling into the void. In this moment, it is not necessary to use any hard strength (**Li**). If he/she senses that you are leading him into

the void and he begins to withdraw or move back, then just follow him and push him.

5. ZUO, YOU DANTUI GUI HUA

Twist Down on One Leg in a Kneeling position

Here the pushing partner moves onto his /her front leg and connects to his/her partner's shoulder blade. Left hand/right shoulder, right hand /left shoulder. The push is actually made up of three parts that are performed in one fluid movement. The first part of the push is made in a horizontal direction across the body, the second push is in a downward direction and the final part is in the outward/diagonal direction. Be aware of how the partner responds to the first push. See how he/she yields to the push. Does he root the push well or does he begin to rise up. If he /she does begin to rise, follow his/her movement and push in the direction the partner is moving.

By following his movement and applying a soft push you will need little or no hard strength. Also be aware that as he is rising he may be yielding, turning and softening the shoulder. By turning and yielding, he may be opening up an opportunity to draw you into the void and push you since you may be overstretched and off balance. So the pusher needs to be aware not to go too far forward when doing the pushing. If his knee has passed his toes when doing the push, then he/she has gone too far. The pusher stays aware and in the moment since at any moment there can be a change.

Of course, if the push is strong and deep then you will have to turn and sink onto the back leg but this is not a desirable

position. In this position you are in an disadvantageous position. Another possibility is the pusher connects to your shoulder but the push is not very deep into your body or your center. If you are aware of this, you may have time to separate from the pusher's hand by making a circling movement with your shoulder. Then the pusher will be pushing into emptiness. This is an excellent moment to push since he has lost his root.

5. DAN SHOU HUA YUAN TUI SHOU

One arm moves in a horizontal circular movement This one-hand pushing exercise is often practised as a warmup exercise before moving onto free pushing. It is an excellent way to practice listening (**Ting Jing**), to develop yielding ability using **Peng**, and learning how to use the entire body to make a one hand push.

To begin the exercise both partner are standing facing one another. One partner stands in (**Ward Off**) **Peng** position and the other partner connects to his/her partner's wrist with the palm of his hand. The person doing the first push (which is generally practiced slowly at first) is standing in the down position and the partner in the **Peng** position is standing up. As the pusher rises he/she pushes out at chest level. The person in **Peng** position listens and feels the push whether it is slow or fast and yields to the push by turning his/her elbow in towards the center of the body while sinking onto his/her back leg. At the same time that the **Peng** is yielding to the Push he/she is also turning his/her hand over so that it is resting on the top of the wrist of his/her partner. By turning his/her hand over he is rotating the force away against his **Peng**. If the push is quite strong and he is having

some difficulty yielding to it, he can grasp his partner's wrist and turn his push to the side. Thereby, opening the side of the partner's body in preparation for a push.

An important aspect of this movement is to be in contact and maintain contact with the partner's **Peng** arm and not to push it with hard strength but with **Yi** (the Chi will be there). If you are in **Peng**, listen for the push and slowly fold the elbow and yield to it.

5. XIANG HOU PENG SHOU WAN YAO

Hold Off (up) Bending Backward from the Waist

In this exercise, we are practicing **Peng** moving upward to yield to **An** (two hand push). The push comes in toward the center of the chest of the partner but the force of the push is moving upward. It is important here not to resist the push but to move with the force. If there is any **hard strength** or **Li** in the Peng arm then this is giving the partner an excellent opportunity to push.

The person doing the pushing starts off with both hands on the **Peng** arm of his/her partner in a downward sitting position.

When he/she rises up he/she only pushes with one hand.

If his/her weight is on the right back leg, then he/she will be pushing with his left hand. If his weight is on his left leg then he will be pushing with his/her right hand.) The non- pushing hand just relaxes by the side of the body. The person in **Peng** position now has an excellent opportunity to push at his/her partner chest by yielding upward. He/she now can bring his opposite hand and move onto his/her front leg and push out at chest level.

In this movement, we are again first yielding to an attack and by yielding we are opening up an opportunity to push. We are not

just randomly pushing but first moving and looking for an opportunity. Something to remember here is that when we use an upward **Peng** to yield we are turning the **Peng** hand and connecting to the partner's wrist and thereby controlling his attacking hand and opening up a side of the partner's body for a push.

8. XIANG QIAN PENG SHOU WAN YAO

Hold off (down) Bending Forward from the Waist

In this movement, we continue to practice using the **Peng** or **Ward off** to protect and yield to an attacking push. The pusher is attacking the lower abdomen or **Dantian** area of the body. The pusher comes down on his/her back leg and pushes out in **AN**. The partner in **Peng** descends on his/her back leg absorbing the push. Here it is not the **Peng** absorbing the incoming push but the back leg and the entire body. If the partner in **Peng** cannot effectively absorb the incoming push, he/she has another option to yield. He/she gently places the open hand (the one not in the **Peng** position and pushes the attacking partner's elbow to the side of his/her body.

It is good to practice bringing the empty hand up and connecting to pushing partner's elbow. In this way the movement becomes natural and automatic.

9. PENG LU

Hold Off Stroke from the Side

The person here starts out pushing out with both hands (**AN**), beginning in the sitting position and then rising and pushing out

at the same time. Actually it looks like both hands are pushing out but when standing on back leg (left) we push out with the right hand. Standing on the right leg, we push with the left hand. The person receiving the push is standing up in **Peng** position. As the person receiving the push to his **Peng**, he/she listens to the direction and power of the push but the key here is not to turn too quickly and lose contact with the pushing hand. Also, not relaxing the **Peng** arm too much and allowing it to collapse and come in contact with the chest. Slowly turn the waist and naturally allow the opposite hand to rise up and (**Lu**) **stroke** just above the elbow of your partner. A word of caution here is not to (**Lu**) stroke below the elbow since this would offer an opportunity for an elbow attack by your partner. The partner who has been yielding now turns over his **Peng** arm/hand and rise up with a push to the partner who is now in **Peng** position.

10. AN FA JING Press down and out with energy

Here we are practicing absorbing a push to the **Peng** arm by circling the **Peng** in an upward direction. The push comes from a two hand push (**AN**) in a downward direction. The pusher starts first by standing up and then sinking down onto his/her back leg to make the push toward the **Dantian** area of the defending partner. The pusher relaxes his/her lower back to push which helps to power the movement from the legs. The person receiving the push is in **Peng** position and connects the **Peng** arm with his /her back leg and relaxes the lower back. The palm of the **Peng** hand remains facing the chest and does not make the turn the hand or grab hold of the partner's wrist as in exercise#7.

10. JI FA JING Squeeze the two hands together with energy

This is a powerful push to the side of the body or the chest. The power comes from using both sides of the body, the waist.

Before it can be used, the pushing partner has to turn his/her partner so that the side of the body or the chest is open to a push. For the push to be effective the push should be straight into his partner's center. It is not a haphazard push but is directed straight at his/her partner's center.

When doing the push, the pusher should use as little if any hard strength (**Li**). When doing the push first connect with the partner's body and feel and locate his/her center. With experience one can begin to see the partner's center without touching him/her.

The push can be accomplished from both the back leg and the front leg. If the push comes from the back leg, then the pusher starts down and pushes up. If the push comes from the front leg then the pusher moves down to push.

12. SHUANG SHOU LI YUAN TUI SHOU

Two hands move in Vertical Circular Motion

This movement is basically a two handed **Lu** with a front leg push. The partner's take turns moving onto their front legs for a push to the chest and the defending partner responds with **Lu** ((A stroke to the side). Two vertical circles are made by the arms doing **Lu**.

There are several important aspects of this movement : the attacking partner starts with his/her hand inside and the

defender is in contact with the pusher's wrist on the outside. As the pusher moves onto his/her front leg, the defending partner remains in contact and makes a circular movement around the wrist of the attacker. Controlling the push back. The key to this movement is **Ting Jing (listening)**

13. PENG LU AN JI

SI SHOU LIANXU TUISHOU FA

**The Four Hands Hold off, Stroke, Press and Ji (Squeeze),
practiced in succession**

This is an excellent exercise to develop fluidity, fluency and a deep familiarity with some of the basic movements in our form with the practice of **Peng Lu An Ji**.

We start the movement with one partner in **An (Press)** with both hands on the partner's **Peng** arm. The pushing partner rises up on his/her the rear leg and the defending partner absorbs the push and sinks down on his rear leg.

14. Dal Lu This is an excellent two person exercise in which we use large movements rarely practised in Tuishou. In Tuishou, we generally use smaller more compact movements since there is little time to employ large movements. Here we are learning to respond to an attack to the chest with an elbow strike and then respond by taking a long step back in **Lu(stroke to the side)**.

15. BA FA This is a two person form which is helpful in developing **Ting Jing** (**listening energy**) and practicing the basic hand movements. It is the final third of the 13 postures.

First it might be helpful to recall the basic movements which correspond to one another in the **Ba fa** exercise.



Correspondence means that when we do **Cai**, (**Pull Down**) for example, that we respond and defend with **Peng** (**Ward off**). When we step forward/up, with **Lie** (**Twist the joint**), we defend with **Lu**.

Cai (Drag down) ...Peng (Ward Off)

Lie (Twist the joint) ..Lu (Hold off stroke from the side)

Zhou (Elbow strike) .. An (Two hand push)

Kao (Shoulder strike) ... Ji (Squeeze)

The practice begins with the two partners facing one another at a 45-degree angle with both partners arms raised in **Shang Peng**. (**Ward off with the arms in a raised position**). This is similar to **Peng** at chest level but the arms of both partners are raised and connected above their heads.

The attacking partner begins by stepping forward with his right foot on the diagonal with **Cai (Pull Down)**.

The defender retreats by stepping straight back with his right foot while responding with left hand **Peng (Ward Off)**.

Continuing on the diagonal line, the attacker steps forward again and attacks with **Lie (Twist the Joint)**.

Here the attacker places one hand under the elbow (his palm is facing up) and the other on the top of the wrist of the defender, slowly pushing down at the wrist.

The defender responds with **Lu** leading the attack to the side of his/her body.

It is important for the defender to maintain contact **Ting Jing (listening energy)** with the attacker as he steps back in a wide arching step.

Continuing, the attack uses his/her elbow to attack to the center of the chest of the defender who responds with **An** or a two-hand push. When we use **An** in a defensive mode, one hand is on the elbow and the other is on the top of the wrist of the attacker.

With the hand on the wrist, it is important to remember to have your thumb resting on top of the wrist rather than clasping or grasping the wrist. This way you can avoid injuring your thumb in the event that the attacker makes a sudden movement.

The defender again makes a wide step back as he defends with **An**. The final part of the attack comes when the attacker collapses/relaxes his/her elbow and attacks with **Kao (shoulder strike)** which is defended with **Ji (squeeze)**.

The **Ji** here is a bit different from the way that we practice it in the form in that the **Ji** movement here is performed on the front leg rather than the back leg. The **Ji** connects to the upper arm of the attacker in an attempt to prevent the attack from reaching his/her chest.

Then the attacker and the defender comes back to the **Shang Peng** position by making a half step forward. Then they trade places with the attacker now becoming the defender and the defender going on the attack. The attacker begins with **Cai (Pull Down)** and the movement proceeds as we mentioned above.

The transition. Both partners return to their starting position **Shang Peng**.

Both partners take a half step to the side and draw a hand up from **inside** the Peng arm and reconnect in **Shang Peng** with the left hand.

The partner who began the last sequence again starts by stepping forward with his/her left foot and does **Cai** with the left hand. We are now starting with a left hand, **Cai**. The defender responds with **Left hand Peng**. And the movement continues as before but on the left side.

LOOKING FOR OPPORTUNITIES

Throughout the numerous Tuishou (**Push Hands**) classes that Wang Laoshi taught over a period of almost two decades, he often encouraged us to work closely with our partner and not to be overly focused on just pushing him/her down or out. He

repeatedly reminded us to search for opportunities before attempting to push our partner. For Laoshi, this appeared to be a fundamental aspect of the practice so perhaps it would be helpful to briefly explore the meaning of **opportunity** and how to recognize it when it presents itself.

First, it is obvious there is no substitute for working with a teacher who explains and shows these movements in detail in the midst of a practice session. In addition to a skilled teacher, it is important to find partners with whom you can work closely and effectively, someone with whom you can explore, question and develop a deep familiarity with the movements. I was fortunate to have found partners here in Taiwan who over the years been immensely helpful to me in my practice of push hands.

These reflections on the practice of Push Hands are written with the intermediate to advanced student in mind. As we move along through this exploration, I will be referring to some of the Tuishou/Push hands basic exercises, so familiarity with them would be helpful and useful.

Generally speaking, when beginning to practice Tuishou, we may meet our partner in the **Peng (Ward off)** position. From this position we can begin to gather useful information about our partner; begin to assess our partner's stability and rootedness, his softness (or hardness), his aggressive or defensive approach and generally his level of skill. During these initial pushes we can begin to look for places where our partner may be vulnerable. For example, is his **Peng** soft and rounded or stiff and angular?

Does he/she have all his/her weight on the back leg or is he/she double weighted or perhaps weighted on the front leg. How does he/she turn when you apply just a bit of pressure on his/her **Peng** and does he/she absorb the push into his legs? Is he/she interested in yielding or is he just interested in pushing? Is he breathing hard or is his breath quiet? Where does he look while you are pushing with him? Is he really “listening” (**Ting Jing**) or is there a separation in his touch?

By either you making the first push or your partner being the first to push, an opportunity may arise. If you make the first push, you can begin with a soft exploratory push to gauge your partners response. It is important to keep in mind that if the intent of your first push is to push your partner out, you are in a sense committing an error. You are pushing without first looking for an opportunity or doing some exploratory work to know your partner better. You are basically pushing blindly and haphazardly. I have found that it is better to wait for your partner’s first push since it will give you some useful information about the speed of his/her push, the direction of his/her push and the amount of power behind the push.

The most common push is to the shoulder of the partner. Of course, one has to make a choice about what shoulder to push. In most cases, people will start off pushing with the **right hand** while standing on the back leg which is the **left leg**.

There is a choice here. if you are making the first push with your right hand (left foot is the back leg) to your partner left shoulder he will generally turn left to yield. You can then push to the right

side of the partner's body with the left hand with your weight on the front leg. Be aware that pushing with your left hand while sinking onto the front leg is a more stable position then pushing off the back leg and it also brings you closer to your partner.

The timing here is very important since it is not a one, two push but with practice two slowly becomes one. In a sense, the opportunity comes from forcing the partner to make a turn and then as he is turning or yielding apply the second push.

The first push is not really intended as a push, but a way of opening up an opportunity for the second or third push.

If the timing and direction of the push are correct you will find that there is no need to use any **Li (hard strength)**.

If you are being pushed, first see whether he is pushing from his front or back leg and how stable and rooted he is when making the push. You may also be able to tell if his push is deep into your body or basically on the surface. How deep he pushes can determine how you will have to yield when he pushes you.

In the first and second basic Tuishou exercise We practice pushing to the partner's shoulder both right and left, while he/she turns the waist to yield in response. In this first basic exercise, the push comes from the back leg while in the second exercise it comes from the front leg. In this exercise, the arms of the yielding person naturally rise to meet the body or the arm of the partner at about shoulder height.

When you are the one being pushed look for an opportunity as you turn the body to yield. Maintain contact with the hand of the

partner without creating any separation from the partner. As the yielding person, if you separate from his hand by turning too fast or taking your hand off his body, you will be offering him an excellent opportunity to push you. Stay in contact with the partner's pushing hand with the body or your hand. Actually, the arm and the hand are the body and not separate from it.

The pushing partner, can find an opportunity if he maintains contact with the yielding person and listens (**Ting Jing**) and tries to detect any resistance or hardness in the person he is pushing. If there is any resistance, hardness, or a feeling of separation, immediately push into it. This is a case where your partner is literally giving you an opportunity to push him. By not being relaxed, soft and in contact with you he is offering you a place and a chance to push. In this case, you need to be very much aware of the situation in the moment since there is little or no time to make a decision to push. Take advantage of the chance or you will miss it.

Another place to search for an opportunity to push is your partner's upper chest above the sternum. See how he/she responds? Does he/she relax and sink the chest or attempt to move their weight or center?

If he sinks his/her weight onto his back leg (**Basic Exercise 3/Bending Back from the Waist**) it opens up the lower part of his chest and offers an excellent opportunity to push. In this case, as the pusher, try not to separate from his body but simply draw your pushing hand down his chest and push again. If you are facing someone with some experience, he/she may turn his waist and bring his weight back onto his back leg at the same time. If

your partner does this, he is opening up an excellent opportunity for himself. So being aware of the response of your partner to your push is essential.

We can go through many of the opportunities that may arise as we practice with a partner. The possibilities are innumerable since with each person you face the variables are different; body size is different, distribution of weight is different, and skill level is different just to name a few. But what does not change is the commitment that one needs to make to investigate and see the possibilities and opportunities that naturally arise in the moment as you are pushing.

Timing and Direction of a Push

In the Tai Chi world, there is generally a basic understanding that we first yield to a push before pushing our partner; after all, T'ai Chi is considered to be a martial art of self-defense. Generally speaking, practitioners who are looking for one strong push are obviously not looking for opportunities before venturing a push or for that matter looking to use a set of techniques to arrive at a push. Sometimes when pushing with an experienced and proficient partner it takes three or four pushes or even five pushes.

From Wang Laoshi's teaching we have learned that the best - case scenario is to **draw in the partner into the void where he/she loses his center and his/her root. That is the time to push.**

One of the first lessons is to see if your partner is merely intent on pushing rather than on first learning about his/her partner. Determine whether he/she is using **Li (hard strength)** to push or **Yi (mind intent)**. Also be aware of the direction of his/her push so that you can respond effectively.

Is your partner pushing from down to up or is he/she trying to pushing you down? Is the push a straight push toward your center or does he want to turn you to set you up for a push. Is he/she pushing with intent or mindfulness or is it a haphazard attempt? In other words, does he have a plan in mind?

In this regard, Laoshi suggested that we read **Wang Zong Yue.***

***With practice we slowly develop sensitivity to feel when the partner moves. If there is no movement do not move. If he begins to move, arrive first.** Timing must be perfect like catching a metronome in movement. Yielding and striking is accomplished at the proper moment.

When you are in the disadvantageous position, it is not the time to attempt a push.

Yin Jin Luo Kong (Drawing in your partner into the void) where your partner loses his center and is in the space with no root. That is the time to push him. This all happens in an instant. Consider the body as a hand and stick and bond to the incoming energy. Catching it, bonding and yielding at the same time. Try not to move suddenly and fearfully to deflect, Investigate the bonding and yielding. Sometimes it takes 5 or more pushes to discover and see the right opportunity to push.

**Be sensitive to the direction of the push. if your partner is pushing up, then follow his/her movement and push. If the pushes come from the side and down, spiral down but try not to break off or separate from the incoming push. If he/she has over extended or has lost his/her center, then you are in the position to push up. Try to follow his/her push and listen to the direction and force of his push.*

Flexibility, softness while remaining in contact with the partner's chi. Do not grab. Yield and push in the same instant while looking for the person's center.

Become one body with the partner. Make changes quickly, changing direction of one's push. A straight push then turning onto the horizontal plane. The movement is not static and the whole body is moving in circles.

First must move your partner, breaking his/her root, (often this is forgotten) then you can use 4 ounces to push.

The push comes like lightning, the partner does not know what hit him.

Relax the upper part of the body so chi can flow up the spine and out the arms and hands. If the upper body is relaxed, then you can sink deeper into the legs. The back is smooth and rounded when filled with Chi.

THE HANDS IN TUISHOU

In Tuishou classes Wang Laoshi often demonstrated and spoke about how important it was to have light, soft and agile hands. There are of course many reasons for this but first a few words

about something that practitioners are often concerned about and that is being injured. The fear of being injured causes many people to shy away from the practice and there are some people who are particularly fearful of injuring a finger.

Some practitioners protect their fingers by bending them into a semi-punch position. But from a T'ai Chi point of view, this can be problematic since it may cause a practitioner to feel uncomfortable since it looks a bit like a punch.

If the hands are relaxed and soft there is less of a probability that an injury will occur. Sometimes fingers or the wrist are injured when the partner makes a quick unexpected turn in the midst of yielding or when other quick movements are made.

One way to avoid an injury is to take a few moments in the early stages of your push hands session to get to know your partner; to learn how he moves when he yields and in which direction, he turns to ward off a push. Does he move quickly or does he listen to your push and make a slow turn. Get to know him and how he moves when being pushed.

To avoid injury also learn to use the palm of the hand rather than the fingers to do the pushing. Laoshi reminded us to use the fingers much like antennae to "listen" (**Ting Jing**) and gather information about the partner. When making a push slightly open the hand and allow the fingers to make soft stretch upward allowing the palm to do the pushing. When the push is made the fingers are not in direct contact with your partner.

Further beginning students often make the error of using the thumb to control the arm of their partner. That is to say that the fingers are placed on top of the forearm and the thumb is underneath the forearm. If your partner is in the **Peng or Ward off** position, it is better and safer to keep all the fingers, including the thumb on top of his/her forearm.

The fingers or wrist may also be injured when you are pushing with too much **Li** or **hard strength** and your partner makes a quick movement to turn and yield. To lessen the chance that this will happen try to use only the palm with the fingers slightly raised off the partner's body when doing the pushing.

To avoid injury, it may also be helpful to do some simple hand exercises or stretches to soften the fingers and hands. Massaging and stretching the fingers to keep them soft and flexible serves to keep the Chi flowing through them and to increase their sensitivity. Many of these exercises are part of the Chi Gung curriculum so with some research it would be possible to learn them.

Laoshi often emphasized that it was important to have soft hands that could change and transform. From an offensive point of view the hands are most often associated with channeling energy with the hands being an extension all the way from the root in the foot.

But soft transforming hands play an important part in many other aspects of the practice. For example, if you push someone at the center of the chest and he yields by turning, an opportunity

arises if your hand softly follows his turn and you apply another push. You can only do this if your hands are soft and responsive. Another chance opens up if you push someone at the top of his chest and he yields by bending backward. Simply stay connected and slide your hand down to his Dantian and apply another push. Just a word of caution here. if you push someone at the upper chest and he bends back or turns, be careful of the wrist.

It is important not to separate from the partner. Keep your hands on his body or arm and “listen” to his intention. When you separate you have lost the listening post and you have to depend only on your eyes to see him and understand his intentions. If your hands remain in contact, you can be more aware of your partner’s intentions.

Listening with the hands can tell you many things about your partner that your eyes may not be able to pick up. First of all, it may be possible to learn the level of your partner’s listening skill. Does he move before he is pushed and does he stay in contact with you? Where are his/her points of resistance in his/her body. Use the hands to discover what you need to know about your partner.

Different parts of the hand can be used in pushing or controlling your partner. I have mentioned above that the palm is generally used for pushing but there are other parts of the hand that may be used in push hands. For example, the side of the hand is often associated with attacks to the throat but in push hands it may be used to push an upper arm or shoulder. To go a bit finer, it is a very short distance from the side of the hand to turn and to apply

a Ji or Press. The back of the hands can be used to control the elbow of the partner when your hands are underneath his arms. To use the back of the hand in this way, it is very important to maintain close contact and to listen to the direction of the movement of your partner. The back of the hand follows the turning of the partner. Be ready and constantly open to transform. This is the key! If the hands get stuck in any position it becomes an excellent opportunity for the partner to push.

Yi, Li and Ting Jing

Teachers of Tai Chi Chuan generally suggest that when practicing the form and doing push hands, their movements need to be fluid, relaxed, rooted and flexible. Most beginning students can easily understand these terms. However, as we move into the higher levels of the practice and begin to practice push hands, unfamiliar concepts such as **Yi** (mind intent), **Li (hard strength)** and **Ting Jin (listening energy)** are not as easily understood or incorporated in the practice. But a well-developed understanding of these terms can go a long way toward enhancing and deepening the practice.

By practicing a Tái Chi form, we have a wonderful and effective method and tool for learning and practicing the basic grammar and principles of Tái Chi. Practicing the form conditions the body and is an excellent preparation for the more advanced practice of Push hands. Despite appearing to be practicing a solo form, all the movements should be practiced from the point of view of a strong, meaningful and mindful interaction with an imagined enemy. The beginning student needs to look at the form not

merely as an empty dance but to see through each and every movement and every detail in terms of their applications. Slowly after an extended period of practice we begin to see how all elements of the form serve a purpose; awareness of the distribution of weight, the turning of the waist, the arm movements, the breath, the positioning of the body in space, all serve to develop to deepen our understanding of the relationship we have to an imagined enemy. If we practice in this way we slowly strengthen and enhance the Yi or mind intent.

Wang Laoshi often reminded us that practicing the form improves our push hands and practicing push hands improves our form. He repeatedly reminded us to practice the form as if we were practicing with someone and to practice Push hands as if no one was standing in front of us.

Wang Laoshi often said, "**Yong yi, bu yau yong li**" (**Use mind intent and not hard strength**), He taught that any push came from the whole body rather than from the hands or arms alone. We were reminded that when doing Push Hands, the movements and the pushes originate in the mind with support from the chi and the muscles of the body. Laoshi would often demonstrate to us that the muscles in his arms were relaxed while pushing.

Experienced practitioners can hear and feel when their partner is using **Li (hard strength)** since this sort of push will make a slapping sound and the partner will feel uncomfortable receiving it. By pushing with hard strength, it is unlikely that the push will be very effective since it will merely land on the surface of the partner's body and will not deeply penetrate the body or reach

the partner's center. A person who uses **Li** to push will mostly be using his/her arms to push and may not be quite so stable and centered in the push. Also, it will be difficult to find roundness and softness in his movements.

This roundness comes from the turning of the waist with the rest of the body following. In Tai Chi, strength does not come with muscle strength and power, which is limited and short-lived but with soft power that comes from the **Yi (mind intent)** with the whole body moving together.

One method that I have mentioned before is to practice using the **Yi** is to stand with one leg back, with the back foot at a forty-five-degree angle and the front foot directly in line with the heel of the back leg. The toes of the front foot are gently touching a wall. Stand in **Peng (Ward off)** position with the **Peng** arm resting on the wall while gently bending the back leg. Slowly rise up on the back leg, without putting any hard strength into your **Peng**. Touch the wall with your arm in **Peng** gently rise up causing you to push on the wall.

Using the other hand, check to see if the muscles of the arm are relaxed or have tightened up. Relax and allow the muscles to soften.

To take this a step further, instead of pushing against a wall, try meeting your partner in **Peng** position. The object of this movement is not to push your partner but to use your intention (**Yi**) to make contact. Find a balance point somewhere between pushing and not pushing. You can then begin to slowly and mindfully turn the waist while maintaining contact. Be sure not to

turn the Peng arm but turn the waist. The Peng arm will turn but the movement primarily comes from the legs and the waist. It is essential during this movement to feel the bottom of the foot of the back leg with no weight on the front leg and to **Hang Shiung Bao Bei. (Gently sinking the chest and slightly rounding the back).**

While moving in this way, use the **Yi (intention)** to listen to:

1. Whether the partner is pushing from his whole body or just using his **Peng** arm to push
2. His/her rootedness
3. balance or double weightedness

All the information you need to understand your partner comes from gently being connected to him through **Peng**. This kind of understanding is essential in Push hands practice.

If on the other hand, one uses **Li** (hard strength), than it becomes more difficult to understand the partner in this way. Laoshi often mentioned that we should be learning as much as possible about our partner; especially if we have never pushed with him/her before.

In April of 1997 Laoshi had us practice **Peng Lu An Ji** while walking so that we could learn how to remain in contact with our partner's Chi. Whether attacking or retreating we had to stay in contact. Also, we were practicing how the legs and hands cooperate and work together. We discovered how difficult it was to do the movement quickly and remain in contact. We had to remember to use the waist in the movement. When using the Snake Step for example, stepping forward we first touched the

floor with the heel but moving backward first touch the floor with the ball of the foot.

The softness that practitioners of Tai chi slowly develop through form practice is an integral part of this concept of **Yi** since in order to listen (**Ting Jing**); the body has to be soft so that a flow of Chi can naturally occur. Softness is necessary if one is working toward opening the body to a flow of Chi or energy and learning to move it with the **Yi**.

Also, when one uses his/her **Yi** to push, the push will be more penetrating and more inclined to arrive directly into the partner's center. The pusher moves his **Yi** in a straight line toward the center of his partner's body and the chi will naturally follow.

The ability to "see" the partner's center requires awareness on a variety of levels. The partner, in fact, may wonder where the push came from and may be a bit amazed at what a soft push can accomplish.

Ting Jing

An essential element in achieving the higher levels of the Push hands practice is understanding and practicing **Ting Jing** (**listening energy**).

To practice **Ting Jing**, the attitude has to be correct and clear. One has to overcome the fear that is often connected with the practice. Fear of losing or being injured is a common attitude that beginner's feel. It is important that we slowly become more and more relaxed in the midst of the Push Hands practice. Then we further develop awareness and go deeper into seeing

opportunities. Hard strength and a hard body cannot really be listening and in touch; a soft body, soft hands and a soft open energetic mind can only be in touch with what is extremely fine.

When we see our partner as our enemy, we want to overcome and overpower them. In this case, we are mostly interested in winning rather than seeing them as a vehicle to understanding, practicing and mastering the basic principles and skills in the practice.

This kind of softness extends to developing the ability to catch incoming force.

In Wang Laoshi's, **Seven Important Tuishou Concepts, (1995)**, he says: **DEVELOP CATCHING ABILITY**, the ability to lead incoming force into the void. Use your arm or other part of the body, which remain relaxed and pliant to take advantage of the right moment and catch incoming force in such a way that it causes your partner to be emptied of his force".

This ability really relies on the ability to be soft and listening and using our Yi or mind intention to listen and understand incoming force.

Many years ago, while Laoshi was visiting Annecy, his student treated him to a wonderful boat ride on the beautiful lake there. When he disembarked from the boat, he commented that if the hardness of the hull of the boat met the hard surface of the water than the boat would be bounced up and away.

He also often gave the example of a goalie in a soccer game, if his hands are hard when receiving a ball, the ball will bounce away.

Laoshi was pointing out the need to receiving a push with softness and with Yi.

Practicing Push hands using mind intent, listening energy and understanding energy perhaps requires a very different mindset and attitude toward the practice of Push Hands. Laoshi counseled that using strength takes us on the wrong path. Also, a more mindful approach takes us deeper into the true meaning of our practice and will ultimately be more rewarding.

Glossary of Chinese Terms

An
Press

Bai Hui

An acupuncture cavity located at the top of the head. Meeting of the Yang meridians

Cai
Pull Down

Chen
sunk

Chi
Life Force

Chi Hai

Ocean of Chi located on the front side of the body. also known as the false lower Dan Tian

Ding Jing
The practice of rooting Jing/ stationary push hands

Dong Bu
Moving Push hands

Dong Jing
understanding internal energy

Fa jing
expressing energy

Gongfu
skill achieved through hard work and practice

Hang Xiong Ba Bei
slightly bowing the back and hollowing of the

chest.

Hui Yin

An acupuncture cavity located in the Perineum area. Meeting of the Yin Meridians.

Ji Fa Jing-

Expressing energy by squeezing the hands

Jie Jing

borrowing energy

Jing

internal energy

Jong Shin

The center in the body

Lu

Rollback

Lu Fa Jing

Express energy with Rollback (as in Play the Pipa)

Ming Men

A gate where energy Prenatal Chi is stored. It is located between the kidneys in the lower back in a direct line from the middle Dantian

Nei Li 内

internal strength

Nien

Being in contact

Peng

Ward Off

Peng Lu
Ward off, Rollback

Peng Lu An Ji
Ward off, Rollback, Push, Press

Ro
Softness

San Shou
The practicing the movements in the T'ai Chi form for fighting.

Shang Peng
Wardoff with the arms in a raised position above the head

Shen
Spirit

Shuang Shou Li Yuan Tuishou
Two Hands Moving in Vertical Circles

Shang Peng.
Wardoff with the arms in a raised position above the head

Song
Relaxation

Ting Jing
Listening Energy

Three Treasures
Jing...Essence
Chi...Life Force
Shen...Spirit

Wei Lu
Tailbone

Yin Jin Luo Kong
Lead the incoming force into emptiness

Yeh Ma Fen Zhong
High Pat on the Horse

Yi
mind intention

Yong Yi Bu Yau Yong Li
Use mind intent, not hard strength

Yuen Shou
Cloud hands

Yuan Qi,
Chi inherited from parents, also termed Prenatal
Chi

Zhong Dantian
Located a few inches below the navel
chi is stored and generated here

Mark lives in Taipei with his wife



Wendy. He began practicing Yang and Wu style T'ai Chi in New

York in 1978, but was soon off to Asia to look for a teacher. After spending some time in India he set off for Taiwan where in late 1982 he began studying with Master Wang. He has taught Yangjia michuan here in Taipei, as well in Germany and in the

U.S and he presently continues researching, practicing and teaching Yang Jia Michuan Tai Chi Chuan..

When doing the basic push hands exercises, practice mindfully. We practice the basic exercises to help us look at the resistances in the body. The body moves as if there are no bones, no edges.

Tuishou is really a practice of the mind...

Wang Yen Nien

