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Yang Tai Chi Curriculum

Student Progress Guide for 2019

"Focus on your breath and achieve softness. Can you be like a newborn?"

-Laozi

Level One (First Six Months to Second Year)

A brief overview of *tai ji quan* (Supreme Ultimate Fist). Why is this the supreme ultimate fist? Why do we play a slow form in a martial art? What did the old masters teach and what did they know? How did they achieve proficiency? How can tai chi be used as a martial art as well as a health benefit? The old times versus the present. Authentic training versus commercial tai chi. Exploring the body as energy and the study of water.

"The trick to the Taiji boxing art lies in entirely not using strength, and also that this is extremely difficult to do."

-Guan Jiongzhi

Some of What Is Covered from the Beginning:

Mind-Body-Qi Relaxation Drills

Stances and Standing (sink shoulders, relax; breathing drops to abdomen) Calm, Supple, Internal Force, Spirit

Intro to Standing Like a Tree and Intro to the Taoist concept of *wu wei*

Other Central Daoist and Tai Chi Concepts: *Taiji*, *Yin/Yang*, *Jing* (Body Essence), *Qi* (Subtle Energy), *Shen* (Mind/Spirit); *Li* (Physical Strength), *Jin/Jing* (Internal Power),

Introduction to Qigong and Qi awareness

Start the Old Yang Family 108 Hand Form created by Master Yang Cheng Fu

Daoist Martial Arts

History of Tai Chi Predates the Yang and the Chen Family

“There is only one tai chi,” the masters used to say

Begin Push Against a Wall, Tai Chi Bag Training, Tree/Pole Walking and Tree/Post Work

Softening the Body

Begin Basic *Tui Shou* (Push Hands Exercises)

Level Two (Second to Third Year)

Something Comes from Nothing- the Full/the Filling from the Empty/Letting Go

See the World as Energy

Review the Old Frame 108 Long Hand Form with Applications

Review of Core Tai Chi Philosophy and Concepts

Explore More Tai Chi Real Life Self-Defense

Review Push Hands and Advance (One Handed, Two Handed, Standing, Walking)

Focus on Stick, Adhere, Yield, Follow, Release

Continue Learning the Various Types of *Jin* (Moving Energy): (*Ti Jin*, *Hua Jin*, *Zhan Jin*, *Fa Jin*, *Jie Jin*, *Zhuan Jin*, *Dou Jin*...)

Study the Tai Chi Classics and the Yin/Yang School of Classics

Begin Old Yang Family *Jian* (single handed straight sword)

Level Three (Third or Fifth Year and Beyond)

Review Yang Straight Sword (*Jian*) with Applications, Push Swords

Study Short Sticks, Hands and Weapons Self-Defense

Learn Broadsword and Staff

Apply Tai Chi Principles to Weapons

*Note this is only an outline study guide. These are many levels of dedicated progress of learning. They mean nothing as far as the beginner or advanced martial artist. The key is deeply understanding the “subtle” aspects of form, principle and application of tai chi through long ceaseless training. For those seeking more martial arts, this means applying more martial arts focus. For those seeking more health benefits, this means greater meditation. The two are not mutually exclusive but depending on what a student needs, his or her objective might be more of one than the other. Progress may be slower or faster depending on your dedication. The true student has the right: purpose, dedication and discipline. Their training is frequent and they make tai chi a central part of their life. They spend one to two hours per day practicing with the correct goal in mind for health and self-defense.

Brief List Taiji Basic Principles, Concepts and Terms Explained

Yi- intent. In tai chi/taiji a practitioner is taught to lead all movements with the mind and intent and let the body and qi follow. There should be a harmony of *Jing* (the essential or physical), *Qi* (empowerment of breath and mind-body energy) and *Shen* (the spirit or mind).

Yin/yang (opposites). In Chinese philosophy, they represent an active balance of all opposite forces and things- the positive and negative, the strong and weak, etc. For martial artists, we focus on larger concepts like: Emptiness and Fullness or Sinking and Floating in our movements. Also: Pushing and Pulling, Fast and Slow, Up and Down, Right and Left, Backwards and Forwards...

The Thirteen Postures of Tai Chi or *Bamen* (eight gates) *wubu* (five steps)- The “eight gates” refer to directional points of entry. Four are straight: *Peng* (Ward-Off), *Lu* (Roll Back), *Ji* (Press), *An* (Push) and four are diagonal/offed angle: *Cai* (Pluck- redirect downward), *Lie* (Rend or snap apart- a circling motion), *Zhou* (Elbow Strike) and *Kao* (Body Shoulder Strike). The “five steps” are active positions (Forward, Backward, Left, Right and Settle).

The Exploration of Energy Emission

Zhuo- touch, come into contact

Ti Jin- lifting power

Hua Jin- neutralizing power

Zhan Jin- adhering power

Fa Jin- explosive power, sending/releasing power

Jie Jin- intercepting power

Jie Jin- borrowing power

Zhuan Jin- rolling power

Dou Zin- shaking power

Qujin Jin- entering/penetrating power

Old Yang Large Frame Taiji Postures:

太極起式

[0] TAIJI BEGINNING POSTURE

攬雀尾

[1] CATCH THE SPARROW BY THE TAIL

單鞭

[2] SINGLE WHIP

提手

[3] RAISE THE HANDS

白鶴亮翅

[4] WHITE CRANE SHOWS ITS WINGS

摟膝拗步

[5] BRUSH KNEE IN A CROSSED STANCE

手揮琵琶

[6] PLAY THE LUTE

左右摟膝拗步

[7-9] LEFT & RIGHT BRUSH KNEE IN A CROSSED STANCE

手揮琵琶

[10] PLAY THE LUTE

進步搬攔錘

[11] ADVANCE, PARRY, BLOCK, PUNCH

如封似閉

[12] SEALING SHUT

十字手

[13] CROSSED HANDS

抱虎歸山

[14] CAPTURE THE TIGER & SEND IT BACK TO ITS MOUNTAIN

肘底看錘

[15] BEWARE THE PUNCH UNDER ELBOW

左右倒鞏猴

[16] LEFT & RIGHT RETREAT, DRIVING AWAY THE MONKEY

斜飛式

[17] DIAGONAL FLYING POSTURE

提手

[18] RAISE THE HANDS

白鶴亮翅

[19] WHITE CRANE SHOWS ITS WINGS

擻膝拗步

[20] BRUSH KNEE IN A CROSSED STANCE

海底針

[21] NEEDLE UNDER THE SEA

肩通臂

[22] FAN THROUGH THE ARMS

撇身錘

[23] TORSO-FLUNG PUNCH

上步搬攔錘

[24] STEP FORWARD, PARRY, BLOCK, PUNCH

攬雀尾

[25] CATCH THE SPARROW BY THE TAIL

單鞭

[26] SINGLE WHIP

左右抅手

[27] LEFT & RIGHT CLOUDING HANDS

單鞭

[28] SINGLE WHIP

高探馬

[29] RISING UP AND REACHING OUT TO THE HORSE

左右分脚

[30 & 31] LEFT & RIGHT KICK TO THE SIDE

轉身蹬脚

[32] TURN AROUND, PRESSING KICK

左右樓膝拗步

[33] LEFT & RIGHT BRUSH KNEE IN A CROSSED STANCE

進步栽錘

[34] ADVANCE, PLANTING PUNCH

翻身白蛇吐信

[35] TURN AROUND, WHITE SNAKE FLICKS ITS TONGUE

上步搬攔錘

[36] STEP FORWARD, PARRY, BLOCK, PUNCH

蹬脚

[37] PRESSING KICK

左右披身伏虎式

[38] LEFT & RIGHT DRAPE THE BODY, FIGHTING TIGER POSTURE

回身蹬脚

[39] TURN BACK, PRESSING KICK

雙風貫耳

[40] DOUBLE WINDS THROUGH THE EARS

左蹬脚

[41] LEFT PRESSING KICK

轉身蹬脚

[42] TURN AROUND, PRESSING KICK

上步搬攔錘

[43] STEP FORWARD, PARRY, BLOCK, PUNCH

如封似閉

[44] SEALING SHUT

十字手

[45] CROSSED HANDS

抱虎歸山

[46] CAPTURE THE TIGER & SEND IT BACK TO ITS MOUNTAIN

斜單鞭

[47] DIAGONAL SINGLE WHIP

左右野馬分鬃

[48] LEFT & RIGHT WILD HORSE VEERS ITS MANE

上步攬雀尾

[49] STEP FORWARD, CATCH THE SPARROW BY THE TAIL

單鞭

[50] SINGLE WHIP

玉女穿梭

[51] MAIDEN WORKS THE SHUTTLE

上步攬雀尾

[52] STEP FORWARD, CATCH THE SPARROW BY THE TAIL

單鞭

[53] SINGLE WHIP

抳手

[54] CLOUDING HANDS

單鞭下勢

[55] SINGLE WHIP, LOW POSTURE

金雞獨立

[56] GOLDEN ROOSTER STANDS ON ONE LEG

倒鞏猴

[57] RETREAT, DRIVING AWAY THE MONKEY

斜飛勢

[58] DIAGONAL FLYING POSTURE

提手

[59] RAISE THE HANDS

白鶴亮翅

[60] WHITE CRANE SHOWS ITS WINGS

樓膝拗步

[61] BRUSH KNEE IN A CROSSED STANCE

海底針

[62] NEEDLE UNDER THE SEA

扇通臂

[63] FAN THROUGH THE ARMS

撇身錘

[64] TORSO-FLUNG PUNCH

上步搬攔錘

[65] STEP FORWARD, PARRY, BLOCK, PUNCH

進步攬雀尾單鞭

[66 & 67] ADVANCE, CATCH THE SPARROW BY THE TAIL, SINGLE WHIP

抔手

[68] CLOUDING HANDS

單鞭

[69] SINGLE WHIP

高探馬

[70] RISING UP AND REACHING OUT TO THE HORSE

十字腿

[71] CROSSED-BODY KICK

樓膝指檔錘

[72] BRUSH KNEE, PUNCH TO THE CROTCH

上勢攬雀尾

[73] STEP FORWARD, CATCH THE SPARROW BY THE TAIL

單鞭下勢

[74] SINGLE WHIP, LOW POSTURE

上步七星

[75] STEP FORWARD WITH THE BIG DIPPER

退步跨虎

[76] RETREAT TO SITTING TIGER POSTURE

轉腳擺蓮

[77] SPIN AROUND, SWINGING LOTUS KICK

彎弓射虎

[78] BEND THE BOW TO SHOOT THE TIGER

上步搬攔錘

[79] STEP FORWARD, PARRY, BLOCK, PUNCH

如封似閉

[80] SEALING SHUT

十字手

[81] CROSSED HANDS

合步

[82] CLOSING POSTURE

*As found in Master Chen Wei Ming's Book, "The Art of Taiji Boxing." Note there are some movements that are not counted as repeats here in the final tally of the 108 Movement Yang Family Large Frame set. "Clouding Hands" for example could be performed three, five or seven times, depending on the master or the school.