



Essential Principles of NeiGong©2013

by
Harry Affley

Preface

Centuries ago Chinese philosophy embraced the concept of physical immortality. It was thought that physical immortality could be achieved in two ways. The first method, called WaiDan or external elixir, involved ingesting formulas or elixirs to bring about physical immortality. In many cases this proved fatal because alchemists used lead and mercury, believing these elements possessed magical properties that would cause the body to live forever. The second method, called NeiDan or internal elixir, relied on physical training, breath training and holding postures, which proved more successful in generating superior health. However, if we take a broad look at the human race it is obvious that there are no immortals, proving the concept of physical immortality to be a fantasy. All the same, these ancient Chinese theories hold some truth and provide many ways to improve our health, power, and mental acuity.

Since the WaiDan system uses the ingestion of something from the outside to the inside, we can examine our diets to determine if they are helping our health. The NeiDan path of physical training is extensive, but certain types of training offer greater benefits for us as we age. One way to determine which style of training is most successful is to evaluate the teacher. Does he or she show great health? Do they have power? Be careful not to assume that all teachers are worthy of following, as some possess a true understanding of what is needed to bring about superior health, while other less evolved teachers do not.

The goal in scholarly QiGong is to develop NeiJin. This is the doorway that must be opened in order to begin the pursuit of great health, and a milestone that most students struggle to reach. Once NeiJin is fully developed the practitioner can move on to higher levels of understanding. So, what is NeiJin? NeiJin is simply gathered and condensed Qi (energy within us that gives us life, see “Qi”). How does one gather and condense Qi? The mind or Yi must have the ability to focus intently, like a marksman trying to hit a distant target. Concentration must be highly refined in order to gather and condense Qi. Condensed Qi accumulates in the lower DanTian located in the lower abdomen in front of the spine. When the body is relaxed and the Qi is gathered, it begins to form Jing. Some refer to Jing as essence, but the most literal definition is “all the good things gathered together into one place.” This Jing will generate internal power or NeiJin, enter the spine and spread throughout the body. NeiJin causes the body to become very powerful and produces great health.

Be patient, practice every day and take your training seriously.

Qi

So far no one has come up with a complete and concise definition of the nature and definition of Qi and there is some disagreement among QiGong practitioners and the Qi medical society. However, here are some points that most will agree upon.

Qi is the energy or natural force that fills the universe. Qi can be defined as any type of energy that is able to demonstrate power and strength and perform work. Qi always seeks harmony and a balanced state. There are three divisions: Heaven Qi, Earth Qi, and Human Qi.

Heaven Qi is the energy that occupies space and the atmosphere surrounding the earth and planets. This force has some influence on the earth, for example the moon's effect on the tides.

Earth Qi is the natural forces and changes of the planet, including gravity, magnetic force, weather patterns and the seasonal changes that occur.

Finally, Human Qi is the energy within ourselves that gives us life.

The correct definition of QiGong is any training or study that deals with Qi to bring about the harmony and stabilization of the human body, mind, spirit and energy. This type of training involves a significant commitment of time and effort on the part of the practitioners.

The Chinese have studied Qi for thousands of years and developed a multitude of physical disciplines to balance and harmonize the human system. Ancient Taoists came up with the concept of Taiji or Yin/Yang theory to illustrate the idea of moving toward harmony and balance.

Essential Principles for NeiGong

1. The weight must sink through only one foot, not through both, to create Yin and Yang balance. Putting the weight in both feet will cause you to be double-heavy. Allow the weight to settle in the pad area of the foot, or YongQuan point, to improve lightness and agility. If the weight sits on the heels the Qi will become stagnant.
2. Stretch the body upward and downward in two opposite directions in order to stabilize the head and straighten the spine, also to improve the root. This will eventually develop an understanding of opposing force or the six directions (up/down, forward/back, left/right), and begin the process of creating Jing and NeiJin.
3. Pay attention to the root in one foot and the stability at the top of the head. During movement there must be great stability, therefore concentrate on becoming more stable rather than worrying about movement. The extension of the spine will support the structure and letting go of the soft tissue will allow the body to extend and move. Mobility increases as stability increases and leads to the development of lightness and agility, or QingLing.
4. Everyone has good root, but the top of the head is easily shaken out of position either from the body's own movement or an outside force. The top of the head controls the stability of the body. The body becomes off center and loses its root if the top of the head loses stability.
5. Be like a child with a straight spine. This is accomplished with practice through extension. Once you develop your center and the NeiJin is complete the spine can take any shape when needed.
6. Relax the muscles of the body without changing the extension of up and down. The weight of the soft tissue is like a coat hanging on a coat rack; the rack is the bone. The coat hangs and the rack is erect and stable. The Yi (mind) and the Qi (energy) do the extension.
7. Early in your practice use the waist to steer the body. The center of the waist is the middle DanTian. Separate the turning of the waist so that the head and foot are not disturbed. With practice the entire abdomen will move and feel alive and all external body movement will come from this feeling. Eventually the lower and middle DanTian will direct the NeiJin and the NeiJin will move and spiral the body.

8. Hold the chest in a position that shelters the stomach. Do not let the sternum or the ribs close inward toward the spine because the sternum and the ribs must protect the internal organs, and hollowing the chest inward prevents NeiJin from rising clearly to the top of the head.
9. Relax the shoulders. Their position should be slightly forward, not pulled back as in a military stance. When the spine is extended and straight this happens naturally.
10. Let the elbows sink down naturally. Pulling the elbows down with effort will lock up the arms and shoulders.
11. You should feel as if your knees do not exist, like the foot is connected to the hip. There is no compression in the joints or anywhere else in the body, except under the rooted foot at the YongQuan point. Once you create NeiJin the joints will feel open.
12. Point your nose toward your opponent or the direction of your intention. When the nose changes direction the body will move in that direction. Eventually the eyes will control the entire body.
13. Use the bones to support the body; do not use the muscle or any soft tissue. The bone is yin and corresponds to stability. The soft tissue is yang and corresponds to mobility. This is the Yin and Yang of the body. First, establish stability then mobility can develop correctly by letting go of the soft tissue. Once the soft tissue relaxes, the bone will carry the weight and NeiJin can begin to develop.
14. Separate Yin and Yang everywhere in the body, in the Yi and also the Qi. Each level of development must have an understanding of the qualities of Yin and Yang. Once the individual qualities of Yin and Yang are understood they will work together harmoniously.
15. The body has four parts: head (including the neck), torso, arms and legs. Each part has a root, middle and a terminus or end point. Each root pushes the terminus. The root of the torso is the lower DanTian and it is the master root, pushing all the other roots. The master root must be grounded through one foot. The four roots are: the lower DanTian, the hip, the shoulder and the base of the neck (Cervical 7).

16. The three most important acupuncture points are the YongQuan in the pad of the foot; the lower DanTian in the lower abdomen near the spine; and the BaiHua at the crown of the head. The lower DanTian is connected to the two other points by NeiJin. The YongQuan point at the bottom is where the NeiJin roots and the BaiHua point at the top is where the NeiJin stabilizes the body.

17. Keep your breathing free and natural. It is unnecessary to coordinate breath with movement. The old writings state, "Focusing on the breath will cause your Qi to become stagnant." A good example is the tiger being unconcerned with its breathing as it stalks its prey.

18. Let the mind be calm, concentrated, and focused. This is the way to internal power or NeiJin.

19. Concentrate on the lower DanTian, which is located deep in the body near the spine, not near the surface of the abdomen. The location of the DanTian will become apparent with proper training and practice. If you cannot find the lower DanTian you should focus on the spinal column. This will develop central stability power or ZhongDingJin.

20. When your concentration (or Yi) is on the lower DanTian the Qi will gather and condense there. This condensed Qi creates Jing. Eventually the Jing becomes NeiJin or internal power, which rises upward through the spine until it reaches the top of the head, or BaiHua point. Rather than using brute force or Li energy, work on developing the mind (or Yi) to move the Qi to do the work and create NeiJin. Once you have succeeded in creating NeiJin all that needs to be practiced is working with the NeiJin.

21. After rising through the spine to the crown of the head, or BaiHua point, the NeiJin (or condensed Qi) spreads to the extremities and throughout the entire body through the bones, and then it fills the muscle and soft tissue and finally the skin causing the body to become very powerful.

22. NeiJin is a stabilizing force as well as a mobilizing force. One of the indications that NeiJin is developing is a feeling of lightness and agility. The body moves as one responsive unit.

23. NeiJin makes the body function as a single unit because the whole body takes its orders from and uses the NeiJin for power. Without NeiJin the body has only physical strength (or Li) and coordination, which break down with age.

24. Use the lower DanTian to make NeiJin and the middle DanTian to turn and move the body using the NeiJin. Allow the DanTian to move freely. Once the middle DanTian has matured through practice and is able to control the body, it feels as though the whole body is now the DanTian. When the DanTian moves the whole body moves. This is because the NeiJin has expanded to the entire body from inside the abdomen and spine.

25. As NeiJin rises to the crown of the head and penetrates deep into the bones JingShen, or spirit, will begin to develop. JingShen is the power of spirit that is shown when a tiger hunts or fights, not to be confused with the spiritual. JingShen is the final goal. When you possess JingShen you will experience automatically all of the qualities mentioned in the literature on internal development.

The Two Basic Postures of XinYi NeiGong



Basic Posture 1



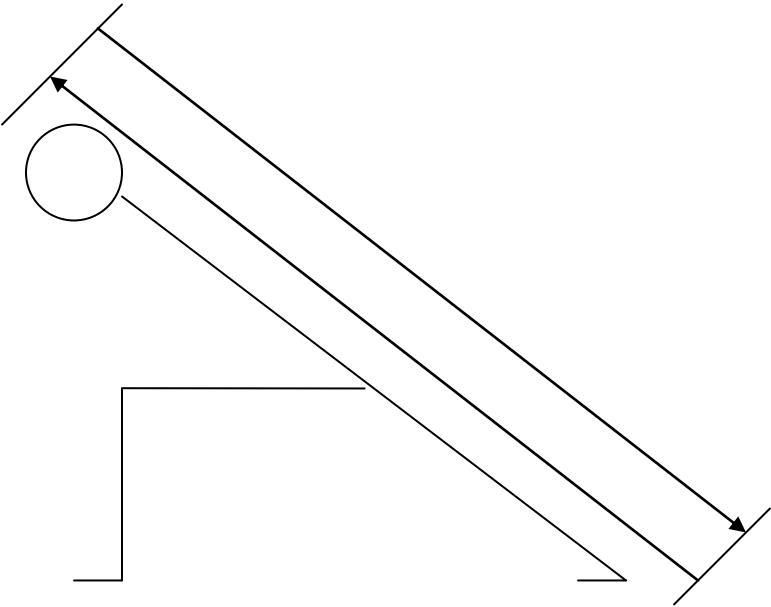
Basic Posture 2

Principles:

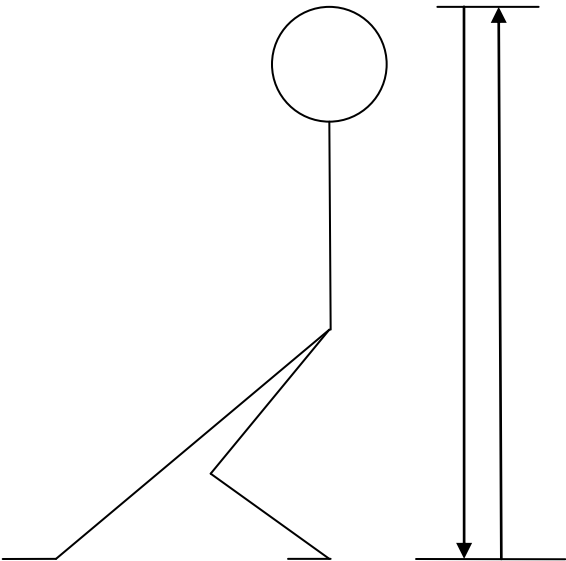
1. Keep your spine straight, not necessarily vertical but straight.
2. The weight of the body should sink through one foot: Basic Posture 1 shows the weight on the front foot, Basic Posture 2 the rear foot. The weight rests on the pad area of the foot, or YongQuan point. Never allow the heel to carry your weight.
3. In both postures the spine should be lightly extended. In Posture 1 the body extends from the rear foot to the crown of the head or Bai Hua point. In Posture 2 the extension is from the rear foot to BaiHua. In Posture 1 the rear foot is empty and in Posture 2 the rear foot is heavy.
4. Separate the waist from the hip and then use the waist to move the arm in a circle. Begin by raising the arm forward.
5. As you move concentrate on the spine feeling extended and stable, the weight sinking into one foot, and the waist turning. Feel deep inside your lower abdomen to search for the DanTian.
6. Above all be sure to relax and use light Yi/Qi force instead of hard physical force.

These concepts apply to all postures and all movements.

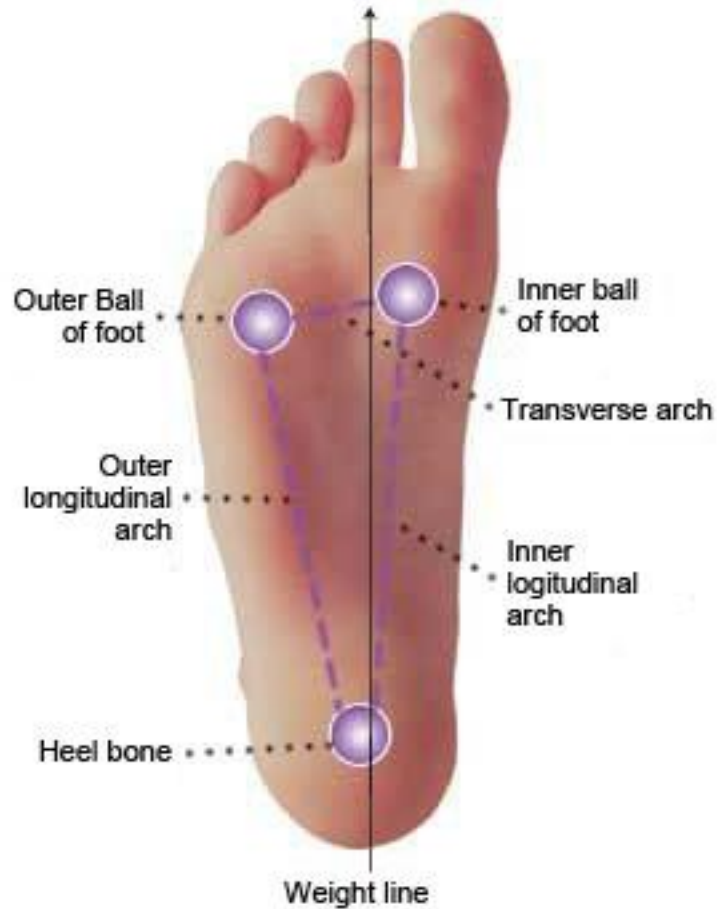
Basic Posture 1



Basic Posture 2

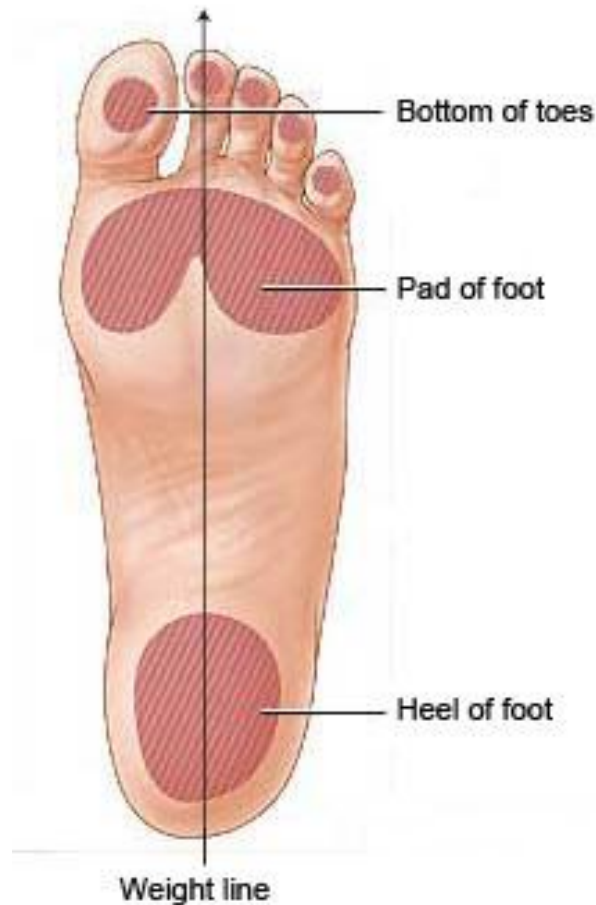


Arches of the Foot



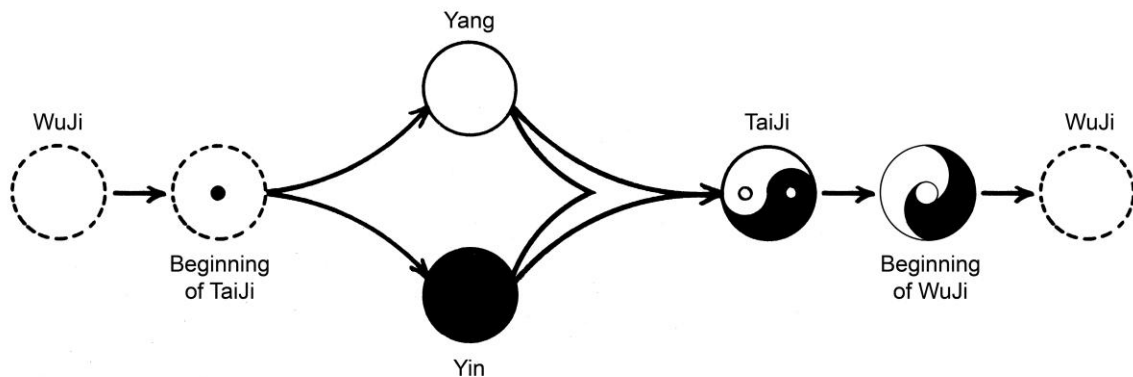
There are three arches in the foot: the transverse, the inner longitudinal and the outer longitudinal. It is very important to get the weight to follow the central line of the foot or the weight line. If a person does not train the weight to follow this line, the arches will start to break down. First the inner longitudinal weakens and fails, followed by the other arches. If the foot breaks down, the entire body structure begins to break down. The secret to great agility lies in the feet.

Foot Pads



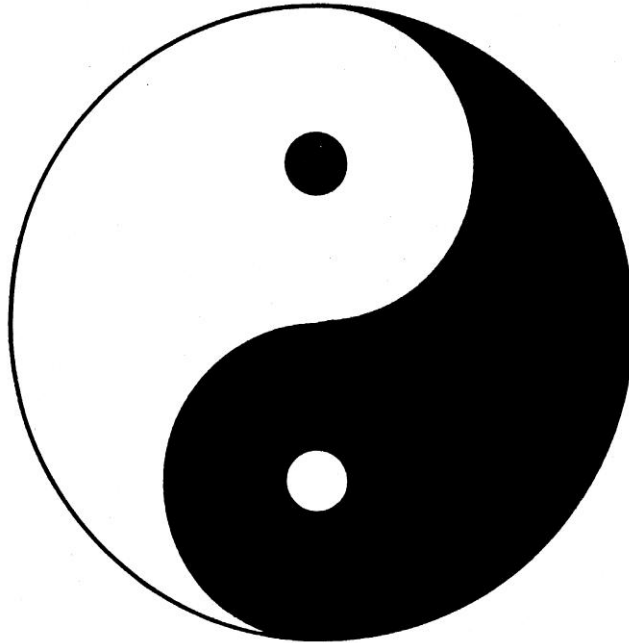
When the correct weight line is obtained the body will move with greater agility. If the weight line is compromised the entire structure will begin to have balance and power problems. The weight rolls forward through the foot as if the foot is a ball rolling on the floor. It passes from the center of the back of the heel to the second toe. The last thing to touch the floor as a person moves forward is the tip of the big toe. When the weight of the body travels along the proper line then the pads of the foot will work to their optimum efficiency. The foot should feel alive and free like a snake against the earth. The secret to great agility lies in the feet.

Wuji moves to Taiji and returns to Wuji



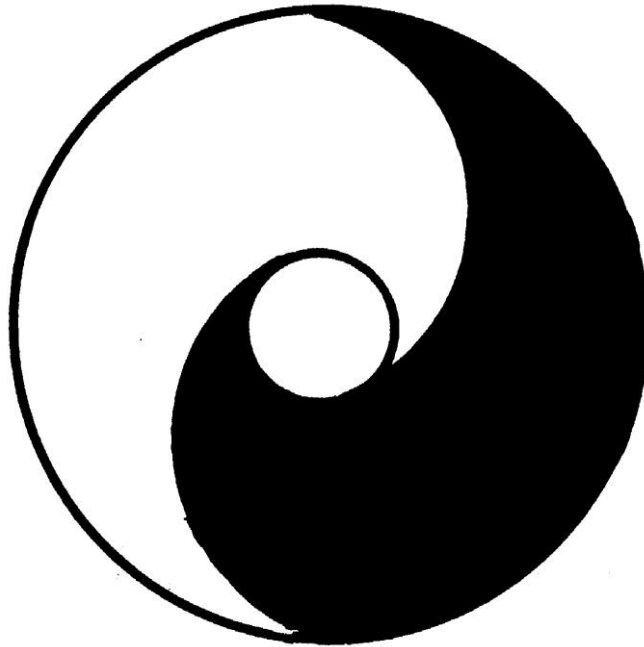
The above diagram shows the process of matter developing out of or from Wuji. The best definition for Wuji is “no-thing”. In recent years scientists have theorized that matter appears from empty space, in other words something comes from nothing. “Something” then returns back to empty space but some remains, which makes up the known universe. All matter or “something” contains Yin and Yang qualities. That which has a front has a back; top has a bottom, left has a right and outside has an inside. These are the opposing forces that exist in the natural universe. We can use the above chart to determine our direction in the practice of NeiGong. A beginning Taiji student knowing nothing about the training starts at the area between Wuji and the Beginning of Taiji. This is where the student must learn to understand Taiji’s complimentary opposites by separating yin and yang in order to understand the qualities of each and discovering that they help rather than conflict with one another. The highest level of development is when the student begins to return to Wuji. Wuji level is best characterized by “no Yin or Yang”: the absence of “something” or “no-thing”. This is the Spirit Level also referred to as JingShen.

Taiji



The above symbol is called Taiji, which means supreme or great thing. It represents all things in the natural universe. Everything has a complimentary opposite; the front has a back, the left has a right, up has down, outside has inside. Each thing cannot exist without an opposite to assist and support it in the existence of its very nature. A coin has two sides and they are not in conflict. It is the harmony between these two opposites that we try to understand and develop in our training.

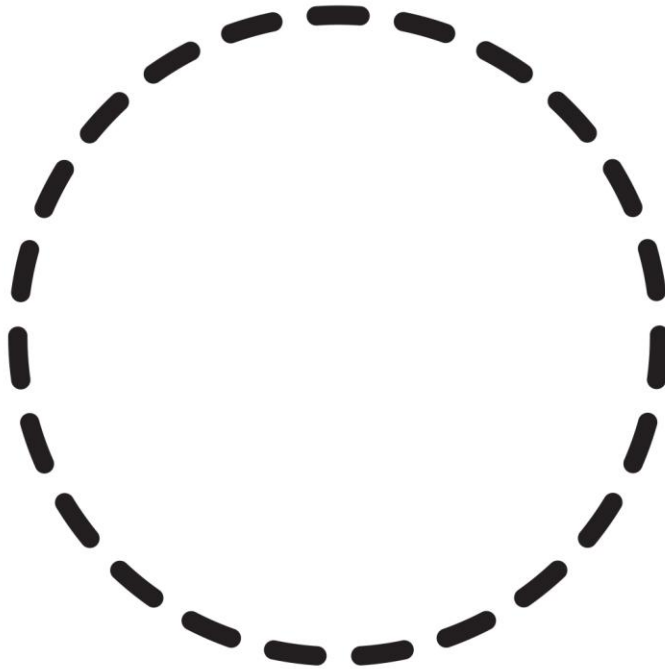
Return to Wuji



When a person becomes proficient in the understanding of Yin and Yang, they embark on a continuing process of becoming empty or “no-thing”. This does not mean that they lose NeiJin; it means that their body starts to look and feel as though it does not physically exist, appearing almost weak in presence, but not in internal structure. This emptiness or “no-thing” is the absence of effort and especially the absence of internal tension, caused by the ability to relax deeply through the study of Taiji.

The highest level of development is when a person begins to return to Wuji or “no-thing”. It is the beginning of the understanding of the Spirit Level or JingShen.

Wuji



The best example of Wuji is space or “no-thing”, without limit or boundary. Wuji is considered to have no substance, yet it possesses qualities specific to its nature. There is no friction upon objects passing through it, and objects in motion will continue in their direction unless they meet another object or some form of force that causes them to change direction. All material things are suspended in it, so it has the quality of support. Even energy passes through it without being slowed. The best definition is that it is not “something”, but it is “no-thing”. In the internal martial arts it is possible to change ourselves so that NeiJin or internal power can pass through us as freely as an object moving through space. Wuji is the Spirit level at which a person is free to do as they wish. They can move the force within to cause an action with no holding back. This level just “is” and requires no thought in order to act, just pure action.

Glossary

AnJin 安劲: Hidden or invisible power.

BaGua 八卦: Eight gates; eight doors; eight directions.

BaGuaZhang 八卦掌: Eight Gate Palms martial art.

BaiHua 百会: 100 assemblies; 100 meeting place; acupuncture point at the crown of the head.

Bei 背: Back side of the body.

BeiJi 背脊: Spine.

Ben 本 or 根: Root base; foundation; like the root of a tree.

ChanSi 缠丝: Spiral, twisting; literally twisting silk.

Dan 丹: Elixir.

DanTian 丹田: Elixir or literally cinnabar field; pill field; the center of the body; energy center in the abdomen.

Dang 裆: Crotch, seat of pants.

Ding 顶: Peak, top.

Dong 懂: To understand, comprehend.

DongJin 懂劲: Understanding power.

FaJin 发劲: To release, send out.

FangSong 放松: Loosen, relax.

GeBoZhou 胳膊肘: Elbow.

Gen 根: Root base; foundation; like the root of a tree.

Gong 功: Physical work.

HuiYin 会阴: Acupuncture point at the center of the crotch.

Ji: Spine.

Jian 肩: Shoulder.

Jiao 脚: Foot.

Jing 精: All the good things brought together, essence.

Jing 颈: Neck.

JingQiShen 精气神: The three treasures; Essence, Energy and Spirit.

JingShen 精神: Spirit; the power of the Spirit that is shown when a tiger hunts or fights; highly refined Spirit.

Jin 劲: Power, strength.

LaoGong 劳宫: Acupuncture point in the center of the palm.

LiuHeBaFa 六合八法: Six Harmonies, Eight Methods.

MingJin 明劲: Visible or observable power.

MingMen 命门: Acupuncture point between Lumbar 2 and 3 vertebrae, life door or gate.

Nei 内: Internal, inside.

NeiGong 内功: Internal work.

NeiJin 内劲: Internal power.

NeiQi 内气: Internal Qi.

Qi 气: Energy or life force; bio-energy; magnetic force etc.

QiGong 气功: Qi work.

QingLing 轻灵: Light and agile.

Quan 拳: Fist.

QuGan 躯干: Torso.

ShouBi 手臂: Arm.

Song 松: Relax.

Taiji 太极: The symbol that represents Yin and Yang, polarized opposites.

TaijiQuan 太极拳: Supreme Ultimate Fist, The Absolute Fist martial art.

TiLi 体力: Physical power, the power comes from muscular strength and contraction.

Ting 听: To listen, hear, obey.

Tou 头: Head.

Tui 腿: Leg.

Tun 臀: Hip.

Wai 外: External, outside.

WaiDan 外丹: External elixir.

WaiJin 外劲: External power.

WeiGu 尾骨: Tailbone.

Wuji 无极: Unbounded, everlasting, and limitless.

Xi 膝: Knee.

Xin 心: Heart, the desire to act.

Xing 形: Form or shape.

XinYi 心意: Heart/ Mind, the desire to act and the act itself.

XinYiLiuHeQuan 心意六合拳: Heart Mind Six Harmonies Fist martial art.

XinYiQuan 心意拳: Heart Mind Fist martial art.

Yang 阳: Hard side of Taiji; male, heavy, full, convex.

Yi and Jin 意和劲: The power that is generated by the mind's intention and concentration.

Yi and Qi 意和气: Mind intention and Qi working together in harmony.

Yi 意: The intention or the concentration of the mind, the action of the mind.

Yin 阴: Soft side of Taiji; female, light, darkness, empty, concave.

YongQuan 涌泉: K1 point in the acupuncture system on the bottom of the foot.

ZhongDing 中定: Central stability, equilibrium.

Zhou 肘: Elbow.

ZhongJingMai 中经脉: Central channel, HuiYin to BaiHua.