

TAI CHI CHUAN CLASSICS

THE TEN ESSENTIAL POINTS OF YANG CHENG FU

1. The head should be held as if it were suspended from above so that the spirit of vitality can reach the head top.
2. Sink the chest and pluck up the back.
3. Sung (relax) the waist.
4. Differentiate insubstantial and substantial (yin and yang).
5. Sink the shoulders and elbows.
6. Use mind and not force.
7. Upper and lower mutually follow.
8. Inside and outside coordinate.
9. It is mutually joined and unbroken.
10. Seek stillness in movement.

from WU YI XIANG (1812-1880)

When one begins to move, the entire body must be light and flexible and the movements must be continuous. The Chi should be expanding with vitality and the mind must be tranquil.

There must be no gaps nor unevenness nor interruptions. Your feet are the root of the energy which passes through the legs, is controlled by the waist and finally expressed through the fingers. Your feet, legs and waist must be coordinated so that (in moving) forwards and backwards you have control of time and space.

Without this control of time and space in all movements - up, down, left, right, forward and back - your body will be in disorder and the fault may be found in the waist and legs.

All these principles concern the Will rather than merely the external.

Inasmuch as there is up, there is down, front and back, left and right. The Will to go up implies the Will to go down. If you first lift, then push something, its roots, or center of gravity will be broken and it will undoubtedly be destroyed very quickly.

The positive and the negative must always be clear. Every movement has its positive and negative. Positive and negative are the foundation of all the movements. There should be continuity throughout the movements of the entire body. Let there be not the slightest breakdown.