

## TRAINING METHODS

The purpose of this small paper is to enumerate and offer a brief explanation the various training methods contained within the study of Tai Chi Ch'uan, as taught by Mr. Lee Shiu Pak. Because it is difficult to cover all of these methods adequately within the period of any one class (or within one month of classes), this list is designed to give an overview of the many areas of work that make up one inter-related body of study.

Most of the training methods come from Mr. Lee's work, while others are derived from some of his advanced students. There are other practices that can be developed, but these grow out of the basics.

### THE FOUR ASPECTS OF TAI CHI

1. **exercise** – to make the self strong.
2. **medicine** – to help other people (open the heart).
3. **boxing** – to protect oneself and other people, and to learn how to relate to power.
4. **philosophy** – to open the thinking.

This outline will describe the exercise form and boxing aspects:

#### 1. Preliminary Exercises

1. **Walking:**– 2 kinds; with and without turns.
2. **Leg Strengthening Exercises:** (to be done on both sides).
  - a) One leg solid, the other moves up and down.
  - b) One leg solid, the other does heel kicks.
  - c) Full squat (heels down).
  - d) Squat - one leg out.
  - e) Up and down on one leg.
  - f) Hold two positions - Play the Pi Pa and Raise Hands for 3-5 min..
3. **Two breath-hand exercises:** -  
One hand and two hands. Hands move up or in (gathering) during the in breath; the hands move down or out (expanding) during the out breath.

#### 2. Exercise and Applications

The exercise form is the most central and important of the training methods. Because this area of study is so vast, it cannot be developed within the context of this small list. All the exercise forms have martial applications, and it is important to understand and practice them on both sides.

#### 3. Push-hands

When practicing push hands and boxing techniques, it is important to be guided by the principles and dispositions inherent in the exercise form. It is also to be remembered that your partners lend you themselves to practice with, and so you must respect and take care of them. A touch is enough to signify a strike.

##### 1. One hand:

- a) fixed; center, up and down.
- b) free; push, pull, twist, hit, with steps.
- c) one person attacks, while one person defends only.

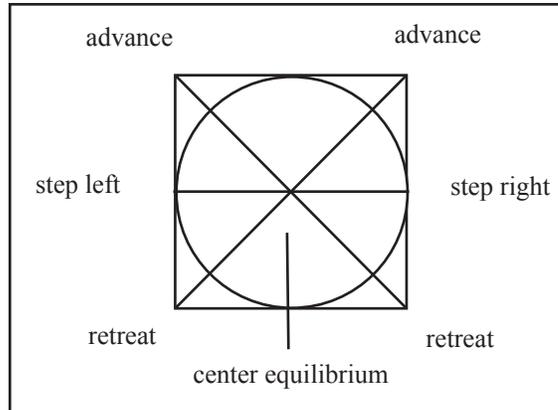
##### 2. Two hands: Free style.

One can do anything. There are other choreographed two hand methods of push hands (fixed and moving), but Mr. Lee did not encourage their practice.

#### 4. Boxing methods

##### 1. Five steps:

Central equilibrium, advance, retreat, gaze to the left, look to the right.\nOne can also practice large and small steps.



2. **Two turns:** Front and back stance.

##### 3. Four way stance:

Most stances contain four positions – 2 front and 2 back stances. This method unites the steps and turns.

##### 4. Five hands and two feet:

Defenses to counter center, high, low and two round hand attacks; and defenses to counter straight and round kicks.

##### 5. Grappling attacks and defenses.

6. **Attacks:** Practice various attacks and combinations using different parts of one's body. One can practice in the air or use various apparatus (i.e. punching bag). One can practice a single attack repetitively in lines with steps and turns.

In the boxing practice, Mr. lee always encouraged each student to develop one or two “special” techniques that would form the foundation of their individual approach to self-defense.

**How to learn:** Don't wait for the knowledge to come to you. Pursue it.

1. Look.
2. Hear.
3. Ask.
4. Feel.
5. Imagine (do it in your mind).
6. Do it often.
7. Sift and reassemble (study).
8. Help less experienced people in the class. They will show you what you do not know.
9. Enjoy the subject.

