

The Six Overtones of Vitality T'ai Chi

Gerontology in Action

Michael Elliott

(1946)

T'zu-chi of Nan-po asked Ju Yi: 'You are old but your complexion is like a child. Why?' 'I have been taught a method.'

Chuang Tzu (369-286 BC)

- ◆ The presenter **DOES** have an interest in selling a technology, program, product, and/or a service to **CME/CE** professionals.



Purpose

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*To provide key terminology & concepts of t'ai chi ch'uan, give experiential group participation sessions, and present the six overtones of Vitality T'ai Chi as **Gerontology in Action**.*

Main Texts Cited:

- ◆ Smith, Robert W., Chinese Boxing, Masters & Methods, 1974
- ◆ Tangora, Robert, The Internal Structure of Cloud Hands, A Gateway to Advanced T'ai Chi Practice, 2012
- ◆ Wayne, Peter M., The Harvard Medical School Guide to T'ai Chi, 12 Weeks to a Healthy Body, Strong Heart & Sharp Mind, 2013

•✿• Brief Chronology

- ✿• 1970: Learn rudiments of 37 posture T'ai Chi from a wandering mime.
- ✿• 1975-79: Formal training with Robert W. Smith.
- ✿• 1980-2008: Teaching & practice; Classical 108 posture T'ai Chi (Yang style) with Peter & Hau Kum Kneip.
- ✿• 2009-Present: Teach Classical & short forms, Portland YMCA; certified 8 Posture "T'ai Chi Moving for Better Balance" by Laddie Sacharko; Parkinson's group at the Maine MOC; Avita Memory care; Ocean View-Senior recreation. Classes in Biddeford, Portland, South Portland.

Core Concepts-A

1. Ch'i: "breath" or "internal energy."
2. Ch'i Kung (aka QiGong): "Skilled breath or energy practice." (100's of internal/external practices)
3. Nei Kung: "Skilled internal practice." (An ancient practice to harmonize body and ch'i).

Five Branches of Ch'i Kung

- ◆ Taoist
- ◆ Buddhist
- ◆ Martial
- ◆ Medical
- ◆ Scholar

- Gerontology: the scientific study of the phenomena of old age (Everybody should have an extra 20 years!)
- Scholar Chi Kung: Nourishing the heart
- Spirit Stone-China, circa 1783



Core Concepts-B

4. Chín: "An expression of internal energy or power in a particular manner."
5. The Four Chín of T'ai Chi:
 - ☯ Peng (Wardoff)
 - ☯ Liu (Rollback)
 - ☯ Ji (Press)
 - ☯ An (Push) (All 4 are strengthened and supported by a vertical circular pattern.)

Core Concepts-C (Specific to T'ai Chi Ch'uan)

- ★ Cross-body power.
- ★ Left-right alignment power.
- ★ Zhong-ding power.
- ★ Drawing Silk.

T'ai Chi Intermision

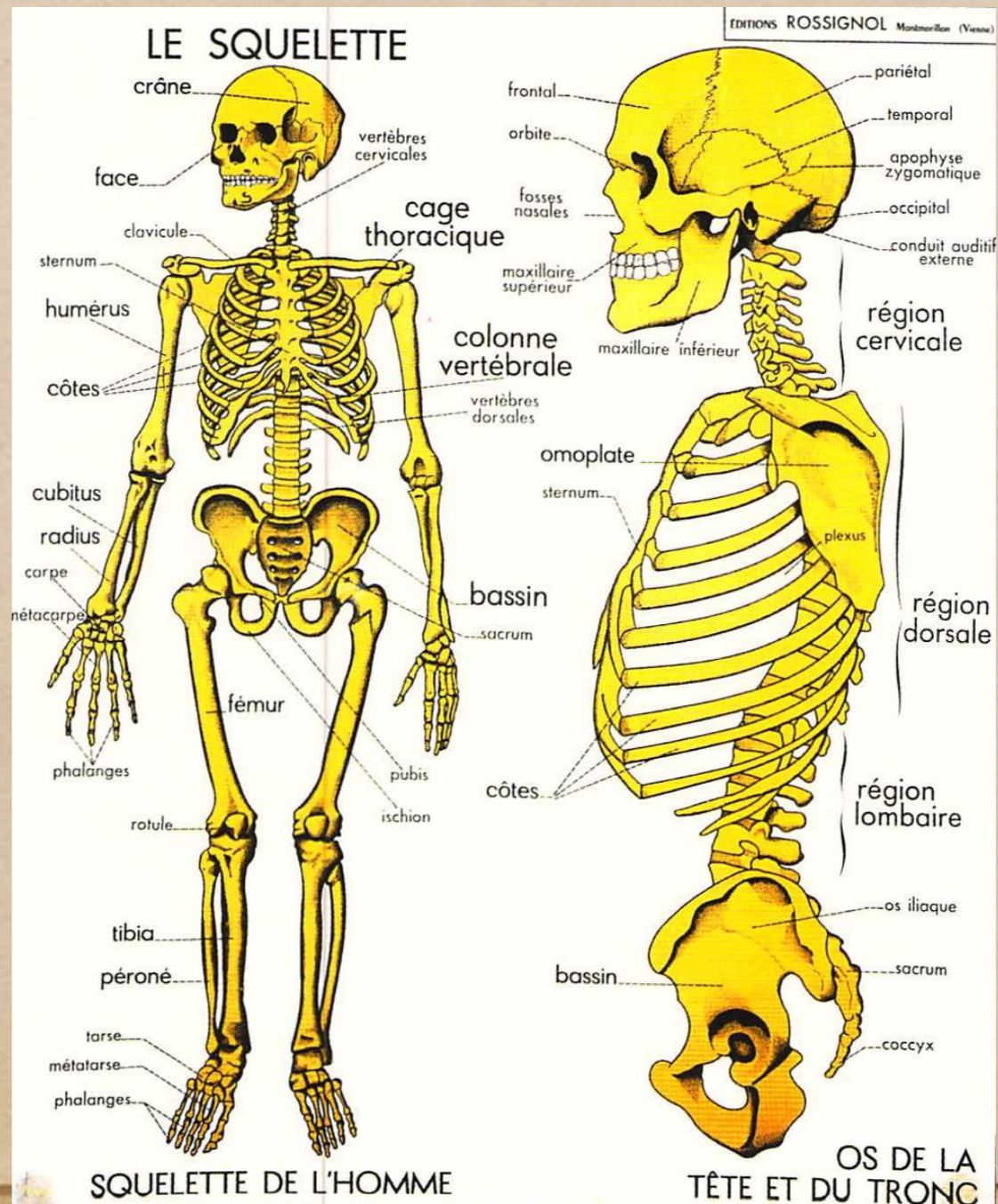


1930 Shanghai

Grand Master Chang, Ching-He
(1903 - 2000)

Two Ch'i Kung's: ★ Center to Periphery:

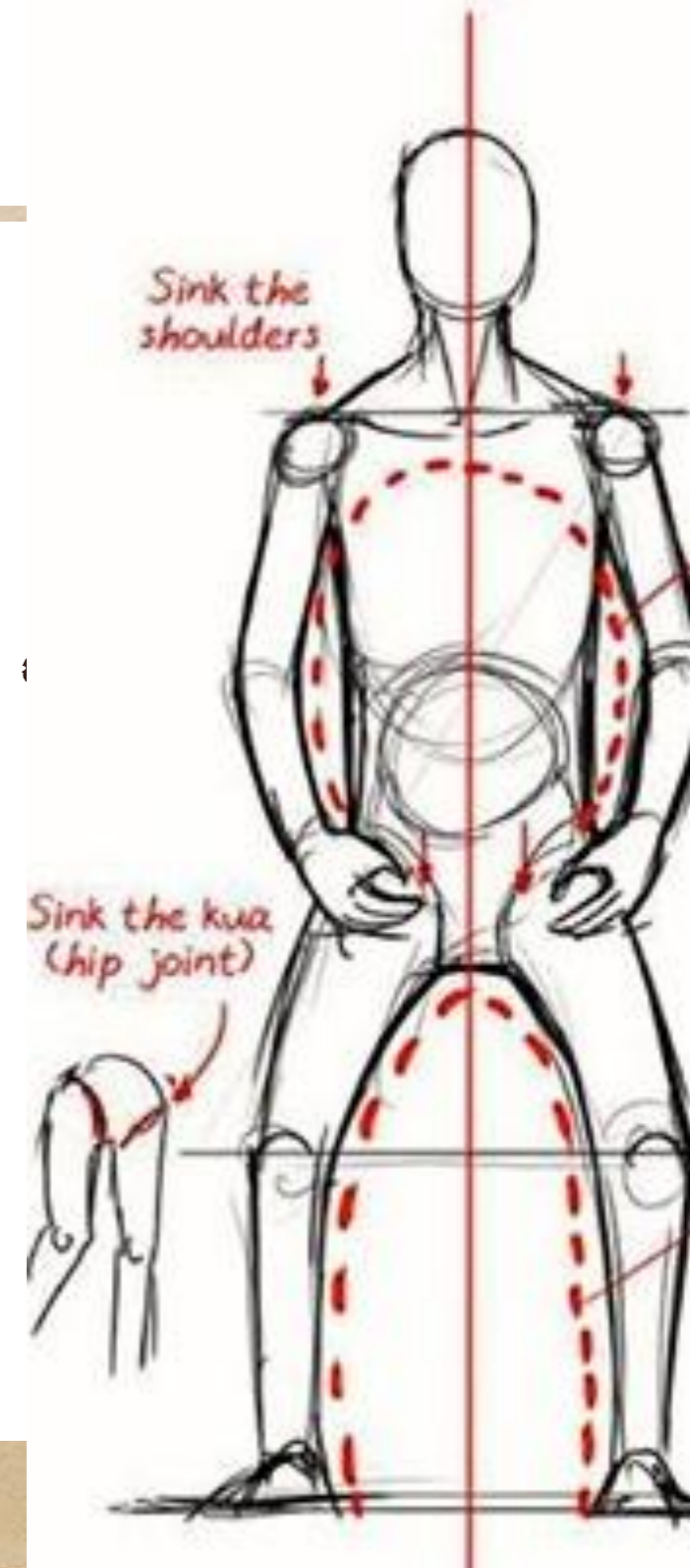
Left-Right alignment Power





2) Earth to Heaven and Heaven to Earth

- ◆ Zhong Ding--stabilization of the
- ◆ Quiet the mind
- ◆ Awareness becomes SONG.



8 Posture Form


T'ai Chi Moving for Better Balance



- A systematic review of 47 studies (9 RCT's, 23 NRS's, and 15 observational studies) concluded that: "T'ai Chi appears to have physiological and psychosocial benefits and also appears to be safe and effective in promoting balance control, flexibility, and cardiovascular fitness in older patients with chronic conditions".
- Demonstration

Cross-Body Power: Cloud Hands

•&• HEALTH BENEFITS:

- ◆ Soft and Connective Tissue
- ◆ Biomechanical (The study of the mechanical principles of living organisms, particularly their movement and structure. ( ernstein, 1856)

Left-Right Alignment
Power:

“Shoulder width”

• HEALTH BENEFITS:

- ◆ Joints
- ◆ Spine
- ◆ Vascular

Zhong Ding Power:

Suspended headtop to
Perineum to middle of
stance.

•&• HEALTH BENEFITS:

- ◆ Spine
- ◆ Nervous system
- ◆ Glandular
- ◆ Organs

Overtone #1: Cross-Body & Zhong Ding

- ***Pain relief***, the first overtone, starts with the Vitality T'ai Chi principles of posture control--a 'suspended head-top' & vertical spine--losing stiffness throughout the body, and breathing like a baby. Pain is a signal for some crucial realignment to take place, and Vitality T'ai Chi is an integral tool for refining this process.

Overtone #2: Left-Right

Alignment & Zhong Ding

- ◆ **Heart health**, the second overtone, begins with the twin Vitality T'ai Chi strategy of practicing a safe aerobic exercise while developing one's personal breathing & breath strategy--eventually leading to greater control over the risk of high blood pressure, cholesterol and diabetes. The practice of Vitality T'ai Chi is also the safest form of exercise for post heart attack

Overtone #3: Left-Right

Alignment & Zhong Ding

- **Breathing enhancement**, the third overtone, deepens the Vitality T'ai Chi concept of a safe and more efficient aerobics, and teaches the technique of internal massage through diaphragmatic (tan tien) emphasis and resulting lung efficiency--in terms of bodily energy *the breath is the life*. Again, Vitality T'ai Chi is ultra safe for the ever-widening spectrum of pulmonary diseases from bronchitis &

Overtone #4, 5, 6: T'ai

Chi Core Concepts &

Great Breathing Ch'i

Kung

1. **Mental Acuity** (improved cognitive functioning: attention, concentration & mental tracking); T'ai Chi winnows away stressful thoughts.
2. **Mood Control** (the *Yi* -'mind intent'- leads the *Ch'i*); long-term T'ai Chi reshapes the psyche & 'nourishes' the heart.
3. **Sleep Quality**: *sink & relax* approach to daily routines creates mood control below the conscious mind during sleep.

Great Breathing for 5 minutes

- ◆ As long as the soul stands erect it holds the body high and does not allow the years to touch it. Nikos Kazantzakas

- ◆ **The Effect of Tai Chi on Health Outcomes in Patients With Chronic Conditions**
• **A Systematic Review**

- *Chenchen Wang, MD, MSc; Jean Paul Collet, MD, PhD; Joseph Lau, MD*

- Objective: To conduct a systematic review of reports on the physical and psychological effects of Tai Chi on various chronic medical conditions.

- Data Sources: Search of 11 computerized English and Chinese databases.

- Study Selection: Randomized controlled trials, non-randomized controlled studies, and observational studies published in English or Chinese.

- Data Extraction: Data were extracted for the study objective, population characteristics, study setting, type of Tai Chi intervention, study design, outcome assessment, duration of follow-up, and key results.

- Data Synthesis: There were 9 randomized controlled trials, 23 nonrandomized controlled studies, and 15 ob-

- servational studies in this review. Benefits were reported in balance and strength, cardiovascular and respiratory function, flexibility, immune system, symptoms of arthritis, muscular strength, and psychological effects.

- **Conclusions:** Tai Chi appears to have physiological and psychosocial benefits and also appears to be safe and effective in promoting balance control, flexibility, and cardiovascular fitness in older patients with chronic conditions. However, limitations or biases exist in most studies, and it is difficult to draw firm conclusions about the benefits reported. Most indications in which Tai Chi was applied lack a theoretical foundation concerning the mechanism of benefit. Well-designed studies are needed

- *Arch Intern Med. 2004;164:493-501*