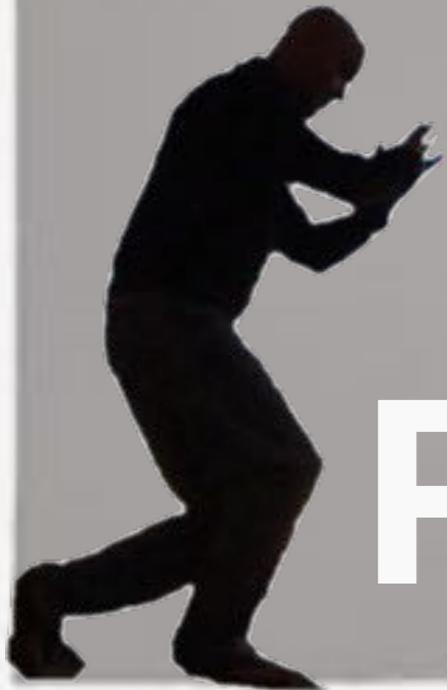


10 STEP FORM



PAUL READ

INTRODUCTION



JUST A REMINDER

NOTHING organic or living IS SET AND so NOTHING IS STATIC FOREVER. Don't turn anything into a stagnant practice.

EVERYTHING IS CUSTOMISABLE AND ADAPTABLE: You have permission to change anything and everything.

teapotmOnk 2017

**WELCOME TO THE 10
STEP FORM**

A SHORT AND
ADAPTABLE
SEQUENCE OF TAI CHI
MOVES FOR ALL
LEVELS.

INTRODUCING THE
IDEAS OF: GROUP
LEARNING, LEARNING
WITH PARTNERS AND
LEARNING WITH
SPECIFIC GOALS FOR
AT EACH LEVEL.



WHAT WILL YOU GET FROM THIS TAI CHI FORM?

SIMPLICITY

- Learning is done in distinct stages that are easy and simple to learn.
- Moves are easy at the beginning, and more difficult at end.



PRODUCTIVITY

- Taught in “clumps” of moves rather than individual postures that start and finish.
- Sense of achievement with something concrete to practice at home.

ADAPTABILITY

- First 10 steps can be expanded to over 30 customisable moves.
- Use of generic postures common to most styles.
- Different levels can practice at same time.

RHYTHM

- You will learn to recognise patterns of movements, rather than the mechanics. In this way you will use your head less and your body and breath more.

-
- You will learn to see and employ the spaces between the moves and not just mechanics.
 - Like playing an instrument, it is the not just the notes but the spaces between them that produce the final piece of music.

SAFETY



•The moves are based on an upright versions of the postures limiting weight bearing turns and kicks. This means that your knees, hips and ankles will be safe from deep knee postures, and that at all stages, alternatives to traditionally “challenging” moves will be given.



preparation

PREPARATION FOR PRACTICE

ALWAYS BEGIN YOUR PRACTICE WITH A MOMENTS PREPARATION.

1. Preparation

- JUST STOP

2. Crane Breath

- USE THIS MOMENT TO WAIT FOR OTHERS TO CALM DOWN AND JOIN YOU.

3. Lift Hands

- GET EVERYONE COORDINATED & CONNECT WITH BREATHING

4. Water World

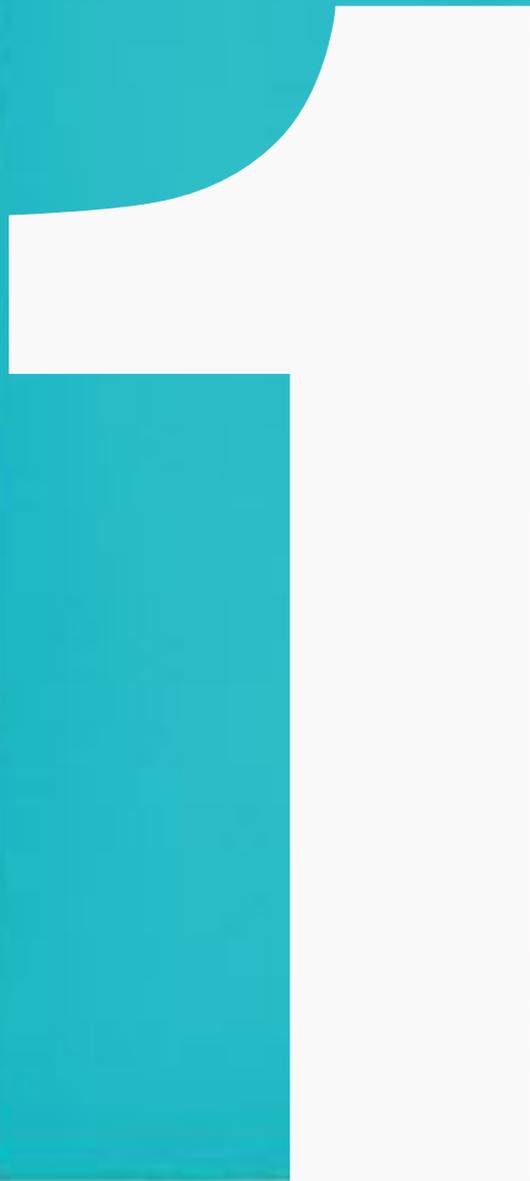
- 2 REPETITIONS SO EVERYONE STARTS AT SAME TIME AND KNOWS WHEN TO BEGIN
- FINALLY, ALWAYS FINISH AS YOU BEGIN, WITH CRANE BREATHING



PART 1



WHITE CRANE
REPULSE THE MONKEY
PLAY GUITAR



WHAT

WHITE CRANE
STEP BACK TO REPULSE
THE MONKEY
PLAY GUITAR



LOOK AT THE RHYTHM OF THE ARMS

1. See how the one arm swings up and the other down - then they return back to the centre.
2. Then watch as they move out to side and push back to front - and return back to centre
3. Finally they drop down and out to sides - and then back to centre.

This is not the move, it is the **RHYTHM** that will guide you better than memory alone.

Can you see the spirals? The swing & momentum? That's the vocabulary of Tai Chi coming to the surface. Postures come and go, applications and variations appear like passing clouds. But the patterns of rhythm and energy will remain.

Add to these arms **the dance of the waist and hips** and you have this section wrapped up.

LOOK AT THE DANCING LEGS

1. Turn waist right and slide left toe forward

2. Turn waist back, step all the way back and sit back on left heel.

3. Step forward and place heel on ground but don't transfer weight.

3 Steps: tap forward, step back, heel forward.

1, 2 & 3. TAP TAP TAP.

**TAP FORWARD
STEP BACK
TAP FORWARD.**



HOW

HOW WE LEARN:

PATTERNS AND PRINCIPLES

Some people learn Tai Chi with data and facts. They like using their heads to understand and interpret the world. They enjoy digesting information for it empowers them. Others learn by doing and trying. For these people they need to try something out in order to understand it. When it comes to a practice like Tai Chi it is important to let go of any fixed ideas and try to experience each class as it unfolds. Try not to approach the subject as you would a D.I.Y job, a maths equation or a political referendum.

Tai Chi is best learnt with the body, whilst the mind takes a back seat. That's because our minds find it difficult not to make judgements as we try out new experiences, censoring unusual practices or ideas that conflict, and embracing those that fall neatly into our chosen preferences or "confirmation bias". So,

when approaching Tai Chi, try turning off your internal Facebook timeline, for it will only obstruct the moment.

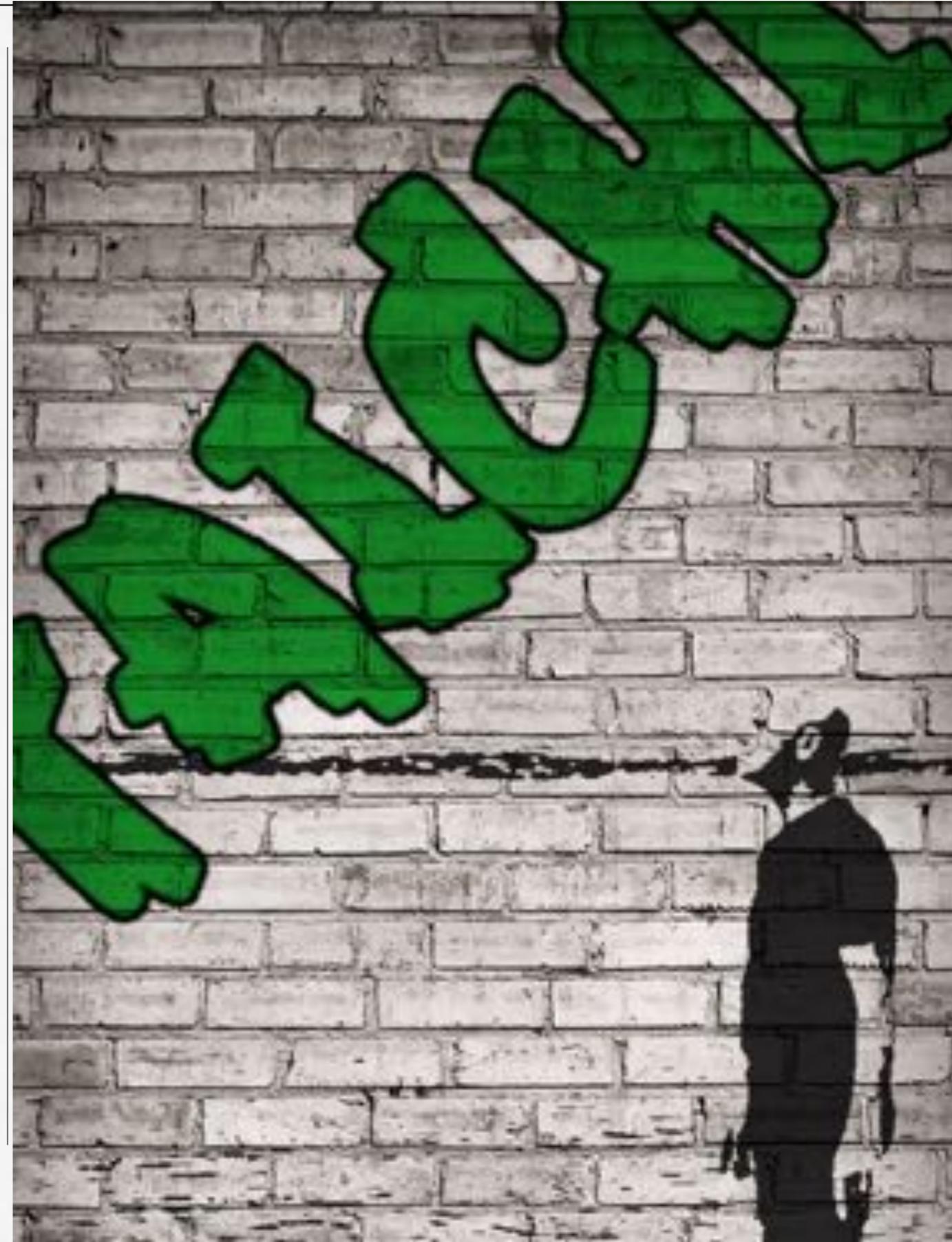
Instead, try to look for patterns rather than data. Forget calculated postures and weight percentages. Focus on movement, rhythm and breath.

For this section, try to find the opposites, explore them, feel them, taste them, subscribe to them on Instagram. And remember, opposites do not necessarily conflict, they can and often do work in harmony. Are Yin and Yang in perpetual combat or in a state of mutual embrace?



In these 3 postures you will find that we always work in a complimentary way - one move may be up, whilst the other will be one down. One back and one front; one pulls whilst another pushes.

Finally, the limbs are never redundant, never not playing a role. Everything is active. Even though one hand may appear to be doing all the work whilst the other is hanging limply at the side, if you explore closely you will find that the “limp” hand is still alive and still playing an integral balancing role.



Section 3

WHY

1: WHY: WHITE CRANE?

Why begin with **White Crane**?

The crane represents vulnerability and strength, longevity and adaptability. You will find it's sense of vulnerability and strength as you perform the move. It's essence of longevity is related to it's purpose in Taoist mythology: The White Crane is the chosen animal of transportation and in Tai Chi it tells us that we have begun a meaningful journey.

The Crane is symbol of the transition between the **dust of the earth** and the plane of the Immortal Taoist Gods. This place is not easy to find on Google Maps, so think of it as a reference for sunlight and shadow, dark and light, yin and yang.

White Crane reminds us that we must make a journey beyond the realm of dust (*this temporal existence composed of material and illusory things*) and out into the world of the immortals. The word of the Immortals is our destination, for it is a place in which things makes sense, everything is in balance, nature travels slowly and deliberately, and it is a world in which people have learnt to tread lightly.

The Crane was the one creature that could travel between the two worlds and so is there to advise us on what to take with us and what to leave behind. You may remember that it carried **Chang San Feng** - the legendary founder of Tai Chi - to the **Pink Ice Palace in the Moon** (Home of the Immortal Gods)



The White Crane posture is one of openness, balance and poise, upright and sunk, open yet guarded. The Crane wishes to protect, rather than attack.

2: WHY: MONKEY?

Whilst the White Crane tells us **where** we are going, it is the monkey that tells us **what** we must leave behind.

We know we must leave behind the **dust of the earth**, but what dusty items precisely? In the dust there are a lot of things that appear important - such as our desire to sit in the driving seat, to clasp firmly onto the remote control, to live on social media under the eternal stage-lights, to fulfil and shape our public profiles on FaceBook. Though they appear shiney, they are still dust.

The monkey reminds us that perhaps this is not the best way to reach the **Ice Palace in the moon**. For to be able to assess and reassess, to formulate and yet remain adaptable on our path we need to be able to change direction without thought for what has been before. To do that we need to stop talking, to stop expecting people to listen and instead to search for a little

stillness. To arrive at a point of stillness we need to learn how to step back: Hence the Monkey.

3: WHY: PLAY GUITAR?

So White Crane introduced us to the idea of the journey, and moving from one stage to another.

Repulse Monkey teaches us that before we set out on this trip we have to let go of a lot of unnecessary baggage. Tai Chi, lets not forget is the art of doing less and less each day until nothing is left undone.



So our third posture - Play Guitar - is going to show us what we can take with us. We begin with one of the essential tools for our trip: Play. For in play we learn skills in another way altogether - through doing and exploring. And like learning a musical instrument, we get to learn by making mistakes.

Play Guitar is the move that grants us permission to fail. In fact, not only are we granted permission, we are encouraged to fail, for by doing so, we learn through direct experience rather than the words and ideas of another.

Play Guitar - offers all this and with its emphasis on space and emptiness - returns us to the state of **an uncarved block**.

PRACTICE

Exercises to explore the ideas in this section of:

WHITE CRANE
REPULSE MONKEY
PLAY GUITAR

1. Monkey Mirroring

- Two people stand and face each other. One person moves slowly, the other mirroring the moves.
- Today's Homework - Try it the next time you stop and meet someone. Mirror them. Reflect back to them their projected image. See how long before they notice (if indeed they do).

2. Pogo-Stick Pushing

3. Resist, But Don't Hit Back

- 4. Extending and contracting the Form - turn your 3 moves into 6.



1. (SNEAKY) SHOULDER STROKE

2. WHITE CRANE (OR MORE)

3. REPULSE MONKEY 1

4. REPULSE MONKEY 2

5. REPULSE MONKEY 3 (OR MORE)

6. PLAY GUITAR (OR MORE)



PART 2



**BRUSH KNEE AND PUSH
STEP AND PUNCH**



INTRO

1. BRUSH KNEE AND PUSH 2. STEP FORWARD, DEFLECT DOWNWARDS, PARRY AND PUNCH.

Part 2 of the Form comprises of two moves that involve a twisting and stepping motion as well as a yielding and attacking move.

One you are familiar with the structural mechanics try to focus on the:

- Gathering of energy
- Turning of the waist
- The stepping action
- And finally a release of energy.

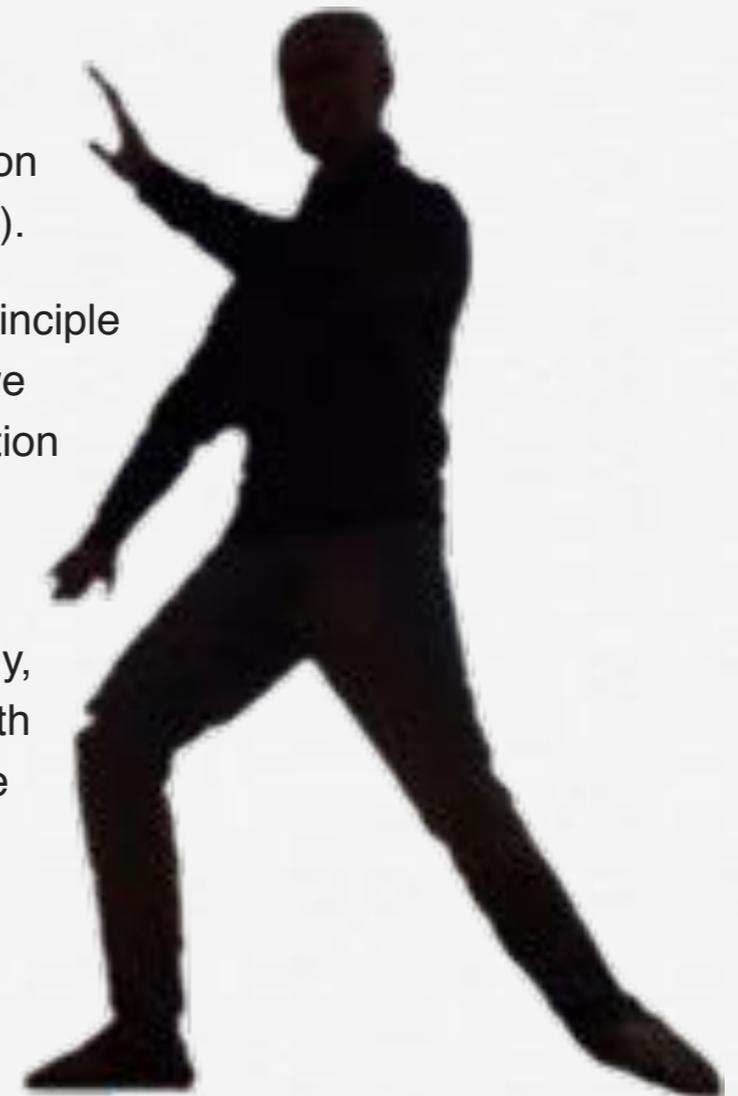
Whilst Part 1 consisted of mostly defensive yin moves that turned slowly into yang actions (with play guitar), Part 2 introduces us to the combined force of attack and defence together.

We also play with a new sense of movement as we turn our body left and right, (as opposed to the emphasis on forward and back in Part 1).

Finally, we play with the principle of discovery - seek what we need in the opposite direction to that we are travelling.

Both moves from this Part can be repeated indefinitely, so are ideal to learn on both sides as well as to practice as a drill.

Both are great partner exercises too - that teach yielding, balance, sticking and rooting.



WHAT

WHAT TO DO WITH THE LEGS

This move begins with a simple widening of the stance. Then engages with a series of wide steps - followed by half-steps alongside.

This stepping practice is an exercise in itself and teaches us the basis of the **7-Stars** two-person exercise you will learn later.

WHAT TO DO WITH THE ARMS

When learning for the first time **Brush Knee**, students often get confused with the arm movements because both arms need to be moving at the same time in different ways.

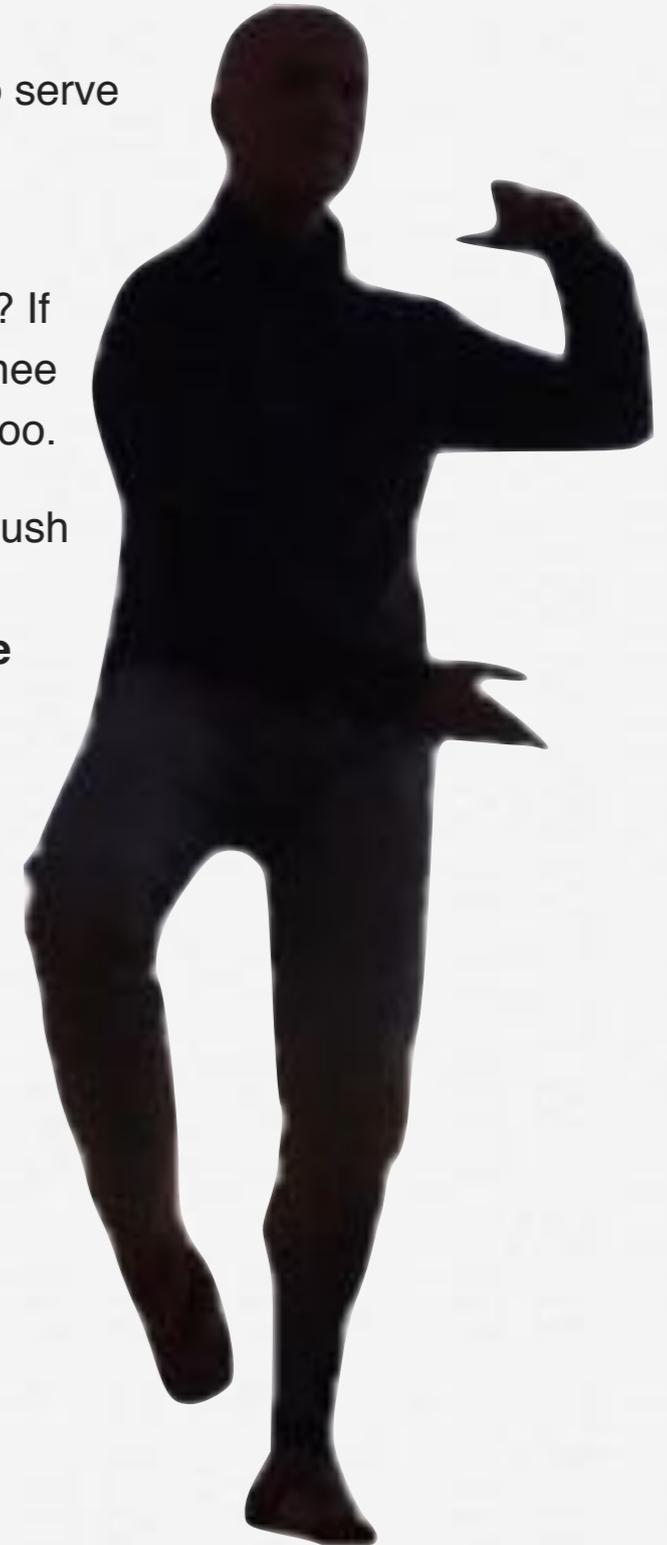
Often, we can get one arm right, but then lose it on the second arm. To help, think about a movement you are comfortable with - for example try to move the arms in opposite circles in front of you.

Or think about playing tennis, specifically when you have to serve the tennis ball

Are you a swimmer? Do you know how to do a front crawl? If so, then you can do Brush Knee for it is the same movement too.

Once you have completed Brush Knee, you are going to learn Step and Punch - or **Take the Key From Your Pocket and Open the Door**.

Drop your arms and search your pockets for your keys. Grab the keys with the right hand, search for the keyhole with the left and then insert the key.



HOW

HOW

In this part we learn yet more patterns - so take note of the **momentum** and **swing** that we use as we step forward and back

Try practising the steps as a drill to internalise the swing.
Practice as a drill across the room.

What do you do when you get to the end of the room? Well, you can either turn round and do it back or stay as you are and Repulse Your Monkey all the way back.

Remember to always turn right before you turn left.

Before you move forward, you withdraw.



RHYTHM OF SWING AND MOMENTUM

- Go back to the drill exercises & add the arms to emphasise the momentum and swing.
- Gradually change arms to become a push going forward
- Gradually change arms to become a yield going back.

WHY

1: WHY: BRUSH KNEE

Oh no! Here comes some more dust - do you have your broom or duster at the ready?

If you poke carefully, amongst the dust you will find two concepts that always get in the way of our learning:

Hurrying and Delaying.

Both serve no purpose whatsoever other



than encouraging us to resist the present. Both get in the way of us exploring what is happening in the moment and both encourage us to step away from the present moment and wander off down the side road of distraction.

If Tai Chi teaches us one important lesson in the 21st century - it is to **slow down**. The practice is the product. The goal is the journey blah blah blah...

Despite the cliché - do try and spend a moment with the moves - do them as slow as you can. This encourages not only a **feeling** for each move but a feeling for the transitions between them too.

You will learn to recognise the uniqueness of each moment and the pleasure and enjoyment inherent in the moment. In effect, you will be lengthening the moment, you will be expanding the present, and your time will stretch out before you.

1: WHY: STEP AND PUNCH

Step and Punch involves a number of distinct moves, one of which requires the application of **adherence**. This is also known as **listening** and **sticking** in Tai Chi.

Listening here is not referring to the the ears, it is the ability to stay in contact with someone and attune your energy to theirs so as to be able to decipher their state of relaxation or tension.

By remaining in contact AND shutting down your other senses (to enable you to focus on the 'listening') you slowly develop the ability to **feel**. This is the sense we wish to develop in Tai Chi. It is an underused sense, that which has been hijacked by sight and sound.

As we perform the move, we connect, stick or adhere and then follow our partner.

This is one of the greatest tools Tai Chi offers us, but how best can we develop this **feeling**.

Well, there are a number of exercises - some of which we will look at now.



**"DON'T THINK...
FEEL"**

PRACTICE

TAI CHI. THE LINK BETWEEN THOUGHT AND ACTION

There are plenty of exercises to explore in Part 2 including:

- **7 Stars**
- **The Hours of a Clock**
- **Step in to Move with Brush Knee**
- **Parrying**
- **Sticking & Following**



Seven Stars.

Used as a training partner exercise in the Wu style of Tai Chi , both practitioners synchronise footwork, waist movements, arms and pace of step.

Practice each element one by one to start with and only at the end try to add them all together.

Then, when you think you have reached sifudom status - go for the whole thing blindfolded - just to bring in a little sparkle to the exercise.

Hours of the clock

For balance and swing, this is a great exercise that involves standing in the centre of an imaginary clock and swinging one leg from hour to hour., whilst rooting down into the other

Start with 5 minute gaps, then increase to 15, 30, 45 and complete with 60. And don't forget the work the other leg.

Brush knee in partners.

Begin by letting someone start the move as a stationary drill. Then the second person steps in and fuses with the drill,

waiting and observing, watching for patterns and breath before connecting with the rhythm. Watch the first time, then step in and yield, but also push back or the exercise won't work.



Sticking Exercises

In partners, one places a single finger over the back of the hand of the other person and then closes

their eyes. Relax the shoulders and elbows. Prepare to dance.

The aim is to stay in contact with the other person, but without holding on. It is an exercise for both partners.

The person with their eyes open, moves slowly up and down, forward and back and in circles so as to transmit to the other person the directional changes. The partner with the eyes closed must feel and interpret these changes with just a one-finger contact point.

Go slow, but move with a gentle pace.

NOTE: THESE WORKSHOP COMMENTS ARE TO BE DEVELOPED INTO A MORE COMPREHENSIVE TRAINING MANUAL.

Check back on the site: www.teapotmonk.com for more additions or drop me a line at teapotmonk@learntaichi.online if you have any questions.



PART 3

DIAGONAL FLYING
GOLDEN ROOSTER

3

PART 4

4

**SINGLE WHIP
FOUR CORNERS**

PART 5

CROSS HANDS
CONCLUSION

5