

# The Eight Methods

By Li Tung Fung

1. *QI*

The Qi works internally as an energy source which circulates your blood. Qi emanates from an area called the Dantien, located about 1.5 inches below the navel. The Dantien is the source of energy from which all movement springs, and lies dormant within everybody until it's activated by constant practice. Since Spirit guides all our movement, spirit assists the movement or our Qi. Qi without spirit is inactive. Show the spirit in your eyes and in all your movements. Have the spirit of the dragon and you will move like the dragon.

2. *BONE*

The internal force (jing) is concealed within the bones and joints. It's the nature of this internal force to come forth suddenly when needed and then to subside. The internal work is more forceful if we move from our legs with the body coordinated. If in the beginning we practice the proper way to root ourselves, then in the advanced stage, our internal work will be very forceful.

3. *FEATURE*

From the time we learn our first movement, as well as the acquisition of each successive movement, it's very important to practice properly. Each movement should be clearly distinguished from the others. In the advanced stage the movements are smoothed into a circle and continuous so there is no separation.

4. *FOLLOW*

In pushing hands we use stick and follow. Without anticipating your partner's move you lightly stick with their every movement. Immediately yielding to oncoming force yet leaving no room for them to advance. In this manner we can thoroughly understand our partner's intentions -- how they wish to attack. Your touch should be so light they should never know what you are up to.

5. *RISE*

Your head is held as if suspended from above, yet relaxed. Remember, the principles of Taiji are the same as those which guide the Yi Qing. The two trigrams which compose a given hexagram in the Yi Qing are composed of three liens each. The top line is always represented as heaven, the bottom line is earth, and the middle line is man. Man must maintain his balance between heaven and earth. In Taiji your head

corresponds to the top line, always moving as if through the heavens. In this manner, the circulation of Qi moves from the base of the spine to the back of the head, then down the front of the body back to the Dantien, like a river returning to the sea.

6. *RETURN*

To maintain an even balance, a movement in one direction is directly related to its opposite. Return means balance between substantial and insubstantial movement. This is the balance of Yin/Yang. Our legs work like a bow, and our advance and retreat should be controlled from the waist by the spine. Our back and arms should be rounded. Inside and outside should be circulated with qi. To and Fro, advance an retreat train us to move in Yin/Yang. We should have both hard and soft, empty and solid at the same time. In maintaining the balance between Yin/Yang there is a constant shift in our movements.

7. *RESTRAIN*

The mind should be calm, maintaining an inner void. Don't mind how fierce your opponent is or whatever move is made. Calm your mind, don't allow yourself to be disturbed. Calmly watch your opponent with an inner void. This calmness gives you the idea you will need to meet the attack; any attack the instant it comes your way.

8. *CONCEAL*

The inner force is concealed until it is needed. After you have practiced enough, you will reach an advanced state: you will have an inner force concealed within your bones which the attacker cannot see, but you know it's there. Conceal the inner force. Do not reveal it until it is needed. When needed, release it like an arrow, suddenly and with surprise.

身心合一

*Body and Mind Harmonized as One*