



SIERRA NEVADA INTERNAL ARTS

Vertical Axis Tai Chi • Spinal Energy Pa Kua • Energy Body Qigong

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Self-Heal the Warrior Way

Why We're Here

Willem de Thouars

You know, I've been through many things in my life. I've been through eight blade fights and I won by some stupidity – nothing skillful. When I see high ranking martial artists getting into fights, I say, "This is just bonkers!" Martial technique doesn't exist. What works in my life is isometrics and that's the reason I've lived a little longer. Jack laLane was a master of his time.

I don't look at martial arts masters. If I go to a master, he says "chi gong this, chi gong, chi gong," and I get headaches. It's silly because since that is what he says, that's what you have to do, but it is annoying because chi gong has become so educated, like a university. In my days, chi gong and fighting were one, but now everything is separated.

We do martial arts to stay healthy and to reach out to others. I have done my job and after next August, I am not going to do seminars anymore. Do you know why? Because I have trained people that can do it. I have touched people. I have put out the seed. My job is to bring people together, not to show how great I am.

You might ask why I am not impressed with this martial artist or that martial artist. Maybe it's because I see that he is sick all the time. Martial arts are wonderful, but let's have compassion for what is

missing in our life. In my life I'm blessed, I go out and listen to music. I am just a simple man.

In my younger days aboard ship as a merchant marine, I fought a man I called Dog Face and Dog Face came back at me. I had a pot of coffee and I threw it in his face. I took advantage of the situation. There was no martial art, no kung fu, and no kun tao.

Let me tell you a story. There was a big fight with an American, a Dutch, a Frenchman and an Englishman. The Englishman was a healthy marine. I am not kidding you, his muscles were like cables



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and I was a skinny kid. I kicked him, and he came back at me - he grabbed me and I was in the corner and I thought, "Oh, no! I am going to die!" He was going to kill me. I felt his grip, I was a skinny guy, so I saw a rock with a sharp edge and I busted his skull. The rock did the work, not my skills.

Another time, we were fighting Dutch marines. This one guy was huge, so I said "Oh, man! Oh, man—help!" I spit in his face, I got a cue and I punched him in the neck with it. That was a technique that worked. Kung fu did not work.

There is another story I'll share with you. We were two whopper shoppers, stupid kids. There was this man, we called him Long Tall Sally, and he was a Dutchman with a jab. What a boxer! I thought my kung fu didn't work and I thought I had this lousy teacher. My teacher told me, "All you have to do is inhale keep your breath in and now explode, and you have a deadly punch!" So I said okay and then I inhaled and exploded. Long Tall Sally hit me in the side of the head, and I said, "Oh, shit, my kung-fu doesn't work!" I said, "Jack, you know our kung-fu sucks!"

So I wondered what we were going to do to that would make us win. There was a cigarette butt of Long Tall Sally's, so I grabbed it and applied it, and Jack got a rock and hit him. Long Tall Sally lost. Our teacher was saying you have to stay in the praying mantis, in the correct form, but at the time, I got punched in the face.

In my life lessons, I stay humble. I have learned

many skills, but the monkey taught me the most. People say that the blocks work, and they do work when you do it like the monkey. I don't mean to pick on silat because that is my family art. Silat

teaches many movements, but you don't fight with those movements. The street fighter, he always fights with a stone in his hand, so he can bang his opponent on the head. I am not picking on Silat. It is a good art. Karate is a good art, if you know how to use it. Too many people are not researching whether an art really works.

I come to these seminars and I am just a player. I hope you don't mind when I speak my mind, and I appreciate all of you and all your skills. We need chi gong healing. When I look at the martial arts, I also see how much of healing there is in the art and love in the art. You also have to understand the culture. Indonesian people are always laughing, saying "Yea yea, you got me!" But five minutes later they say, "I am going to kill you." I've seen it so many times. Like in a coffee shop, one guy will come at you with a blade like a fish hook, so all you do is hit someone and pull them up. I've seen people who've said how wonderful their kun tao is get stabbed and killed.

I hope you understand, I've lived through many different things by God's Grace. What is really practical in life are boxing, grappling and soccer. If you put those three together, you have a solid defense. But we do martial arts, whatever it is, to stay healthy. Our practice makes us healthy, that's what we are doing here. 🙏

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These Really Are the Good Old Days

Stewart Lauper

Uncle and I were just talking, and this is a fantastically, interesting experience, probably greater than any of us realize at the time. These really are the good old days. We will look back at these as maybe a singular moment, maybe an event. I do not think that there will be anything like it again, and there certainly has not been anything like it before.

If you look at everybody from Steve Watson, James Painter, and everybody in-between, it is a rather special, singular thing, to have this many people from this many different perspectives and points of views and directions, to all be at the same place and all want to do the same thing. Obviously Uncle, I think is kind of the magnet, the lure that makes people want to do that. Yet it takes someone

else to make it happen. There are other people that have been with Uncle for a lot longer, way longer, yet Sam, for whatever skill, reason or ability is able to do that. That's a rather impressive thing.

I don't know if it's anything nice or it's just an observation. Because Sam travels to India, he talks about spontaneous gatherings, where they just magically, seemingly put together these huge, huge things, and this is perhaps not huge by that standard, but it's huge in the sense that this would have never happened when I was a child. If people from different arts trained together, you would be shunned by your teacher. You would be excommunicated, beat to death, and it would just not be a good thing.

Something that Uncle and I were just talking about before is that everybody has natural skills, abilities, inclinations, predilections, to kind of be the martial artist, or even the person that they are and you can almost look around the room and can see the person that someone is going to be. You look like you would be a big, thick neck kayaker, a wrestler, and you can look around and see the kind of

guy that you were going to be facing. Plus you don't have to be in the market to pick up on people's energy and see where they are coming from.

What is an interesting question is, what we were just talking about, is, and maybe it is part of the human condition, the way everybody has a natural resistance to being complete, because when you see guys that have really good combat skills, they tend to look at the Tai-chi guys like, "yea, that's cool, but you know, that is just a Tai-chi thing." If you see the Tai-chi guys, they look at the UFC fighters like, "Those guys are cannibals. Why would you ever want to do that?"

I think that is something that Sam is certainly doing and I think maybe without saying it, is trying to make the way for everyone else to do that, to kind of have everybody be complete in that sense. That is what is maybe singular about what we have here because humans become experts in avoidance. When there is something you don't want to do, you become an expert in avoiding that. If we said, if Sam said, everybody should bring a big metal rod and a stick with them this time, half the people would not have come, because they would have thought it would be painful, and they would not have wanted to do that.

I think that it is probably equally hard for both directions. If you come from an energy-based

system, it is probably hard to get comfortable with the idea of hitting people and having them hit you. Certainly looking at it as fun is a foreign notion. By the same token, if you come from an impact-generated system, and we're going to work on our energy, you are going to look at it as, "Ugh." I think you really turn a good corner when you see the value in all of that, and that certainly has happened for me before in my life, but never to this degree, so this is kind of amazing in that regard.

We've done lots of different things when we've come out here, and it has always been fun and we've had a great time and hopefully everybody has learned more about each other than maybe specific skills and talents—things that you take away, although those things within themselves would be considerable. If you could spend an afternoon with James Painter, you could certainly walk away becoming a person better able to defend yourself. The things that he drills in your head—like slap, grab and twist—that's good stuff and that is the kind of stuff that Uncle kind of harps on. You see the guys that are 14th degree black belts, 25th degree black belts, and yet they can't do that kind of stuff, and if they had to face someone like James Painter, they would immediately be an expert in avoidance. "Well, I would fight him, but see, I have this ethical dilemma about... I'm scared, man!" I would like to

say it: I just don't have the sack to go up against a 300-lb. guy who can kill you in five seconds.

Uncle says, and he says a lot of things that cut to the essence of human foibles: If all these people that claim to be so great, if they are so great, then why aren't they rich? Or why aren't they the UFC champion? Why aren't they at the top of whatever it is? Of course they give you their avoidance reason: "Well, it's because of my humility."

I think that if you want to be self-serving, that the energy thing will probably have greater pay-offs than the merely physical path. Of course I kind of came up through the impact generated thing, but I think with Uncle that he has certainly helped me with being a little more well rounded, a little bit more complete as a person, certainly as



a martial artist, but hopefully as a person. I guess the thing that you could do with your hundred or so years that you have would be to have some fun, to pass that on, maybe contribute a little bit to the human condition and that is kind of what we do we do here, and what we do, we do in kind of unorthodox ways.

When we first came out, I think that we kind of started at the end game. We talked about that before. We just did two rules fighting. The first time

we came out here, you know Josh broke my nose and I broke his leg and I've broken something every time I came out here - it's a tradition that I have to break something. James Painter and I, for instance, seem to mirror each other. Our arts are very, very different. But they are very similar in many, many ways, as everybody's probably are, so we probably have more in common than we have that separates us, and that is the most interesting thing.

So, I have trying to think about the process too, to kind of bridge that gap, and not just here with this group, but in general. I think there's a physical route that you have to take to get to where Uncle is, and it is interesting the observations that he makes. He always talks about speed as bullshit, timing is everything. You can only say that if you are remarkably fast. And you can only say to take the soft way when you can do things incredibly hard.

You know it's like, warriors can choose pacifism—others are condemned to it. If you were complete as a martial artist, you might feel a little more complete as a person. You wouldn't feel insecure and then these insecurities wouldn't pop up everywhere. It's odd that they pop up in the martial arts community. That's the stuff that Uncle talks about all the time, and that's where politics comes in, in the form of: I'm a 9th and you're a 6th so I'm 50 percent better than you."

It's like music. When you first start you want to be the best musician, and then at some point you realize it's entirely arbitrary and you can never be the best so you just want to enjoy the fact that you are

a musician and at that point something really good happens. That certainly happens in the martial arts. James Painter, for instance, says, "I'm just the guy teaching guys how to beat other guys up." Maybe in a very base sense that's true, but not really. He's way more complex a person than that, and he really

is trying to put his students on his shoulders and he has, I mean, he produces people better than himself and that should be the aspiration of every

teacher. And maybe not better in their physical skills because I think that he could still toss people around pretty well, but he tries to make them better as people—as with Sam, as with anybody here. I still just get great pleasure from hitting people so we're going to do that.

When I first came to these things, people had this "I'm a this guy and you're a that guy, and that's just the way it's going to be." I think that given time there really has been a nice sense of family that's developed here and these are bonds that will last the rest of our lives.

You can kind of look at it however you want to look at it but it will be a middle ground kind of thing, so this will be, especially because the space is small and we cannot bleed—"Or break the walls," Sam interjects)—so it's not going to be bashing each other around. We will be gentler, so there won't be any blood, there won't be any impact, so try not to think about boxing as a pugilistic thing right now. Think about it as a cat-and-mouse game. We do tons of stuff like that, like I wrestle with the kids, we play soccer with boxing gloves, we do tons of goofy stuff just to get them out of this mental construct of "this is combat and you have to crush the person and shove his head up his ass until shit comes out the hole in his neck," so you feel good about yourself as a person. There's just something wrong with people that think like that and yet way too many people think like that. I think the rest of the world thinks that we are like that as a country which is abhorrent, but we won't even go there. 🌍

"Warriors can choose pacifism—others are condemned to it. If you were complete as a martial artist, you might feel a little more complete as a person."

At the End of the Day, Being a Bad Ass and a Buck Fifty Gets You a Ride on the Bus

James Painter

At my school when I'm training a lot and training pretty hardcore — what I think is really hard — the thing is that I try not to do it to hurt anyone. That's why I like to grapple. With grappling you can go hard and not hurt anyone. The thing is not to take numerous shots to the head, like in boxing. I used to box and you get a lot of soft tissue damage, so we try to avoid that. Grappling is a good way to avoid that. You can go hard and have a lot of contact, but not hurt each other too much... So we do a lot of jiu jitsu there but we do a lot of boxing also but we're trying to move away from that so you don't have soft tissue damage, you won't have brain damage later in life.

If you're grappling, you know, tapping out before it goes too far and you get hurt. I have a lot of students and I'm kind of too nice to them in the sense where I let them beat me up a lot or I don't hurt them back. I always tell people, "I never hurt anyone unless I mean to hurt them." And you should have the responsibility of that too, you students, don't hurt anyone unless you mean to hurt them. Yeah, you got to go out there and hit somebody so they know what it feels like to be hit back, but the thing is not to go out there and just hurt people. I had a lot of instructors that were like that, and I try not to be like that.

I wanted to reiterate what Stewart was saying earlier. A lot of my life was thinking about stuff that happened in the past or things that I'm going to do. But the thing is really about what's happening right now. These are the good old days. There's going to be a time when Willem's not going to be here anymore, or someone's not going to come to the seminar or they can't make it or whatever, and we kind of have to appreciate what's going on right now. I sat for a long time and talked to Willem about helping kids. I mean, a lot of people look at me, and I'm a

pretty competent fighter, and I have a lot of really tough students, but in a sense it's like what Stewart said, "At the end of the day being the toughest guy in the room and \$1.50 will get you a ride on the bus."

It's not that big of a deal to be so ego driven to have to be the toughest. I have nothing to offer any kid. I can't teach them how to do artwork or anything like that. I'm just a street fighter. That's all I am. In a sense I feel kind of bad about it because Willem was telling me he's going to go teach kids art and all I can teach anyone is to hurt somebody. That's the only thing I can do. It's important for self-defense, yes, but there's another side of it that I have no grasp of, other than developing character.

I'm trying to ascend being just a street fighter, or whatever I am. I just teach people how to fight. But building better people? I'm trying. Make myself a better person? I don't know, but I'm trying, at least I'm aware of it and trying to do that. It seems self-evident, over the

last four or five years, it may be happening.

I come here and I learn a lot from a lot of people, just talking to them or watching and I appreciate that. It has expanded my mind a lot and opened my horizons. You guys have accepted me for who I am and what I do, and I try to accept you guys too. I thank everyone for that, for having the chance to come up here and work out with you guys and see you guys. That's really humbling to me because I don't think I'm at the same level as all of you guys. I'm just a street fighter, and not that good of a street fighter really. I just know some stuff because I've experienced a lot.

But the thing is I'm trying to expand my mind as everyone here is, and I think that is the best that we can ask for. So thank you all. 🙏



We Think When We Are Older We Are Supposed to Get Older: Don't Be a Copy Cat!

Cosme Castanieto

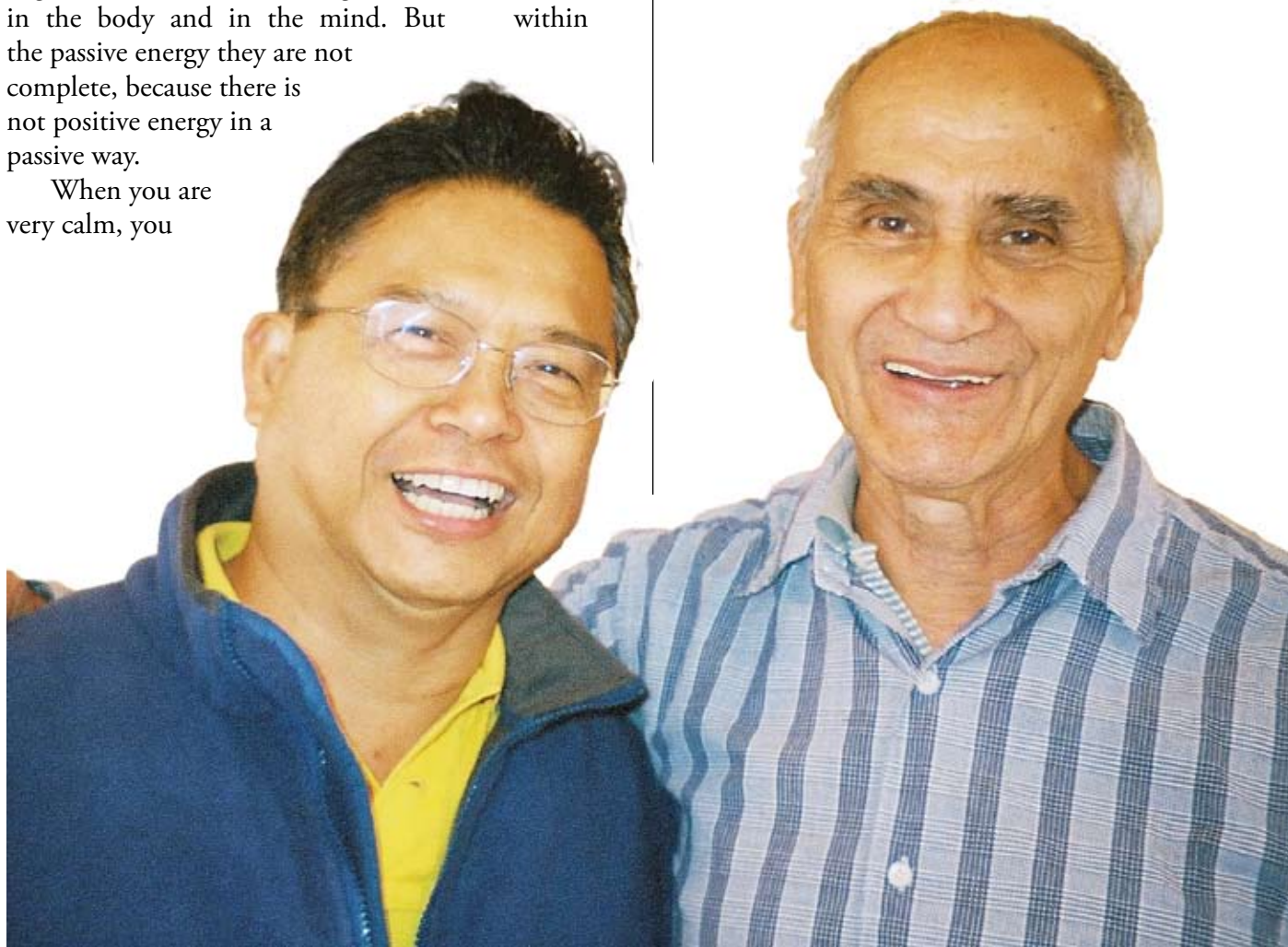
I would like to say that I was just at the opposite of where you are at; your energy of where you work is very active. I have been in New Jersey with people who do yoga and their energy is very passive. One thing that I have learned is that when I work with people who work with yoga and have very calm energy, they use it both in the body and in the mind. But within the passive energy they are not complete, because there is not positive energy in a passive way.

When you are very calm, you

need to use the passive and the active energy. When they come together it is like a kiss, like a butterfly. For many of you, you have very active energy. It will be quite interesting to see—are you too much in the positive energy and not using your negative polarity? Your yang and yin has to be in balance.

Through the 40 years that I have been in this work, I have listened to thousands of people who throw the muscles off, who have emotional problems and my work is to listen. Each one of us has a music coming out of our bodies, and I hear this music. I see myself as the director. As I listen to the music, I can see all your organs as they are playing.

Each organ is like an instrument to me. I go to each instrument and I see how each organ is functioning. Does it play very nicely, like a piano that has been tuned? I go to each of the organs and see what the problems are. It could be the food, anger, frustration—each one of us is unique. Then I



see how you play all your instruments together, and sometimes, many times, they do not play together as a family. So my work with you is to get you to balance your positive and negative energy.

I believe each and every one of us can have the best of health.

When I see a young man, who has just graduated from high school, I see he is on top of the hill and ready to go back down into age. Because I have worked with so many people in the past, I can see the flaw in the system, but for each one of you, you do not have the opportunity to listen to your own system. When you do not listen to your own bodies, in time your bodies will complain to you, and say, "I am going on strike" and the next thing you know, you are in the hospital. So the object is to learn how to use the yin and the yang.

Looking at your whole body is like a chair with the 4 legs: mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual. Your physical can be, whatever, 65 percent. You need to ask yourself: How is your emotional body? Is it in balance, or is it not? Most of the time I find in people that their emotional is very low. When energy is low in the emotional body, you lose your physical energy instantaneously—100 percent. I will prove it to you in a short period of time—what you are doing to yourself, and how you are reacting to other people. You have a spiritual body and mental body, and each of them have to work together as a family. It is so important that we can see that flaw within ourselves, so we can be as strong and as healthy as possible. Only then can we help others.

When I was 43 years old, I felt that my physical energy dropped by about three levels. All of a sudden, I began to lose muscle tone, and I began to shrink. Because I had been doing healing all these years, and because it runs in my family in Hawaii and in the Philippines, I found the flaw. Within three-and-a-half years I was able to correct my body: physically, spiritually, emotionally, and mentally. In three-and-a-half years I grew from shoes size 7 ½ to 9 and I grew three-quarters of an inch taller and I got 10 years younger. We think that when we are older that we are supposed to get older. Don't be a copy-cat.

You have this special gift to share with the world. We can speak words, words can be spoken

correctly and words can be misinterpreted, but the light energy that comes off of your body never lies. It tells the truth. That is why when being with your friends, and watching people go by, or being in a building and seeing someone, one feels uncomfortable about that person, or feels good about that person, because we all have a sense, this ability, about people.

I have learned with many people that they have energy blocks within their own body and they can be a nice person, a sweet person, very strong in mind, beautiful or handsome person, and the energy short circuits. But once you open the energy in a correct way, there is no fight, there is peace, there is love, there is a dance, and you move in a circle. Keep your body in balance and your body will become very strong. Your body can recharge, your body can become young. Exercise brings in the sunlight to the chakras, and they are recharged. Words can make you and words can break you.

Do you know why? Because we all come from the creator and we need to use our energy in a positive way. When you are able to use the energy from the heavens, energy from the mother earth, the energy from the trees, the birds, it will become very effective. You need to make peace with the energy that is around you. This is the North Pole, this is the South Pole, this is the equator. If the equator weak, the North and South Pole become weaker. When I speak of positive and negative, Mother Earth comes up from this direction here, up there as you say God, the father comes from this direction here, so we have the positive energy and the negative energy that meets right here in the solar plexus. It comes together here. It's like lightening.

When you respect self, spiritual, mental, physical, and emotional, eating the right type of food, then you become alive again, it's a kiss in you, and so you need to know how our bodies work. In Christianity they speak about Moses, and Moses went up to the Sinai Mountain, and this bush of fire spoke to Moses, and Moses said, "Huh?" And the voice came back and said, "I am that of what I am." Listen very carefully. When you say I it is an inhale when you say am it is an exhale. Inhale is alpha, exhale is omega. Inhale positive, exhale negative polarity. We are always connecting a higher power and I will prove it to you. ☺