

CHI CHAT with Grandmaster

Issue 28

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From the Grandmaster's Desk



I was delighted by the response to the **"Boosting the Immune System"** workshop on 09 February when more than 80 participants turned up to fill the training room almost to capacity. Apart from our regular members, I spotted a number of new faces among the participants. This is most encouraging, especially when we do not advertise but depend on news getting around by word of mouth through our members.

For more on the Workshop, please turn to page 3 for a report by **John Tee**. You may also [click here](#) to view my presentation on our YouTube Channel.

When we started the Alexandra Centre three years ago with just a handful of members, I thought that the training room was much too large for our classes and that it will

take us quite a long time and lots of effort and publicity to enroll more members to fill it up. But I was wrong. Thanks to our members, volunteers and our team of instructors, we are already achieving attendance close to capacity.

As the Alexandra Centre will be celebrating its 3rd Anniversary this year, we are planning to hold a dinner in May or June to commemorate the occasion. Details will be announced as soon as they are finalised, so please stay tuned for further news.

In conjunction with the anniversary dinner, we will also be staging **"The Chi Dynamics Qigong Challenge 2015"**. The objective of this competition is to 'crown' the **Champion of Chi Dynamics Exercise Forms** and we hope to make this our annual hallmark event.

The Challenge is open to all members from our training centres in Singapore and Malaysia. Participants may compete as individuals or as a team and they will be assessed on accuracy, interpretation,

..... continued on page 2

In this Issue

From the Grandmaster's Desk	1-2
Boosting The Immune System Workshop	3
I. Warton Ong— Combatting Stress in the Fast Lane!	4-5
Ask Grandmaster	6

This publication is for internal distribution to CDI members only. Should you have any interesting health-related experiences to share with our readers, please email them to: gmasteranthony@gmail.com.



A record turnout of participants at the "Boosting the Immune System" workshop.

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From The Grandmaster's Desk continued from page 1

timing and breath control before a panel of judges. Additional points will be accorded for the degree of difficulty of the exercise and also flair in the execution.

If you wish to participate in this Challenge, please email **Ronald Lim** at gmasteranthony@gmail.com to register your interest as soon as possible.

Recently, I was invited to Bandar Utama Centre's annual dinner held in Petaling Jaya. I thoroughly enjoyed the evening — the food was sumptuous, the company delightful and the hospitality warm and sincere. What impressed me most was the camaraderie displayed by the members of the Centre which has flourished for more than 12 years — kudos to the able leadership of **Ng Yee Fock** (Resident Instructor) and his team comprising **Tan Kim Seong** (Instructor) and **Victor Wong Khang Seng** (Asst. Instructor).

I was also spoilt rotten by **Simon Cheong** (Resident Instructor) when I visited his Pasang Klang Centre, a small but active centre which has been in existence for more than 11 years. Besides being treated to the best '**Bak Kut Teh**' (pork rib soup) in Klang, I had the opportunity to sample the much acclaimed '**Eng Kee**' pineapple when Simon took me on a tour to one of Klang's finest pineapple farms.



The fabulous Eng Kee pineapple—sweet and juicy!



*Grandmaster Anthony Wee enjoying himself at Bandar Utama's annual dinner. Standing behind him are Resident Instructor **Ng Yee Fock** (orange T-shirt), Instructor **Tan Kim Seong** (yellow T-shirt) and Assistant Instructor **Victor Wong Khang Seng** (striped shirt)*

Dark in colour and about three times the cost of other species, the '**Eng Kee**' pineapple is perhaps the juiciest and sweetest pineapple I have ever tasted. In fact, it was so good that I returned to the farm a few days later!

I was born in the Lunar Year of the Ram which means I will be turning 72 soon! I am looking forward to it as I anticipate it is going to be another active year of sharing my '*made in Singapore*' Qigong with the community at large, especially those who need to stay healthy and active in their senior years.

Before I end this message, I would like to thank all my instructors, volunteers, sponsors and well-wishers for their invaluable support. I look forward to our continuing collaboration and wish you all the very best for a healthy, happy and prosperous Lunar New Year of the Ram.

Grandmaster Anthony Wee

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Alexandra Centre will be closed for the Lunar New Year holidays from 16 to 22 February 2015.

Classes will resume on Monday 23 Feb 2015.

We wish all our members Good Health, Happiness and Prosperity for the New Year!

Boosting the Immune System Workshop—09 Feb'15

Once again, **Grandmaster Anthony Wee** drew a huge crowd to his **Boosting the Immune System** workshop at the Alexandra Centre on 09 February 2015.

Stressing the importance of the Block Breathing technique, Grandmaster Wee explained that it is necessary to rid the body of stale air, including carbon dioxide, thus reducing the body's acidity with the removal of carboic acid from the body's cells.

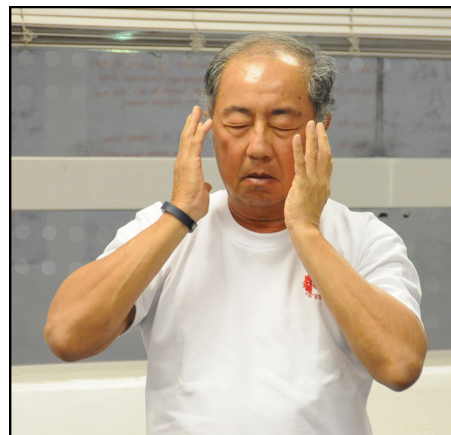
The Block Breathing exercise is a simple but very powerful and beneficial exercise that Grandmaster Wee has been practicing since the age of 16 when he was pursuing pugilistic goals. It is a technique that helped him to develop exceptionally strong dan tian and inner power, and win many local and regional pugilistic awards.

For steps on how to perform the Block Breathing exercise, please refer to the training charts at the Centre or [click here](#) to download them from the Chi Dynamics website. Grandmaster's workshop presentation is also on our YouTube Channel and you can [click here](#) to view it.

Grandmaster Wee advised healthy students to do Block Breathing twice a day, in the morning upon waking up and again in the evening before sleep. For others encountering medical challenges, they should perform this exercise more often, even up to five times or more a day.

He stressed that the body cannot rest and heal when it is multitasking. Therefore, we need to find time to slow down and rest to allow the body to heal. Block Breathing is the technique to achieve this. The exercise also helps to detox the body and reduce inflammation.

Apart from illustrating the importance and power of the mind, "Yi" and how it is related to the body, Grandmaster Wee touched on the five flows experienced by Qigong practitioners: Blood flow, Heat



flow, Electromagnetic flow, Vibratory flow and Chemical flow (*the latter is capable of producing more than 200 different chemicals to promote self-healing*). He explained that physical energy is generated from the lower dan tian, the upper dan tian 'Yi' directs the energy, while the middle dan tian connects it all.

To boost the body's immunity system, two exercises were taught to stimulate the body's auto immune system and the thymus gland.

The first was the static **Crane Form**:

- ◆ Adopt a stance with one foot in front and weight on the back leg.
- ◆ Breathe in and slowly press the hands (*palms facing earth*) down and simultaneously lift up the heels to transfer the weight to the Yong Qian. The latter is to stimulate the kidney, liver and spleen meridians. Exhale using soft 'Tu'.

- ◆ Repeat this 9 times and then change legs and repeat 9 times again.

The second exercise was the **Crane Walk**:

- ◆ Breathe in and simultaneously raise both hands with palm facing together upward while simultaneously raising one foot.
- ◆ Separate the hands and palm face outward, slowly lower at the same time whilst lowering the raised foot with the heel touching the ground first. Soft 'tu' exhalation is to be used.

The class was then divided into groups to practise the exercises under the watchful eyes of the many instructors around.

The workshop was a resounding success based on the feedback from the participants.

John Tee

Photographs courtesy of Tan Kee Wee

I. WARTON ONG

Combating Stress in the Fast Lane



*With boyish looks that belie his age, the affable 62-year-old **I. Warton Ong** exudes a personality that is cool, calm and collected. Happily married with three grown up children, he has served 30 years in the fast lane of the competitive oil and gas industry where he was involved in general management, business planning, turn-around management and organisational development. His life took a turn seven years ago when he made a concerted effort to wind down his hectic pace of life to strike a balance between his work and family life – a move which he has never regretted. We caught up with him to find out more about him and his positive outlook towards life and below is what he shared with us.*

Chi Chat: Warton, please share with us how you cope with your demanding job and manage to balance work with family so well.

Warton: My work in the oil and gas industry was rather demanding and stressful as I had to travel extensively throughout the Asia Pacific Region; there were also long spells of living and working in the United States and China. However, the international exposure and experience provided me with a broad perspective of the work-life balance issues in a corporate environment and this valuable insight helped me tremendously in deal-

ing with work pressure and stress.

To combat stress, I reckon that you have to (a) lead a balanced lifestyle, (b) get involved in activities that interest you most and (c) learn to relax. About seven years ago, I made a major decision to align my life and career along these three broad principles.

First, I cut down on my travels and focused on my role as a China business advisor to the American SME I worked for. This meant I could spend more time with my family.

Secondly, I pursued activities that interest me and this included going back to school on a part-time basis to get a Masters degree in Psychology and Counseling. Since being certified as a family therapist, I have been doing volunteer work with youth at risk from secondary schools and with ex-prisoners from the prison resettlement project, and also with families and couples at a Catholic Counselling Centre.

Finally, I took up Qigong three years ago to learn and practice relaxation techniques at the Chi Dynamics' Alexandra Centre.

Chi Chat: How did you get to know about Chi Dynamics Qigong?

Warton: I was introduced by a friend who is very active and always exploring the various forms of exercises to participate in. He did his homework well and eventually came to the conclusion that Chi Dynamics Qigong

offered the best all-round training in a nice environment. Following his recommendation, I joined the Chi Dynamics training centre at Alexandra.

Chi Chat: You have been practising Chi Dynamics Qigong for three years now and obviously you find it beneficial. In what way has it help you?

Warton: I would say that I have gained most from Grandmaster Anthony Wee's rhythmic breathing techniques. When in anger or faced with a difficult situation, one's breathing tends to be shallow and erratic; invariably, this affects our behaviour and performance adversely. However, as many have found, rhythmic breathing is beneficial as it helps coherence, regulate the heart's power output and drive other biological systems to synchronise with the heart. Perhaps the following analogy from a doctor is the best way to illustrate what I mean.

Our body is like an orchestra and the heart, which does more physical work than any other muscle during our life time, is the string section of the orchestra. The blood flow that the heart generates is like the lead violin. Rhythmic breathing is our way of taking control of the biological equivalent of the lead violin. When we breathe rhythmically, the

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blood flow which the heart generates creates the equivalent of harmonious musical notes instead of erratic noises. This strong coherent note from the heart in turn begins to entrain all the other physiological signals such as our lungs, kidneys, brain, etc and release a lot more power that enhances our daily performance.

With just 10 minutes a day to practice rhythmic breathing, you can set your physiological coherence to be your default pattern. When it does, you are less reactive and less likely to “fly off the handle” and trigger the “flight or fight” response. Once you start to develop emotional coherence, you get the whole orchestra to play in tune instead of out of tune.

Chi Chat: What exercises are most beneficial to you?

Warton: For me, the Hand Flicking exercise is the most beneficial. For many years, I had been experiencing numbness, weakness and associated problems in my left hand because of the pressure on the median nerve in my wrist – a disorder commonly known as carpal tunnel syndrome. This disorder can be corrected surgically and would cost patients close to \$4,000 in a private hospital. However, I chose the Hand Flicking exercise option which eventually cured my condition without costing me a cent.

I find the stretching exercises such as the Butterfly Stretch and the Sword Stretch helpful for my joints; the core muscle strengthening exercises are also great for building up muscle strength. I make sure that I do these favourite exercises of mine for 20 minutes daily. I believe consistency in the practice is more important than remembering to do too many forms which some of us may not have the time for.

Chi Chat: Have you practised other forms of movement exercises (like Yoga) or martial arts (like karate) before? If so, how do they compare with Chi Dynamics?

Warton: I learned Taekwondo at the age of 15 right up to 35. After attaining my second degree black belt, I was made the assistant instructor. Subsequently, I was promoted to be an instructor when I attained the third degree black belt. However, I stopped practicing the art after I was relocated to the USA for about 8 years.

Taekwondo requires good stamina and agility to cope with sparring and fast kicking techniques. As I had experienced, it may lead to injuries as a result of excessive exercise and little attention to self-care. On the other hand, Qigong is more gentle and calming and this suits me fine.

Chi Chat: We understand that you plan to be trained as an instructor. What prompted you to take this step?

Warton:

我听见 我忘记;
我看见 我记住;
我做 我了解

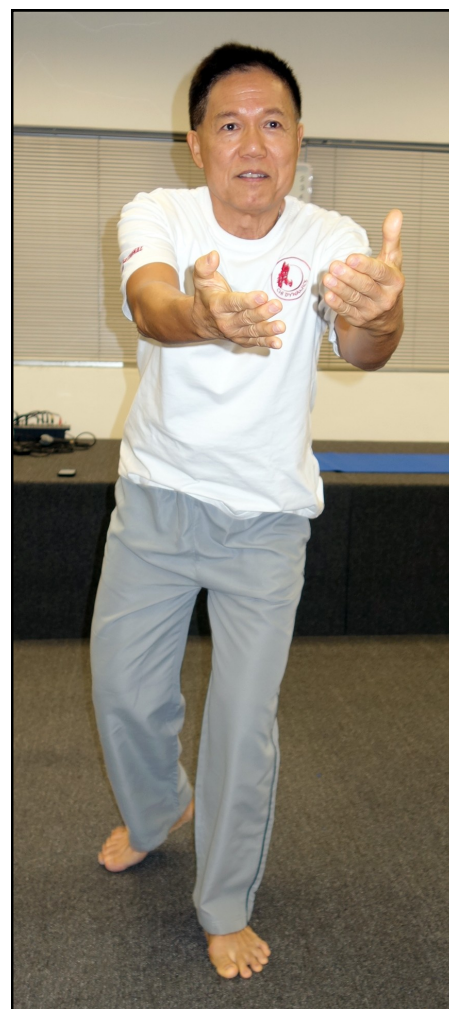
**“When I hear, I forget.
When I see, I remember.
When I do, I understand”**

This old Chinese proverb tells us that you can only understand something by trying it yourself. So, if you just tell me, I will forget. If you show me and I will remember. If I get involved, I will understand.

Getting involved to me is the process of developing an awareness of the Chi Dynamics form of exercise and the learning comes when one has to teach. My interest in being trained as an instructor starts with this premise of acquiring a good understanding and with this, my hope is that it would allow me to convincingly spread the benefits of Chi Dynamics style of Qigong exercises.

Chi Chat: Do you have any suggestions how we can improve our Chi Dynamics classes and overall experience.

Warton: Grandmaster is very generous with the sharing of his knowledge and



experiences. The instructors and volunteers whom I have interacted with are dedicated and eager to share their experiences as well. They all command high respect from the students because of their enthusiasm. Most of us practising at Chi Dynamics are very keen in managing and maintaining our health. Sometimes a new exercise is thrown in but we only get to do it once or twice and not really being able to understand or practise it long enough to benefit from it.

As a suggestion, besides the regular loosening exercises, a “health-targeted exercise” focusing on different parts of the body/brain for each month can be explored. However, it is important that the instructor leading the class is well prepared to instruct and share the exercise with the class.

Ask Grandmaster

Question: Is there an exercise in Chi Dynamics that can improve mental health?

Answer: Yes, I would recommend deep breathing using the "Chui" method in the one-legged stance of the crane form. 5 minutes of this balancing exercise each morning will help stimulate the left brain and the right brain and facilitate more oxygen and blood flow to the brain. Besides keeping the brain in top shape, this exercise is also great for those who are mentally tired.

A variation of this exercise for improving coordination and cerebral balance is the **Water Crane Walk**. This exercise (described below) is particularly beneficial for those who are unable to do strenuous exercises.



Step 1. Start with the toes of the right leg touching the ground and cross your palms facing the chest.



Step 2. Stretch your arms outwards to the sides like a fan opening up and inhale simultaneously.

Note: This exercise is well illustrated and explained in my book "Dynamic Free Flow of Qi" and Training Manual. For copies of them, please contact Michael Koe (email: mslkoe@gmail.com; SMS: 9836-7151)



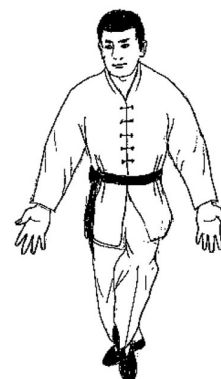
Step 3. Hold your breath and swing your hands gracefully up the sides of your body while lifting your front leg.



Step 4. As your hands float down, stretch out your front leg and turn the foot 45 degrees outward. Pause for a few seconds.

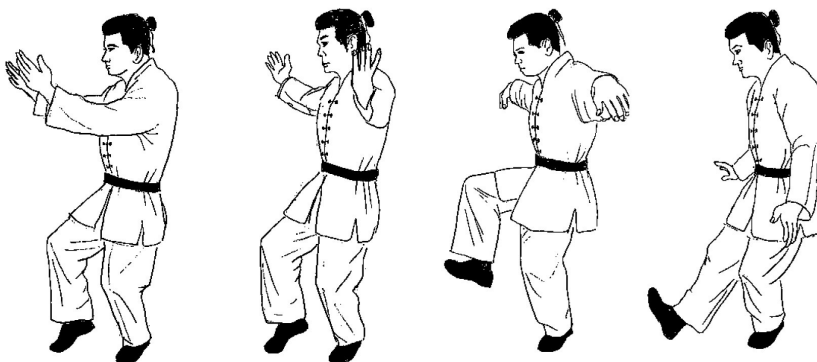


Step 5. Then step down on your heel and transfer your weight onto the front leg. While doing so, exhale (Chui) as your hands sweep forward from the side.



Step 6. Next, glide your other foot (left) forward to the front and stand with its toes resting on the ground with the heel lifted off the ground. Repeat the exercise for at least 15 minutes, alternating legs.

Note: You need to be very focused doing this exercise.



Side View: Water Crane Walk