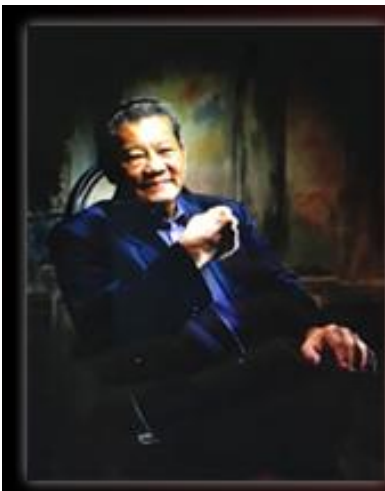




CHI CHAT

with Grandmaster

Issue No: 58

01 April 2019

FROM THE GRANDMASTER'S DESK

Greetings!

Over the Lunar New Year festivities, I met someone who asked me rather cynically the relevance of Qigong in our present time, and why is deep diaphragmatic breathing one of the pillars of good health in the age-old practice of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and Qigong when there is no scientific evidence to support it by the western world.

I took the opportunity to correct him that the West does in fact support many ancient claims from the East and this is after exhaustive scientific studies. Although the West takes a deductive approach by treating health separately from disease and the East's holistic inductive approach treats health as a balanced state and diseases as an unbalanced state, both parties firmly agree that breathing does play a huge part in our state of health.

Deep Diaphragmatic Breathing

I went further to explain that in the practice of Qigong, deep breathing with slow exhalation (*up to 10 seconds*) slows the heart rate and lowers blood pressure. This exercise, coupled with healing sounds media-

tion and the massaging of the neck just below the ears and at the carotid, stimulates the Vagus Nerve to improve the immune system. Deep breathing also reacts to the '*fight or flight*' response in the nervous system to lower stress markers and reduce inflammation.

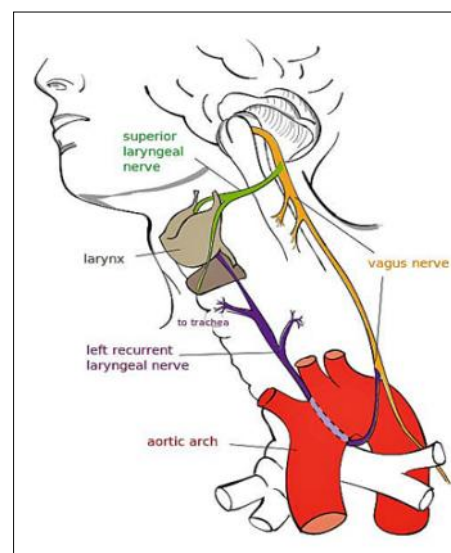
The Vagus Nerve

Known as the "*wandering nerve*", the Vagus Nerve is the '*super highway*' that connects the cerebellum and brainstem of the brain down to the lowest veins of the abdomen. As it reaches out to all the major organs of the body along the way, its role is to send signals to the brain on what is going on in the organs; in the process, it plays an important part in influencing your breathing, digestive functions, heart rate and mental and physiological health.

In recent years, Western medical researchers have recognised the importance of the Vagus Nerve and how it impacts our immune system and mental health. A study in 2015 by the well-known licensed clinical psychologist, Dr Arielle Schwartz,

HIGHLIGHTS

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Source: www.teachmeanatomy.com

established that the Vagus Nerve can be stimulated naturally through exercises in the comfort of your home. Among the recommended methods are humming, conscious

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From the Grandmaster's Desk—continued from page 1

breathing and healthy relationships which are all very similar to what we practise in Chi Dynamics Qigong. [For more on Vagus Nerve stimulation exercises, visit Dr Schwartz's blog at <https://drarielleschwartz.com/natural-vagus-nerve-stimulation-dr-arielle-schwartz/>.]

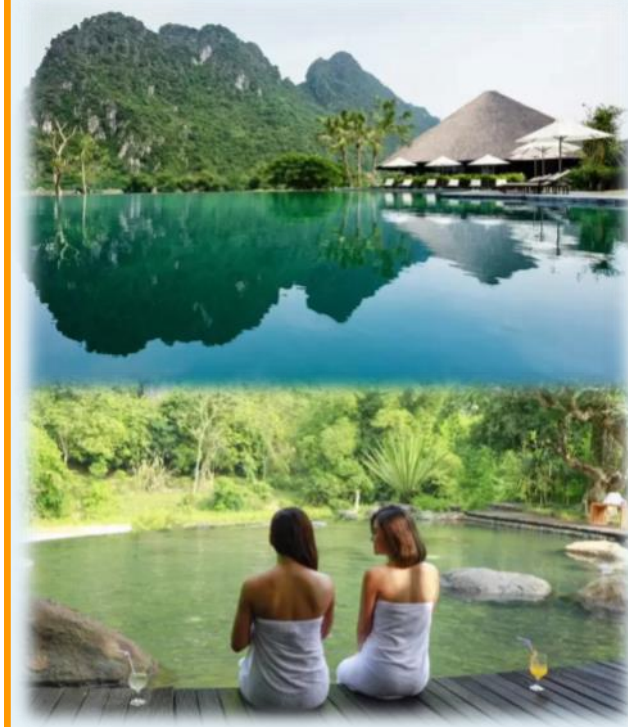
Judging from the numerous print and social media reports, deep breathing for wellness has certainly gripped the world. Just do an Apple or Google Play Store search for 'breathing' and you will find heaps of information and even free apps promoting the benefits of breathing and helping people practise breathing techniques and exercises. This is indeed evidence that although with roots steeped in ancient Eastern practices, Chi Dynamics Qigong is still very relevant to wellness in today's world.

Serena Resort Kim Boi Retreat

We have decided on Serena Resort Kim Boi, Vietnam as the venue for our 2019 Retreat. I visited it recently and found it to be very suitable. Sifu Michael Kang is co-ordinating the event and details will be announced as soon as arrangements are finalised. Meanwhile, pen down 4-8 November 2019 as the tentative dates for the Retreat and look out for more information which will be available soon.

Grandmaster Anthony Wee

2019 RETREAT Serena Resort Kim Boi 04-08 November 2019



ASK GRANDMASTER

Question: In block breathing, we are supposed to gently tighten the anus while holding the breath for 4 seconds. Do we still have to continue tightening the anus when we exhale?

Answer: Yes, continue to tighten the anus for 6-9 seconds on exhalation; this is to keep the qi energy from dispersing. Relax for 4 seconds and then inhale to repeat the breathing cycle.

The tightening of the anal muscles has a number of health benefits as it stimulates the nerves of the sacrum



at the end of the spinal cord for a number of health benefits.

Firstly, it enhances qi flow to the Hui Ying (or Perineum) which is a master point in the Ren and Tu Channels and assists the Inner Orbit Circular Qi flow (Seow Chow Tien). This requirement is a must

for advanced level Qigong practitioners.

Secondly, it improves waste disposal and thirdly, it strengthens the abdominal core power by enhancing the pelvic floor muscles and inner bowel movements.



MUSINGS OF A SIFU WANNABE

'Sing Moh' Andrew Lucy shares his experiences leading a Qigong class

Warton Ong strikes again: with a poke to my belly in a recent class, I was asked to go from calmly meditative (*if struggling*) student/practitioner to panicky and uncertain interim teacher. Fortunately, fellow classmates - such as Janet and Michel, have also taken their turns, which does tend to lessen the awkward focus!

In my case, the lack of preparation was certain to be readily apparent to the class - given that, even after several years of practice, I remain encumbered by those *"two left feet composed entirely of thumbs"* I mentioned in an earlier article for "Chi Chat". But the doubts engendered by such thoughts swiftly melted away in the warmth and *"unfailingly patient and supportive"* environment of the class at Alexander - the members of which smiled through the excessive duration of the warm-up floor exercises through which I put them (*easy for me, as I just stood and watched*)! Equally importantly, Warton (*for all his entrapments*) was always on hand to keep me in check and to provide advice - which he followed up with a series of emailed pointers I must now take to heart for future such ambushes!

Those that are familiar with my history may be surprised by the above *"shocked to teach"* implication - as I have long been an educator, of sorts. The *"of sorts"* modifier being central to that claim as, contrary to Mr Shaw's glaringly false maxim that *"those who can, do; those who cannot, teach"*; the greater truism is that those who don't teach quite often seek to tell those who do teach how

to do so! So, now the tables have been turned and it has been, surprisingly, quite refreshing - it seems I had nearly forgotten that one can learn as much, if not more, whilst teaching as whilst being taught, and the teacher does, indeed, always remain a student.

Nonetheless, each time Warton, Roland or Michael somewhat slyly ask one of us if we can *"lead the shoulder role"*, the sense of foreboding remains - or, it certainly does for me as the request immediately wipes my memory causing me to forget the difference between *"Yin"* and *"Yang"* styles, or whether it should be Fu, Chui, Pi, Tu or Xi breathing! Fortunately, the always-available reassurance of our more seasoned leaders stems the cascade of doubt each time. However, it does seem, in a roguishly surreptitious way, that these same Sifus are exploring veins of new blood with which to infuse class participation. Is this a contingency plan for succession, perhaps? Or is it simply that there is amusement in our squirming? Any of us with a suspicious mind may tend to view Warton's penchant for *"mountain climbing"* as an indication toward the latter deduction!

All light-hearted cynicism aside, being granted the chance to lead our class has been an honour and a trigger for contemplation. In the normal course of my participation as a student of QiGong, I admit to sometimes thinking the teaching of our group *cannot be so hard*. After all, we know most of the moves, and tend to go into them on autopilot.



lot. Such thoughts, I believe, will be less common now, having gained a more complete understanding of the nuances of teaching a physically demanding series of complex postures to such a diverse gathering.

We are a congenial and capable class, no doubt. But how is a teacher to judge when their guidance to one individual will be deemed disruptive, and when as the constructive guidance it is intended to be? How many shoulder rolls are enough? Which exercise will benefit the greatest number of those attending? Is anyone pushing themselves too hard? *Is everyone still breathing?*

As students, we respect our Sifus, but it may be that we also take them for granted, and I sense that realisation may define the wisdom of asking the student to play the role of master. By *"climbing the mountain on the Sifu's mat"*, we may begin to better appreciate the mutuality of our endeavours with Qigong, and the contributions we each make toward a holistic and healing class experience at Chi Dynamics.



APPOINTMENT OF CHI DYNAMICS INSTRUCTORS

If you have noticed the passion, commitment and leadership skills of Chi Dynamics instructors, this is because there are stringent rules and criteria in their selection and appointment. And it takes time to be trained as a Chi Dynamics instructor too. If you are interested to be trained and certified as a Chi Dynamics instructor, here are rules and conditions.

The Pre-requisites

The incumbent should have strong interpersonal and communication skills, exemplary leadership and the passion and commitment to share the art of Chi Dynamics Qigong with people in need.

Assistant Instructor

It takes at least 2 years of training to be certified as an Assistant Instructor, during which time the incumbent is expected to clock in attendance of at least 75%; he or she is also expected to help out with beginners in a centre. When the incumbent is deemed fit for appointment by the centre Chief Instructor, the Grandmaster will then assess his or her knowledge and ability through a series of tests which includes the compulsory Chi Dynamics 5 Essentials.

Instructor

It takes at least another 12 months of active service and participation at a centre before an Assistant Instructor is promoted to be a full Instructor. This again is after a stringent assessment by the Grandmaster.

Senior Instructor

As time goes by, and when the incumbent has at least three Assistants and two other qualified instructors under his or her wings, the Grandmaster will appoint him as a Senior Instructor. This may take another five to eight years.

Sifu ('Master' in English)

As with all other Chi Dynamics titles, "Sifu" is an *earned* title and not arbitrarily self-imposed. It is conferred by the Grandmaster only when Senior Instructors have fulfilled a number of conditions, among which are at least 10 years of voluntary services with Chi Dynamics and having successfully trained at least three instructors and three assistant instructors with groups under them. The title is for life but may be stripped off if the instructor leaves the Chi Dynamics movement or for disciplinary reasons.

Meanwhile, Chi Dynamics trainees may show respect to their instructors who have not earned the Sifu title yet by addressing them as 'Si-Heng' or 'Si-Jia' which means 'Elder brother of the Art' and 'Elder sister of the Art' respectively.

Si-Gong (or Grandmaster)

To qualify for this honour, a Grandmaster must have at least 6 Sifus under him and a total membership of at least a thousand trainees.

Currently, Chi Dynamics has 9 appointed Sifus. They are Roland Hong, Michael Kang, and Lawrence Chong from Singapore, Hew Chee Wai, K.K. Kuan, C.C. Chin, Ong Kah Yong and Dato Alan Yong from Malaysia and Shane Francis from Perth, Australia.

The total number of certified Senior Instructors, Instructors and Assistant Instructors now stands at 6, 30 and 15 respectively (*see list on the next page*).



Roland Hong
Singapore



Michael Kang
Singapore



Lawrence Chong
Singapore



Hew Chee Wai
Malaysia



K.K. Kuan
Malaysia



C.C. Chin
Malaysia



Ong Kah Yong
Malaysia



Dato Alan Yong
Malaysia



Shane Francis
Australia

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Appointment of Chi Dynamics Instructors continued from page 4



CHI DYNAMICS (INTERNATIONAL) CERTIFIED INSTRUCTORS

SINGAPORE

SIFUS

Roland Hong
Michael Kang
Lawrence Chong

SENIOR INSTRUCTORS

S.J. Chiang

INSTRUCTORS

I. Warton Ong
Michael Koe
W.C. Chong
Cecilia Ang
Florence Tan
Arthur Low

ASSISTANT INSTRUCTORS

Andrew Lucy
Janet Chung
Michael Teo Chin Huat

PERTH, AUSTRALIA

SIFU

Shane Francis

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

INSTRUCTORS

Tan Kim Seong
Alice Khoo

MALAYSIA

SIFUS

Hew Chee Wai
K.K. Kuan
C.C. Chin
Ong Kah Yong
Dato Alan Yong

SENIOR INSTRUCTORS

Khadijah binte Shaari
Hew Mei Lan
Matthew Phung Tian Sin
June Heng Poay Cheng
Ng Yee Fock

INSTRUCTORS

Lo Kin Heng
Philoeno De Souza
Lee Kam Lan
Eric Thean Chi Kim
Raphael Yap Fook Onn
Dato Yee Weng Loon
Ron Ng Keng San
William Tan Jin Ho
Simon Cheong Keng Hong
Sirima Chantawarodom
Mary Wong
Tan Kim Seong
Tony Loh Chin Nyen
Eddy Ch'ng Eng Keat
Wong Tet Yoon (*Mrs Mary Ch'ng*)
Foo Tiock Feng
Martin Toh Keng Peng
Mary Heng Ah Sau
Wong Kim Fatt
Irene Gunn
Chin Fui Ning
Toh Ah Nya
Joni Chan Sim Ai

ASSISTANT INSTRUCTORS

Milly Foe Djien Lan
June Siew Chung Hiong
Teresa Yip Choy Heng
Ricky Leong Poh Seng
Jennifer Yoong
Gary Chan Jin Eng
Goh Sok Choo
Freddy Cheow Hock Teong
Shirene Chen Lai Ming
Ku Yuen Mun
Calvin Lum Tuck Wai
Liew Peng Chuen
Cindy Chan

Health & Medical

SNIPPETS

Israeli Cancer Cure Breakthrough

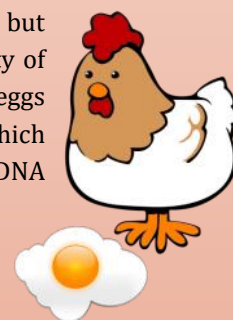
A group of Israeli scientists has claimed that they are on the verge of a medical breakthrough with a cheap cure for cancer that is effective and with minimal side effects! With the unlikely name, MuTaTo (**Multi-Target-Toxin**), the revolutionary drug combines peptides (*amino acid chains*) with a toxin that specifically targets cancer cells without harming the healthy ones.

Clinical trials have begun and the scientists expect the new drug to be available within a year. By then, expensive chemotherapy and radiation treatments which tend to affect cancer patients' quality of life may become obsolete.

However, the medical fraternity is rather sceptical that the drug can be available within a year. They say that while laboratory tests on mice have been successful, it will take more time than a year to conduct clinical trials and have the drug approved by the authorities.

Cancer-Killing Eggs!

It may sound a little absurd but researchers at the University of Edinburgh have found that eggs from modified chickens which are spliced with human DNA may soon be a cheap and effective cure for cancer! In the egg whites of the modified chickens, they found two proteins which are used to treat several types of diseases, including cancer. These proteins, IFNalpha2a and macrophage-CSF, are very expensive to produce in the laboratory and only just three eggs is said to contain a single dosage of the proteins used in treating cancer.



WORKSHOP & OPEN HOUSE @ MTC, Kuala Lumpur

The **Cancer Care Workshop and Open House** at the Main Training Centre, Ara Damansara on 16 February was well attended by 60 participants. The highlight of the Workshop was an enlightening talk by Grandmaster Anthony Wee on how the Vagus Nerve can be simulated by natural means such as the Crane form deep breathing exercise and healing sound Meditation.

After the talk, the participants put into practice the exercises under the watchful eyes of instructors, followed by lunch which kicked off with the traditional tossing of Yee Sang (vegetarian, of course!) for good health, happiness and prosperity.

"Everyone seemed relaxed and happy. The occasion was also excellent for networking and fellowship for the participants. We even took the opportunity to celebrate the birth month of babies of our trainees", according to Y.T. Sia, volunteer cancer care coordinator at the Cancer Support Unit in Kuala Lumpur.



The attentive participants



Participants exercising under the watch eyes of instructors



Grandmaster Anthony Wee showing how the Crane form breathing exercise is done

Left: Celebrating birth month babies

Below: Sharing session by Sifu C.W. Hew

Training Session @ MTC by Sifu C.W. Hew

Subsequently on 9 March, many trainees (including 6 new ones) turned up for a training session led by **Sifu C.W. Hew**.

"Sia and his wife Tze Lin are doing a marvellous job coordinating the activities at the Support Unit which is barely a year old. Many people are already benefitting from it and the number is growing", Grandmaster Anthony Wee said.



A GREAT 2019 START FOR CHANGKAT!

A good turnout of 54 members gathered at the Chi Dynamics Tampines Changkat Centre on 6 January, all raring to start the new year on a healthy note. Led by Sifu Lawrence Chong, the group enjoyed the practice session from 8 am to 9.30 am, after which it was time for fellowship and bonding over a buffet breakfast at the Tampines Changkat Community Club.

Sifu Lawrence enjoys conducting Chi Dynamics Qigong sessions which he has been doing at the Tampines Changkat Centre since 2005. According to him, *"It provides me the opportunity to interact with others outside my workplace and family circles. And what gives me great satisfaction is seeing the amazing camaraderie that has developed amongst my members. We are like a family in Tampines Changkat!"*



4th MARCH WORKSHOP @ Alexandra, Singapore

At the Alexandra Centre Workshop on 4 March, Grandmaster Anthony Wee taught the participants how to stimulate the Vagus Nerve through the simple Crane form exercise. The steps are as follows:

- ♦ Whilst executing the Crane form exercise, inhale by taking in three breaths continuously without exhaling.
- ♦ Then exhale slowly for 6 breaths.
- ♦ The duration of inhaling and exhaling may vary but it should be in the ratio of 1:2—i.e. if inhaling is 3 breaths (*or seconds*), then exhaling should be 6 breaths (*or seconds*) accordingly.

The class had its lighter moments when Sarah Manning demonstrated the incorrect “crooked” plank pose, much to the amusement of the class.



Grandmaster Anthony Wee



NEW MEMBER @ ALEXANDRA



Robert Chua Ah Chye

Robert had some issues with his health and was introduced to Chi Dynamics Qigong by a colleague. Since then, he has been attending classes regularly although it takes him an hour of travelling time to get home after each class. Apparently, Qigong has done him good as fellow members at the Alexandra Centre have noticed that he is now looking fit and healthy compared to when he first joined the class.

