

Bonsai Tai Chi

The Blog



September Have your say: email theblog@bonsaitaichi.eu

Pushing hands, here I have always found something of a dichotomy. The object is not simply to perform a dance but to seek a weakness in your partner's position and to push them away. However, the object is not to push your partner away but simply to 'feel'.

In his book about Chen Man Ching Wolf Lowenthal refers to 'sensing hands' which description may give a better idea of what it is all about.

Beginners fall into two traps. The first is to concentrate on the moves and to anticipate the partner by moving with him rather than waiting for the push, so performing a dance. The second is to regard pushing hands as tai chi sparring and to approach it with the sole object of beating your partner at all costs. This always results in hard pushing using shoulder and arm muscles and, often, a confused demoralised partner.

The real object is to feel what your partner is doing and to react to that with weight shifts, absorbing and diverting his energy, sticking to him and following until you feel a gap in his energy. Then you project your energy, perhaps with the help of a weight shift, and send him flying. Softly. ☯