

THE MATRIX



Grand Master Sam Chin
applying "Chin Na"

OF I LIQ CHUAN

By Sam Chin and Robert Hoffman

Part One: The Power of Peng

"Look, no matter what you do, you can't touch me!" Master Sam Chin laughed. Continuing, he said, "You're so close, but why can't you land?"

I had tried many times to move or strike him, but had no success. Kicks, strikes, entering in - they were all useless. After repeated failed attempts, I gave up. Laughing and panting for air, I asked, "What am I missing?" According to sifu, I was missing an important piece of my foundation. In short, I could not enter his "spheres" - that is to say, I could not penetrate Master Chin's defensive energy. Since that first encounter, I have come to learn that what Master Chin called "the spheres" is closely connected to an energy named *peng-jing* (棚勁). Literally translated, *peng* means ward-off, and *jing* means applied

energy. Although peng-jing can also refer to a particular technique, it more accurately refers to the basic energy of dynamic balance.

Dynamic balance is essential to good kung fu; it is the gateway into the secrets of the internal martial arts. *Peng-jing* is an essential energy, but it is in fact only one part of the fifth principle that forms the I Liq Chuan system. I Liq Chuan (意力拳) means "mind-force-fist." The art of I Liq Chuan is arranged into specific levels. Each step leads the student to higher levels of mental-physical coordination. The fifth principle is called "The Force Field of Offense and Defense." The overall art of I Liq Chuan is based on six physical points, three mental factors and a unique quality called "the feel." The concepts described in this article reveal inner aspects of the nature of mind, body and the application energies of the internal martial arts, and will prepare the student for more advanced work.

Dynamic balance is essential to good kung fu; it is the gateway into the secrets of the internal martial arts.

Grand Master Sam Chin in
"Strike With Knuckle and Kick"



Grand Master Sam Chin in "Heavenly Cover Palm"



Introduction

Transcending Technique

One man defeating many. A strike that no one sees delivered unbelievably fast. What appears to be a tiny push sends an attacker tens of feet away. Small motions that are so internal, you can't understand why you're off balance and on the edges of your feet. In front of such a person, all your techniques seem useless. What's going on?

According to Master Sam Chin, one of the main requirements for high-level kung fu is what he calls the "Merging of the Spheres." This article will describe the preliminary physical and mental levels of merging the spheres. Merging the spheres is a very refined expression of an internal energy commonly known as *peng-jing*.

Merging the spheres with *peng-jing* will result in strong-rooted movements which naturally enhance internal energy, mental alertness and martial art. Not only that, but if you train well - then, as Master Sam Chin says, you can "even transcend technique itself."

What is Merging The Spheres?

Merging the spheres is a process, not a technique in and of itself. This process is as much mental as it is physical, and it depends heavily on the situation at hand.

In essence, merging the spheres means constantly maintaining the proper alignment between a point of contact and your physical-energetic root. By properly aligning the body and mind in this way, a practitioner is able to move, change and respond to a multitude of forces with relative ease.

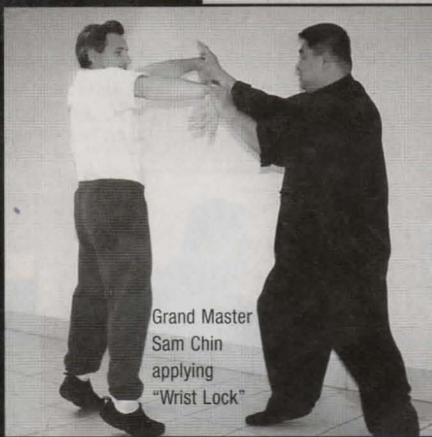
The method of properly aligning your body requires you to interconnect each and every part of your body. The connecting process is called merging the spheres. Once a student is properly harmonized with the spheres (the internal structure), their mindfulness can direct the body to respond in whatever way is necessary based on the conditions at hand.

Specifically, the image is that every part of your body has the quality of a sphere. Merging the spheres, then, is the process of feeling that each and every sphere of the body is connected to every other sphere.

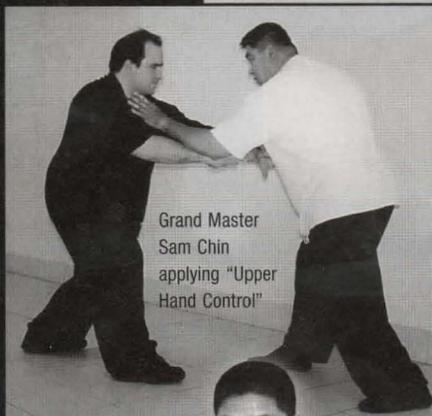
Grand Master Sam Chin
applying "Elbow Lock"



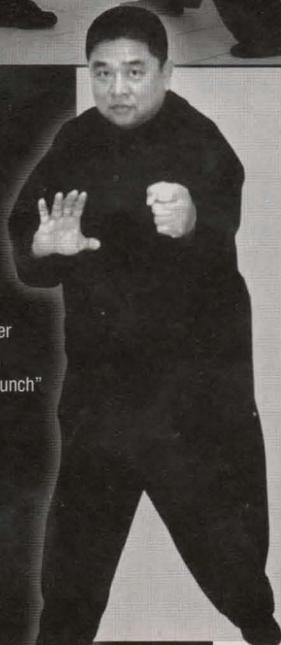
Grand Master
Sam Chin
applying
"Wrist Lock"



Grand Master
Sam Chin
applying "Upper
Hand Control"



Grand Master
Sam Chin in
"Trap and Punch"



A Good Model

Spheres are a good model for how our body should be able to receive force. Although our body cannot actually become a sphere, by employing the proper mental-physical connections, we can simulate the strength and dynamics of a sphere. On this point, a student may look into the taiji classics for inspiration, as a careful study of those writings clearly reveals the importance of emulating the sphere.

Creating and maintaining the sphere-like structure is the key to accessing the higher levels of the internal arts.

Powers of The Sphere

A sphere can compress, rotate, uplift or press down. Furthermore, no matter what action is being taken, the center of the sphere is always well protected. Although merging the spheres is a physical "feel," there are mental aspects to it as well.

Merging the spheres must be done in every moment of your life. This means that you are always seeking balance and harmony. If you can do that, then you can touch the higher levels. That is to say, when your mind and body become aware enough to merge "the spheres" at all times, then you stand at the gateway to internal skill.

Classical Spheres

The taiji classics mention that internal practitioners should manifest an energy called *peng-jing*. The relationship between *peng-jing* and "merging the spheres" is one of process and effect. Merging the spheres is the process that generates the effect known as *peng-jing*.

Many students believe that *peng-jing* refers to a particular technique. In fact, while *peng* can be translated as "ward-off" and refers to a move commonly found in many taiji forms, *peng-jing* refers more-so to an application energy - a state of mind and quality of your body feel. *Peng-jing* is not just a technique; it should permeate all your movements.

Improving your Peng

Unfortunately, because many students are not taught about the difference mentioned above, their defensive energy is not complete. One's practice can be improved by considering Master Chin's teaching on the "merging of the spheres."

The differences between *peng-jing* and merging the spheres will be discussed more fully later on, but for now it is enough to say this: *Peng-jing* is the end result of a process. The process is called merging the spheres.

Merging the spheres means that mindfulness, *qi* and proper structure interact on every level of the body-mind. Such an interaction will generate a 3 dimensional energy force within the body. The three dimensional force is physical, but it is regulated by the mind. With correct interaction of body and mindfulness you will achieve a dynamic state of balance. This balance is what is required to express the higher levels of internal skill.

The process of learning and maintaining the *peng energy* is called merging the spheres.

Mental and Physical

The process of merging the spheres has both a physical and a mental component. The physical component relates to how you hold your body posture. Proper posture is critical to allow for maximal flow of *qi* and intention. Stiff tension, as well

as flaccid softness, are impediments to the proper flow of *qi*. Dynamic tension-relaxation is the rule.

The mental aspect of *peng* relates to your psycho-emotional state of mind. If you are tense, or obsessed with "winning," then you will never reach the higher levels. Relax into the nature of your body-mind and there you will find all you need.

In the end, *peng-jing* - or any other worthwhile endeavor - is about self-realization and harmonizing with the nature of things. The martial aspect of the process is only one piece of the puzzle.

Part Two: Merging The Spheres

The Nature of *Peng-jing*

According to Master Chin, the first step in merging the spheres is creating *peng-jing*. Pronounced "pung-jing," this energy is often translated as ward-off. But the term "ward-off" is misleading. More accurately, *peng* implies a dynamic relationship between you, your center of mass and whatever force is acting on you at the time.

Master Chin teaches that if your *peng* is true, then you can handle even multiple forces with relative ease. This thought is supported by the taiji classics.

The Classics

According to the taiji classics, a practitioner should be able to handle forces "from the eight directions." In order to be able to do just that, the *qi*, mind and force must exist in harmony at all places and at all times. Very few masters teach how to achieve such profound internal skill. Master Chin, on the other hand, is one teacher who throws open the doors of secrecy. As Master Chin often says, "If you work, I'll teach."

Points of Contact

To properly employ *peng-jing*, you must properly manage points of contact. Wherever you receive a force is called a "point of contact." A point of contact might be a grab, a kick or even a look. Whatever, your internal energy must respond. The way you respond is to align the point of contact to the root of your structure. Then, you employ your mindfulness to respond in whatever way is necessary.

Visualizations are often useful to help imagine how the body can correctly line up with a point of contact. I Liq Chuan has specific visualizations that help access the power of *peng*. The visualizations also clarify the nature of a point of contact. In regards to visualization, some arts recommend that *peng* be thought of as a circle or hoop. Although circular energy is part of *peng-jing*, it is not the complete thing.

"Being circular is not *peng*," explains Master Chin. "In fact, circularity is only part of it. Real *peng* is spherical and can manage force from all directions."

THE EXTREME PACK

The Tiger Claw Extreme Pack

A spacious gear bag that converts into a useful backpack. Excellent for practitioners on the road. Sturdy nylon construction with three handy zipper pockets.



24"(L)x12"(W)x12"(H)
99-34S Small
\$31.99

30"(L)x13"(W)x14"(H)
99-34L Large
\$39.99

AVAILABLE AT...

MARTIALARTSMART.com

Or Call **1-800-824-2433**

International calls 510-656-5100

or see our Order Form on page 99

Applications of *Peng-jing*

We have now established that *peng-jing* is more about the way you change with change than with any particular posture. Furthermore, it is also clear that *peng-jing* must employ spherical rather than a circular type energy projection. Finally, we have established that in order for your skill to be great, the *peng* energy must be dynamic and capable of handling even multiple forces from different directions. If such integration is achieved, then *peng* energy will be full and can be used under any circumstance, including self-defense.

In fighting, *peng-jing* is about maintaining your structure and not letting forces control the center of your mass.

Part Three: Physical and Mental Aspects of *Peng-jing*

Mental Visualization

With the difference between circular and spherical types of internal energy now clear, it is important to learn how to bring that understanding into your body-mind. To do this, Master Chin recommends that you imagine that every part of your body is capable of expressing the spherical type force.

Peng-jing is achieved when you can maintain the fullness of the spheres at all times and on all parts of your body. Changing as the moment requires, projecting here and repelling there, the dynamic interchange of the spheres is what is known as *peng-jing*. *Peng-jing* is the basic defensive energy.

"Because *peng-jing* is the foundational skill in the martial arts, *peng* is the gateway to everything else," says Master Chin. The way of expressing *peng* is to harmonize the many sphere-like points of contact of the body-mind and merge them into one.

***Peng-jing* is achieved when you can maintain the fullness of the spheres at all times and on all parts of your body.**

In closing, the process of merging the spheres is feeling the fullness of the "one-ness of the sphere." The process leading to that oneness is the foundation from which all movement correctly arises. The I Liq Chuan system organizes physical and mental activity in a step-by-step progression. Organized in this way, the student can ultimately achieve unity of body, mind and spirit. With that harmony in hand, one can reap the fullest benefits of the martial, medical and spiritual aspects of this art. This article has revealed some of the essential teachings which, if experimented with, can help lead the practitioner to the higher levels of martial skill. ☉



Left: Grand Master Sam Chin applying "Hook and Grab"



Right: Grand Master Sam Chin applying "Fa-jing"

In all cases, one should feel that the point of contact is spherical. If that can be done, then no matter what the other person does, you can remain poised and balanced. This is easy to say with words, but the skill requires true dedication.

Physical Structure

"Every part of the body is capable of expressing a spherical energy," says Master Sam Chin.

The energy of this sphere can be solid or light, hard or soft, receptive or warding off. The energy manifested will change as the moment demands.

I Liq Chuan (Mind-Force Fist) is a family style of martial art originating in Malaysia. I Liq Chuan was founded by Grand Master Chin's father, founder Chin Lik-keong. Early in his youth, Grand-Master Chin studied with high-level internal and external teachers. The result of this study (and mastery) was a total awareness of the root of movement and consciousness. Gradually Grand-Master Chin found that at the highest levels, technique and form dissolve, as a student understands the root of cause and consequence. With this understanding in hand, Grand-Master Chin formalized the internal art of I Liq Chuan. Sam Chin (second generation master of the style), further organized his father's art. Master Sam Chin systematized how a student can most quickly learn not only the martial side of the art, but also completely harmonize oneself with the nature of body, mind and universe. The result of all this work is a superior martial art and a complete path of self-recognition. For further information on classes, seminars and learning materials, please visit www.iliqchuan.org