



Newsletter Summer 2009

These are exciting times for Zhong Ding. The Malaysian Training Centre is now in full swing and much of my time is spent there, training and teaching. Already this year a number of students from the UK have spent time there and I think it is fair to say that all who have returned to the UK have done so feeling that the experience was at the very least worthwhile and at the most transformational.

At the very heart of what Zhong Ding is all about, is this process of allowing people to discover within themselves the tools that make such transformation possible. The centre situated in a small backwater, provides the perfect setting in which students can concentrate on their training. As always with the study of the martial arts the lessons are not only about physical technique but also about discovering who we really are and what is important to us.

Over the years Zhong Ding instructors have studied many different healing arts and technologies. My own forays into this field have included the study of a number of systems of qigong as well as bone-setting and both Chinese and Malay body and energy work. In order to ensure that Zhong Ding members are given the most extensive opportunities to study this aspect of the Asian arts, the Perfect Balance (Zhong Ding) Healing Arts and Therapies Initiative has now been established. Classes, courses, seminars and intensive training will be available with certification recognised and accredited by appropriate Asian bodies. This initiative is being headed by a panel of Zhong Ding Senior Instructors with interest and expertise in the healing arts, headed by Miles Craig, who has devoted the best part of three decades to the training in, study and research of healing therapies from a wide range of backgrounds.

A curriculum has been devised to encompass the wide range of expertise already present within the Zhong Ding organisation. This will enable students to learn material at basic intermediate and advanced level and to qualify as teachers equipped with all of the necessary tools to enable future students to gain the most from these healing therapies. The first instructor examination will be held on the weekend of July 11th and 12th as a part of the Second Master Liang He Qing Memorial Event in Nottingham.

The first day of this event will consist of a series of seminars given by different senior Zhong Ding instructors, including Dave Spencer, John Fowler, Pete Lane, Don Harradine, Darren Roberts, Miles Craig and myself. Topics will include Qigong, Taijiquan applications, Master Liang's broadsword form, pushing hands, and balance and movement. On the Sunday there will be a competition including all the regular events, as well as a repeat of the very popular silat story telling. For more details see the East Midlands website.

I will leave you now with a piece from Miles Craig introducing the Perfect Balance Healing Arts and Therapies Initiative and I hope to see many of you in July.

Until then train hard and have fun!

Nigel

Perfect Balance Healing Arts and Therapies Initiative

As Nigel said in the last newsletter, I have taken up the challenge of Chairing the Zhong Ding Qigong Committee, so I'd like to take this opportunity to explain a little about what the committee is doing and why we are doing it now. I will also introduce the members of the committee: Don Harradine, Tony Ulatowski, Jan Simpson, Adam Lammiman, Paul Gitsham, and of course Nigel.

There is a very rich variety of qigong practiced within the Association, which may seem surprising, until you think that Zhong Ding will be 21 years old this year; qigong has been an important part of the practice of the members of the Technical Advisors, and they have shared their practices with us over that time. So the first task for the Qigong committee was to make an inventory of these different systems and exercises; and then to develop this into a qigong curriculum.

That prompts the question, "Why do we need to do something different now?"

There is an increasing interest in qigong, and related practices amongst the general public; and perhaps many of the newcomers to a taiji class are actually looking for qigong. This level of interest can be seen in the number of seminars being organised, (sometimes by 'Masters' of uncertain lineage), and in the huge growth of Reiki, which uses a lot of the same principles as Qigong. In addition, although a lot of effort is required to develop what we have into a syllabus, this is something we can then use to develop the next generation of Instructors. This does not mean a change to any of the classes that are currently running, or that any of the Senior Instructors need to take a grading, or change what they are doing.

I've spoken to a few people from different parts of the country, and really appreciate their positive comments and the feedback they've given me. As much as this has been incorporated into the curriculum, I'm sure there are going to be some things that will still need to be 'fine-tuned', so please bear with us. The weekend of the Competition, (11th-12th/July), will give us an opportunity to share some of the practical details, but I'd like to explain a little bit here:

Perfect Balance (Zhong Ding) Healing Arts and Therapies Initiative, (ZD-HATI), will be established, with Nigel Sutton as President, and Honorary Presidents / Technical Advisors, Master Lau Kim Hong, Guru Azlan Ghanie, and Guru Zainal Abidin.

Local authorities take a greater interest in health and healing related courses than in martial arts ones, so it is important that we can demonstrate that we have a syllabus, and a process (a grading panel), to confirm that instructors not only know their subject thoroughly, but also that they can teach it effectively, and have an understanding of the law and how it applies to Healing Arts.

I think this is a real opportunity, in this 'coming of age' year for Zhong Ding, to spread authentic qigong & Silat Healing Arts, in the open, sincere way, that has characterised our approach to taiji, silat and the other martial arts we practise.

If you have any questions or comments about anything in this article, then please post it to the Zhong Ding discussion forums – Qi Gong section at, <http://myzhongding.myfreeforum.org/> and I or one of the committee members will respond. That way everyone will be able to see all the questions and answers. If you're not already a member of the discussion forums, don't hesitate, sign-up today.

Miles Craig – Chairman, Perfect balance Healing Arts and Therapies Initiative