

Iron Shirt Chi Kung I

***Once a Martial Art, now the Practice
that strengthens the Internal Organs,
Roots Oneself Solidly, and unifies
Physical, Mental and Spiritual Health.***

Mantak Chia



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I have come upon Master Chia's Taoist practice in my old age and find it the most satisfying and enriching practice of all those I have encountered in a long life of seeking and practicing.

Felix Morrow, Senior Publisher

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About the Author

About the Author



Mantak Chia

Master Mantak Chia

Master Mantak Chia is the creator of the Universal Tao System and is the director of the Universal Tao Center and Tao Garden Health Resort and Training Center in the beautiful northern countryside of Thailand. Since childhood he has been studying the Taoist approach to life. His mastery of this ancient knowledge, enhanced by his study of other disciplines, has resulted in the development of the Universal Tao System which is now being taught throughout the world.

About the Author

Mantak Chia was born in Thailand to Chinese parents in 1944. When he was six years old, Buddhist monks taught him how to sit and “still the mind.” While still a grammar school student, he learned traditional Thai boxing. He was then taught Tai Chi Chuan by Master Lu, who soon introduced him to Aikido, Yoga and broader levels of Tai Chi.

Years later, when he was a student in Hong Kong excelling in track and field events, a senior classmate named Cheng Sue-Sue introduced him to his first esoteric teacher and Taoist Master, Master Yi Eng (I Yun). At this point, Master Chia began his studies of the Taoist way of life in earnest. He learned how to circulate energy through the Microcosmic Orbit and, through the practice of Fusion of the Five Elements, how to open the other Six Special Channels. As he studied Inner Alchemy further, he learned the Enlightenment of the Kan and Li, Sealing of the Five Senses, Congress of Heaven and Earth and Reunion of Heaven and Man. It was Master Yi Eng who authorized Master Chia to teach and heal.

When Mantak Chia was in his early twenties he studied with Master Meugi in Singapore, who taught him Kundalini, Taoist Yoga and the Buddha Palm. He was soon able to clear blockages to the flow of energy within his own body. He learned to pass the life force energy through his hands also, so that he could heal Master Meugi’s patients. He then learned Chi Nei Tsang from Dr. Mui Yimwattana in Thailand.

A while later, he studied with Master Cheng Yao-Lun who taught him the Shao-Lin Method of Internal Power. He learned the closely guarded secret of the organs, glands and bone marrow exercise known as Bone Marrow Nei Kung and the exercise known as Strengthening and Renewal of the Tendons. Master Cheng Yao-Lun’s system combined Thai boxing and Kung Fu. Master Chia also studied at this time with Master Pan Yu, whose system combined Taoist, Buddhist and Zen teachings. Master Pan Yu also taught him about the exchange of Yin and Yang power between men and women, and how to develop the Steel Body.

To understand the mechanisms behind healing energy better, Master Chia studied Western anatomy and medical science for two years. While pursuing his studies, he managed the Gestetner Company, a manufacturer of office equipment and became well acquainted with the technology of offset printing and copying machines.

About the Author

Using his knowledge of Taoism, combined with the other disciplines, Master Chia began teaching the Universal Tao System. He eventually trained other Instructors to communicate this knowledge and he established the Natural Healing Center in Thailand. Five years later, he decided to move to New York, where in 1979, he opened the Universal Tao Center. During his years in America, Master Chia continued his studies in the Wu system of Tai Chi with Edward Yee in New York.

Since then, Master Chia has taught tens of thousands of students throughout the world. He has trained and certified over 1,200 instructors and practitioners from all over the world. Universal Tao Centers and Chi Nei Tsang Institutes have opened in many locations in North America, Europe, Asia, and Australia.

In 1994, Master Chia moved back to Thailand, where he had begun construction of Tao Garden, the Universal Tao Training Center in Chiang Mai.

Master Chia is a warm, friendly and helpful man who views himself primarily as a teacher. He presents the Universal Tao System in a straightforward and practical manner, while always expanding his knowledge and approach to teaching. He uses a laptop computer for writing and is totally at ease with the latest computer technology.

Master Chia estimates that it will take thirty-five books to convey the full Universal Tao System. In June, 1990, at a dinner in San Francisco, Master Chia was honored by the International Congress of Chinese Medicine and Qi Gong (Chi Kung), who named him the Qi gong Master of the Year. He is the first recipient of this annual award.

In December, 2000, the Tao Garden Health Resort and Universal Tao Training Center was completed with two Meditation Halls, two open air Simple Chi Kung Pavilions, indoor Tai Chi, Tao Tao Yin and Chi Nei Tsang Hall, Tai Chi Natural Swimming Pool, Pakua Communications Center with a complete Taoist Library, Internal World Class Weight Lifting Hall and complete 8 Court Recreational Facilities.

In February 2002, the Immortal Tao practices were held at Tao Garden for the first time using the Darkness technology creating a complete environment for the higher level Taoist practices.

About the Author

Master Mantak Chia has previously written and published these Universal Tao books:

Awaken Healing Energy of the Tao - 1983
Taoist Secrets of Love: Cultivating Male Sexual Energy
co-authored with Michael Winn - 1984.
Taoist Ways to Transform Stress into Vitality -1985
Chi Self-Massage: the Tao of Rejuvenation - 1986
Iron Shirt Chi Kung I - 1986
Healing Love Through the Tao: Cultivating Female Sexual Energy - 1986
Bone Marrow Nei Kung - 1989
Fusion of the Five Elements I - 1990
Chi Nei Tsang: Internal Organ Chi Massage - 1990
Awaken Healing Light of the Tao - 1993
The Inner Structure of Tai Chi co-authored with Juan Li - 1996
Multi-Orgasmic Man co-authored with Douglas Abrams 1996 - published by Harper Collins
Tao Yin - 1999
Chi Nei Tsang II - 2000
Multi-Orgasmic Couple co-authored with Douglas Abrams 2000 - published by Harper Collins
Cosmic Healing I - 2001
Cosmic Healing II co-authored with Dirk Oellibrandt - 2001
Door of All Wonders co-authored with Tao Haung - 2001
Sexual Reflexology co-authored with W. U. Wei - 2002
Elixir Chi Kung - 2002
Tan Tien Chi Kung - 2002

Many of the books above are available in the following foreign languages:

Arabic, Bulgarian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Hungarian, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Lithuanian, Malaysian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Slovenian, Spanish, & Turkish editions are available from the Foreign Publishers listed in the Universal Tao Center Overview in the back of this book.

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I thank the many contributors essential to the book's final form: the artist, Juan Li, for many hours spent drawing, making illustrations of the body's internal functions and for the artwork on the cover of the book; Terry Goss for his chapter on Breath Alignment which helps tremendously in the practice of Iron Shirt; Larry Short for sharing some of the Tibetan Nui Kung Exercises; Michael Brosnahan for helping to clarify the technical points of structure; Dr. Michael Posner for sharing his view of Chiropractic and Iron Shirt; Gunther Weil, Ph.D., Rylin Malone, and many of my students for their feedback; Jo Ann Cutreria, our secretary, for making so many contacts and working endlessly; Daniel Bobek for long hours at the computer; John-Robert Zielinski for setting up the new computer system and for his interview of Michael Winn; Valerie Meszaros for editing the book, organizing, typing, and revising it on the computer, and proofreading; Helen Stites for proofreading; Adam Sacks, our computer consultant, who assisted in solving computer problems as they arose during the final stages of production; Michael Winn for general editing, and Cathy Umphress for design and paste ups. Special thanks are extended to David Miller for overseeing design and production and to Felix Morrow for his valuable advice and help in editing and producing this book and for agreeing to be the publisher of Universal Tao Publications.

Without my son, Max, the book would have been academic; for his gifts, my gratitude and love.

Words of Caution

The practices described in this book have been used successfully for thousands of years by Taoists trained by personal instruction. Readers should not undertake the practice without receiving personal transmission and training from a certified instructor of the Universal Tao, since certain of these practices, if done improperly, may cause injury or result in health problems. This book is intended to supplement individual training by the Universal Tao and to serve as a reference guide for these practices. Anyone who undertakes these practices on the basis of this book alone, does so entirely at his or her own risk.

The meditations, practices and techniques described herein are **not** intended to be used as an alternative or substitute for professional medical treatment and care. If any readers are suffering from illnesses based on mental or emotional disorders, an appropriate professional health care practitioner or therapist should be consulted. Such problems should be corrected before you start training.

Neither the Universal Tao nor its staff and instructors can be responsible for the consequences of any practice or misuse of the information contained in this book. If the reader undertakes any exercise without strictly following the instructions, notes and warnings, the responsibility must lie solely with the reader.

This book does not attempt to give any medical diagnosis, treatment, prescription, or remedial recommendation in relation to any human disease, ailment, suffering or physical condition whatsoever.

The Universal Tao is not and cannot be responsible for the consequences of any practice or misuse of the information in this book. If the reader undertakes any exercise without strictly following the instructions, notes, and warnings, the responsibility must lie solely with the reader.

How to use this Book

In the last pages of this book the reader will find descriptions of the courses and workshops offered by our Universal Tao Centers. This material is also in effect, a comprehensive description of the whole Taoist System. All of my books together will be a composite of this Taoist world view. Each of my books is thus an exposition of one important part of this system. Each sets forth a method of healing and life-enhancement which can be studied and practiced by itself, if the reader so chooses. However, each of these methods implies the others and is best practiced in combination with the others.

The foundation of all practices in the Taoist System, the Microcosmic Orbit Meditation, is the way to circulate Chi energy throughout the body and is described in my book, *Awaken Healing Energy Through the Tao*. This practice is followed by the meditations of the Inner Smile and the Six Healing Sounds, set forth in my book, *Taoist Ways to Transform Stress into Vitality*. All three meditations are emphasized throughout the Taoist System.

The practices of Iron Shirt Chi Kung are very powerful and therefore very effective. To insure that you carry them out properly, prepare yourself first by learning the Microcosmic Orbit Meditation, the Inner Smile and the Six Healing Sounds. These will enable you to identify and eliminate energy blockages that may occur in your Iron Shirt practice during the learning stages.

Second, learn information contained in the chapter in this book on body alignment.

Third, understand the rooting principles.

Fourth, learn the preliminary exercises until you are proficient at them and comfortable with them. This will give you the conditioning you need to proceed comfortably to the postures.

You can use the complete description of each posture during your learning. The shorter description of each posture is meant as a guide during your practice.

Lastly, we offer to you a suggested practice timetable, although it is not necessary for you to follow it exactly. Use it merely as a guideline for adjusting your own schedule. As you read the information provided in this book and become aware of concepts not contained in Western thought, you will deepen your understanding of the relevancy of these practices to your physical, emotional and spiritual advancement.

Mantak Chia

Chapter 1

General Introduction

A. Universal Tao System and Iron Shirt Chi Kung

In addition to the more popularly known martial arts disciplines of Kung Fu and Tai Chi the Universal Tao System includes health practices, healing arts, the development of a state of mindfulness, and the management of vital energy (Chi). The martial arts aspect of this training, the practice of Iron Shirt, develops a highly refined moral and spiritual awareness.

The goal of the Universal Tao System is to keep our physical bodies in good condition in the physical plane in order to build and store more Chi energy for further use in the higher level of the spiritual plane. (Fig. 1.1)

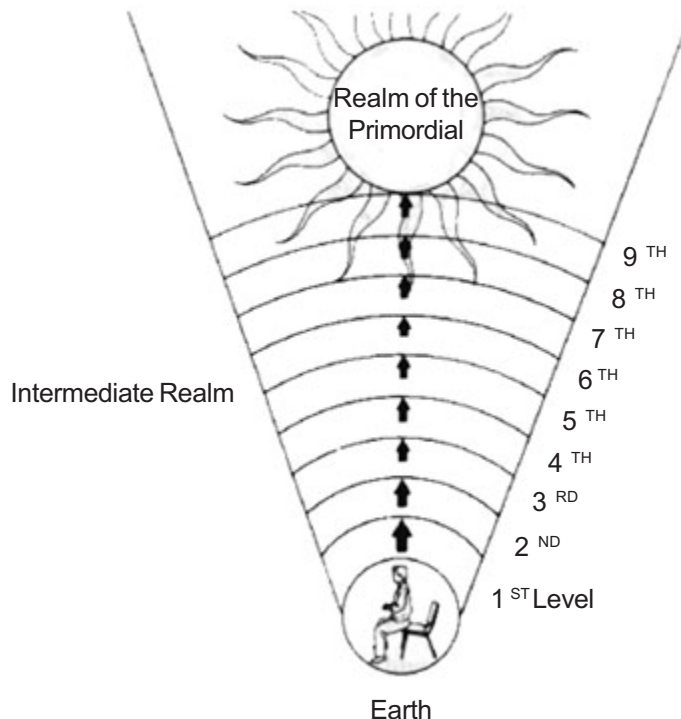


Fig. 1.1 Realm of the Primordial Tao