MARTIAL ARTS IS DANGEROUS

It is especially dangerous to gifted beginners, theoretical experts and small children.

These techniques should only be tried under the supervision of an accredited and experienced Martial Art Instructor or Master; preferably with extensive Animal Kung Fu experience, and experienced in safety and teaching.

These techniques should not be used in any other way than as a training aid, for understanding of attack possibilities and preparing against these. Under no circumstances should any of the Demon Claws be used for anything other than Self Defence where you truly believe that you life and limb may be in Danger.

These techniques are too complex and involved to be of any real use. In past centuries, students would focus on learning just once of these, as their special, secret and final solution routine, for many, many years. They could spend up to 5 years of training reaching the point where a Master would then teach them just one of these techniques which they would need to train until their Master believed that they were flaw less.

Anyone wishing to study any of these techniques in any serious form, please contact Master Robert Z at the Shaolin Kung Fu Academy Australia on +61 458 742 654 (+61 0458 SHAOLIN) or e-mail sijo@shaolin.com.au (www.shaolin.com.au).

I have paid the price for learning these techniques in the form of time, effort and injury; and now have chronic physical problems as a result. I have spent the time to ‘alter’ these techniques and the way we train them to stop you having to pay for the skill and ability of the Demon Claws with anything other than time, diligence and practice. I have never injured any of my students in any way other than bruises and pain, which are part of the training and hardening, if they wish. I do not wish you to be injured in any way so; Be Careful, Train Slowly, Practice Gently, take time Understanding and seek professional guidance for assistance even if you are well experienced with any Animal Kung Fu Styles!

Sijo Robert Z

Shaolin Academy
Preamble

Often you may hear the term Internal or External Kung Fu as well as Hard and Soft Training. In modern Chinese martial arts there are a lot of Yin Yang descriptors such as this including Long & Short Fist, Northern & Southern Kung Fu and more. Although nowadays these terms are used superficially especially in the English speaking world, in Chinese, in the time of Warriors they had much more meaning.

The Term Long Fist meant not only that you used your reach in your Kung Fu, that is took a long time to prepare the body but also that the style consisted of Long Arching Techniques which, if properly executed had severe damage (long healing time) or death (long journey) and the practitioner would then need to spend a long time in meditating. Although the above may not be a 100% description of Long Fist, you will see how Chinese descriptors in the past had a deeper meaning than often used today by many styles to describe their style. So it is also with the Iron or Steel Kung Fu styles.

I was introduced and taught 5 of these, which often were described as the 5 Disciplines of Iron Body Kung Fu and as a specialisation Iron Hand Kung Fu;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal Toughening</th>
<th>External Toughening</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Iron Torso</td>
<td>a) Stone Fist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Iron Arm</td>
<td>b) Iron Palm</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Iron Legs</td>
<td>c) Diamond Finger</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Iron Neck</td>
<td>d) Snakes Head</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Iron Head</td>
<td>e) Sword Edge</td>
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There is of course a number of styles that also focus on Knees, Legs, Elbows, etc. Yet, the above are considered the key is an example of Internal and External styles. Where by the left column represented the internal strengthening of the body against attacks and the right represented the toughening of the body for attacks.

It is important to note that no kung fu style that had the concern of their students would ever teach them to harden all their body for attack. This type of training, up to a point, is actually of health and well-being benefit to the practitioner and from a point onwards very detrimental. So the approaches to the two components are also different in a strange similar way. Both have a lot in common but the internal is good for the whole body and the external is usually bad for that body part.
There are thousands of breathing techniques in the different healing and spiritual traditions of the world. There are books galore telling you how to breathe and what to do with your breath. Breath has been used for everything from stress management to psychological self-therapy to rebirthing your divine self.

Kung Fu practitioners draw on the Taoist Chi Kung (also written "Qigong") breathing principles and techniques. It is different from many other eastern methods of breathing. In India, most of the methods fall into the broad category of pranayama. The yogic schools involve the mind controlling the breath. The Taoist approach to breath is very different: there is no counting or setting a certain rhythm or telling the intelligence of the lungs how it should breathe. The idea of the Taoist approach is to cultivate the intelligence and the natural spontaneous abilities of the intelligence of the body and of the "spirit of the lungs." The fundamental term "chi" (or qi) means "subtle breath".

Chi Kung Fundamentals teach how the "five animals use the six healing sounds." That's one form of breathing. This form of breathing with sounds targets the 6 major organs with air and vibrations. This method of chi breathing focuses on the out-breath, which is releasing for cleansing, letting go.

Taoist chi kung often uses various movement techniques to activate natural whole body breathing. When we do something with movement, our body remembers it. It learns it much more deeply. Since we are moving all the time, our whole body is always pulsing and moving, the whole body is breathing as one. This unity of body is the prerequisite for the unity of Mind and Spirit.

Shaolin developed the Iron Wire Form for just this purpose; to unify Movement and Breathing, thus to unify the major organs from which will flow the unification of the whole body opening the way for true and deep meditation. The Emai Shan form works on the same principles but is just a shorter and easier form to learn. At later levels it fulfils a different function again.
When we say breathing, we must distinguish between internal and external breathing. External breathing is the physical level of oxygen going in and out of our lungs. Behind that movement of air in and out of the body is the question: who or what controls the breathing process? Something is causing our lungs to move. Calling it "the autonomic nervous system" doesn't answer the question. It buries it under mechanistic language.

Chi Kung is the essentially a method of cultivating your relationship with your life force or Jing. You have two forms of Jing, Prenatal and Postnatal. Prenatal is what you are born with and it is greatest at that moment and reduces through your life. Postnatal is that what you develop and determines you health, vitality and power. As long as your postnatal force is strong there will be very little drainage of your finite, prenatal Jing. But when you drain your Postnatal Jing, and you need more, you will tap into you prenatal Jing, and this can never be replaced.

This is the logic of Taoism, to find a balance of exercise and live that will keep you fit and healthy but not put yourself in exceptional situations (too often) that will deplete your Jing Force.

This is also the reason why you should not dive into the deep end of Iron Body Kung Fu. Consider your long term well being and make a great experience enjoying this Months of Iron Body Kung Fu. Learn the methods and counter-indications and if you feel this is what you want to do you will have all the knowledge and knowledge of the materials to start on the path. But i do suggest you talk to me first. It is a rugged path and the test for passing the levels is Physical.

Read the section on Pain carefully!

Sijo
Manager & Chief Instructor
Shaolin Kung Fu Academy
Additional Warnings

You are dealing with an ancient art, one that used wrongly, over exercised or applied inconsiderately can cause long term damage. As with any exercise, you first weaken you body doing the exercises before your body builds up. Aside from the individual breaks between the exercises mentioned each time, there are some additional considerations;

i. Do not attempt this without the full guidance a Kung Fu Master gives.

ii. If you are unwell, have sniffles, flu, cold, hay-fever do not do these exercises until you are fully well again. Consult a Medical Professional for guidance.

iii. If you have alcohol in your system, drugs (legal or other), steroids, herbs or anything the like, do not do these exercises. If you are a regular drug taker under a medical practitioners supervision, consult them before commencing training.

iv. If you had not a good night rest, do not train this form.

v. If you have been in any extreme situations that has caused you stress do not train this day.

vi. If you have been subject to any medica ministrations, ask your medical profess training; if in doubt, don’t train.

vii. If you have had any serous traumas, physical, mental or spiritual, consult a medical professional before training.

viii. If you have had any bone breakage, consult a medical professional before training.

ix. If you have had any joint problems, consult a medical professional before training.

x. If you are in any doubt, speak to your master and consult a medical professional before training.
Meditation and Kung Fu

Before we look at the specific Kung Fu style meditation, let’s have a look at Meditations in general!

**Zen Meditation**

Zen meditation is based on zazen. This has to do with sitting in one of several possible positions and using meditation to help achieve a better connection with reality's true nature. There are different forms of Zen meditation, which interpret and practice zazen in different ways. For example, while Rinzai meditation calls for practitioners to sit in a circle, facing each other, Soto meditation requires that mediators face a wall (like in the story of Bodhidharma).

**Yogic Meditation**

Yogic meditation is a practice developed in India. The breath is used as a focus to quiet the mind. Within the calmness of the mind, there is a focus on the present moment, not on what has or what will happen. Combine with pranayama and yoga, it leads to physical and mental relaxation and improves health, while also alleviating several forms of illness.

**Vipassana (Insight) Meditation**

The word Vipassana means to see things as they actually are. It is among the oldest meditation techniques from India, and was rediscovered over 2500 years ago by Gotama Buddha, who then shared it openly with others to assist in overcoming what he referred to as universal ills. Non-sectarian, the goal of Vipassana meditation is the elimination of mental impurities in order to achieve freedom and the happiness that comes with it. It is a method of self-transformation by way of self-observation.
Tibetan Meditation

Tibetan meditation is the general term for all meditation practiced within the Buddhist philosophy of Tibet, with the goal of meditating in order to achieve salvation. Tibetan Buddhists practice hundreds, if not thousands of different meditation techniques, each with its own purpose and style in order to compliment the personality of the practitioner. Tibetan meditation works to take the practitioner beyond him/herself and into Nirvana.

Transcendental Meditation (TM)

TM is a basic and natural form of meditation that works to achieve a settled state in the mind, referred to as the transcendental consciousness, which is a purer consciousness and which is the root of all creativeness. Transcendental meditation makes use of mantras, and is practiced twice per day, for approximately fifteen minutes each time, in the morning and in the evening. The conscious becomes open to itself when transcendental meditation is achieved.

Osho Meditation

Osho's meditations all begin with an active stage - frequently quite physical in nature - and are followed up by a silent time. Each Osho meditation technique is complimented by meditation music which has been composed specifically for the stage being practiced at that moment. There are different meditative techniques that are practiced at different times of the day. Osho meditation isn't considered a practice in itself as much as it is a way of life. Osho Meditation is the ideal for combining Kung Fu, Meditation and Cool Down Stretching.
Meditation and Prayer

Prayer and meditation are two unique processes of the mind and body. Prayer is concerned with communicating personally with a deity, spirit, or other form of higher power. It can be an appeal, a wish, or simple communication. As thoughts and feelings are expressed, the path of thinking is altered and a better understanding of divine purpose is achieved. Meditation is a technique that helps to slow and focus the brain so that it is not swarming with the constant thoughts that usually flood it. It helps to bring the body and mind together to achieve a higher level of peace and happiness. Together, meditation and prayer combine for a high level of respect for others, compassion, and overall calm.

Guided Visualization

Guided Visualization is a form of meditation that allows the mind to take a journey toward discovery and change. It is a process that works well for overcoming fears and issues causing trouble or stress. It can either be performed with a recording or with a guiding person slowly reading a script out loud while the practitioner meditates. The tone of the speaker must be soothing in nature. It opens the conscious and subconscious minds to a communication between them. Perception through the actual senses is encouraged through the different guided visualizations. Guided visualization is similar to hypnosis in many respects.

Taoist Meditation

Taoist meditation, rooted in ancient China, shares many features with Hindu, Zen and Buddhist systems, though the Taoist approach is more practical than the abstract, contemplative traditions of India and Japan. Taoist meditations feature the internal circulation of energy, or Chi, and are related to other Chinese arts such as Tai Chi, Chi Kung and Chinese martial arts. Taoist meditation is built upon the three treasure of Sheng, Jing & Chi. The breath is the usual focus of attention to achieve a state of meditation, with a one-pointed awareness the goal.
Moving Meditation: Kung Fu, Tai Chi and Chi Kung

Tai Chi is a moving meditation developed in ancient China, practiced for its relaxation, health, flexibility, strength, and balance benefits. Tension is released through the toning of the muscles, development of balance, and increasing flexibility. As a general guide, for young people often a more vigorous form is better suited to harness the energies and to meditate as Kung Fu offers it. For mature persons Tai Chi is often the path to take although it is very in the nature of the person which suits which; and ultimately, it is best to vary between all three. Chi Kung is a meditation based on the breath. It works toward physical health and mental wisdom for freedom from upset and sorrow. In China, Qigong meditation is used in hospitals for a wide variety of ills, and is also believed to extend life and protect health. This breath centered approach is also what makes Chi Kung the main Meditation and breathing style for Iron Body Kung Fu.
Water Breathing Meditation Form

Ocean (Natural, Wave) Breathing

It is best to learn this form on the beach. As we are fortunate to be very close to the beach, you can also find a secluded spot somewhere where you can spend a bit of time meditating and aligning yourself to the surrounding and the lapping of the waves.

i. Sit yourself in a comfortable lotus position. Ensure that you reduce or remove any distraction to your comfort especially if you are not a Black Sash mediator. If possible, also have something to support your back as you need to keep it straight, not rigid but vertical, not slumped.

ii. Now remove the outside world from your mind. You can do this by;
   a. Reduction Meditation where you focus on each item in your mind and place into a (mind) container like a chest or basket. One by one, knowing that when you are finished you can recover all your thoughts from the container.
   b. Exclusion Meditation where you focus on just one thing to the exclusion to all else; possibly a grain of sand or some such.
   c. Visualization Meditation where you close your eyes and picture your surroundings until there is no difference between your minds eye and your open eyes.
   d. Sound Meditation usually requires you to have found your inner sound but in this case you can try and find a sound that harmonises with the ocean.
   e. Immersion Meditation where you actually go into the waves and stand there in a Horse Stance being an actual part of the ocean.
iii. Once you have found the rhythm of the ocean, become part of the ocean! Place yourself in the mindset that the waves you hear are a part of you; that you are the waves. Spend some time achieving this focusing only on the waves, the rhythm, the ebb and flow.

iv. Assume the movement of the waves, no matter if you are standing in Natural or Horse Stance, no matter if you are in or out of the water and no matter that you may be sitting down. If it helps, you can even by lying on the sand.

If you have received the impression that this is my favourite way of meditating then you are reading it well. Aside from my lazy streak, the power of the water expressed in the gentle waves energises and inspires my whilst reminding me to be humble (and i need that often). For, what are the gentle waves if not the close cousins of a storm waves or even tsunamis.

Water was the source of life and many believe it will once come to reclaim all life.
5 Animal Earth Breathing Form

Warm-up & Cool Down
In Natural Stance, Relaxed and balanced, Breathing in, Raise two arms to shoulder level with palms of hands facing down. Turn palms upwards at shoulder level and continue raising arms to Baihui (directly over the crown of your head) where fingers touch. Breathing out, bring hands down front of body with palms facing down. Then stand with hands at side and breath. Breathing in bring hands to Baihui point as before then breathing out bring hands down back of head around neck to the front and then slowly down body. Bring hands to side breathing normally. Bring both hands over Dantian. Ladies put right hand down first then left directly over. Men put left hand first then right.


Heart: Breathe in. Breathing out sounding KuAH raise hands to temples where you rest first finger of each hand. (at brain). Breathing in lower hands “VERY FLOWING” and rest hands at side of body.

Stomach: Breath in. Breathing out sounding HU raise hands up to heart level. Split hands in opposite directions. (men left up, women right up). Press down and up. Bring hands together at heart then bring down. Repeat with other hand up.

Spleen: Breath in. Breathing out sounding SHEE bring hands up to shoulder level turn and press hands as if to two walls. Fingers pointing up. Breath out while lowering hands to sides.

Kidneys: Breath in. Breathing out sounding TUII bring hands up to kidneys. Turn hands towards back while sounding Tuii. And brush down kidneys with back of hands. Repeat a second time. Third time after brushing down kidneys bring hands wide and towards the front of body at heart level. Bending knees turn hands and bring hands down while stretching legs and breathing in.

Triple wrmr: Breath in. Breathing out sounding Shaa. Bring hands up and over head. (if high blood pressure bring up to forehead). Turn hands and breath in while bringing hands down. Rest hands on Dantian. (men left hand first, women right hand first)

Notes Before each exercise do three warm-ups. Do each exercise six times for one cycle. You can do all six with three Warm-ups in between each one. You can do these exercises daily or weekly; anything is better than nothing! When finished relax on Natural Stance with hands on your Dantian.
Emai Shan Wood Breathing Form

Yes, this is the form you learn on gray Sash. It is actually a very important form that once learned can be used in many ways. Consider the following options;

Relaxation

Once you have learned the form it is a great form of relaxation. Just work through it once gently. Find a private, isolated or semi private place and focusing on the breathing, In - hold - out - hold, etc., just perform it gently.

Focus

In this version you focus on every movement and ensuring it is perfect. Your attention is to detail making all the movements either parallel or counter mirror as in the Heaven and Earth movement. Ensuring that you find an almost perfect Horse Stance, executing the form this way will drive away any other thoughts; just work on perfection.

Energising/Recovering

If you are low on energy, tired, distracted or even moody then you execute the form at ¾ strength focusing on the rhythm of the movements and slow deliberate actions. This is also good if you can not fall asleep but you are still tired. Do the form, go to bed.

Preparation

It is also a great form to do in preparation for physical activities. It moves every part of the body and if done correctly, stretching and warming up every joint and muscle. Repeat the form three times, high and relaxed focusing on breath; medium and smart focusing on strength and speed; low and slow focusing on stretching and earth connection.

Chi Kung Workout

This is where the form comes from and it was adapted for our use. Considering the 5 frames of the form we have Grounding, Strength, Stretch, Breath and Chi frames in that order. Perform the form except repeat the frame that you need eight times. If it is grounding, do the hand movements and drop down, pause jump up and repeat another 7 times and then finish the form. If you wish to focus on Iron Strength do the first frame and then repeat the Pushing the mountain and separating heaven and earth segments. You can do this with any of the frames or all of them for a complete workout!
Panther & Fire Forms

These two forms are part of the Shaolin Academy senior curriculum. They are two separate and individual form but are put together as our Yin-Yang Hard form (Fire & Iron).

The Black Panther form

It is a rare speed and energy form that requires the practitioner to be very good in their martial arts to even attempt it let alone in the 21 seconds it is meant to be performed. In the Academy there are only a few people who have achieved this 21 second time frame;

- Sifu Chris S
- Sifu Vanessa C
- DiSifu John P
- Sihing Luke B

It is one of those challenges that some add to their kung fu training to develop speed, economy, balance, power and more speed.

The Iron Wire form

Also translated steel cord form referring to tendons, is a 1000 year old Isometric exercise, Gym in a box, form. It is used for strengthening the body by tensing different muscle groups at different times. And it is used to beat you as you hold the various postures. You buddy or partner comes along with either a Whisk, Sand Sock, Reed, Staff, Slapping Hand, Fist, Back Hand, Foot . . . you get the idea and hits, kicks, slaps, bashes and punches you. (Having fun yet?).

It is usually only used in black Sash training, possibly Red Sash plus. Usually, even managed gently, it is too much for the uninitiated and unprepared beginner level student.

*IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU MANAGE THE AMOUNT OF IMPACT AND PAIN YOU RECEIVE IN THESE EXERCISES. NO ONE CAN KNOW AS WELL AS YOU HOW MUCH IS TOO LITTLE AND HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH. JUST RIGHT IS A SKILL THAT NEEDS TO BE TRAINED.*

Be Careful, Train Slowly, Practice Gently, take time Understanding and seek professional guidance whenever you attempt any of these techniques.
Iron Palm Breathing Set

You already know two breathing forms. The gentle morning breathing and stretching form, Wood (Precious) Breathing, and the centring, relaxing and founding, evening exercise, Earth (Number 3) Breathing form. Now you will learn one of the most powerful breathing forms, the Iron Palm breathing form.

Iron Palm is based on a long lost but not forgotten form, which develops your muscles and sinews. It is one of the fundamental works to Shaolin Kung Fu:

The Muscle Changing Classic

The Iron Palm Form is an essential form, which replaces any need for gyms or weights. Practicing this form only once a day 5 days a week will develop your muscles, tendons and sinews to such a degree that you will be very strong indeed. With excellent muscle definition not muscle bulk (which require a lot of sustenance and energy thus promoting excess weight and fat building).

This form is best practiced after school or work or in a break. If you cannot first warm up, just perform the form three times:
1. Once gently, focusing on posture, breathing and form
2. Once medium strength, focusing on technique and flow, and
3. Once very strongly, focusing on power and strength.

There are many advantages to trying this out. Some of these are evident and some you will not notice immediately or possibly even in the near future. You will notice your arm and leg definition improving and your strength increasing tremendously, bit by bit, week by week.

*Liang-I does not recommend Iron Palm Kung training!*

*Short & Long term negative effects may result, which are totally contrary to our style, philosophy and aims!*
Principles & Progress of Toughening

Although it may be evident to some/most why we need to do toughening, it may be best to reiterate this point so that we all have the same shared understanding.

Foundation Toughening

You have already practiced some toughening & hardening exercises. From White Sash onwards your fists should be tougher than the average persons, able to deliver fairly solid strikes and punches in a, for you, safe way. Various parts of your feet have been toughened through thousands of front kicks, enabling you do defend yourself effectively with your hands & feet. Even blocks are not only for deflecting attacks but can be used to attack an aggressor. All this requires a minimal amount of arm and foot toughening.

Bone Strength Toughening

Pounding exercises have long been recognised as beneficial. Through running or bouncing your strengthen your whole skeletal structure, except the hands and arms. This is where Shaolin Kung Fu gives you a better balance. Once you have learned the techniques and passed them in a grading certifying you that you know how to use them, you can start impact work on bags. But only the Techniques you have graded 80% or better (including blocks).

Body Toughening

When you started as a gray Sash Student you were/are untouchable. No one will hit you or work hard with you. As a Health and fitness exercise you can work all the way to Black Sash without being hit once. For most though, from White Sash onwards you need to work on some Physical Body Toughening and preferably on all five as listed in the preamble.

Mental Toughening

Possibly even more important than physical toughening. Unless you are invulnerable to taunts, threats, intimidation and such everyday occurrences, we also need to ‘abuse’ ourselves verbally. Once you have been verbally assaulted in training and even have fun doing it, it will be difficult for other people to ‘flick your agro switch’ without you allowing them!
Pain

There is a Pain Classification that may help you to prevent going to far through understanding. This information is similar as used in various Pain Management Cliques.

Nociceptive Pain

It arises from the stimulation of specific pain receptors. These receptors can respond to heat, cold, vibration, stretch, impact and chemical stimuli released from damaged cells.

Non Nociceptive Pain

This arises from within the peripheral and central nervous system. Specific receptors do not exist here, with pain being generated by nerve cell dysfunction.

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<th>Nociceptive Pain</th>
<th>Non Nociceptive Pain</th>
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This then breaks down further into two distinct types each.

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<tr>
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<td>Visceral</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Nerve</td>
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<td>Sympathetic</td>
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Somatic Pain

Source - tissues such as skin, muscle, joints, bones, and ligaments - often known as musculo-skeletal pain.

Receptors activated-specific receptors;(nociceptors) for heat, cold, vibration, stretch (muscles), inflammation (e.g. cuts and sprains which cause tissue disruption), and oxygen starvation (ischaemic muscle cramps).

Characteristics - often sharp and well localised, and can often be reproduced by touching or moving the area or tissue involved.
Visceral Pain

Source - internal organs of the main body cavities. There are three main cavities - thorax (heart and lungs), abdomen (liver, kidneys, spleen and bowels), pelvis (bladder, womb, and ovaries).

Receptors activated - specific receptors (nociceptors) for stretch, inflammation, and oxygen starvation (ischaemia).

Characteristics - often poorly localised, and; may feel like a vague deep ache, sometimes being cramping or colicky in nature. It frequently produces referred pain to the back, with pelvic pain referring pain to the lower back, abdominal pain referring pain to the mid-back, and thoracic pain referring pain to the upper back.

Nerve Pain

Causes - may be due to any one of the following processes

- Nerve Degeneration - MS, stroke, brain haemorrhage, oxygen starvation
- Nerve Pressure - trapped nerve
- Nerve Inflammation - torn or slipped disc
- Nerve Infection - shingles and other viral infections

Receptors activated - the nervous system does not have specific receptors for pain (non Nociceptive). Instead, when a nerve becomes injured by one of the processes named above, it becomes electrically unstable, firing off signals in a completely inappropriate, random, and disordered fashion.

Characteristics - These signals are then interpreted by the brain as pain, and can be associated with signs of nerve malfunction such as hypersensitivity (touch, vibration, hot and cold), tingling, numbness, and weakness. There is often referred pain to an area where that nerve would normally supply e.g. sciatica from a slipped disc irritating the L5 spinal nerve produces pain down the leg to the outside shin and big toe i.e. the normal territory in the leg supplied by the L5 spinal nerve. Spinal nerve root pain is also often associated with intense itching in the distribution of a particular dermatome. People often describe nerve pain is often described as lancinating, shooting, burning, and hypersensitive.
Sympathetic Pain

Source - due to possible over-activity sympathetic nervous system, and central / peripheral nervous system mechanisms. The sympathetic nervous system controls blood flow to tissues such as skin and muscle, sweating by the skin, and the speed and responsiveness of the peripheral nervous system.

Causes - occurs more commonly after fractures and soft tissue injuries of the arms and legs, and these injuries may lead to Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS). CRPS was previously known as Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy (RSD).

Receptors activated - like nerve pain there are no specific pain receptors (non Nociceptive). The same processes as mentioned afore in Nerve Pain may operate in CRPS.

Characteristics - presents as extreme hypersensitivity in the skin around the injury and also peripherally in the limb (allodynia), and is associated with abnormalities of sweating and temperature control in the area. The limb is usually so painful, that the sufferer refuses to use it, causing secondary problems after a period of time with muscle wasting, joint contractures, and osteoporosis of the bones. It is possible that the syndrome is initiated by trauma to small peripheral nerves close to the injury.

Summary

Understanding types of pain allows us to manage in such a way that it is of benefit to us and our training. And there is a golden rule that derives from Stress; Stress is a part of life, too much or too little causes us Distress. To toughen up we just push it towards the extreme but do not want to cause Distress.

No pain will cause us to be very touchy to everything that might hurt us, to much and we will switch off. We try and keep the ball from rolling to much to either side.
Iron Hands

Although not a great secret nowadays, it is still the knowledge of the Master as to how to apply toughening, with what intensity, preparation and what to use. It is important that these exercises are managed by a Kung Fu instructor with good experience in Student Management and reading. Thus, only the bare mechanics will be listed in this book.

For all of these exercises use Dit Da Jow and never alone, always under the supervision of an Experienced Shaolin Academy Instructor! Failing to follow this rule may result in immediate expulsion!

Iron Hand Tools and Rules

For the ‘external’ aspect of the exercise we need 5 containers. Each container is filled with a specific material as per diagram below!

![Containers](image)

Each container is only half to two-thirds full. Each container is a preparation for the next and it is like Gradings; if you can not successfully complete the 1000 techniques in 1000 Chinese seconds (a Chinese second is a bit longer than a Western second so let’s make it 20 minutes) you may not continue! If there is any blood on your hands you fail and take 100 days break. If you loose a fingernail or even break a finger your training is over. You have a maximum of 100 minutes to complete all the containers and you are then recognised as an intermediate level Iron Hand Practitioner. This is the ‘old’ way of the iron Hand. The Modern way is different.

We reduce the repetitions to 100 in 100 seconds and allow 100 second break in-between. Thus you have 1000 seconds to make it through all containers for a level 1 Achievement. Level 2 is ofcourse based on 200 techniques in 200 seconds with still only 100 seconds break. Thus all 5 containers in 1500 seconds. If you manage to do the whole 1000 techniques in each in 1050 second that is the highest level, the equivalent of Black Sash in the technique you are performing. But any visible damage, blood, skin scrape or such immediately stops the exercise and you are not allowed to resume until the damage is totally healed without visible damage or scarring!
The Iron Hand Preparation

There is some preparation required before you get to use the 5 containers. You need to prepare your body and mind. Following is a suggested cycle assuming that you have stretched and warmed-up and done 15 minutes cardio vascular workout.

i. Meditation Form; preferably the Iron Wire but any of the afore mentioned Breathing and preparation forms will do;
   a. Iron Wire (Metal Breathing)
   b. Emai Shan (Wood Breathing)
   c. Ocean Meditation (Water Breathing)
   d. 5 Animal Sounds (Earth)
   e. Black Panther (Fire Breathing)

ii. 100 techniques left to right hand

iii. 100 techniques of Gentle Bag Work, to achieve your rhythm, prepare the specific muscles, test the joints and make sure all is fine.

iv. 100 techniques on the Sand Pillow to prepare the skin and prepare for the impact.

v. 100 seconds of rest

Now you are ready to approach the 5 Iron Hand Containers. Have someone taking the time and a 2nd person counting the techniques. The person counting the techniques also has a close look at the striking hand(s) to ensure that they remain without damage. Also keep an eye out for signs of any pain. If you notice either, the exercise is over for now!
The 5 Traditional Hand Uses

Punch, Fist, Hand Edge, Fingers and Claws are the 5 families of Hand Shapes; understanding that each of these has a number of further options not including delivery methods and angles (italicised version not a good choice for Iron Hand Training);

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Punches</th>
<th>Fists</th>
<th>Open Hand</th>
<th>Fingers</th>
<th>Claw</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stone Punch</td>
<td>Panther</td>
<td>Outside Edge</td>
<td>Spear Hand</td>
<td>Tiger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun Punch</td>
<td>Panther</td>
<td>Thumb Edge</td>
<td>Snake Fingers</td>
<td>Eagle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thunder Punch</td>
<td>Monkey</td>
<td>Iron Palm</td>
<td>Diamond Finger</td>
<td>Crane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corkscrew Punch</td>
<td>Phoenix</td>
<td>Slapping Palm</td>
<td>Dragon Thumb</td>
<td>Mantis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reverse</td>
<td>Dragon</td>
<td>Splashing Palm</td>
<td>Doom Fingers (3)</td>
<td>Phoenix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hammer</td>
<td>Leopard</td>
<td>Undulating Palm</td>
<td>Spider Fingers</td>
<td>Crab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scraping</td>
<td>Thumb Palm</td>
<td></td>
<td>Monkey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of these the Primary Choices are Stone
Breaking Punch, Panther Fist, Spade, Iron
Palm, Edge Hand, Doom Fingers and Phoenix
Shredding Claw. It is good for all students to try all techniques but proficiency should only be sought in one of these. It is better to be “Master of One” than “Dabbler in All”, although the latter is easier and that is why there are so many theoretical experts out there!

The Iron Palm

This is possibly the best technique to use for our styles point of view and from safety point of view. Any techniques that use the Fingers such as Claws, Spear & Snake Hands will ultimately damage the Fingernails and may cause joint problems. Similarly, the Fists and Punches are prone to damage the knuckles and joints through prolonged use. And if you wish to be proficient in this you need to do the 100 techniques a day for 6 out of 7 days a week for the rest of your life. The next best is the Spade Edge strike but this is awkward to train and needs special arrangements for the buckets.

Well, now you know why ‘smart’ martial artists use and train the Iron Pam and not the karate fist.
Monk Pan Hui’s Song of Palm Thrusting

Chi goes from the navel part,
Strength centres in the palm heart;

In the substantial your strength is found.
Exhale air while making a sound.

Upward Pushing is necessary;
Pressing with a horse step, primary.

Remember Attacking, Pushing and Blowing,
The bones near your pulses are forcefully going!
Iron Body

Although there are many body parts that can be toughened, it is always best to focus on one key area. Trying to toughen too many parts of the body will result in serious problems in the long term. A usual combination is Body and Forearms. But let’s first look at the 5 key Iron Body Areas;

i. Iron Buddha (Stomach and or Chest)
ii. Iron Bar (Forearms & Shins)
iii. Iron Gong (Forehead)
iv. Iron Neck (all the way around)
v. Iron Shield (The Back from Sash to Neck)

There are of course a number of other Iron techniques, some that have lately come into focus such as Iron Crotch Training. Then there is Iron Thread, Iron Man and others even more obscure. Same as with the hands, there are some for these that are beneficial and some down right stupid. I for one, have trained the first two above and found it very useful. With a ‘largish’ Buddha Belly, this was often a sough after target by my opponents so this received some ‘automatic’ training. But i also enjoyed the Iron Bar Kung Fu immensely. If you can handle it, you can feel very alive.

No matter which you choose, you need to train all. In the beginning you train all of them equally, ensuring that there are no areas of particular vulnerability. Should you feel tender somewhere than you will need to consult a medical practitioner

Now, let look at the actual physical training.
Preparation is identical to the External preparations with a good 30 minute warm-up, 15 minute cardiovascular workout and meditation according to individual need. Use the 5 step breathing method for better outcome. Also, ensure that you are in a warm and protected room. You will be lowering your external protections during the exercises before they rebuild stronger. During the rebuild time you need to protect yourself from external evils.

In Shaolin we recognise ‘5 pains’, these being:

i. Slapping (hand slap, side of sword slap)
ii. Stinging (bee, knife, needle)
iii. Scraping (sandpaper, falling on you knees, carpet burn, burn)
iv. Pounding (punch, kick, elbow, knee)
v. Extending (Hyper Extension)

The first four are the ones we cover with the Iron Body training, the fifth is in a discipline of it’s own.

What we now wish to do is simulate these pains without the use of a fist, foot or such. Remove the psychological effect of someone attacking you by using substitute equipment where possible.

Following are some examples:

i. Slapping like a Slapping Palm; Belt, flat piece of plastic or wood, spoon, anything that makes a slapping effect on the skin
ii. Stinging like a Bee; Brush, Straw Broom, Spiked Bat, Sash, Towel, anything that causes a ‘sharp’ effect on the skin
iii. Scraping like a Scrape Punch; Sandpaper, Leather Ball, anything that creates a burn like sensation
iv. Pounding like a Punch; Medicine Ball, Padded Sword, anything padded and semi heavy.

Of course, at a higher level there is no substitute for the real thing and you partner up with someone and use you body to create all these effects. There are even Iron Body Workout routines where two people have a 10 minute form in which they train both all the Hand and all the body techniques.
About Kung Fu Styles

In a time in the long-ago where martial arts were either for the rich or for warriors, there was not a great need for a lot of techniques but for fighting success. In a time where school meant a few years with your local master, learning the basics of reading, writing, arithmetic in the morning, the afternoons were spent developing your Kung Fu.

Kung Fu adapted to this 3 to 4 year training cycle and depending on the quality of the master and the nature of the student, the styles had to be adapted to this rhythm. For the most, these teachers would show their students one ultimate style technique towards the end of their training if the master believed that the student is worthy. Depending on the masters skill and knowledge, the nature of the student and where the student would be returning to, these techniques were from the simple “special fist” technique to the more complex fists, palms, claws or even Poison Hands.

The master, to ensure that they did not have competition for their livelihood would never teach a local student their best and most secret technique. They would teach them lesser techniques if the student was unworthy or problematic (such as did Yip Man with Bruce lee). Because of this, many of these techniques were lost in the originality as Masters died without passing on their secret or the technique was jumbled.

Yet, there were those techniques that were so good, so usable and so effective that they were rediscovered over and over again. Techniques that were so successful that as long as they were passed on once they remained alive. Some of these techniques developed into a full style as Chain Punching into Wing Chung, Eagle Claw into the Eagle Claw System, Mantis, Monkey and others. Some though were so brutal that they had to remain a secret being only passed on in time of greatest need or with the biggest bribes.
Today, in the free information age, experienced and qualified martial artists can read a book, see an action or peruse the WEB and find the essence and core of many if not most of these techniques. Possibly, in this way, it is able to reconstruct the past to a degree as never before and with minor modifications reconstitute what was a hidden technique, the masters pride and/or the core of a style.

This does not apply to the nine devil claws! These are still around, still in use and for the most, with one or two exceptions still the Masters Choice techniques. How can they be simply used for casual training? Easy, without a few years of guided practice, none of these techniques can be anything more than just techniques. Without developing the body and mind to the style they can not reach their full effectiveness.

They are very good to show what can happen in a defence situation. They are very good to understand and to learn how to defend against a Claw attacker but they do require years of dedication to develop the physique and attitude for application. One may know many Demon Claws but one can only master a few, with years of training and dedication.

Author

Sijo Robert Z started his martial art training when he was dragged along by his brother to Judo around 1962. 6 months later he was still training, his brother had quit. He is still training but has since progressed from Judo, to Karate, Aikido and since 1982 Shaolin Kung Fu.

He was an active student until 1999 with many specialist masters along the way including some well know such as Dai Sifu Pi-er of the Golden Lion, Kenco Terry Lim of Long Fu Pai, Bob Johns and others (possibly more infamous ). He has also had a number of less well know teachers who did not usually accept ‘western’ students preferring to remain anonymous. These covered such things as Thunder Stepping, Undulating Palms, Ripping Claws, Poison Hands, Dim Mak, Breaking Forearms, Water Hands and some others.

Today, Sijo is fully dedicated to his Shaolin Academy only occasionally sharing the old knowledge’s with some of his fellow ‘oldies’. Occasionally sharing some in the form of Appreciation Workshops and seminars, for which this book was put together. (Melb 2000)