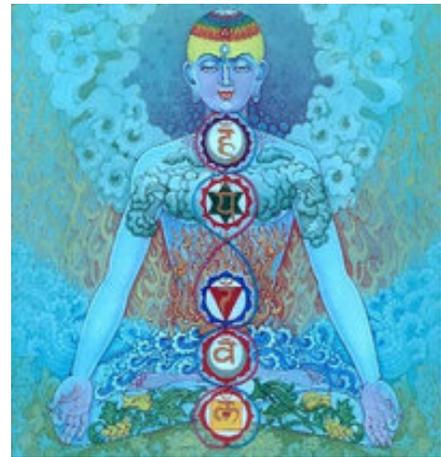


IS CONSERVING JING CHI THE KEY TO POWER AND STRENGTH?



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Although most would agree that one would be hard pressed to find a subject that fans the flames of controversy more than politics and religion, over the years I have discovered that the Taoist Practice known as Sexual Conservation ranks a close third when it comes to conversational topics that are capable of causing heated discussion and arousing passions. The seemingly irreconcilable disagreement over this ancient practice's ability to increase physical, mental, spiritual, and so-called psychic powers has been debated for centuries and not surprisingly, continues even today.

The act of regulating sexual activity, what Taoists refer to as conserving one's "Jing" Chi, can be traced all the way back to man's primordial beginnings. Curiously, throughout human history, not only has this ancient practice been an important feature of mysticism and occult practices, it has also been one of the guiding principles in the esoteric form of the internal practice commonly known as Chi Kung.

The idea of conserving sexual energy in order to promote the cultivation of the vital energy (Chi), which it is claimed increases one's physical strength and extends endurance as well as promoting the development of psychic /spiritual powers, is one of the core principles of Taoism and is by no sheer coincidence, an important discipline in the practice of advanced Chinese internal martial arts. According to Taoist teaching, such practice not only promotes longevity (although we would all like to live a long life), perhaps more importantly for the martial artist is the practices ability to replenish and nourish Chi.

The vital energy that accumulates or builds up to unprecedented levels as a result of practicing sexual restraint, allows martial artists to engage in the practice commonly referred to as "Chi Circulation." This ancient Chinese ascetic practice involves circulating the Chi through the body via the Small Heavenly Cycle during what is often referred to as Micro-cosmic Orbit Meditation. And, while most of us are vaguely familiar with the ancient practice, a majority of people associate any form of sexual subjugation with priestly vows, esoteric initiations, and archaic religious disciplines.

This general perception which has some factual basis is further supported by the fact that a lifelong commitment to celibacy – which should not be confused with temporary sexual conservation – is one of the highest initiations undertaken by priests, monks and adepts of the world's oldest religions, mystical orders, and occult societies. Regrettably, it is the tendency to associate theories on regulating sexual activity with these austere religious practices that has made recognizing its functional application in the practice of martial arts all the more difficult.

Even though there is ample evidence of the implementation of underlying principles of sexual conservation in a number of well-known health practices such as: Kundalini Yoga, traditional Chinese medicine, Chi Kung and advanced martial arts, as well as many forms of athletics. Far too often the age-old practice is marginalized by modern martial artists as well as most other secular members of society.

Familiar examples of the application of the ancient practice's underlying principles such as:

- 1) the persistent rumor concerning the U.S. Military's use of salt petre in the food of military personnel in an effort to harness libidos and curtail sexual activity,
 - 2) professional boxing trainers insistence on banishing women from the pre-fight training camp of male boxers, and
 - 3) the athletic coach's attempt at enforcing abstinence among their athletes in the days leading up to "the big game,"
- are all based on the belief that the rewards of sexual restraint such as increased strength and endurance, improved focal abilities and overall physical prowess are all advanced by conserving one's sexual energy.

Although the enhancement of athletic performance and the rewards to one's health are undoubtedly important to Taoists, unlike your average martial artist, followers of the ancient Chinese religion are primarily motivated by sexual conservation's relationship to longevity and its reported ability to harmonize the mind body and spirit. This according to ancient teaching can lead the aspirant to the highest levels of spiritual development or enlightenment.

From a medical point of view, one of the most compelling arguments for sexual temperance is traditional Chinese medicine's assertion that – not only does excessive sexual activity have a negative effect on energy levels by over-taxing the Kidneys creating a condition known as Kidney Yang deficiency, sperm depletion and its relationship with Kidney exhaustion is (according to Chinese medical theory) the primary cause for the loss of vital energy (Chi), sexual dysfunction, and a shortened lifespan.

Regulated sexual activity is also part of the more esoteric form of martial arts commonly referred to as *Shen Kung*. A common feature of this high level martial practice is the temporary sexual abstinence that is required in order to increase the vital energy (Chi) to levels that allow us to circulate it in an orbital fashion through meridians up the midline of the back and down the front of the body through the Small Heavenly Cycle.

According to ancient mystical teaching persistent practice will enable the practitioner to experience the physical and psychic phenomena that is the result of what is commonly referred to as “storing the essence and circulating the Chi.”

It is claimed that the process of moving the vital energy in a circular fashion within the body can elevate one's martial abilities to levels that are transcendent to those that are obtained through mere physical training. According to ancient teaching, when we allow sexual energy to intensify through abstinence, circulation of the stored energy combined with Dan Tien Breathing and deep meditation creates an altered mental state that sets in motion the alchemical process that is the key to unleashing both physical and psychic powers that otherwise remain dormant.

This we are told unlocks the door that allows us to enter the realm of the supernatural. Many of the extraordinary feats of strength and demonstrations of unworldly martial abilities that have become a permanent part of martial arts lore are attributed to this ancient mystical practice.

The discipline required to accomplish this feat is difficult to say the least; however, it is by no means impossible. First and foremost it requires a mental and physical commitment and a willingness to temporarily forgo sexual orgasm which is arguably mankind's greatest sensual pleasure. It also requires that you exercise what my mentor and martial arts instructor Shidoshi Ron Van Clief refers to as “iron will.”

We are also fortunate to have at our disposal herbal elixirs (such as the ancient Taoist formula *Jin Suo Gu Jing Wan* [aka Golden Lock Pill], *Si Jun Zi Tang* [aka Four Gentlemen Tea] and *Chuan Yao Tonic*) to assist us in our effort to regulate seminal discharge and replenish the vital energy that has been lost as a result of too much sex.

While it is doubtful that the debate that surrounds this ancient transmutative process will ever be resolved. There is no question that proof of the extra ordinary spirit nurturing health promoting benefits that are gained when this ancient practice is exercised concurrent with taking herbal elixirs, cannot be validated unless we free ourselves from the sensory enslavement to sex – that has always been an obstacle to humankind realizing their highest potential.

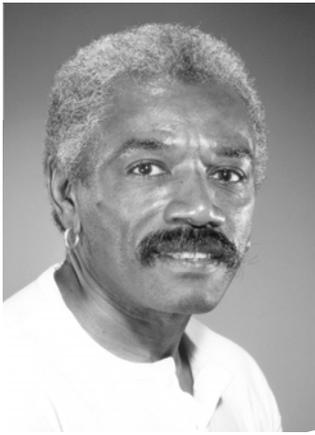
Let's face it, celibacy is obviously out of the question for the great majority of human beings; however, the use of sexual discretion, periodic conservation and the use of herbal tonics to cultivate the Chi and increase seminal fluid is something that we may want to consider. When viewed in this context, the age-old axiom, which emphatically states that the primary purpose for sex is procreation rather than recreation, is definitely food for thought.

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Internal Alchemy



THOMAS RICHARD JOINER, author of the *Warrior as Healer, Blending Botany and Budo*, and *Chinese Herbal Medicine Made Easy*, is a Renshi, fourth-degree black belt and certified instructor in Chinese Goju Martial Arts and Tien Tao Chi Kung, as well as a graduate of the Institute of Traditional Chinese Medicine New York City. He has conducted advanced study in traditional Chinese medicine and acupuncture at the Academy of Chinese Culture and Health Sciences in Oakland, CA and the Institute of Chinese Herbology in Berkeley, CA. Thomas's martial arts education includes training in Wing Chun Gung Fu with Sifu Ralph Rodriguez, Sifu Lee Moy Shan and the late Grandmaster Moy Yat. In addition he has studied Taoist Esoteric Yoga Micro-cosmic Orbit Meditation, Iron Shirt Chi Kung and Seminal Ovarian Kung Fu with Mantak Chia, as well as training in Chinese Goju Martial Arts under Grandmaster/Shidoshi Ron Van Clief.

Sensei Joiner's books provide extensive insights into the centuries-old practice of incorporating herbs into your martial arts training as well as making available prescriptions for many of the legendary and most highly-regarded

formulas used in Asian Martial Arts for treating injuries as well as enhancing one's training.

Sensei Joiner has been a practicing Chinese Herbalist for nearly two decades, and is the founder of an online mail order company **TREASURES FROM THE SEA OF CHI** which specializes in traditional Chinese herbal formulas used in martial arts training. If you would like more information on ancient herbal practices used in the martial arts, Sensei Joiner can be reached at his company email: info@seaofchi.com.

If you'd like to know more about the products discussed in this article and/or to purchase please read the following...

SI JUN ZI TANG

A classical four-herb yang Chi tea that is mentioned repeatedly in Chinese texts that chronicle the centuries old practice of martial artists using herbs. It is legendary for increasing yang Chi levels. Available as a raw herb formula or in patented pills. (use 60+ days)



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