

PRINCIPLES, THEORIES AND CONCEPTS OF CHINESE MARTIAL ARTS

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Principles, theories and concepts are the most important factors in Chinese martial arts. It is the very foundation by which the arts stand. Even though it may carry different traditions, it is the major doctrine that separates and cultivates what is considered as true Chinese martial arts distinguished from other arts. How we define the principles of the yin and yang in reference to internal and external applications will make all the difference universally in the preservation and cultivation of the arts. For example, if my understanding and perception is not clear about the principles of the yin and yang theory, it will affect the outcome of the technique mainly with the distortion of natural forces.

In focusing on the external principles of the yin and yang we will come to realize the internal values that cooperate with its function. Along with the basic concept of push and pull we can understand a lot about correct application in managing kinetic forces. Rather than offering resistance to kinetic energy we should cooperate by managing without resistance the kinetic force by allowing the natural but continuing force to apply itself to the proper focus. For example, we may perceive a method or technique as “punch” and “block” rather than “push” and “pull”. Externally the idea of “punch” and “block” has already determined its response, which is to resist or offer an equivalent force as a response. Since blocking means to stand in the pass of force, there really is no need to use force towards the “punch.” This is strictly an external view of how to manage kinetic energy or physical force that defeats the natural principles and concepts of the yin and yang theory. Unfortunately, most artists prefer to challenge energy rather than manage it. The result of not cooperating with natural forces and underestimating its ability can be devastating. The most powerful force is that which we cannot see aside from natural movements. So if our understanding is based on what we can see it will result in our response being limited

and useless. Being a universal principle, the yin and yang principle should be applied in every aspect of the martial arts.