

FCIA Module 7:

Tai Chi Bare Hand Partner Drills I

I. Jue shou (Sensing Hands) I

1. Basic Rolling – Forward and backward rolling to explore and develop the skills of Roll, Pivot, and Transfer.
2. Basic Rolling – Forward and backward exploring and developing the above in addition to the skill of Exchange. Exchanging in the beginning continues the circle in the same direction. Notice the different places in which Exchange occurs most safely (exchanging hand goes over or under depending on which hands are involved at which part of the circle). Later we can explore organically changing the direction of the circle through various means.
3. Rolling with Advantage – Forward and backward rolling with emphasis on transfer and exchange for structural advantage and simple applications. Slow, clear movement with support down through legs and feet.
4. Rolling as above and introduce moving step – initially, single step forward and backward.
5. See Sam’s handout on Jue-shou [HERE](#) for his commentary on the principles of sensing hands practice.

II. Tui Shou (Pushing Hands) I

1. The Eight Disc-framed Fixed Step Push Hands (*Ba Pan Jia Zi Dingbu Tui Shou*)
– aka the 1-8 Preparatory Drills

* The 8 Preparatory drills are studies in structure, clear energies, and clear responses in partner work. Among the most important are the ability to receive (support) weight at the point of connection, the ability to neutralize, and the ability to issue. This is largely a study of Peng, Lu, Ji, and An.

* Cultivate well integrated Taiji structure, aligned around the point of connection with your partner.

* Cultivate the ability to clearly engage from your center toward your partner’s center. This involves developing awareness of the various vectors of connection both to and from one’s partner.

* Cultivate clarity regarding the “weight” used in these drills and develop the ability to connect with progressively heavier *and* lighter weight with good structure and sticking skills.

* Use of increasingly subtle body alignment/adjustment and Taiji energies (peng, lu, ji, an, na, ...) to accomplish the goal at hand.

* Look for the specific lessons each drill has to offer and if you find yourself struggling, take a moment to reset and resolve the problem.

* Cultivate Yang, Cheng Fu’s 10 Important Points (See handout [HERE](#)). and the fundamentals of sticking – including avoiding the Four Errors. (See handout on Deep Sticking [HERE](#).)

3. Four Square Push Hands (*Si Zheng Tui Shou*) – Forward Timing

* This is essentially a study of Peng, Lu, Ji, and An, basic ways they are applied and neutralized

* Initially practice this sequence in smaller pieces. For example: A advances with ward off, B responds with roll, and repeat. Then add the next piece, and so on, one at a time.

* Also explore this practice allowing one partner to express their move to completion (i.e. ward off wins, etc.). This provides a more thorough experience of the energies inherent in the movements and how they feel when successful.

* Work toward comfortable accomplishment of each movement, then work the opposite side and string it all together. This is an exacting pattern and pulls together much that we've been working toward thus far.

* Keep in mind YCF's 10 Important Points (link to handout above).

4. Three Old Techniques

* This drill begins with A's right foot forward and B's left foot forward, note how this is different from the way in which most Yang style practices are organized.

* This stance arrangement puts the front elbows in closer proximity making it a useful study. The three techniques studied are: Elbow, Push, and Rollback. The all-important "*spiral*" is used to connect the drill. As the circle rolls and one person changes their leg so that both partners have the same leg forward, we start to see Yang style reverse timing four hands emerge.

5. Four Square Push Hands (*Si Zheng Tui Shou*) – Reverse Timing

* Basic Pattern – Initially practice slowly and clearly while further developing previous principles and points of focus.

* Pattern Changes – The following are methods to change the direction of the reverse timing circle. These changes are highly useful for creating greater vocabulary in push hands. They can also be used to generate and study applications. It is very helpful to memorize these so they can be mastered and integrated into easy movement. To make them easier to remember, I pair them in the following order. Use whatever method works for you.

1. Cross Hand Reversal
2. Replace Spiral Reversal
3. Rolling Reversal
4. Hinder Spiral Reversal
5. Sitting Wrist Return
6. Lower Hand Reversal
7. Chop Reversal
8. Palm to Palm Reversal
9. Universal Change – can go both directions