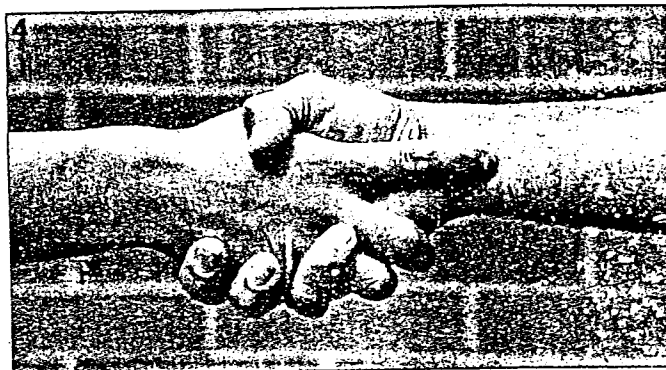
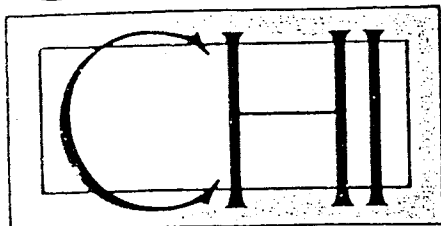


CHARGE UP YOUR



The four newly revealed chi grips are: thumb joint over first large knuckle (1); thumb joint between first and second large knuckle (2); pinching the palm with the thumb and index finger (3); and clasping with the little fingers interlocked and the index finger placed on the wrists (4). Each grip is performed successively and elevates chi flow.

physical, too."

3. *Vertical palm grip.* The third chi-building handclasp is performed when you hold your right hand forward, fingers straight, thumb extended and pointing straight up. Your partner then brings his or her right hand toward your extended palm and grips it with the thumb on the bony side and the index finger on the palm side.

"The principle of chi focus was extremely important to the ancient Chinese, especially the Shaolin Temple monks," explains Daniel M. Laruso, a research consultant at San Francisco's Institute for Chinese Research. "This exercise was used anciently to further develop chi focus."

Laruso suggests that the thumb-and-finger pinch of the palm symbolizes two things: 1) the sun being the center of the solar system, and 2) humankind being the center of life on earth.

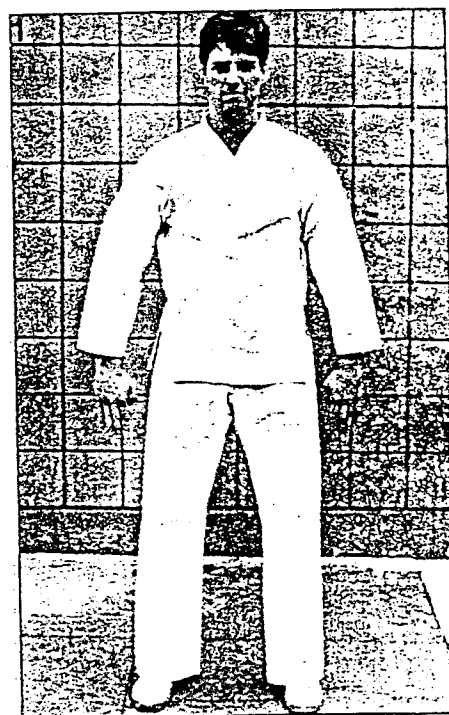
4. *Grip of fellowship.* The fourth hand-

clasp is almost more of a friendship gesture than an exercise. The grip is made by clasping the right hands, interlocking the little fingers, and by placing your index finger on your partner's wrist. The hand position was a way of demonstrating harmony among the monks. The grip also helped monks maintain chi flow.

Breathing Exercises

Duncan also discovered four chi-building breathing exercises. These moves, which are performed while you stand on both feet, are strictly upper-body exercises. And they may be unsurpassed at developing internal power.

1. *Arm to the square.* By raising your right hand to your side and squaring it at the elbow, you make the first position of this effective chi-building exercise. As you lift your arm into position, keep your lower arm vertical and your upper arm level with the ground. Face your palm forward, keep your fingers together and



...r thumb extended.

To draw chi toward your brain, bring the thumb of your right hand (palm down) to the left side of your neck. Then draw your thumb across to the right side of your neck.

While executing this move, transfer your chi from your center (located near your navel) up to your brain. Duncan says the ancient Shaolin Temple monks may have used this exercise both before and after kung fu practice sessions. The pre-workout session, Duncan suggests, got the monks' minds ready for the spiritual and physical aspects of their training. On the other hand, the post-workout session helped them retain their enlightenment.

Torso chi builder. Here is one of the most powerful chi builders there is. It's great for developing chi in the midsection and chest. After you bring your right hand in front of you, fingers cupped and your elbow square, raise your left arm to the square, your palm facing forward, fingers together and your thumb extended. Next, place your right hand over the left side of your chest. Experience the chi flow. As you draw your right hand across, bring your left hand down to the left side of your chest and lower both arms to your sides. Repeat as often as necessary.

Lower midsection chi. This movement elevates the chi flow in your lower midsection and groin. First, bring your left hand to your side, the elbow forming



Former KKI coverman Bill Henderson (right) uses his chi to blast the fight out of a vicious opponent.

a square, palm up and fingers cupped. Next, place your right hand, fingers together, palm down, thumb extended, over your left hip. Then draw your right hand to your right hip and your left hand to your left hip.

4. Chi breathing. The fourth chi-building exercise is a basic breathing movement that is designed to fill your body with internal power. Start by lifting both of your hands high above your head. Make sure your palms face forward and your fingers are close together. Next, lower your hands to shoulder level, then

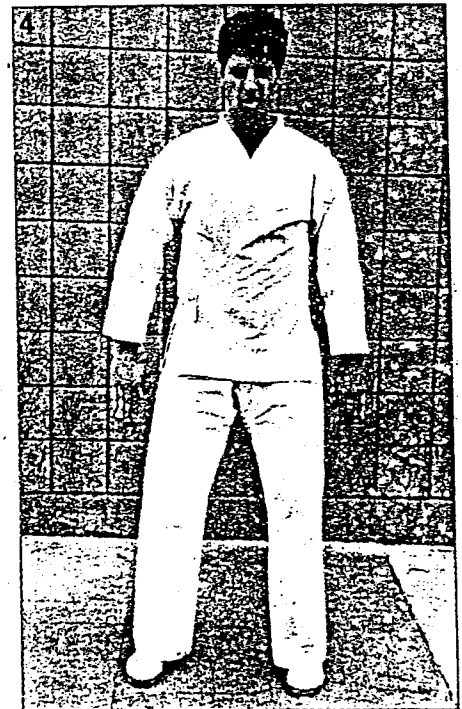
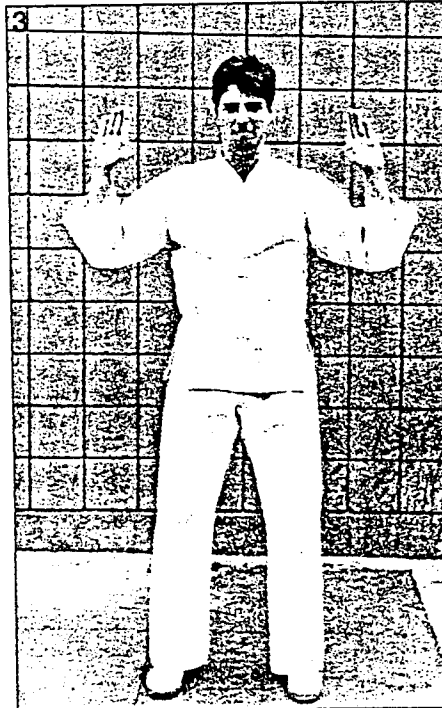
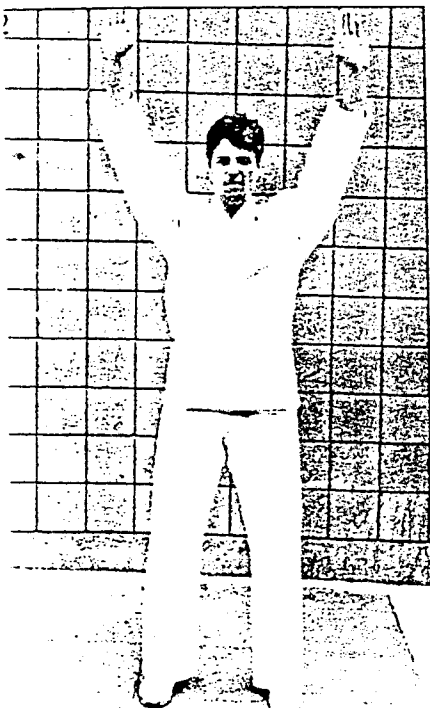
down to your sides. As you do this, inhale as you raise your arms overhead, then exhale as you lower your arms.

"This three-step chi-breathing exercise is great for overall chi development," says Mike Wong, a kung fu stylist whose hobby is studying chi and other Chinese fighting concepts. "I learned the exercise from my *sifu* (teacher), and because of the exercise, my martial arts training has improved tremendously."

Revealed or Forever Unknown

A wise Chinese sage once observed

While doing this recently discovered chi-building exercise for the entire body, Ludice stands with his hands at his sides (1). He raises both hands high above his head (2), brings them to shoulder level (3), and back to his sides (4). He likes to repeat the exercise three times.



Chi is internal power, the kind that makes kung fu techniques devastating, not just effective.

For centuries, mystery has permeated the concept of chi. Is it supernatural, beyond the realms of science and empirical truth? Or is chi merely a biological force we're all born with—a power each of us has the potential to develop? Further, what role did chi play in the ancient Shaolin Temple? And what were the chi secrets Shaolin Temple monks reportedly lived and died for?

Kung fu is meaningless without chi. As Emil Farkas and John Corcoran explain, "Chi can infuse a person with tremendous vitality and make him or her extremely powerful in action, much more so than the power purely developed through the muscular system alone."

Powerful Discovery

Until recently, some of the best chi-building exercises remained secret. However, in late 1986, Mark Duncan, a kung fu artist and researcher of Chinese fighting arts, discovered four chi handclaps and four cryptic chi-building ex-

ercises while examining Chinese documents. He found the grips and body movements depicted amid writings on the Shaolin Temple's religious practices.

"These discoveries are just the tip of the iceberg as far as our knowledge of the Shaolin Temple goes," Duncan explains. "The chi exercises contained in the recently discovered documents seem very fundamental to the Shaolin Temple and to the martial arts."

Sacred or Secret?

It may be misleading to refer to the "sacred" Shaolin Temple chi exercises. More appropriately, they are secret chi techniques that were only practiced by the more faithful monks—those of the Shaolin Temple's inner circle.

According to Duncan, "Most Shaolin Temple monks were devoutly religious in the Buddhist faith and in their practice of kung fu. The faithful monk's martial art was a religious experience. Only rarely did it involve physical fighting in a life-or-death situation. Consequently, the chi exercises recently brought to light were a physical and spiritual experience for participants."

Yet, any sacredness associated with Shaolin Temple chi exercises was probably just an excuse to keep them secret. Martin H. Anderson, a student of Chinese culture, believes the sacredness of the chi exercises was just a way to ensure their secrecy.

"The hand and arm movements were sacred; of that there's little doubt," Anderson says. "But they were only revealed to a handful of people. Therefore, they were secret. Many examples show where sacred doctrines are taught to thousands—even millions—of people, which shows something need not be withheld from the masses to be sacred."

Chi Grips

The chi-building handgrips Duncan discovered resemble ordinary handshakes. He says these grips transfer chi between two people and allow each person to more sharply focus internal power. Each of the four handclaps is done sequentially while standing.

1. *Thumb over knuckle.* During this first handclasp, stand facing your partner and extend your right hand, as if to shake hands. You and your partner then place the joint of your right thumb over the first large knuckle of each other's right hand. Now let your chi flow into your partner's body.

2. *Thumb between knuckles.* This chi developer is much like the preceding one. The only difference is that you and your partner's thumb joints cover the space between the first and second large knuckle. Nancy Richfield, a Berkeley, California-based Shaolin Temple researcher, suggests that this chi builder is one step more advanced than the previous one.

"In this exercise," she says, "you not only transfer chi to your partner, but also focus your chi more accurately. To focus your chi means to narrow its application, to make your chi more precise. That process is more mental than

Arthur Iudice performs a new midsection chi-building exercise. He places his left arm close to his side, elbow to the square, hand in cupping shape, palm up, and positions his right hand (palm down) over his left hip (1). Next, he begins drawing both hands across his body (2) until they are over his hips (3). Iudice then drops his hands to his sides (4).

