

Pushhands Patterns

1. Introduction

- a. There are 5 pushhands patterns that increase in difficulty and intricacy. Pattern 1 and 5 have an a. and b. set that are variations but work on the same principle.
- b. Pushhands trains:
 - i. Posture
 1. You should always be looking over the opponents shoulder and not down
 - ii. Weight shifts
 - iii. Softness
 1. Rigidity is exhausting and shows where your tension is. New practitioners typically have sore shoulders for example. Know that these sorenesses should be temporary and is where you should put your attention to relax
 - iv. Martial application
 - v. Listening energy
 1. You should be touching the person just hard enough so that there is not separation when they are moving away from you.

2. Opening Movement

- a. A bow and distance measurement begins (and ends) the pushhands sets. It is important that you establish respect with the other person because people generally do not know how hard they are pushing at the beginning. This can be misinterpreted as aggressiveness when the “aggressive” pusher is actually trying to be soft but does not have the sensitivity to know how much muscle they are using. Pushhands can quickly erode into an ego battle. Therefore, it is also suggested that if you are with a group that you rotate frequently to get new heights/strengths/perspicities/experience with abilities and are removed from a mounting egoic response.
- b. The box is done by bringing your hands up from your sides and placing your right fist against a flat left hand. The left hand is at a 45 degree angle. You then return the hands to your sides.
- c. The measurement
 - i. Face a partner
 - ii. Raise two fists forward and touch knuckles to establish the distance.
 - iii. Both turn your left foot out at 45 degrees
 - iv. Both step forward with your right
 - v. Rotate your right hand up to the left, clockwise, both ending with the wrists touching.

1. Opening pushhands series (two parts)

- a. Single hand
 - i. Opposing (e.g. both right or both left) hands are touching at the wrists.

- ii. Other hand is behind the small of the back
- iii. This pushhands drill only goes one direction
 - 1. You always push forward over your leading leg.
 - 2. If doing right hands the circle is parallel to the floor, counterclockwise
 - 3. If doing left hands the circle is parallel to the floor, clockwise
- iv. Hands
 - 1. As you push the back of your hand is traveling forward with your weight
 - 2. As your move backward and the partner is pushing, your palm faces them
- v. Other side
 - 1. To switch sides one person steps forward and one person steps backwards
 - 2. Switch to other hand and push in the direction of the forward leg
- b. Two handed – wide circling - gathering
 - i. Overview: This is a pattern where wide circles will be made circles will be made by circling the hands to the outside, over the head, pushing down, and then back out
 - 1. It is similar to the gathering that is done to collect chi at the end of a qi gong or silk reeling exercise
 - ii. Repetitions
 - 1. Do 10 for each activity
 - 2. Each activity can be done for series of four parts with opposite feet forward and opposite arms touching.
 - 3. This is a high number of repetitions and this is also purposeful. If you are not using proper posture and alignment you fatigue and your body teaches you were you are tense by showing you pain/fatigue
 - iii. Process 1 – weight shift is matching
 - 1. Opposing stances (both right feet forward)
 - 2. One person puts arms forward palms up
 - 3. Second person puts unites the wrists with the hands on the outside
 - 4. It is the second person's (outside wrists) to curl his palms over and pull the person's hands down towards his center
 - 5. He then opens his wrists to circle out, up and around
 - 6. The back of the person's wrists will be on top of his wrists as he goes up
 - 7. As he circles down he will come around the wrists and push them down, shifting his weight back towards the center.
 - 8. Both people shift forward and backwards together.
 - 9. Chests stay parallel with shoulders aligned
 - 10. Trade by having the second person moving his wrists to the inside
 - 11. Four patterns can be done
 - a. Left leg forward circle inside
 - b. Right leg forward circle inside

- c. Left leg forward circle outside
- d. Right leg forward circle outside
- iv. Process 2 – weight shifts in opposite direction
 - 1. In this exercise the process is the same as in Process 1 However:
 - a. Weight shifts are opposite meaning that both partners shift forward at each other .
 - i. Both partners move away from each other as the weight shifts back
 - b. Directions
 - i. The shoulders do not remain parallel.
 - ii. Because the weight shifts are opposite you would headbutt each other.
 - iii. As you approach you turn to face sideways your
 - 1. Right shoulders almost touch
 - 2. Switch and your left shoulders almost touching
 - iv. Switch feet and do right shoulders and then left shoulders with the other feet forward
 - 2. It has the sensation not unlike swimming against a wave in the ocean.

The following exercises are nearly impossible to describe in print. Notes are taken here about the overall postures to help remember the series and some subtleties that were shared to improve progress.

- 2. Two handed Pushhands
 - a. Partners face each other with opposing legs forward (e.g. both right)
 - b. Right arms touch at the wrist creating a “teepee” Left hands cup the opposing elbow.
 - c. This is the rest place that you return to in the middle and beginning of a cycle.
 - d. This posture has 4 directions
 - i. Left and right foot forward
 - ii. Clockwise and counter clockwise directions
 - e. When the hands make the transitions between the motions they pendulum down and come back up to make contact again. They do not cut directly across to the next body part
 - f. Weight shifts go in the direction of the person that is pushing.
- 3. Dalu – Deep pushhands
 - a. Dalu is a deep form of pushhands where the opposite leg come forward and touch (one left and one right)
 - b. It is a combination of the circling of the two handed pushhands and a deep pull through of one arm with a step backwards
 - c. The first step is to remember the choreography
 - d. Second step is to work on the spiraling of the body that initiates from the rear heel and extends through the hand.

4. Dalu – Deep double pushhands

- a. Same as the dalu except that:
 - i. An extra circle is added
 - ii. An extra extension of the hand
 - iii. A deeper step is taken after the transition step pulling the persons into low stances.

5. Walking Dalu

- a. This is a moving pushhands pattern which begins like the dalu. Instead of pulling the person through the cycle both members begin walking. The person whose arm was pulled through (has a forward forearm up) is the leader. They can take the partner anywhere in the room. Initial directions to practice are:
 - i. Straight
 - ii. Cut left
 - iii. Cut right.
- b. The person follows has both hands on the other person's forearm and lightly touches. They pay attention to the direction that the leader is going as to not be fooled.
- c. Walking dalu short (3 steps)
 - i. The person leading (with the forearm up) steps
 - 1. Forward
 - 2. Forward
 - 3. Backward
 - ii. The follower steps
 - 1. Forward
 - 2. Forward
 - 3. Forward
- d. Walking dalu long (5 steps)
 - i. The person leading (with the forearm up) steps
 - 1. Forward
 - 2. Forward
 - 3. Forward
 - 4. Forward
 - 5. Backward
 - ii. The follower steps
 - 1. Forward
 - 2. Forward
 - 3. Forward
 - 4. Forward
 - 5. Forward