



Sun Do

At One with Nature and a Mountain Taoist Master

BY VIRGINIA LeROSSIGNOL

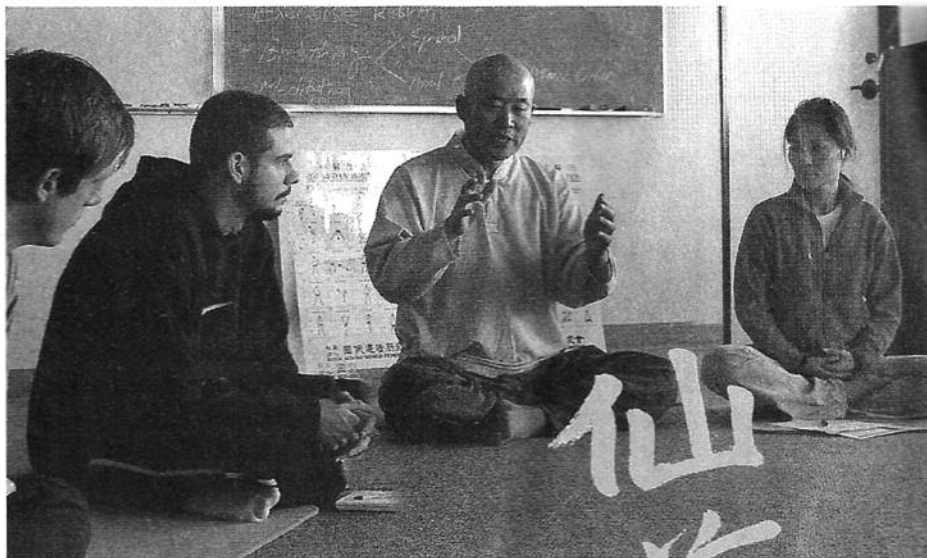
For thousands of years, mountain hermits in the East have quietly dedicated their lives to preserving the wisdom of the Mountain Way—Unification of Body, Mind and Spirit. The philosophy, principles and methodologies of what is called Mountain Taoism have been passed down from sage teacher to individual student for many generations in remote mountain ranges.

Possibly coincidental with these critical times, arcane teachings are emerging from seclusion and being offered again. Followers of Sun Do believe the teachings and practices of this tradition can help us rediscover our relationship to heaven and earth and re-orient ourselves to the principles of the Way in order to elevate humanity.

At Sun Do's core is the Enlightenment Principle of "Being One with Nature." Mountain Taoist Master Hyunmoon Kim believes that for Westerners living in a busy modern world of the 10,000 distractions, it is crucial to learn how to return to one's center to receive access to the source of energy, healing and oneness.

Ancient Roots

Sun Do has been preserved for a purported 9,000+ years, originating from indigenous teachings of the Tong Yee hill tribes, the early ancestors of the Korean people, who originally populated an area from mainland China to the Korean peninsula. In the 9th century, during



Sun Do Mountain Taoist Master Hyunmoon Kim explaining "Being One with Nature."

times of social and political strife, practitioners withdrew into the remote mountains of Korea where the art was preserved and practiced for centuries by hermits as Mountain Taoism.

Sun Do remained hidden until recently, when the sages foresaw very challenging times ahead and chose to disseminate this knowledge for all humans. In 1967, Bekyung (Secret Boundary) was sent down from the mountains to live among humanity, instructed to find and teach "those who will listen" how to awaken and live in accord with the principles of the Way and nature.

Bekyung established Sun Do training centers in Seoul, personally training 17 direct masters to pass on the tradition. One of these sanctioned teachers is Master Hyunmoon Kim, who has been pivotal to the transplantation of Sun Do in the West.

Universal Energy Flow

Sun Do training is a sophisticated body/mind/spirit method of unifying human beings

with nature and the universe. Yet it is simple and direct—all that is needed is one's body, one's breath, and the will to devote oneself to daily practice. Sun Do's method of "energy ventilation" admits the universal energy flow into our bodies. Sun Do practitioners believe that by establishing more harmony within, we can once again be in tune with universal energy.

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Establishing one's center through *tan cheon* breathing is the essence of Sun Do practice. This breathing technique begins the alchemical process of awakening the inherent original energy within. With focused breathing, a bridge is built between conscious and unconscious,

photo courtesy of Lifegate Institute

creating mental and emotional harmony. It is also believed that spiritually, full development of *tan cheon* breathing brings oneness with the universe.

Stages of Spiritual Development

Sun Do's method is non-theoretical, non-intellectual and non-verbal, bringing the student slowly and experientially to intuitive wisdom.

The yogic body postures, which progress through different levels over time, naturally open the channels and clear physical energetic blockages via Ki-regulation. "Each posture awakens the wisdom of life which is stored in different parts of the body," says Master Kim. "Sun Do practice is designed for awakening this hidden wisdom."

The first level, Jung Ki Dan Bub ("cultivating the center") teaches the practitioner to take Ki into the body, thereby cleansing the organs and systems. At this level, the student begins to build a healthy constitution, and the cells and tissues become vitalized.



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The next stage, Keon Gon Dan Bub, or "realizing heaven and earth" has progressively complex postures with a more advanced breathing method, circulation of Ki through the two basic meridians, and more vigorous cleansing activities throughout the organs and tissues. This phase is known as a settling-in to a "spiritual nest."

The third level, Won Ki Dan Bub ("Original Ki") builds the general states of mind and body to a still higher plateau. Through the discipline of 360 postures, the practitioner circulates the accumulated Ki through all of the meridians, progressing from two to 12, then 14 channels, and then to 365 points.

These first three levels are taught openly to

anyone willing to learn. Going beyond the third stage requires a serious relationship with Master Kim, a commitment to the refinement of being in both body and mind. Also necessary is the time and environment conducive to training in the higher stages of practice.

Dissemination

Master Kim travels to cities and communities in the U.S. to initiate the teachings. He has also been training senior teachers and senior instructors in the foundations of Sun Do to help establish and support local study and practice groups among like-minded individuals.

LA YOGA

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