Spiritual, Mental and Physical Training for Martial Arts and a Better Life:
(Reprinted from Nitrox Diver Magazine with permission based on excerpts from T Ki International Survival Systems text "The Fundamentals of survival").
By Tom Mount D.Sc.

Spiritual, Mental and Physical development processes enable us to become better people and enjoy life more. Each process covers a wide variety of issues and in itself could be a stand-alone article.

Most people think of martial arts as a purely physical pursuit, when in reality it is much more than that. Martial arts offer spiritual and mental growth as well. In fact true martial arts is equally devoted to spiritual, mental and physical aspects. For many of us our studies of Martial Arts is also our religion. The practice of Martial Arts has a peaceful and soothing effect on us, thus making it ideal to be at ease spiritually and mentally, opening the gate to greater understanding of these realms. Looking into oneself is a consciousness decision and takes discipline. It requires forgiveness, self-acceptance, acceptance of others, and a willingness to receive universal energy. The rewards of seeking and discovering internal balance in our spiritual, physical and mental lives are well worth the effort. This is a major step towards individual peace and personal happiness. It is the major realization of becoming a true martial artist and of bringing about healing abilities in our lives.

The rewards of seeking internal balance are bountiful; increased health, stronger immune system, enhanced self-healing abilities, greater happiness, and a more peaceful life on the physical plane we exist in. We will also become better warriors and more capable of dealing with stressful situations. Sparring is an enjoyable way to build your conditioning, develop timing and technique. It is the master chess game for martial artist.
situations, including increased survival abilities and proficient teachers and students. Our relationships will be enhanced, our attitudes will become more positive, and we can dissolve negativity from our lives. Through this growth process we gain more respect in the communities we live in. If these rewards entice you, then prepare to journey deep into yourself and discover your personal path to enlightenment.

Like all journeys or endeavors in life there, is a price that must be paid to achieve the rewards we have discussed. But, even the journey can be fulfilling and rewarding in itself.

First, let’s discuss the tools and vehicles for this internal trip and define some terms that will be used during this exploration.

Below is a partial list of tools that may be during the Spiritual portion of our journey:

**Spiritual and Mind**

*Breathing exercises*
- Diaphragm breathing
- Reverse Breathing
- Embryonic breathing

*Meditation*
- Focused mind
- Empty mind
- Visualization

**Enhanced Ki development**
- Imaging Ki
- Flowing Ki
- Focusing Ki

**Enhanced Ki (continued)**
- Healing Ki

*Use of Qi Gong*
- Directed energy

*Intuition*
- Listened to natural
- Focused healing

*Belief*

*Forgiveness*

As you can see, it is evident that our quest will demand developing the spirit to attain the rewards previously mentioned. But, it is an exciting path we’re on - with immediate rewards. Let’s begin…

**Spiritual & Mind**

The spiritual realm is the one that actually directs our life. This is the realm where we are connected with God or universal energy, and it is the one least explored by many. Others vastly misunderstand it. This discussion has no bearing on religious beliefs but rather focuses on the energy we gather and use to sustain our lives.
Let’s begin with breathing exercises. At first some may question how breathing is considered spiritual? The answer is simple: breathing does gap spiritual, mental and physical areas. It is the sum of all energy and information in the universe, and the energy that provides our life form. In this context, understand that breathing is the essence of the spirit when manifested in the physical body. It gives the body energy to survive; it empowers our mental abilities, uniting the brain with the spirit and thus creates the mind. It is interesting to note that the mind is neither the brain nor the spirit and in western culture has no specific definition. But, the mind contains the sum of all information if it is receptive. Breathing is the biofeedback path for unity of spirit, mind, and body.

*Left-Tom Mount demonstrates correct breathing*

Correct breathing is done through the diaphragm. In Daoism, philosophically, a contributor to aging is the breath (source of all energy thus life). Breath moves upwards from the diaphragm and center of our being towards the throat, resulting in less exchange of energy via the lungs, which deprives us of the energy attained with diaphragmatic breathing. In fact, correct breathing provides more oxygen to the blood and tissues. It is easy to understand that incorrect breathing speeds up the aging process and predisposes one to stress and disease. Many, in both eastern philosophy and western medicine today, acknowledge stress as a major contributor to disease.

*Stress changes our breathing or energy patterns creating a base for abnormalities in our physical and mental being that may lead to ailments, including cancer, kidney, and heart disease.*

Breathing is the source of Chi, our life energy, it is the door to a healthy immune system, and Chi is the realization of strength. A person with strong Chi, derived by proper breathing can accomplish the seemingly impossible. A person with good Chi may remain calm in the midst of chaos.

*Guidelines for correct (natural) breathing:*

Concentrate on breathing through the diagram. To do this you must relax the stomach area and chest; otherwise correct breathing cannot take place. Perform slow deep inhalations followed by slow long exhalations. Most people in western society breathe between 15 to 20 times per minute. Those who practice correct breathing average between 5 to 10 breaths a minute. The author breathes between 3 to 5 breaths a minute, varying with workload. Why is this slow breathing so beneficial? It maximizes the exchange of gases in the lungs providing more oxygen (energy) for the blood and tissues.
If we look at the lungs we discover two thirds of the blood is in the lower one third of the lungs. Therefore it becomes apparent that if a person is a chest breather which keeps the gas inhaled and exhaled in the upper two thirds of the lungs they simply will have inefficient gas (energy) exchange. If diaphragm breathing is used gas travels to all portions of the lungs and much more oxygen (energy) is allowed into the circulatory system as well as enhanced carbon dioxide removal.

Learn to maintain the same slow breathing rate even while working. This takes time and practice but is worth the effort. You will learn to pull in more air volume in a given breath under heavy workloads, rather than increase your respiratory rate. It is obvious to see the benefit of this in diving environments. Make your breathing a continuous action. Only hold your breath during specific breathing exercises or for breath hold diving.

Anytime you feel stressed, first do a complete exhalation then follow this with natural (slow, deep) breathing. If you are upset due to a threatening event, anger, fright or emotional stimuli, this will calm and allow you to deal more effectively with the situation.

Always remember, breath and the way we breathe control the direction, force and effect of the energy we are bringing in or extending outward.

On land, breathe through the nose. Avoid chest breathing. It is shallow, thus causing a higher rate. This changes the acid to base balance. The $O_2$ binding becomes too tight with RBC and the body becomes energy starved. It also restricts blood vessels causing cold feet, hands, etc., and may lead to damage of the heart and brain.

Dantien breathing incorporates both the stomach and lower back; on inhalation they expand outward and on exhalation they both will contract towards each other. This is an ideal way to loosen muscles and to relieve stress.

This exercise should be practiced regularly. This exercises all of the internal organs filling them with Ki (internal energy) and at the same time massages the organs, which leads to better health.

*Right-Grand Master Mount demonstrates Dantien breathing techniques*

Embryonic breathing is easy and gentle. It leads to a feeling of serenity. It is very slow and very relaxed, allowing us to totally release if the mind is quiet. This is an advanced stage of breathing and, like Dantien breathing, is a combination of 4 stages: inhale, the turnaround and relax, exhalation, and a slight natural pause before the next breath.

These breathing techniques should be done as effortlessly as possible; do not offer “strength” while doing this. At the same time feel the 5 qualities of the breath. It should
be slow, long, deep, smooth and even - with no one part of the breath being favored. Practice this in 10-minute sessions. Continue to practice until this becomes your normal breathing habit.

Reverse breathing is an exercise where we actually reverse the action of the diaphragm while breathing. This technique develops breathing efficiency, focusing power and/or healing energy. This is not a normal way of breathing, but as an exercise it increases Ki and works the diaphragm muscles. It is used in some martial arts applications and should be practiced for 5-10 minutes, a couple of times a week. On inhalation, the tongue raises up against the roof of the mouth. It is important to form an image of drawing energy into the lower back. On exhalation, lower the tongue and exhale from the mouth. Visualize your breath leaving from your lower abdomen. Thus, the energy enters via the lower back and exits the front of the lower stomach. This strengthens the kidneys and brings healing into the entire lower body.

Meditation is the key to unlocking the sprit and uniting it with the physical body. When meditating the mind is free; all blocks are removed and the spirt can absorb the energy of the universe. This is when the mind and brain communicate with the sprit. During meditation one becomes relaxed, may experience inner vision, intuition, perception, and even clairvoyance.

Focused mind is a meditation method where one focuses on a single item or group of single things. This can be an object, a color, light, or even a void. This develops concentration, healing techniques and psychic protection. It also develops discipline, concentration and internal power. It is ideal in focusing and achieving our goals in life.

Empty mind meditation is actually a method of not allowing distracting thoughts to interrupt us during meditation. In this form of meditation we may actually focus on an open vision or on a single purpose. This is ideal for learning to avoid having feelings, emotions or images that may distract us from our meditative objective. This carries over into the everyday as we learn to vent thoughts that may derail us from our purpose in life.
Visualization meditation is a strong meditative tool and the most commonly practiced discipline. This is exemplified by pre-sparring visualizations, survival visualizations or goal achievement. A major form of visualization meditation occurs in fighting and over-coming disease or the achievement of lifelong goals. It enhances our belief system as we see ourselves doing the things we seek, as if already accomplished.

Many people advocate and practice visualization meditations in conjunction with affirmations. This is one of the most powerful tools available to us and everyone should practice it. It is now used by most world-class athletes and is responsible for numerous sports world records. It also leads to healing both chronic and acute disease. In my own experiences I have used it to survive an airplane crash, control pain, stop bleeding from a gunshot wound, control pain and bleeding when a finger was bitten in off, to control bleeding and pain from a knife wound and overcome a prostrate problem. It is remarkable that this type of visualization is so effective in improving performance and enhancing our immune systems.

Overall meditation is the most effective tool we have to prepare us for survival and success in life. It helps us develop a stronger belief system and reap the benefits of our prayers. As is stated in most doctrines in one form or another, “what so ever you ask for, ask for believing and you will receive it.”

_Meditation allows us to see and experience what we desire, enables us to believe and pray during this time, and otherwise achieve those things we believe in._

This goes well with, “what the mind believes it can achieve.” Also avoid the “I Want,” a syndrome that has a lack of belief and little probability of achievement.

Meditation is the tuning fork that unites us with our higher spirituality and the power of the universe, our God. It allows us to meet our guardian angels and become more intimate with our spiritual direction. Meditation leads us to question and then discover our own beliefs. This deepens the belief and personalizes it, creating a greater foundation and inner growth. It may transform you into a greater spiritual leader, a more content person, a more deeply religious person, or an independent view of life and eternity. It will make you a stronger person, as you will discover your impersonal self.

Enhanced Ki development fosters our abilities to focus, become stronger and even to become a healer. But, first we need to define Ki. Ki is the use and transfer of energy from breath and universal energy gathering into a resource to be used by the individual.
For internal health the class is doing a bone marrow cleansing session

Ki enables us to accomplish the seemingly impossible and difficult. Ki is gained from drawing energy into our spirit. This allows focusing our mental being and then physical demonstration of its power. Ki is a mystical quantity that is manifested by using breath and the omni-present flow of energy of the universe. We all have the ability to use Ki but for most it takes years to develop the trust in ourselves to manifest its usage.

Once it is incorporated into ourselves, we can control our mind and physical being through the spiritual energy achieved by pulling Ki into us.

We access Ki through numerous techniques, which are linked to breathing. We can imagine it as pure energy, light or a flowing body of water. Ki can be focused into a single body part. Those who have mastered its use can distribute it throughout the body.

Martial arts practitioners demonstrate Ki through simple acts i.e. resist choking, Ki out of a body lock, control an opponent’s grip, or push through their sword or knife thrusting them backwards when they attempt to use a blade. It seems mystical, yet it is simple in manifestation. To use high levels of Ki requires practice, breathing control, belief and concentration combined with energy gathering.

Ki can also be used for health maintenance, as a healing entity and pain control mechanism. Qi Gong is a practice that emphasizes building, nourishing and directing Ki. Accomplished Qi Gong practitioners can direct Ki as a healing agent when injured and even assist the healing of others. Ki can be directed into the palms, for instance.
Below the students are doing exercise to gather white light energy and build their Chi

Energy passed from the mid-point of the hand towards another being helps to heal them. It can also be used in the same fashion to increase strength and balance. Qi Gong incorporates a combination of visualization, forms (frolics), and energy gathering exercises. It is frequently used in conjunction with or by other martial arts. Qi Gong is a part of Chinese Medicine that dates back thousands of years. Traditional Chinese Medicine uses Ki, acupressure, acupuncture, herbs and many other energy techniques to treat disease.

Intuition is a valuable asset of our minds. This is that little voice that somehow knows or sees without a conscious reason for why. Intuition is enhanced when incorporated with meditation or Qi Gong. Today there is also a growing population of Medical Intuition practitioners. These folks become so tuned into their intuition and their ability to sense the distress in others that they average on first time diagnosis, as high or higher than medical doctors do. Many also have the operability of intuitive healing which has been more effective than traditional western medicine in some cases.

While all of us are not skilled in medical intuition we can use it to avoid mishaps in life. For this reason, the author advocates pre-dive visualizations allowing the mind to sense any bad vibrations about the dive. Visualization also relaxes the body prior to a dive. It is interesting that on all of the tragic accidents I have thoroughly reviewed over the last forty years, at least one or more people have had a “bad feeling” about the situation or person(s) prior to the incident. If we train ourselves to listen to these feelings we can avoid many accidents.

Belief is the foundation for all accomplishments. Belief is developed through reinforcement combined with faith. To truly believe one must have faith, and faith is essential to becoming a believer. Our minds and our spirits can partake in miracles if we have faith, trust in our abilities and believe in them. But, for many, it takes a long process to develop and tune in to these essential parts of the human spirit and mind.

Indeed teaching martial arts has taught me this lesson. New students have the capacity to do many of the feats that experienced martial artist (real martial artist not just those who kick and punch) can do except they do not yet have the faith, trust or belief to do these skills. Even at the black belt level they are still developing these areas and many, although they exercise many examples of Ki, still doubt it.
In the below photos Grand Master Mount demonstrates the use of Ki to drive those using muscle against him with the swords backwards. In photo one and two swords are level against him with the attackers trying to push the swords into his body on photo three 3 swords and a wood sword are used against him This type of training develops strong Chi and mental focus capability.

What the mind believes it can achieve

Master Timinsky checks strength and energy flow on Morgain Harris, it is very important prior to and following training sessions to check student’s energy flow and strength and to restore any imbalances.

We must first believe, have faith in ourselves, and the power of the universe before we truly experience the internal power in our lives. Once we believe and accept these points, all else will follow in natural order.

Martial artist, need to develop their inner beliefs, trust and faith to survive the seemingly impossible or to realize their full potential.

Forgiveness is the most difficult of tools to master for advancement in life. Yet forgiveness is the true key to gaining spiritual power. Without forgiveness we tend to spiritually stagnate. It is also a prerequisite to enable one to love fully. Forgiveness is essential to develop a belief system, faith and trust. Everyone has something or someone in his or her past or present lives that must be forgiven. This act of forgiveness is essential for us to grow spiritually, mentally and
physically. This is perhaps the hardest of the tools for us to develop and utilize yet it so vital to our growth and health.

Jordan Timinsky uses Ki Survival Systems Techniques (short cutting normal Hapkido techniques) to throw his attacker Morgain Harris. This techniques uses both Chi and pressure points to be effective.

Failure to forgive leads to fear, anger, frustration, distrust, insecurity, hate and numerous other roadblocks to personal success, growth, achievements, goals, health and happiness. It can create stress and reduce health, both mentally and physically.

It is essential that we learn to forgive. Meditation is an ideal tool to assist us on this path. Without forgiveness we tend to get bogged down into a sea of negativity, confusion, anger and frustration – and that’s no way to live or practice martial arts.

Mental and Mind

The mind is the most powerful tool we can use to become mentally and spirituality in tune. When we discuss mental aspects, we include our mind as an inner link between our brain and our spiritual being.
Our brain is an amazing and narrowly understood entity. One human brain contains enough energy to fulfill the power requirements of Los Angeles County for 24 hours. The average person uses less than 5% of it. When you consider what is accomplished using only 5% -10% of our brain, it is astonishing to comprehend a fully activated brain. Special exercises can help us develop and use more of our brain.

Some of the ways we develop and use our brain include our spiritual body - the brain, mind and physical body together. We can set goals and use their power to achieve them. Goals give us mental direction, influence our strategies to attain things we desire, and reinforce our beliefs. Goals are vital to lift ourselves to any level we seek yet most people do not do it.

When setting your goals, think long term and imagine your ultimate desires. Then divide the goals into segments building towards the ultimate ones. Goals should span a lifetime - ten year, five, four, three, two, one, six months, and finally monthly (up to six months). Short-term goals are easy to achieve. As you complete them, set more demanding goals. Begin with the simple ones. You will strengthen your belief system. As they become more demanding, your belief system will flourish. Goals you once thought impossible become attainable.

Always write down your goals, map their course and visualize accomplishing them. Visualization is an important tool and works best with short-term goals. Performance improvements in sports are well documented among athletes who use visualization. It expands your horizons and personal capabilities beyond your wildest dreams. Visualization also increases ki power, which has beneficial side effects i.e. a stronger immune system, less anxiety, increased emotional balance and it enhances your life overall.

Affirmations are also helpful. An affirmation is stating a goal as if it has been accomplished. Healers and successful business people use this technique. Affirmations may be verbal, written or incorporated into mental pictures. Try using affirmations in each form. Looking in a mirror and stating positive affirmations will accelerate your goal accomplishments.

The most extreme sin is not having a goal in life. This leads to a subdued and unbalanced state. It places someone in limbo so they just drift with the tides. People without goals get lucky and have short-term wellness but typically live in turmoil. They rarely find lasting happiness or peace, and frequently wind up jealous of those who appear to have the traits and success they desire but lack the energy to achieve.

Gaining focus is a major step towards developing concentration, full potential and self-actualization. Begin to focus the mind. Sit and look at the second hand on a clock. Discard any thoughts and focus 100% on the movement of the second hand. This may seem difficult in the beginning but skill develops rapidly. With practice you can totally focus for five or more minutes. Try these exercises combined with visualization techniques. When we face threats of any kind, we must focus. In life or death situations, people who focus their minds and energy fully on...
survival can overcome what’s threatening them - regardless of what it is. Focus speeds up learning, enhances intelligence, recognizes intuition and makes better decisions. Open mindedness is another aspect of mental development that is ignored. It teaches us new concepts and knowledge, tolerance and acceptance, and honesty. This helps us actually see the symbolic self in others and us. We can share this understanding, be calm, and omit expectations or attachments that weaken our being. This allows us to give and receive feelings more fully, without selfish expectations.

*Having an open mind is an imperative step towards accepting others and true happiness.*

Maintaining an open mind throughout life is a most rewarding goal. Always study your own existence and the sources of life. Engage in research about the earth and universe that provide more internal knowledge. This brings true wisdom and better equips you to deal with life’s changes. It will even give you personal power to enact positive changes in your life.

Understanding means looking deep inside your higher self for life’s true virtue. Be analytical, yet trusting of your intuitive values and ascend into a more peaceful existence with greater confidence. Understanding enables us to respond proactively, removes doubt, builds confidence and allows us to ignore negative influences. It also leads to acceptance.

Attitude is the summation of everything above. It is the quality that shapes our lives. It makes things happen, attracts our success, and reflects our soul. Developing a good attitude brings good things to life and success in areas we value. A bad attitude will ultimately bring misfortune. Attitude is controllable and changeable through our evolution as previously discussed.

We can change and indeed should always continue growing and making consistent changes in our attitudes.

**Physical & Mental Conditioning**

As we progress into the physical dimension it is worth noting that once again we are united with the mind. The mind interacts with the physical body as much as it does with the spiritual and mental body. It gains wisdom and function from each of these areas. In fact, each of these areas function as a giant biofeedback network. You cannot ignore any one area and expect to gain in another area.

This is one of the challenges for people in healthcare. As in many disciplines, a practitioner will focus on one part and ignore the others. A truly healthy individual has to maintain balance in spiritual, mental and physical realms thus leading to
sustained health. Drugs, remedies, herbs and energy practices have limited effect if any of these realms are ignored.

**Exercise is not an option for physical health. It is mandated.**

With all the known benefits many people still jeopardize their health by avoiding exercise programs.

Even more amazing is that many people claim to be deeply interested in health and do not perform proper exercise.

*It is astonishing that a large percentage of people in healthcare choose not to include exercise in their regime.*

Many MD’s, PhD’s in health related fields Homeopaths, aging Martial Arts Masters, Coaches, etc. do not perform scheduled exercise programs, even though by education they recognize its importance.

Your body needs regular exercise to function properly. Exercise builds muscle and burns fat. Anyone on a proper routine is improving his/her lean muscle mass to fat ratio. It enhances circulation and oxygen transport ability therefore increasing the energy levels. Exercise builds collateral circulation providing better gas transport in the body. It increases our RBC/hemoglobin count, aiding in the removal of carbon dioxide. Exercise increases our VO\textsubscript{2} max, enabling us to use oxygen better. It also stimulates the production of human growth hormone (HGH), which is a foundation for keeping or building muscle mass, bone density and slowing the aging process.

It is of great concern that so many senior citizens do not have a balanced exercise program. We (the author turned 65 in March 2004) lose our ability to produce HGH and exercise stimulates its production, even in the elderly. Indeed as important as an exercise program is for young people it is even more critical as we age. Exercise relieves stress thus enhancing our immune system even beyond the obvious direct effects of exercise on our bodies and minds. We could easily devote this entire article on the benefits of exercise without even getting to the subject of how to exercise, but in this paper exercise is only a part of the whole so we will limit the discussion.

So, what kind of exercise should we do? Many debates have evolved over this issue and changes in theories. Today we have such a vast scientific understanding of the effects of the different types of exercise, that we can explain the benefits of each type.
Aerobic exercise stimulates a good cardio vascular condition so it should be a part of any routine. The types of aerobic exercise should be determined mostly by selecting ones we are willing and physically able to do. The more immediate accessible aerobic routines include jogging, running, fast walking, swimming, cycling, skating (such as rollerblading), and home exercise aerobic machines such as Stairmasters, treadmills, and video or DVD aerobic programs. All of these are good for some people just as each may be bad for other people. I enjoy jogging with one of my dogs, but jogging is not for everyone as it is hard on the knees and is classified as a high impact exercise. The same effects may be gained from numerous low impact machines or aerobic routines.

Swimming is an ideal cardiovascular program as it uses the majority of our muscles; in fact if we change strokes or styles (free style to breast stroke to butterfly to back stroke for example) we hit every muscle in the body along with a great cardio workout. For variety, to burn more calories and build leg strength, do cardio swimming with fins on. For those who have discipline, go to a gym and enroll in their aerobic program. This will provide the professional supervision for correct technique when doing the exercise combined with matching the best form of activity with a person’s needs. Whatever activity you select it should be done a minimum of 2 to 3 times weekly. It is also advisable to do cross training that is for instance swim one day then jog on another. Also, do not limit your program to aerobics only.

*Resistance training is the best exercise for burning fat and building muscle.*

Resistance training is the best for increasing bone density and avoiding osteoporosis. The most common form of resistance training is weight lifting with free weights or using resistance machines that duplicate this action. When deciding what type of resistance routine to do, identify your training goals. If you wish to simply ensure good muscle tone with some strength improvements then opt for circuit training. For the majority of people this is the best solution. It builds stronger muscles, achieves the health benefits of resistance training and can be performed at a near, if not at, an aerobic pace (taking advantage of both types of training). For those with time management problems this is a faster moving program. As a rule, it does not build the mass of a bodybuilding or sculpturing routine or the raw strength of a power lifting routine.

Mario Rios works his shoulder with the dumbbell fly. This exercise is very important for martial artist as the shoulders endure a lot of stress during training sessions.

If you desire somewhat bigger muscles or enhanced body sculpture, then a body building type of workout is beneficial. Do not be worried that you will have massive muscles if you do this routine. For most people to become massive a more intense
workout is involved and a lot more time is spent working out than the majority of people are willing to dedicate to training.

The difference in a circuit training program and a body building routine is basically that in a circuit you will go from one exercise directly to a different exercise until you have completed all of your schedule. Then, in most circuit programs you will repeat it. There is little to no rest between the exercises. Circuit training usually does not involve as heavy of weights as a body building routine, as there is little muscle recovery time between exercises. You most likely will discover on a circuit program you actually are doing the same exercises as the body builder, just laid out in a different fashion and accomplished at a faster pace. A good circuit program can actually be accomplished in as little as 30 minutes of training.

John Timinsky performs curls to maintain muscle balance in his arms

A body building routine is designed so the person will do an exercise then rest and repeat for 2 to 3 or more sets then they will move to the next exercise. The routine also is broken into muscle groups such as 2-3 chest exercises; followed by shoulder exercises, then back… until all the muscle areas have been individually worked. Typically a body building routine will allow 30 seconds to 2-3 minutes between sets, and a longer time-lapse exists between body parts. Some people actually do a body building type routine at the same pace as a circuit routine. This will not allow adequate time for muscle recovery to use heavier weights and will not build as much muscle mass. Many people on body building regimens do a “split routine,” where different muscle groups are worked on different days. A typical routine of this sort would exercise the muscles that “push” on one day (i.e. shoulders, chest and triceps) and then on another day work the muscles that “pull” (i.e. back, biceps and legs). The most serious body builders split the routines

Mario Rios uses high pull-ups to tone muscle to avoid injuries while training
even more by adding a day of legs only. Some even do a single muscle group each day. This is well beyond the interest to the majority of us.

*In the two photos below John Timinsky and his son Jordan Timinsky use knuckle pushups to condition their upper bodies. Note as a warm up John (and Tom Mount) do 100 parallel knuckle – 100 series knuckle, 100 palm forward – 100 wide palm and then 25 wrist-25 finger tip pushups-Jordan does 25 knuckle pushups*

Power lifting will most likely build the most muscle mass. It encourages the use of extremely heavy weights, but for those who desire maximum strength it is the most efficient. However, like all sports when the intensity becomes more extreme there is a paradox: we may get more benefit, but we may also sustain more injuries.

Another form of resistance training is calisthenics. This includes push-ups, pull-ups, using muscle against muscle, dips and a wide range of other exercises where we use our bodies as the resistance. There are also programs such as dynamic tension and isotronics that fit into the resistance training agenda. A good target is to exercise 60 minutes a day with 1-2 day(s) a week total recovery time. For those pressed for time, it may be easier to devote 3 days a week and do both aerobic and resistance training at the same session.

*Most people receive the most benefit by devoting 2-3 days a week to resistance training and an additional 2-3 days to aerobic training.*

Then of course we have other forms of exercise. Many of these incorporate elements of both resistance training and aerobic activity. I personally practice and teach martial arts. My first martial art was boxing as a kid, from there I evolved to Judo then Karate, then Tae Kwon Do, Hapkido, Kickboxing, Dim Mak, and Ki Survival Systems plus Qi Gong and energy healing. Overall, I have been practicing martial arts for over 50 years. In
addition to excellent physical training it also teaches us to be more spiritual and forces us to use our minds. In olden days the orient martial arts masters were both the defenders/warriors and the healers, thus many concepts in oriental medicine were developed through martial arts. Some of us have been fortunate enough to have some of that information passed on to us. Dedicated martial artists do much research and study into the links between the spirit, mind and body to make them a more balanced person. Martial arts are not only a way to workout but also a lifestyle, providing many of us with our philosophies on life and a religion.

Patti Mount enjoys cycling for aerobic activity

Yoga is yet another discipline that is of great benefit providing flexibility and strength. The reason older people tend to get more muscle, tendon and ligament injuries is due to loss of flexibility. The practice of Yoga allows one to maintain or gain more flexibility and less probability of injuries. Yoga is an activity that may be practiced solely on its own or cross-trained with other sports. Most strength athletes will find yoga exceptionally rewarding in reducing injuries and muscle pain, like Martial arts it also has a deep spiritual aspect.

As we all know there are numerous activities we can practice to provide us with aerobic and resistance training. One of the best-combined sports is gymnastics. Here one uses resistance combined with balance and stretching to aid in physical health.

All of us should have some kind of physical maintenance program. Due to our differing personalities and interests there is no one program that is best for everyone. The primary focus for someone just beginning an exercise routine is to discover something enjoyable or at least an activity that you will maintain a training schedule on. Many of you will enjoy participating in a variety of activities.

Mario, does hack squats on a Total Gym

Diet is another critical area of health maintenance. The saying “we are what we eat” is true. Our diet has a tremendous influence on our health and feeling of well-being. In today’s rushed society many sacrifice eating well with eating what is fast and convenient. This is a process that may eventually lead to various forms of disease. It is almost better to skip a rushed valueless or harmful meal than to ingest the toxins for momentary gratification of your appetite. You should take time out to enjoy food and to eat
foods, which are nutritious and nurturing for your body and soul. What is really sad is that good food can be attained as easily as fast junk foods, with a little planning. Your activity levels should influence both the types of food you eat and the quantity. Another good suggestion is avoid the standard FDA food pyramid. Instead, turn it upside down.

The food pyramid as endorsed by the FDA until this time has led to an epidemic of diabetes, heart disease and an alarming obesity rate. When you look at the recommendations of the FDA and then look at the recommendations of the Farm Bureau for fattening cattle and pigs it is easy to understand what has caused so much obesity. However, there is still hope. The food pyramid is now being revised and supposedly this year new recommendations will be made. Meanwhile, it is worth reading two textbooks to gain insight into a correct diet: *The Zone* and *Radiant Health Beyond the Zone*. These books tie food needs into cell physiology thus explaining what we need to be healthy from the cell structure upward and outward in our bodies.

Fitness is more complex. Many feel, “Oh, I workout so I’m fit.” Some of these same people eat hurried and terrible diets. While they may have great muscular tone and even a good lean muscle to fat ratio, they may not be truly fit.

*Fitness is the marriage of lifestyle, a balanced workout program and proper nutrition. Complete fitness will also include our mental and spiritual outlook.*

One who is fit for life has combined all the elements, is truly healthier and will most likely have better quality of life for as long as they exist on earth. So ask, am I truly fit? Review, and see if you do
include the whole fitness package or just one or two areas of it. Evaluate what you need to include in your lifestyle to be truly fit for life and incorporate it into your daily living.

Another very important area of mental and physical fitness is our ability to survive in everyday life and when faced with a physical, health, mental and/or spiritual threat or stressor. For purposes of this discussion we will call this “survival body and mind.”

Survival body and mind, is a method of increasing your willpower to survive physically and mentally. It forces you out of your comfort zone. This starts with setting up a survival training regime and following it. A big factor to your survivability is having the discipline to continue training on those days when you really don’t want to workout. Don’t give yourself excuses, “Oh I’m too tired. I just do not feel good today.” Or, “I’m not in the mood to workout today.” Instead, just go out and do it. This moves you beyond your comfort zone of quitting into not quitting! As simple as it sounds, this is an immense step towards physical and mental survival and toughness. The same applies to maintaining meditation practices and other areas your life. When we maintain our training program on those days when we really do not want to, most of the time you will feel much better once you have accomplished it. And, even though it is subtle you have just grown as a survivor.

Training skills to increase your survivability may be incorporated into your workout schedules. It is good to use an exercise machine that provides a measurement capability. On these systems (Stairmasters, elliptical trainers, treadmills, etc.) use the level of performance attained as a measurement. For instance, if a given

Grand Master Mount applies a strike to conception 22 on John Timinsky

Grand Master Mount demonstrates use of combined pressure point strikes to Master Timinsky
machine measures distance and time, then set two goals - one for the time duration and the other for your distance traveled. You will have to experiment with your capability and fitness level to determine your maximum performance. Set a time such as a half-hour or up to an hour. Note your short-term maximum rate of performance. Then score yourself as to how close you can match your maximum performance over the duration of the time selected. The most critical part is that you complete the time you have planned. The second most important is to be as close to maximum performance as possible. This is well beyond a daily cardiovascular workout so limit it to 1-2 days each week.

Develop your ability to maintain the same breathing rate as if at rest, instead of giving into the stimulus to breathe faster. Faster breathing will result in turbulent gas flow and chest breathing, therefore reducing efficient gas exchange. This process may eventually lead to hyperventilation and blackout. Concentrate on maintaining a normal breathing rate. Allow more volume of gas in each breath. This is where your breathing exercises come into play and why it is important to learn to breathe correctly. If you practice, you will be amazed how much your performance will increase. You will also expand your will to survive.

Another method of survival training is similar to what Special Operations Forces in the militaries of the world do. Simply push limits to a point that the body screams for relief but do not give in to the urge to quit.

Survival training teaches you not to quit, regardless of the odds

As a person becomes involved in more adventurous lifestyles this type of discipline and survival training may very
well save a life. In my own life, survival skills have saved the life of others and my own on more than one occasion.

In many accidents, quitting or fleeing is the real reason for the accident or death. Survival training will make a difference for all of us.

Many of the things we have discussed so far play a role in survival. The ability to focus, build Ki, breathe correctly, develop a belief system, have faith, and use discipline all are tied together when the Chips are down. This is not just as an application in face of physical threat it also applies to emotional, psychological and mental survival. It even applies to our business life and our personal relationships.

Reflex development is a by-product of training. Survival reflexes are honed by training and maintenance of skills. In emergencies, diving or otherwise, our reflexes will have a great effect on our reaction and the outcome. While some may have superb reflexes when checked during a physical, these are not necessarily the reflexes that provide a safe outcome to a physical, mental, spiritual or emotionally life-threatening situation.

The reflexes we want to develop are those associated with the activities we pursue in life. We need good physical reflexes, but more importantly we need to develop and reinforce intuitive, mental and skill reflexes. The old saying “use it or lose it” is very true here. This is why divers periodically practice basic skills and why martial artists cover the basics routinely - to allow them to face and overcome the seemingly impossible.

Nurture and care for your body so it can be healthy. Up to this point we have discussed exercise, diet, fitness, survival… and some may think this sounds like torture. Well in fact it is also not wise to abuse your body. Your physical body is a holy temple, thus we need to care for it accordingly.

Everything we’ve covered is needed to develop health, live longer and enjoy a better quality of life. Give yourself rest and recuperation time, so your body can replenish itself. Muscles, when worked at high intensity, need a full day to recover. This is one reason to workout different body parts or types of exercise on different
days, so the physical body can maintain itself. Go one step beyond and reward yourself with a massage, soak in a hot tub, or a steam room. Occasionally, just take a day to be lazy and allow your cells to rejuvenate.

In closing, we realize frequently discussing these subjects under the headings of mind–body and spirit is a little misleading. Hopefully we have developed an understanding that the mind as our most important element is linked to the spiritual, mental and physical being. I believe we are one with each of these and are one with the universe, as we are the energy provided by God. To be whole we must be aware and willing to develop our selves in these areas. The reward is better health, greater ability to deal with the world and increased contentment in life. Be healthy and live long...

About the author: Tom Mount D.Sc. (Martial Sciences) and a MS (Health Sciences) is a USMA Member as is his school Mount’s World of Martial Arts. He first began his Martial Arts training at age 9 as a boxer in 1948. Since that time he has attained the following ranks including co founder Ki International Survival Systems (this system is based on using Chi principles, practical techniques that work in real life situation, and Dim Mak for self defense) KISS is a USMA affiliated martial arts system 10th Dan, Kick Boxing 9th Dan, Taekwon do 8th Dan, Hapkido 7th Dan, Judo 4th Dan, Karate (1966) 2nd Dan, Qi Gong Instructor. He has studied pressure point fighting for over 20 years and is a graduate of Dim Mak training offered by Grand Master Dr Pier Tsui-Po. Tom was inducted into the USMA Hall of fame as Founder of the Year in 2003 and inducted as Grand Master of the Year in 2004.

In his other professional life Tom is the CEO of the International Association of Nitrox and Technical Divers (IANTD) with 24 international licensees offices representing 80 additional countries worldwide. He is also the author of numerous SCUBA related textbooks, and articles. Tom is listed in Who’s Who and Who’s Who in SCUBA Diving. As well he is a recipient of diving’s most prestigious award The NOGI for contributions in Sports Education and Tom has received many other awards for professional service and contributions within the dive industry.