

18 Daoist Palms

"Live 100 Years" Tonic

An Introduction to Kung Fu Herbology with a Tonic Used For Meditation, Derived from the Authentic Five Elder Kung Fu Recipe
By James Lacy

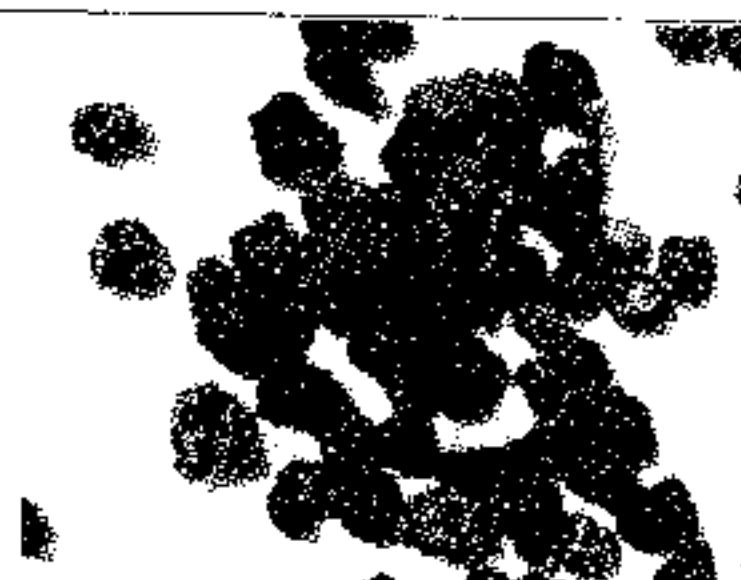
Today's kung fu practitioner is becoming increasingly exposed to traditional Chinese medicines, particularly types of kungfu liniments and tonics. Many of us can wander into a Chinatown herb store and be intrigued, yet overwhelmed by its contents. The bridge between Chinese herb names and Latin or English terms is also a problem for many Westerners. Here James Lacy helps guide us through this fascinating area with an overall guide to several herbology references, an explanation of translating terms, as well as a specific tonic recipe and instructions on how to make it. We hope this will elucidate a sometimes mysterious healing tradition and process, and inspire interested readers to pursue Chinese herbology research more actively. - Ed.

When it comes to martial arts and herbs, students learn quickly that there are often great similarities in Eastern, Western, ayurvedic and worldwide cultures of naturopathic medicine. Then again, because of the similarities, it is easy to get sidetracked when wanting to purely specialize in one's own system of healing within their individually chosen kung fu system. Do you want to study medical, philosophical, religious or pure kung fu herbology? Herbal lists share slight similarities and varieties of purpose, and distinctions can be important. Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) "over the counter" books are in abundance. So are camouflaged books using the catch phrase "Shaolin." Usually the latter are not herbal lists passed down through established historic lineages, father to son, within a historically verifiable lineage to Shil lum kung fu. When the convenient reference to kung fu is used, it is often a nebulous unknown system or individual. Now don't get me wrong, that does not mean what they share is not valid. But there is the very obvious overkill of Chinese herbal books that have no traceable kung fu roots to consider. So what is the big deal? Simply, that you and I do not have the time in a lifetime to read all these herb books. Therefore, when making the choice to study herbs in general, one must be guided to research the real thing, if indeed your focus is kung fu.

2. *huang qi*: Milk-vetch root, astragalus. Some of its actions and indications are that it tonifies the spleen and augments the chi. Sucrose is a property. Page 318.(2.8oz.)



3. *shan zhu yu*: Asiatic Cornelian cherry fruit, cornus. Stabilizes the kidneys and retains the essence. Tonifies and augments the Liver and Kidneys. Contains vitamin A. Page 375.(1.7oz.)



4. *bai zhu*: *Atractylodes* (white) rhizome. Tonifies the Spleen and augments the chi. Also contains vitamin A. Page 321(1.4oz.)



5. *fu ling*: *Sclerotium* of tuckahoe, china-root, poria, hoelen. Strengthens the Spleen and harmonizes the middle burner. Quiets the Heart and calms the spirit. Contains some protein, fats, glucose, sterols, histamines, lecithin and choline. Page 131.(1.3oz.)



6. *chen pi*: Tangerine (or mandarin) peel. White part of peel, whole peel, red part of peel, seeds and vascular bundles are all used for slightly different effects. Warm; acrid and bitter; non-toxic. Enters Lung and Stomach channels. Rectifies chi and regulates the center. Page 232.(.7oz.)



7. *shu di huang*: Chinese foxglove root cooked in wine, rehmannia (cooked). Literal English translation is "cooked earth yellow." Tonifies the blood and nourishes the yin. Nourishes the blood and tonifies the essence. Contains some mannitol, rehmannin, arginine and glucose. Page 327.(2.8oz.)



8. *fang feng*: *Ledebouriella* root, siler. Literal English translation is "guard against wind." Releases the exterior and expels wind. Contains some mannitol. Page 32.(1.6oz.)



9. *sheng di huang*: Chinese foxglove root, rehmannia (fresh). Literal English; "fresh earth yellow." Clears heat and cools the blood. Contains mannitol and rehmannin. Page 68. (2.6oz.)



10. *dang qui*: Angelica root, Chinese Angelica root. Expels wind and alleviates pain. Contains sucrose, Vitamin B-12 and carotene. Page 329.(2.3oz.)



11. *rou gui*: Inner bark of Saigon cinnamon, cinnamon bark. Warms the Kidneys and fortifies the yang. Disperses deep cold, warms the channels, unblocks the channels and vessels, and alleviates pain. Encourages the generation of chi and blood. Contains cinnamaldehyde. Page 301. (1.8oz.)

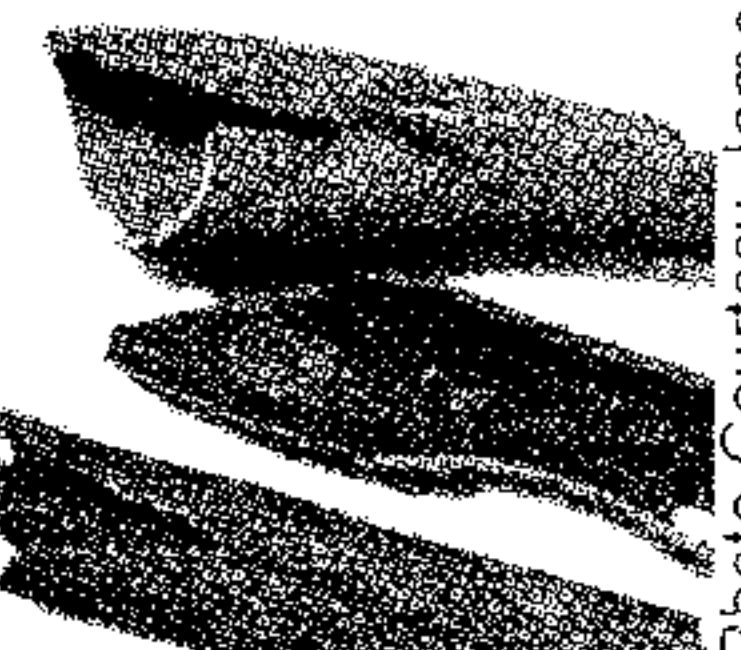
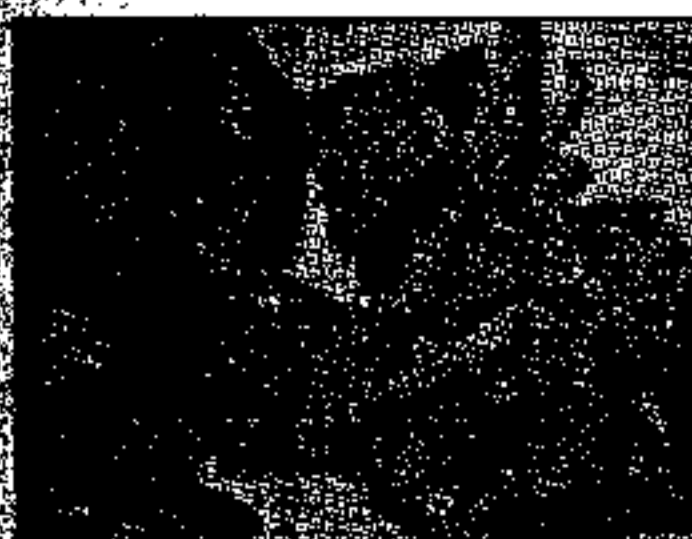
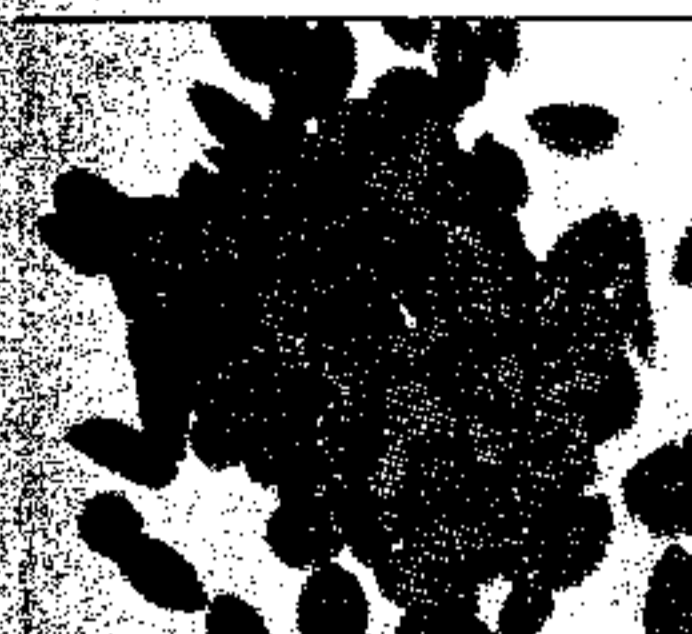


Photo Courtesy James Lacy



12. *mai men dong*: *Ophiopogon tuber*. Literal English translation is "lush winter wheat." Moistens the Lungs and stops cough. Augments the Stomach yin and generates fluids. Clears the Heart and eliminates irritability. Moistens the Intestines. Contains ophiopogonin. Page 360.(1.8oz)



13. *gou qi zi*: Chinese wolfberry fruit, matrimony vine fruit, lycium fruit. Nourishes and tonifies the Liver and Kidneys. Benefits the essence and brightens the eyes. Enriches the yin and moistens the Lungs. Contains traces of carotene, thiamine, riboflavin, vitamin C and linoleic acid. Page. 333.(1.60z)



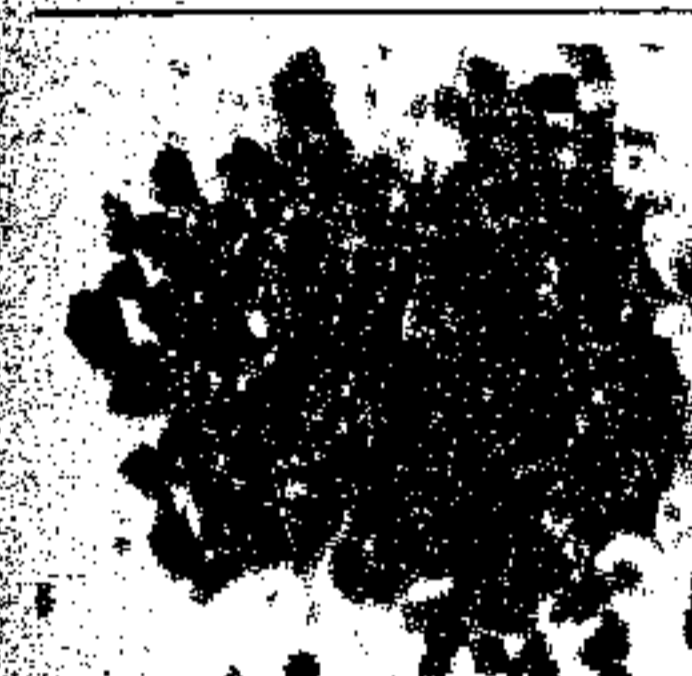
14. *wu wei zi*: Schisandra fruit. Literal English translation: "five flavored seed." Stabilizes the Kidneys and retains the essence. Tonifies and augments the Liver and Kidneys. Contains saponins, tannin and vitamin A. Page 376.(1.0oz.)



15. *nu zhen zi*: Chinese lovage root, ligusticum root, kao-pen. Expels wind and alleviates pain. Contains angelical. Page 266(1.4oz.)



16. *qiang huo*: *Notopterygium root*, *chiang-huo*. Releases the exterior and disperses cold. Unblocks painful obstruction and alleviates pain. Contains angelical. Page 33. (1.2 oz.)



17. *e jiao*: Turtle glue (collagen), ass-hide glue, donkey-hide gelatin, gelatin. Tonifies the blood. Nourishes the blood and stops bleeding. Nourishes and moistens the yin. Contains amino acids including lysine, arginine, histadine, glycine and cystine. Page 332. (1.0 oz.)



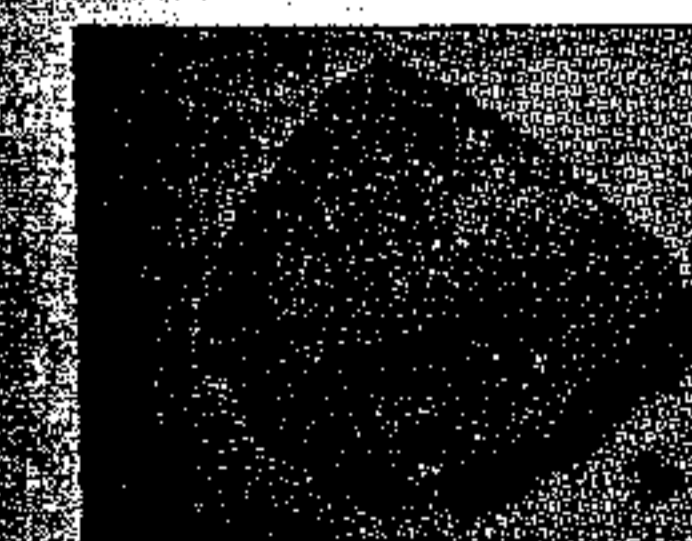
18. *fu ling*: Poria Spirit. Notice that this is similar to #5, however, my herbalist distinguishes this as Poria "Spirit." This is the uniqueness of being able to show you an actual digital image of this ingredient as packaged separately by my herbalist. Check out the photo difference in #5 and #18 and ask your personal herbalist as well. Page 131. (2.6 oz.)



19. *dang shen*: *Codonopsis root*. Literal English translation is "group root." Tonifies the middle burner and augments the chi. Tonifies the Lungs. Strengthens the chi and nourishes fluids. Contains portions of saponins, alkaloids, sucrose, glucose and inulin. Page 317. (1.8 oz.)



20. *da zao*: Chinese date, jujube. Literal English translation "big date." Tonifies the Spleen and augments the chi. Nourishes the blood and calms the spirit. Moderates and harmonizes the harsh properties of other herbs. Contains vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, phosphorous and iron. Page 332. (1.2 oz.)



21. Yellow Lump (Rock Sugar) . For taste. (3.0oz.)

Herbal History - A Brief Guide

Nowadays, individuals with varied Western and Eastern traditional healing backgrounds are busy patenting their own methods. Names like Kloss, Christopher, Sheldon, Jensen and others are considered basic reading to understand our own American naturalpathic movement. During the 20's in America,

we had genius herbalists like the late Otto Masseurt. Otto's book listed hundreds of formulas using Western herbs, flowers, stems, leaves and roots. The formulas covered common and not so common ailments from A to Z.

The most successful and well known of the above names that has survived as the icon of natural remedies is arguably the late Jethro Kloss. Almost any natural food bookstore section will have his book. It is considered a type of bible for understanding the basics of a clean natural life. It was this book that gave me my first liniment formula about 25 years ago. I still have that formula memorized, which called for one ounce each of myrrh and golden seal, with a half ounce of red cayenne pepper. The powdered ingredients were let to set covered in a container filled with a pint of rubbing alcohol for one week. We "purists" have evolved to now want more natural fermentation mediums.

Kung Fu Tonics - History and Secrecy

In kung fu, a tonic such as "Live 100 Years" with a lineage of centuries, passed down within an elite five elder system, holds more potential interest than a glass of fine liquor, wine or beer to many kung fu enthusiasts. In kung fu, one eats and drinks for health. Western science has verified the benefits of wine in moderation. Less healthful benefits have been attributed to hard liquor. For this reason alone, though it takes longer to age, many prefer to use high quality natural Chinese wine for making a tonic. I just recently received a bottle 14 years old from my herbalist as a gift. It made an excellent textured chi conditioning liniment. In the past I have had students try white lighting, pure USP alcohol, rum, gin, vodka and rubbing alcohol, depending on whether a formula was external or internal. I had a student make coconut wine. Certain formulas can be set in cold pressed all natural oils. Precooking certain formulas in a pressure cooker, grinding methods for capsuling, and methods of preparing concentrations, tinctures, infusions and tonics are numerous. How unique to make an herbal elixir with real Chinese kung fu ambiance! Remember, when it comes to learning Chinese kung fu formulas, there was always secrecy involved. Many of the ancient formula ingredients were and still are black market products. It is still a secretive subject for several reasons. It often took decades to "inherit" even a singular herbal list. To have it in the actual passed down heirloom Master's writing was even rarer. Grandmasters knew that "real" internal kung fu meant having knowledge of meditation and herbs. One without the other was not authentic internal kung fu. Because the "old" kung fu herbal lists often have ingredients no longer importable, endangered or otherwise proven dangerous or illegal, it often is an underground black market means to an end for many eccentrics that "must" have the original formula filled at almost any price, moral or not. Some of this is superstitious ignorance and an unwillingness to even consider alternative ingredients that have in many cases been proven superior.

Cooperation

For reasons such as this these ancient kung fu herbal lists are often studied for historical purposes and no medical values are claimed. Nevertheless, we reserve the right to investigate these lists under the scrutiny of modern science, as well as through the

perspective of traditional Chinese medicine. Cooperation between these two groups (Western and holistic medicine) will provide healthy, legal alternatives to ingredients that by necessity "in modern scientific light" need to be substituted in many cases. Remember, the beauty of folk medicine is that it is cheap and usually comes word of mouth from within families. It takes sometimes seven years research and a half million dollars to bring a synthetic patented version of a product merely derived from a natural ingredient to market. For a growing population that still has such disparity of rich and poor, it is imperative that all countries discover their indigenous healing ingredients, revive their native herbal cultures and cooperate by sharing. Western medicine allows us to look at each ingredient's separate compounds under a microscope. For instance, with the "Live 100 Years" formula that I am about to share, I will discuss some of the more common ingredients within each ingredient, such as vitamins, minerals, trace minerals and elements, amino acids or hormones that are easily recognizable.

"Live 100 Years" Tonic Formula - Latin

Here is a copy of the original formula for "Live 100 Years" tonic, which I use to drink before meditation. The first list of names I will share contains my personal herbalist's exact Latin breakdown for each ingredient. I will not alter his spellings for authenticity.

"Live 100 Years Tonic"

2. Astragali Radix (with honey)
3. Corni Fructus
4. Atractylodes Rhizoma
5. Poria
6. Citri Leiocarpdae Exocarpium
7. Rehmanniae Radix (cooked)
8. Ledebouriellae Radix
9. Rehmanniae Radix (raw)
10. Angelicae Radix
11. Cinamoni Cortex
12. Ophiopogonis Tuber
13. Lycii Fructus
14. Schizandrae Fructus
15. Cnidii Rhizoma (Ligustici Rhizoma)
16. Notopterygii Rhizoma
17. Turtle Glue (collagen)

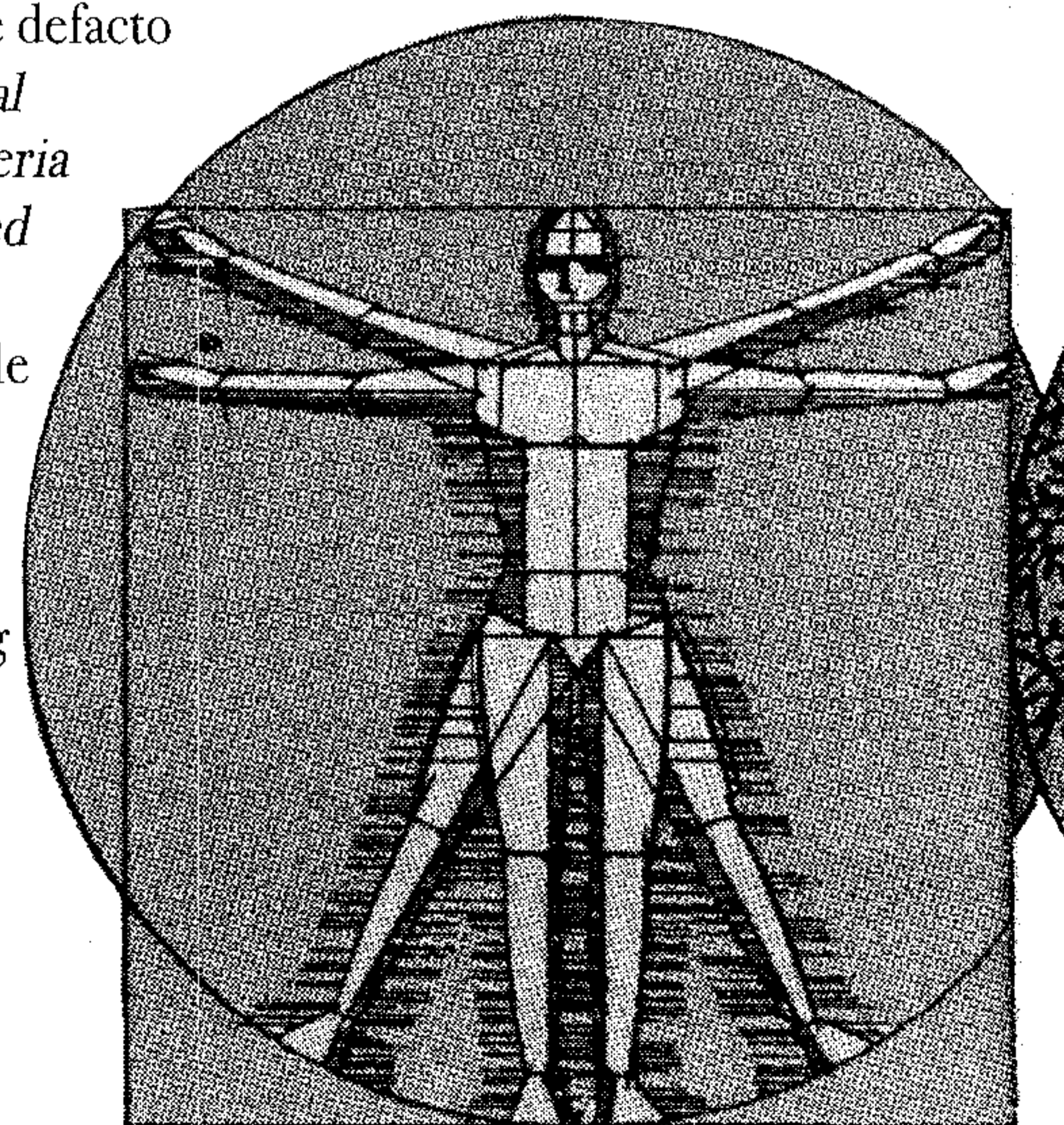
18. Poria Spirit
19. Codonopsis Pilosulae Radix
20. Red Dates
21. Yellow Lump (rock sugar).

Although one could literally write a whole book on one ingredient let alone twenty, nevertheless, it is very rare for an herbalist to even be able to read these often very old martial lineage formulas. I pay the herbalist extra to number the formula, and give me a Latin name to go by and individually bag up that ingredient separately. A number written on each bagged sample correlates with the number the herbalist wrote onto the original formula.

"Live 100 Years" Tonic Formula - Chinese/Common Terms

Now I will give you the breakdown with the Chinese terms. I will re-list the ingredients by number. Notice I start you off with the Mandarin name, followed by the English name and a small sample of one or more of its recognizable properties. This time I will share what I was able to come up with doing further research from what my herbalist gave me, along with input from students in different parts of the country consulting their herbal sources. By sharing our humble attempt at playing herbalist, perhaps readers with specialties in this area will shed even greater insights of their own. I only can claim that the formula is five elder lineage and I have and still do use it myself. On these next breakdowns, I will give you the digital weight of each individually zip locked bag sample. I included the weight of the bag (less than a gram.) You will also be given a page number to easily cross reference and go into much more depth regarding each ingredient in the Bensky book discussed below.

If you have the defacto *Chinese Herbal Medicine Materia Medica Revised Edition* by Bensky Gamble from Eastland Press, notice I have included corresponding page numbers for each



ingredient for you to easily cross-reference in more depth for yourself. My herbalist has 5000 ingredients. Bensky's book only covers about 500 of the more common. Most Chinese Herbal licensing courses do not require knowledge of much more than 500, if indeed that many. Needless to say it is a large field with many ingredients still waiting for science to identify and break-down.

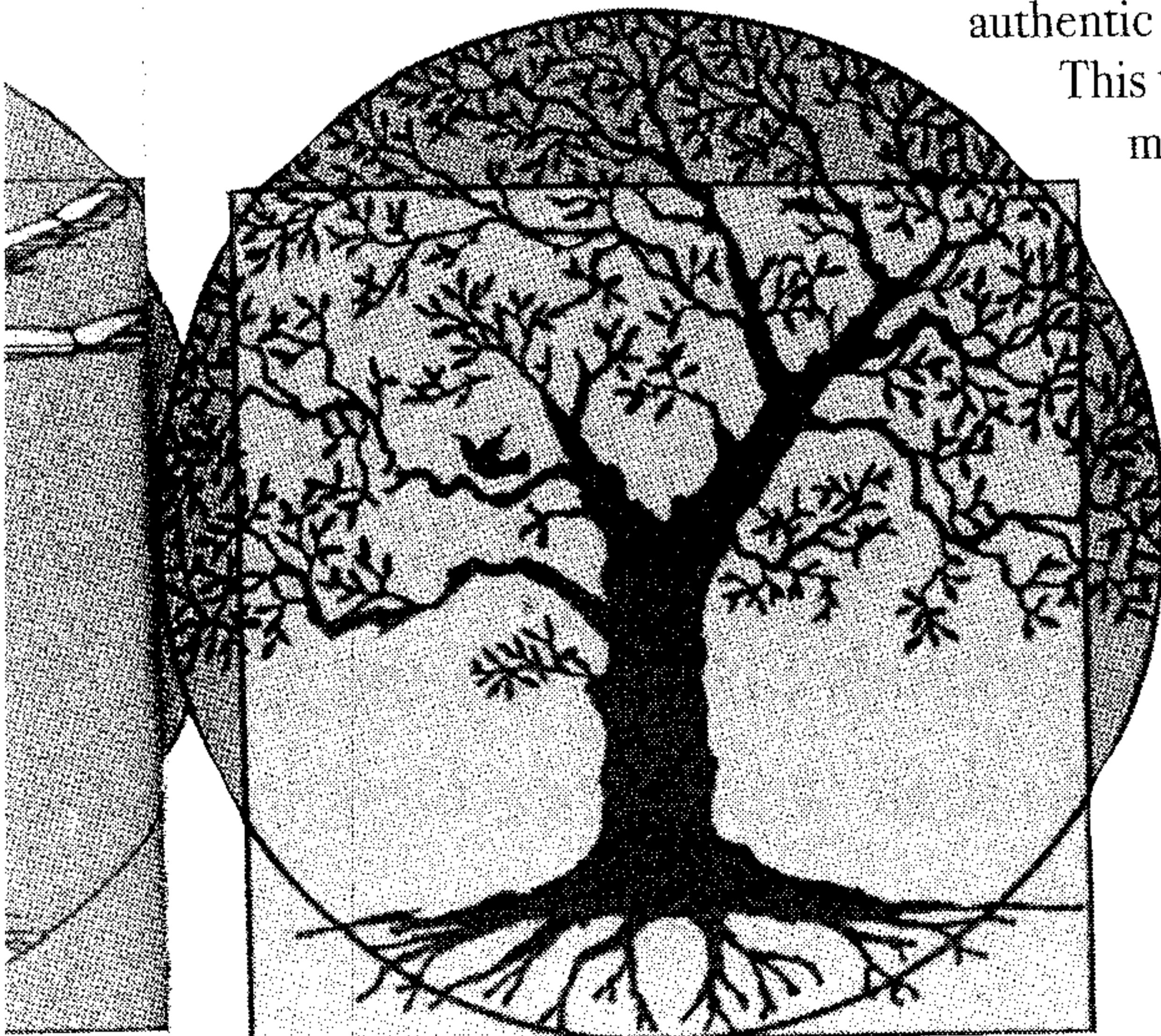
Preparing the Live 100 Years Tonic

There are various ways to prepare this formula. I will share one of my favorites. Put a package of all the ingredients in a one-gallon high quality Sun tea container with a wide mouth lid. I pay about \$10 for a package. The ingredients are covered with Chinese wine, sake, gin, rum or my favorite vodka. I use a 1.75 liter of vodka (about \$10) to cover the ingredients in the gallon container. I label the container and place it in a dark space to age (closet, pantry or cabinet.) After about two weeks, I add more vodka if needed to keep the ingredients covered. The bulk herbs will tend to absorb or soak up some of the vodka, thus the need to compensate a tad more if need be to keep covered. After six weeks the tonic is ready to use, albeit the longer it sets, like fine wine, the better! This is not your French or Italian sweet after dinner liqueur. It packs a unique "punch" with a strong herbal taste that I have come to enjoy in no more than a small one ounce shot dose.

Using the Tonic

I use a small shot glass full every other full moon or so as an enhancement before going into meditation. Obviously this is explained for those over 21 or legal drinking age in their area. With a little creativity and help from a licensed Chinese herbalist, you may make this formula into capsules of finely ground powder, or for those too young or anti-alcohol, a water based product should be looked into. Dosage, contraindications, side effects, toxicity levels and preparations should be obtained from a licensed Chinese herbalist and your Western doctor. Other medications could interfere, or it may not suit you if pregnant, very old or if you are allergic to any of the ingredients. With all the disclaimers out of the way, let me remind you how much fun it can be to study herbology objectively. It has always had a place in authentic internal martial arts.

This tonic was used before meditation, and therefore it can most definitely be considered a mandatory subject of learning to discover the inner secrets of authentic



five elder kung fu.

Principles of Chinese Herbs

Lastly, more and more schools are teaching one or two herb formulas, mostly liniment types. A thorough curriculum would include learning the nine classical sequential Chinese brush strokes and learning to write the formula in Chinese characters. A student should spend some time studying the principles or metaphysics behind Chinese herbs. What you learn will blend well with acupuncture, acupressure, dim mak, antidote healing, bio-electricity enhancement, bruise, sprain, strain healing, bone setting, moxibustion, cupping and food for health preparation. In closing, could you imagine liquor stores of the future offering over the counter kung fu legendary tonics? Oh, the tonics already exist you say! True, but how many have a 380-year father-to-son history within an elite five elder lineage? In any case, good to the last drop. Enjoy! ☯

James Lacy is a freelance writer based in Jacumba, California.

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