

## Hands-on Brain: Rewiring the Brain Connections with the Laying--on Hands on the Head

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(155pp)

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*The New Age theories in Hands-on Brain include useful exercises for cleansing the mind and spirit.*

Rene Qian's New Age text *Hands-on Brain* explores how the brain's electrical fields impact people's physical and mental health; it draws on this information to supply an exercise guide for adjusting and molding such fields for increased well-being, via exercises in which one's hands are positioned on different areas of one's head.

With a heavy emphasis on the mind-body connection, the book runs through concepts behind chi, radiance grids, and vital energy using a straightforward, if sometimes vague, precept: everything is possible. Stressing concepts familiar within Eastern medicine and spiritualism, the book delves into topics such as the manifestation and non-manifestation of energy, suggesting a connection with electromagnetic currents that can be used to unlock the brain's hidden talents. Its work includes a primer on the different areas and functions of the brain, suggesting ways in which its exercises might stimulate energy in specific areas of the mind.

While the book's explanations of the brain are thorough, and are supported by an extensive glossary of terms, it is less than successful at drawing a convincing connection between these explanations and its more esoteric claims about the universal energy that surrounds and nourishes people. Without reasonable proof or much scientific rigor to fall back on, many of its theories are bogged down by high-sounding concepts that don't quite pull together, especially when the text waxes fanciful about the "blue energy" that it claims a person might see as a result of its exercises. Whether these musings are questionable or credible may depend on the audience's patience for concepts such as auric fields and chakra energy.

The book's rhetoric is rough around the edges at times. At one point, it digresses from its topic to cover the adjustments that people have had to make in their lives due to COVID-19, linking these with a general philosophy about changing paradigms and routines to shape one's character, destiny, and body, but the actual links between these concepts aren't clear. But, though the book is less than effective at laying a solid foundation for its ideas, its exercises nevertheless prove valuable. Whether they are capable of rewiring the neural pathways of the brain as is claimed remains an open question, but their directions are well described and illustrated. They fall back on tried-and-true methods, including deep breathing and meditative thoughts. Most effective is the concluding chapter, which walks through meditation techniques and methods, providing plenty of guidance for achieving calm. Still, these exercises account for only a small portion of the book.

The somewhat muddled theories in *Hands-on Brain* will engender either approval or suspicion, depending on one's views; they include exercises for cleansing the mind and spirit.

HO LIN (January 21, 2021)

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