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Health & Fitness

Sunset Tai Chi: Simplified Tai Chi for Relaxation and Longevity
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Sunset Tai Chi is a worthy follow-up to Rones and Silver's *Sunrise Tai Chi: Simplified Tai Chi for Health and Longevity*, a Living Now Book Award Winner. While internal ("soft") styles like tai chi, taijiquan, and qigong have been popular around the world for years, in part because they can be practiced at any age, there is a growing body of peer-reviewed, scientific evidence that confirms the importance of mind-body approaches such as the one described in this tome for health maintenance, disease management, and longevity. That is exciting news for folks who are already interested in martial arts, but also powerful motivation for those who have been thinking about it but not yet begun their journey. Whether you are a rank beginner or already a practitioner, there is more than enough information in this book to get you started and/or teach you something new.

The workout described combines mental and physical techniques from yoga, qigong, and tai chi into a comprehensive program which helps practitioners relax, regain their composure, and recuperate from the stresses they have experienced throughout the day. It is synergistic and compatible with most other forms of martial arts, mediation, and stress reduction. Better still, it can be performed sitting or standing, so one does not need to be in great physical shape in order to get started. Content includes an introduction to tai chi and stress reduction, understanding human energy, breathing, cool down exercises, meditation, circulation, balancing exercises, tai chi movements and stances, and moving drills, all leading up to the sunset tai chi form itself.

Publisher YMAA's motto is "YMAA means in depth." This book certainly proves that point. It is over an inch thick and absolutely cram-packed with information, everything from esoteric theory to step-by-step exercises and visualization drills, all augmented with hundreds of illustrations and photos that assure clarity. Although hands-on instruction is always advisable, the book is so detailed that readers can benefit from it alone. While the writing style is a bit academic (a nice way of saying "dry bordering on tedious"), the materials are well worth

wading through. One simply cannot read from cover to cover without markedly increasing their knowledge of the subject. And, there's an excellent index for times when you want to refer back to something later on.

The authors truly know their stuff. Ramel Rones is a senior disciple of renowned teacher and Kung Fu Hall of Fame member Dr. Yang Jwing-Ming. He teaches qigong at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and is a consultant of mind-body therapies at Harvard and Tufts medical schools and at Children's Hospital in Boston, proof that his ideas actually work. A gold medalist in both internal and external martial arts, including a Grand National Championship in Shanghai and three gold medals in the International North American Chinese Martial Arts Competition, he currently spends his time doing research, studying the effects of tai chi on treating rheumatoid arthritis, fibromyalgia, prostate cancer, and cystic fibrosis. Co-author David Silver began practicing martial arts at age eleven. He has studied goju ryu, taijiquan, qigong, and yoga. He currently works as a writer, producer, and director of instructional martial arts and health books and DVDs.

Lawrence Kane