

Tai Chi Chin Na: The Seizing Art of Tai Chi Chin Chuan

Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming

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Tai chi students at all levels will enjoy this book from an acknowledged expert.

In this revised edition of *Tai Chi Chin Na: The Seizing Art of Tai Chi Chuan*, Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming discusses the martial arts origin of tai chi. His informative explanation and instruction of the fighting application known as *chin na* reveals its serious intent.

Tai chi began centuries ago for use in deadly combat, a purpose that has been overlooked in recent years due to the growing practice of the tai chi form to promote health. Yang introduces the martial application known as *chin na*, meaning to seize and control, to present-day students of the art. The narrative includes interesting detail about tai chi history and its general concepts; the parallel relationship of *chin na* techniques to the thirty-seven postures of Yang-style tai chi chuan; and *chin na* applications as they relate to pushing hands, a two-person tai chi exercise. Instructions for executing postures and corresponding applications include photographs of two people demonstrating techniques, with directional arrows that indicate body movements.

Yang's deep knowledge of tai chi and this advanced martial application comes through clearly in his thoughtful writing style. Following explanation of each tai chi technique, he theorizes about how it applies to *chin na* as a combat tactic. For example, he explains why the subtle spiral motions integral to the tai chi form adapt similarly in *chin na*: "When you use circular motions, you are able to set up a *qin na* [*chin na*] lock before your opponent feels it. A good *qin na* technique is soft, smooth, and round."

A list of books and videos by Yang appears at the book's end, and are referenced when related to topics discussed in the text. The concluding chapter sincerely urges readers who have achieved expertise in the tai chi form and its related applications to share their knowledge and enthusiasm through seminars, class instruction, and writing. "Only then can this art remain alive and develop continuously," writes the acknowledged tai chi expert.

Tai Chi Chin Na: The Seizing Art of Tai Chi Chuan represents a valuable contribution to the ongoing development of tai chi as both a health-giving exercise and a martial art. The table of contents lists by subheadings the topics covered within each chapter, a structure that allows readers to select information according to interest and ability.

The precisely written text covers advanced tai chi concepts that both inspire and instruct. Words for tai chi postures, techniques, and applications appear in English, followed by transliterations into Chinese pinyin and characters. Footnote references are given at the end of each chapter in either English or Chinese.

Tai chi students at all levels will enjoy this book, which also serves as a reliable reference for those interested in learning about a martial application.

MARGARET CULLISON (February 19, 2015)

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