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The Healing Power of Mudras: The Yoga of the Hands

Rajendar Menen
Singing Dragon (August 2010)
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The many health benefits of yoga are now generally known, but many people find yoga too challenging. They might be interested instead in exploring mudras, which promise, according to Rajendar Menen, their own quite astonishing results. Readers interested in Eastern philosophy and thought and devotees of yoga and alternative healing will also find much to interest them in *The Healing Power of Mudras*; this slim volume offers a multi-faceted exploration of the mudra, its execution, and its purpose.

Mudras, or positions of the hands and fingers, are not only part of yoga, but also of dance, tantra, art, and even martial arts. Their significance throughout history is visible in various depictions of the Buddha, other deities, and bodhisattvas, whose hands are portrayed in numerous positions to relay the traits each deity embodies. A fascinating if brief section discusses some of these religious figures and their roles, describing their yogic postures and mudras.

Menen's writing is clear and easily understandable; however, some sections would benefit from more details, which would be valuable to those with little knowledge of mudras and related subject matter. While the author recommends additional texts, it can be inconvenient for readers to be sent farther afield for additional study.

Organization seems a bit less than optimum, too, with the first part of the book launching into verbal-only descriptions of mudras and yogic positions that can be challenging to the average reader, particularly since the 53 drawings that depict the various mudras don't occur till later in the book. More illustrations would have been welcome to accompany the descriptions of deities, postures, and even dance, which can be a bit hard to follow without visual assistance.

The verbal descriptions accompanied by line drawings of the various mudras, though, provide the reader with the means to try these exercises and sample their benefits. Menen's knowledge seems far broader than this small book might indicate, as he refers to the incorporation of Reiki into mudra practice, and the accompaniment of music and color as healing augmentations. Such tantalizing glimpses into the way alternative healing methods dovetail is a sure attraction for students and practitioners in search of deeper wisdom.

The deceptive ease of mudras may entice readers into further research into the study of yoga and other alternatives, leading to better health and mental and physical well-being. This book is an excellent, affordable guide to a little-known practice that can have benefits far beyond its modest appearance.
MARLENE Y. SATTER (November 9, 2010)

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