

Weightlessness: Integrated Exercise: Yoga, Pilates, and Chi Kung

Ray Rizzo

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Ray Rizzo, an eminently qualified and longtime practitioner of martial arts, Pilates, yoga, and bodywork, wrote *Weightlessness* to share his transcendent fusion of these modalities. In a publishing genre overflowing with good books written by great teachers, Rizzo's addition is a superlative gift to practitioners of all ages and fitness levels.

Weightlessness is beautifully packaged. The cover is professionally designed, with sacred geometry graphics and two photographs of the author. In fact, there are dozens of photos of Rizzo demonstrating various practices throughout the book; his Adonis-like presence alone may make *Weightlessness* a page-turner for some readers.

Weightlessness is divided into four sections and twelve chapters, each offering a set of practices that could stand alone or be integrated to produce a multitude of transformative routines.

In chapter one, Rizzo writes about how to achieve the "weightless zone," a place where one feels an almost divine synthesis of body, mind, and soul. Learning to breathe properly is paramount to reaching this zone, and Rizzo shows how it's done in chapter two. Chapter three provides a series of simple, yet profound warm-up exercises.

In chapters four, five, and six, Rizzo demonstrates three routines borrowed from chi kung and yoga. As with all of his routines, the material is clearly explained, modifications are provided, suggestions for deepening the practice are shared, and photos of Rizzo modeling perfect form accompany each move or position.

For those seeking guidance with health challenges, chapter seven delves into using fasting, cleanses, meditation, and yoga postures for healing. Chapter eight focuses on nutrition and includes several excellent lists outlining how and what to eat for optimal health. Rizzo includes organic fruit pie, wine, dark chocolate, and espresso on his list of acceptable foods, which nicely tempers his tendency toward Calvinistic purity.

In chapter nine, the author models and provides commentary for seventeen yoga postures that could easily serve as a complete yoga practice. The same could be said for chapter ten, in which Rizzo shares the fundamentals of Pilates, and chapter eleven, wherein he shows what seems to be a perfect synthesis of all the branches of the martial arts. The final chapter focuses on self-observation.

Weightlessness will be a standout on the fitness, yoga, Pilates, and martial arts shelves. The only caveat is that it does have a profound spiritual dimension that might intimidate or confuse those with little understanding of shamanism or yoga philosophy.

PATTY SUTHERLAND (September 21, 2012)

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