



FOREWORD

I was first contacted by Dr Kevin Chen several years ago regarding his proposal to create a new book on the important topic of Qigong. Jessica Kingsley Publishers in the UK had the foresight to bring out this new book in their Singing Dragon imprint. This development continues a recent pattern I have noted where the United Kingdom appears to be taking the lead over US publishers in bringing forth important new works in the English language that will help usher in the new era of medicine in the twenty-first century.

This book also represents a continuation of the tradition of restoring important knowledge about ancient healing systems that has growing relevance to our current healthcare crisis and should help with its ultimate resolution. Unfortunately, current political debates in the US about healthcare “reform” amount only to “rearranging the deck chairs on the SS Titanic” of a mammoth, unsustainable healthcare system we have inherited with all its shortcomings from the late twentieth century, while continuing to largely ignore effective, cost effective and sustainable health modalities from our ancient cultural patrimony.

True healthcare reform will result from radically altering the kind of healing modalities that are available to the public – not just changing who pays for healthcare that is largely not worth being paid for by anyone. It is widely acknowledged that one-third of modern Western biomedicine is ineffective or even counterproductive. Students, practitioners, and clients of what is labeled “Complementary/Alternative Medicine” (or CAM, a category which contains Chinese Medicine, including Qigong) probably recognize that it is closer to two-thirds of modern biomedicine that is inappropriate or wasteful. Scholars of CAM may also recognize that most of the scientifically proven and widely available CAM modalities are in fact classified as ethnomedicine. Treatments of CAM topics like Qigong, such as this book, which recognize and respect the cultural and social roots of these healing traditions, are particularly valuable in laying the foundation for a meaningful and sustainable worldwide system of healthcare in the twenty-first century.

Qigong also recognizes the role of Qi or “vital energy” in health and healing, a key feature of human physiology and biology that is not fully recognized or utilized in Western biomedicine. Notwithstanding Western medical technology, Qi represents a powerful force of Nature which may be cultivated for healing purposes. The ancient wisdom regarding Qi cultivation is captured in this book and made available to current students, practitioners and consumers of “alternative medicine.”

This unique text is a remarkable achievement representing a masterful collaborative effort among 19 members of the Chinese editorial board, 10 Chinese translators, 4 English translators and 6 consulting editors.

This book provides thorough coverage of the topic, presenting the philosophical and theoretical basis, scientific research, methods, and clinical applications, as well as excerpts from the classic texts of Chinese medicine. It provides important insights to the nature and character of “Qi” itself which eludes many CAM texts. Influences on Qigong from Daoism, Confucianism and Buddhism are thoughtfully presented.

From a practical standpoint, periodic questions for review reinforce the educational value of the book. A useful Glossary and a Chronology of Dynasties in the History of China are provided at the end of the book, to which can be added the appearance of key developments in Chinese medicine and Qigong, as well as Chinese classic medical texts.

Marc S. Micozzi, M.D., Ph.D
Adjunct Professor, Complementary/Alternative Medicine Masters Program
Department of Physiology and Biophysics
Georgetown University School of Medicine
Washington, DC