

# Book Reviews

## The Harvard Medical School Guide to Tai Chi

By Peter M Wayne with Mark L Fuerst

Shambhala Publications, 2013

ISBN 9781590309421

Over the past decade, there has been an increasing number of reports on the effectiveness of Tai Chi for a growing list of medical conditions. *The Harvard Medical School Guide to Tai Chi* by Dr Peter Wayne, an Assistant Professor at Harvard Medical School, comes at an opportune time to review current research in this area. Dr Wayne, an avid exponent, teacher and researcher of Tai Chi, has put together an innovative and succinctly written text integrating research and a practical approach to learning Tai Chi. Dr Wayne states 'The science of Tai Chi is just now catching up with and substantiating what Tai Chi practitioners have known for centuries – Tai Chi often leads to more vigour and energy, greater flexibility, balance and mobility, and an improved sense of wellbeing'.

The 336-page text is divided into three parts. Part One details the history of Tai Chi and what Dr Wayne describes as its eight active elements. These include awareness, intention, structural integration, active relaxation,

strengthening and flexibility, natural breathing, social support and embodied spirituality. The author details how each element is developed in practice and how the eight elements evolved during the design of a clinical trial protocol for Tai Chi. Part One finishes with a 12-week simplified program in which each of the elements is integrated into a practice regime. This chapter has step-by-step details and black and white photographs showing the sequences and details for each movement.

Part Two looks at the scientific evidence for the effect of Tai Chi on a range of medical conditions, including chapters on balance and bones, pain, cardiovascular and respiratory conditions, as well as cognitive and psychological states. Wayne reviews each area, stating the benefits and directing the reader to relevant published studies. Scattered throughout these chapters are quotes and comments from Tai Chi practitioners who have benefited, in a medical sense, from their practice. Dr Wayne often provides his personal

experiences in text boxes that give a very personal perspective on a particular aspect of each chapter.

Part Three surveys the issues of integrating Tai Chi into everyday life. Included chapters look at training with a partner, enhancing creativity, cross training, on-the-job practices and the lifelong study of Tai Chi. Practical tips and strategies are given to stimulate a deeper understanding and enhance ongoing Tai Chi practice.

This text includes copious notes referencing supporting research and clinical studies. Interspersed with stories, quotes and practical tips, it is extremely easy to read, even for those with little experience of Tai Chi. I highly recommend this text for anyone looking for a condensed scientific understanding of the practice of Tai Chi, or for practitioners of other disciplines wishing to advise patients on the benefits of Tai Chi as a primary or adjunctive treatment.

*Reviewed by Chris Zaslawski*

## Essentials of Law, Ethics and Professional Issues for CAM

By Julie Zetler and Rodney Bonello

Elsevier, 2012

ISBN 9780729539708

This is a relatively new book in the field of law and professional issues for complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) in Australia. The key difference to other texts on the subject is the range of contributing authors from the various CAM professions. Indeed, two of the contributors (Zhen Zheng and Sarah George) are members of the Australian Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine Association Ltd (AACMA).

The 15 chapters (271 pages including index) fall into two main parts: the first focusing on 'the foundation principles in law, business and ethics', with the second focusing on 'the major individual CAM therapies and approaches issuing from those unique perspectives'.

Chapters 1–3 (Julie Zetler) provide an overview of the Australian legal framework, the legal issues facing CAM and litigation and dispute resolution. These chapters offer a plain-English summary in 'bite-sized' portions, with

lots of useful information for students and practitioners alike.

Chapters 4–8 focus on professional issues: business issues for CAM therapists (Margot Jensen), ethical challenges in the 21st century (Rodney Bonello and Julie Zetler), professional responsibilities (Rodney Bonello), research (Spero Tsindos) and communications (Jonathan Wardle). These chapters provide a good overview of the issues and principles for each modality covered and include clear headings, sub-headings and highlights of the key points, making for easy navigation through the chapters.

Chapters 9–15 provide a snapshot of the major professional areas in CAM, written by experts within those fields. One chapter is allocated to traditional Chinese medicine and acupuncture (Zhen Zheng), which was written before the profession joined the national registration scheme. Although most sections referring to the Victorian board

are now out of date, the principles are still applicable.

The text's value lies in its easy-to-access outline of legal and professional issues for both students and practitioners. While it is not intended to cover every issue in depth, it will assist readers to identify the key issues in a particular matter and consider whether further research or advice is required. For readers who are unfamiliar with the main CAM professions, it provides a thorough overview that will benefit inter-professional understanding and cooperation. It will be interesting to see how the content develops in later editions, taking into account recent and impending changes in the regulatory and practice framework for the CAM professions.

*Reviewed by Judy James*

## Law and Ethics in Complementary Medicine, 4th Edition: A Handbook for Practitioners in Australia and New Zealand

By Michael Weir

Allen & Unwin 2011

ISBN 9781742374055

This well-established text, now in its 4th edition, will be more familiar to readers as *Complementary Medicine Ethics and Law*, its title in previous editions.

The eight-chapter book (304 pages including index) begins with an introduction to the complementary

medicine sector, the regulation of health professionals, and 'commandments' of professional practice. Each is addressed in more detail in the relevant chapter in the text.

Chapters 2–5 deal with legal issues. Chapter 2 focuses on ethics and

professional misconduct, and includes a good summary of the basis of ethical conduct, codes of ethics, client records and ethics and disciplinary action. Chapter 3 covers restricted acts and protected titles, and includes an update on changes to restrictions on spinal manipulation following the

commencement of national registration. Chapter 4 covers negligence and professional responsibilities, while Chapter 5 deals with goods and consumer issues.

Chapters 6 and 7 provide an overview of CAM modalities, including acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine, and related legal and professional issues (Chapter 6), while Chapter 7 covers setting up a practice.

The final chapter (Chapter 8) deals with the legal framework and court system as well as the topic of expert witnesses.

This latest edition of Weir's seminal text incorporates changes resulting from the national registration and accreditation scheme for the health professions, and consequential changes in protected titles and restricted practices. The second major update relates to the introduction of the Australian Consumer Law in 2011, while the third major change is the inclusion of aspects of regulation in New Zealand. Weir has also had training in complementary therapies (massage) and has extensive experience in teaching legal and professional issues to students of complementary medicine.

The strength of this book is its plain-English, easy-to-read approach to understanding the law as it affects complementary medicine. Well-placed headings and highlighted Action Plans and Practice Tips throughout make it easy to navigate and to pick out the main issues of interest.

It continues to be a good reference text for students and practitioners alike from Australia's foremost writer on this area of the law.

*Reviewed by Judy James*