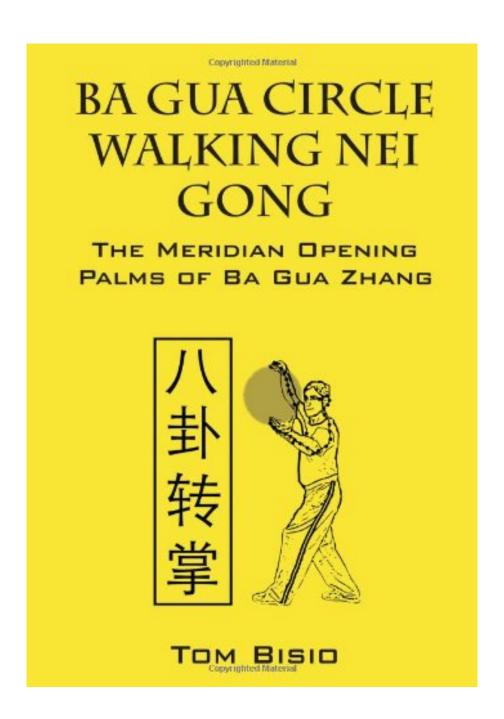


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Recent studies have shown that regular walking may be the ultimate cardiovascular exercise. However, the circle walking exercise of Ba Gua Zhang is not simply walking. It combines the benefits of walking with Qi Gong and meditation. It also develops a refined strength that can be employed in martial arts and other physical activities.

Walking in a circle with intention, correct alignment and deep breathing is the characteristic internal exercise (Nei Gong) associated with the martial art Ba Gua Zhang. Circle Walking Nei Gong is not only the foundation of Ba Gua's sophisticated fighting method, but also an incredible system of health preservation that nourishes life and staves off illness.

Ba Gua Circle Walking Nei Gong is rooted in ancient Daoist longevity exercises and internal alchemy practices, which aim at re-connecting us to our intrinsic nature and inner wisdom. While smoothly walking and circling, the practitioner holds different postures or "body patterns" known as Ding Shi. Each of these postures opens, unblocks and energizes a specific acupuncture meridian or group of meridians, thereby modulating and activating the body's energetic matrix. Regular practice of Ba Gua Circle Walking Nei Gong re-programs the body to walk and move correctly with balance, power and agility, while powerfully energizing the body and calming the nervous system.

In Ba Gua Circle Walking Nei Gong: The Meridian Opening Palms of Ba Gua Zhang, author Tom Bisio, a renowned martial artist and acupuncturist, details the practice method and theory of this powerful system of internal exercise. The postures, alignments and practice methods are clearly explained and correlated with practical discussions of meridian pathways and pathologies from the perspective of internal Nei Gong practice. These discussions are accompanied by extensive illustrations, including drawings rendered from photographs of famous Ba Gua masters holding the Nei Gong postures. Also included are medical applications of Ba Gua Circle Walking Nei Gong and an introductions to the rarely taught Ba Gua Energy Accepting Palm, in which vital force (qi) is absorbed from the natural environment.

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Deep in knowledge yet Accessible

By H. Asbury

Tom Bisio has been writing books about Chinese medicine and martial arts for a while now. The first book "A Tooth From the Tiger's Mouth" and this one are both the result of long term training, learning, pondering and feeling the results of the training and both books say much more than what they might seem to at first glance. Mixing the training experiences and Chinese medicine knowledge with information provided by senior practitioners like famed Ba Gua instructor Zhao Da Yuan, disciple of the late Li Zi Ming, the book addresses the meaning, function, purpose and method of what is called Ding Zhi Ba Zhang- the eight fixed or patterned palm walking method. Many Chinese martial arts include "internal" training as part of their curriculum. The arts that have been called "internal" are those that base the whole training around methods that develop the body from the inside out, and begin with softness. This book explains not only how to practice the 8 patterns that comprise the ding-shi (8 "fixed" palms), but explains the purpose of the training in a level of detail that has not been typically approached in print, but saved for personal disciples.

The exercise is developmental on a number of levels, which require that the student manage their body posture and movements and breath in great detail. How to do this is discussed both on the physical level and that of understanding the major pathways of the qi. Quoting from the Nei Gong Zhen Chuan (the authentic transmission of Nei Gong) Tom reiterates: "1. Real knowledge of Nei Gong requires a thorough understanding of the vessels and collaterals." Further: "2. Once the vessels and collaterals are understood you must observe the patterns. After one is familiar with the channels and collaterals it is necessary to understand that there are certain patterns that pertain to the whole body. If the patterns are not understood, all discussion of the channels and collaterals is empty talk." The Ding Shi Ba Zhang makes use of posture and movement that create patterns designed to allow for the opening of the channels, increasing of whole body use of power, ease of movement, increase of alertness and other benefits. This process results in abilities that when combined with tactical and technique knowledge and ability make for almost miraculous results. This book carefully and methodically lays out these foundations for Bagua practitioners to follow in order to progress beyond merely tactical understanding of martial arts.

Anyone wishing to live up to the promise of the internal arts and take them beyond just relaxation ("empty talk") knowledge contained in this volume must be acquired, and then mastered through long training. I've practiced Baguazhang for many a year, and I have not reached as high as even my potential. Such a manual shows the methods and the means to get there. All practitioners of the internal arts should own this book.

31 of 31 people found the following review helpful.

At the very top.

By Peter Payne

I am 67 and have studied internal martial arts, as well as other Bodymind approaches, all my life. I have read most of what has been published on these topics, though it is rarer and rarer now that I find a book which really gives me something. This book, as well as others by Tom Bisio, is among the ones that do.

I have corresponded with Tom, though I have not yet met him. As well as being extraordinarily knowledgeable and accomplished, Tom is also humble and seems to me pretty much free of the ego trips that unfortunately are so common in the martial arts. He is also unusual in that he genuinely wants to share all he knows, making it as clear and accessible as possible without (it seems to me) holding anything back.

In this book on Bagua walking, he goes into great depth (as is appropriate, and also rare) about the precise details of posture. If you do not know this, I am telling you: that is the million-dollar secret in the internal martial arts. Getting the correct posture, then maintaining this while moving: that's the ticket! (As to the fighting, learning techniques is just to keep you interested while you move with good posture; combat skill comes through intuitively sensing relationship, not by learning techniques.)

Anyway, Tom gives as good instruction as one can get in a book, and this particular walking practice is second to none for health and np meditation, and as a solid foundation for fighting if you are so inclined.

Check out his web site too; good stuff there.

33 of 34 people found the following review helpful.

The missing link between martial arts and medicine

By Adam Wasserman

Many books on Chinese martial arts talk about the relationship between Chinese medicine and Chinese martial arts. Some even say that the best martial artists also understand the medicine as well. This book explains how Chinese medicine links up with the Chinese martial art of ba gua zhang.

As usual, Mr. Bisio is able to explain Chinese medicine in simple, approachable terms, allowing people who have not devoted years of their lives to graduate school to be able to understand the basic foundational concepts of Chinese medicine. What's more, in this book he is able to relate those foundations to the practice of walking the circle found in ba gua zhang.

This book transitions effortlessly from easy to understand theory to practical descriptions of the movements involved. Mr. Bisio explains how each of the postures of the ding shi (a practice of circle walking in ba gua zhang) relates to the various meridians described in Chinese medicine. This discussion allows the practitioner of ba gua zhang to deepen their understanding of the art and its practice. It also allows one to tailor their practice to address specific health concerns, as is talked about by many of the past masters of this art.

This book is invaluable for practitioners of ba gua zhang of any lineage, but it can also be an excellent resource for practitioners of Chinese medicine who seek to further enrich their understanding of the fundamentals.

\*In the spirit of full disclosure, it should be noted that I have studied both martial arts and medicine with the author of this book.

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