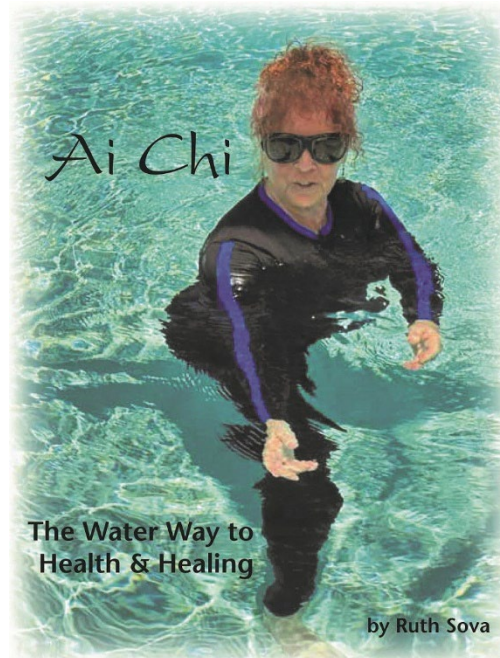


BOOK CITATION: Sova, R. (2023). *Ai Chi: The Water Way to Health & Healing*. DSL, Ltd.
 ISBN: 978-3642042522

Nº pages: 92



Ai Chi is an aquatic program emphasizing breath paired with broad movements that is utilized for a myriad of health and wellness concerns. This technique was created in the early 90's by Jun Konno who later collaborated with Ruth Sova to create reference tools and books illustrating the importance, utilization and execution of Ai Chi. To date, hundreds of studies, focused on a variety of populations, have been conducted employing Ai Chi as the intervention. Findings support the importance of Ai Chi as both a rehabilitation and wellness tool. Ruth Sova's latest book titled *Ai Chi: The Water Way to Health & Healing* continues to explore and explain the benefits of Ai Chi.

In 1996, the first text on Ai Chi titled *Ai Chi: Flowing Aquatic Energy* (1996) was published, providing a reference tool for aquatic practitioners. This text introduced the technique, reasoning, progression and movements. *Ai Chi: Balance, Harmony & Healing* (1999) expanded on concepts, benefits, and uses of Ai Chi. Sova's latest text strengthens the

OPEN ACCESS

Correspondent author:

Lori A. Sherlock, Ed.D.
 Professor
 Aquatic Therapy Coordinator, Division of
 Exercise Physiology
 West Virginia University, School of
 Medicine).
lsherlock@hsc.wvu.edu

Citation:

Sherlock, L.A. (2024). Recensión del libro
 Ai chi: the water way to health& healing.
 RIAA. *Revista de Investigación en
 Actividades Acuáticas*, 8(15), 41-42.
<https://doi.org/10.21134/riaa.v7i13.2002>



Creative Commons License

Esta obra está bajo una licencia de
 Creative Commons Reconocimiento-
 NoComercial-Compartir-Igual
 4.0 Internacional

argument for integration of Ai Chi into plans of care and exercise prescriptions across the rehabilitation and wellness spectrum. This text presents eight major thematic blocks: 1) Introducing Ai Chi (concepts and postures), 2) History, 3) Benefits to the body's systems, 4) Clinical relevance and effectiveness, 5) Breathing, 6) Finding a focus for the Ai Chi session, 7) Clinical populations, and 8) Versions of Ai Chi. Additionally, the book is accompanied by two videos on Ai Chi to further deepen the foundational knowledge of the practicing individual and practitioner.

Chapter 1 introduces Ai Chi, explaining the origins, the fundamental principles behind the technique and its benefits for physical and mental health. The images in combination with the step-by-step instructions for each posture in addition to the single-page reference for the nineteen postures aids the ability to reproduce the movements with success.

The foundational aspects of Ai Chi, including the basic stances, breathing techniques and the importance of relaxation and mindfulness are explored in chapter 2. While the first two chapters guide the reader towards specific stances, movements and breaths, it is continually noted by the author that Ai Chi "will turn out exactly the way it was meant to be."

Chapter 3 provides practical advice on how to begin practicing Ai Chi, including choosing the right aquatic environment, safety considerations, and the potential benefits. The extensive benefits of this technique are reviewed in-depth utilizing language that is easy to understand yet clinically applicable.

The essential aspects beyond the postures of Ai Chi are reviewed in chapter 4. Importance of positioning, movement intensity and level of immersion, the influence that water has on the body and recommended temperatures, breath, bodymind connection, and the clinical relevance of the various body mechanics are reviewed.

Chapter 5 reflects on the power of breathing and the various techniques that may be employed during Ai Chi. Additional focus on how breathing can affect relaxation and increase vagal activation. These presented integrations of breath with Ai Chi provide an interesting application of the technique for various physical and mental health conditions.

Chapter 8 is a resource guide for evolutions of Ai Chi including Ai Chi Ne (a partnered version of Ai Chi), Ai Chi Core (Ai Chi with a greater focus on alignment and posture), Ai Chi with Nidra Principals, and many others. Illustrations, instructions and even example scripts are included for enhanced understanding and facilitation ability.

With the growing mental and physical health concerns across the globe, Ai Chi offers a low-cost, accessible, inclusive, therapeutic exercise option. As the book explains, it benefits nearly every body system while offering a plethora of positive mental health benefits as well. Further, Ai Chi can be performed by a wide range of individuals regardless of age, fitness level, or physical limitation. This level of inclusivity paired with its comprehensive impact on mental and physical health have the potential for profound effects on the practicing individual.

Ai Chi can be practiced individually, within a small or large group, or be led by a practitioner. It is a versatile technique that can be done as a portion of an exercise or therapeutic program or as a standalone practice. For the individual using this as a reference for self-guided Ai Chi, explanations, images, and the accompanying videos help to understand and perform the technique. For practitioners and instructors, the book delves into suggestions for teaching effective and resonating Ai Chi. The detailed descriptions and illustrations, holistic approach, practical applications, and research-supported findings presented in the text are particularly helpful for maximizing the benefits of Ai Chi. Personal anecdotes and case studies enrich the narrative while offering real-life examples of the transformative impact that Ai Chi can elicit.

Ai Chi: The Water Way to Health and Healing by Ruth Sova is a valuable resource for anyone interested in exploring the therapeutic potential of Ai Chi. This text is appropriate for those wishing to learn about Ai Chi as well as those seeking additional resources to deepen their practice of this mindful aquatic exercise.

References

Sova, R. (2023). *Ai Chi: The Water Way to Health & Healing*. DSL, Ltd.