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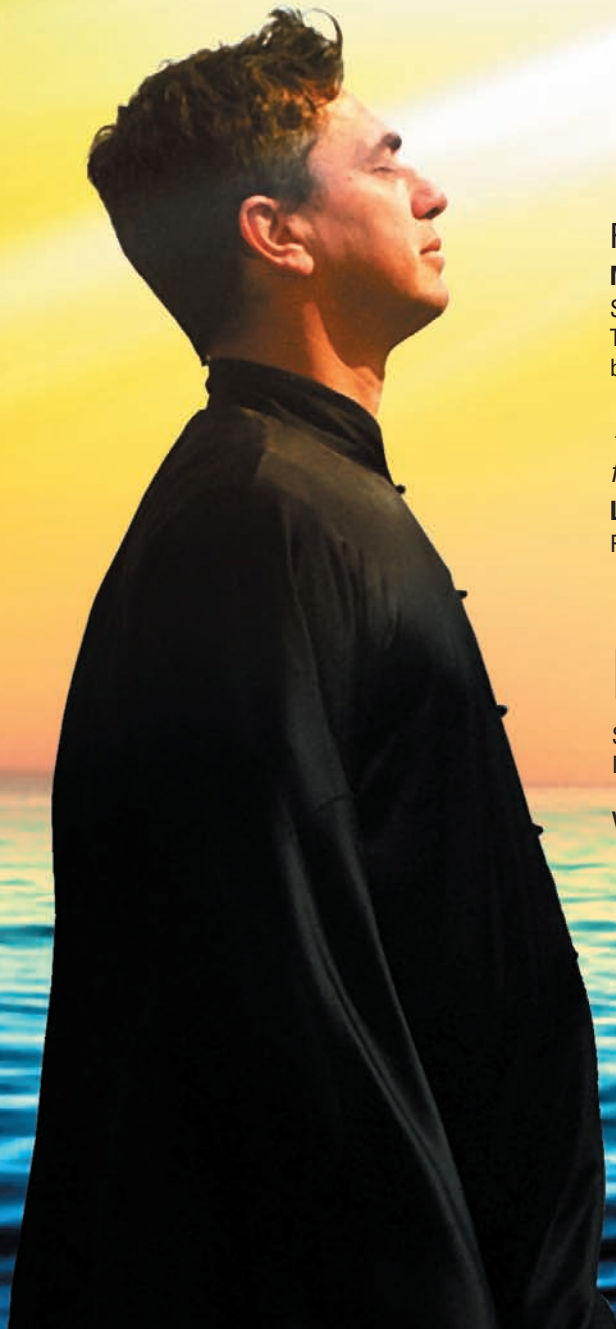
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SUNRISE TAI CHI

SIMPLIFIED TAI CHI FOR HEALTH & LONGEVITY



Foreword by

Miriam E. Nelson, Ph.D.

School of Nutrition Science and Policy,
Tufts University, author of *Strong Women*
book series

*"I encourage people to learn and
follow Rami's mind/body program."*

Larry Lucchino

President and CEO of the Boston Red Sox

Ramel Rones

Scientific Consultant, Dana Farber Cancer
Institute, Tufts and Harvard Medical Schools

with

David Silver

Praise for Ramel Ronés...

“Working with Rami for the last five years helped me to repair a debilitating back problem, and contributed to a better quality of life. Nevertheless, what has been more important is Rami’s consistent teaching of deep breathing and the meditative mind, which has helped me to maintain some calm on the emotional rollercoaster of my life. I believe that stretching, relaxation, and meditation exercises may also have helped me to avoid illness during the long Boston winters. I encourage people to learn and follow Rami’s mind/body program.”

Larry Lucchino

President and CEO of the Boston Red Sox
March 2006

“Deeply versed, passionate and informed, Mr. Ronés is a committed and caring teacher of the Asian mind/body arts, including Qigong, Tai Chi, and Yoga.

This precious exercise shows practitioners how to incorporate positive images from nature into a daily self-healing regimen. The practices come from the oldest traditional teaching, yet offer wonderful antidotes for the accelerated pace of modern life. In learning Mr. Ronés’ art, novice and adept practitioners alike will find pearls of wisdom.”

Ted J. Kaptchuk, OMD

Assistant Professor of Medicine,
Osher Institute, Harvard Medical School
Author of *The Web that Has No Weaver*

“In his twenty years of study with some of the world’s great masters of the Asian mind-body arts, Rami received a rare immersion in the inner teaching of Yoga, Tai Chi, Qigong, Meditation, and various martial arts. He has integrated these inner teachings into a powerful balanced mind/body program contained in the *Sunrise Tai Chi* book and DVD.

These exercises are the result of years of testing and refining these deep teachings

during Rami's private clinical practice working with students facing life challenges, from maintaining general well-being to surviving cancer. This program is so useful for students at any level of health, whether they are healthy athletes looking to balance their training, or elders who wish to avoid and reverse unnecessary aging.

In *Sunrise Tai Chi*, you will benefit from his clinical experience. He has done the work of determining what works best, and here he has set out an integrated, easy to use set of mind-body practices that allow the student to draw on the best of Eastern meditation and internal bodywork traditions.

In my own experience working with Rami, I have learned so much about how to lead a balanced life while coping with a challenging, potentially life-threatening illness. With Rami's help, and through the exercises he has taught me, I have learned how to energize my life, deal with stress, and stay healthy.

Cathy Kerr, Ph.D.

Instructor, Harvard Medical School

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Foreword by Miriam E. Nelson Ph.D.

This book by Ramel Rones has been anxiously awaited by professionals and all those dedicated to health promoting activity. We scientists and professionals committed to the dissemination of knowledge which will help people maintain strong and healthy bodies have long needed to refer to a book which clearly makes the connection between exercise and spirit, between the mind and the body. Ramel Rones captures the essence of how the ancient Eastern concepts of mind and body can connect with our modern ideas of health-promoting exercise. He presents this approach in a way that we can understand and begin to use immediately. I have personally worked with Rami and have experienced the benefits and insights of his blend of Tai Chi, yoga, and balance control. This book is a powerful tool for our efforts of motivating people to adopt and use healthy practices to strengthen the body and mind.

I strongly believe that Ramel Rones' instruction of low-impact, stress-reducing exercises and meditations has strong potential to immediately help people that are seeking good quality of life and excellent health and longevity, as well as to complement the journey each individual needs to take with various medical issues.

Some of the medical studies, R-21, which were done with Ramel Rones' approach have showed promising results: improvement in balance, flexibility, and arthritis symptoms, reduction of pain, stress, and anxiety, and improvement in cardio-respiratory function.

Miriam E. Nelson, Ph.D.
School of Nutrition Science & Policy,
Tufts University

How to Use This Book

In order to obtain the full benefits of this book, first read through it completely to understand the theory and become familiar with what I call the different “mind/body prescriptions,” the exercises/visualizations.

Once you begin training, start practicing the physical skills separately from the mental visualizations. Practice the various physical and mental skills individually until you sense that it is time to put them together. Use my concept of the “Art of Using 80 Percent of your Effort” when advancing through the physical skills, which will help you to prevent injuries, leaving the other 20 percent of your attention for focusing on the breath and the mental tasks. Being able to visualize three or four visualizations at once is not easy. It is a process that takes time. Do not overload your brain; give yourself enough time and slack, and do not be hard on yourself.

For beginners, it is natural, when you are trying to put your mind in the energy centers, for other thoughts to steal your mind away from staying focused on the visualization. Instead of fighting your thoughts and trying to pull them back into your energy centers, try to loop them back in a natural, curving arc. Let the thoughts happen and then just loop them back in, and regain your focus on your breath and the sensation of the energy center. When you realize a thought has taken your attention, you can visualize looping your attention in through the Third Eye, into the pituitary gland area or energy center, and connect into the baton in the center of your body, and then lead it down into the lower energy center in your abdomen, your center of gravity energy center. As you read this book, all of these concepts are explained.

Again, this will take time and energy. Therefore, you must invest the time and the effort to achieve these internal goals. Once you achieve them, you can gradually mix this skill with any other stretches, stances, moving Tai Chi drills, and the Tai Chi form we will show you in this book.

Advance through the theory as well as through the action while referring back to the detailed instructions until you have a strong understanding of the various mind/body prescriptions, the separate Tai Chi movements, and the Tai Chi form. Practice the Tai Chi drills and the form both ways, to the left and right. Remember, one of the main objectives of the exercises in this book is to free your skeleton from being a prisoner of the soft tissue. If you cannot perform certain physical skills, it is often because the soft tissue is shortened from lack of use or insufficient stretching. It is restricting the full range of motion of your skeleton. Once you are free of this shortness in the soft tissue, and you have built enough strength, you can do what your body is potentially designed to do and the quality of your life will change tremendously.

Try to experience simultaneously the heavy force from your body's Center of Gravity Energy Center downward, and the light force from the Center of Gravity area upward, and then through the center of the body and the spine. One day you will be able to differentiate between the two at all times. You will discover that when you inhale, it enhances the feeling of the light force through the spine, and when you exhale, you lead the heavy force through the legs.

As you become more advanced or experienced, you will see that you can change this at will. When you inhale, you can emphasize the heavy force through the legs while monitoring the light force through the spine and when you exhale, emphasize the light force through the spine while monitoring the heavy force through the legs. This skill can be very useful in your Tai Chi practice and in developing a stronger ability to monitor your body's internal properties.

Connecting with the forces of nature, especially the sun, is very important. You will need to remember the experiences and sensations which you have had with each one of these natural forces and try to apply them when you are visualizing the forces.

For example, when you "work" with the earth energy, you may recall the experience of working in the garden, digging into the earth with your hands, planting, and feeling the earth between your fingers. This physical feedback can help you have a stronger sensation of earth energy in your visualization.

In the Eastern arts, there is an exercise called Embrace the Tree in which you literally go and hug a tree, or you can emulate this. Recalling a walk through the forest or a time you may have climbed a tree can help you to feel a strong connection to the trees and their energy, which you can apply later in your practice.

When you hike through the mountains, you can sense a connection to them, especially when you stand on the summit and look at the view of the landscape, across a mountain range. You can utilize this powerful feeling in your practice.

If you ever flew in a plane, or if you ever skydived, or perhaps stared at clouds when you were a child, you can have a stronger sensation of the sky when "drawing in" sky energy. If you were an astronaut, you would probably have a stronger sensation of the universe, and the stars!

The bottom line is that you want to connect not just with your imagination, but also with your emotions and most importantly, with your spirit. For example, the mind/body prescription "Walk Like a Warrior" should not only be physical. I want you to add your spirit and literally sense as if you were running through a battlefield to save your family and your country, or whatever it takes to evoke your spirituality. Of course, on the physical level, this walking is an excellent cardiovascular exercise

and helps in losing weight. On a spiritual level, your eyes are those of a warrior. The feeling in your entire body is like a warrior. Then once you finish the exercise, you are in peacetime. No more warrior and no more war. Return to your meditative state, with brainwaves between awake and asleep, and with a high spiritual sensation. This skill of changing your energy so dramatically can be very helpful in daily life, in relationships, and in your ability to adapt, to accept sudden changes, and even maybe one day to enlighten.

This journey is not easy. There are obstacles. It takes training, time and effort, and consistent repetition of both the mental and the physical exercises. Eventually you will be able to be like a conductor, able to monitor the many skills at once. By following these guidelines, your results and benefits will be much stronger and they will lead you step-by-step, if not to enlightenment, then to better health and a higher quality of life.

CHAPTER 1

What Is Tai Chi?

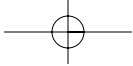
INTRODUCTION

Each day, millions of men and women worldwide practice the Chinese martial art Tai Chi Chuan (taijiquan), which has been known for centuries to promote deep relaxation, excellent health, and to prevent injuries and illness. This gentle moving meditation teaches you to find balance between strength and flexibility, increases bone density, while involving all of the various soft tissues in your body: muscles, tendons, ligaments, fasciae, and skin.

Commonly known by its abbreviated name, Tai Chi (taiji) practice improves the circulation of blood and *Qi* (energy), which enhances the body's natural healing capabilities. In addition to learning fundamental Tai Chi stances and postures, these body-conditioning exercises also help you to increase muscle mass and bone density, while the gentle movements continually massage your internal organs, leading to increased flow of blood and oxygen through every cell in our body. Tai Chi is an excellent way to improve your quality of life and daily physical performance quickly. You will learn to relax your body and mind, optimize your internal energy use, and allow the energy from your surroundings to be absorbed into your body and boost your energy system to abundant levels. Relaxation is an essential key to successful practice, and should be the primary goal of students new to Tai Chi.

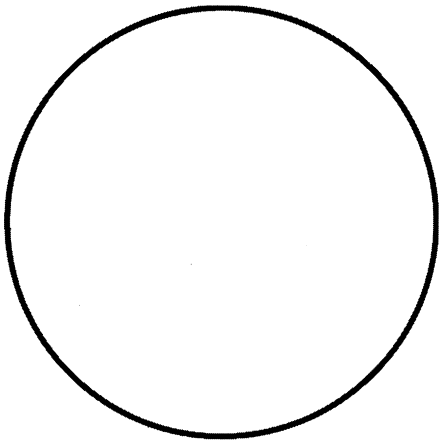
Each of the movements taught here can be done seated as well, for those who have difficulty or are unable to stand, and for those interested in refining the training by first isolating the upper part of the body. Training on the edge of a chair offers many benefits for beginners and for more advanced students, because it restricts movement, and causes the practitioner to focus on fine-tuning certain aspects, or skills, that are needed in each one of the five building blocks: Body, Breath, Mind, Energy, and Spirit. For example, you will learn to focus on an aspect of the movement, such as turning the waist, and on using certain breathing techniques.

Practiced to both the left and right, this simplified short Yang-style Tai Chi Chuan sequence is a perfect way to balance your practice before moving on to more complex Tai Chi forms, such as the 24-posture form, or the older, long form of 108 postures.

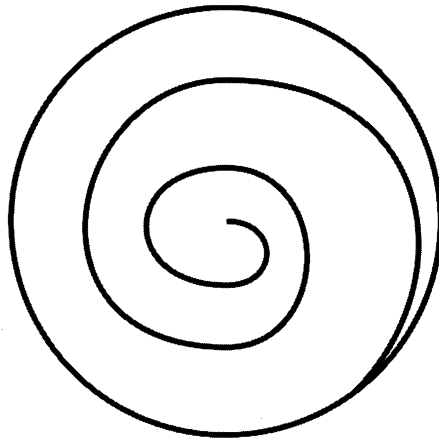


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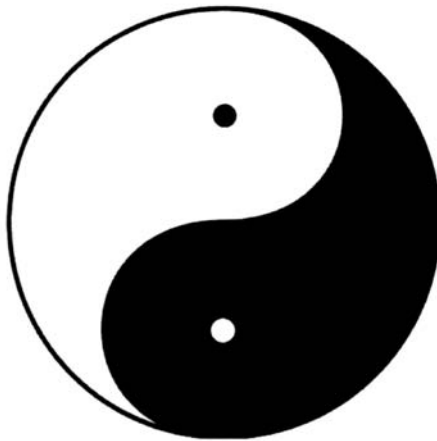
Finally, the “internal” aspect of each movement will allow you to experience the connection between your body, mind, and spirit. This will help you find harmony within yourself, as well as harmony between Human Energy, Earth Energy, and Universal Energy. In the Tai Chi Classics it is written that Tai Chi is originated from Wu Chi and is the mother of Yin and Yang (see symbols below).



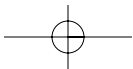
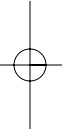
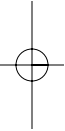
Wu Chi (Wuji)
[Empty circle]



Tai Chi (Taiji)
[Spiral]



Yin/Yang
[Symbol]



HISTORY

Tai Chi, or taiji, is an ancient Chinese philosophy that dates back at least 5,000 years. Some recent archaeological findings suggest that the *Yin-Yang* concept may be over 10,000 years old. *Yin-Yang* theory is based on the idea that everything in the universe is created, developed, and constantly changing due to the interaction, balance, and imbalance of *Yin* and *Yang*, which can be described as any two opposing forces, such as light/dark, cold/hot, or force/yielding. This concept of constant change and *Yin-Yang* balance is an approach to understand the laws of nature, and the universe itself.

Tai Chi (taiji), which translates as Grand Ultimate, is the creative force that lies between *Wuji*, the state of No Extremity, and *Yin-Yang*, the state of Discrimination. In Tai Chi Chuan (taijiquan), this creative force is the mind, the origin of all movement, and therefore the origin of all *Yin-Yang* in the body. This Tai Chi philosophy was later blended with several ancient physical exercises and martial arts forms to create a new martial art style known as Tai Chi Chuan, or Grand Ultimate Fist. Tai Chi Chuan is often shortened to Tai Chi, but the practitioner should be clear about the distinction between the martial art of Tai Chi Chuan, and the more ancient Tai Chi philosophy.

Lao Tzu, an older contemporary of Confucius, wrote and taught Taoist (Daoist) philosophy in the province of Hunan in the 6th century B.C. His classic book the *Tao Te Ching* (*Dao De Jing*), or *The Way of Virtue*, offers insightful discussions of Taoist philosophies which lie in the heart of Tai Chi Chuan.

The essential principles of Tai Chi Chuan can be traced back thousands of years to ancient Chinese health exercises and to Classical Yoga in India. In the 4th century B.C., the Life-Nourishing Techniques (*Yangshenfa*) were being practiced. These ancient exercises included bending, expanding, condensing, and extending movements, breathing techniques, and *Qi* circulation methods similar to the later internal aspects of Tai Chi.

Ancient exercises and breathing techniques, known as *Dao Yin* and *Tu Na*, were created to adjust the imbalance of *Qi* energy in the body, to build more energy, and to increase adaptability to the natural changes in the environment. *Dao Yin* is the art of guiding the energy in the pathways of the body to achieve harmony, and of stretching the body to “massage” the *Qi* pathways in order to reduce *Qi* energy stagnation and to attain flexibility. *Tu Na* is the art of breathing, which was taught and studied in the Buddhist Shaolin and Wudang monasteries.

Other patterns practiced since the Chinese Tang dynasty (600 A.D.), such as Long Fist, Little Nine Heavens, and Five Animal Sports are attributed to the development

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of Tai Chi. In 800 A.D., a philosopher named Hsu, Hsuan-P'ing developed a long *Kung Fu* of 37 forms. Of these, certain postures still survive in the contemporary Tai Chi form, including:

- Play the Guitar
- Single Whip
- Step Up to Seven Stars
- Jade Lady Works the Shuttles
- High Pat on Horse
- White Crane (originally Phoenix) Flaps Its Wings

Many stories tell of the origin of Tai Chi Chuan, but the most popular legend is that of Zhang, San-Feng, a Taoist (Daoist) immortal and Shaolin martial artist. Zhang is described as an eccentric hermit with extraordinary powers, who died once and was reborn, and whose life spanned a period of at least 300 years, though no one is sure exactly when he lived. According to the legend, Zhang, a monk of the Wudang monastery, created Tai Chi Chuan after witnessing a battle between a crane and a snake. Wudang (Wu Tang) or Wudang Shan, refers to a region in China which includes seventy-two different mountains.

Intrigued by the yielding, smooth evasion, and darting counterattacks of both animals, Zhang's insight in the practice of martial arts are expressed according to four basic principles:

- Use calm against action.
- Soft against hard.
- Slow against fast.
- Single against a group.

He stressed the "internal" aspects of the exercises, and he is credited with creating the fundamental Thirteen Postures of Tai Chi that correspond to the eight basic trigrams of the *I Ching* and the five elements. The eight postures or doors are

1. *Peng*—Ward-off
2. *Lu*—Rollback
3. *Ji*—Press/squeeze
4. *An*—Push

Press (Ji)

Continuing from Rollback, begin to exhale and to shift forward into Forward stance. The right arm is raised in front of the body, parallel to the ground. Here is another opportunity to feel Ward Off energy, with a rounded feeling between the right arm and the chest. Finish exhaling as the left hand moves forward to press the inside of the right wrist, and both hands press forward. Hide the fingers of the left hand behind the inside of your right wrist, so your imaginary opponent cannot grab them.

The application for this posture is that you are either pressing into an opponent quickly with both hands as a strike, or the opponent is between your hands, and you are squeezing him.



Press on the right foot
70% - 30%



Press

Push (An)

Continuing from Press, shift your weight to the back leg, keeping you hip bones square forward. At the same time, slide your left palm over the right and separate your hands shoulder width apart in a circular, wavelike motion. Try to imitate the spirit of a mighty wave breaking on the beach (Push–Yin).

Begin to exhale as you shift your weight into Forward stance. The fingers point forward until you reach the imaginary object you will push. Then, settle your wrists downward, point the fingers up, and push forward as you finish exhaling. Make sure your head is suspended, your shoulders are relaxed and your elbows are sunk. Try to imitate the spirit of a powerful wave lifting a boat in the middle of the ocean (Push–Yang).

This Push can be applied as either a defense or an offense. You may push an opponent's attack downward to redirect the attack or to "seal" his limbs so he cannot lift them or draw them back. You may also push or strike the opponent with both hands, which requires you to have a strong feeling of being rooted to the ground, pushing from the back leg.



Push (Yin)
40% – 60%



Push (Yin)

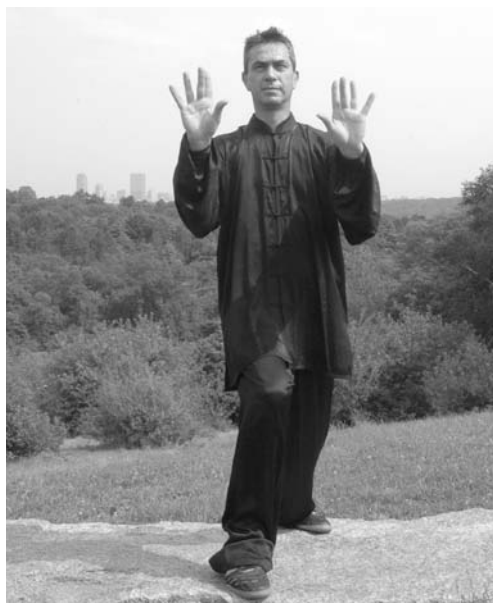
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Push on the left leg (Yin)
40% - 60%



Push on the right leg (Yang)
70% - 30%



Push (Yang)



Push (Yang)

Keypoints

I first teach students to separate and break this complex sequence of Rollback, Press, Push into nine keypoints to make it easier to learn and to refine. Afterward, you emphasize these keypoints as you move through Rollback, Press, Push with continuous, smooth movement.

- One, drop the elbow.
- Two, reach up with both hands.
- Three, flip both palms.
- Four, sit back as if you are pulling a rope.
- Five, scoop or small circle with the left hand.
- Six, meet the right hand and press.
- Seven, left over right.
- Eight, sit back.
- Nine, push forward.

Rollback, Press, and Push are also fundamental energy patterns in Tai Chi, like Ward Off, and they can be found within other postures throughout longer Tai Chi forms.

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A senior disciple of renowned teacher and author Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming Ph.D. in Boston, MA since the 1980s, Ramel is a Gold medalist in Internal and External Martial Arts: Three-time Gold Medalist in Shanghai, China for Tai Chi, External & Internal Weapons (Grand National Championship 1994), and Gold Medalist for Tai Chi & Kung Fu Sword, 1994. From 1991 to 1993, Ramel earned gold medals for Tai Chi, Pushing Hands, and Tai Chi Sword in the International North American Chinese Martial Arts Competition.

Ramel works to improve the quality of life of his many students, improve their martial arts skills, and to help some cope with cancer, arthritis, and other serious ailments using the principles taught in this book and DVD. *Sunrise Tai Chi* is his first book.

David Silver has been a student of the ancient Chinese art of *Qigong* since the 1990s, and became certified to carry on the teaching of *Qigong* by Master Yang, Jwing-Ming in Boston, MA. He works as a producer and director of instructional health and martial arts DVDs, and teaches group and private *Qigong* classes. David has also worked as editor of Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming's *Qigong* books, and has contributed his research/writing skills to many other published materials. *Sunrise Tai Chi* is his first book.

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Ramel Ronés, a martial arts gold medalist, works as a Scientific Consultant of Mind/Body Therapies at the Dana Farber Cancer Institute, and the Harvard and Tufts Medical Schools, as well as co-author of numerous scientific publications. He is the author of the best-selling DVD, *Sunrise Tai Chi*. Ramel resides in Boston, Massachusetts. www.RamelRones.com

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