'The Dynamics of Standing Still’ is a fascinating and convincing introduction to Zhan Zhuang Chi Kung. Peter Den Dekker not only succeeds in conveying the principles of this ancient Chinese art of standing still in a simple and comprehensible way, but also invites us on an inspiring visual and somatic journey into matters of body, mind and health.

One section of the book is dedicated to ‘The Craftsman’, a master of tempeh-production (an Indonesian soy product). The master gives the author the following advice: ‘Make sure your product is tasty. When it is tasty, your customers will come to you!’ Peter den Dekker has succeeded in producing more than a tasty book. It is not easy to explain how the apparently simple business of standing upright can – via the postures of Chi Kung - reconnect us to our bio-mechanical, energetic and spiritual essence as human beings.

To illustrate this, Den Dekker uses delightful and persuasive metaphors to link anatomy, physiology, traditional Chinese medicine, developmental psychology, philosophy, sport and architecture, and supports them with a wealth of pictures, sketches and graphics, chosen with a loving eye for detail.

‘Zhang Zhuang’, says Den Dekker, ‘can be a life-long study for some, while others might be satisfied with an introductory course.’ The same is true for this book. The author’s enthusiasm, dedication and clear instructions will inspire the layperson to start practising straight away. Advanced Chi Kung practitioners, body workers, Shiatsu practitioners, therapists and medical professionals will find many enlightening examples here of how their own style or discipline connects with the ”secrets” of traditional Chinese medicine.

But the most important message of this book is one that fits perfectly with the spirit of the times. In our modern, dynamic and ever-faster world, it is difficult to maintain a gentle, manageable pace, or to stop and to stand still for a while to recharge the batteries. Zhang Zhuang Chi Kung is not the only way of doing this but ‘The Dynamics of Standing Still’ is one of the most beautiful books you will find to set you on the path.

Mike Mandl, Vienna

More info: www.thedynamicsofstandingstill.com
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