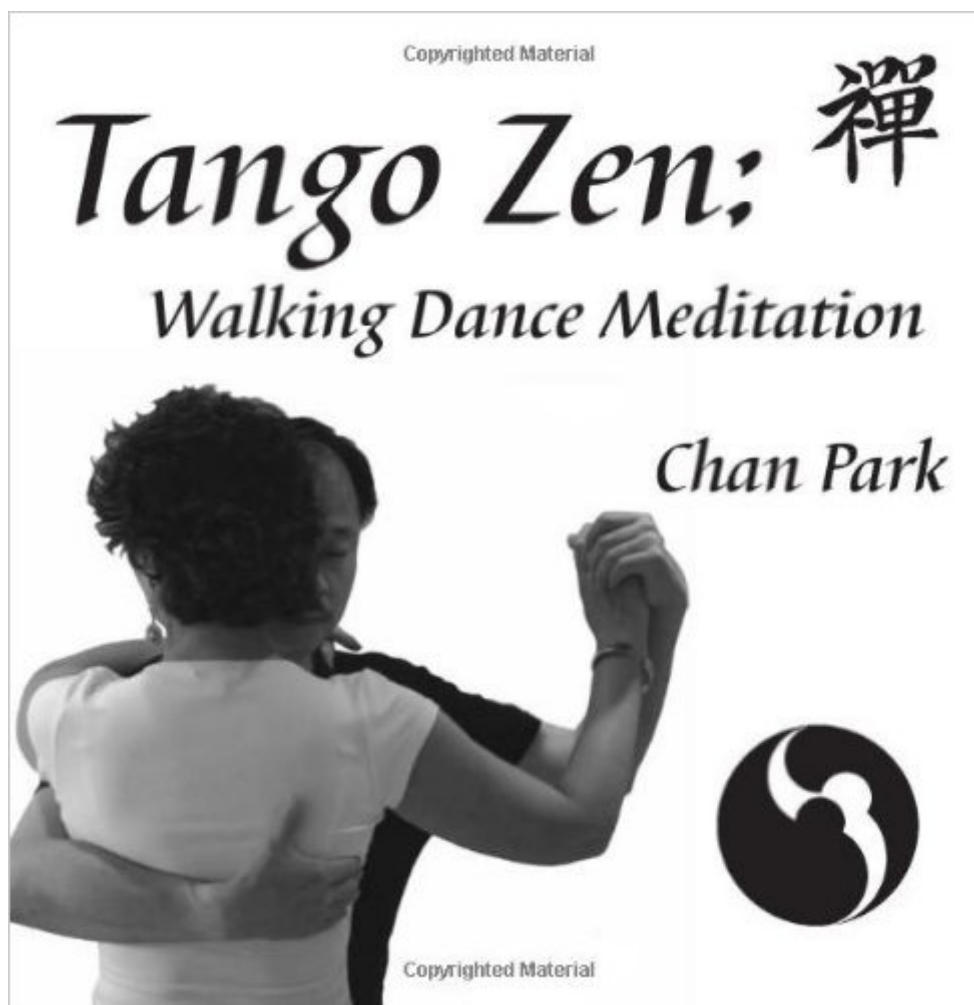


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Tango Zen: Walking Dance Meditation



Synopsis

Book by Park, Chan

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Tango Zen is an innovative yet natural way of meditating while dancing Tango..." Chan Park, p 9. I mistakenly thought the book was about Tango. - I had hoped it might give me some insight or means to finding that elusive communication between dancers. I should have read the fine print before buying: 87 pages, 5" X 5". What you get is an attractive small book, very nicely laid out, with 17 B&W full page head-shots of couples with eyes closed in embrace and 24 pages of quotes on Zen, Dance and other topics (the kind of quotes that make nice signature tag-lines). Tango Zen Exercises begin on page 69. The exercise are comprised of instruction and photos: 1 paragraph on Warm Up, 2 pages on Individual Standing, 3 pages on Stretching, 3 pages on Individual Walking, 2 pages on Couple Standing and 2 pages on Couple Walking. That's it. My advice is to take one of Mr. Park's live workshops on Tango Zen - the book might have more value for you then, it has little value to me now. But then it was only \$10.

This little booklet is made up of quotes and pictures only; still, it DOES manage to convey the message that Tango isn't just "another" Dance. As should be expected, the pictures, talk louder than the words!

Tango is hot! If there aren't tango dances or classes taking place in your town now, get ready: they will be there soon! The tango is on MTV, in new movies, and young people worldwide are discovering that it is the best way to have fun, meet people, and be incredibly beautiful and sexy all at once! So who knew that you could combine the tango with meditation? It seems that not only can you do so, but even Buddha himself practiced meditation while walking. Zen meditation can be practiced in more active ways than the sitting posture. Chan Park says "One can meditate while dancing Tango, experiencing deeper appreciation of physical, emotional, and even spiritual aspects of inner-self." You know those books that offer a new idea whose time has come? This may well be one of them. Tango zen is such a beautiful concept that it is bound to catch on. This book includes a bit on Zen philosophy as well as well-illustrated exercises which should help any beginner to get started. It is a small book, but it contains all you need to learn this fascinating new meditation/dance technique - and the book can be easily held in the hand while learning to do the exercises. It does not attempt to give extensive instruction on all tango moves. Anyone can benefit from this technique, and Chan Park's book is highly recommended. Personally, I would be very happy to see our parks full of people doing tango meditation together! What a civilized sight that would be!

Tango and Zen - this sounds like a culture clash. But it isn't. Of course everything is Zen once you are in it. But maybe Tango is a little bit more, just because there is no direct familiarity. For everybody doing Zen this familiarity is quite obvious, because one should try to reach maximum awareness every single moment. But for most Tango Dancers this is a new approach. Normally we just dance, try to do the correct step, stay upright, opening our mind for what the partner is up to now. Once we get in the Zen-Mind, all this is not important anymore. We are there, floating free, just music, all movement. Doing Tango-Zen helps us to reach this state of mind, it combines the best of both worlds.

I bought the small booklet Tango Zen which handles tango as moving meditation. In pair dance one's attention is in feelings and sensations brought by music, dance movement, sociality and sexuality - in the here and now that is! Where in sitting meditation the body is still and the mind gets used to being still and alone, the motion of dance, its naturally flowing action and sociality - why not sexuality too - is a suitable next step to conceiving the whole spectrum of life in a meditative way: flowing, participating in life, enjoying life without grasping anything too much. A very nice idea - I do not know how much new there is in the book if you know lots about Zen, but the book is quite cheap/small and easy to read: a suitable reminder of a nice way to meditate in motion!

As a tango dancer, I am all too aware of the tension in tango between the show and stage style and the more intimate milonguero style. There has been a tendency for the showy style to be considered to be more advanced but, in truth, the levels of skill, musicality and connection are so much higher in milonguero. I was so delighted to discover this book which encapsulates within a fusion of tango and zen, all that is wonderful in tango. This book ought to be required reading for all those who find the athletic, gymnastic form of tango neither possible nor to their taste. Power to your elbow Chan Park! You have made an old tanguero very happy.

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