

LETTERS TO AND FROM THAI

Protecting the Thai Therapist's Energy System

Dear THAI,

I have received the THAI Basic Member welcome package with great honour and gratitude. When I entered the THAI archives, I also understood how and why I got my last injury.

One of my clients is a Parkinson's patient with serious leg issues and problems with his limbs in general. One day, after doing extensive work on his leg lines, I woke up the next morning and literally had to crawl to my front door steps and call for a cab. I simply could not walk, and I had to buy and begin to use cane. My leg was fully out of order, and the next day my arm and hand were numb. I couldn't write or type.

I found information about negative energy on the THAI website, I began using Asokananda's suggested exercises, and I was back in business within 5 days. It's now 4 weeks later, and I'm still a bit stiff but almost back to normal. What a great man and what a great vision! So for my next study I have the option to go to Sunshine Massage School, that's clear, and my very next time would be with Ajahn Pichet. Now I can plan for further study if time and space allows me.

Thank you so much for your helpful information. May Buddha bless you and may the heavenly spirits be with you and may they protect you. We will be in touch,

Kob khun kab,

Peter, from Holland

Negative experiences with a teacher that is not a THAI member (all names have been withheld)

Hi THAI,

I believe (you know about) my situation. I took a month long intensive with (name withheld) in March 2007. I completed levels 1-5 and level 6 (the final 2 days) was canceled due to his poor health.

I was promised hard copies of my certificates in the mail within a week of the class cancellation which I have not seen yet (I have emails from them documenting this assurance). I want nothing further to do with (this person) at this point. The majority of my experience ... was unsatisfactory and I feel the best thing to do is to walk away from the situation. I will go into further detail if you need me to but would prefer not to, at this point I can say that his behavior was unprofessional, erratic, and I would never refer anyone to him for instruction or bodywork due to my personal experiences with both.

I am hoping to further my Thai training with THAI Instructors as well as with teachers in Thailand, and I hope to...get recognition at some point through THAI.... I would greatly appreciate any advice you might have regarding my situation and how I might be able to go about getting connected with (THAI).

Namaste,

(name withheld)

Inaccurate information on traditional Thai massage

Greetings,

One of our members referred your web site to me, asking if I could help to clarify what she thought was a textual inaccuracy on your web site. I hope you don't think badly of me for contacting you. It is truly in the spirit of friendship, and with the hopes of providing some clarity for the sake of *nuad boran* around the world.

In several parts of your web site, you refer to traditional *nuad phaen boran* as having influences in Tibetan medicine. As far as is known, this is not true. The Tibetan medicine system was and is quite different than the Indian Ayurvedic system which paved the base of knowledge that would later evolve into traditional Thai medicine. The Buddha was born in what is current day southern Nepal, but spent most of his life further south, in India. He spent a long period of time in Rajgir, Bihar (current day India) where he befriended Jivaka Kumarbhaccha, who eventually built a monastery for the first *sangha*. Jivaka was born in northern India but studied medicine in Taksila (current day Pakistan) before he began his professional practice.

There seems to be no evidence of traditional Thai massage or the Thai medicine system having been influenced by indigenous Tibetan medicine. If you know something to the contrary, it would certainly be good to hear about it. Jivaka is indeed mentioned in ancient Tibetan books, (and in Chinese and other Asian cultures' books as well) but only with regard to his relationship with the Buddha. The earliest mentions of Jivaka's practice in early Ayurvedic medicine come from India, not Tibet.

We'd love to hear from you, and we'd like to take this opportunity to invite you to join the Thai Healing Alliance. THAI maintains an archive of historical information on Jivaka, Thai healing traditions, Theravada Buddhism and other related items of research. We hope we have been helpful in clarifying the historical information associated with what is known today as traditional Thai massage.

Best wishes,

Bob, for THAI

A THAI Member's respect for his teacher

I just wanted to let you know that my studies with Pichet are going really well - so well that I'm afraid the bad news is that I won't be able to make it to the THAI Retreat in June - but the good news...well...

My first meeting with Pichet was very positive. He sensed that my heart was open right away - and from this point on I have felt as if I have been adopted by him. By the end of the first week with him, he asked me to come sit in front of him while the other students were practicing - he then performed a ritual with chanting and moving his arms and writing letters/symbols on my forehead and top of head with a stick - had me repeat mantra many times and quickly and loudly. I felt myself breathing from my core for the first time - all of my tension gone completely.

This is the way Pichet chose to teach me how to meditate...he is teaching me how to take care of myself before I can take care of others...how to be strong and unmoving as things pass before my senses...and not to hold on to things...letting them pass away...I am very grateful...One of his assistants who has studied with him many years commented that this is a special experience...and that I am a gift to him and the class. I am blessed to be their gift. More blessings came for me as today I was asked to be involved in the daily course preparations - lighting candles and incense before each day of class - and also the preparations for the Monday class blessing ritual. It is a great honor for me to have this responsibility. Nevertheless, I continue to be blessed to learn many things about taking care of myself before I take care of others. My approach to the practice and teaching of this work has been transformed by Pichet's kindness towards me and his ability to approach this ancient healing tradition in a holistic, integrated way.

Thanks for your kindness in helping me prepare to experience this amazing season of learning with Pichet. My regrets for not being able to meet you in person at the retreat, but I trust our paths will cross in the future when the timing is right.

With loving kindness,

Jon

