



LIVING TRADITIONS

Newsletter of the Thai Healing Alliance International - Volume 6, 2008

THAI works with other organizations

THAI entered its third year of activity making key partnerships with other healing-based organizations. The most important of these are the North American Studio Alliance (NAMASTA) and the Natural Health Practitioners of Canada (formerly known as AMTWP).

The alliance that THAI has made with NAMASTA helps members of both organizations. For Registered Thai Therapists (RTT) in THAI, the most obvious benefit is access to low cost liability insurance. Members of THAI at the Practitioner level or higher may obtain insurance for their Thai practice through NAMASTA as long as they reside in the USA or Canada, and they comply with all local laws and restrictions. You must first obtain the level of RTT in THAI in order to qualify for insurance through NAMASTA.

In addition to securing insurance for its members, NAMASTA also provides e-newsletters with interesting information about how to run an effective business in

holistic healing, table massage, pilates, t'ai chi and yoga. Access to this information may help marketing efforts, increase revenues, and manage business risks. Other services include discounted studio software, low cost web site creation, and access to health benefits. Members of THAI or NAMASTA may join each other's organization at an introductory 20% discount. For more information, or to request a discount application, contact www.namasta.com.

THAI has been making inroads toward international acceptance of its standards for the study and practice of *nuad boran* (traditional Thai massage). Another organization who has recently endorsed THAI's study guidelines is the Natural Health Practitioners of Canada (NHPC).

NHPC, (formerly known as AMTWP), is dedicated to promoting the art and science of natural health practices, to serving the needs and maintaining the professional standards of Canadian natural health practitioners, and to improving alternative health care in Canada.

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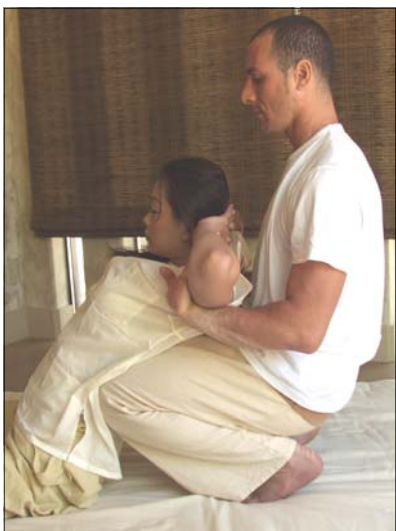
NHPC has officially adopted THAI's study and practice standards for *nuad boran* as their benchmark for the safe and effective practice of Thai massage in Canada. Specifically, NHPC advocates compliance with THAI's minimum requirements for RTT/Practitioner level before beginning to practice Thai massage professionally in Canada. NHPC is at: www.nhpcanada.org.

If you know of an organization in your country that might be interested in forming an alliance with THAI, please send their contact information to: info@thaihealingalliance.com ✦

Ancient Practice - Modern Therapy By Gabriel Azoulay, RTT



Dr. Ida Rolf, founder of the Rolf Institute of Structural Integration, used to say: "Anyone can take a body apart, but few know how to put it back together." For thousands of years, the Eastern approach to the human structure has also been concerned with putting the body back together.



Asana yoga practice, chi gong, t'ai chi and other forms of self-structural integration have proven themselves, if not simply by how old they are, but by the living testimonies of the health and well being of their practitioners.

These practices are not, in and of themselves, just a form of therapy; they enhance every aspect of living. Not only do they put the body back together, but they also rejuvenate, reform, and recreate. When you get off the massage table, don't you wish to feel renewed, reshaped, and regrouped? And, why not? According to Ayurveda, the ancient system from India known as the "science of life," every seven years we have a brand new body, with modified bones and muscle tissue. This concept is not so bizarre when we consider that every second, human cells die and new cells are immediately created to replace them.

Today, there is ample evidence and expanded research to support the physical effects of yoga, t'ai chi and chi gong, from the efficient use of the muscles and conservation of energy to the facilitation of a more economical and refined pattern of movement. Regular practice has proven to significantly reduce chronic stress and indeed can change the structure of the body.

No wonder Dr. Ida Rolf was into yoga! One might wonder if she was into Thai yoga massage as well. When one explores her philosophic approach to the body, and the manner in which she has chosen to pursue it by providing the healing aspect of intentional touch, the parallels are striking. Her techniques might vary, but the results are very similar.

— continued on page 3

Phra Lersi (The Reusee of Thailand)

Text & photos By Chris Jones of www.thaiamulets.com



The religion of the Thai population is by and large Buddhist, and decidedly of the Southern Hīnayānic School of Theravāda, or Doctrine of the Elders. But it would properly be referred to as Sinhalese Buddhism as Sri Lanka is the place where it first took form. It may also be described Pāli Buddhism for its strict adherence to the Pāli Language literature compiled by the ancient Sinhalese.

But for a period extending about nine hundred years before the thirteenth-century arrival of Sinhalese Buddhism, a multitude of religious approaches coexisted in Thailand. These ranged from the Brahmanistic styles of ascetic endeavours to the sundry systems of Shiva-Shakti worship, from the Vaishnava and Krishna *bhakti* schools to the Pure Land cults of the Mahāyāna.

A great multiplicity of religious forms flourished in the Thai region before the 14th century. There once existed an awe-inspiring variety of independent religious figures such as shamans, *sādhus*, *yogins* and the *rishī*, that dwell beyond the pale of any specific community or social convention. These indigenous wisdom-knowers roamed about as free as the breeze and practiced now-vanished forms of asceticism. Such holy men were often skilled healers, as well, and commanded high respect from prominent sectarian leaders.

In the Thai language a hermit is called a *reusee*, (*lersi*) (in Khmer, *rosei*) from the Sanskrit *rishī*, that is, a forest dwelling visionary. In fact, in the oldest surviving Buddhist scriptures, the Buddha himself is referred to as “the Rishī.” In general *lersi* are known as ascetics and are characterised by refraining from worldly pleasures. Those who practice this lifestyle hope to achieve greater spirituality. Essentially they believe that the action of purifying the body helps to purify the soul, and thus obtain a greater connection with the divine. Originating in India before the time of Buddha, most *lersi* are hermits and live, study and meditate in caves or forests. In Thailand one of the most famous ascetics is Lersi Tarfai, (*photo above*) who lives in the region of Nakhon Ratchasima.

The stone-hewn bas-relief of two Brahman *sādhus* (ascetics) joyfully worshipping the Hindu god Shiva bears testament to early Thailand's affinity with the religious culture of India. The two bearded *sādhus* wear only loincloths. Their hair is tied in a topknot. They sit on the ground in a casual manner and lean back against a low decorative pillar. Each of them holds in their two joined hands a *chilum*, or ritual clay pipe, as they perform the quintessential Vedic rite of honoring Shiva with sacramental smoke offering. The pipes are filled with the herbal offering typically consisting of cannabis-derived substances.

There existed an opulent fabric of religious diversity that had formerly been woven between the ancient ruling houses of Lopburi, Nakhon Ratchasima, Srivijaya, Pan Pan, Grahi, Sathing Phra, Phatthalung, Pattani, Nakhon Sri Thammarat and others. Stretching across a near one thousand-year period beginning as early as the 5th century CE, a broad range of Brāhmanical and Buddhist schools flourished in the independent kingdoms and principalities that once comprised the Central Plains of Thailand and the southern Isthmus of Kra.

Numerous forms of Indian religions had thrived there. Brāhmanic, Mahāyānic, Tantrayānic, Vajrayanic and the Pure Land Amitabha and Avalokitesvara sects flourished side by side throughout the overlapping states. Before the thirteenth-century arrival of Sinhalese Buddhism, a great variety of religious traditions flourished in Thailand. Independent figures such as shamans, *sādhus*, *yogins* and *rishīs* (*reusee*) roamed about as free as the breeze and practiced now-vanished forms of ascetic technology. These holy men were often skilled healers too, and commanded high respect from sectarian leaders. They dwelt in a spirit of mutual appreciation with no one heritage having authority over another. The fifth-century Hindu kingdom of Sathing Phra (present day Songkhla) is an interesting little-known case in point. This extremely ancient city is one of the earliest and most fascinating kingdoms on record. It was a purely Hindu society and an important port from the 5th to the 8th centuries. A Hīnayāna Buddhist school prospered there in the 7th and 8th centuries. During the late 9th to the early 11th centuries, Mahāyāna Buddhism from Nalanda and Java took root and flowered. Khmer-influenced sculptures of Avalokiteshvara and Maitreya dating from the 7th to 9th century were found further in Lopburi (an old Mon capital) and in villages around Nakhon Ratchasima and Buriram in the region known today as northeastern Thailand.

Essentially Phra Lersi are Indian hermits who are credited as founders and patron saints of various professions such as doctors, religious tattooists, white magic practitioners, herbalists and many others. There are currently 108 sacred hermits that are recognised by name and many others who are not. More often than not, the Lersi is generically represented as an older man wearing a conical head dress and a tiger skin robe. In Indian mythology, Phra Lersi received worldly knowledge from the Gods and taught this to mankind. Thus, Phra Lersi are known as masters of knowledge and are frequently worshipped by students and others in academic pursuits. As Phra Lersi are also credited to be founders of the Thai magical arts, they feature prominently on the altars of magic practitioners in Thailand and are often invoked in rituals.

One of the most famous current-day black magic practitioners is Ajahn Noo Kamphai. His temple is filled with hundreds of statues and images of the Thai reusee which comprise his signature tattoos. He is particularly well known for a reusee with a tiger's face called 'Phor Gare, Na Sua.' By carrying or displaying an image of Phra Lersi it is believed that you will be protected from black magic and evil spirits.



*Detail of a bhikkhu and a rishi (Thai Reusee)
from a Thai temple mural*

Ancient Practice - Modern Therapy *(continued from page 1)*

Nuad Boran, often called Thai yoga massage or traditional Thai massage, is an ancient, powerful form of structural and energetic integration. Gravity affects our structure moment by moment, and years of walking, standing, sitting in a chair, or sleeping in our favorite position take a toll on our physical structure -- usually in ways that limit the full use of our muscles, our mental acuity, or the heartfelt sharing of our joys. Thai yoga massage can balance and rejuvenate every aspect of your day. Thai massage affects the entire structure in every session. The density of the muscle and the joints' range of motion both indicate the flow of energy in the body. Imagine a ballet dancer, flowing gracefully, moving with ease, effortlessly gliding across the stage. Or picture small children, and how they move with ease and grace even if their movements are not so elegantly executed. As we grow older, we step away from the body and focus our attention on our careers, our family, and life in general. We sustain just enough energy to keep us going through each day - unless we exercise. Then, we experience, first-hand, the jolt of energy it provides. Thai yoga massage is designed to expand the flow of energy in the body. The movements and the manipulations are all based on ancient practices, most of which have been shared by practice, rather than by writing or talking about it. For hundreds of years and currently, people in Thailand receive *nuad boran* to rebalance and increase their energy. They also work on each other at home with family members and friends. This traditional therapy unwinds tension stored up from working in the fields (or in the modern-day office and work setting), it clears the mind from mental agitation, and through the power of touch and physical connection, it expands the heart. The traditional positions and movements are effective because they address all three aspects of our daily life experience: our physical body, our emotional state, and our mental disposition.

Have you ever noticed that it is difficult to lie on your back, perfectly still, without moving? Try it now. For five minutes, simply close your eyes and lie motionless. What most people become aware of very quickly is the motion inside the ears and the flickering of thoughts in our head. *Nuad boran* begins lying on the back, which allows the spinal cord a chance to unwind and release the gravitational pull (one reason chiropractors advise sleeping on the back rather than the belly). Something interesting happens when your body is touched by another. Whether it's because the intention is to bring your body and mind into balance, or whether it's due to a nervous system trigger, what happens is that you quickly sink into a relaxed state. In this relaxed state, your body is guided through a yoga routine. Specific positions allow energy to move more freely. Pressure stimulates circulation and movement aligns bones, increasing range of motion. These various manipulations lead into the first powerful principle of *nuad boran* — the principle of stretching. This action releases stiffness, increases traction and space between bones at the joint capsule, improves joint mobility, and enhances blood circulation. Another principle of *nuad boran* deals with specific pressure points. Over years of experience, the Thai people have discovered there are certain areas where sustained pressure increases and enhances the flow of energy to the body, as if opening an energetic dam. The surge of energy helps to alleviate pain, restore balance, and even improve posture. Similar to the effect of joint pumping, this principle generates heat in the joint capsule, increasing blood circulation, and improving range of motion. When combined together in a flow-like session, the receiver arises from a session feeling enhanced, elongated, invigorated, and reformed.

Thai yoga massage is not only effective and therapeutic for the receiver, but when practiced correctly, it is also a yoga practice for the therapist. The giver improves his own physical energy flow, joint range of motion and mental balance. Each movement is designed so that both parties are balanced. Yoga is a self-practice where we discover how physical postures enhance our internal energy and improve our external experience. This discovery is revealed through sensation. What we see is what we have been accustomed to feeling. From the texture of a rock, the heat of sunlight, or the nourishment of fruits, many aspects of life are energetic experiences. In Thai yoga therapy we go a step further. We feel beyond ourselves. While staying perfectly attuned to our experience, we sense our client so we can actually serve and benefit him. This feeling, beyond ourselves, is the core element of loving kindness, or "metta". As we develop our own capacity to extend loving kindness to another, we find that we can better share that attitude with the universe. Every day, our experience is new, and every day our body, our mind, and our emotions are different. *Nuad boran* addresses these fluctuations in a unique and powerful way. It connects us to the present moment, both client and therapist, and when we are in the moment, our possibilities for growth and knowledge become expanded and enhanced.

INTERVIEW WITH LOI KROH

Loi Kroh is a Traditional Thai Massage School and Salon in Chiang Mai, Thailand, that specializes in private lessons. Coocky Tassanee is the owner and founder of Loi Kroh, and this interview was conducted by Hillary Olsen, RTT.

THAI: *I've heard that you have some beautiful stories from your childhood regarding Thai massage. Can you tell us about them?*

Since the age of 8, I began to help my grandfather ease his numerous aches and pains. Coming from a Thai village, most of my family members worked on the farm, and at the end of the day, they would come back home with aching legs and backs. My grandfather would offer me 50 satang (0.5 baht) to walk on his back, which I gladly accepted. Instead of playing with my friends, I preferred to earn a few baht while holding onto the wall, not really knowing why I was walking up and down my grandfather's back for 30 minutes to an hour, or until I became bored.

My grandmother's sister was the town's midwife. Whenever she had to assist a birth, I would try to help in any way I could. I would often watch the births, since our big house didn't have many rooms to disappear into when someone came over screaming with pain. I grew up accustomed to the traditional Thai methods and remedies. The bamboo knife that cut the umbilical cord never really scared me, or even the bloody scenes of birth. By the time I was 10, my mother would wake me up in the middle of the night with cramps and gas in her stomach, and ask me to work on her. I didn't realize it back then, but she was teaching me how to press these uncomfortable pains away. These late night cramps happened often with my mom, who gave birth to five children.



Coocky Tassanee

THAI: *I've read that Loi Kroh first started as a massage salon in 1998 and then a year later, you began leading private lessons. What first inspired you to open a massage salon? And then what led you to begin teaching a year later?*

As a young adult I rarely had any encounters with massaging. I eventually married a Dutch man and moved to Europe. I became a housewife while he worked in the hotel industry, and we started a small, private souvenir shop for three years. In the 90s we decided to move back to Thailand after living in Europe for more than a decade. Thai massage seemed really interesting to me at the time. I took several trainings and later opened a small massage salon on Loi Kroh road with my friend. We had two mats and could accommodate two customers at a time. Business was OK and it started to go up as the years went on. After a while, a Spanish customer asked me to teach her Thai massage. She wanted to give massages to her friends and family. I agreed to teach her what I knew, charging her the same price as regular massages by the hour. A year later, I opened the school; teaching private one-on-one courses. Recently, we've opened double courses: two students to one teacher. I find it very effective when a student observes the methods from another point of view. They also have a chance to feel the difference between other peoples' bodies. Today, my ex-husband manages the massage salon and I manage the massage school. I'm still learning about the art of Thai massage to this day.

THAI: *You have an extensive training background. It seems you've trained with many different styles and teachers. How would you describe your lineage and style of Thai massage, and how has your diverse background influenced you and Loi Kroh's style of teaching?*

Yes, I have training with many different teachers. When I first decided to train in massage, I took up a course with Mama Lek Chaiya on Thapae Road. I got a really good feeling whenever I gave massages and decided to choose this path. I searched for more schools to study at and completed several more courses with Pichet, the Old Medicine Hospital, and Wat Po to name a few. I don't use 100% of my different trainings! I just pick up the different styles of what is suitable for me. So my style has a little bit of every one of my teachers.

THAI: *Loi Kroh is known for its one-on-one private trainings. Why did you decide to format your trainings in this way? What are the advantages to learning Thai massage in a one-on-one setting?*

The teacher can correct the position or pressure in a better way when it's one-on-one. It is a real advantage for the student. One-on-one is also good for people who don't have time to stay one month in Chiang Mai to learn Thai Massage in a class setting.

THAI: *Loi Kroh is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year. How exciting! Please describe the evolution and changes of your school over this past decade.*

First, when you said this, I didn't realize it... Loi Kroh is celebrating its 10th anniversary! These 10 years passed by so quickly... Loi Kroh is growing every year. We started with three mats and next month the third building will be finished! Here, people come from all around the world, just for fun or for professional training. We are happy to share our techniques with everybody. We don't teach so much theory but more about feeling and intuition. It's our specialty at Loi Kroh.

THAI: *There is a Loi Kroh school and also a Loi Kroh massage salon. Tell us more about receiving massages at Loi Kroh.*

Well, the training school and the massage salon have been operated independently for three years now. But, at the school you can receive massages from our teachers. It's a real advantage, and I recommend that each student receives from their teacher before and during the courses at Loi Kroh. And Loi Kroh school has a very relaxed and open feeling, especially in our private garden.

THAI: Few schools offer trainings in Rue Sri Datton, and Loi Kroh is one of them. For the THAI members that aren't familiar with Rue Sri Datton, please describe this ancient, movement practice and explain the classes and trainings you offer for this style.

Our Rue Sri Datton style is the original one, the same as Wat Po. At Loi Kroh we are focusing on breath to create your external power. This technique helps people who give massage, and it's also very good to detoxify the body. Your body and digestion begins to burn foods better after at least 5 days of R.S.D training. And we also teach a meditation class before and after each practice of R.S.D. Since I began practicing R.S.D, I really felt different and changed in a positive way. It creates very good self protection, strengthens the immune system, and it brings you overall well-being and growth on many different levels.

THAI: What do you think the next 10 years will look like for Loi Kroh? What dreams and goals do you have for your school?

I don't really know. It's so far ahead for me. Life is beautiful, giving massage, teaching... I enjoy it a lot ! For this year, in Loi Kroh school we will develop two new courses: pregnant women Thai massage and baby massage. In March 2008, the new building will be finished so that we can offer a big classroom in Chiang Mai. I'm teaching some interesting courses there in May and June of 2008. And maybe next year I will develop a Loi Kroh school in Europe because I have been living six months a year in France since 2007.

THAI: What are your hobbies and activities outside of Loi Kroh (not that there's that much extra time, I could imagine!), but are there some interesting activities and interests that you'd like to share?

I like to be quiet in nature, go to the temple, I like to touch wood... I also like cooking, planting, gardening, and meditating. And I definitely love to spend time with my daughter and my future husband, Xavier. I like to practice qi gong and tai ji quan. Also, I keep studying about energy and about spiritual work.

THAI: And to conclude, do you have any further information for THAI members - any advice or suggestions for them as they continue their studies and teachings?

I thank you very much for the work at THAI to introduce Thai massage around the world and to bring it in such a positive way to so many people. I wish THAI good luck. Love and Blessings to you !

Loi Kroh may be found on the web at www.loikrohmassage.com



The teaching staff of Loi Kroh on the school grounds

**PRACTITIONERS' GATHERING
& STUDY RETREAT IN WHISTLER, BC**
WITH THAI INSTRUCTORS:
KRISTIN NUTTALL & TIM HOLT

SEPTEMBER 5TH-8TH, 2008

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INFO@ANCIENTTHAIMASSAGE.CA**

Thailand web link partners

THAI wishes to acknowledge its web partners in Thailand. Please consider these schools and teachers when you study in the motherland.

Loi Kroh Massage School, Chiang Mai - www.loikrohmassage.com
tel: 53 903 884 e-mail: cocky_t@lycos.com *One-on-one basic & advanced trainings at a lovely central downtown location.*

Nerve Touch Massage, Chiang Mai - www.nervetouch.com
tel: 53 278 325 e-mail: tanavid@loxinfo.co.th *Jap sen style Thai massage; one on one and small groups. Right beside Tha Pae Gate.*

Phussapa Thai Massage, Bangkok - www.thaimassage-bangkok.com
tel: 2204-2922/3 e-mail: phussapa@thaimassage-bangkok.com *Basic and specialized trainings. Right near Sukhumvit Rd. & the Skytrain.*

Sunshine Massage School, Chiang Mai - www.sunshine-massage-school.com
tel: 53 262 574 e-mail: info@sunshine-massage-school.com *Lovely school in a quiet neighborhood. Basic and specialized trainings.*

THAI HEALING IN ACTION



Standing: Al Turner, Paul Fowler, Hillary, Rose Griscom.. Kneeling: David Weitzer, Bob Haddad, Chris Gordon

Hi THAI colleagues,

As you know, THAI endorses students, Registered Thai Therapists, teachers and schools around the world that follow basic guidelines of study and practice. The photo to the left is of me and some of our colleagues from the THAI retreat in June 2007, in Chapel Hill, NC, USA. Those of you that attended know what a great experience it was.

THAI is very dear to my heart. When I started practicing Thai Yoga Massage several years ago, I felt isolated and without an organized network of fellow practitioners and teachers. Thanks to THAI, there is more of a collective consciousness and support system among members of the worldwide community of Thai massage.

As Media Coordinator for THAI, I am looking to find a few members who can help me compile and write articles for the Living Traditions newsletter and the THAI e-newsletter.

If you are interested in joining the Media Committee, please contact me as soon as possible: media@thaihealingalliance.com

- Hillary Hilliard (Olsen) -



Online course list

In January, 2008, THAI launched a new online course listing service. Approved teachers and schools can now list details of their upcoming courses on the THAI home page, which is viewable to the general public as well as all members of THAI.

A wide variety of courses are listed in chronological order from the present up to eight months into the future.

Plan for your continuing education, and see the new courses being offered by THAI Instructors worldwide. View the new course list on the THAI web site by clicking on "Upcoming Courses & Workshops."



Why is that man smiling?

For one year now, Danko Lara Radic (*below, left*) has been silently and lovingly working in the background for the benefit of THAI and the world community of *nuad boran*.

Danko originally trained at ITM in 2000, and later with Andrea Baglioni and Davor Haber from the Sunshine Network. Last year he made a special trip to study with Pichest Boonthumme.

Danko heads ITM Belgrade in Serbia, which opened its doors in 2005 as the first school of Thai massage in that country. He maintains a personal practice in Belgrade, and travels to other Balkan locations to give introductory courses in *nuad boran*, including the Isle of Iz, where this photo was taken.

"It's a good opportunity for the people from South-eastern Europe, countries like Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia, Romania, and Bulgaria", he says about teaching at Iz.

"This year an advanced training will be offered there for the people that have studied last year. My plan is to help spread the art of Thai massage first in this region, and then I will try to reach out to other parts of Eastern Europe."

With reference to his volunteer work to help maintain the THAI Archives, Danko says: "Although Thai massage is one of the most efficient body-work therapies, and has no equal for its complexity and universal techniques, it's spread has been somewhat slow-paced compared to other Eastern traditions. My wish is to help *nuad boran* become established and recognized as a premier healing therapy, and to help my colleagues in THAI who want to deepen their knowledge through personal research and investigation."

Thank you, Danko, for your selfless work. And..... keep smiling!

- Bob Haddad

Working toward your RTT?

THAI has recently seen an increase in membership of Basic Members. At the same time, more Basic Members have been upgrading their membership to Practitioner level, and are now using the title of RTT after their names. If you are a THAI Basic Member, here are the requirements for becoming an RTT:

* Certificates and transcripts totaling 150 hours of formal study (some of this study must be with THAI-approved Instructors)

* A blank copy of your client intake form. You may modify and use THAI's suggested form, or any other form of your choice.

* 50 logged practice sessions must be submitted. You may use THAI's Form L, or any other form you wish. Written descriptions of each session must include: a) client's first name, date and total session time b) client symptoms & complaints c) positions (supine, prone, side, sitting) and techniques you used, d) general observations and findings

Make sure to keep your logs! See the THAI web site for more details on RTT membership.



Danko at the beach in Croatia.

THAI welcomes new members

Laura Knudsen	Basic Member	Creston, BC, Canada
Nicole Arel	Basic Member	Manchester, Connecticut
Nathalie de Meyenburg, RTT	Practitioner	Bloomington, Indiana
Kathy Talley	Basic Member	Federal Way, Washington
Elizabeth Zebold	Basic Member	Bow, Washington
Annette Caesar, RTT	Practitioner	Calgary, Alberta, Canada
Gabriel Azoulay, RTT	Practitioner	Scottsdale, Arizona
Kelly Colbert	Basic Member	Palm Desert, California
Margaret Harstad	Basic Member	Carlton, Minnesota
Richard Willis	Basic Member	Albuquerque, New Mexico
Marie-Claude Comtois	Basic Member	Pemberton, BC, Canada
Jennie Scott	Basic Member	Whistler, BC, Canada
Anita Gertz	Basic Member	Halfmoon Bay, BC, Canada
Julie Fischer	Basic Member	Havertown, Pennsylvania
Megan Pischke	Basic Member	Squamish, BC, Canada
Karen Ufer, RTT	Basic Member	Germany / USA
Dorothy Stewart	Basic Member	Dallas, Texas
Denica Lilova	Basic Member	Sofia, Bulgaria
Raquel Silva	Basic Member	Forest Hills, New York
Ashleen Buchter	Basic Member	Cedar Ridge, California
Gina Courter	Basic Member	Raleigh, North Carolina
Joyce Kilburg	Basic Member	Placerville, California
Heather Oblak	Basic Member	Chicago, Illinois
Janine Favia	Basic Member	Chicago, Illinois
Phillip Duffy	Basic Member	Belmont, California
Li Anne Tseu	Basic Member	Belmont, California
Jill Rietema	Basic Member	Chicago, Illinois
Sara Roer	Basic Member	New York, New York
Christy Rice	Basic Member	Prior Lake, Minnesota
Jennifer Schwindt	Basic Member	Sarasota, Florida
Kathryn Ellis	Basic Member	Warwickshire, UK
Carrie Fulton	Basic Member	Naples, Florida
Jennifer Barnett, RTT	Practitioner	Kansas City, Missouri

The above members joined THAI before March, 2008. Members who have joined since then will be featured in the next issue of the Living Traditions newsletter.

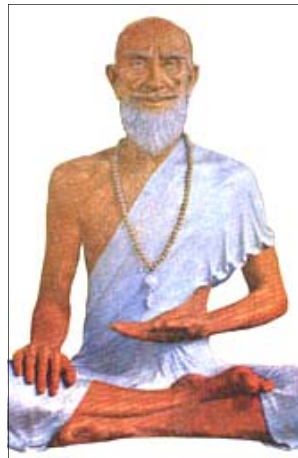
Thai massage testimonial

The most dramatic result of my first Thai massage was that I felt like I could breathe so much better. I do a great job on exhalations, but I've always had more trouble with inhalations. It just never felt like my diaphragm or chest wall could expand enough for a full breath.

On the evening of my first Thai session and the next morning, I noticed how deeply I could take a breath. It felt incredibly good! Even after a few weeks, it still is better, though not as good as the first few days after the session.

I'm learning that I am more of a giver than a receiver and I am working on that through breathwork and meditation. I am truly looking forward to my next session.

With Joy and Ease, - Paula



JIVAKA'S CORNER

Some of Jivaka's most famous treatments

The diseases that were prevalent in Magadha (Northern India during the time of the Buddha) were: leprosy (*kuttham*), ulceration (*gandho*), eczema (*kilaso*), consumption (*soso*) and epilepsy (*apamaro*). Malaria (*ahivatakaroga* or "snake-wind disease") and diabetes (*madhuragu*) were also common. In the time of the Buddha, the most famous physician was Jivaka Komarabhacca who was the private physician of King Pasenadi Kosala, as well as physician to the Buddha and his *sangha*. It is recorded that Jivaka cured the king of a fistula (an abnormal opening between two organs) with a single application of a special ointment. Once when the Lord Buddha was sick, Jivaka prepared a concoction of three fragrant lotus flowers mixed with other medicinal herbs to release his bowels, and the medicine was administered to the Buddha in a inhalation compound. After the Buddha's recovery, Jivaka prepared a special type of ambrosia to nourish him.

In the ancient scriptures there is a story, told in connection with the rules on clothing, of the famous physician. It throws light on the practice of medicine in ancient times, and illustrates a deep psychological understanding on the part of Jivaka. A certain merchant from Rajagaha had suffered from severe headaches for many years and was close to death because of the affliction. None of the local physicians were able to help him, but Jivaka was given special permission by the King in order to treat him. After arranging the fee - one hundred thousand florins each for himself and for the king - Jivaka told the patient that after the operation, in order for the procedure to be effective, he would have to lie quietly on one side, then on the other and finally on his back, for a total of seven months in each position. The patient, realizing he had no other option, agreed. For the procedure, Jivaka tied him to his bed and (probably without the use of anesthetics) performed trepanation (opening of the head). Jivaka cut into his scalp, removed two creatures (*panakas*), closed the skull with sutures, and then applied a freshly-made herbal ointment.

The patient tried his best in the recovery, but the longest he could stay in each position was for seven days. In three weeks, the merchant he was completely cured. Jivaka, in his last visit with the merchant, admitted that he had lied to the patient. He said that if the patient hadn't agreed to remain still for seven months in each position, he would never have remained that way for even seven days.

— edited and researched by Bob Haddad



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Letters & Commentary

By belonging to this organization, I am helping to spread awareness of traditional Thai massage. My affiliation with THAI will help my practice grow. *Jennie Scott, Whistler, BC, Canada*

THAI is playing an important role to promote and expand the knowledge and value of Nuad Boran. It is an honor to help support and share the beauty I was given while living in Thailand. *Gabriel Azoulay, Arizona, USA*

Affiliation with a larger body provides support in the form of education and professional resources, and supports the community in maintaining the highest standards for Thai massage. *Dorothy Stewart, California, USA*

I think it is very important that such an activity is going on in the world—especially now when Thai massage is spreading more and more. We have to save the tradition! *Denica Lilova, Sofia, Bulgaria*

As a Thai Massage student and a member of Thai Healing Alliance, I now know how to go about meeting my goals professionally. *Raquel Silva, New York, USA*

A group of people must unite to keep any belief and form of practice strong. By being part of THAI I will be able to develop and maintain a stronger practice. *LiAnne Tseu, California, USA*

I want to be recognized by an international body in Thai massage, and to use the THAI logo in my marketing and practice. *Kathryn Ellis, Warwickshire, UK*

I am impressed that THAI is a non-profit, volunteer organization, whose goal is to educate and share Thai Massage in its original form, without regard for personal or monetary gain. *Jennifer Barnett, Missouri, USA*

I have practiced yoga for many years, and following a trip to Thailand I became interested in Thai massage. My children are now leaving home and now I have the opportunity to study and become a Thai practitioner. It is important for me to be part of a recognized body. *Christine Kirby, Hertfordshire, UK*

I joined THAI to network with other therapists and to help promote Thai massage to the general public. *Carrie Fulton, Florida*



Thai Healing Alliance International

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Inside you'll find great information on traditional Thai healing arts