



The Newsletter of the  
**Twin Cities T'ai-Chi Ch'uan  
Studio**

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# Wu-Dang

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Complimentary for studio members.  
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Please send requests to address at left.

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## Two Upcoming Summer Retreats

The studio will be sponsoring two retreats this summer. We will have our second annual Faribault retreat (August 10-13) and a new "Other Styles" retreat (July 28-30) in Northern Minnesota. Both retreats will offer healthy doses of practice, hiking, relaxing and socializing.

The other styles retreat will offer instruction in Pa-Kua, Hsing-Yi and Praying Mantis. The location for the retreat is Dora Lake Lodge in Northome, Minnesota. Travel time from the Twin Cities is about 5 hours. The Lodge is situated on a lake and boats can be rented. The lodge offers showers and students may rent cabins or camp. Meals will not be provided, but we can opt to cook communally.

The theme of the Faribault retreat will be the 8 Energies and how they apply to the Solo Form, Pushing-Hands and weapons. The retreat will again take place at Shattuck School, which will provide lodging, linens, and meals.

As always, every is welcome and invited to attend both workshops. There are no prerequisites. Sign up at the Studio. Please call Kim for details and any questions. ☺

## Schedule Change and Closings

The summer schedule begins with a new class for Pa-Kua on Monday nights 8:30-9:30. This class will cover the 8 Linking Palms, a 2-Person Form and applications. No previous experience is necessary for this class.

Tuesday night Pushing-Hands from 6:00-7:00 will review basic drills and Ch'in-na. From 7:00-7:30 we will teach a 2-Person Ch'in-na form. No previous experience necessary.

The rest of the schedule will remain the same except for our usual Wednesday night Solo Form in the Park. Our old park is unusable this year, therefore we are going have class at Newell Park in St. Paul. From the Studio: East on University to Fairview (if you reach Snelling, you've gone too far), North on Fairview to the park. Fairview dead ends at Pierce Butler Route and the park is on that corner. We will meet at South end of the park. In case of rain, class will be at the Studio. Pa-Kua and Hsing-Yi will be held at the studio at their normal times.

We will be closed Tuesday, July 4 and Monday, September 4. ☹

# The What, Why, When and How of Pushing-Hands—Part III

by Ray Hayward

In the past two newsletters we have gone over the What, Why and When of Pushing Hands. Which leaves us the most difficult to understand—How to learn, practice or do Pushing-Hands. Because there are so many misunderstandings and inconsistencies we will divide this part into two sections—to be continued (and hopefully concluded) in the next issue. This article will deal with the use of the number three as a guideline. The article in the next issue will talk about the use of the number eight

Just as a great dish needs a recipe or an extensive trip needs a map, so too does the path of learning and practicing need a plan of action. T'ai-Chi as a system has many clear cut formulae which we can use for learning and practicing as well as teaching. We are going to look at the T'ai-Chi symbol which is a guideline for breaking down any given learning/practicing plan into three parts. We will also use the 8 trigrams, which will give us a couple of lesson plans in increments of eight.

When looking at the T'ai-Chi symbol, most people see black and white fish or dots, and this makes them think of opposites, but the symbol represents not just opposites and not two, but three powers, active, passive, and neutral. The three powers, called San-Tsai in Chinese, represent heavenly power, earthly power and human power. If we approach Pushing-Hands in three progressive steps we can not only save time and energy, but understand Pushing-Hands and the entire system of T'ai-Chi as a whole.

The first set of three for learning is to train the body to become first soft, then hard, and then have the ability to freely change between the two. The T'ai-Chi Classics say, "From the most soft and yielding you will arrive at the most powerful and unyielding," and an old martial arts saying tells us to be able to make our bodies soft as cotton or as hard as steel in the blink of an eye. I can't emphasize enough that softness is not only one third of the mastery of Pushing-Hands, but it must be the first part mastered.

Another set of three for learning purposes is the concept of Hua/defend, Na/control, and Da/attack. Each single technique is T'ai-Chi has three distinct

parts, which at the highest level are done together, but for learning purposes are mainly broken down into three parts. Defense can be defined as the many ways to avoid or reduce your partner's energy or attack from coming toward your body, control is to stop any further energy from your partner, and attack is issuing your energy to your partner. The first step in learning any Pushing-Hands practice is to study the defensive part, to truly understand how to protect yourself. Control is a very subtle idea of doing something to stop your partner from doing anything further to you after you have neutralized their first push or attack. This can be achieved by unbalancing, trapping, locking their joint or any other number of ways to try to freeze them, so to speak. Attack is to issue energy of your own for a specific counter-attack such as a push, strike, throw, trip, or a finishing joint-lock.

When you understand the three parts of a technique separately, you can begin to combine them together. First, you should combine the defensive and controlling aspects and then counter-attack, making the three parts into two. The final stage is to defend, control and counter in the same movement. Easy to say (or write), but difficult to do without years of correct practice.

There are so many ways to use the three powers for training, but I'll just give one more. When learning a new method or practicing a familiar one, put your attention first on your body, then on your partner's body and lastly on both bodies at the same time. Master Liang always told us, 'The first step of Pushing-Hands is to make a thorough investigation of feeling and sensitivity.' When practicing Pushing-Hands I want to feel my body—Is it relaxed? Unified? Balanced? Am I in a defect position? Then I want to feel my partner's body for the same qualities. And finally, I want to feel both our bodies at the same time, processing information and acting accordingly. A common pitfall is to focus on your partner's faults and mistakes without first correcting your own. Without fail, 90% of all complaints made to me about other students is after a Pushing-Hands class. You work on getting yourself right. When that is done, you can look and study your partner. Then, and only then, you can begin to understand any given technique from both points of view. The Art of War says, "To know yourself and know your opponent is to have 100 victories in 100 battles." ☺

# Introduction to Rolfing®

by John Zembiec

Rolfing is the method of physical restructuring developed by Ida P. Rolf, Ph.D. Based on the principle of physics, histology, and biochemistry, the Rolfing approach to structural integration is unique in its attention to improve alignment and balance within the body, as well as balancing the body within the field of gravity.

Rolfing is a system of soft tissue manipulation that is designed to sequentially and systematically align the major segments of the body in a balanced relationship. The Rolfer uses physical pressure to stretch and guide connective tissue to a place of easier and more efficient movement. The client works with the Rolfer to release holding patterns within the connective tissue.

Fascia is the human body's organ of support and organization. From brain to bicep, lens of the eye to liver, femur to pectoral, fascia surrounds and invests in every structure and organ of the body. Fascia is one continuous web of tissue that can be likened to a deep second skin that acts as a physical template, arranging all systems of the body. It has many unique properties that the

## My Experience with Rolfing

by Paul Abdella

Two years ago I sustained injuries from a bicycling accident which impacted the left side of my body at the ribs, pelvis, and knees. For the next two to three months I slowly worked on rehabilitating myself with the aid of physical therapy, acupuncture, and deep tissue massage. I also created a stretching and exercise program to try and offset the body's natural tendency to create muscular compensation patterns whenever it is injured. These compensation patterns are the body's way of protecting an injured area from

**Paul's Rolfing continued on Page 4**

Rolfer uses to bring the client into a new state of being and awareness.

People take part in the Rolf experience for many different reasons. Professional athletes, including one particularly famous Minnesota Viking, attribute their professional longevity to the Rolf methods' ability to maintain the architectural integrity of their bodies. Martial artists and dancers are often astonished at the improved levels of somatic awareness, reaction time and physical power that manifest after Rolfing. Of late, Rolfing has found its way into the corporate world where it is being used to abate the omnipresent condition of thoracic outlet and carpal tunnel syndrome. The Starkey Hearing Aid company of Minneapolis has employed Rolfers to reduce repetitive stress injuries and enhance employee productivity for over a decade. People who have sought relief from appendicular, head and spinal injuries often find Rolfing to bring improvement when no other method could. ☺

*John Zembiec has been interested in body culture for most of his life. Zembiec teaches a Sufi method of personality profiling known as the Enneagram, and has experience in many forms of body work, both esoteric and mundane. He is a recent transplant from New Mexico, and has been Rolfing in the Twin Cities for a little over half a year. His favorite Martial Art is Hsing-Yi.*

## My Rolfing Experience

by Ray Hayward

I had been hearing about the deep-tissue body work called Rolfing for over twenty years. I have seen people's before and after photos and the improvement in postures and alignment are remarkable. I have always planned to explore this type of massage/manipulation, but the time or the money never seemed available. That changed when John Zembiec came through the Studio door looking for Hsing-Yi.

John casually mentioned to me that he was a

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### Paul's Rolfing continued from Page 3

further injury as well as taking up the workload of that area. An example illustrating this idea would be to look at a large circus tent with its intricate framework of poles and ropes. If a section of the tent had its support poles knocked down and ropes cut, not only would the outer form of the tent be altered but the poles and ropes that remained upright would strain to do the work of those which were knocked down. So it is with the body. My injuries were deep enough that I couldn't rehab with anything but rest for about a month. After that I began the aforementioned therapies and within ten weeks I was back to a near normal level of activity.

Over the next two years I enjoyed my usual level of martial arts practice and other activities but last March began to experience shooting pain down the outside of my left leg. The pain started slowly and mostly at night but gradually intensified and spread to the front of the leg. I added extra stretches for the abductors and hip flexors to my usual routine which offered temporary relief but eventually the pain worsened and I began losing strength in my leg. I sensed that I had a slight misalignment in my pelvis which my muscles were compensating for and that it stemmed from the accident two years earlier.

I was considering what form of body work would be the most effective when I was forced to make a quick decision. During a routine round of the solo form my left leg completely gave out performing a heel kick. I was unable to lift my left leg and began walking with a slight limp. After talking to Ray about my leg he told me he was seeing a Rolfer who was helping him with an old injury of his own and that I might benefit from getting Rolfed. I had been considering Rolfing as a treatment option anyway so I called the Rolfer, John Zembiec, and made an appointment.

My initial treatment was a diagnosis that lasted about an hour which consisted of structural evaluation, muscle testing and some preliminary massage work. John determined that a stress line

had developed in my body which ran from my left foot upward on the inside of my leg, through the abdomen and hip flexors on up toward the head- probably caused by the impact of my fall on the left side of my body. He felt the fourth and fifth Rolf sessions would have the most significant effect on my condition. Rolfing utilizes ten treatment sessions designed to reinstate the body's natural integrated structure (putting the circus tent back up) through various massage and manipulation techniques. I liked the fact that Rolfing has the client work with the therapist by moving into or away from the massage techniques being used. This for me, increased their effectiveness and made me an active participant in making changes in my body.

With each session I felt a shift in my structure that gave me a greater sense of balance and equality between the left and right sides of my body as well as diminishing my leg pain. As promised, the fourth and fifth sessions made significant change in the condition of my left leg. The fourth session began at the feet and worked up the inner leg to the external rotator muscles-working on the obturator externus muscle in particular. This work was deep-challenging even my preference and aptitude for deep tissue massage, but by the end of the session I walked out on a new pair of legs. Session five targeted the psoas muscle in the abdomen-the primary muscle involved in elevating the leg. By the end of this session my leg length had evened out between left and right and the pain in raising my left leg was essentially gone. It took until the end of all the sessions for the strength to return to my left leg but return it did.

Rolfing restored the full function of my leg and gave me new insights into the subtle and unique ways in which the body maintains health through the balance of its structure. I have been fully participating-pain free- in all my martial arts practices since the end of April. I highly recommend considering this effective form of body work. ☺

# Graduation News

Congratulations from the instructors to those members who have finished the 150 movement Solo Form. Many have started, few have finished. Congratulations also to those members who have completed other forms and styles. Keep up the good work and know it is an honor, a privilege and a great joy to share these arts with you.

## Solo Form

Danny Beck  
Mike Cosgrove  
Patrick Philips

## Aaron Friday

Linda Hermanson  
Kim Husband  
Kyoko Katayama  
Dan Nave

## T'ai-Chi Sword

Mike Clemens  
Brad Felske  
LeRoy Jenke  
Pat Hemmis  
Kelsey Miller  
Karen Peterson  
Stephanie Reynolds  
Cory Tobin

## T'ai-Chi Fast Form

Tim Behm  
Matt Buzzard  
Julie Cisler

## James Postiglione

Eric Stull  
James Whitney

## Read any good books?

from Members of the Studio

Fools Crow by Thomas Merila

Beyond Civilization by Daniel Quinn

The Hiram Key by Knight & Lomas

Karate Do, My Way of Life by Gichin Funakoshi

The Second Messiah by Knight & Lomas

Secrets of 7-Star Praying Mantis by Lee Kam-Wing

## Cat Care Clinic

**Sue Swanson, DVM**

Veterinary Care, Housecalls, Adoptions

**(651) 429-4153**

## Rolfing®

**Structural Integration**

**John C. Zembiec, Certified Rolfer**

**(612) 644-6420**

### Ray's Rolfing continued from Page 3

certified Rolfer and that he'd like the chance to work on a pudgy, forty-something T'ai-Chi instructor (my adjectives). He also said he was required to donate some of his body work as a follow-up to his graduation. Would I like to get Rolfed for free? You bet!

At the time I am writing I have received nine of the ten basic sessions. The first thing I noticed, like the first night after my diagnostic session, was that my sleeping posture changed and that I was able to be more relaxed and recharged after one night's sleep. I usually get treated on Sundays, so

Monday classes were always different as my body adjusted to the new found alignment and freedom. Not only did I get a lot of cracks and releases, but my standing meditation reached new levels from the same effort.

There were many subtle as well as obvious benefits, but the one peculiar one dealt with my kicks, especially high kicks. I have the ability to execute high, and to some extent, difficult kicks, but as I get older the desire to do them has faded. Now after my Rolfing experience, I caught myself not only doing high kicks, but wanting to do them. Go figure! ☺

**Schedule**  
**June 15 - September 15, 2000**

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Saturday
12:30-2:30 Solo Form	6:00-7:00 Pushing-Hands Research		12:30-2:30 Solo Form	10:00-11:30 Eeclctsis
6:00-7:30 Solo Form	7:00-7:30 Two-Person Ch'in-Na Form	6:00-7:30 Solo Form at Newell Park	6:00-7:30 Solo Form	11:30-12:30 Conditioning or Stretching *
7:30-8:30 Pushing-Hands and Form Applications	7:30-8:30 2 Person San-Shou	7:30-8:30 Hsing-Yi at Studio	7:30-8:30 Praying Mantis Level I	12:30-1:30 Chi-Kung, Standing Meditation and Energy Work
8:30-9:30 12 Animals/ Pa-Kua	8:30-9:30 Praying Mantis Level I	8:30-9:30 Pa-Kua #2	8:30-9:30 Praying Mantis Level II	1:30-2:45 Solo Form

\* First and last Saturdays, 11:30-12:30 are Stretching, all other Saturdays are Conditioning.

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**First Class Mail**