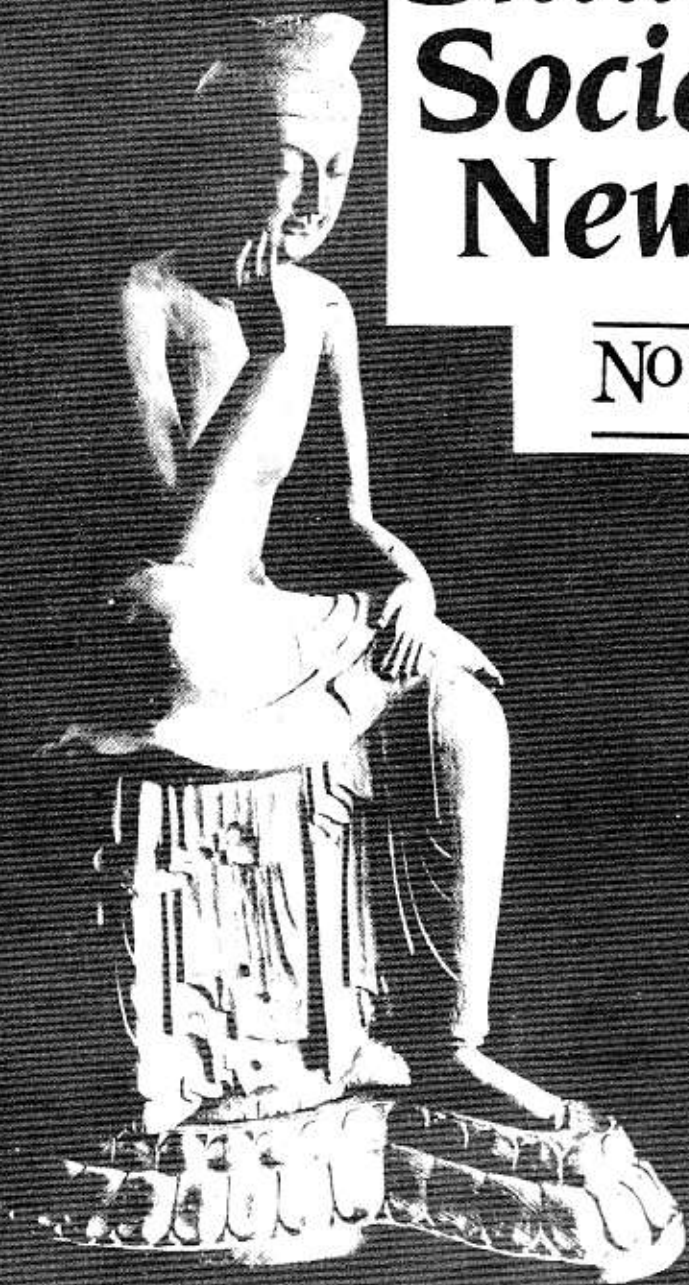


# Shiatsu Society News

No 15



Sculpture of  
Miroku Bodhisattva

OCT ~ DEC 1985

It may seem a little strange at first to be discussing defensive measures in the context of Shiatsu, where the process of shiatsu is openness for both the practitioner and recipient. The kinds of things I would like to share with you are practical ways of "holding centre" and self-revitalisation which have been useful over the years as an aid to greater spiritual awareness and helping others through the use of the meridians.

Is there a need for spiritual defense? If we "mere mortals" are living all the time from Oneness, Enlightened Mind, Supreme Judgment, etc then there is no need. From Oneness there is no resistance to flow, therefore the Mind is not stained by events of the world. "The enlightened man leaves no trace". As we aim towards this goal through self development, of which practising Shiatsu is part of this path, there are many occasions when we become unstuck and wobble, when will and vitality are lacking. I have found this particularly evident while treading the path of a meditator, shiatsu/jin shin practitioner. In both cases we aim to be open and clear; as a meditator we could say the purpose is to see ourselves, where we are now. As a practitioner we could say we aim to see clearly and be open to how another person is. The latter we may not do successfully if there is not some degree of personal/self openness. With openness comes the possibility of vulnerability, being influenced by someone else's ideas, thoughts, energy.

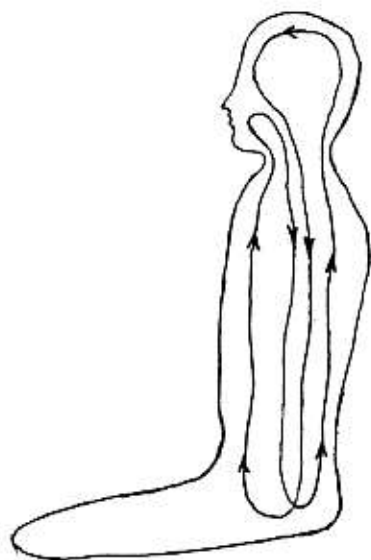
It would be easy to say that regular practise of dō-in, yoga etc are an adequate protection from emotional and spiritual ills, just as it is easy to say that a clean balanced diet could protect one on a biological level also. The reality is not so simple, since we are always in a dynamic flux, as graphically illustrated by the five transformations. It is not always possible to treat someone without clearing the "self" out of the way. In other words we work from where we are and not from some ideal. Therefore how others are energetically can affect us on many levels (eg. physical, emotional, spiritual, karmic) and it is very interesting to look within to see what changes are taking place. It is useful to become familiar with ways of looking, through other related practices, which can help us to adjust as well as "fine tune" with our environment.

The following are some of the ways I have found helpful in this fine tuning and self-reflection, which use meridians and ki flows. They have come out of my continued study of Zen and Jin shin acupressure. One interesting observation is the use of the eight extra meridians which are not normally used in Shiatsu. Two of the eight "Strange Flows" are more well known; the Conception Vessel and Governing Vessel, which are traditionally thought to trace a figure of eight within the body i.e. ascending the spine, over the head to mouth, descending deep within the torso to the base of the spine, then ascending the front to the mouth and again descending to base of spine. This pair, like the other six extra meridians, has psychic properties and is known as the Spiritual Channel. The primitive flow of the Spiritual Channel (CV & GV) is often modified with breath co-ordination to a simple circulation of ascending the back to head (inhale) then descending the front to coccyx (exhale). This flow is seen to be a more mature spiritual development and is used by many religious traditions as a meditational tool. A typical example

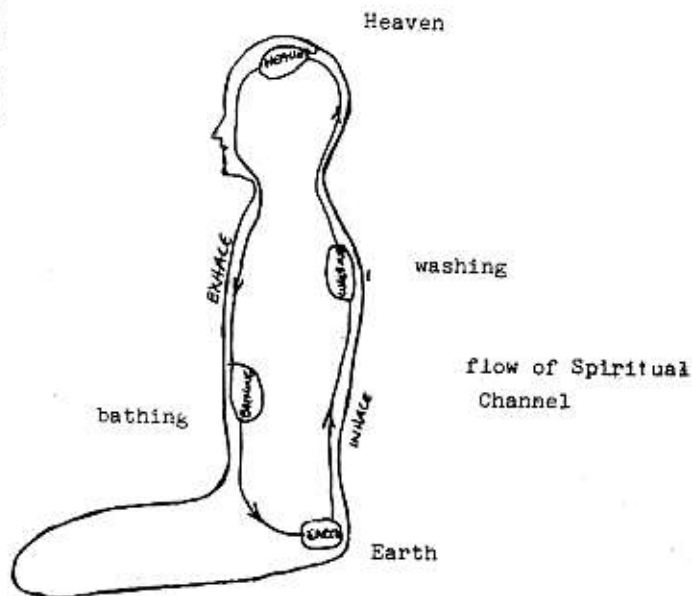
of advanced spiritual practice using the Spiritual Channel can be found in the Taoist text "HUI MING CHING" (Secret of the Golden Flower - R. Wilhelm) and variations of this are seen in current Zen practices. There are many other ways to use this flow constructively. To promote strong reserves of Ki in hara ( tanden - sea of energy) try the following meditational exercise before giving a treatment or at any time when feeling drained of resources.

With the back erect:

- 1) On inhalation, breathing through the nose, hold the tongue on the top palate ( connecting Conception Vessel to Governing Vessel) and creatively visualise Ki/prana moving with the breath to hara and filling the abdomen.
- 2) On exhalation disconnect the tongue from the palate and breath out through mouth slowly whilst retaining the visualisation of Ki in hara.
- 3) Repeat the exercise as often as needed.



Primitive flow of  
CV & GV

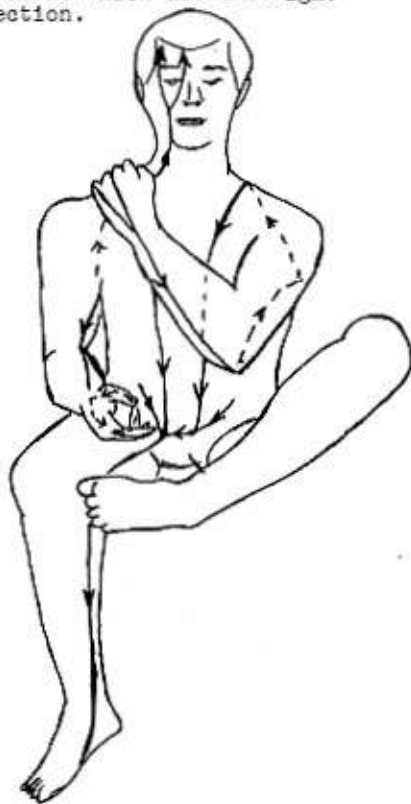


If one studies Buddhist/Taoist iconography one will see many hand gestures and recurrent bodily positions. These are called mudras. Perhaps the most common mudra is the Lotus Mudra, the position of sitting cross-legged with the hands together on thighs. This mudra greatly influences the flow of the Spiritual Channel by the physical unification of the limbs and the support of a straight and balanced back, neck and head. The above exercise is best done using this mudra. Many variations are seen which take into consideration the qualities of left and right polarities, where the left hand is the receiving hand and the right the giving hand. Therefore hand positions can greatly affect ki-flow, for example the Buddha's earth witness mudra where the right hand touches the ground has the effect of helping to release to the all-accepting Earth doubts, fears, anger, anxiety and other feelings which tend to overwhelm. This may be used at any time as a "grounding". It seems to work best when one is close to the ground and can actually touch something connected to earth, or if you are several floors up a metal water pipe is a good substitute.

The left hand being the receiver can be used defensively by closing it, so helping one regain equanimity and resolve whilst the external may be chaotic. A 20th century application of this is when answering the telephone, perhaps shortly after meditation or shiatsu treatment etc. In other words when one is both open and vulnerable. The Spiritual Defense Mudra is simply to close the left hand to a fist and hold it across the chest touching approx ST 24, this also offers some protection to Stomach and Spleen from unknown, external disruptive influences. Of course the hand can be released when one finds the caller "friendly"! The mudra can be used unobtrusively in many instances and can be combined with other mudras which use the right hand, to give additional support and protection.

Hand and finger, and body positions may be co-ordinated to influence the flows through the extra meridians to promote calm, clarity, relaxation and unity as well as balancing the 12 organ meridians which they strongly affect. The following mudra is again seen in Buddhist iconography with Kannon, Bodhisatva of Compassion, forming a flow of Ki through the Regulator Channel (Yin & Yang Wei Mo).

- 1) Sit in a comfortable armchair with lower back supported.
  - 2) Place left foot against right Spleen 9.
  - 3) Place right hand on thigh and connect thumb over middle or ring finger.
  - 4) Rest left hand on right GB21 or TW 15.
  - 5) Hold for as long as you wish.
- Note: the arm positions by themselves can have a very relaxing and centring effect.



Using the basic flow polarity where right hand gives and the left receives, the Spiritual Channel (CV & GV) may be supported by the following sequence of hand positions where two points are held simultaneously for a minute or two until the pulses one feels at the points are balanced. A basic sequence could be:

- 1) right hand - top of head
- 2) left hand - between eyebrows
- 3) move left hand next to below nose
- 4) then left move again to sternum CV17
- 5) left hand again moves to base of sternum CV15
- 6) left hand to top of pubic bone
- 7) then right hand move from top of head to coccyx.

The fingers hold a key to the Five Transformations of Energy which I used extensively about 4 years ago while recovering from a motor-cycle accident on hospital life support equipment. Their use is just as effective at recharging our systems on not so serious occasions, and is so simple.

Self treatment technique is to cover a finger or thumb on one hand with the fingers of the other hand and work in sequences, holding for a few minutes each. The digits are summarised as follows  
 T=thumb I=index M=middle R=ring L=little  
 and those which are underlined are the principal digit associated with the energy/organ and could be used as a 'quicky'!

Transformation Phase	Organs	Sequence
Earth	St/Sp/Pan	<u>T</u> M L
Water	B/K	T <u>I</u> L
Wood	GB/LV.	L R <u>M</u>
Metal	LU/LI	T I M <u>R</u>
Fire	HT/SI	<u>L</u> R

The above is just a sampler of the ways one can use mudra (hand and body positions) for re-vitalisation, which I humbly offer to you to experiment with. If any reader has experience of these ways of working with the meridians and ki flows I would be very pleased to hear from you personally or through the pages of this journal.

