

*Hello Healers,*

*In SoCal 2007, we find massage therapy offered in a variety of venues: at day spas, salons, and resorts; in chiropractic, sports-medicine, and physical therapy clinics; at major sporting events; in Skilled Nursing Facilities; and even in the business office setting. Just 15 years ago, the term 'massage therapy' was uncommon. Most Americans considered 'massage' an exclusive experience for the elite, or an X-rated activity. What we now call massage therapy is a blend of diverse healing traditions, borrowed from cultures throughout the world, from the present to thousands of years in the past.*

*If we follow our healing traditions back far enough, we find that touch is essential for the survival of all mammalian creatures. For human beings, this need is especially acute: an infant will literally die without touch, a child will grow malformed bones with minimal touch. We need touch as much as we need food. Some of our oldest written records include lists of harvest yields and human illnesses with details of the hands-on treatments that cured them*

*This quarter, Healing Hands begins our 16th year in the field of Massage Therapy education. How fortunate we are to learn from the oldest, most practiced, most refined forms of healing. This Spring we are opening our eyes and hands to the East. The Eastern healing lineages bring us an in-depth look at how life forces maintain homeostasis. The study of energy pathways (the meridians) and the potent points along those paths lead us to discovering techniques that heal. Reinvigorating the flow of life energy, Chi, infuses the stuck muscle, frozen joint, aching head, and indeed the whole person with blood and lymph and it opens the fascia for optimal health.*

*From China, we study Tui Na Acupressure. Raina Colvin and Shannon Baily will teach us to use our hands in 13 different ways to directly manipulate the tsubos (points) and meridians. Punit Auerbacher will present Jin Shin, which combines holding different points with a light but highly concentrated touch. Faun Parlman, a Master of Reiki, will lead us in the study of healing energy, where indeed, there may not actually be direct touch. Karen Hershman, a Licensed Acupuncturist, will*

*demonstrate treatments applied in a therapeutic massage practice. Raina will present the Japanese tradition of Shiatsu and Seymour Koblin, the innovator of Zen Shiatsu, will demonstrate how a deep understanding of energy can be used to help guide one's life path. We go to India to study Ayurvedic massage. Jennifer Peterson will teach us basic Ayurvedic concepts, as well as, the deeply relaxing Vishesh massage.*

*We at Healing Hands have some traditions of our own. Every Spring, since 1995, we retreat from the world of technology and hot showers and gather in a protected canyon, held in its natural state. Under century old oaks by a bubbling creek, we are led in meditations, handcrafts, healing techniques and herbal lore. We eat delicious food, lovingly prepared. We sit at the fire and bring our voices together in song and laughter. We carry wood, water, and our need to connect with a force within each of us, yet more permanent than any of us. Get out your sleeping bag and come join us for the Healing Hands Holistic Living Retreat!*

*May Healing and Peace Extend from our Hands to Yours,*

*Paula, Neha and All of Us at Healing Hands*