

EUROPEAN GATHERING 2011

OFFICIAL PROGRAM



The 2011 Gathering takes place on the island of Iž, near the coastal city of Zadar, Croatia,
from 26th of June to 8th of July 2011

The event itself has two parts:

1. **Official European Gathering**, from 26.06. - 02.07.2011. This first week comprises five days of workshops and presentations and two days of massage and treatment exchange. Workshops last two hours and two will be offered on each of the Gathering days.

The schedule is as follows :

26.06 - 28.06. - Gathering

29.06. - Treatment exchange day / Free time

30.06. - 01.07. - Gathering

02.07. - Treatment exchange day / Free time

2. **Individual 20 hour workshops**, from 03.07. – 08.07.2011. The second part of the Gathering is for students who wish to stay longer and deepen their Thai massage study and practice. During this time, five comprehensive and specialised 20-hour workshops are offered. Each workshop comprises four hours study per day over five days.

WORKSHOPS

Aleksander Skwara :

2 hour : 1. *How to avoid injury and fatigue in work with Thai massage*

After few years of working intensively with Thai massage, especially during long “marathons” we may experience temporary injury, such as tired shoulders or a sore back, or we may even sense a running out of energy. The reason for this may be because we do not use our body mechanics efficiently enough. Therefore, this workshop is mainly about body mechanics and better use of our body during massage. We will review the ways we choose the right position for ourselves, the right distance to put between ourselves and the client and most important – transitions from one position to another. We will explore situations where it is better to use one hand instead of two hands pressure. Doing Thai massage should be equal Yoga for ourselves as well as for the client. We should be able to not only avoid injuries, but literally heal ourselves, feel good and then share these feelings!

2. *Developing the sense of contact, connection and flow*

The sense of contact and “feeling” the client is one of the most important points to being a successful body therapist. Some simple techniques of Yin Yoga and working with balance on a Pilates ball can increase one’s abilities to feel one’s own body better and from this, almost automatically, it becomes easier and more natural to feel the body of our client too. Also, when we are able to stop thinking and judging then the connection with the client, the rhythm and so called “flow” comes spontaneously, as a part of our meditation ... and the work becomes a playful game!

20 hour: *Finding centre: our centre, the client’s centre and the connection between*

What we call “the right technique” is an outcome of several factors. Proper body mechanics means our posture, using body weight and leverage, the right angle to press or pull etc. But in my experience what is most important in Thai massage is a meeting of the two bodies and two souls. We have to connect. We have to find the real feeling of our body’s inner centre and align it in such a way that it connects with client’s inner centre, in every moment and movement of our treatment. This feeling of being connected helps us diagnose and treat each individual accordingly to their needs and our work becomes effortless and beneficial to us too. Training with Pilates ball can increase this ability significantly. In this workshop we will learn new and useful balance exercises on the ball and review many techniques we use in Thai massage. It will be very individual work because everyone is different and there is no single “standard” way of applying technique, on the contrary there are many ways of doing them, but all are safe, easy and powerful at the same time

Felicity Joy :

2 hour : 1. *Working on the stomach*

The abdomen is the main part of the body that creates problems. It is the store house of emotional and physical imbalances. Anatomically, due to the fascia, many issues of the body can be sorted by working deeply in to the stomach. It takes confidence and skill to be able to release nerve, blood, fascia, muscle and the organs, let me show you the possibilities of facilitating long term body relief though working the abdomen.

2. *Herbal compresses and oil work for deep pain release*

Sometimes we have a client whose pain body is so acute that to stimulate it with thumb pressure would be too much. In this case we can use traditional Thai herbal compresses and oils to relieve the pain and still encourage pranic flow, so that healing can continue even after the treatment. This is particularly necessary when there has been a great shock to the energy system

20 hour : *Sen line therapy and techniques*

Due to language barriers and the lack of obvious excitement, the sen lines are often seen as a small part of the massage. Yet they are the most important part of the treatment. They each have their own way of moving pranic energy around the body. The asanas or stretches are there to pull the energy channels tight so as to enable pranic energy to flow more effectively around the body so that it can heal itself. In this workshop, we will be using very clear maps to see where the Sen lines run and working on each other we will feel the different effects that stimulating the individual lines produce. This workshop will enable you to be very effective in the way you treat your clients in helping to facilitate long term change.

Robert Henderson :

2 hour: 1. *Treatment for stress in Thai massage*

This workshop tells you all you need to know about stress and how best to treat a client suffering stress. The workshop addresses the following: Where stress originates in the body. The body areas most physically affected by stress. What causes stress ? The emotions and energies underlying stress. Finally the workshop will teach the student the most effective Thai massage treatment to give a client suffering stress.

2. *An introduction to energy work in Thai massage*

Every school and teacher talks about energy in Thai massage. It is, after all, what forms the Sen Lines. But what is it? What is energy? More interestingly what is an energy block, or an energy imbalance? These issues are never addressed in schools, which is strange, because we are taught that Thai massage is used to release energy blocks and restore energy balance. But what is an energy block? What are we actually releasing? Neither is it explained to us how our client may experience the energetic effects of our massage. Why does a client sometimes feel heavy , tired, nauseous or even elated after a massage? What is happening? Nor is it explained how we experience in ourselves the energy of our client. And what about the question: Do I take on the bad energy of my client? This workshop answers all these questions plus much, much more.

20 hour: *Dealing with Energy and Emotions in Thai Massage*

This workshop offers the student a complete understanding of the nature of energy, energy blocks, energy imbalance, emotional release and spiritual awakening as experienced by both the client and the therapist in Thai massage. The workshop covers: (1) all aspects of energy, detailing the different ways we feel it in both ourselves and in our client, from the most common manifestations such as body heat and skin condition to the more metaphysical experiences of energy as colour, picture or symbol; (2) All aspects of energy or energy blocks which present in your client as physical condition, such as closed hips, tight hamstrings, coldness in the abdomen, tension in the solar plexus, weakness in the arms and tightness in the shoulders and neck; (3) energy imbalance, including imbalances in the chakras and Sen lines (meridians), as well as the more fundamental energy imbalances such as those between male/female, left/right and front/back; (4) the full process of an emotional release in a Thai massage treatment from the initial feeling of pain/discomfort to an abstract body experience, such as feeling cold, heavy or irritated, through the emotional release itself to the final phase of understanding and letting go. The workshop demonstrates how a whole range of physical conditions presented to you by a client, such as stiff ankles, weak knees, tight hamstrings, weak lower back, tightness between the shoulder blades and tightness in the neck and shoulders can have underlying causes relating to blocks and imbalance in energy and emotion. The workshop reveals fully what each of these blocks and imbalances are and suggests relevant practical treatment. The insights contained in this workshop run very deep and can often be a life-changing experience for the student.

Tirza Bottema :

2 hour: 1. *Thai massage for neck and shoulder*

Neck and shoulder problems are one of the most common problems in the West. Related to stress, bad body posture and body use, many people have them. As a Thai massage practitioner you can do a great job releasing neck and shoulder pain. Of course a Thai massage of the neck and shoulder region will help but there are also other related parts of the body that are important to treat and several very good special points that can do a great job helping to release pain in the neck and shoulder region. Beside that it is also important to teach the client to do some yoga. There are very good Yoga stretches that help the client release stress and energy blockages in the neck and shoulders, relax their muscles and give them better body awareness. When your client does these postures every day, the healing process will go much faster. During this course you will learn how to give an accurate Thai massage to people with neck and shoulder pain and how they can also treat themselves with some good yoga postures.

2. *Metta and mindfulness as the basic of Thai Massage*

Metta (loving kindness) and mindfulness meditation are the two basic parts of a good Thai massage. They are part of the Buddhist spirit that is part of Thai culture and Thai massage. During this course you will become more aware of the importance of Metta and mindfulness and learn how to let them be a natural part of your practise. You will learn how to be more aware and at the same time accept everything you feel just the way it is. This is the first step to healing. It will help both yourself and your client to relax and let stressful thoughts go away. Stress is the number one reason for many illnesses and diseases. Less stress means more balance in body, energy lines and mind. Metta and meditation give you a peaceful and clear mind too. As a healer you will be able to give Thai massage on a deeper level and feel more in balance yourself too.

Davor Haber :

2 hour: *Legwork with the recipient in the prone position*

As is widely known, there is a great emphasis on leg work in Thai massage. This is often attributed to specific needs of the inhabitants of Thailand, working in rice fields and walking long distances, for whom the intense work on the energy lines in the legs brings immense relief. Regardless of whether this argument is valid or not, the truth is that today, due to the reverse case of insufficient leg use and excessive sitting, we can again benefit from the focus on leg work in a massage. During a typical “textbook” routine, when we put the recipient in the prone position, the leg work is rather limited, and the emphasis is on the third inside line, which runs along the Achilles’ tendon, over the gastrocnemius muscle, reaching the popliteal fossa, and upwards to the ischium. In the course of a somewhat more creative session, we discover the great accessibility of all outer lines, as well as the fact that we can stimulate them not only by our hands, but also by our elbows, knees and feet. If we bend a leg and move the knee towards the trunk through a series of positions, the energy lines will become easily accessible, which is conducive to both the dynamics and the flow of the massage. The final position, in which the knee is below the armpit, i.e. lifted to the uppermost position, enables extremely efficient work on the pelvis. Afterwards, we can focus on the stretched-out leg, and proceed by treating the first and the second inner lines on it.

20 hour: *Recipient in the prone position – Advanced*

In this workshop, I would like to present a routine I follow quite often during massage, so I guess this routine is more accurately described as “alternative” rather than “advanced”. One of my major misgivings about the “classical” approach is that, to my mind, we spend far too little time on back work while the client is in the prone position, and after a “cobra”, we quickly proceed with the other body parts, while most of the recipients want to stay longer in that position. That is exactly what this routine is all about: extensive work on the legs, pelvis and the back in the position that is rather comfortable for the recipient (bear in mind that many people sleep in that position). In the course of this routine, the recipient is put in a series of specific micro-positions, which enable precise and energy efficient work on certain segments of energy channels. Since the energy channels of the back in Thai massage, are identical to those in the traditional Chinese medicine and Zen Shiatsu, we will compare the various techniques applied in these systems, and talk about the diagnostic methods employed while working on the back. The idea is to make this workshop both interactive and inspiring.

Danko Lara Radic:

2 hour: 1. *Transforming the traumas into a mimic or a vocal pattern*

This revolutionary workshop is mainly focused on teaching the client how to simply release his/her traumas through voice and mimic expression in the healing process. We live in a modern, "polite" society and from childhood many people are suppressed to express their natural emotions for the sake of "peace & quiet". Many conflict situations in everyday life are not properly solved as people don't react to traumas in a natural way anymore. How many times have you been very angry, but you stayed silent? How many times have you been sad, but instantly searched for fun? Every time this happens, when the emotion is not immediately expressed, that unprocessed experience is then stored somewhere within the body for future processing, usually in the form of an energy block. During the Thai massage treatment, the therapist is activating those stored experiences and the client faces them again as the sensations of physical pain, anger, sadness, rage, tears, laughter, joy, etc. But still, driven by artificial codes of behavior, most of the people again try to stay quiet and endure the sensation without expression, not knowing that sensations should be expressed and by that way traumatic experiences can be finally transformed and easily released.

20 hour: 2. *Thai massage treatment routine without the use of thumbs*

Thai massage as a treatment is well known worldwide for its use of elbows, forearms, knees and feet in the usual massage routine, unlike most other manual therapies. Nevertheless, the main issue, work on the energy lines, is performed mostly using the thumbs. But what can the therapist do if he/she suffers from a temporary or a fatal thumb injury? Is it possible to maintain your practice? It often happens when the therapist overworks his/her capacity where some therapists have even been forced to end their career too early because of this issue. This could be a great risk especially if massage practice is the Thai massage professional's only source of income. Fortunately, Thai massage has an enormous number of effective techniques for treating the whole net of Sen lines without the use of thumbs. The complete routine can be successfully performed in this manner and this workshop will present the optimum solution for that particular routine. This workshop offers the solution to how you can safely maintain your massage practice if you suffer from a temporary thumb injury without worsening its condition.

PRESENTATIONS

Danijel Dubičanac

Yoga for bodyworkers

Even though TYM is a healing modality designed to help both giver and receiver, yoga offers unique insights and releases to the practitioner. If practiced on a regular basis, asana and pranayama will enliven the spine and balance energetic centres, developing the capacity to remain present throughout a massage treatment. This yoga for bodyworkers is based on Rishikesh tradition which focuses on spinal health and bodily awareness. I'll teach modifications as well, all-levels welcome.

Therapeutic flying

Gives your client new perspective: effortlessly flowing inverted in gravity, spine extending on its own, aided with gentle work on arms, neck, shoulders, back lines, spiced with twists that just have to be experienced. Much of the release happening is emotional, waves and shakes moving through the joints and tissues often transporting the flyer into childhood days. Some therapists choose to start their session with flying. By doing so, the client will lie light and extended, ready to receive the work deeper than usual. Some choose to fly their clients just before final relaxation. Learn the basic principles and safety rules of this exhilarating technique.

MORNING PRACTICE

Danijel Dubičanac

Yoga & meditation morning practice

Daily yoga practice rooted in Vishnudevananda's tradition: holding the position, observing the breath, witnessing modifications of mind. Modifications offered, all levels welcome.

*For any further info or to register for the event please contact
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