



## The Spiritual Path of Healing

By K Gurunathan

Andre Capiez hails from the lush paradise of New Caledonia, a tropical island located in the romantically-named Coral Sea of the South Pacific. That enviable origin does not stop Andre from praising the virtues of Wellington where he has lived for the last three years. "I love Wellington. It's a compact manageable city, with different areas having their own unique soul and culture. It's now my new home," adds Andre who recently acquired his permanent resident status.

Before he moved to New Zealand, Andre was publications manager for the Secretariat of the Pacific Community. It is an inter-governmental agency, committed to the development of its 22-member Pacific Island nations and territories. Motivated to move by his Kiwi partner, Andre enrolled as a student with the New Zealand School of Massage. "I wanted to do something where I can be my own boss and also make a new change in my life. So I moved to a new country and a new career," says Andre who speaks French, English and some Spanish.

Having completed his two-year diploma course in therapeutic massage and sports therapy, Andre decided to undertake further study in acupuncture. He was inspired after listening to an introductory talk on tuina delivered by a lecturer from the NZ School of Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine (NZSATCM). Andre is now a second-year acupuncture student at NZSATCM. The change was a natural one as Andre had personally experienced the healing power of acupuncture. Back as a young lad in Noumea, the capital of New Caledonia, he suffered from sciatica. As a last resort, his mother had urged him to try acupuncture. It worked.

"There are not many practitioners of acupuncture in New Caledonia. In France, the insertion of needles is considered a medical act which can only be performed by a doctor. As a French territory, the same rule is applied in New Caledonia," says Andre who is



keen to explore the co-relation between western medicine and traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). "I'm not interested in making TCM conform to the western modality, but I believe that there is complementarity and that TCM will become stronger through better understanding the western approach and application to the same area of healing," he adds.

Andre is particularly interested in the use of acupuncture to promote mental health. To extend and complement

his understanding of traumatic stress disorders, he is also doing a Certificate in Trauma Studies at WelTec. His quest to extend this comparative knowledge has led him to other areas, including dry needling used by western practitioners in pain management. "I can say acupuncture is more effective," says Andre who has also studied the art of cupping. "Cupping is commonly used in TCM. It is also used in a limited way by the French who cup the chest area to bring relief for congestion. My mother used it. I went to Australia to study



eastern and western styles of cupping.”

Underpinning his constant quest for knowledge is Andre’s spiritual commitment. He has been a practitioner of Tibetan Buddhism since he was 17 years old. “For me, the path of healing is a spiritual one. I believe that to be a good TCM therapist, I need to match professional integrity with genuine compassionate intention and care,” says Andre Capiez. ■

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# The Campus Mum

By K Gurunathan



Marion with student, Shinichi Louis

**G**ive Marion King whatever title – mother hen, gatekeeper or student support officer – it all means one thing to her. “The welfare of the students means everything to me. Without the students, there is no school. I live by this principle so the focus of my work

is very clear,” says Marion who cut her professional teeth looking after young people as a teaching support staff at a secondary school. Her job then was to adopt strategies and customise them to meet the specific needs of young people having learning difficulties.

Today, at the New Zealand School of Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine, while the basics are the same, the work comes packaged with an additional range of challenges. The School teaches a set of courses with a different cultural base and the student population is a unique mix of roughly 80 percent of local students and 20 percent international students. The international component itself is a mixture of Chinese, Koreans and others.

“I have an open-door policy. Students can walk in at anytime to talk about anything and I’m ready to listen and advise. And, if I cannot sort it out, I can connect them with someone who can. There have been few, if any, major issues that we have not been able to resolve easily. My open-door policy starts literally at the door with a welcome and a smile, especially for the new enrolments and international students. I know all the students by name. The first thing I say to them is ‘welcome to the family’ because that’s how I see the School,” says Marion, who is known to most as the Campus Mum.

Nurturing a safe family environment that involves the department heads, teachers and students is important to Marion. “I organise functions and events that involves everyone. If it’s an end-of-the-year function for the year 4 students, then I make sure the year 3 students are invited and the tuina students, who are generally isolated, are also invited.”

Marion sees the value in fostering this interaction as not only creating a safe family environment but also paying dividends in other ways. An appreciation of the holistic nature of TCM, and the opportunity for students to interact with other students, has led to some students wanting to take on additional courses in other areas of TCM.



Lack of proficiency in English, as well as certain cultural issues, can be a barrier to what the Campus Mum wants to achieve. The Korean and Chinese students naturally tend to stick together and some of these students, used to the traditional Asian culture of respecting the authority of their elders, are reluctant to speak out about any problems. "Unless they learn to speak out about issues, it's difficult for me to know what issues are concerning them. This can make it difficult to help them manage those concerns," says Marion who goes the extra mile to be culturally sensitive to such problems. "It takes time to nurture this change but it's critical and

rewarding. It's important that the students know that whatever they talk about is held in strict confidence," she adds.

The School also has the services of a professional counsellor to manage personal issues, including outside campus matters. Marion notes that while local students are culturally used to access to such help, the international students may be reluctant and need to be encouraged.

Marion's other job is domestic marketing. "Over time, we have found that our local student intake was coming through by word-of-mouth and through people

who come to our clinics. Marketing and administration does take a chunk of my time but my first love is always looking after the students. Recently, I have been ensuring that the students put in their required clinic hours early so they are not rushing at the end of their course. The best part of this job is celebrating the success of the students. It's like watching your kids grow. I absolutely love it when the students tell you how wonderful it was to have treated their first client. Their success becomes partly your success and the success of the School family," says Campus Mum, Marion King. ■

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# The Harmony of TCM and Marital Arts

By K Gurunathan



If Peter Larking was branded, he would be known as the "Hands-on Man".

The hands that stroked the strings of his first violin, at the tender age of five, later tapped the keys of the piano and plucked the strings of a guitar, are the same hands that find the precise spot to insert the acupuncture needle. "Like in music, there is a rhythm in the body that can be felt through which creates movement. It took me a long time to realise and understand this and I am still learning," says Peter who teaches the science of applying traditional Chinese theory to clinical practice.

Peter remembers the rigorous discipline of his violin teacher. "One day, after teaching me for 15 years, she said this amazing thing. She told me to forget everything she had taught and just enjoy it!" That lesson, of discipline being the gateway to freedom, proved a useful lesson when, in his late teens, Peter took up Chinese martial arts under the tutorship of the well-known exponent, Steven Yan, who was also a practitioner of acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine (TCM).

Again, the journey was one of being connected to the rhythms of the body's movements. "The disciplines of Ba Gua, Dai Chi and Qi gong are all anchored in this basic understanding," says Peter who was to discover another connection when he experienced his first TCM treatment. "I had been suffering from

eczema and asthma for some time and nothing was really helping. Henry Su treated me with his needles and herbal medicine and there was a remarkable improvement. This was a mystery to me and I wanted to know more," says Peter whose urge to take up formal study in acupuncture saw him enrol at a school in London.

Fate intervened and he never made it to London. "It was 2001 and through the martial arts I was doing, I met Adejola Olatunji and started doing Dai Chi and Akido with him. He made me realise I did not have to go halfway around the world to study acupuncture. There was his school in Wellington. I started there learning tuina. Halfway through, I was invited to teach Qi gong and Dai Chi," says Peter who continued his studies and graduated in acupuncture. Today, he teaches 3rd and 4th-year students acupuncture theory and practical and also runs Tuina and Qi gong diploma classes. He specialises in teaching the practical side of the skills, like needling

and clinical strategies.

Peter says the study and practical application of acupuncture has made a significant improvement to his understanding and application of martial arts. "The cultural and philosophical understanding of movement and the anatomy; the influence of yin and yang on these movements; and the use of the body to achieve focused outcomes. They provide a knowledge base for martial arts training. They help to create a deeper appreciation," he says, adding that movement therapy has a positive medical effect.

"I am privileged to have this opportunity to learn from Olatunji and Steven. A student can get certificated in three or four years but the real learning takes many, many, more years. Olatunji had taken me under his wing from the time I was 21 years old and I am just like a sponge continually learning as much as I can," says Peter. ■



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## Journal Club 2013

### Journal Club Definition

A group of individuals who meet to discuss and critique research that appears in professional journals.

### Dates and Times

#### Auckland Campus

When: Sunday  
5 May 2013  
5-6pm

Where: 382c Manukau Road  
Epsom

Presenter: Mike Armour  
(mike.armour@nzsao.com)

### Overview

The School is conducting 2 journal clubs per year as part of the research courses. Any interested staff or NZRA practitioners are welcome to attend.

#### Wellington Campus

When: Tuesday  
7 May 2013  
3-4pm

Where: Level 10  
Willbank House  
57 Willis Street

Presenter: Kate Roberts  
(kate@nzsao.com)

### To Confirm Attendance

Email the Journal Club presenter.



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## WFAS Sydney 2013 First Announcement

WFAS Sydney 2013, the World Federation of Acupuncture-Moxibustion Societies (WFAS) 8th World Conference on Acupuncture, will be held on 2-4 November 2013 at Australia's Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, located at Sydney's beautiful, pristine Darling Harbour.

There are many reasons why WFAS Sydney 2013 is a not-to-be-missed event:

Learn from world famous clinicians and researchers at the largest ever Chinese medicine conference in sunny Sydney, Australia.

Be part of WFAS's 25th year, a historic celebration hosted in Australia, including the international roadshow featuring post-conference workshops with world-famous Chinese doctors and an exhibition on the history of acupuncture.

Network with local and international colleagues and enjoy a spectacular night out during the Gala Dinner!

For more information:

[http://acupuncture.org.au/Events\\_and\\_Conferences/WFAS\\_Sydney\\_2013.aspx](http://acupuncture.org.au/Events_and_Conferences/WFAS_Sydney_2013.aspx)