



Zen Shiatsu: How to Harmonize Yin and Yang for Better Health

By Shizuto Masunaga, Wataru Ohashi, The Shiatsu Education Center of America

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The basic approach of oriental medicine is to emphasize natural powers of self-cure and to evolve a therapy that is entirely in harmony with the entire organism of the patient. Shiatsu is one of the oriental medical disciplines that have made great progress in such therapy.

The common conception that shiatsu is no more than the application of strong digital pressure on single points on the body misrepresents the truth. Shiatsu is based on a full oriental medical system, which explains the human body in terms of a network of meridians through which flows an energy called Ki in Japanese. If the flow of Ki through the meridians is smooth, the person is healthy. If the flow becomes sluggish, the person falls ill. The nature of the flow is analyzed on the basis of the Chinese conception of the duality Yin and Yang into two states called Kyo and Jitsu. In the Kyo state, the flow of Ki is sluggish, and the body functions are dulled. In the Jitsu state, the flow is too rapid, and the body functions are overactive. A therapy that fails to take these states into consideration can only further retard the activity of sluggish functions and further stimulate hyperactive ones. In short, such therapy can produce no beneficial effect at all.

The way to restore the proper balance to the system of Ki energy is the subject of *Zen Shiatsu*, the first book on the topic ever published in the English language. In this richly illustrated work, the author thoroughly covers to-nification-sedation, meridian shiatsu (Zen shiatsu). In addition to the services he performs as a therapist, he has devoted many years of study and much effort to developing new shiatsu ideas. *Zen Shiatsu* is the result of all these efforts. The inclusion of a chapter on self-shiatsu makes this an unusual and valuable book from the standpoint of people interested in home remedies.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

SHIZUTO MASUNAGA was born in 1925. After graduating from the Psychology Department of the University of Kyoto, he began working in the field of shiatsu. For ten years, he was an instructor at the Japan Shiatsu Institute. At present he is a member of the Japan Psychology Association and the Japan Oriental Medicine Association and the chairman of the Iokai Association for Shiatsu Therapy.

The first person to establish a theoretical basis for shiatsu therapy, Masunaga has evolved his own practical method of shiatsu treatment based on his many years of clinical experience and, through his important and widely recognized contributions, has established himself firmly as the leading authority in the field.

Some of his numerous written works are WATARU OHASHI grew up in war-torn Hiroshima Prefecture and was saved from near death at the age of two through moxibustion treatment. His family's accounts of this experience created an early interest in oriental healing, and he sought shiatsu instruction after graduating from Chuo University. He began teaching early in his career, and in 1974 he founded the Shiatsu Education Center of America in New York City, where he and his associates conduct classes.

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Jose Johnson:

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