

# An Experience of Being Alive

## Therapy Through the Body – Rolfing and Hakomi Therapy

By Patricia Stepan

*The body is a teacher – a powerful resource of information for growth, change and for being fully alive.*

**As** we shape our lives, our lives shape us. Our responses to the forces of life, its joys and challenges, shape physical individuality. Our structures, contours and movements become a living map of who we are, a reflection of our habits, patterns, goals and experiences.

As children, we model our behavior and posture after our caregivers, creating stances and habits that identify yet often limit us. The impact of traumas – accidents, injuries, illnesses and threatening experiences – leave imprints through the body's structure long after the trauma has passed.

Our personal histories also reflect a larger body, that of our culture and times; posture often reflects

culturally distorted notions of strength, weakness, ugliness and beauty.

Yet we seldom consider how these habitual patterns influence us. Frequently, it is the 'gift' of pain and injury that brings our attention to our structures, offering the opportunity, at times the necessity, to open and awaken to new possibilities.

The healthy body is highly adaptive, receiving new input as an opportunity toward freedom and maturity, regardless of age. To be fully alive is to be responsive and aware, to have the capacity to learn and relearn.

Rolfing/Structural Integration and Hakomi Therapy are two powerful resources for accessing and supporting the natural intelligence and adaptability of the human body and the experience of being fully alive.

## About Patricia Stepan, B.S, CMT

*Body-Centered Therapist -- Instructor*

*Certified Advanced Rolfer/Structural Integration Practitioner*

*Certified Hakomi Therapist*

*Internal Family Systems Therapist*

her journey. . .

Patricia Stepan, from Boulder, Colorado, has thirty years of training and experience as a body-centered therapist and somatic educator

Patricia's journey into the world of bodywork began with her certification from the Boulder School of Massage Therapy in 1976. At that time, she also was a student of Ron Kurtz, founder of Hakomi Therapy, during the early stages of Hakomi's development. Since that time, Hakomi Therapy has been an integral part of her practice and teaching.

Rolfing became part of Patricia's journey in response to a spinal

curvature, scoliosis, that had been part of her structure since adolescence. The Rolf process turned her structure and life around in a direction that would deepen her relationship to the body and the human experience. After her first three sessions, muscle spasms, pain and a back brace gave way to physical freedom, renewed energy and a new focus. In 1986, Patricia became a Certified Rolfer and later Certified Advanced Rolfer.

her work. . .

For these past thirty years, Patricia's professional life has been deeply involved in the exploration of the bodymind process,

both through private practice and through teaching.

As a teacher, she served as Core Faculty at the Boulder School (now College) of Massage Therapy for fourteen years; she helped to develop the Foundations of Bodywork program at the Rolf Institute and for seven years was lead instructor of Bodywork Basics at the Guild for Structural Integration. She has also taught nationally and internationally for Hakomi Integrative Somatics and has been a Teacher for the Hakomi Institute.

Most recently, Patricia has trained with Dr. Richard Schwartz, founder of Internal Family Systems Therapy, and is now incorporat-

ing this powerful modality into her practice.

the world. . .

Over the years, Patricia's work has taken her to many extraordinary places and has nourished her love of travel. She has always felt the importance of making the work available to 'outposts', far from the usual healing arts crowds. Her teaching and practice have taken her to Ecuador, Australia, Canada, Mexico as well as throughout the US.

**Boulder and beyond. . .  
travelling practice**

After having lived and practiced in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico for two years, in 1982 Patricia and her daughter returned to Boulder, where her practice and teaching became firmly based for the next fifteen years.

In the early 1990's, interest from friends and family called her skills as a Rolfer to areas that had none. Through these experiences, Patricia discovered how much she enjoys the uniqueness of a travelling practice. which over the years has included Bainbridge Island, Wa., Millbrook, NY and currently, Louisville, KY.

While serving on Faculty for the first Hakomi training in Louisville, people in the community expressed interest and curiosity about her Rolfing. Patricia has been welcomed into the Louisville community through her affiliation with the Louisville School of Massage Therapy and the Hakomi community. Patricia travels regularly (every six weeks) to Louisville to work with Rolf clients, as she has done for the past four years. For the past five years, Louisville has become Patricia's second home.

After having lived in Boulder for twenty-years, a midlife call to the ocean lead Patricia to Wilmington, NC for four years where she enjoyed Rolfing by the sea. The sands and soft light were a wonderful adventure and it wasn't home. She returned to Boulder in 2004 and is now enjoying reconnecting with her Boulder/Denver home community. She has recently joined an exciting team of health care professionals, Medical Massage Center, Inc. in Littleton, Co.

**Current focus. . .**

Currently, Patricia's focus and dedication is private practice. Her passion is to facilitate and assist clients in their personal journeys of integration and wellness. The combination of her indepth experience and skill of calling on the body's wisdom and structure, allows Patricia to facilitate and assist clients in the integration and resolution of traumatic wounds as well as "everyday" issues resulting from developmental wounds.

Patricia's style is gentle, interactive and creative. She works in partnership with clients fo facilitate and support a healing, empowering and educational experience.