

SEIKI SOHO - SHINING LIFE

Life and Philosophy of Akinobu Kishi

Taken in 1998 from a now nonexistent webpage:

<http://www.mayo-ireland.ie:80/Mayo/Towns/TuarMhic/Shiatsu/Life.htm>

Kishi's Smooth Way to Personal Growth, to our Roots

After many years of intensive work with Shiatsu Akinobu Kishi developed his own way of energy work - Seiki. Despite his provocative statements on Shiatsu he is regularly invited by the different Shiatsu Schools, because his work can also have a very stimulating effect on people, who want to continue practising Shiatsu.

Akinobu Kishi Sensei was born in the North of Tokyo in 1949. When he was 8 years old, he made an experience that should determine all of his later life: his grandmother had been ill for a long time. Sometimes, when the pain was very bad, his grandfather would sit down close to her and put his hands on her chest and on her back with the effect that the pain would become a bit easier. Once, when the grandfather was busy, Kishi took over his place, and to his great surprise he felt that between his hands something was happening. This experience never left him again. In accordance with Japanese tradition Kishi was introduced into the Shiatsu teachings by his father, who was a Shiatsu practitioner. As he tells, it was Shiatsu and his cats, that was of interest to him, when he was young. Later on, he completed his studies, among others with Namikoshi, and for 10 years he was a close pupil of Masunaga. In addition, Kishi also studied other methods of body work like Chiropractic, Osteopathy, Seitai, Yoga, Acupuncture, Bio-energetics, the teachings of Wilhelm Reich and Shintoism.

When he was almost 30 years old, Kishi fell ill, and from one day to the other he stopped practising Shiatsu, because as he said he saw no change anymore. For a few months he withdrew, and as a synthesis of his various studies and experiences, he developed his own method which he called Seiki. And all at once he saw unbelievable change.

In 1974 Kishi was conferred the title Sensei, which only few teachers are awarded in Japan. After having lived for 16 years in Europe, he is now again at home in Japan. Kishi is not the master, who leads an ascetic, secluded life. He participates in life, is open-minded and ready for conflict. In a conversation he is direct and has a good sense of humor. Kishi likes to travel, and he loves movement and creativity, for him the most important prerequisite of any development; he does calligraphy and is very much interested in art.

The literal translation of Seiki is "treatment of life energy". Kishi not only looks at a person's body with different symptoms; a person is for him a unity of body, spirit and soul and forms part of everything, i.e. part of the world and the universe. His method is a universal and spiritual path with the target, to develop one's own personality, power and originality and to come again into a natural balance. Seiki consists of three different basic elements: Seiki, the method for diagnosing and treatment of the body, as well as two different kinds of concentration and meditation: Katzugen and Gyo-ki.

Seiki - Concept and Method

For Kishi unpleasant sensations, illness, and pain are nothing bad, that has to be oppressed and brought to an end by all means. There is a sense in them, our body wants to express something. Clear pain is a chance. Good health and illness are no contrast, they are different but natural expressions of the body. During a Seiki treatment, his main intention is to help this person regain its natural balance, so that illness and pain are no longer necessary and can be resolved by the body alone. The body can take care of itself: When we are tired, we yawn; when we have eaten something bad, we will throw up. By nature our body has this capacity, to balance and recover, what the Japanese call Myo-ki.

Everyday pressures and stress is building up for all of us. Some people develop diseases and physical problems; others react with emotional disturbances as e.g. fear, rage, and excessive aggressions. For Kishi all of this are simply distortions of the life energy, that flows through our body, a state of change or the body's individual way of recognizing change. At the same time they indicate the body's innate desire to balance these distortions and get well again just as a snake sloughs its skin.

Kishi accompanies people in such process of change. He makes them look into the mirror and helps them to become aware of these changes, to feel them. We must feel the movement behind a physical discomfort, behind a pain or emotion. Instead of movement we could also say energy. Every distortion of life energy must clearly manifest itself, in order to come to its natural end. To feel the movement means to go deeply into a pain or emotion, in order to finally resolve and release it.

Kishi is convinced that people, when they really get into their feelings, can instantly solve their problems, here and now. And what keeps them from doing so? It is very difficult to grasp the moment. We are caught in everyday pressures; we have obligations, needs, wishes, and hopes. We are so busy and confused, manipulated, conditioned. For example, it is very difficult to become quiet inside. This endeavour is always disturbed by thinking and judgements. For Kishi this is the problem. Thinking is o.k. It is also movement, as long as something changes, and dynamics can be perceived. His target is to look behind the facade, at our deepest point of reality. Only through continuous awareness and cleaning we can develop sensitivity and create a new body. The only prerequisite for this work is motivation; we must only want!

In Kishi's opinion the body and all of its manifestations are natural expressions and no problem. If we can perceive this, life is no longer so difficult, as people maintain. Our problems are our chance. We should use them to regain our original personality and power. Our society has such a structure that socially weak people will get help, when they are in trouble, just as you place a child on his feet again, once it has fallen down. Wouldn't it be better, the child learns to get up alone, out of his own power? In our society weak people try to avoid their problems. By all means they look for help and support. They try out all kinds of therapies and become dependent. They never get to the point of realizing and developing their own power.

According to Kishi's definition power signifies accepting every situation as it comes and to be flexible. Then body and mind are also flexible and allow quick change to happen. Life offers a chance to everyone of us: we must recognize and use it. His advice: Live your full potential, then you can die peacefully one day!

What happens in a Seiki treatment?

Through a simple method of diagnosis, which Kishi developed, he gets a first impression of the energetic situation of the person, he wants to treat. At certain points of the body, e.g. the knees and feet, Kishi checks this intuitive impression. His hands only touch very lightly, he gets a feeling for the other person's body, there is a very close contact. At some of these points there is a resonance, at others not. His picture becomes clearer. What is the meaning of resonance? Kishi describes resonance as very fine energetic vibrations: a leg moves from the right to the left side; the spine oscillates in a certain rhythm; the head between his hands expands and contracts. Sometimes he describes resonance also as a melody. At this point the contact between Kishi and the other person is so close that they are one, form a unity. There is no more boundary: Mr.X and Mrs.X marry, as he says. Mr. X and Mrs. X stand for body intelligence or subconscious autonomic nervous system, our self-healing power or the inner doctor.

Kishi now relaxes even more, he finds his own focus, his own roots and makes himself completely empty. With the light touch of his hands he accompanies the spontaneous movements, very lightly he swings in the same rhythm. Resonance becomes clearer, the movement gets stronger. In the right moment, he gives an impulse and after a certain while the movement ends. There comes a moment comparable to wind stillness. In this way he regulates at different healing points of the body the subconscious autonomic movements. The treated person comes again into a state of quietness and harmony, where all tension and needs cease to exist, to feeling of deep inner peace and equanimity. Here at this point there are no more hopes or wishes, there is only a deep perception of the essential, clarity and a feeling of unity and belonging. Kishi describes this point brilliantly with the picture of the empty space or the blue sky above the clouds. Whenever we rise in an aeroplane, even on the most ugly cold or rainy days, there is the blue sky above the clouds with the sun shining. This means: Even when we don't feel good or have physical problems, we can find this state of peace and equanimity, if we go very deep inside. What we have to learn again, is how to find our natural balance. Seiki together with the other techniques, which are mentioned in the following, is a way to get there.

Katsugen

During a Seiki treatment, it happens time and again that spontaneous physical reactions arise, which are not oppressed, but consciously eliminated, so that the body immediately regains its natural balance. Katsugen is practised alone or with a partner. In deep inner concentration you try to get a feeling for your own inner movements, you follow them and allow them to become clearer and bigger, in order to eventually release and transform them. Everyone has his own individual movements: One gets into a light swinging, someone else starts to shake violently, and a third person makes a fabulous crawling movement throughout the room. It is not important what kind of movement comes up. Everyone has his own way of elimination or unwinding. Kishi's striking description for Katsugen is emptying our inner garbage can. Especially for people with severe tensions and emotional blockades, this kind of work is immense release: however, you will only feel the liberating results, if you can turn off your mind completely.

To the question, what is the difference between Seiki and Katsugen, Kishi gives the spontaneous answer: Both is cleaning; Katsugen is like a plane for the heavy work: Seiki is the fine sensitive work, which regulates and rebalances the body afterwards.

Gyo-ki

For Kishi Gyo-ki is the feeling for cosmic energy. We all know that our body with its low vibrations is surrounded by a layer of higher vibrations, the aura, and, furthermore, we have the cosmic energy of the universe. Again and again Kishi makes us aware of these higher energies, so that we can develop a feeling for them.

In Seiza or standing upright we go into a light relaxation with our concentration focused in the lower part of the Hara. Both hands are lightly brought together before our chest. When breathing in, we open our hands slightly, then a little bit more, when breathing out, we bring our hands together, until we can feel a light resistance between both hands. Breathing continuously and regularly, our hands start to move on their own. Our body is light and almost feels transparent: we are in contact with Ki, with our energy and with the energy of the universe. This experience is individually different for all. There can be visions; blockades can open up; sometimes there are tears; a feeling of unity spreads. For Kishi Gyo-ki is like a light walk through the universe; in a far distance he can see the earth in blue color.

After a Gyo-ki experience almost all people look different: more relaxed, liberated, and more centred; some are deeply moved; others surprised; nearly all have bright and shining eyes. This can be a moment of deep insight with the notion that the center of the universe is inside all of us.

Difference between Seiki and Shiatsu

Kishi developed his method, because, as he said, with Shiatsu there was no progress, he saw no change. More than once he had discussions with Masunaga's way of practising Shiatsu you sometimes work with a very deep pressure. To Kishi this was not the right way. You exercise a heavy influence on the patient, but hardly give him space. Let him have space to expand, let him feel free! This is important for Kishi. "Don't press, just be", is one of his basic principles. Everything that is stuck in our body, shall come up to the surface, so that the body can liberate and cleanse itself.

"Shiatsu people work too much, too much form and technique. They never know, when to stop. Shiatsu people think too much; they are all in their heads!"

This is hard; these are heavy accusations. But isn't Kishi right? Is it not a fact that sometimes doing is still the most important aspect in Shiatsu? Don't we all feel addressed with a least one or another of these statements? Don't we all remember a moment when during a highly effective technique we started sweating and were no more relaxed at all? And don't we really think too much about meridians?

From Kishi Shiatsu practitioners - and others- can learn to do less and allow things to take their course. This is very difficult for Europeans, even if they are open to Eastern teachings. After all we have learned that we have to put in some effort, if we want to achieve something. For people from the East, it is perhaps easier, to let things develop, whenever there is the right time. Patience and accepting are virtues we have to learn again. There are our efforts, wishes, eagerness and the striving to perfection, all this can simply be too much. We get distracted from the essential part of our work. What about spontaneity and intuition? We allow ourselves hardly any space to feel, to let our hands find their own way. With all our ideas and elaborated concepts we are no more open nor aware, we are tense and closed up. How shall a patient be open?

Kishi goes directly to the very source of the problems. He makes no compromises, he doesn't cover up anything, on the contrary he releases, whatever is blocked inside. He wouldn't accept to give a treatment simply to relax, if a client is not prepared to tackle his problems on a deeper level. For him this is like anaesthetic, a loss of time, not honest. With Seiki you don't make any conscious decisions, their movements just come. Seiki is the very pure method without any compromises; cleaning, guidance, and development.

Seiki and a workshop with Kishi will have an effect on all of us, who practise Shiatsu or some other kind of body work: We will have to do some thinking and perhaps fall into a state of constructive confusion. We will surely change. Our Shiatsu will certainly get another quality, when we try and integrate Kishi's principles, when are ready for more experimentation and intuitive work.

Kishi show a clear direction: concentration on the essential. To be open, let things happen, listen, to do less, to give space and follow the movements. Less can be much more. As Laozi once said: "Wise man does nothing and achieves all."

Course Director

Seiki, Shiatsu and Tuina Practitioner Gavin Davies is organising this course. Gavin has completed a 3 year Diploma Course with the Bristol School of Shiatsu and Oriental Medicine, and has continued his studies at the International College of Traditional Chinese Medicine, Shanghai, China.

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