



November 13, 2005

Hi Everyone,

Well it's been a whirlwind trip to Thailand and the Mae On Project. This trip we interviewed all the participants in the acupuncture study including patients and nurses. What they said was not only encouraging but made all the hard work of getting the acupuncture clinic off the ground worthwhile. Almost all the patients reported improvement in symptoms and sense of wellness. Those who did not have improvement were symptom-free when the acupuncture treatments began. Here are some quotes from the participant's interviews:



**Left:** Acupuncture clinic at Mae On Hospital in full swing. You can see Wanida (acupuncture assistant) doing Tui na (Chinese massage) in the foreground. In the background, Kai (nurse) and Unchalee (nurse) are giving acupuncture to patients.

“Acupuncture increases my hopes and aspirations and gives me encouragement, strengthens me. I have something to lean on. If I don't come here, I feel like I've left something out of my life and I want to come here.”

“Through acupuncture, I feel my life has extended and I will be able to live a long life and enjoy life more because I will be around for my children and may be even my grandchildren.”

“Acupuncture is very good because it helps to reduce or get rid of any symptoms we may have without having to depend on medications. I'm already taking anti-retroviral therapy. If I had to take pain killers for back pain or medications for numbness, I feel I'm putting more chemicals in my body and I worry all the drugs combined together will have a bad effect on the body. Acupuncture is a way to treat myself without medications and it's also effective.”

And here is what the nurses trained in acupuncture had to say:

“Most of the patients, when they first came here were thin, suffering weight loss, dry skin and general health not 100%. And most on ARVs. So prior to acupuncture, they were all given medical exams. From the time acupuncture began, we saw improvements and symptoms began to disappear. And each time the patients reported

they were better and obvious physical signs – itching and skin rashes - would disappear.’

‘I feel honoured to have been able to participate in the (acupuncture) program. It’s provided an opportunity for me to help many people. A program like this can’t be found anywhere else in Thailand.’



**Left:** Laurie interviewing one of the participants in the acupuncture study at Mae On Hospital.

**Right:** Laurie interviewing Unchalee for the acupuncture study at Mae On Hospital.



A BIG and warm thank you to Laurie Maund (Sangha Metta Project) who interviewed all the patients and nurses for the acupuncture study. Laurie has lived in Thailand for 34 years and is a UN certified translator and interpreter.

The training of the three new nurses continues to go very well. They have completed their basic training with Dr. Rungrat and Dr. Sudhisak of Mungkala Clinic in Chiang Mai. And now all five nurses are taking an advanced acupuncture training course. I met with the newly trained nurses to go over some clinical skills including acupuncture point location, needle technique and case histories. Here are some photos of our training.



**Left:** Dr. Rungrat (lying) is the model for a case history. Dr. Rungrat is going over the location of acupuncture point Lung 7.

**Right:** Tik locating an acupuncture point on Dr. Rungrat.





**Left:** Dr. Rungrat teaching the five nurses advanced acupuncture therapeutics at Mungkala Clinic in Chiang Mai.



**Right:** Dr. Rungrat showing where the acupuncture meridians travel on model at Mungkala Clinic in Chiang Mai



**Above left:** Laura demonstrating to the newly trained nurses how to stimulate acupuncture needles to get 'Qi' sensation at Mae On Hospital.

**Above right:** Khai inserting an acupuncture needle on model (Jeff) during one of our training sessions at Mae On Hospital. Thanks Jeff!!



We had another successful fundraiser this September at the Vancouver Masonic Centre. It included a wonderful silent auction, raffles and a presentation by renowned psychic medium Carolyn Dominick. A BIG thank you to all the silent auction and raffle donors and of course, Carolyn!



Silent auction items from September fundraiser at the Vancouver Masonic Centre.

Our big news is that we submitted an abstract on the Mae On Project for the Global Summit on HIV/AIDS, Traditional Medicines & Indigenous Knowledge conference in Ghana next year and it was accepted!! We are so excited!! Thanks SO much to Dr. Heather Greenlee and Dr. Rob Kaplan for doing all the statistical analysis and their large contribution in helping put the abstract together. Also many thanks to Jennifer, Ian, Judy, Carolyn, Silvia and Paula for their feedback on the abstract and getting it down to 500 words!! We couldn't have done it without you!

Thank you again for all your support!! Donations can continue to be made to the Tides Canada Foundation (see attached).

Yours in Health,

Laura

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**Left:** Here I am (the tall one) at Mae On Hospital training the 3 new nurses in clinical skills. Unchalee is here helping with the interpretation. Left to right: Tik, Unchalee, Khai and Ting.