

# Key to good health is in your feet

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Reflexology, the art of massaging the various zones on the feet to rid the body of ailments, has finally caught on.

It has been seven years since Father Josef, a German missionary, initiated the setting up of the Rwo Shur International Health Centre in Taipei to perpetuate and research the art of foot massage or acupressure. (Rwo Shur is the Mandarin pronunciation of Josef).

Two brothers the missionary had close contact with, Josef and Thonet Tschen, were named founder and president respectively.

The three were in Kuala Lumpur recently, one of their planned stopovers on their extended tour round the world.

"We have been to Japan, China and Singapore," said Thonet. After KL, we will be moving on to Sabah, Austria, Germany and Italy. We'll (he and his brother) only be returning home in the middle of this year."

The objective of the trip by Thonet and Josef is to "let everybody know this method, and understand and do it themselves".

It is a new strategy that concentrates on teaching those interested how to massage their own feet rather than go to the centres for treatment.

"We learnt a lot from Japan," said Thonet. "Their fast way of promotion is most impressive. There are now 700 centres in Japan promoting the method."

"They provide free massage to clients as well as sell products such as the massage board and our self-help book on reflexology."

The massage board, a blue plastic one, has 16 protrusions on it, some resembling rocks, one that looks like a boomerang and one that has rounded "spikes" on it, all devised to massage the various zones of the feet as you step on it.

The institute has also come out with a self-help book on the art of reflexology where readers are taught step by step how to massage the 64 zones on our feet, legs and hands.

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By  
EU HOOI KHAW



□ The reflex zones on both feet. For example, the tips of both big toes and the other toes relate to the sinuses.

steps towards getting affiliation with the World Health Organisation which has accorded due recognition to traditional medicine such as acupuncture.

WHO officials have already been invited to participate in the next International Conference on Rwo Shur Health in Japan next year. "We hope it will lead to co-sponsorship in the future," said Father Josef.

Reflexology has certainly caught on in Taiwan. "Two million people are doing it every day. Nearly every family has the stick (used for massaging), the board and the book and this is only one tenth of the population," said Father Josef.

The Taiwanese have gone one step

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□ Mr Thonet Tschén massaging the big toe of a participant who was complaining of migraine.

further by paving roads in parks and schools in several cities with pebbles so that people can walk on them barefoot and improve their health.

For this is basically what reflexology, an ancient health skill that dates back 5,000 years in China, is all about. Before man started wearing shoes, he was a lot healthier.

For by walking on the stones and pebbles, he massaged the various zones on his feet that relate to certain organs and glands in his body. This improved his circulatory system and got rid of toxins in his system.

The institute was also set up with altruistic motives. "For many people poverty comes from diseases. If people can be healthy through a cheap method, they have less expenses and can work better," said Father Josef.

"We have a course for the blind in Taiwan where they can learn the health method and earn a living from it. We hope to extend the service here."

"We don't claim to cure diseases. Reflexology improves the circulation, clears the neurological and chi paths, balances the hormones and improves the function of

every organ. Traditional healing has been practised for thousands of years; medical science only 200 years."

While reflexologists can prove the results, they cannot prove the method and this limits their acceptance with medical doctors. "For example, with foot massage we can reduce the size of a kidney stone till it disappears completely. This happens through better circulation and getting rid of the uric acid. We can explain it but we don't know if the doctors would accept it," said Father Josef.

"Sometimes the method works very fast. An illness that has been around for 10 years needs just four treatments. It is the same with modern medicine. When you find the right medicine, it cures the illness."

The institute also plans to give back to China the skills from where they originate. The Tschén brothers have been to Beijing and Canton where an exchange of knowledge took place between them and the Chinese doctors.

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## Father Josef's own experience with pain.

Father Josef Eugster's health history best illustrates the effectiveness of foot massage in relieving various ailments. On his

recent visit to Kuala Lumpur where he met up with Rwo Shur's local representative here, Mrs. Geraldine Tay, he also gave a talk at the Thean Hou temple. At the talk he related to an audience of 300 how his years of suffering from rheumatism finally ended because of reflexology.

The Swiss priest spoke in fluent Mandarin, which, ironically had to be translated into English for those who did not understand the language.

"I endured pain in my knees for more than five years. The pain got worse during winter and this caused me to have a bad temper," he recalled. At Tatung (Taiwan) where his parish is, his condition was aggravated by the fact that he had to cycle everywhere to attend to his parishioners.

He tried all kinds of medicine but still his rheumatic pains persisted. One day a Swiss brother who was visiting the church saw him in great pain and said: "I will massage your feet and your problem will be gone."

"I did my own research and experimented on my parishioners. One morning after mass I noticed a 70-year-old man with a funny gait, who kept massaging his back. Mr. Cheng, the man, had a backache for months. He had seen a lot of doctors but it did not get rid of his backache."

Father Josef volunteered to massage his feet, which had amusing results. The man turned up the next morning with his feet thoroughly washed and perfumed.

"I pressed hard on his feet and for one hour, he yelled and screamed with pain. On the third day he ran away," said Father Josef.

"I sought him out and promised him improvement on the fourth day. He did improve and I continue to work on his feet for three weeks, paying more attention to his kidneys, urethra and bladder. The pain in his reflex zones lessened with each treatment. He is now 83 years old."

Father Josef aims to multiply the effect of this health method. "God is merciful in that he placed a natural doctor in our midst."

Father Josef, who at 48, barely looks 35, still runs his parish in Tatung, while paying special attention to the research on the health method by the International Institute of Rwo Shur Health Method.

At the talk at the Thean Hou temple, those with health problems were invited to step up on stage and have their feet massaged.

A man suffered from toothache was rendered quite speechless by the massage but he admitted to feeling better after it. Massage was emphasized on the reflex zones of his jaws and temporal area.

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A girl with backache was observed by reflexologist Thonet Tschen to have a swollen ankle, and hence swollen lymph glands on that particular reflex zones on her feet. Besides these zones, massage was also emphasized on the sacrum and rectum (reflex zones).