

30 Years of Growth and Development Touch For Health & Energy Kinesiology

by Matthew Thie, M.Ed, Vice President, TFH Education, Inc.



Who is your primary care provider? **YOU are your primary care provider.** You are the one most qualified to assess your own experience of life and health. To care for your whole self, your whole Soul, you need to find ways to remember what Wellness is for you in the context of your own unique lived life. You can then make the shifts in your energies, the changes in your postures, attitudes, choices and actions that will allow balance among the

various aspects of your life. This means embarking on a journey of self discovery which includes responsibly requesting assistance, counsel or therapy from others, whether your friends, your family, professional health practitioners or other "experts".

For over 30 years, Touch For Health (TFH), developed by chiropractor, Dr. John F. Thie, has provided a way for people to work together to assist themselves, their family, friends, and clients to reclaim the central role in the creation of their own Wellness.

We remain committed to the idea **that many of the techniques used by professional health care practitioners can easily and safely be shared with lay people for their own participation and empowerment in their self-awareness and self-care,** even as TFH is adopted by more and more health care professionals and professional TFH training become available.

When we first began teaching lay people as part of the Applied Kinesiology (AK) program, there were two principle objections. One was that the AK techniques would be dangerous in the hands of lay people, and the other was that we were liable to create a new profession that would be in competition with chiropractic and other categories of physicians who are licensed to diagnose.

Since that time TFH, and so many other Kinesiology systems which have grown out of or in parallel with the TFH or Energy Kinesiology model, have been shared with hundreds of thousands of lay people with great success, satisfaction and safety. The fear that sharing with the public would be dangerous has proved unfounded. TFH is very consciously designed in a holistic, non-diagnostic, energetic model that is safe to learn and apply without any prior specialized training, yet very effective in helping people to feel better and enjoy their lives more.

TFH in particular has developed philosophy, ethics and protocol which not only make it a clearly different model than that practiced by biomedical physicians (a truly holistic, vitalist/energetic model rather than a disease treatment model) but also has proven to be an extremely beneficial complementary approach to working with human beings. TFH focuses on facilitation of optimum performance and satisfaction in life, and does not compete with medicine, but integrates with all aspects of health and Wellness care, encouraging prevention and self-care, including proactive and timely consultation with physicians and other health care experts. The TFH model of kinesiology is non-invasive, honoring of the individual, hopeful and positive (which in itself has a powerful healing influence, even before we apply our gentle energy

balancing techniques). TFH & Energy Kinesiology represent the cutting edge in health maintenance, being positive and safe interventions, reducing unnecessary medication and surgery, and optimizing medical care, recovery, adaptation and rehabilitation.

Today it is very clear that the sharing of TFH has indeed resulted in the creation of a new profession of (Energy) Kinesiology. As we celebrate our accomplishments and plan the future growth and development of this new profession of Kinesiology, it is important to consider the foundational program of Touch for Health and the principles that have created this distinct and particularly beneficial profession.

Touch for Health Purposes

VITALITY: Enjoy Life. Improve posture, attitude, energy, balance, harmony and Wellness.

Develop awareness and presence to appreciate and enjoy what is happening in YOUR life. Focus on the creation of optimum performance and personal best. This process of greater awareness leads to growth on all the levels of human functioning.

TELOS: Develop your *Reason for Being*. Find and fulfill purposes and goals that contribute to your sense of participating and loving life. Identify the types of environments, roles, careers and activities in which you will naturally thrive. Create and expand opportunities for all people to discover and utilize their natural healing abilities. Encourage the natural healers to practice the healing arts.

HEALING & RECOVERY: Optimize function of the immune system and healing system. Harmonize mental, emotional, physical and behavioral aspects of each person's life for relief of symptoms, enhanced adaptation and coping, and improved quality of life and Wellness.

Create practical and accessible processes, practices and habits that are proactive, preventative and life-affirming.

In 1973 the book *Touch for Health* was published with the hope that the maximum number of people could help each other to understand and FEEL that there is always HOPE, no matter what their age or physical conditions. All that is needed is a pair of loving hands to improve healing, quality and meaning in life. The original vision was to train patients to use the fundamental principles of assessment and balancing of muscular posture and subtle (meridian) energies through muscle testing and acupressure. Patients were able to bridge the gap between feeling "not well" or imbalanced and feeling "sick enough" to consult a professional. They improved their own preventive self-care habits and increased the benefit of professional health care. This was so successful that lay people who experienced the benefit of TFH wanted to "pass the word" as TFH instructors. This was the beginning of the TFH training program in the educational model.

Since that time thousands of lay people have become effective instructors of TFH and shared these simple, safe, yet powerful techniques throughout the world, in more than 100 countries and 23 languages. Many people have found a career as

TFH instructors, and even TFH practitioners without any prior background in healthcare. Most importantly, thousands upon thousands of people have been helped in subtle or dramatic ways to function better and enjoy their lives more, through the grassroots sharing of TFH as well as in clinical settings.

An untold number have benefited simply by reading the book and trying it out. We have had many letters and reports that suggest that thousands have benefited through their own independent study and experimentation.

Experts have developed and adapted the Touch for Health system in the specific contexts of their professions, which include religious ministry, psychological counseling, education, personal coaching, and more. Within the health-care field, TFH has proved beneficial across the spectrum in the context of traditional Western biomedicine, nursing, chiropractic, massage therapy, Traditional Chinese Medicine, acupuncture, psychotherapy, physical therapy, sports medicine, personal training, etc. The TFH Energy Kinesiology model has also been embodied in a wide range of other kinesiology systems, many of which are based on the foundation of the TFH system, so that this kind of work is becoming more and more known and accessible throughout the world, especially in Europe, Australia and New Zealand.

Important Developments in the Growth of TFH and Energy Kinesiology

The Touch for Health Foundation & Association established 1975

The TFH Foundation was established in Pasadena, California in 1975 (together with the International College of Applied Kinesiology- ICAK) to train instructors to teach the TFH system and administer the TFH Association whose membership includes TFH instructors and interested members of the public. It was set up as a not-for-profit educational foundation accredited in the state of California as a vocational training school. The Foundation also organized and sponsored the first TFH conferences which for many years were the only international kinesiology conferences in the energy model, and to this day embrace speakers and attendees from across the kinesiology spectrum and from around the world. Many of our current leaders in the field of Energy Kinesiology and faculty members of the IKC remember the early days in San Diego, California.

TFHF and ICAK divide and develop separately

Though founded together, and originally coming together in a joint conference, the two organizations soon separated. The ICAK has since focused on training physicians who are licensed to diagnose, using AK in a clinical setting, while the TFHF emphasized the holistic, personal development approach.

TFH Foundation closes, TFH/KA and IKC established 1990

In 1990 drastic changes occurred in California law related to vocational schools, and Dr. Thie retired from his chiropractic practice (which had in part subsidized the TFHF during its 15 year existence) and he donated the Thie Chiropractic Clinic to the Los Angeles College of Chiropractic. It was decided that the time was right to pass the authority for continuing the certification of TFH Instructors to the existing Faculty of the TFHF who then formed the International Kinesiology College in Switzerland. The IKC has now been legally reestablished in Australia, but remains as always a "college without walls", existing wherever TFH classes are taught, consistent with an international standard of instruction and content.

Responding to the needs of lay people, as well as to professionals studying the TFH syllabus, more levels, hours and details have been added to the curriculum, so that now we have a minimum 60-hour training as well as an Advanced Skills Workshop as a pre-requisite to the Instructor Training Workshop. In addition, many related Kinesiology programs and further professional trainings in kinesiology have been developed which are in keeping with the principles of TFH and the standards of the IKC.

It has been a joy to see so many and diverse opportunities to study for those who are passionate about the principles and techniques of this work.

The IKC Faculty continues to expand making TFH ever more available throughout Europe as well as Australia, New Zealand, The United States, Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Central and South America, Japan, Hong Kong, and Indonesia. And the IKC continues to develop means and strategies to fulfill the mission of making TFH available to all people, whether families and friends, lay instructor/practitioners, Professional TFH Kinesiologists, or professionals of other disciplines.

Aims and purposes of the IKC (excerpted from the website, www.ikc-info.org)

The following are just a few elements of the IKC aims and purposes:

- **To teach and disseminate TFH and make TFH available to the widest possible range of people.... in all walks of life and all nations of the world....**
- **To promote research to show TFH works....**
- **To define kinesiology as a method of personal evolution, using precision manual muscle testing only for biofeedback.**
- **To actively support and create the worldwide development of kinesiology as a professional discipline in its own right.**
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A Unifying Mission

We share these same goals, in terms of the promotion of a professional discipline of Energy Kinesiology, with several other international associations, quite a few national associations, many Kinesiology Institutes, and thousands of individual practitioners throughout the world. The TFH Kinesiology Association in the U.S. continues the mission of an international association, and promotes research and the establishment of TFH Kinesiology as a professional discipline, in addition to its role as an IKC national association. The Energy Kinesiology Association (formally ASK-US, the Association of Specialized Kinesiology of USA) is dedicated to a parallel mission, including the establishment of professional standards, except without as much special emphasis on TFH. The IASK (International Association of Specialized Kinesiology) also has much the same mission, though without the same authority to certify TFH Instructors.

The principle of unity in diversity encourages us to see the opportunities for synergy amongst these similar but separate organizations. The first step is greater awareness of each other and co-operation in common goals. We are happy to report that this process is under way as board members compare notes and find ways to at least work in parallel, if not always directly together.

There are now also many Kinesiology Institutes that offer up to 3-year professional trainings in Kinesiology, with government recognition and even funding of student education. The demand for these trainings is only growing, and I think there is a public need for professionals trained in this way. For that reason we are particularly pleased to see the development of a Professional Touch for Health Kinesiology Training program.

Right now in several countries the governments have recognized the Touch for Health Energy Kinesiology model as useful for their citizens and have recognized it in various ways. In many countries Touch for Health Kinesiology courses and seminars are recognized as continuing education for many of the licensed and registered health professions as well as by organizations and associations for unlicensed or government registered groups. Governments and insurance companies are authorizing payment for kinesiology consultations.

This official recognition of TFH and Energy Kinesiology is a wonderful development and will contribute tremendously to the awareness and availability of TFH. However, with this recognition comes a pressure to conform to more familiar healthcare models and training structures, potentially changing fundamental aspects of TFH.

A Professional Touch for Health Kinesiologist must be a fundamentally different kind of “therapist”, with a primary emphasis on teaching people to be aware of their choices and care for themselves, while also offering expertise and experience in the specific techniques and applications of energy balancing with kinesiology, to assist people in relieving their distress and realizing their full potential Wellness and enjoyment of life.

We still believe in keeping TFH Kinesiology as accessible as possible, while we also develop additional and diverse opportunities for learning (more and different workshops and training programs) and target specific groups (whether segments of the lay public or particular professions). Part of our original purpose in providing a minimal lay training was to allow instructors to be able to share TFH with a minimum investment of time and money, so that those with a gift or passion or calling could discover it, and those who would be happier in a different career field would discover that too.

As was the case when we started TFH, there are many people today who have trained for many hours and years to be health care professionals without first discovering if they have a gift for healing, or a genuine calling, passion, or even any enjoyment in helping other people with their health and Wellness. This is unfortunate for the professionals who are stuck with debts and a personally unsatisfying career as well as for their clients who may not benefit as much from the attention of someone whose “heart is not in it”.

One of the great joys of TFH is to observe so many people with no previous training of any kind discover a natural gift or interest in energy balancing and healing. An untold number of people have simply picked up the TFH book and discovered for themselves a way of using the TFH principles to help themselves, their family and friends feel better and improve their lives. Many have taken the basic weekend course, or the entire TFH training and gained a useful tool for their self-care. And many have been inspired to share this help either informally within their circle of family, friends, etc. or formally as TFH instructors, becoming certified through the Instructor Training Workshop and passing on the knowledge with the tried, true and standard protocol codified by the International Kinesiology College for worldwide consistency.

And a percentage of TFH students are continually inspired to become health care professionals, either by going on to study in a traditional profession— massage, chiropractic, naturopathy, acupuncture, biomedicine, psychology, etc.— **or by becoming experts through their own experience and development of the same philosophy, principles and protocols of the TFH synthesis: self-responsible, non-diagnostic, holistic, energy balancing.** This has resulted in a flow of enthusiastic and passionate people into the health care field for the right reasons.

From early on, we have also found that, although TFH is designed to be completely safe and accessible without any medical training, there has been an enthusiastic response from people who are already professionals, or who already have the intention of becoming professionals. Health care professionals are often in a better position to truly appreciate the power of energy balancing, because they are familiar with the limits of the biomedical approach. Many medical doctors, nurses, massage and physical therapists, chiropractors, acupuncturists, psychotherapists and counselors have seen surprising positive results, either in conjunction with standard treatment, or as an alternative in situations where there is no “treatment” or even identified “cause” to treat. Many of these professionals have seen growth in their practice, and more importantly, increased personal and client satisfaction. The focus is transformed from disease treatment to Wellness enhancement, functional improvement and greater joy in life.

There are already existing professions and training programs that have pathology as their primary focus. In fact, the biomedical model is so dominant, availability and access to many safe and effective alternative approaches is often quite limited. While TFHK may be very useful as an adjunct to the biomedical approach to healthcare, it is not necessary, nor even desirable that all practitioners of TFHK be trained in the biomedical disease model and the detailed science of pathology.

There is a great need for a primary focus on the holistic function of the person in the context of his or her own life, and on the powerful yet safe modality of postural and energetic balancing through Touch for Health Kinesiology. Many of those trained in TFHK may indeed wish to continue their study of anatomy, physiology, pathology, psychology, etc., yet many people with a natural gift of healing will find the basic fundamentals of TFHK are sufficient tools to be able to safely help people become more aware of themselves, and to lead healthier, happier, richer lives.

It is perfectly okay, and even desirable to be a Professional TFHK Practitioner having studied “only” Touch for Health, in keeping with the holistic, energetic model and staying within the safe range of Wellness assistance and self-responsibility. Where a TFH Kinesiologist is effectively acting in the role of a Primary Care Provider, it is important to have some first aid training and a knowledge of Red Flags or Warning Signs which indicate an emergency or need for referral. When acting as an instructor, coach, or lay assistant in a model of self-care through self-awareness and postural/energetic balance, we can rely on common sense and other health care resources.

Because so many professionals are involved in the study, teaching and practice of Touch for Health, and so many TFH’ers become professionals, there has been an ongoing evolution of the TFH curriculum towards professionalism. While we support the development of opportunities to enhance professional Kinesiology skills and practices, arbitrary professionalization may be counter-productive.

Professionalism – Expanded and improved teaching materials and curricula, increased opportunities for training, additional support for students through practice and competency assessment and the promotion of excellence in professional practice – is a positive development.

Professionalization – The arbitrary application of standards from other professions in order to look professional such as required prerequisites, breadth studies, hours of training, licensing and regulation (in some countries the use of TFH/K has been restricted to licensed professionals). We must consider carefully whether ever-increasing “standards” might become counter-productive to the goal of sharing these safe techniques with the widest number of people for the maximum benefit.

Dr. Thie originally opposed the increasing requirements for chiropractors in the United States as a barrier to students, yet the result seems to have been an increase in enrollment. Perhaps more worrisome has been the shift away from the vitalist, holistic traditions of chiropractic towards a more biomedical training and philosophy. Similarly massage therapy is approaching a national standard of 1,000 hours of training for certification. How much is too much required training? More importantly, we need to guard against professionalization resulting in the neglect or even elimination of the lay model of individual empowerment with TFH. Awareness and demand for access to the techniques and benefits of TFH among the general public is what will ultimately bring TFH kinesiology to its full potential as a benefit to humanity.

In California, as of January 1, 2003, we now have the “**Health Freedom Law**” which we feel is a much better way to manage TFH and Energy Kinesiology than legislation, restriction and professionalization. The law basically defines the practice of medicine in narrow terms and liberalizes the practice of all the various safe, non-medical therapies. This type of freedom has existed in some parts of Europe and Asia for years with a track record of safety and great benefit, yet the laws in the EU in general and in some specific countries are currently changing and need to be monitored.

Excerpted and paraphrased from **California Senate Bill SB577**, available on the internet.

SECTION 1.

The Legislature hereby finds and declares all of the following:

(a) Based upon a comprehensive report by the National Institute of Medicine and other studies...it is evident that millions of Californians... are presently receiving a substantial volume of health care services from complementary and alternative health care practitioners. Those studies further indicate that individuals utilizing complementary and alternative health care services cut across a wide variety of age, ethnic, socioeconomic, and other demographic categories.

(b). ... practitioners could... be subject to fines, penalties, and the restriction of their practice under the Medical Practice Act **even though there was no demonstration that their practices are harmful to the public. [our emphasis]**

(c) The Legislature intends... **to facilitate access** by Californians to complementary and alternative health care practitioners who are not providing services that require medical training and credentials. The Legislature further finds that these non-

medical complementary and alternative services **do not pose a risk to the health and safety** of California residents, and that restricting access to those services ... is not warranted.

SECTION 2.

... Business and Professions Code... :

.... a person who discloses to a client that he or she is not a licensed physician shall not be in violation of Section ... unless that person does any of the following:

Conducts surgery ... punctures the skin or harmfully invades the body... [Prescribes or administers] x-ray... legend drugs or controlled substances... Recommends the discontinuance of legend drugs or controlled substances prescribed by an appropriately licensed practitioner. Willfully diagnoses and treats a physical or mental condition of any person **under circumstances or conditions that cause or create great bodily harm, serious physical or mental illness, or death.** Holds out, states, indicates, advertises, or implies to a client or prospective client that he or she is a physician, a surgeon, or a physician and surgeon.

Informed Consent and Full Disclosure

The law also requires full disclosure about the practitioner's level of training, the theory and evidence related to a given procedure and about the risks, benefits and alternatives. This will highlight those who have had more extensive training, while not preventing the gifted healer from helping people with TFH as soon as possible. Interestingly, the law also opens the doors for physicians to use alternative therapies that are not within the scope of traditional biomedicine, and may also require the acknowledgement that 80% of standard medical procedures have not been scientifically proven, and other less dangerous, approaches are available.

Under this new law it is now clearly legal to be a TFH practitioner, yet the training of TFH Instructors or Practitioners is potentially subject to demanding California requirements for secondary education! For this reason, TFH Education Inc. is beginning to explore the possibility of partnering or cooperating with existing vocational institutions in California to seed a TFH Instructor/Practitioner program in a variety of schools such as massage, acupuncture, and chiropractic. It has long been a goal to make TFH and/or AK more available to chiropractic students. Currently, although probably all chiropractic campuses have an AK club, almost no colleges make it an official part of the curriculum because it is “not scientific”.

Touch for Health is scientific, but lacks orthodox evidence

We know that Touch for Health is real and effective because we have experienced and witnessed the changes in our muscles, postures, energy and in our improved experience of life. Each of us uses the scientific method of observation, hypothesis, experimentation and confirmation in daily practice, and we find that our techniques are easily transferred, and the outcomes are consistently repeatable. In this sense, Touch for Health is one of the most scientific methods available for improvement of wellness and personal best performance. At the same time we lack the traditional documentation of evidence that is required for acceptance within the scientific establishment.

We need to clearly document WHO is doing WHAT, and what kinds of outcomes are resulting. Although we do not treat named diseases, we need to document how use of TFH as an integral part of health care enhances wellness, effectiveness of treatment, compliance, relief from symptoms and reduction of dan-

gerous medication or surgical procedures for people who do have diagnosed conditions. And we need to publish our findings in Peer Reviewed Journals that are listed in the cumulative indexes and are available for research via the internet.

Notes:

Currently there are a number of newsletters and journals, most notably *Kinesiology Forum* and *The Journal of Applied Kinesiology and Kinesiologic Medicine*. We need to support these journals by encouraging everyone to subscribe, by submitting articles, and by supporting research projects that can be published in the journals. But we need to know what kind of research is appropriate to our model of TFH and Energy Kinesiology.

The reductionist scientific model of orthodox pharmaceutical medicine which seeks a “one drug for one bug”, “magic bullet” approach to disease is almost diametrically opposite to the holistic, Wellness model which seeks to take into account a maximum of significant factors which contribute to an integrated sense of well-being and good living. Where the holistic model places the greatest importance on the subjective perceptions of individuals in the context of their lived lives, the allopathic model seeks the “objective” and discretely quantifiable measures of controlled experiments, isolated from any contextual influence, epitomized in the special ritual of the Double or Triple Blind Randomized Controlled Clinical Trial (RCT).

Valid research in TFH and Energy Kinesiology requires TLC not RCT!

RCT is inappropriate for our use. It assumes the ability to eliminate many factors of human experience that cannot be eliminated, and in any case, are fundamental to the theory and practice of TFH/K. We cannot provide an equal initial state in any two human beings, or even in the same human being in a second trial. A blind, false or placebo “balancing” is hardly practicable, is of questionable ethics, and contrary to our purposes. (We are in favor of comparing outcomes of different approaches, or combined approaches to see which seem to produce the most favorable outcomes in general, and for people with specific conditions or symptoms).