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Greetings,

We have a couple of exciting programs coming up. Elisabeth Rochat de la Vallee will be here in November doing an all day program - including our classical Chinese medicine study group and the feature program for the day: The Fasting of the Heart/Mind in the Zhuangzi.

We are doing our annual Chinese Medicinal Plant Walk at Quarryhill Botanical Garden in Glen Ellen later this month. This is a great opportunity to see Chinese medicinal herbs growing in a beautiful and natural setting!

All the details are below and on our website.

Our feature article for this newsletter is "Free & Easy Movement" about reclaiming natural, efficient movement by re-patterning our movements - from standing to walking and more complex movements. Just scroll all the way down to read it.

As many of you know, our membership program provides funding for traditional Chinese medicine health care for low-income people that would otherwise not have access. We have an ever-expanding member's section online that has numerous articles, audio file and videos. To see more (including all recent updates to the member's section) please visit us [here](#) at our membership information page.

Wishing you a healthy and fruitful Autumn!

All my best,  
Sean

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**Chinese Medicinal Plant Walk at Quarryhill Botanical Garden  
with Peg Schafer and Sean Fannin  
Sunday October 28th 10am-12.**

Located in Glen Ellen, Quarryhill is one of the pre-eminent Asian botanical gardens globally, featuring one of the largest collections of documented, wild-collected Asian plants in the world.

All proceeds from this walk go to benefit the Garden.  
Cost for the walk is \$15.

Space is limited, please call 707-996-3166 to reserve yours in advance.

[Visit Quarryhill Botanical Garden's site here.](#)



## "Fasting of the Heart/Mind in the Zhuangzi"

a special presentation by Elisabeth Rochat de la Vallee

Monday November 12

Elisabeth is an internationally renowned scholar and translator of classical Chinese medical and philosophical texts. This is a fantastic opportunity to immerse yourself in classical Chinese philosophy with one of the most well respected scholars in the field.

### Schedule for the day

- Classical Chinese Medicine Study Group - Suwen Chapter 5  
10am -12 noon
- The Fasting of the Heart/Mind within the Zhuangzi  
1:30pm-4:30pm and 5pm-7pm

"The Fasting of the Heart/Mind" is the topic of Chapter 4 of the Zhuangzi, which along with the Daodejing, is one of the most well known and loved daoist texts.

- The tuition for the Study Group Meeting from 10am-12noon is \$25 (\$22 for CTHA members)

- The tuition for the "Fasting of the Heart" presentation from 1:30pm-7:00pm is \$75 (\$63.50 for CTHA members). To attend only the afternoon presentation 1:30pm-4:30pm is \$50 (\$42.50 for CTHA members). To attend only the evening presentation 5pm-7pm is \$35 (\$29.75 for CTHA members).

- To attend the entire day including the morning study group, the afternoon session and the evening session, is \$90 (\$76.50 for CTHA members). This option is highly recommended as a chance to spend the day with one of the most well-respected and inspiring teachers in the field of Chinese medicine and philosophy!

For more information [please visit our update page](#) or call (707) 763-8040

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### Elisabeth Rochat de La Valle's website is up!

Elisabeth's new site is up and running it has her complete schedule for the year, including contact information for her programs, as well as articles to read online and other great information.

The site is <http://elisabeth-rochat.com>

I highly recommend a visit!

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Free & Easy Movement

by Sean Fannin

[Direct link to the full article for members here.](#)

Physical movement is one of the most fundamental processes of life. It is natural for us to move and we need to move regularly in order to be healthy, vital and aware. Awareness and movement are intimately linked. How we move is, to a great degree, associated with our perception of our outer environment and the state of our mind within the internal environment. Conversely, our posture and movement can shape our thoughts, perceptions and emotions. So it is necessary and natural for us to move. However, how we move may not be natural.

In relatively recent times in the United States we have transitioned from a fairly

active lifestyle to less and less movement. Because of this, the movement and activity that we do get is often not efficient. Efficient use of energy is necessary everywhere in nature. It is that which allows the hunter to sit motionless until it explodes into action, and what allows the prey the possibility of escape. Efficient movement is the norm in the natural world. It is characterized by smoothness, lack of tension and a graceful quality even in the middle of a flurry of activity.

Modern life, unfortunately, does not seem to lend itself to free and easy movement. We tend to be in a state of hyper-focus, spending our days on the computer, phone, tv, etc. with little awareness of our actual environment. The body responds to this type of focus by contracting in, leading to a constricted chest that blocks the full movement of the diaphragm, pulls the head forward and rounds the lower back. we then walk and move in that state of contraction, which is not only inefficient, but actually causes painful movement patterns, increased stress response, anxiety and depression over time.

To regain our natural free and efficient movement we need to practice working with our posture, breath and awareness. It sounds odd to have to practice something that is inherently natural, but it is necessary to reset our movement and awareness. In doing this we are not creating a new way of moving, breathing and thinking, but are rather allowing the body to remember an easier, more efficient way that we strayed away (or were led away) from early on.

To begin resetting these patterns we need to make sure that we are structurally aligned. This allows for a relaxed circulation and movement and gives us the space to breathe freely. Begin by making sure that there is a curve in the lower back. Not so much that the pelvis tilts back, but a noticeable curve (opposite to an arch which is rounding the back). Then lift the chest up, imagining that the chest is opening upwards. The head should move back so the crown is pointing to the ceiling. Don't move too far back or it will cause your pelvis to shift forward. (see the [member's video section](#) for a demonstration of this posture and the following movements)

Get comfortable standing and sitting in this position, with the arms and shoulders relaxed. Take deep breaths and notice the movement in your spine and chest as you inhale and exhale. Let your focus relax into a more general awareness of your body and the environment around you.

Once this is comfortable, you can start practicing movements. One of the most basic and important movements is walking. Practice walking barefoot with the naturally aligned posture described above. Lead with the torso rather than the head...

[Become a member of the Center for Traditional Health Arts and read the full article.](#)



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