

**2014, Structural Integration = A Body that Runs Energy**  
**by Jean Louise Green, Certified Rolf Practitioner and CMT**

“Take off your boots!”

“Huh?”

“*Take off your boots!*” I heard it again, this time louder. It was an early rainy spring morning in 2011. I was in my garden and my wrists hurt from doing lots of work and wheel-barrowing two cubic yards of worm castings.

I had told myself that I wanted to show up with more of a big ‘YES’ for my internal cues. There was no denying this was one of them. I felt my resistance on that chilly wet day as I literally stepped out of another pattern and flung my rubber boots off. Guess I would learn to shovel barefooted.

The moist garden soil felt good between my toes. As I looked up, the wind caught my hair and found my face. It was really a good day. I hadn’t felt this good in a long time. Then I felt the sensation. A strong tingling moved up to both of my wrists and vibrated. Surprised and humbly stilled, I just observed. When it stopped, the pain in my wrists was gone!

Like the ‘Energizer Bunny,’ I continued to work through the day and into night with my headlamp until my barefoot work was done. The next day I awoke with absolutely no pain anywhere in my body! How could that be? *It has to do with having a body that runs energy through it.*

Let’s look at the bodywork of Structural Integration and how it optimizes the flow of energy through the connective tissues of the body. If you imagine how it feels to have a fluid, light, balanced body, free of pain, stiffness and chronic stress, at ease with itself and the earth’s gravitational field, then you’ll understand the goals of Structural Integration. It begins with Dr. Ida P. Rolf, the founder of Structural Integration.

**In 1916, twenty year old Ida P. Rolf** was on a campout in the Rockies and was kicked by a horse. It left her with impaired breathing and a severe fever. When she sought medical help, an osteopath treated her with a simple spinal manipulation. Immediately, her fever reduced and her breathing normalized. In that life changing moment, Ida realized that structure determines function.

Four years later she received her PhD in biochemistry and continued to study osteopathy, homeopathy, yoga, and do hands on healing work. Ida

developed unique ideas of how the body is comprised of segmented parts, the malleability of the connective tissues, and the body's relationship to gravity. By 1965, at Esalen Institute in Big Sur California, Dr. Rolf began teaching her work, which she called Structural Integration, also known as 'Rolfing' by her students.

**In Structural Integration, the major body segments are organized around a central axis called the 'Line.'** This is done in a series of 10 sessions that Dr. Rolf described as a 'recipe,' the culmination of her life's work. It is a blueprint for organizing the layers of the body's connective tissues that form a continuous interconnected system throughout the body. Each session proceeds in sequential order with specific goals and areas of the body that are addressed. The goal of each session is to create length in the body and horizontalize the pelvis. I follow the recipe and customize it to the needs of each person.

**The collagen fibers of connective tissues are described as living crystals** that conduct electrical impulses through their piezoelectric capacities, or 'pressure electricity.' The crystalline structure of their long, thin pliable molecules are soft and flexible and generate electric fields when they're compressed and stretched.

"The important point is that when a bone or cartilage is compressed, when a tendon or ligament stretches, or when the skin is stretched or bent at a joint, minute electric pulsations are set up," said biophysicist James Oschman. "This information is electrically conducted through the surrounding living matrix." "Connective tissue seems to dictate the flow of electromagnetic energy throughout the body at the finest level," concurred physicist and physiologist Valerie Hunt.

In this regard, the significance of posture comes to mind. Proper stacking of one's bones helps current flow in the body. One of the best ways I know to do that is through awareness of my 'Line.'

**The 'Line' is both structural and functional**—structural because we organize the center of gravity of a person's body segments around it; functional because it is an energetic channel that connects the body with Life Force energy from the electromagnetic fields of the celestial heavens and the terrestrial earth.

Electromagnetic energy flows in a donut-like torus shape around the body with a central column called the pranic tube going down the middle that channels electromagnetic energy into the body. The Rolf 'Line' that extends through the central axis of the body is synonymous with the pranic tube.

Our posture is a reflection of our relationship with gravity. As body segments align and balance, energy flows from electromagnetic fields of the heavens and earth can support us. A biological scientist said, "Structural Integration is powerful because it addresses who we are. That is where the physical meets the energetic, which is sacred space. It's a blending of the physical and the non-physical. The body becomes a vehicle for energy flow and one's spirit can more freely live on this earth."