

## SET TALK

By *Don McCann, MA, LMT, LMHC, CSETT*

*MM3717*

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### MY PATHWAY TO FINDING MY TRIBE

Even at an early age I liked helping people. Boy scouts was an opportunity to do a good deed daily which I consciously worked at for several years. In doing this I became very aware of how satisfying it was to help people. When I couldn't find a good deed to do I wasn't as happy.

My first real job after high school graduation was a life guard on the beach where I was able to make rescues and really feel that I was helping people. When I went to college I found it very hard to focus on business and other classes that did not involve relating to or helping people. By the time I was a senior I was working with a volunteer student peer counseling help line assisting students who were having adjustment problems and other challenges making sure that they would get to the right people for help. I discovered I had talent in listening to people who had problems and helping them find solutions and feel better. This was where I found my happiness and satisfaction.

After college graduation I took a job in corporate America where it became apparent in a very short time that it was not about helping people, but about helping the corporation with little concern for what was good for people. Six months later I resigned and started looking for something that was more aligned to who I was.

I decided to go to graduate school for counselor education which seemed to be a good fit based on my previous experience with the student help line. After a year and a half of graduate school I had my first bodywork session and I was intrigued. Pains that I had in my body for years disappeared and a new freedom and range of motion within my body evolved. I was excited even more than I was by the counseling I had been studying, but it was important to finish my master's degree and graduate. Fortunately, this would leave a summer when I would be able to travel before having to start work.

I heard about bodywork training in California (Postural Integration) that incorporated bodywork with emotional release. This really intrigued me. However, I had just finished a two year master's degree program and was very low on funds so I needed a full time position that would utilize my master's degree and allow me to make a decent living. My choices were guidance/school psychologist, government agency rehab, substance abuse

counselor, or not take a job and travel to California to take the bodywork training. Obviously, there was a major decision to be made here.

In the middle of July I traveled to the Garden of the Gods in Colorado and was camped in a camp ground with huge beautiful red rock formations in my sunset. I was fretting on what my decision would be because I would either have to go back to Florida and start looking for a job soon or try to find a way to go to California for the bodywork training. I narrowed my options down to a school psychologist/guidance position or California.

The sunset had been absolutely gorgeous - one of those sunsets in which you feel your soul becomes alive and you know how wonderful it is to be alive. I went to bed that night with a question, and in the morning I had a certainty about what I would do which was to go to California and study Postural Integration. I was relaxed, and I was confident that this would be my path. Once the decision had been made I was able to walk into my credit union and take out a signature loan for money necessary to go to California and pay for my training. I was aligned with the Universe and the Universe was supporting me.

Studying and learning Postural Integration was a joy. While in California I also developed a successful practice before I was finished with my training and found tremendous satisfaction and happiness having these tools to help people.

After my training was over I realized I needed to go back to Florida and happily made my trip across country fully expecting people would come running to me with these wonderful new skills that I had to offer. At the time in the mid 70's Florida only had three massage schools and massage parlors were illicit entertainment. My family thought I had gone off the deep end. The fact that it was hard to get a practice going was evidence to them that I was off on a half-baked idea and needed to grow up and get a real job. Fortunately, inside myself I knew what I was doing was right and would make a major contribution to people's well-being.

It also became apparent that in Florida I would need a massage license to practice. Life's circumstances of needing an income came into play, and since my practice was not producing a significant income I found it necessary to take a guidance counselor job for a dependable income. I no sooner took the guidance counselor position than my practice started to grow. I was a guidance counselor from 7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. and a massage therapist doing Postural Integration from 4:00 – 10:00 p.m.

In the process of getting my massage license I traveled to Gainesville on the weekends to attend the Florida School of Massage. While I was there I went to one of the first conventions of the FSMTA which I joined. It was exciting to find other people who shared my excitement and joy of doing massage and bodywork. As you can tell from my work schedule I was extremely busy. I had very little spare time being a guidance counselor along with a massage bodywork practice that was almost 40 hours a week which included weekend sessions. Something had to give.

In the late spring the principal of the school called me in and offered me the assistant principal position for the next year. I went home that night and really had to make a decision. It wasn't that hard. I was going to follow my dream, and massage and bodywork was where I was the most gratified and happy. The next day I walked in and gave the principal my resignation letter. He was very surprised but he understood that I was following my heart and what I really loved to do.

At this time I entered a stage of taking every course that could make me a better body worker and kept adding new things to my original modality of Postural Integration. It wasn't long before I had stepped outside of the bounds of Postural Integration because my clients brought me so many specific problems that were not covered and they did not fit a 10 session model. I was spending more and more time going to the FSMTA meetings and conventions and feeling very supported with the people I was meeting and sharing what I was learning. I found osteopathic cranial classes, craniosacral, worked with other cranial therapists and developed Cranial/Structural Therapy that is the "golden nugget" for aligning the core distortion. By this time my work had evolved into Structural Energetic Therapy®, a name that I coined.

For the first time I took a booth at an FSMTA convention to demonstrate my work and found even more support from the FSMTA tribe. CE's were now becoming a requirement for massage therapists and since much of my work was different from what therapists had learned from other classes I developed CE classes. At one of the conventions the State President of the FSMTA asked me if I would be interested in the State Education Standards chair for the FSMTA. At first I said no, then reconsidered and joined the FSMTA board, eventually spending three years as the state president. Obviously, I found my tribe and have been a member serving in many ways.

My pathway now involves teaching my passion, Structural Energetic Therapy®, which includes the Cranial/Structural work that focuses on releasing the

core distortion, and the Cranial/Structural Frontal/Occipital Decompression that has been effective with concussions, Alzheimer's, autism, learning disabilities, detoxing the brain, and many other conditions associated with the cranium and brain. I am teaching Structural Energetic Therapy® skills nationwide, instructing at FSMTA Conventions and presenting CE programs at FSMTA Chapters. I have also written SET TALK articles since 2000 for the *Massage Message*. Today I am as busy as ever with a practice in Structural Energetic Therapy®, a busy teaching schedule, and the FSMTA. Yes, my tribe is massage and bodywork and I now am being supported by my involvement in the FSMTA. Thank you for being here!

*Please visit our website for more information – [www.StructuralEnergeticTherapy.com](http://www.StructuralEnergeticTherapy.com). You may also contact me through that site with any questions you may have.*