

Concept

an idea
distilled
to its
essential
elements

Our business day starts and ends with a session on an automatic massage bed that incorporates acupressure and infrared heat. The public comes in all day for free, yet we're sustainable.

Former organizational consultants and facilitators, we now run *Back to Chi*, where the bed, which combines ancient and modern technologies, relaxes muscles and opens acupoints along the back. The aim is to boost the body's systemic balance—to improve *chi*, the Chinese word for vitality, life force, power.

Some people buy the technology to use in their homes, offices, and health centers. That pays our bills and allows us to make it free. We're doing what we love: to research, to learn and engage with people, to create a healthy, sustainable organization focused on community and generosity.

Before we opened the center, we worked with multinational business leaders, heads of academia, and others. We learned that those best at creating a healthy organization were doing it as social entrepreneurs and letting their organizations do the talking.

We searched for and found other healthy organizations: Spain's Mondragon Banking Cooperative, noted for its community-based structure and long-term economic success; St. Luke's, the British ad agency whose

autobiography, *Creative Company*, reads like an adventure and ethical business plan; Gaviotas, the thriving Colombian intentional community where children pump water by playing on the village see-saw; the Amazon Herb Co., where American botanist "Amazon John" works with scientists and tribes who gather, mix, and export rainforest teas and medicinal herbs to "keep the rainforests more valuable alive than dead."

We say that the most permanent, rewarding, and engaging learning is intrinsic to work, not removed from it. Being healthy, feeling lively, and learning together entwine in healthy organisms—and in healthy organizations. By tapping into this intrinsic wisdom, the mystery, the vivaciousness, the *magic* of real learning occurs. It's a model we've adopted—one that anyone can adopt and evolve.

Daisy Birch and Arash Sadati

own *Back to Chi* (www.backtochi.com/chi.htm), a natural technology health center in Alexandria, Virginia, that offers thermal acupressure massage free to anyone as long as they wish to use it. The center also provides daily free lectures and discussions on a wide range of alternative and integrative health topics.

Creating a Healthy Organization

Another Kind of Embedded Learning



By Daisy Birch and
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