

# SourcePoint Therapy and Its Implications for Rolfing® Structural Integration

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This article draws on material presented in the May 2009 workshop “An Energetic Foundation for Rolfing: A Bridge Between Dr. Rolf’s Recipe and the Wisdom of Each Individual’s Body,” taught by Bob Schrei, Certified Advanced Rolfer, and Ray McCall, Advanced Rolfing instructor. The stated goal of the workshop was to teach SourcePoint Therapy (which was developed by Bob Schrei and his wife Donna Thomson) and to explore it as a means to accomplish the goals of Rolfing Structural Integration. The claim is that SourcePoint Therapy “aligns and relates a person’s physical body to the energetic blueprint that Dr. Rolf refers to in her book *Structural Integration*” (quoted from class description in *Fascial Flashes* Vol. 17, No. 2). We were also promised a body-scanning technique that would enable us to “locate blockages [and] discontinuities which result in global patterns of dysfunction and compensation,” and which “informs the questions: ‘Where do we start [an intervention]?’, ‘Where do we go next?’ and ‘When are we done?’” Answering these questions would enable a practitioner to effectively strategize a session or a Rolfing series, be it basic or advanced. My purpose in writing this article is to present a clinically effective way of working in the energetic taxonomy.

## The SourcePoint Blueprint and “The Line”

SourcePoint Therapy theory brings with it the powerful implication that the “vertical line,” Dr. Rolf’s “line of gravity,” is an actual energetic structure – an energetic organ with a function as vital to our being as breathing. Rolfers talk about “the Line” as

an indicator of order; but it is imperative to see that it is not just a concept or ideal that we superimpose in our assessment of the body. Rather, the Line is an actual energetic event with two profoundly important functions. The first is to receive information from the “blueprint.” The second is to distribute this information in order to right dysfunction in all of the taxonomies: structural, functional, geometric, energetic, and psychobiological.

The fundamental experience upon which SourcePoint Therapy is based “is that there is an energetic template or blueprint of health for the human body, a storehouse of information that guides the development of the individual.”<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, SourcePoint Therapy works “with the understanding that the physical body is not a fixed entity,” and can therefore be altered – even to the extent of being able to attain the highest potential for a human being – when it is reconnected with its source.<sup>2</sup> It “works with repairing the energetic boundary structure of the individual being to contain, direct and facilitate the healthy flow of energy and information, and bring structure back into alignment with the flow that is its source.”<sup>3</sup>

I propose that the Line we refer to, as Rolfers, is actually a manifestation of the blueprint in the physical realm – an energetic structure with power to both integrate and organize the human being. The extent to which the Line is freed from obstacles is the extent to which it is able to transmit energy and information that connects the body with its source. This connection enables the body to manifest a higher level of order, which allows it to function better, ideally attaining to ever-higher

levels of order and function. This concept is not unique to structural integrators; for example, in visceral manipulation, if liver mobility is restored and the organ is freed to traverse its axis of movement, then the whole person approaches a higher level of order in gravity, and is likely to manifest more functionally.

In SourcePoint Therapy, there is not just one singular “Line” responsible for ordering the entire body. Rather, there are a number of geometric structures in the energetic field, including palintonic lines, each of which has a different function and contributes to the health of the body as a whole. Some of the palintonic lines that we are most familiar with are those that run through the arms and legs, down the hands and feet, through the tips of the fingers and toes. Other geometric structures that Rolfers are familiar with are the triangular shape of the sacrum and the axis around which the sacrum flexes and extends. SourcePoint Therapy takes these structures as energetic configurations with a function: for example, it regards the structure of the sacrum as that which connects the physical body “to the vital life force energy of the earth plane,” and the “history of evolution,” thereby assisting the human being “in its next evolutionary step” to move beyond “survival issues as [the] primary focus [of life].”<sup>4</sup> It is beyond the scope of this paper to explain all of the geometric structures that are addressed by SourcePoint Therapy. Nevertheless, serious consideration of such structures, their functions and possible anatomical correlates add a rich dimension to what we call the geometric taxonomy. SourcePoint Therapy’s ability to explain energetic structures in the body and how to treat them allows us to address specific obstacles in the energy field as clearly as we address structural issues in bones, muscles, ligaments, organs, and joints.

By virtue of its central tenet – that the body is an energetic expression of the blueprint in the physical realm – SourcePoint Therapy puts us in a better position to understand how the body aligns itself in gravity, how this change in patterns can happen, and why it happens as a result of Rolfing Structural Integration. The attempt to differentiate energetic palintonic lines and structures from disorganized flesh is also why a SourcePoint session can look like typical structural integration. To free these lines can require deep contact with

the structure. As Jan Sultan recently stated in a workshop, "Rolfing is an organized stressor, and as such it can activate latent potentials that allow a person to break out of old patterns and establish new ones."<sup>5</sup>

What is striking to note, as a Rolfer, is that if we work with a structure to invoke its axis or the Line, the structure begins to align itself. This phenomenon suggests that as energetic lines are differentiated from disorganized structure the blueprint can more clearly transmit information to the body. By receiving blueprint information, the body attains higher order, not just structurally, but throughout all of the taxonomies. Because they function to transmit blueprint information to the body, and because blueprint information addresses the organism's complete health,

as palintonic lines become unencumbered, so too does the person. With the idea of palintonic lines as manifestations of the blueprint in the body, and the understanding that these lines function to transmit information that benefits the whole person, SourcePoint Therapy explains why Rolfing Structural Integration as structural work is also a radical path for personal transformation.

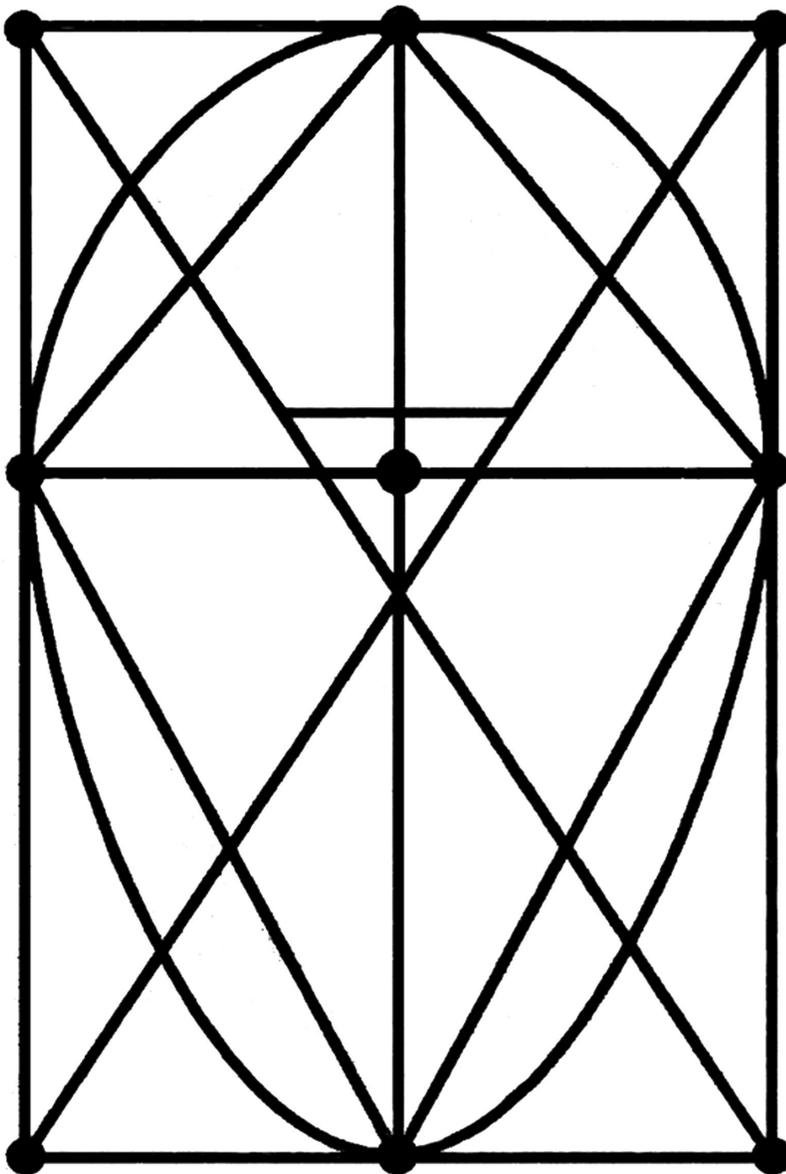
## Integration Comes from Connecting to the Blueprint

From the standpoint of SourcePoint Therapy, working with the body is working with energy – even if we are working deep in the tissue to mobilize the interosseous membrane. Rolfing Structural Integration as we know it is energy work. It is contact

with energy that has taken the form of flesh that is organized by information that it receives from the blueprint. The extent to which the flow of information from the blueprint to the body is hampered is the extent to which we fall away from order. Perhaps this was Dr. Rolf's understanding when she wrote that "a joyous radiance of health is attained only as the body conforms more nearly to its inherent pattern. This pattern, this form, this Platonic Idea, is the blueprint for structure."<sup>6</sup>

The therapeutic vision of Dr. Rolf and SourcePoint Therapy is extremely optimistic. Both hold that we are profoundly resilient and capable of enormous growth. Dr. Rolf humbly stated this vision when she wrote: "Is 'balancing' actually the placing of the body of flesh upon an energy pattern that activates it? The pattern of this fine energy would not be as easily disrupted and might well survive, relatively intact, traumatic episodes that distort the flesh."<sup>7</sup> My claim is that as Rolfers – whether through deep manipulation at the level of the ligaments, hands-off energy work, craniosacral, neural, or visceral work, movement work or Somatic Experiencing® – we are bringing order through all the taxonomies by connecting them to the blueprint.

To understand how the blueprint is capable of such profound integration, it is important to remember that the blueprint transmits both energy and information from the source of life to the living organism. Blueprint information is transmitted through *chi*, the breath of life, the long tide, mid-tide, or any number of phenomena depending on the modality. To underscore the importance of this information and its relevance to how and why SourcePoint Therapy works in the way that it does, we can refer to this quote from *Science and the Akashic Field* by Ervin Laszlo:



"The Diamond Points"  
courtesy of Robert Schrei



It is information – information as a real and effective factor setting the parameters of the universe at its birth, and thereafter governing the evolution of its basic elements into complex systems . . . . Most of us think of information as data or what a person knows. But . . . the great physicist David Bohm called it ‘information,’ meaning a process that actually ‘forms’ the recipient. This is the concept we shall adopt here . . . . Information is not a human artifact, not something we produce by writing, calculating, speaking, and messaging. As ancient sages knew, and as scientists are now rediscovering, information is present in the world independent of human volition and action and is a decisive factor in the evolution of the things that furnish the real world.<sup>8</sup>

Laszlo’s statement suggests that Rolfing Structural Integration is effective because as Rolfers we are restoring the body’s access to information that it needs for health.

**Three Basic Methods in SourcePoint Therapy**

SourcePoint Therapy contains simple and effective assessment tools and treatment techniques that help to diagnose a body’s current state of health or order while bringing about a greater flow of information between the body and its blueprint. I will provide a sketch of three basic methods: Setting the Diamond Points, Scanning for Blockages, and Finding the Entry Point.

*Setting the Diamond Points*

In SourcePoint Therapy there is a focus on ten primary points in the human energy field. The first four points, which are sometimes referred to as the Diamond Points, are the most commonly used for connecting the blueprint to the client’s body.

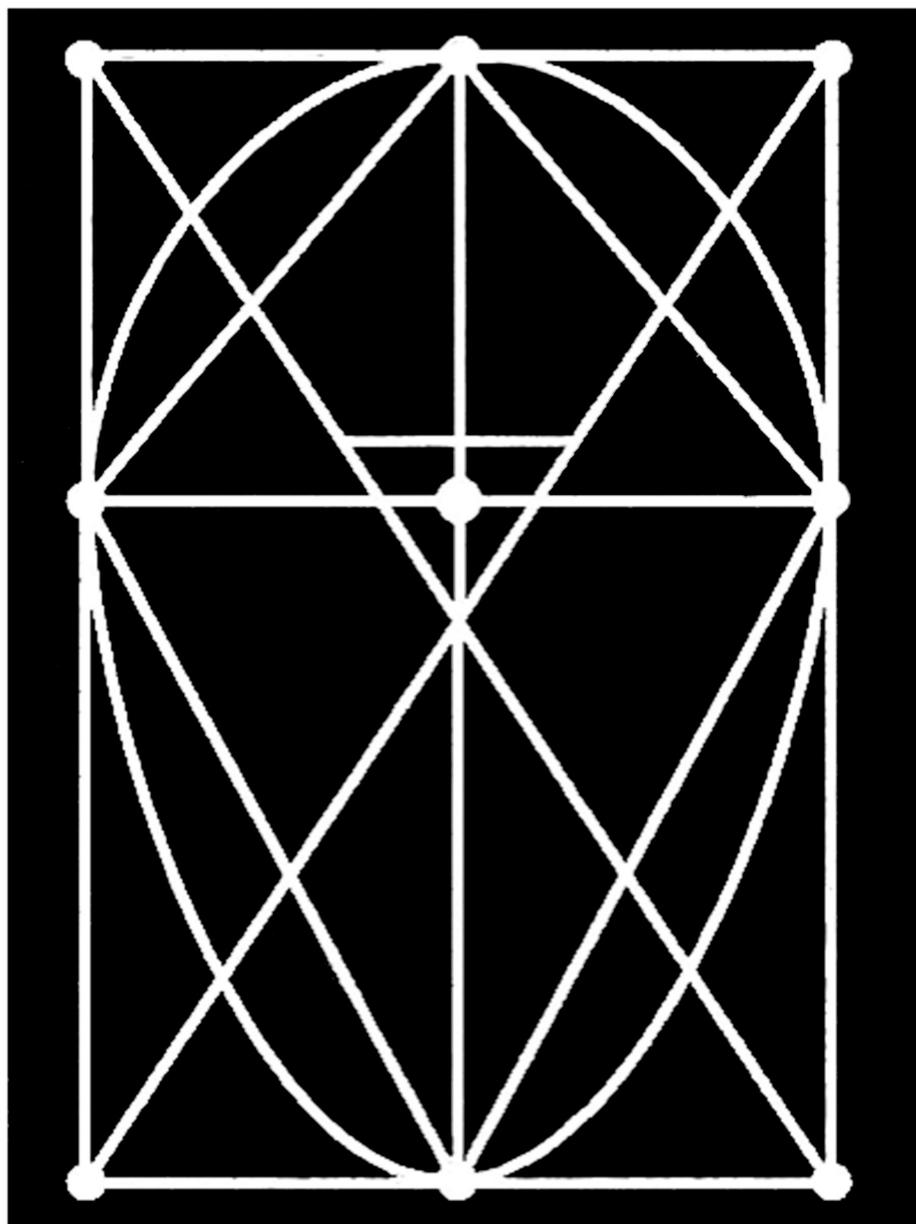
- The first point is located approximately one to two feet from the right lateral surface of the body at the level of the navel. It connects the organism to the information of the unaltered human body, the blueprint of health. It is called the Source Point.
- The second point is located on the midline, below the feet. It grounds the information contained in the blueprint in the physical body, and also grounds the client’s consciousness in that information. It is called the Grounding Point.
- The third point is located directly opposite to the first point, off the left side of the body at the level of the navel. It activates the information of health

that the first two points connect to and ground in the body. It is called the Activation Point.

- The fourth point is located on the midline above the crown of the head, at the polar opposite of the Grounding Point. Activating this point assists the physical body and its energy system to realign more deeply with the information contained in the blueprint. It is called the Transformation Point.

Setting these four points clears the energetic and informational fields and allows for a more clear transmission of information from the client’s body to the practitioner. For example, the craniosacral rhythm might track more clearly, fascial strains

“The Diamond Points”  
courtesy of Robert Schrei



and vectors become more pronounced, and energetic blockages show up more distinctly for assessment.

Setting the Diamond Points also helps the client feel that he is being held within a clear, safe, therapeutic field. It was noted in our workshop that asking permission before treating a client can have profound therapeutic effects, particularly with clients who have been physically or sexually violated. Setting the Diamond Points at the beginning and the end of each intervention not only initiates communication between the body and its source, it also establishes a clear therapeutic framework that fosters enough trust that a client's issues present themselves more acutely.

## *Scanning for Blockages*

Once the Diamond Points are set, we can proceed to scan for blockages. This scan is carried out with the intention of locating the primary blockage in the energy field that inhibits communication with the blueprint. The scan simply involves running your hand over the client's energy field at a gentle pace until a density is encountered. Sometimes a density is so pronounced that it will be impossible to move your hand through it. This is the primary blockage, and working to relieve or eliminate it, as learned in class, has profound positive effects on the body's health and order.

## *Finding the Entry Point*

Once the primary blockage is located, but not addressed, we move to the third technique – finding the entry point. This is also accomplished by running the hand over the energy field at a gentle pace, but here we use a slightly different hand position. Also, the intention of the scan is to determine where the body would like us to make initial contact. One feels the Entry Point as an intense tingling in the fingers, which lessens as your hand moves away. Once you have found this point, you make your initial contact.

My experience with this method is that the client's body finds this contact profoundly reassuring. Lately, I have had clients get off of the table to see what, if any, changes have occurred as a result of just this contact. So far, in every case, the change has been profound. From this point, we proceed as we would in a typical Rolfing session, using all of the technical skill and anatomical

knowledge that we can muster, with the intention of reconnecting the body with the blueprint.

Thus, the question "What do I do first?" is answered by our scan for the entry point. And our second question, "What do I do next?," is answered in much the same way as we have always answered it – by assessing the body through the taxonomies, assessing movement and anatomical symmetry, and determining where and how the body is compensating for not being able to find vertical in gravity. But now, at the very least, the answer is strongly informed by knowing where the primary blockage resides. The last question, "When am I done?," is answered when the practitioner perceives that the body has had enough, which is a perception that one learns in the workshop. In my experience, any work that takes place to achieve a goal that I have set for the session is not effective if it is performed after the body has said, "Thank you, I'm done now."

## **Experiences with SourcePoint Therapy**

What follows are two accounts of SourcePoint Therapy, both from the above-mentioned workshop. The first is my own experience as a model for the teacher, the second that of a woman I will call Ms. Y.

### *Case Report 1*

While in class, I volunteered to receive work from instructor Bob Schrei so that he could demonstrate how to use information gathered through basic SourcePoint Therapy diagnostics during a Rolfing session. Bob immediately found a block in my energetic field above the upper attachment of my left biceps. This was not surprising, as I had been suffering from chronic elbow tendonitis for three months. As treatment, Schrei placed his elbow onto the attachment and proceeded to shift most of his 190 pounds onto my arm. Just when I could bear it no longer, he stopped. My elbow immediately felt better and the energetic block in my upper biceps was gone.

Schrei then shifted his attention to a block in my energetic field over my diaphragm. I knew he had discovered something associated with my emotional body. The content felt related to recent work with my somatic physiotherapist and was also

connected to an extremely physically disruptive event I had been exposed to six months prior.

Schrei acknowledged the finding and its emotional component. He pulled up a chair, sat down and lightly placed one hand over my diaphragm. After becoming comfortable with this new style of touch, I spent the next few minutes discharging with large breaths and the occasional full-body shake. However, what made the intervention transformational was that as my system vented, Bob's contact within the context of SourcePoint Therapy gave me the information I needed to reorganize around my Line. The sensation was that of more fully integrating the recent therapy while also healing from the physical disruption that I had experienced months ago.

When the mini-session was over, I stood taller and walked with more ease and softness. But more importantly, I had expanded into my field and experienced a heightened sense of coherence both physically and emotionally. This sense of wholeness was something that I had never felt before and I continue to embody to this day.

### *Case Report 2*

(This report is in the participant's own words.)

"I entered the Spring 2009 SourcePoint Therapy training with a deviated septum from an eight-year-old snowmobile accident and a traumatized left leg from a ski crash the previous spring.

"One session during the SourcePoint training unraveled much of the residue from these injuries and invited me to experience my body with a new sense of congruence. In this particular session my practitioner spent the majority of our time (about twenty-five minutes) doing off-the-body SourcePoint assessment work. He discovered the entry point at my left shoulder and settled in to holding the shoulder joint with what I can best describe as a cranial touch. After a few minutes, my entire being connected to the input. What I remember most is the radiant quality of my breath, the length of my breath, and the diffusion of my breath gradually up my cervical spine leading to a cascade of spatial awareness up the posterior line of my cranium and up the sagittal suture. The pair of receptive hands remained on my left shoulder as they kindly

witnessed the progression to its completion. Once off the table, I saw through new eyes and immediately noticed that a pattern of holding around T1-T2 had softened.

“The next day, the hours passed and I watched a brilliant evolution. First, I noticed that the thawing of my thoracic spine permitted my lumbar spine to settle as well. As I stood, I experienced a new sense of depth in my visceral space as opposed to a feeling of ‘dumping’ forward after twenty-eight years living in an anteriorly shifted pelvis. The next shift occurred an hour later when I was driving. In the driver’s seat, an anterior “pinning” of my sacrum gave way and the length of the inner line of my left leg unraveled from my lesser trochanter to my medial malleolus, across my medial arch. Towards the end of the day, I experienced the liberation of my right nostril as my deviated septum gave way and I resided in the luminosity of my breath for the first time in almost a decade.

## Conclusion

One of my goals in writing this article has been to describe SourcePoint Therapy as a clinically effective way of working in the energetic taxonomy. To this end I have introduced assessments and techniques that enable one to identify and address fixations on an energetic level. I had also hoped to explore concepts that allow for a coherent discussion about what it means to work in the energetic taxonomy; in particular, that the Line that we speak of in assessments as an indicator of order is an actual energetic organ that functions to provide the body with blueprint information. Hopefully I have disarmed the mistaken notion that so called “energy work” is necessarily light and superficial. On the contrary, energy work involves the full spectrum of touch. In conclusion, I believe that SourcePoint Therapy finally puts Rolfers in a position to embrace the energetic taxonomy for what it has always been – a fundamental part of structural integration. With SourcePoint Therapy we can begin to map out large parts of previously obscure territory, and employ a generous range of techniques that profoundly increase the effectiveness of our work.

## Endnotes

1. Schrei, Bob, *SourcePoint Therapy Workshop Manual, Module 1*. 2009, pg. 4.
2. *Ibid.*, pg. 6.
3. *Ibid.*, pg. 5.
4. Schrei, Bob, *SourcePoint Therapy Workshop Manual, Module 2*. 2009, pg. 8.
5. Notes from Jan Sultan workshop “How the Cranium and the Pelvis Are Unified through the Axial Complex and the Pre-Vertebral Visceral Tube,” June 18-21, 2009, Herndon, VA.
6. Rolf, Ida P., *Rolfing: The Integration of Human Structures*. Santa Monica, CA: Dennis-Landman, 1977, pg. 16.
7. *Ibid.*, pg. 205.
8. Laszlo, Ervin, *Science and the Akashic Field: An Integral Theory of Everything, 2nd edition*. Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 2007, pg.13.