

Linda McClure was just 26 years old when she was first diagnosed as having osteoarthritis of the hips. A top professional squash player who represented New Zealand on the world championship circuit, the New Zealander had pushed her body past its limits so often that her hip joints had become seriously stressed. Couple that with her passion for extreme skiing that led to an equally extreme accident where she skied over 60 feet of rocky cliff face. "One of my friends who watched me going over the cliff thought I was doing it on purpose and was impressed until they saw my skis fly off and my body start cartwheeling and bouncing off the large granite rocks of the cliff face. Miraculously surviving but accelerating the osteoarthritis in her body Linda did not want to admit that she was in big trouble. She continued to play professional squash in the face of a lot of pain and discomfort until one day when she was playing in Nairobi at the Kenyan Open squash tournament during the northern hemisphere off season she came across a woman who was about to change her life. That woman was a physiotherapist who happened to have studied in Hellerwork structural integration.

"In Nairobi you are 4,000 ft above sea level and I was having trouble during that first week with my fitness levels and pain and was feeling depressed".

"Someone suggested that I go see this lady who gave a really good massage, I was not prepared for what ensued".

Linda said that the massage she had was very intense and at first she wondered why she had agreed to come. All those years of overtraining, overstraining and abusing her body came home to roost as the therapist went to work on her glued up muscles and over tight body. After the session she felt strangely light and free. Shrugging it off as just feeling relaxed she went to the local pool to start trying to gain some fitness back and get used to the high altitude rarified air. After swimming for a short time she realised that she was not gasping for air. Puzzled that this should have changed in such a short time she thought she must have miscalculated the time. After swimming a whole kilometer she realised that this was no accident. It was clear that the deep tissue session she had from the therapists amongst other things had released her ribcage and enabled her to take a much deeper breath.

"It felt like magic, I could breathe so well. It felt like someone had given me a great oil and grease and I had virtually no pain".

Linda realised at that moment that this therapy was what she had to study.

"Doing Hellerwork enabled me to take into consideration my whole environment and a raft of different factors which influenced me and contributed to my condition".

"In time I did eventually have to have a hip replacement because there was virtually no cartilage left, but my experience in Nairobi and subsequent Hellerwork sessions gave me another 5 years before I had to have it done".

"When I did have the operation I was able to heal very quickly, having had a lot of Hellerwork during my rehab."

"I can now quite comfortably do yoga and most forms of fitness that do not involve anything percussive like running."

Essentially, Hellerwork is a form of specialised deep tissue massage, designed to lengthen and separate the soft tissue of the body. Over the eleven 90 minute sessions the bodywork, ergonomics and movement re-education is designed to realign the body and produce a more relaxed and youthful state of being. Practitioners also facilitate clients

awareness around how their physical tension may be intrinsically linked to their mental/emotional states, this in turn can effect a persons relationship with themselves, others and the world around them.

After graduating as a Hellerwork practitioner in 1989 and being in private practise for several years Linda's passion for the work inevitably led to her into teaching and she is currently on the faculty of Hellerwork International and is a Director on their Board of Education.

"Its been a long road and if you had asked me if I would end up in this position 15 years ago I would have said you were mad, I was young I was at the peak of my career, travelling all over Europe earning more money in tournaments over a weekend than most folk would earn in a month. But in fact when I look back now, my international squash career was just the apprenticeship for becoming a Hellerwork practitioner - I needed the life skills and more importantly the maturity to get to this place and I wouldn't swap it for anything now."

"As luck would have it, being a Hellerwork practitioner, just like my squash career, can take me anywhere in the world to work - I feel blessed".

Hellerwork has been practised internationally for the last 25 years and has been available in Australia for most of that time although several practitioners have left lately to practise overseas. Joseph Heller and the faculty of Hellerwork International are now creating Australian career training opportunities in Hellerwork Structural Integration.

"We are offering the 1250 hr training to those people who are interested in adding to their current knowledge base, want a career change, want to engage in a very satisfying occupation, want to contribute to the health and well-being of others and who want to embody the fluidity and integration of the work themselves."

For Pre-requisite workshops contact us on (07)5527 0333