

## **A Heartfelt Tribute to Cindy Banker**

By

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It is with joy and sadness that we wish Cindy Banker, MA, Dipl. ABT (NCCAOM), ABT CI (AOBTA), a fond farewell as she steps down from her position of Director of Education with AOBTA. Cindy has contributed to the AOBTA from the very beginning and has been a driving force ever since.

Cindy has done it all! Cindy began her shiatsu studies in 1975 and started her school, the New England Shiatsu Center, in the early 1980's. She brought her school to a close in 1991 so she could immerse herself in education earning her BA in Asian Medicine and a Master's degree from Lesley University in Chinese Herbal Medicine and Language. Working with Ted Kaptchuk as her advisor, Cindy structured her own unique degree programs in both the history and practice of Chinese herbal medicine. Cindy also did extensive studies in the use of diet as a means to health with her original training throughout the 1970's from Michio Kushi and Shizuko Yamamoto. In addition, Cindy had a successful full-time practice in Five Element Shiatsu and herbal medicine for almost forty years.

Over the 33 years of AOBTA's history, Cindy has been a consistent contributor to AOBTA and has worn many hats. She was one of the original founders in 1989 (for which we are very grateful) and its first Director of Internal Affairs, 1989-1990. Subsequently, she has held the following positions and responsibilities:

- Law and Legislative Committee Chairperson (1990-1992)
- Education Director (1992-1997)
- Certified Instructor Interview Committee, member/former Chairperson (1989-present)
- Forms Committee Chairperson (2007-present)
- Peer Review Committee Director (2012-present)
- Council of Schools and Programs, Director (2012-present)

Cindy has been a leader in setting and updating educational standards, creating policies, and forming many of the systems and offerings that are currently a part of the AOBTA.

Using the Five Elements as a foundation, we would like to give you a more personal overview of Cindy describing her through the Five Elements:

**Wood:** Cindy embodies the Wood Element. She is a pioneer! Cindy founded the American Shiatsu Association (ASA) in 1984 in New England, and was its first president. She is a founder of the AOBTA and was instrumental in its early formation by

agreeing to bring the ASA membership into it. She developed and taught Five Element Shiatsu which is an official ABT form. Cindy co-founded the New England Shiatsu Center, and became a nationally recognized instructor. In addition to being an ABT practitioner and instructor, Cindy practices herbal medicine and is a translator of original Chinese Medical texts. Cindy continually grows and develops ideas, community, and ABT professionals. She is self-driven and hard-working, and welcomes new challenges.

**Fire:** Do you know Cindy? Cindy is a Fireball! Cindy is a leader and inspires others with her passion and fire. She is easy to laugh and can easily get our attention. Underneath Cindy's passion is a wealth of knowledge and expertise, and she is very willing to share what she knows, what she believes, and the next "great idea". Cindy offers her ideas with great enthusiasm and passion, which demonstrates that she is a "force of nature". Does Cindy ever sit still? Possibly no... If you know Cindy, she is vibrant, active, busy, highly productive, and always seems to be having fun.

**Earth:** Although Cindy embodies Wood and Fire so well, there is a strong sense of Earth in who she is. Cindy is deeply thoughtful which is reflected in her many writings about ABT. She has been the stable center of AOBTA's Education Committee for many years. She has overseen COSP, the CI's and RI's, the Peer Review Committee, and AOBTA's Academy. Being one of the early founders and contributors to AOBTA, she has strong relationships with the early pioneers and experts of ABT across the country.

**Metal:** Cindy "shows her metal". Cindy is direct and to the point, and holds a high degree of integrity and rational thought. She draws from her experience and knowledge which gives her the ability to get to the point (cut through the BS). Cindy lets you know what she is thinking quickly and with precision. You can count on knowing exactly where Cindy stands.

**Water:** It is easy to see Cindy's Wood and Fire natures, however, to know Cindy is to experience her strength, determination and willpower. The Water Element is strong in Cindy. She is a seeker of knowledge and understanding. This is evident in her deep study of Chinese Medicine, shiatsu, the Chinese language, the Chinese Medicine Classics, and her many writings. She is a critical thinker which may be challenging to those around her. Cindy is not afraid to ruffle feathers when needed.

It is with deep gratitude and a heartfelt "thank you" that we wish Cindy, her husband and her dog the very best. We can be assured that Cindy will not be sitting still. She will be writing, traveling and enjoying life. Cindy, we wish you safe and happy travels for your next adventures!