

Back To Skool

Faster, stronger, smarter—getting on course can improve even the most heroic of super men (and women)

text by June Lee and Joe Ng; illustrations by Iris Ng

Hate your job? Can't sleep at night? Feel like there's so much more to you, and life would be better if you were better at whatever it is you want to be better at? Fear not—every need is catered for in today's self improvement crazed world. Forget self-help books and get hands on, whether it's full-time, part-time or just on your downtime. From shiatsu to baking to hairdressing, there's a class or course out there to help get what you want—what you really, really want.

GET RICH

Take a step to becoming a real life Richie Rich by attending the **Executive MBA Program** at the grand old House of Tan Yeok Nee, now housing the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business. True, the fees are sky high, but you need not worry since you could conceivably earn them back by, ahem, playing the stock market. Singapore Exchange organizes the **SGX-ETS Trader Training and Floor Trader Qualification programs** all year round for greenhorn traders who are still bullish about the market. If, however, you're afraid of burning a hole in your pocket, the Professional Training Company provides comprehensive lessons for a **Certified Financial Planner**.

Executive MBA Program Asia

University of Chicago Graduate School of Business, 101 Penang Rd. Call 6835-6482, email singapore.inquiries@gsb.uchicago.edu or visit gsb.uchicago.edu/execMBAasia.

What to expect? You get to joke with high net worth executives without an interfering secretary, and maybe even work for them. "We had a couple of students with dot.com experiences and war stories to share," says past participant Jeannet Wong.

Academic requirements? Admission is limited to 84 students per class, with at least 10 years business experience. You'll need to attend an interview and pass the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), depending on your English language skills.

How much? US\$79,500, which includes course materials and hotel lodging for special joint residential sessions in Chicago and Barcelona. (GST of US\$1,500 not included.)

How long? 20 months.

Certified Financial Planner (CFP)

The Professional Training Company, #07-02, 22 Malacca St. Call 6327-4800, email info@professionaltraining.com or visit www.professionaltraining.com.

What to expect? Learn to deal with financial issues such as risk management, insurance, taxes, investment, retirement and estate plans. Be prepared to hobnob with insurance agents, accountants and lawyers.

Academic requirements? You need to have a full GCE "A" Level certificate or three years' relevant working experience. Furthermore, membership of the Financial Planning Association of Singapore (FPAS) is needed before you can take the exams.

How much? For self-study enthusiasts, you pay \$3,160 for a CD and manual. Otherwise, pay \$4,860 to get the package and attend lectures at the school.

How long? You need to pass six modules to be certified, so the fastest you can get there is 18 months. Exams by FPAS are conducted twice a year, and the school conducts six lectures (three hours each) and a mock exam to prepare you for it.

SGX-ETS Trader Training Course

Singapore Exchange (SGX), #02-01, SGX Centre 1, 2 Shenton Way. Call 6236-8777, email education@sgx.com or visit www.sgx.com.

What to expect? The ETS is an electronic trading system for placing orders for trades. You'll be learning the basic principles of financial futures and options, which belong to a group of financial instruments known as derivatives. You'll also meet other like-minded folks who know how to trade put options and call options.

Academic requirements? All applicants are interviewed by the Membership Department of SGX before starting the course. Basic English and a good grasp of numbers needed.

How much? Course fee of \$208 includes GST, study guide, theory and practical test fees.

How long? Students attend five theory sessions (two hours each) over a week and a four-hour practical session.



GET HEALTHY

If the recently married Christy Turlington's healthy glow, calm centeredness and limber yogic poses are too good to be true, don't get mad—just get even. Literally, even, as you find balance by connecting with your spiritual self. Be healed by positive mental attitudes and remedial stress therapies. A little New Age goes a long way. Referring to roots dating back thousands of years (way before aspirin was available), Earth Sanctuary Spa's Chin Hung will explain why Yin, Yang and **Traditional Chinese Medicine** (TCM) play a big part in your life. If your Mandarin is proficient, you could even do a **Degree in Traditional Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture** at the Singapore College of Traditional Chinese Medicine. If your ailments are diagnosed to be purely physical rather than internal, than **Shiatsu** may ease away the pain. And if you must explore the unknown, then the **CranoSacral Therapy Workshop** might just blow away your mind.

Basic Certificate in Traditional Chinese Medicine

Bodywork Training Institute, Earth Sanctuary Spa, 86 Club St. Call 6324-7933, email bodywork@earthsanctuary.com.sg or visit www.earthsanctuary.com.sg for details.

What to expect? Learn the basics of the esoteric philosophy of Traditional Chinese Medicine from trainer Chin Hung, who's currently expanding his knowledge at the Singapore College of Traditional Chinese Medicine. Achieve a balance in your lifestyle by understanding the theory of Yin and Yang, the five elements and their relationship with our biological clock.

How much? \$180.

How long? The Basic Certificate consists of two sessions, each lasting 150 minutes.

Degree in Traditional Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture

(in Mandarin)

Singapore College of Traditional Chinese Medicine, 640 Lorong 4

Toa Payoh. Call 6250-3088, email assoc@scpa.org.sg or visit www.singaporetcm.com for details.

What to expect? With 46 years' experience in training Chinese sinsehs, you can be assured of the pedigree of this college. Consisting of 30 percent practicum (practical session) and 70 percent theory, the courses are conducted jointly with Nanjing University of Traditional Chinese Medicine. Topics covered include Chinese diagnosis methods, Chinese herbs, internal medicine, gynecology, pathology and physiology.

How much? \$16,200 (full-time bachelor degree)

\$27,000 (full-time Masters degree)

\$10,800 (part-time bachelor degree)

How long? Three years for a full-time degree, five years for a full-time Masters, and six years for a part-time degree.

Foundation Shiatsu Course

The Shiatsu School, 280 River Valley Rd. Call 6836-1231 or log on to www.theshiatuschool.com for details.

What to expect? The Shiatsu School is an accredited regional training and practice center where the focus is on this traditional Japanese massage and bodywork. Courses are tailored to anyone interested in this healing art—that means you'll be rubbing shoulders with complete beginners and massage therapists looking to upgrade themselves.

How much? The Foundation Course costs \$1,800 for 54 hours. The course culminates with theory and practical examinations. Alternatively, a six-hour Introduction to Japanese Massage costs just \$200 for two *I-S* readers (just quote this magazine article). Usual price \$400 for two.

How long? You need to achieve at least 90 percent attendance, complete 18 hours of clinical practice and undergo at least three Shiatsu therapy sessions before you receive your certificate.

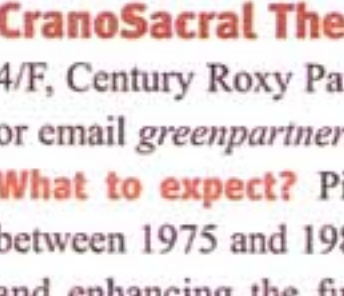
CranoSacral Therapy Workshop

4/F, Century Romy Park Hotel, Romy Square, 50 East Coast Rd. Call Kheng at 6258-5031 or email greenpartners@pacific.net.sg for details.

What to expect? Pioneered and developed by osteopathic physician John Updelder between 1975 and 1983, CranoSacral Therapy is a gentle, hands on method of evaluating and enhancing the functioning of the cranosacral body system (membranes and cerebrospinal fluid that surround and protect the brain and spinal cord).

How much? US\$595.

How long? Four days, 9am-5:30pm.



GET SOME REAL STYLE

Was it Coco Chanel who famously declared that chic is in the details? Now you don't have to beg, borrow or steal—getting in style is just a snip, trim and buff away. Don't turn up your nose at these opportunities: stealing beauty is big business because, hey, everyone wants to strike a pose. The Toni & Guy Academy offers a **Basic Comprehensive Course** to get you snip happy, while Eucalyptus Day Spa and Training Academy has courses to fulfill all Cinderella dreams, including a **spa manicure and pedicure** class. Style doesn't stop there—how about a course in **smithing your own jewelry or designing your own gown**? It's all a monogrammed heart beat away.

Toni & Guy Hairdressing Basic Comprehensive Course

Toni & Guy Academy, B1-26/29 The Riverwalk. Call Academy principal Janice Gan at 6534-2621.

What to expect? This full-time program, imported from London, teaches you to cut, perm and color the Toni & Guy way, with additional theory and service training. Your classmates are likely to be career minded stylists.

How much? \$12,000 for 30 intensive weeks. Courses start every three months at the Academy.

How long? Students train in groups of up to eight on weekdays from 10am-6pm.

Spa Manicure and Pedicure

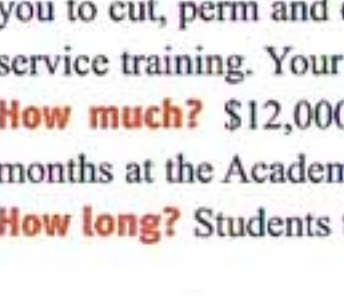
Eucalyptus Day Spa and Training Academy, 43A Craig Rd., 6324-1338.

Visit www.eucalyptus.com.sg.

What to expect? At this accredited academy, you'll be in good hands. Director Dianna Chia is one of the most well respected spa trainers in the region. Your comprehensive course includes the how-tos of skin exfoliation, massage sequences, warm oil and paraffin mask treatments, nail and cuticle work, color application and home care advice.

How much? \$660 with 10 percent discount for early bird registrations. Fee excludes accessories.

How long? Four three-hour sessions.



Getting Some Class(es)

These centers offer you a one-stop shop for all the courses you could take in one lifetime.

LASALLE-SIA College of the Arts

Offers: Design, Fine Arts, Media Arts, Dance, Drama and Music—degrees, diplomas and enrichment courses.

Where: 90 Goodman Rd. Call 6344-4300, email enquiries@lasallesia.edu.sg or visit www.lasalle-sia.edu.sg for details.

Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA)

Offers: Fine Arts, Interior Design, Multimedia, Visual Communications, Arts Management, Dance, Music, Theatre, Fashion Design, Marketing and Merchandising (full-time and part-time degree, diploma, certificate courses).

Where: 111 Middle Rd., 1A Short St., 11 Upp. Wilkie Rd. Call 6331-0316, email studentaffairs@nafa.edu.sg or visit www.nafa.edu.sg for details.

Raffles LaSalle International Design School

Offers: Full-time and part-time design (fashion, interior, multimedia, graphic) and business (design management, fashion marketing, business administration and marketing communications) certificates, diplomas and degrees.

Where: #01-02, 11 Beach Rd. Call 6338-5288 or visit www.rafles-lasalle.com for details.



GET DOMESTIC

Nigella Lawson and Martha Stewart never seem to break a sweat, but we all know that being a domestic goddess (or god) entails more than just folding napkins. For starters, nothing beats the smell of fresh apple pie in the oven. Find your inner tart at Singapore's only full fledged **baking school**, where students are transformed from butterfingers to bakers du jour. With so many cooking schools out there, and just so little time, you should check out **quick cooking for dinner parties** at

culinary academy at-sunrice. And when

it's time to show your mettle, a course

on **basic plumbing maintenance**

should prove your domestic superiority.

Give it the Martha touch—clear a

stubborn choke to the strains of

Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 in the

background. Or light

some lavender incense

before you demolish the

water closet. And for dinner parties,

a la Tom Cruise in *Cocktail*, get the

lowdown on **managing a bar**. Impressing

friends will take training—not to mention

smashed bottles, spilt alcohol and bruised

egos for some.

Baking Principles

Prima-SPRING Singapore Baking Industry Training Centre, 11/F, Annexe Block, 201

Keppel Rd. Call 6276-6337 or visit www.bite.com.sg.

What to expect? Besides a diploma in baking and various National Technical Certificate

courses, this accredited regional training center for the baking industry also offers basic

courses to mastering the science of baking.

How much? Bakery Principles I, Cake Principles I and Pastry Principles I all at \$325.

How long? Five lessons, each lasting four hours.

Quick Cooking for Dinner Parties

at-sunrice, Fort Canning Centre, Fort Canning Park. Call 6336-3307

or visit www.at-sunrice.com.

What to expect? From pepper crab to Madras curry, the focus is on pan-Asian cuisine.

The courses are catered to busy executives looking to jazz up home cooked meals.

How much? \$75 each lesson, which includes preparation of three dishes, inclusive of

plating (the art of arranging food on a plate) and table decoration.

How long? Classes on Tue, Thu and Sat 6-9:30pm.

Basic Plumbing Maintenance

Construction Industry Training Institute, 200 Braddell Rd. Call 1800-258-7092 or visit www.bca.gov.sg/citi/app.asp for details.

What to expect? Though you don't qualify to offer your services as a plumber, we doubt your friends will mind when there's a WC crisis or the sink starts overflowing with unrecognizable bits and pieces. Learn about stopcocks and balls, installation of a complete

sanitary system and even noise problems in plumbing systems.

How much? \$565.40 (does not include tools such as spanners, waterproof tape and denim

overall)

How long? 60 hours (eight days) with a two-hour test conducted at the end.

Tiger Beer-SHATEC Certificate in Bar Operations (Bartending)

SHATEC, 21 Bukit Batok St. 22. Call 6415-3505, email secretariat@sha.org.sg or visit www.singaporebartenders.com for details.

What to expect? Learn about the classification of alcoholic beverages, how to operate a bar, mixing and even flairtending or flairing (bartending term for the bottle juggling and fire stunts you can see at China Jump). However, participants need to have at least a year of F&B experience.

How much? \$450 per participant (does not include \$105 administration and assessment

fees and GST).

How long? Five weeks (three sessions per week, each lasting three hours).

GET TOUCHY FEELY

Wonder why your colleagues shun you during lunchtime? Wonder why you have no luck with the opposite sex? Wonder why you keep wondering about your life? Rather than advise you to read the whole of Dale Carnegie's *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, we suggest you take up **Feng Shui**, the ancient Chinese art of land forms and luck engineering. Besides the Jade Dragon and White Tiger presiding at your residence, spread a little good luck (and disperse the bad vibes) by employing the I Ching. However, this is only useful if your friends are healthy. If not, go learn **Reiki**, to promote natural healing for your friends. Or if you have a phobia about skin contact, we recommend **Jin Shin Jyutsu**. This method of healing emphasises achieving harmonic energy flows through our bodies by tapping on 26 Safety Energy Locks located all over the body. For a less traumatic way of getting in touch with yourself and your country, how about getting serious as a **local tourist guide**?

Feng Shui Practitioner Diploma

NUSS Orchard Guild House, 8/F Cathay Cineleisure Orchard, 8 Grange Rd. Call

Kheng of Green Partners at 6258-5031, email greenpartners@pacific.net.sg or visit www.fengshui-lo.com for details.

What to expect? Conducted by Master Raymond Lo, a Feng Shui lecturer at the University of Hong Kong and consultant to various agencies, you need to complete five short courses over a period of 18 months. Learn about the two schools of Feng Shui (Flying Stars and Form), apply the different concepts into your lives and use the Pillars of Destiny to understand yourself better. You'll have to take an exam—which includes a Feng Shui case study, destiny analysis and I Ching divination—before you can start practicing.

How much? Feng Shui Part I (\$450), Part II (\$750); Four Pillars of Destiny Part I (\$450), Part II (\$550); I Ching Divination (\$450). Total fees: \$2,650.

How long? Feng Shui I and II (five days);

Four Pillars of Destiny Part I and II (four

days); I Ching Divination (two days).

Reiki

New Age Circle, #02-11,

Chinatown Point, 133 New

Bridge Rd. Call 6534-5701,

email oselang@hotmail.com

or visit www.newagecircle.com

for details.

What to expect? Form a

duo with your partner or a

friend, and register for the

workshops. It'll be more

fun learning to heal each

other than to let strangers

move their fingers over your

body in the name of energy

transfer.

How much? Reiki Level I

(\$250), Reiki Level II (\$350),

Reiki Level III (\$1,500).

How long? Attend two four-hour session

on separate days.

Local Tourist Guide Licensing Course

(Singapore Tourism Board)

Tourism Management Institute of Singapore, #16-01/04,

Palais Renaissance, 390 Orchard Rd. Send your application forms to CAST Management

Systems Pte Ltd, 27 Defu Lane 6, S539380. Call 6221-0236, email info@tmis-edu.com or

visit www.tmis-edu.com for details.

What to expect? Know how many Merlions are there in Singapore? Or the history of the House of Tan Yeok Nee? What about avoiding the pesky touts at Newton hawker center? Become an ambassador for Singapore by digesting all the facts and figures and passing the exam.

How much? \$2,625 (part-time English or full-time Mandarin); \$545 (company sponsored application).

How long? Part-time English course conducted over six months (two weekday

nights and Saturday mornings); full-time Mandarin course takes three months, Mon-Fri

9am-5pm. ■

Certificate in 3D Metalsmithing

Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, 111 Middle Rd., 1A Short St.,

11 Upp. Wilkie Rd. Call 6331-0316, email studentaffairs@nafa.edu.sg or log on to www.nafa.edu.sg for details.

What to expect? They say diamonds are a girl's best friend—and what better way to show off your freshly manicured hands than with jewelry? Get a recommendation from your boss (if you are working in a jewelry shop or studio) and a design portfolio, then get grilled on your aspirations before you even start the course. Besides the usual subjects on design

theory and the characteristics of metals used in jewelry, you will get a chance to apply that knowledge by crafting your unique fashion accessories.

How much? \$76.40 registration and miscellaneous fees; \$2,964 tuition fees (\$988 per semester of six months).

How long? Complete three modules in 18 months (two sessions per week).

Arts Enrichment Programme: Fashion Accessory Design/Diploma in Fine Art (Jewelry & Art Metalsmithing)

LASALLE-SIA College of the Arts, 90 Goodman Rd. Call

6340-9141/2/3/4/5, email enquiries@lasallesia.edu.sg or visit www.lasalle-sia.edu.sg for details.

What to expect? What's a girl (or guy) to do without a Prada or LV tote bag? Make them, of course! Brainstorm and bring out your personality by designing shoes, handbags, headgear and even belts. However, the actual crafting of the accessories are not taught in the enrichment program. You'll need to enroll full-time to learn the tricks of the trade.

How much? \$20.80 registration; \$360 (excludes drawing materials); \$3,030 (with MOE tuition grant)/\$8,200 (independent students).

How long? 12 sessions (a two-hour session weekly), or three years full-time.

SPAcademy

Offers: Full-time and part-time spa therapy and management certificates and

diplomas. Aromatherapy, reflexology and lymphatic drainage courses also

available.

Where: B/3, Raffles City Shopping Centre (via Lift Lobby A), 252 North Bridge Rd. Call 6883-2308, email spacademy@raffles.com or visit www.spacademy.com.sg for details.

The Substation

Offers: Photography, batik painting, acting workshops, salsa and merengue, belly

dancing, yoga, and more courses depending on instructors' availability.

Where: 45 Armenian St. Call 63377800 (Mon-Fri 4-8 pm), email admin@substation.org

or visit www.substation.org for details.

Thames Business School + Informatics Computer School

Offers: Certificates, diplomas, bachelor degrees, masters and doctorates offered by Australian, Canadian, British, US universities (part-time and full-time). Fields

include Accounting, Business Administration, Secretarial, Mass Communication,</