

# Healing Hands

A NEWSLETTER OF THE BARBADOS REIKI ASSOCIATION



## OPEN FORUM ON REIKI IN MEDICINE A RESOUNDING SUCCESS



Panelists from left: Dr. Cheryl Alexis, Haematologist/Oncologist and Senior Lecturer at the UWI; Dr. Michael Walcott, Holistic Practitioner; Dr. Damian Cohall, UWI Pharmacologist and Coordinator of the pre-clinical phase of the UWI Undergraduate Medical Degree Programme; Mrs. June Cheesman, Holistic Practitioner; Dr. Jonnalagadda Ramesh, Consultant General Surgeon for 33 years and Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Medical Sciences at the UWI; and Mrs. Verity Dawson, President of the Barbados Reiki Association.

There was standing room only in the CARICOM Meeting Room at the University of the West Indies (UWI) Cave Hill Campus when the Reiki Association hosted its first ever Open Forum on Reiki in Medicine on May 2nd, 2013. Before a bumper crowd of some 80 persons, six panelists convened to discuss the topic "Integrating Reiki and Other Complementary Therapies into HealthCare in Barbados: Pipe Dream or Possibility?"

This event was thought to be the first formal attempt to integrate complementary therapies and allopathic medicine in the island and a long-held aspiration of many complementary health practitioners. The discussion focused on three specific issues: what practical steps need to be taken to make allopathic doctors more aware of Reiki and complementary therapies; what do doctors need to know to recommend these therapies to their patients; and can Reiki be included in training programmes for doctors and in scientific academic research.

Animated discussion continued long past the scheduled close and by the end of the evening there were smiles on the faces of everyone in the room as the answer to the evening's question seemed clearly to be that integration is a possibility. The acknowledged need for a long "courtship" to achieve mutual understanding did not dampen the high spirits, as it was evident to all that both groups are united by a common goal – a deep commitment to the health and well being of fellow human beings in need. Fran Cadogan, Chair of the Association's Medical Outreach in delivering welcome remarks, stated that the objective of the outreach is "to have Reiki accepted and used in healthcare facilities across Barbados". She pointed out that the Association sees non-allopathic therapies as complementary to allopathic medicine and not alternative to it and outlined the Association's ongoing work to share Reiki with patients such as those of the Heart and Stroke Foundation. She noted that conventional medicine really depends on where in the world one is located when asking the question. "For example, in indigenous cultures such as deep in the Amazon rain forest, conventional medicine is herbal medicine while "alternative" if we may say so, would be allopathic medicine," she said.

Kathleen Hurley and Sonia Johnson made a presentation which provided an explanation of what Reiki healing is and an overview of the new trend of integrative medicine that is spreading throughout North America, the UK, Australia and elsewhere around the world, which seeks to treat the patient holistically – body, mind, and spirit - bringing together conventional Western medicine with ancient complementary treatments, such as herbal medicine, acupuncture, massage, biofeedback, yoga, meditation, Reiki and many others (particularly those that have some scientific evidence to support them). Following the presentation, mini Reiki treatments were shared with panelists and members of the audience.

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Then it was over to the panel, which comprised three allopathic doctors and three complementary practitioners. The conventional medicine practitioners all acknowledged the importance of treating the patient holistically. Oncologist, Dr. Cheryl Alexis, said that she sees her role as giving her patients the best information she has available to allow them to make whatever choices they feel are best for them. She was not opposed to providing information on complementary therapies, but she felt that she could only do so if there was sound scientific evidence to support them. She was concerned that some herbal remedies, for example, could interact with conventional medicine and impede the patient's treatment. She noted, however, that if she had easily accessible information about what complementary therapies were available in the island, she would be in a better position to recommend them to patients. She suggested that there be a central information system that doctors could access.

Dr. Damian Cohall, pharmacologist, acknowledged the importance of relaxation to healing and the role that a non-invasive treatment like Reiki could play in that process. He too emphasised the importance of presenting "robust research with good study designs" that validate Reiki therapy's efficacy. He sees the need for good quality assurance mechanisms that protect patients through licensing and certification of Reiki practitioners. Surgeon, Dr. Jonnalagadda Ramesh, who noted that he had come to the Forum primarily to learn, stressed that he was against non-allopathic therapies being seen as alternatives to allopathic care and affirmed that he felt that Reiki treatment could be a very useful complement to conventional medicine. He urged the Association to work hard at educating the medical fraternity about Reiki and extended an offer to the Association to make a presentation to his medical students, which was very enthusiastically received.

Dr. Michael Walcott, who practices Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), Acupuncture, Iris Analysis, Reflexology, Polarity and Reiki, said that he feels that these ancient therapies are credible because of their historical background; several, like TCM and Ayurveda being thousands of years old. He questioned whether they could be credible in a scientific way given the fact that current scientific parameters cannot measure energy fields and the work of the holistic practitioner was to create a healing response by changing the energy in the body. He noted though that science was making a shift and welcomed the Open Forum as a start to a process of dialogue and education between complementary and allopathic practitioners that could lead to better mutual understanding and collaboration.

June Cheesman, a skilled herbalist who devises total wellness programmes, emphasised the importance of supplements in a society of generally mal-nourished people, as well as the value of connecting clients' mind-states to their symptoms and to their healing. Verity Dawson, President of the Barbados Reiki Association and a Reiki Master and Life Coach, gave a history of natural healing to put it into perspective of how far the medical fraternity has strayed from the original principles of viewing the person as a mind-body-spirit unit. "We are extremely proud of having created the evening, a dream for some years. The presentation was at an extremely professional level and indicates that the Association is *bona fide* and committed to its objectives," said Verity, expressing the sentiments of organisers and audience alike.



Far left: Audience members get a five minute Reiki treatment

Left: The audience assembles for the Forum

For more pictures visit us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/#!/media/set/?set=a.10151550412351166.1073741826.111163506165&type=1>

## LYNN ARMOR: A MEMORIAL

by Sharon Hurley Hall



On April 30, 2013, a large group of Reiki practitioners gathered at the Main Guard, The Garrison to celebrate the life of Lynn Armor. Lynn, a Reiki Master/Teacher, Healer, Naturopath, Herbalist, Shaman, Medicine Woman, Teacher, Guide and Ritual master, Mentor, made her transition on Thursday, 14 March 2013. Organised by Michael Rudder, Kathleen Hurley and Francine Cadogan, the Memorial attempted to capture and remember a small part of Lynn's life in Barbados, which she considered her second home.

As well as a beautifully decorated altar with Reiki candles and an angel on loan from Sheila Leslie-John, the room featured a collage of photos of Lynn and friends taken on her many visits to the island between 1995 and 2011. The guest book table featured Lynn's snorkel, sandals and sarong - three S's to go along with the sun, sea and sand that she loved so much.

Led by Michael, the programme included sharing from a number of people whose lives Lynn had touched. Michael recalled his introduction to Reiki, leading to an invitation to Lynn to teach Reiki in Barbados, which she did twice a year for many years. Kathleen, the only Reiki Master Lynn trained in Barbados, shared personal memories of the many times Lynn had stayed with her, while Fran talked about Lynn's involvement with the Modern Mystery School.

A video tribute to Lynn followed, with additional sessions where some of the attendees shared their memories of Lynn. People who spoke included Rosina Wiltshire, Trevor Davis, Hartley Forde and Sharen Carmichael with a brief interlude for songs from the Voices in Christ choir, some of whom studied Reiki with Lynn. Mario shared his memories before performing first a drumming meditation and then a happier piece which had participants tapping their feet. Reiki Association President Verity Dawson rounded out a beautiful occasion which, as many commented, Lynn herself would have enjoyed. Photos of the event are available on our website at

<http://www.barbadosreikiassociation.com/memorial-for-lynn-armor-photos/>.

## HOLISTIC 'SELF-CARE' by June Cheesman

(Extracts from a presentation to the Open Forum on Reiki in Medicine)

All disease comes from an imbalance which means dis-ease in the system. An imbalance in thinking, resistance held in the body, guilt, recrimination, the lack of joy and the lack of Love. Disease comes from deep seated sadness held within the heart, deep seated sadness within the soul. It diminishes the life force from the body. The first step to good health is the importance of our thoughts. Dr. Candace Pert explains in her book, *Molecules of Emotion*, the importance of having positive thoughts as being the first step towards having a strong immune system. She explains that negative thoughts, that is, thoughts of anger, fear, anxiety, hatred etc. create an imbalance in the body, thus weakening our immune system and allowing for diseases to take place.

Complementary therapies such as Reiki help to restore balance to the body. It is a transfer of energy to assist in healing the body. We need to be aware of the foods that should be eaten to restore balance to the system. The majority of the foods that we eat have been in some way altered by man. For example, herbicides and pesticides, while serving a purpose of protection from pests, ultimately are harmful to our bodies and so the use of vitamins and supplements are needed to replenish those missing from our food. This is one of the reasons for taking a good quality multi vitamin with minerals and antioxidants to boost our immune system. Stress is another reason to take supplements. After injury or before and after surgery, extra nutritional supplements are helpful in supporting rapid healing. I was especially pleased to learn that Dr. Elliot Douglin is teaching first year medical students at the UWI Cave Hill Campus about vitamins. This is indeed a major step forward in the integration process.

Diet is vital in treating any illness, whether it is so called, "Incurable" or chronic. Holistic practitioners are aware of the foods that should be avoided and those that should be encouraged. We say, "There are no incurable diseases, but incurable people". That is persons who would not accept responsibility for their illness and themselves and take the necessary corrective measures. Health is far more than the absence of disease. When we are healthy all our bodily systems and functions are harmoniously balanced and integrated with each other and we are also in balance with our environment. This is a time for integration, to combine the therapies of holistic practitioners and conventional medicine. The cornerstone of all natural healing is summarised in the statement, "All healing comes from within and the body heals itself." (Given the right tools of course.) Working with holistic practitioners would be a great boost to our health care system.

## UPCOMING EVENTS: JUNE – AUGUST 2013

- **June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2013 - Practitioners' Reiki Share, 7:00 pm, Harrison College:** It's our turn! An all Reiki evening dedicated to "healing the healers" as we share Reiki treatments for the full hour.
- **July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2013 – Movie Night, 7:00 pm, Harrison College**
- **August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013 – Group Meditation, 7:00 pm, Harrison College**
- **Save the date for the Annual Reiki Practitioners' Retreat on Sunday, October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2013!**

*All Reiki practitioners are invited to come out and join the Association!*

*We welcome contributions to Healing Hands from Reiki practitioners.  
Contributors in this edition: Sharon Hurley Hall, Sonia Johnson, Verity Dawson, June Cheesman*



The Barbados Reiki Association was founded in 1995. The Association meets monthly to conduct business, offer education on Reiki, environmental and health issues and to share group Reiki healing. The vision of the Association is to be part of the process of spreading the knowledge, understanding and practice of Usui Shiki Ryoho. Its Mission is to create and maintain a professional profile for Reiki practitioners in Barbados. Every year, the Association hosts a Retreat for Reiki practitioners and a Complementary Health Fair.

Reiki (pronounced Ray-Key) is Japanese for "Universal Life Force Energy". It is an ancient system of hands-on healing. Anyone may gain access to Reiki by means of an attunement process carried out by a Reiki Master. There are three levels of practice. At First Degree, a Reiki practitioner is able to heal him/herself and others; at Second Degree, he/she is able to heal others distantly; and at Master level (specifically Master/Teacher level) he/she is able to teach and attune others to Reiki.

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### Reiki in the Hospital

Since Reiki requires no specific setting or preparation, it can be utilised in all hospital environments, including outpatient clinics, emergency rooms, intensive-care units, operating rooms, and all other outpatient settings. It can be incorporated into a patient's treatment at any point. Reiki can be used alone or as an adjunct treatment, or it can be integrated seamlessly into the healthcare professional's existing medical repertoire. There are many indications for the use of Reiki in hospital settings. It helps relieve stress, agitation, and acute or chronic pain; it is helpful as an aid for sleeping and also as an energiser. It promotes the release of emotions such as grief, anger, or anxiety and provides comfort in palliative care. There are no side effects or contraindications with Reiki; it is noninvasive and appropriate for all segments of the population. Reiki can be performed on a patient while he is lying down, sitting or standing. The environment can be as quiet as a private room or as stimulating as the emergency room. No adjustment in clothing needs to be made, since Reiki flows through any barrier, including casts.

*From Reiki Energy Medicine by Libby Barnett and Maggie Chambers*