

Lifestyles, Marin Independent Journal: From Lawyer To Healer

Last year Ann Black of San Rafael decided to try to help her mother, Susie Collier, with her swollen hands. The 83-year-old woman was struggling to care for her ailing husband and keep house with hands that were becoming as efficient as boxing gloves. " It got to the point my hands were so swollen I could no longer sew, and it was hard for me to eat, " Collier said. " Sometimes I had to use the left hand to help the right hand get the fork ."

Black, who then worked at Marin General in the mental health department, arranged for her mother to call Robert Ginsburg whom she knew as a healer. Collier was sitting on a stool in her kitchen in Fresno when she made the call at a pre-determined time. Her daughter had not prepared her in anyway for was about to happen.

" It was the strangest circumstance. I was sitting on the barstool with my legs hanging free, and all of a sudden they started moving back and forth and I didn't know what was happening to me." Collier said of the first contact with Ginsburg.

The strange thing was Robert said " Your elbow must be on the counter. It's inhibiting the energy from going through to your hands. " I moved my elbow right quickly, and he said, " That's better ." It was weird. " We did the session and the results were just terrific. My hands were no longer swollen as badly, " she said.

This is one of dozens of people who claim to have seen improvement with Ginsburg's help but this was not the direction his life originally took. He earned a law degree at the University of Pennsylvania at Philadelphia and eventually became an assistant district attorney in that city.

Nearly 30 years ago, Ginsburg became interested in the Eastern philosophical concept of atmospheric energy, which supposedly surrounds us. In an effort to explain what he perceived, he first studied the Japanese concept of Reiki. He then studied polarity therapy, craniosacral therapy, and Rubinfeld Synergy Method. These methods all rely on physical contact as part of healing.

He developed a private practice in healing while maintaining his career in law. But eventually he left his legal practice behind. " One day I was working on somebody and I moved my hands over the body without touching and the person had a stronger reaction than with the regular work I was doing. I said, 'What is going on here?' So I started looking for people to study with. "

Ginsburg investigated the Chinese theory about feeding energy into seven primary chakra centers or layers vertically aligned in the body. " But it wasn't specific. It helps, but it didn't solve the problem. " Ginsburg said of the Chinese technique, which relies on the patient's body to apply the healing qualities of the energy received.

Unlike the Chinese approach, Ginsburg's concept is to apply the healing energy directly to the organ or system causing the problem. But it goes beyond that. He "programs" the energy, which he sends to these trouble spots to perform specific tasks in the healing process. In his live demonstrations, Ginsburg works on members of his audience, even if

they are 30 feet away. He holds his hands out as if positioned around the person's spine and goes down the vertebrae one by one. He stops where misalignments occur, and with only the power of his mind and his mastery over the energy present in nature, he tries to move the vertebrae into better position. Those he works on feel heat or tingling.

Although his audiences are generally receptive, when worked on almost all his participants feel some improvement. However, one doesn't have to believe in the process to reap its benefits. Since he doesn't physically touch patients, Ginsburg can work from a distance - over 175 miles away in the case of Susie Collier. The phone helps establish contact with the person, but is only valuable for feedback from the client. Although he also sees patients face to face, many receive treatments while on the phone from places all over the globe. A woman on vacation called from Paris for a session.

Ginsburg's charges vary with the eventual goals of the process.

A client who desires privacy called Ginsburg after being diagnosed with three herniated discs in her neck, one of which was pushing on her spinal cord. She arranged for the first of her sessions with Ginsburg to take place less than three weeks before her surgery. After that first visit she noticed a difference. But the second session changed her life.

" The next time I saw him I left totally pain free for the first time in 10 months. So I canceled the surgery much to the dismay of my neurology surgeon. " Her improvements from the previous diagnosis were concrete. " I had a second MRI and it showed that my disc had moved sufficiently into place for my doctor to agree with the cancelation of the surgery."

Dr. Bill Elliott, a doctor of internal medicine at Kaiser-Novato and an assistant clinical professor of medicine at UC San Francisco, says while he does not endorse healing services such as those practiced by Ginsburg, he thinks people should be free to choose whatever process works for them - to a point. " I think the human body is a miraculously complex computer with an amazing capacity to heal itself ," Elliot said. " I think all that any doctor, healer, or anybody does is to put the body in the right framework to fix itself whether it's traditional medical care and antibiotics, health recommendations such as diet and exercise, or some other system as long as it works. "

If the malady is serious enough, though, Elliott feels traditional medicine should take precedence. For Susie Collier whose husband is a Methodist clergyman, the power of prayer is well established. But Ginsburg's approach was far different from prayer, and she had to reconcile with the concept. " I didn't want it to interfere with anything I believe ," she said. " I console myself with the thought it was nature, and it was pure and if Robert could find a way to use it, that's not going against what I believe. It's not magical or voodoo. I'd never have anything to do with that. And my husband, being a minister, doesn't feel that either. He feels Robert has found a way the universe can be used that we don't know. "