

Energy Healer Helps Restore Balance

By Jacqueline E. Burrell

The woman is in labor. Suddenly, her baby's heart stops beating. Time stands still. The baby's heart starts again, but the crisis has frightened the young parents-to-be and the family members who have gathered to support them. Anxiety and tension fill the hospital room.

A friend of the family, an energy healer, has been called to assist, and for the next six hours, she uses her training and experience to help them transcend the trauma and create an environment of love and safety for the soon-to-be born child. Skillfully, she begins by gently transmitting energy through her hands to key tension spots, and the mother falls into a deeply relaxed sleep.

Taking a cue from the medical team, the healer concentrates on the baby, whose stressful reaction to the mother's contractions is visible on the fetal heart monitor. The energy healer's efforts produce electrifying results: the baby's heart rate stabilizes as the monitor records the jagged peaks of the mother's contractions. To the amazement and elation of the family, the baby's heart is calm.

That anxious moment happened one year ago at Howard County General Hospital. The baby--a boy, Billy--is beautiful and healthy and doing well. Billy's parents are Angela Gray-Parham and William Peter Parham II. His maternal grandparents are Sandra and C. Vernon Gray, long time County Council member; the friend they called was Betty Caldwell, the only energy healer certified to practice at HCGH.

While traditional medicine focuses on the physical body, Caldwell works with a different understanding of the human body, which in health circles is increasingly being discussed in terms of quantum physics. The body, like all matter, starts with energy. It is this energy that determines both the physical and emotional well-being, like "an underlying blueprint." If there is a distortion in the field, Caldwell can detect it.

As Caldwell explains it, each part of the body has its own vibration rate. When something goes awry, the aberration will show up as an uncharacteristic vibration in the part affected.

Energy healing is "not fighting, not fixing," she points out. "The body has its own inborn tendency to return to wholeness. I help it along,

using the body's own natural energy sources."

Caldwell's clients look to energy healing for help with stress-related illnesses, chronic pain and arthritis, as well as recovery from trauma, fatigue, emotional issues or intense medical treatments like chemotherapy, whose side effects may be lessened.

Some clients come seeking a deeper connection with a sense of self and heightened awareness of living. Some have lost that sense of coherence that makes us experience life to its fullest.

Caldwell's sessions with clients last from one hour to 90 minutes in a modified counseling format, with fully clothed clients lying on a massage table. After an initial conversation, she begins with an energy assessment, to detect where the body is out of balance, depleted or in some other form of stress. Then, she works with a variety of healing tools, from direct transmission of energy through her hands (frequently experienced by her clients as warmth or surges of energy) to application of selected essential oils and flower essences.

For a client, the healing experience often includes discovery of an underlying conflict or a long forgotten physical condition that is still a source of discomfort. As Caldwell works, clients begin to feel a sense of safety, clarity and relaxation, and an enhanced insight into the source of their problem. The symptom, which has probably precipitated the visit, is transformed in the healing process into a window of recovery, according to Caldwell.

In addition to individual sessions with clients, Caldwell works in tandem with physicians with a holistic orientation to health care. Patient demand has created a greater awareness among medical professionals that health care consumers feel wellness involves more than the physical body. Thus, more frequently than in the past, treatment involves a variety of healers who address wellness in all its manifestations. The informed and involved patient can be taught how to balance his or her energy to assist healing.

"People can do a lot more to assist their own recovery," Caldwell says. "They can take more responsibility for their own health if they've been taught to do so."

This focus on helping others is something Caldwell has been doing for more than 20 years. She has a master's degree in counseling. Her career includes work with international health education in the Peace

Corps in West Africa. She served as director of the White House Task Force on Women and was vice president of a national group dedicated to ending childhood hunger.

Most recently, Caldwell is founder and president of the Healing Dimensions Foundation, a new global network of healers and people interested in holistic healing practices.

The foundation provides education, teleconferences and referrals. Members include clients and practitioners of energy healing, as well as physicians, teachers, therapists, acupuncturists and others. Newly reemerging fields like "vibrational medicine," such as homeopathy and aromatherapy, are being studied, along with other alternative healing modalities.

Caldwell is proud of the Healing Dimensions Foundation, and she sees it as an opportunity to spread the word about holistic healing and its great benefits, made exhilaratingly clear to her the day she helped Billy Parham come into this world.

"I love the way this whole process unfolded," she says, "and I look forward to working with future clients not only in the birthing room, but also before and after surgery, possibly in the operating room, in the nursery, and in other times and places they request my presence."

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