



## We Have Arrived

*Ron Stram, MD*



When I started the Center 8 years ago, I was pursuing a goal that I knew may not succeed: practicing preventative and complementary health care in a system dominated by health insurance and pharmaceutical companies that were not integrative friendly. It was a risk I was willing to take, because I knew that medicine had to be on the brink of change. My clinical experience in the emergency room was teaching me over and over again that patients could avoid these expensive ER visits had they only practiced a lifestyle of prevention and encouraged by a healthcare system to do so.

We have finally arrived. In March 2010, President Barack Obama signed into law The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. The part of the reform bill specific for increasing the access to Integrative and Complimentary therapies is section 2706, which prohibits "discrimination" against any health care provider licensed in a state by a group health insurance. Specifically:

"A group health plan and a health insurance issuer offering group or individual health insurance coverage shall not discriminate with respect to participation under the plan or coverage against any health care provider who is acting within the scope of that provider's license or certification under applicable State law."

With more people covered under plans that are more inclusive for complimentary providers, this should allow for greater access to and, by extension, demand for licensed integrative medicine providers. This is an opportunity for you, my fellow readers and active participants of integrative healthcare to seize this right to demand of your insurance carrier to cover services offered by licensed integrative medicine and complimentary providers.

It is no longer a privilege but a right; it is no longer a risk with poor odds for providers like myself and my colleagues at the Center with an integrative philosophy of treatment to pursue their goals to help create a wellness- oriented society built on prevention which is more sensible, sustainable and respectful of the healing powers of nature.

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## Stories from the Center

*Sue Coughtry, Licensed Massage Therapist, Advanced Reiki Master*

### Surgery Is Not Always the Answer: Henry's Story



Don't get me wrong – surgical treatment saves lives and makes all the difference in the quality of life for many people. But surgery is often used when something else less invasive might work just as well if not better. It is often well worth it (when this is not a critical life saving necessity) to try

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alternative treatments first to see if they can solve the problem without the surgical intervention. Acupuncture, meditation and yoga, massage, craniosacral therapy, and reiki can truly change a person's life and eliminate the need for surgery. Here is an example.

Henry, 79 and fully mentally engaged (quite a character, in fact, with an absolutely charming personality) came in to see me with substantial knee pain in one knee. His doctor had told him it was osteo-arthritis and that he'd need a knee replacement soon. Henry was still very active, working several part time jobs by choice. His knee was hurting more and more however and restricting what he could do so much so that he had reached a point where he was seriously considering getting that knee replacement surgery, though it did pose some risk by virtue of his age.

Henry didn't stretch regularly and had never looked into alternative treatments for anything. In fact the only reason he came to see me was because his wife knew me. After our initial visit, I felt that muscle imbalances were contributing to his knee pain so I simply massaged and used gentle trigger point therapy on all the muscles that pull on the knee. I recommended a few stretches that could also lengthen and balance those muscles. This was all he needed to relieve the pain and get on with his life. He had considerable improvement after one session and started the stretching routines regularly. I continued to see him every 2 weeks for a few more sessions. He's back to doing what he wants to do in comfort. All it took was being open to trying an alternative therapy before undergoing the risk of invasive surgery.

When it's not a life-threatening situation, its really worth looking at all your options. You can often find a solution that is far less invasive and possibly even more successful.

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## Community Acupuncture at the Center

*Christopher Reilly, Licensed Acupuncturist*



The most frequent challenge we hear from those who desire acupuncture treatment is the out-of-pocket expense. Too often, the financial difficulties and limitations many of us experience stand in the way of our receiving the care that we need. After extensive research and consideration, we

believe that we now are able to provide an exciting and effective solution.

For \$35- just slightly more than the average health insurance co-pay, and less than half the cost of a traditional acupuncture visit- we are proud to be the first facility in the Capital Region to offer [community acupuncture](#). Clients are seated on reclining chairs in a spacious, comfortable room, complete with all the hallmarks of comfort and serenity that you have come to expect from the Center. In this setting, Rebecca and Chris take advantage of the multitude of limb and ear acupuncture points that effectively address a large spectrum of health concerns.

Group meditations and ceremonies are intrinsic to nearly every native healing tradition in the world, and we now have the opportunity to offer that group synergy to promote healing at the Center. Some clients require more extensive acupuncture sessions, and some will certainly prefer the solitude of a private session. For others, this new step in integrative health care provides the effective and affordable option that many in the region have been waiting for. Please join us as we continue to work for the advancement of integrative care in our community and the nation!

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## Preparing for the Summer with your Spring Cleanse



It's that time of year again to do some spring cleaning! Many of us have the tradition of cleaning our houses, basements, and cars, so why not our bodies? We are exposed to many toxins on a daily basis, from the air we breathe to the foods we eat, that over time can take its physical toll on us. This can manifest as fatigue, brain fog,

indigestion, muscle aches and pains, joint pain, and a feeling of overall sluggishness.

### **How do We Reduce the Toxins Already Present in our Body?**

First and foremost attention must be on enhancing liver functioning to optimize the detoxification process. This is accomplished by resting the liver through diet, and supplementing with key vitamins, nutrients, and herbs that will support liver detoxification. Herbs can be used in many different forms from herbal teas, encapsulations, and tinctures. Some great herbs for the liver include milk thistle, dandelion, tumeric, artichoke, and burdock. In general, root vegetables and bitter foods are great for the liver, as well as sulphur containing foods such as onions and garlic.

Toxins are eliminated from the body by excretion through urine, stool, and sweat. This is accomplished by drinking lots of water, using fiber with high binding capacity such as psyllium and ground flax seeds, and using infrared saunas. For some, the use of enemas or colonics can be useful to expedite elimination through the bowels. However, these methods have some health risks and contraindications, and should be discussed with your doctor.

### **Eat "Clean" Fruits and Vegetables**

Foods eaten during a cleanse are typically limited to brown rice and vegetables or juicing. All foods should be organic to limit the amount of pesticides ingested into the body. According to the Environmental Working Group, there are 12 fruits and vegetables that contain the highest amounts of pesticides and therefore should be bought organic whenever possible. These include peaches, apples, bell peppers, celery, cherries, nectarines, strawberries, kale, lettuce, imported grapes, carrots, and pears. Some of the cleanest fruits and vegetables include avocado, pineapple, mango, asparagus, kiwi, cabbage, watermelon, broccoli, and tomato.

### **Benefits of a Cleanse:**

- increased energy, mood, mental alertness, as well as weight loss.
- strengthens the immune system
- decrease antigen-antibody complexes; this is beneficial to those with autoimmune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis as well as those who suffer from Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and Fibromyalgia
- Aids with health issues related to hormone imbalances; the liver processes hormones and therefore a healthy functioning liver can help keep hormones in balance.

If you would like to schedule a Cleanse Consultation or have any questions, don't hesitate to call the Center: 518-689-2244. Happy Spring Cleaning.

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## **Featured Supplements for Your Spring Detox Cleanse**



Spring is a great time to clean our bodies of the many toxins we exposed ourselves to on a daily basis, from the air we breathe in and the foods we eat. Accumulation of toxins does take its toll on us and can manifest as fatigue, brain fog, indigestions, muscle aches and pains, and a feeling of overall

sluggishness.

During a cleanse, the most important focus is to support and enhance the liver's role in the detoxification process. This can be accomplished through these hand selected nutritional supplements which are available to you by calling our office or through our [webstore](#).

[Mediclear](#) by Thorne - provides essential vitamins and minerals necessary to support the liver in the detoxification process

[Liver Cleanse](#) by Thorne - provides botanical herbs such as Stinging Nettle leaf, Dandelion Root, Milk Thistle, Burdock Root, to support the liver and kidney

[Fiber Flow](#) by Wise Women - provides psyllium and charcoal to assist in binding and clearing toxins in the bowels

[HMF Super Powder Probiotics](#) by Seroyal - provides beneficial flora for bowels to increase immunity, regulate digestion, and assist in nutrient absorption

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## Medical Massage Techniques That Help Fibromyalgia

*Sue Coughtry, Licensed Massage Therapist, Advanced Reiki Master*



Fibromyalgia (meaning pain in the muscles and their connective tissue covering) is a condition where a person experiences chronic pain all over for seemingly no reason. It is diagnosed by having a certain number of tender points in various muscles over the body that are painful upon touch. There is a drug or two that can help with this condition, but fibromyalgia is a condition that very little is known about.

### Are You Wearing 'Body Armor'?

My observation, coming from years of working with people dealing with this condition, is that the muscles in someone dealing with fibromyalgia are in a hyper-tense state all the time. All muscles have a little tension in them – that's called baseline muscle tone and that's the way they are supposed to be. Some people have more baseline muscle tone than others – that can come from genetics, lifestyle or stress. Severe physical or emotional stress on the other hand can make people unconsciously turn their muscles into "body armor" to protect them from those. This is what fibromyalgia is – extreme muscle tension all the time. And when the muscles are this tense all the time, they're going to hurt - a lot. The tighter the muscles, the worse the pain, which tightens the muscles even more, creating more pain. This is a nasty cycle.

I believe there is an emotional component to fibromyalgia as well. Most of the people I know who are dealing with it have had, or are having, feelings of being trapped or hopeless; or have had some pretty severe trauma in their lives. The tight muscles have become a way of protecting themselves or shielding themselves from the hurt or the trauma. This is something to keep in mind and perhaps work with as you work through fibromyalgia.

### How Medical Massage Can Help

Medical massage therapy helps relieve the pain and tension with fibromyalgia very well, often to the point that the symptoms go away all together. Regular massage can sometimes be too painful, especially when the pain is severe. I use positional release therapy (prt) to first ease and then eliminate trigger points in the muscles (those painful knots). PRT is the gentle way to release those trigger points - there is very little discomfort with this approach. I then use craniosacral therapy which deeply calms and enhances the functioning of the entire central nervous system as well as deeply relaxing the muscles. That also uses very gentle touch – it is a totally pain free technique. Somato-emotional release

can be added, which uses dialog during craniosacral therapy, to ease the emotional aspects of the fibromyalgia if the client is comfortable with that.

I've had great success with this approach to fibromyalgia. If you're struggling with this, come give this massage technique a try. This therapy can really make a big improvement for you in a short time.

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## Is Your Diet Too Acidic?

*Jennifer Enos, Holistic Nurse Practitioner*



The many diet fads reveal themselves over and over again. If we sit long enough, the next one will be on the horizon with fresh ideas on how to lose weight and look more beautiful. What most people are overlooking is that health and longevity is truly an inside job. With this, comes behavior changes and choices that must become a way of life and natural out of what we desire for our long range vision for ourselves.

Alkaline food choices are becoming more and more known as an important choice for health maintenance and disease prevention. Evidence is showing that the more acidic our body, the more chronic illnesses develop. Acidity contributes to our weight gain; oxidative stress; elevates blood pressure; causes premature aging; the development of allergies.....and the list goes on.

To determine one's ph, ph paper is used and either saliva or urine are used. The ideal number should be around 7- but many of us tend to be about 4-5 (acidic). One of the ways to bring us into more balance is to eat more alkaline foods. I have prepared a list for you as a general guide to healthy food choices.

Here's to your health and a safe and joyful summer!

**ALKALINE VEGETABLES:** asparagus; artichokes; cabbage; lettuce; onion; cauliflower; radish; peas; leeks; watercress; spinach; turnip; chives; carrots; green beans; garlic; celery; grasses (wheat, barley, etc); cucumber; broccoli; kale; Brussels sprouts.

**ALKALINE FRUITS:** lemon; lime; avocado; tomato; grapefruit; watermelon (is neutral); rhubarb. All other fruits are considered acidic.

**ALKALINE SEEDS, NUTS AND GRAINS:** almonds; pumpkin; sunflower; sesame; flax; buckwheat groats; spelt; lentils; cumin seeds; any sprouted seed

**ALKALINE DRINKS:** "green drinks" –fresh vegetable juice; pure water (distilled or ionized); lemon water (pure water plus fresh lemon or lime); herbal tea; non-sweetened soy milk; almond milk

**ALKALINE FATS AND OILS:** flax; hemp; avocado; olive; evening primrose; coconut oil;

### **ACIDIC FOODS:**

**MEATS:** pork; lamb; beef; chicken; turkey; seafood

**DAIRY:** milk; eggs; cheese; cream; yogurt; ice cream

**DRINKS:** fizzy drinks; coffee; tea; beers and other spirits; fruit juice; dairy smoothies; milk;

**FATS AND OILS:** saturated fats; hydrogenated oil; margarine (worse than butter); corn oil vegetable oil; sunflower oil

**SEEDS AND NUTS:** peanuts; cashew nuts; pistachio nuts

**OTHERS:** vinegar; white pasta; white bread; soy sauce; tamari; condiments (tomato sauce, mayonnaise, etc); artificial sweeteners; honey

**CONVENIENCE FOODS:** sweets; chocolate; microwave meals; tinned foods; powdered soups; instant meals; fast food

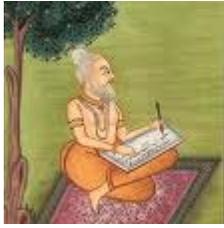
**GENERAL GUIDANCE:** stick to salads, fresh vegetables and healthy nuts and oils. Try to consume plenty of raw foods and at least 2-3 liters of clean, pure water daily. Limit fatty meats, dairy, cheese, sweets, alcohol and tobacco. Packaged foods are often full of hidden offenders and microwave meals are full of sugars and salts. Over cooking also removes all of the

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## Yoga/Mediation Corner: What are the Yamas?

*Jim Whiting, Certified Kripalu Yoga Instructor*



After teaching yoga and meditation for several years, one question that always comes up is “What are the Yamas?” This one question I love to answer because it is so profound and useful to helping to create a healthier you.

Yamas is a term used in Yoga writings outlining the dos and don'ts of yoga. They are five common sense observances we can do in everyday life to help us maneuver life's challenges. By acting skillfully and in alignment with our conscience we build a strong foundation to move into creating a healthy mind and body.

### **The Yamas are:**

1. Non-harming (Ahimsa): Does your thought, word, or deed harm another and just as importantly, does it harm you? Remember charity begins at home.
2. Truthfulness (Satya): Speak truth and act in line with truth. Many confuse facts with truth. Because something is a fact does not make it a truth; a truth must resonate from within. When you hear a truth, you know it and feel it; the same with others around you. If you are not speaking from the heart, others can sense it.
3. Non-stealing (Asteya): Do not seek to possess that which is not yours. This includes jealousy, greed and desire.
4. Moderation (Brahmacharya): balance is the key word here, and the key to a healthy mental outlook and body.
5. Non-possessiveness (Aparigraha): Remember all we believe we own or possess is on loan and one day will be surrendered. It is the natural order of the universe for energy to flow. When we try to hold onto or possess, we disrupt that flow. When we become attached to our possessions they own us.

The yamas are observances that are at the core of every spiritual belief system, and for good reason. We need the mind and body to be clear of negative energy to be healthy.

Every Wednesday 7:30 PM at the Center we gather for guided meditation and discussion. In the weeks to come, we will be exploring the Yamas and how we can integrate them in to our everyday life. The meditation is free; join us in de-stressing, good company and good conversation.

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## Cooling Coconut Crème Dessert

*Rebecca Rice, Licensed Acupuncturist*



This easy and nutritious dessert is suitable for those who are fans of ice cream but are seeking a healthier cool treat, without the dairy and high amounts of refined or cane sugar.

Coconut milk is used as the base. It is cooling in nature and high in minerals, folate, vitamin C, and lauric acid. Lauric acid is of special interest because of its conversion into monolauric acid in the body. Monolauric acid is an important deterrent of viruses, like herpes and influenza.

### Coconut Crème Dessert

- ½ Can coconut milk
- ¼ to ½ Cup frozen berries
- ½ tsp. lemon zest

Blend all ingredients thoroughly using a hand blender or food processor.

Place in freezer until desired density is reached (less time is needed for frozen fruit).

Remove from freezer and enjoy!

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## *What's New in Holistic Medicine at the Center*

### **Community Acupuncture Clinic Now Open at the Center**

After extensive research and consideration, we now are able to provide an exciting and effective solution to the financial restrictions felt by many seeking acupuncture therapy. We are proud to be the first facility in the Capital Region to offer COMMUNITY ACUPUNCTURE.

### **Myofascial Release is Now Added to Sue Coughtry's Medical Massage Tool Bag**

Sue Coughtry, L.Ac has recently completed training in myofascial release and can more effectively address pain and joint issues as well as irritable bowel issues, pelvic pain, urinary frequency issues and respiratory problems. Read more about this effective tool on Sue's [blog](#).

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## *New Classes and Workshops*



### **Reiki Certification Classes**

Each class offered is a one day workshop. Each student will be given a course manual and a certificate of completion at the reiki level attended.

**Reiki I : July 11; or Sept 26. These are Sunday classes, 9am-3pm.**

**Reiki II: June19; Aug 21. These are Saturday classes, noon to 6pm**

Fee: \$150 per class. Space is limited to 10 participants. Registration is required by calling our office. Please call: 518-689-2244. See [Classes](#) page for full schedule

### **CIHH Presents: Drawn By Nature: Finding Your Creative Side**



Evening Stroll by Andrea Hersh

Come discover the artist within you and let your love for nature be your guide. Experience the increased sense of well-being and happiness that many health care professionals link with artistic expression.

**When:** Saturday, July 10, 2010; 10am-5pm

**Fee:** \$75 plus \$15 materials fee

**Where:** 10am-1pm: Five Rivers in Delmar; 2pm-5pm: Center for Integrative Health and Healing

CALL to REGISTER: (518) 689-2244. Space is limited; early registration is recommended.

**Instructor:** Andrea Hersh, MFA

*About the Artist: Andrea Hersh is a painter who has had numerous shows in and around Albany as well as NYC, among many other places. Her work is inspired by landscapes from Iceland to Thatcher Park. She has won the NYFA award in Painting and received the acclaimed SOS grants for her work. Andrea teaches painting and drawing at SAGE COLLEGE in Albany. She lives and paints in Slingerlands, NY [www.ahersh.com](http://www.ahersh.com)*

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## Announcements:

- We are now on [FACEBOOK](#). Become a fan, write a comment share us with your friends!

- Saturday massages are now available with Sue Coughtry, LMT. Start your weekend with a therapeutic massage and let the stress of the week fall away.

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