

Providing a 'Healing Touch'

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Vicki Marish saw many people come through her door while she taught continuing education, Practical Nursing and Associate Degree Nursing classes at Southwest Wisconsin Technical College.

Little did she know one of the people to walk through her door would change her life and career.

After beginning her career as a staff nurse at the Good Samaritan Society - Fennimore, Vicki joined the Southwest Tech staff in 1975 as an instructor. While an instructor, she earned a master's degree in education at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville and later a master's degree in nursing administration at University of Dubuque.

Vicki was asked to put her strong academic background in nursing to work as the College's health occupations coordinator, when she received that fateful visit.

"Ironically, what started it, was as health occupations coordinator in 1986 my responsibility was to hire instructors and that is what I did," she recalls. "I also set up and supervised the classes they were hired to teach."

"One day, a monk showed up on my doorstep. He wanted to teach two classes - one was reflexology and the other was called magnetic therapy."

Following an interview, Vicki hired the monk to teach the classes. To support her newest hire, she enrolled in his classes.

"One of the classes - magnetic therapy - included teaching eastern medicine concepts of Prana and Chi, is putting energy in someone and taking energy out, and balancing the energy" she said. "And, in 1986 who knew about reflexology? It is working with acupuncture points on people's feet for relief of symptoms.

"I found out I could do energy work and I enjoyed doing it. That is how my adventure into the world of energy healing started."

A nurse with many credentials, Vicki searched far and wide for an energy certification program with a basis in traditional nursing. She found the answer in 1994, right where she began her teaching career eight years prior.

"I attended a continuing education class at Southwest Tech called Healing Touch," Vicki recalls. "It was taught by one of our Associate Degree Nursing graduates. I went to it and it was like, 'this is it.'"

Vicki packed her bags and traveled to Detroit that summer, where she attended a weekend retreat to learn more about Healing Touch. In the years that followed, she traveled to Des Moines, Minneapolis, New Orleans and Raleigh Durham as she continued her studies of the five level program.

"I ended up getting certified in 1996 as a Healing Touch Practitioner," she notes. "Because I am a teacher and I love to teach, I spent an additional two years getting certified as an instructor, so now I can teach Healing Touch, which I do locally."

Make no mistake, Healing Beyond Borders Healing Touch is not for the weak-at-heart.

"It is a professional, international organization, and the educational program is sanctioned and approved by the American Holistic Nurses Association, which is a branch of the American Nursing Association," Vicki explains. "So, it has the stamp of approval for credentialing. Simply said, this program is not a weekend warrior thing.

"You have to have knowledge and experience doing energy based work, be professional in conduct and you have to have standards of practice to get the credentials of certification. We also have a code of ethics. We have to maintain all of those things, and if we don't, we can lose our certification status. It is both interesting and challenging to function at this level of professionalism in a non-traditional area."

Vicki's clients may be suffering from physical, emotional, mental or spiritual distress.

"I have had clients come in with all those kinds of distress," she says. "What happens is, once they come to see me, we work on relieving and easing whatever it is that is distressing them or causing the pain."

What does Vicki do?

"My goal is to help people heal themselves and to feel better in mind, body and spirit," she explains. "I see people come in with chronic pain or emotional distress. They have been on medications or they are facing surgery and what they are doing is no longer enough to manage. They are asking, 'what else can I do?'"

"I am always relieved when they come in and they say 'I have been to my doctor and have had all of these tests, and this is what they say I have.' As an RN, I now know their diagnosis, what their medications are and what their symptoms continue to be. Then, energetically I can go in and track that disease process from an energy perspective and then we look and see if we can alleviate it."

One of Vicki's clients suffered a foot injury in a motorcycle accident. She provided the client Healing Touch treatments over several days before he returned to

college.

"I can energetically feel the pain," she explains. "So I move it, balance the affected area, and I put energy in so the person self-heals."

Vicki's client returned to college and in his healing process, visited his doctor.

"The doctor said, 'I have never seen anybody heal this fast,'" Vicki recalls. "He said, 'I don't know what you did, but keep doing it.'"

"That is how the energy can work in a physical healing situation."

Vicki also assists clients suffering from what is deemed an "energy block" emotionally or spiritually.

"Beliefs, thoughts, perceptions, usually resulting from life in general – can block our flow of energy. The result is 'we get stuck,'" she says. "In Healing Touch, Reiki and Soul Awareness –the healing practices I carry certification in – the main goal in all of these is to track the energy to the source, release the block and get the energy flowing smoothly and fully within the body to move from feeling 'blah' to feeling better, happier."

"I reach into my tool box of experience and knowledge to pick out a technique that would help clear or balance that particular challenge. The techniques have really basic names like clearing, hands in motion, pain drain and opening of chakras. There are multiple techniques to draw from as each curriculum is amazing.

Vicki's traditional medicine trained mind has been put to ease because the work she does is nursing based energy, which in her words "takes some of the voodoo out of it." And where did she get that name?

When her son Brian was a member of the Fennimore High School football team, she became affectionately known as "voodoo mom" to some weary players after she performed Healing Touch on them as part of a required community project for her certification.

"It looks really strange when you are standing there clearing somebody's bioenergetic field by waving your hands over their physical body," she says. People often wonder or ask, 'what the heck are you doing?'

"While it looks really strange, there is growing professional research being done in major hospitals and universities to support its use. The newest terminology is Integrated Health Care and its basis is in metaphysics for those who want to research it on the Internet or in books."

Vicki continues to learn. She is in the process of becoming certified in Akashic Records. She describes this as looking at one's life as a library.

"As a practitioner, I go with the client into their life energetically and together we search for the events in their past which are challenging them now with the goal to heal them."

She also continues to study new trends in integrated healthcare and is serving on the Professional Education Committee for Healing Beyond Borders, the Healing Touch of Lakewood, Colo.

"The challenge is how to combine traditional healthcare with the perceived voodoo stuff," she explains. "It is just being open to seeing how they can work together and how they can help people heal, which is the main goal for all healing professionals."

"It is asking, how can we promote the person's self-healing by doing a variety of things to support them, whatever that might be?"

Vicki's favorite part of her work is when a client achieves their sought after self-healing.

"It is the awesomeness of watching people come in and have a healing moment, and get the 'a-ha' of 'wow, I feel better than when I came in,'" she says. "I am always excited for them."

Vicki encourages those who are curious to visit her website, <http://www.energyforhealthllc.com/>, which includes testimonials from clients she has worked with.

"The trick is to get here, to be open to something to change," she says. "Do you have to believe? No, you have to be open."

"You have to be willing to try something different to be different in a good way."

Vicki she sees changes happening every day as people are more open about asking or talking about other ways of healing. She is excited about the future of health care.

"There is more of an opening for it. I am living long enough for people to say 'oh yeah, I have heard about that,' or 'I have seen something about it,' or 'my cousin did that,' she says. "There is a trend of people becoming more open to it and I am grateful for that."

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