

Just a Light Touch:

Jin Shin Jyutsu Promotes Relaxation, Healing

By Tanya J. Tyler

Nowadays, people are probably quite familiar with age-old healing practices such as homeopathy, acupuncture, aromatherapy and biofeedback. Another ancient practice gaining new respect in the wellness community is jin shin jyutsu*.

The physio-philosophy of jin shin jyutsu originated in Japan. Jin shin jyutsu means "the art of the Creator through compassionate man." The theory behind it is that the gentle touch its practitioners use opens up blocked energy pathways so the body can return to its natural state of harmony and balance. Jin shin jyutsu is similar to acupressure, but differs in that it involves no physical manipula-

tion, only light touches with little pressure.

Its main proponent, Master Jiro Murai, a Japanese philosopher, rediscovered jin shin jyutsu in the early 1900s. He used the practice on himself when he was diagnosed with a life-threatening illness. His dramatic recovery inspired him to continue studying the art, and he passed on his knowledge to his student, Mary Burmeister, a Japanese American who brought jin shin jyutsu to America.

"There are all different types of ways to heal our bodies," said Lexington jin shin jyutsu practitioner Jennifer Bradley. "We all need to be harmonized. We all need some relaxation. Jin shin jyutsu actually opens up the mind."

Bradley became intrigued with jin shin jyutsu after hearing of her sister's positive results from using it while undergoing aggressive chemotherapy for breast cancer.

"She came out (of a jin shin jyutsu session) and her face was bright and her cheeks were pink," Bradley said. "She had this lovely improvement in the quality of her life. I found this so compelling that I began to study jin shin jyutsu."

A typical jin shin jyutsu session lasts about an hour. As the client lies fully clothed face-up on the table, the practitioner "listens" to the energetic pulses in the wrist area, which reveal important information about the current state of the body's energy system. The practitioner gently accesses safety energy locks – there are 26 on each side of the body for a total of 52 – and unblocks them, using specific hand-placement patterns called "flows."

"Practitioners think of their hands as 'jumper cables' to spark the body's energy system, just as jumper cables used on a car spark the engine so it will run smoothly again," Bradley explained. "We work with the whole system." Patients are given holds they can do on their own outside of their sessions. For instance, if someone is feeling anxious, they are taught to lightly hold their index finger.

Bradley has been studying jin shin jyutsu for seven years. She works with patients at both the University of Kentucky's Markey Cancer Center and Saint Joseph Hospital's Hospice facility. She also teaches jin

shin jyutsu courses. She believes the deep relaxation many people experience during a session helps them most. "If the mind can rest, the body can follow," she said.

Bradley doesn't consider jin shin jyutsu to be a form of either complementary or alternative medicine.

"I think of it as integrative," she said. "I like to work with doctors. We're working together."

To learn more about jin shin jyutsu, visit www.balanceflow.com or www.jsjinc.net.

