

A REPORT ON THE INTEGRATIVE HOLISTIC HEALING RETREAT— MOLINE, ILLINOIS

Pam Taylor, ND

1630 5th Ave; Suite 706
Moline, IL 61265
309-797-3367

An Integrative Holistic Healing Retreat, sponsored by the Institute for Cultural Traditions, took place July 31-August 3, 1997 in Moline, Illinois, on the wooded grounds of a former private school and convent. The workshops and conference were well received, and attended by holistic and conventional practitioners, as well as the general public. Workshops and lectures covered a wide variety of topics, including Qi Gong, meditation, yoga, chiropractic care and naturopathic medicine.

Addressing a Thursday night audience of close to 100 people, local surgeon Myron Fields, MD was critical of conventional medicine and the insurance and pharmaceutical companies which sustain it, and cautiously supportive of alternative therapies. As an example, he compared the cost of Proscar (tm), a prescription drug for benign prostatic hyperplasia dispensed at \$1.75 per capsule, to *Serena repens* (saw palmetto), an herb found to be equally effective (1) costing seven cents per capsule. Dr. Fields reported he is gradually shifting from surgery to family practice and incorporating some alternative healing modalities into his protocols.

Huan Po Quah, MD spoke Friday evening. With degrees in both conventional care and traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) (University of Beijing), she teaches anatomy at the Palmer College of Chiropractic. Dr. Huan stressed the need for both health care approaches; she spoke at length about the cost-effectiveness, benefits and low risks of TCM. While both kinds of medicine are freely available in China, patients generally choose TCM.

Evan Kligman, MD, professor and department head of Family Medicine at the University of Iowa School of Medicine spoke Saturday evening, and offered one of the more intriguing presentations. Dr. Kligman moved to Iowa from Tucson, Arizona, where he was a colleague of Dr. Andrew Weil's since 1979. Redefining allopathy as "a system of medical practice making use of all measures that have proved of value in the treatment of disease," Dr. Kligman predicted that, "we will move from complementary to integrative medicine with specialists trained as fellows (MDs) in integrative medicine," and "newly trained physicians assess(ing) the appropriateness of alternative modalities for patients...."

Dr. Kligman said that Dr. Weil had already begun work at the Arizona Center for Health and Medicine in Tucson, which "integrates TCM, acupuncture, home-

opathy, nutritional therapy, Ayurvedic medicine, psychological counseling, Trager and Feldenkrais body awareness techniques, therapeutic massage, Therapeutic Touch, osteopathic manipulation, guided visual imagery, herbal therapy, yoga, tai chi, aromatherapy, dance and art therapies." He predicted that "within 10 to 15 years, there will be no distinction between conventional and non-conventional treatments. Alternative therapies with evidence-based efficacy will be incorporated within integrative health care."

Dr. Kligman went on to say that, "Family physicians will be expected to guide their patient's use of what are now alternative therapies, and may have skills to deliver one or more modalities. Larger group practices will employ an integrative medicine specialist to set up integrative medicine protocols and assess patients."

The potential for grant monies, stated Kligman, to study, develop and verify holistic protocols was substantial. He also mentioned the impact of "telemedicine" on the practice of medicine. Monitoring equipment attached to computers would allow the physician of the not-too-distant future to take blood pressures, pulses, even palpate without ever leaving the office or touching the patient. He envisioned a "global network of alternative therapy specialists ... available via e-mail or telemedicine." At the same time, Dr. Kligman referred to surveys showing that those patients who prefer alternative therapies demonstrate a "high need for affiliation" and "want a more relational style of health care." Calling family practice medicine and integrative medicine a "logical fit," Dr. Kligman stressed the importance of communication and the relationship between the patient and provider. Dr. Kligman stated that the University of Minnesota (*Ed: See related news item.*), the University of Arizona, and the University of Iowa are aiming to have integrative clinics and health care programs by July of 1998.

1. Strauch G et al. Comparison of finasteride and *Serenoa repens* in the inhibition of 5-alpha-reductase in healthy male volunteers. *Eur Urol* 1994;26:247-252.