

Healing Touch "Energetic Medicine"

By Jon Rogers

Kathy Duquette, a Hospice Hawaii nurse, recently shared a story of a patient's first experience with healing touch therapy. Although initially reluctant and skeptical, he accepted and afterwards happily said, "It felt like I was dancing inside."

Hospice Hawaii volunteer **Kathy Summers** refers to healing touch as the positive manipulation of energy fields around the human body. In an effort to center and relax the patient, a practitioner will move their hands just above the body rhythmically. This helps to find regions in the body that are weakened or closed due to illness or fatigue.

Those familiar with healing touch find that it relaxes and centers the patient long enough for the body's immune system to work at its greatest potential. Healing touch is not a massage, nor is it a method to rid the body of illness through forceful extraction. Healing touch is a non-invasive complement to traditional medical treatment.

According to practitioners, there are seven layers of energy fields around the human body, some being more fluid and others, more solid. Summers says that with time and skill, a practitioner may actually feel energy layers around the body up to 24 inches away.

While healing touch does not attempt to cure a physical illness, it

can enhance the healing of mind and spirit. **Bernadette Park**, another Hospice Hawaii volunteer, says that "when a patient is fully relaxed, he or she is more apt to heal, and the quality of life is improved and sustained for longer periods of time." Duquette adds that healing touch allows "energy to go where it needs to go," enabling the patient's body to achieve its "highest good."

According to practitioners, it is essential to be focused wholly on the patient to be effective. Park describes an effective healing touch practitioner as "an empty vessel in attendance," meaning that he or she must forego all sense of ego. The practitioner is not there to meet his

or her own needs but the patient's.

Park describes healing touch as the "icing on the cake." It cannot or should not replace other medical therapies. Rather, it can be used to enhance the patient's care. Healing touch therapy fits well with hospice care because of its holistic nature.

Hospice Hawaii also uses music therapy with healing touch. Volunteer **Jan-Joy Sax** plays her harp for patients and lets them conduct her as she plays. Sax often teams up with **Ethel Marie Curren**, a healing touch volunteer, and together, they help patients regain a sense of relaxation, control, and calm.

Honoring Our Loved Ones



Hospice Hawaii's annual holiday memorial tradition of dove ornaments gave our hospice families and the community an opportunity to honor a special loved one. Holiday trees with personalized dove ornaments were displayed throughout Oahu's Satellite City Halls. A special mahalo to the City and County of Honolulu and AIG Hawaii Insurance Company for co-sponsoring this community outreach event.

Hospice Hawaii's **Sonya Ramiro** gets into the holiday spirit with tree decorating.