

Touch... to heal

Jin Shin Jyutsu professes a healing touch, literally. Janet Oliver, a practitioner and instructor for over two decades, explains how. Rajeev Nair writes

CAN healing be this simple? As simplistic as touching a few points on the body, and you walking away hale and hearty?

The Internet — the low-cost hotbed for alternative therapies — abounds with testimonials.

"Miraculously, the tension of months of work disappeared," declares one. And that with just a firm grasp of the forefinger. There are more: Stress relief, cancer pain alleviation, trauma support...

Simple as it may seem, the physiophilosophical art of healthy living, Jin Shin Jyutsu (pronounced jin-shin-jit-soo) is a well laid-out tradition. One that goes down centuries and, as with much of the lost ancient wisdom, regained only in the beginning of the 20th century by Jiro Murai, a Japanese, who healed himself of a terminal illness after unlocking the mystery of being and living from the Japanese "Record of Ancient Things."

Jin Shin Jyutsu caught the fancy of the world at large, when Mary Burmeister, a first-generation Japanese-

American, met with Murai through sheer coincidence. Burmeister had gone to Japan to study Japanese; she ended up training in Jin Shin Jyutsu for five years under the master in Japan and continuing it further on from the US.

Burmeister took the technique to the US, where she fetched her first student in a chiropractor. She called it the "art of life," and the "art of the creator through the person of compassion," as Jin Shin Jyutsu literally means, has been gaining ground since then.

Janet Oliver, one of only 18 instructors trained by Burmeister was in Dubai recently to host an intensive workshop at the House of Chi.

A genial lady, smiling, and soft-spoken, she trained attendees to balance the body's energy channels and promote all-round well-being. Her sessions included a complete self-help plan for reducing tension and application of Jin Shin Jyutsu for specific ailments.

Oliver used to work with the Federal Reserve of San Francisco, in charge of the statistical and data services department. "It was a high stress job, and I had

got a case of bronchitis. I had to find something that would keep me healthy. I tried acupressure and yoga, and during the process heard about Mary Burmeister's Jin Shin Jyutsu class," she recalls.

"She touched certain points on my body and the back pain I had for years disappeared right in the class. I felt wonderful, just wonderful, inside, outside, and I said to myself, this is what is really important to the world, and I began to study."

After some years she took her break from the Federal Reserve and began practising Jin Shin Jyutsu. "At that time few had heard of Jin Shin Jyutsu and to begin a career in it was rather frightening. My family was very concerned," she says. But she was pleasantly surprised to discover a keen public interest in Jin Shin Jyutsu.

Brian O'dea, who was practising acupuncture and acupressure, was one. After an out-of-the-world Jin Shin Jyutsu session, he was charmed by the magic of Jin Shin Jyutsu. And presumably with Oliver too. They got married.



Janet Oliver, Mala Jham and Brian O'dea.

Oliver remembers her first client. A neighbour had walked in with a long-standing shoulder pain after having heard of this "new" practice. "After the first session, he got up and said the pain had gone," says Oliver.

So how does it work? What is the "non-secret, secret" of Jin Shin Jyutsu? "It runs on the energy system of the body, which is very much like the electrical systems at home. You bring home a new air-conditioner, you plug it in, and sometimes it is too much for the system, and it breaks down. You go around, unplug things, and go to the circuit breaker, and turn it on. Jin Shin Jyutsu works very much the same way," explains Oliver.

"Living badly, tension, the accumulated stress, they all could lead to energy blocks in the system. The Jin Shin Jyutsu practitioner by applying light pressure with the fingertips (over a clothed body) on particular spots that correspond to safety energy locks, restores the harmonious flow of energy."

Lasting less than one hour, a Jin Shin Jyutsu session does not involve elabo-

rate massages. Unlike modern medicine, it is not about diagnosing; it is about harmonising the body's energy locks.

The first step in Jin Shin Jyutsu is "listening" to the pulse of the client as he/she lies on a table. "To the practitioner, the pulse indicates what areas have energy blocks, and what areas need to be helped. We also study the body language to ascertain the stress," says Oliver.

As much as Jin Shin Jyutsu "heals," it is also a personal development tool. "As the system becomes clear, the person is clear in the mind and the heart, and life changes," says Oliver. Better relationships with people, greater confidence, an understanding of stress are all offshoots of clearing the energy blocks.

"I am a very curious person," says Oliver. "I have studied other alternatives. And what I love about Jin Shin Jyutsu is that it has been developed and evolved over many, many centuries. You just cannot argue because the moment your teacher puts his/her hand on you, everything changes."

The technique also challenges her. "I have a mathematical background and the intricacies of Jin Shin Jyutsu are a bit of puzzle in each person, one that you have to figure out for yourself."

Mala Jham, Jin Shin Jyutsu practitioner at House of Chi, had learnt the technique three years ago, and finds it helpful for people with body pain and other ailments. "My father had a by-pass surgery last year, and for two weeks prior to the surgery I used to give him Jin Shin Jyutsu treatment daily. The doctor was amazed at the way the heart was reacting at the operation theatre for ten hours," she says. "My father also had a quick recovery."

She has also worked on autistic children. "I used to work once a week on seven children. In three months, five of them were promoted to a higher class because they were able to grasp things in a better way. Their motor skills improved."

Jham says it "is so wonderful that when clients come to a Jin Shin Jyutsu practitioner, they are gifted with a technique they can take along and practise at home."

Jham, one of a small select group in Dubai, who has trained in all seven systems of Reiki, incorporates the Jin Shin Jyutsu technique in all her sessions with other complementary therapies too. "It's amazing. Even if you just sit down and hold each of your fingers every day for a few minutes, you will feel how Jin Shin Jyutsu is working on you."



Photographs: Chandira Balan

Janet Oliver does a Jin Shin Jyutsu session at the House of Chi.