

Watsu therapy offers relaxing path to health

Water is the staple of life and there would be no life on this planet without it. Mankind has known the healing powers of this life sustaining liquid for centuries.

Samish Island resident Liz Bart puts it to what some call a profound use. She is the owner of Soothing Waters and is a Watsu practitioner.

Watsu is part massage mixed with a dash of physical therapy and it's all done in a warm (96 degrees) swimming pool. Harold Dull, a Zen Shiatsu instructor, developed the practice in 1980.

Subjects, who have their eyes closed, are cradled carefully as they float in what feels like a gravity-free atmosphere. Soft music plays in the background and as trust builds between practitioner and patient things become otherworldly. According to Karn Kenaston, who was having her third Watsu session on Monday morning, the feeling of weightlessness is magical.

"It's almost womblike," she stated still somewhat dreamily and feeling the effects of the dip. "There is absolutely nothing like it."

Kenaston was first introduced to Watsu when her mother bought her a gift certificate. And like Bart, who also teaches aqua baby and water fitness classes in the area, was hooked after just one session.

Those who experience a full session often proclaim they have never experienced anything as profoundly healing and relaxing.

Karn, who is an artist, utilizes the relaxing Watsu to reach what she calls an inner peace.

"It's like shutting everything off," she explained.

But clients with muscular tension, range of motion issues, circulation problems, hypertension, neuromuscular disorders, and even depression report amazing progress.

The body and mind reach such a state of relaxation that it takes time to get back to reality.

"It's important not to pop back to the real world too quickly," warns Bart who has been a Watsu practitioner since 1997, two years after her first session.

"I was hooked from the start!" Liz exclaimed. "It's definitely refreshment for the body, mind and spirit." Bart is a member of the Worldwide Aquatic Body-

work Association, Aquatic Therapy and Rehab Institute, Northwest Watsu Practitioner Association and a college level wellness instructor.

Her sessions generally run about an hour and 15 minutes, but in some cases do go longer.

Prices are similar to a good massage, and start at \$70.

To find out more or to schedule an appointment call 766-8403.

There is also information available on her website at www.soothingwaters.net.

Your Health



**Thursday, June 26
5:30 to 6:30 p.m.**

Registration requested, leave message

Learn how to enhance your life by implementing action to control heart disease, the

Featured

Theodore Hegg

Medical Director, Island Hospital Care

Dr. Hegg will present a comprehensive overview of how to prevent heart disease and reduce risk factors.

- ♥ How heart disease symptoms differ
- ♥ How heart-disease symptoms differ
- ♥ How those at risk can reduce risk
- ♥ How to avoid recurrent heart disease
- ♥ How to return to optimal health