

Self Care in a Community Setting: A Healing Touch Day-Long Retreat

by Ginny Thorndike, Ph.D., HTCP



Organizing and hosting a Healing Touch Self-Care Retreat in April 2008 at my home for apprentices, practitioners and certified practitioners brought me so many gifts. The planning stage enabled me to practice trusting the process. As the day unfolded I reconnected with wonderful people and met new ones. I had the privilege of being pinned by my mentor Savitri Gauthier in the spiritual garden I designed in the time between Level 4 and Level 5. Cherry-Lee Ward also pinned her mentee, Jenni Hewat. Savitri sang a Shaker hymn "Here Flow the Living Waters" as we circled my waterfall and pond shaped in the image of the YinYang circle.

My goal in offering this retreat was to enable experienced practitioners to recharge in the supportive company of peers. I have found that many of us have too little opportunity to be in resonance with the loving nurturing group field we create together. Benefiting from that amplified bio field, we can do important inner work and self-care.

Saturday morning April 26, we convened in joyful chaos. Krista Hall led our opening meditation. As we sat in circle we shared about ourselves: selling a second home to consolidate energy in one place, completing HT instructor training, losing a job and health insurance, illness, an upcoming marriage. We sat in silence honoring someone's tears. Many of us wrote intentions for the day and placed them on the altar space in the middle of our

circle. I led an introduction to toning (self-generated improvisational vocalization for healing purposes). After the pinning ceremony we enjoyed a delicious potluck lunch.

Joan Rehner convened the afternoon by sharing her first improvisation on her autoharp. Then we did one-one-one exchanges.

As we progress through our Healing Touch classes we receive tools and are reminded of the importance of self care. After we join the community of Healing Touch Practitioners I believe we need regular opportunities to come together in sacred space. In a retreat setting we can support one another and benefit from the Aligned Group Energy that amplifies and accelerates healing on all levels.

My husband and I have dedicated our home as a sanctuary fostering compassionate caring and community as a healing and empowering opportunity. It is a special joy to host Healing Touch colleagues. You embody our core values.

And so, I am offering Healing Touch Self-Care Retreats for apprentices, practitioners and certified practitioners in the spring and fall every year. The next one will be Saturday October 24, 2009.

Two participants would like to share their Retreat experiences:
Melissa Elley, HTP

"As I sat in Ginny Thorndike's living-room, the vision of my journey through Healing Touch over the last couple of years

passed before me as if I were watching it on a wide-angle screen of life! I realized as we shared who we are and where we had come from, that the life-changing experiences I had were simply magnificent. I realized that each golden thread of our lives is vital to the tapestry of others, and that we all come together so that our lives are interwoven for a purpose. The group toning accentuated the high vibration that was already in the room."

Krista Hall, RN, HTCP/I, RMPT

"A small story I would like to share is my experience with the toning and my fear of failure. As we were toning our names I toned Krisssss Okay that was good. Then taaaaaaa. A horrible panicky feeling came into my heart chakra. I kept toning my name Krisssss...taaaaa. The consonant sound started to move the block of fear. When I moved to the place "that needed healing" (my solar plexus), the fear of failure continued, then lessened, then cleared. I have been toning since the Retreat whenever my "nerves" come up about the upcoming Level 1 class I will be teaching and it helps to relieve the jitters. Toning has also given me a way to comfort and care for myself (self-care), to move forward in the work I am here to do - Healing Touch. The group setting and intoning with others was also very helpful as I did not feel as self-conscious! This day was lovely, and I left feeling refreshed, restored, renewed - and connected to the wonderful HT group."

About the author:

Ginny Thorndike, a Healing Touch Certified Practitioner, has a part-time private practice as an Integrative Wellness Educator and Life Coach. She works with individuals, couples, and small groups to enhance awareness and use of complementary modalities for self-care and to achieve their goals. She also is a Sound Healer specializing in toning. She is married to Irving Spitzberg, her Happy Buddha.



Above: Everyone gathers in the spiritual garden Ginny designed for a pinning ceremony.

On the previous page: back row left to right: Ginny Thorndike, Jenni Hewat, Krista Hall, John Croskey, Lois Schmidt, front row left to right: Victoria Stewart, Melissa Eilly, Joan Rehner, Savitri Gautier, Francie Williams