A Word About Complimentary/Alternative Ideas to Healing

**Sacred Space** A special place where one’s highest self can dwell; a place that is “alive” with positive-healing energy and that is reserved for times when we feel called to be in the presence of our highest self, to commune with it, honor it and call on it. We adorn a “sacred space” with items that encourage and invite us to feel peaceful, compassionate, and loving. Often using gifts from our mother the earth, representing the elements of nature, Water, Fire, Wind and Earth. Perhaps adding fresh flowers, scented beautiful candles, multi-textures flowing fabrics, medicinal/healing herbs (lavender, sage, cedar, sweet grass…), water, crystals, and stones. Some include pictures and items that represent their spiritual believes and practices- others keep them very simple and modest.

**Yoga** An immortal art, science, and philosophy. There are different types of Yoga that address our physical, psychological and spiritual needs. At the physical level it gives relief from countless ailments, strengthens the body and creates a feeling of well being. On a psychological level it sharpens intellect, aids concentration, steadies the emotions, gives hope and encourages a caring concern for others. The breathing techniques “Pranayama” calm the mind. As for spirituality, yoga brings awareness and the ability to be still. Through meditation, inner peace is experienced. Anyone, irrespective of age, health, circumstance of life, and religion, can practice and benefit from Yoga.

**Meditation** Lets you tap into deeper levels of awareness, and enhance you daily life. Many mediators speak of richer sensory experiences, greater alertness, and increased mental efficiency. For some it is a mental exercise aimed at training the mind itself. Meditation as a way of keeping the attention pleasantly anchored in the “present moment”, it is focusing on the space, the moments, between the thoughts. Meditation has been found to release stress, having a positive impact on nervous conditions, blood
pressure and other physical and emotional conditions. Meditation takes many forms, but four elements are common to most systems. First, finding a quiet place to meditate. Second, being in a formal posture, usually a comfortably erect sitting position that keeps you relaxed yet alert. Third, having an object to focus upon and forth, having a passive and receptive attitude.

**Somatic Experiencing** is a form of therapy aimed at relieving and resolving the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other mental and physical trauma-related health problems by focusing on the client’s perceived body sensations (or somatic experiences), and it was introduced in Dr. Peter Levine's 1997 book *Waking the Tiger*. In it, he discusses at length his observations of animals in the wild, and how they deal with and recover from life-threatening situations. He concludes that their behavior gives us "an insight into the biological healing process" (p.98), and that "the key to healing traumatic symptoms in humans lies in our being able to mirror the fluid adaption of wild animals" (p.17-18) as they avoid traumatization in reacting to life-threatening situations. It helps survivors increase their awareness of how the trauma has impacted their nervous system, the neurobiology of trauma and how to support their healing journey at the core. This is a gentle, self empowering and mindful approach.

**Psycho-Spiritual Psychotherapy** A process of supportive emotional, psychological and spiritual exploration and development. A compassionately woven method of talk therapy and complementary healing methods that creates the rekindling of the spirit, opening of the heart and the birthright of living life to it’s fullest.

Through the use of creative arts, such as healing art, movement, family sculpting, meditation and visualization, breath-awareness, journaling, “safe touch” and energy work, gestalt and inner child honoring, the psycho-spiritual psychotherapist encourages and gently challenges the client to emerge from limiting patterns and behaviors.

Creative Arts can play a significant role on aiding the release of emotions. They create overall opportunity to tap into experiences we would not otherwise be conscious of. Transforming something from intangible to tangible can often make it REAL, allowing it to be manifested in whatever way the individual needs it to be. Creative therapies range from Visual Arts, Music, Drama, and Writing to Storytelling, Dance and Movement.

**Creative Writing**- A form of self expression that allows individuals to release frustrations, sort out problems, documents facts and experiences, that can otherwise be forgotten or latter healthier than those who keep feelings bottled up inside. For some, writing becomes a way of expressing thoughts, difficult to talk about. Writing also gives an individual the “opportunity to bring affirmative statements”. Creative Writing can take on the form of poetry, journal writing or simply “jotting down” a few things.

**Creative Dance/Movement**- A form of self-expression that incorporates body, mind and spirit. Gabrielle Roth, an urban shaman states that, “…individuals are encourages to free their body to experience the power of being, express their heart
to experience the power of loving, empty their mind to experience the power of self-knowledge, awaken the soul to experience the power of seeing and ultimately, embody the spirit to experience the power of healing.”

Bodywork  The need to touch and be touched is universal, yet somehow this gentle act of caring, warmth, communication, and concern is no longer a central part of modern medicine or modern life. But around the globe, bodywork practitioners still rely on the essential healing power of the human touch and energy. Bodywork ranges from Reiki, Swedish and Shiatsu Massage to Reflexology, to name just a few. Most body work techniques help ease sore muscles, correct posture problems, improve circulation, serve as detoxification, and assist weight reduction and even heal terminal illnesses. Bodywork can relieve emotional stressors, improve self-esteem and awareness and increase sense of spirituality, belonging and connective-ness. There are only some of the many benefits of Bodywork.

Therapeutic Massage- a meditative, holistic approach that creates body, mind and spirit harmony. It helps you attune to the inner messages of you body by helping you unblock and resonate with the Healing Energy that resides within. This relaxing and invigorating experience incorporates Relaxation techniques, Safe Touch, Breath work, Reiki, Energy Balancing, Swedish massage, Reflexology and Psychotherapeutic approaches, all of which get weaved in and out of the intervention depending on the unique need of the individual receiving the service.

Unlimited Reiki- (pronounced ray-kay) is the Japanese word for Universal Life Force Energy. Rei refers to the unlimited aspect of this energy; Ki is the vital force flowing through all living things. This is the energy that flows through the hands of the REIKI practitioner. It is an ancient Tibetan natural therapy and healing art that helps re-establish harmony in Body, Mind and Spirit. Reiki balances and revitalizes energy and promotes deep relaxation. It supports the body’s natural healing ability.

Psycho-therapeutic Massage- An intensive hands on method of healing, through the development of body awareness and body dialogue. Patterns and holdings often manifested through emotional and physical dis-ease are identified and processed in a safe and nurturing setting. Individuals express feelings and emotions deeply rooted in their “souls” and at times only accessed through the memories of the body. The “dis-ease” is transformed into emotional and spiritual awakenings.

Chakras Prana, also known as Ki, Chi, or Kundalini are other words for “absolute energy”. Chakras are known as energy transformers. Prana interacts with the nervous system as well as the physical body. Although there are Chakra areas all throughout our body, there are seven major energy centers. The 1\textsuperscript{st} Chakra is located at the base of the spine in the area of the coccyx, it is associated with the Earth, with the qualities of resistance and solidity and basic survival issues- its color: Rose Red. The 2\textsuperscript{nd} Chakra is
located just above the genitals. It regulates sexual energy. It is the seat of creativity through which a person experiences the childlike wonder of excitement of the manifest universe- its color: Orange. The 3rd Chakra is located by the solar plexus and is the seat of personality. It is responsible for the assimilation of food, and it controls the horizontal section of the physical body. It plays an important part in a person’s relationship to the world, to people, places and things, and peoples ability to connect, to belong, to make long term intimate associations, all love issues are associated with this Chakra- its color: Yellow. The 4th Chakra is located at the eighth cervical vertebra of the spine opposite the region of the heart. It is associated with compassion and healing. It is the source of light and love- its color: Emerald Green. The 5th Chakra is located at the base of the neck by the third cervical vertebra. It controls a person’s ability to express themselves fully and creatively, their facial expression, gestures and even the amount of personal space and integrity- its color: Blue. The 6th Chakra is located between the eyebrows and is commonly known as the third eye. It controls seeing, not only in the physical sense but also in the mystical sense of seeing into the higher planes, intuitive seeing, clairvoyance and other paranormal forms of knowing- its color: Purple. The 7th Chakra is located at the crown of the head. It is the place of total atonement, it corresponds to the highest level of spiritual perfection- its color: Golden-White.

Prepared By:
Santa Molina, LICSW
Director of Counseling and Advocacy
202-232-0789 ext 1202
smolina@dcrcc.org