

EXTRA! EXTRA! Big Gay News Debuts!



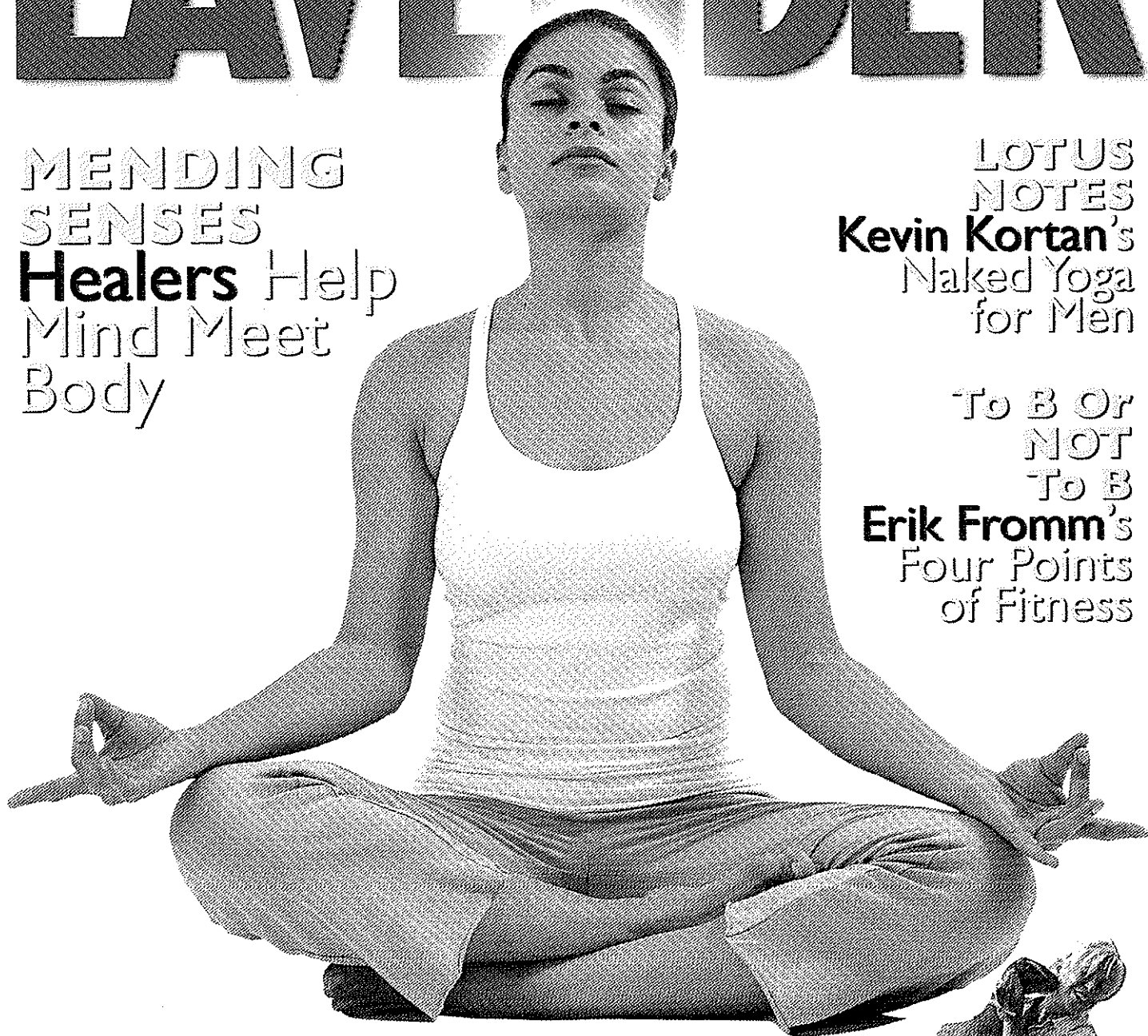
LAVENDER

Since 1995

MENDING
SENSES
Healers Help
Mind Meet
Body

LOTUS
NOTES
Kevin Kortan's
Naked Yoga
for Men

To B Or
NOT
To B
Erik Fromm's
Four Points
of Fitness



Mending Senses

"Medicine sometimes snatches away health, sometimes gives it."

—Ovid, Roman poet (43 BCE-17 CE)

SOMEHOW, WHILE GROWING UP, most of us were told that our health is the most important thing we possess. Perhaps we don't recall precisely who told us, but nevertheless, the sentiment became intrinsic to our understanding of the way the world works.

After bankruptcy, foreclosure, or a bad breakup, friends shake their heads, and say, "Well, at least he has his health."

When that health is threatened, though, where do we turn? Our primary physician? An alternative healer? God?

Recent reports released by the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) show that in the United States, more than one-third of adults and nearly 80 percent of adolescents use non-conventional medical treatments.

To take it a step further, *The New York Times* recently reported that more people pray for their health than invest in every form of alternative medicine and medical treatments combined. The *Times* attributed this to rising medical costs.

Yes, medical costs are creeping beyond the reach of many Americans, but is this tendency to turn to alternative forms of medical treatment more basic than that? As patients, are we receiving what we truly need from established Western medicine?

"We live in a culture that elevates [the study of conventional medicine] to a status above everything else, and I don't think that's deserved," Richard Adams, a licensed psychologist with Garuda Coaching and Consulting, says.

Adams has been in practice for nearly 20 years. For most of that time, he has used alternative healing in his personal, as well as professional, life.

Mark Lachapelle, Adams's colleague in



Dr. Dina Gad (left) and Dr. Hanan Rosenstein

Photos by E.B. Boatner

the mental health field, sees things from a holistic understanding of the self: "Addressing thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, and their relationship to one's body functions, is pivotal to caring for the whole self."

No one would argue that Western medicine, which ushered in the age of antibiotics and immunizations, has a long and storied history of eradicating disease and prolonging life.

So, why do so many people turn to prayer, herbs, acupuncture, massage, or healing touch, to name only a few forms of what has become known as complementary and alternative medicine (CAM)? And where, in this tangled skein of our *selves*, lies the secret to our health?

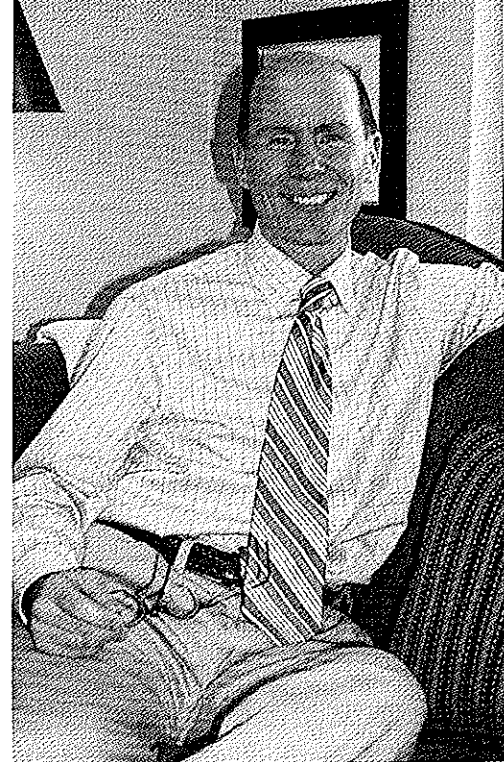
The relentlessly impenetrable argot of the sciences refers to these, and many other medical and health care systems that are considered apocryphal to the bible of con-

ventional medicine, as CAM. Or the more hopeful integrative medicine (IM).

Scientists, doctors, and other health-care practitioners are investigating more and more rigorously the effectiveness of medical treatments that lie outside the mainstream. Especially, it seems, doctors graduating and entering the workforce have an acute awareness of the limits of Western modes of science.

Dr. Dina Gad, an internal medicine specialist at Allina Medical Clinic, The Doctors in Uptown, who has been practicing for three months, states, "I cannot be so arrogant as to say, 'This can't exist, because I don't understand it. I cannot reduce [the human body] to a sack of biochemical reactions that we just throw medications at, and hope for the best.'"

Gad's colleague, Dr. Hanan Rosenstein, a veteran of the war on disease after nearly 30 years in practice, takes a more tempered



Mark Lachapelle

view: "I need hard science. It's the only way we know that something actually helps."

Sitting side by side in the break room at their clinic, they face off, both grinning. They respect each other's position. In fact, they share many beliefs about how the human body works, and what makes good science. They both believe deeply in caring for their patients—helping them to be healthy, and lead happy, fulfilling, pain-free lives, whatever that entails.

But where does pain truly exist? Is it all in the mind, as some practitioners of alternative medicine claim? Does it matter? After all, if we perceive pain, don't we then feel it in our bodies?

When discussing the topic of the relation of the mind to the body to the spirit, the common language of stress unites practitioners of differing healing paths. Americans seem able to understand much through their experience of stress, which they know affects their minds and bodies.

Certified Spiritual Director Doug Federhart, M.Div., would add to that mix the ephemeral spirit.

"It is misleading to say 'mind/spirit/body connection,' because there is no way to separate them," Federhart maintains. "There are no little 'dividers' within our body-beings that partition off one aspect from the other. They are intertwined aspects."

So, when we suffer, we suffer as whole

beings.

Perhaps it is disingenuous to slice our beings into discrete compartments. However, the tendency to do just that is a powerful one. You can see it in the split between the myths of East and West, alternative and conventional, internal versus external, and, interestingly, acute versus chronic conditions.

"Western medicine is great at treating acute illnesses, but we really struggle with chronic illness," Gad notes.

Another divide yawns between the patient and the healer in Western society, as well. Physically, the distance between the two has grown, as doctors are discouraged from touching their patients. The importance of human contact, of touch, seems intuitive. An anecdotal history of the power of touch to heal stretches back thousands of years. But the prohibition against touching a patient is deeply entrenched in all branches of Western medicine.

Adams relates this to the rise of a modern language of sickness that treats all ailments of the body as diseases. These days, a patient doesn't just have a sour stomach, but rather, acid reflux *disease*.

As Adams explains, "If you have a disease, there's a pill, and the pill fixes the disease. And the physician never needs to touch you, which, of course, he can't do anyway, because it's against the rules.

"So, here's this entire area of healing that has been wiped out by ethical codes and medications, and it's preposterous. It eliminates one of the aspects of interpersonal relationships that probably has some of the greatest healing qualities."

Gad agrees: "I think that there is an inherent value in human touch. It is very therapeutic."

However, Adams tempers his insight by adding, "Though, like any powerful healer, it has a powerful negative side. Touch can be very, very negative."

Perhaps, too, it's the promise of the miracle, coupled with the vast unknown of the human body, that impels us to reach out to alternative healers.

When the placebo response, the positive response of a subject to an inert substance the subject believes to be medicine, is so well-documented in Western medicine as to be a part of most clinical trials, how can anyone believe that spontaneous moments of healing can't happen?

Local practitioner Timothy Cope has

been certified as a Shamanic Counselor by the Foundation for Shamanic Studies, an international nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving surviving shamanic knowledge, and to teaching the practical application of that knowledge.

Cope shares this experience: "I was once present when a man who had been in a coma for over a week returned to consciousness and was able to get out of bed as a result of 20 minutes of vocal toning by his friends and family. It would appear that it was the prayers and intentions of this circle that called him back to awareness."

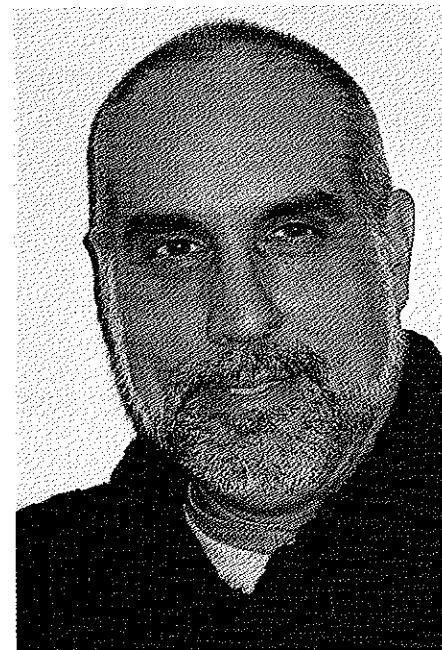
With the uplifting promise of the miracle of rebirth given by the power of prayer, a shadow side to the miracle exists.

Adams relates this story: "I had a friend whose brother went to Mexico, and was going to get this quick fix of lamb uterus injected into his blood stream, and ended up dying of a tapeworm in his brain."

Such instances obviously have made Western doctors leery of referring patients to alternative practitioners without plenty of solid Western-style clinical trials.

But this distance also aggravates the problem, according to Adams: "The fact that Western medicine won't talk to alternative medicine gives the charlatans a pass."

The lack of communication, not just between conventional medicine and CAM,



Timothy Cope

Royal Treatment



For this New Year resolve to have us take care of your pet instead of always asking the neighbor!

Four Seasons Pet Care

651-688-8585

WWW.FOURSEASONSPETCARE.COM

Lu Dunlap presents...

Majestic Wooded Retreat

Amazing 5,241-square foot estate on 8-acre of West Trillum Preserve. Perfectly private and replete with ideal spaces for entertaining. 4BR, 4BA, 4-Car garage -- \$889,000. Call Lu for showings!



Akilu "Lu" Dunlap

Agent/Attorney

(612) 306-4753

addunlap@cbbumet.com
www.akilu.com

COLDWELL BANKER'S BURNET

Real Estate with Diligence and Integrity



Doug Federhart

but also between patient and doctor is a widespread problem.

Many people don't know that what they're doing outside the doctor's office is considered medicinal, or they feel that their doctor wouldn't approve.

However, doctors emphasize that it's important to talk to them about what you're doing. Explore what makes you feel good. But remember that herbals are medical in nature, and any radical procedure should be run past a doctor. Finally, keep taking the medicines they prescribed you, while you explore complementary care.

"We're not totally negative [about CAM]," Rosenstein emphasizes. "It's important that we talk about the benefits and the complications that could occur with complementary treatments."

So, the mind-body-spirit divide is seen by many alternative practitioners as illusory.

At the same time, the application of alternative medicine continues to grow, as insurance costs rise. Patients self-medicate, but don't tell their doctors. Those same doctors rely almost exclusively on Western-style, placebo-controlled experiments that may not reflect accurately the healing powers of a particular alternative method.

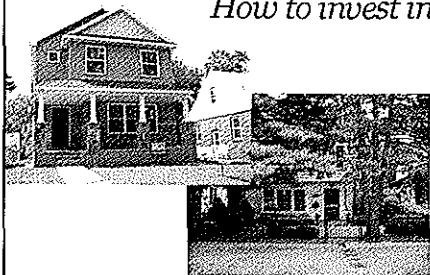
Doctors admittedly have few CAM practitioners for referral.

What is the best way forward to integrate all these disparate areas of health care? To move toward wholeness and health for people who suffer from chronic ailments

Get Smart Real Estate Seminar

How to invest in real estate

and increase your net worth



Saturday, January 13

Walker (Uptown) Library
2880 Hennepin Ave. S. • Minneapolis

Coffee and nosh at 10 a.m.

Presentation 10:30 a.m. to Noon

Presenters:

- Kathy Jungquist, Mortgage Planner, Prime Mortgage
- Ben Kolkman, Investor, Realtor, Great Minneapolis Real Estate Company
- Lee Roehl, EA Tax Professional, ROR Tax Professionals

Cost: \$10/Person, \$15/Couple

Proceeds donated to Minnesota AIDS Project

Reserve your space: 612-822-7177



and diseases?

Dr. Paul Mittelstadt offers this answer: "A combination of the two that shows respect for the patient and respect for both methods of treatment. As Western medicine understands and accepts more of the nontraditional methods of medicine, there will be more understanding of how the spiritual and emotional aspects of nontraditional healing apply to Western medicine, and vice versa."

Mittelstadt's fellow healers offer a chorus of accord that emphasizes the importance of dialogue and integration between the disciplines, and between the doctor and patient as well.

Adams observes, "Alternative medicine tends to hold that the healing is inside of you, and that the energy has been blocked or misdirected. Western medicine looks for disease, and tries to fix the disease.

"There's a great deal of validity on both sides of that, but they're not talking to each other. I would love to see some influential people start talking across the gap."

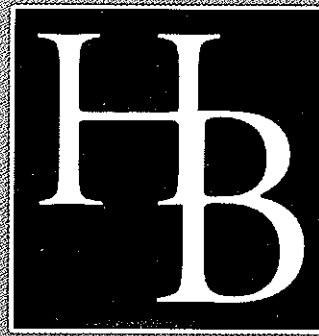
Integrative medicine is the holy grail of the health field. Organizations that support research into integrative techniques stress that health care should strive to be both comprehensive and evidence-based. Research on both forms of healing should follow the same principles, though new methods of testing may have to be devised.

Cope comments, "Conventional Western medicine is becoming more open and accepting of the idea that there is a connection between its practices and other healing modalities. As this openness increases, the interplay of all these systems is becoming more integrated."

Lachapelle remarks, "While we cannot all be experts on all matters of well-being, we can be broad-minded about working creatively and cooperatively to deliver the best care possible to our clients and patients."

In the end, that is what everyone interviewed for this article agreed on.

Patients or clients arrive with an illness inside them that they can't escape. Seeking healing, they eventually will find their way to the shaman, the psychologist, the spiritual director, or the doctor. And those who have chosen to pursue an understanding of disease and the human condition will work their hardest simply to make the seeker feel better. ■



Heltzer & Burg P.L.C.
Attorneys at Law

**WE'VE HAD YOUR BACK
FOR MORE THAN 13 YEARS.**

612-333-4858



Rebecca
Heltzer

Jerry Burg

**Criminal Law • Employment Law • Family Law
Domestic Partnership • Corporate Law • Real Estate • Wills**

WWW.HELTZERANDBURG.COM