

Unity Holistic Wellness Center: Tools for Achieving Optimal Health



Stacey Paige: Wednesday morning yoga class.



Ellen Barron, leading a workshop in her Enneagram Series.

“It seems to me,” observes Rev. Ellen Barron, founder of Unity Holistic Wellness Center in Raleigh, “that ‘optimal health’ is something we all strive for. We all want to feel good—really good—free of aches and pains, free of worries, rested, and joyful. Understood that way, ‘optimal health’ is whole health—involving body, and mind, and spirit. When we’re balanced in this way, we are able to function at our highest potential in all areas of our life.”

But, she adds with a smile, “Achieving optimal health takes practice. It starts with understanding how the physical, spiritual, and mental aspects of our being work together. And that’s not enough; we also need the skills to use that understanding if we are to heal and to maintain a healthy, balanced life.

“There are whole industries devoted to helping us develop skills for physical health,” she notes. “However, jogging and dietary changes alone don’t help us achieve whole health. Emotional and mental stresses affect us physiologically; pain and hormonal imbalances affect us mentally and spiritually. We need the skills to manage these connections.

“Which is what Unity Holistic Wellness Center is all about,” she explains. “Our goal in creating the Center is to empower participants—through affordable, interactive workshops and classes—to develop the skills for healthy, whole living.”

In a conversation with *Health & Healing*, Rev. Barron (who prefers to be called Ellen) talks about the skills needed for whole health, and how the Center’s workshops and classes can help with skill-building.

Health & Healing: What do you mean by a “whole-health skill?”

ELLEN: It’s a process—a process that can be learned. Let’s say for example that, as the result of an emotional crisis, you have stomach pain so severe it’s hard to stand up. You might recognize that your stomach pains were triggered by emotional stress, but that doesn’t relieve the pain.

However, there are techniques you can learn—step-by-step—to understand the emotional source of your physical pain and address it. By practicing these techniques, you can develop the habit of whole health.

I would say that the most important skill you can acquire is that of self-awareness. Self-awareness is the ability to understand your own mind, body, and spirit and how they connect.

It could be awareness of the messages you’ve been giving yourself that interfere with

your health. It could be awareness of how your thoughts and emotions are affecting your body. It could be awareness of how your body is affecting your thinking and feeling.

Self-awareness is the first step in that process I spoke of earlier—the process of recognizing and then getting rid of certain blocks to health, such as being stuck in fear or anger. Once you start to practice self-awareness, then you begin to be able to make choices. For example, you can choose holding onto the fear or anger that stresses you, or you can choose to let it go.

I should add that self-awareness is not just awareness of what’s going on inside of you; it’s also awareness of how you connect with everything else.

He&H: What role does connectedness play in achieving better health?

ELLEN: We all share the desire—in fact, the need—to connect spiritually and with others, to be connected in ways where we can experience unconditional love and support. We’re not the independent beings we think we are; we all need love.

And, after the last two years of frightening isolation and fragmentation, we’re in a place of spiritual disconnection in many ways. Regaining our health, returning to “normal,” means re-connecting. And this relates to self-awareness. When we are in touch not only with ourselves but our relationships, then we’re really opening up a space for this connection that we all need, for love.

He&H: How do your workshops reinforce these ideas of reconnection and healing?

ELLEN: Just being aware of mind-body-spirit is not enough. One has to create a strategic

WEDNESDAY MORNING YOGA

The Center’s newest program—a weekly yoga class, “is the epitome of a mind-body-spirit practice,” notes Ellen. “We tend to think of yoga as just the exercise part of it. This focus on movement is another way of connecting mind, body, and spirit. By holding a pose, for example, we quiet the mind, and movement then becomes a bridge to stillness, to spirit.

“Our yoga class, led by licensed yoga instructor and licensed spiritual coach Stacey Paige, meets every Wednesday morning between 10:00 and 11:00. Stacey guides the class through an alignment-based slow-flow practice designed to improve balance, strength, and flexibility. To sign up and for details, visit www.unityholisticwellnesscenter.org.”

practice of being healthy. That’s what our workshops are all about.

The workshops teach techniques for achieving the sense of awareness that is central to healing. One common method is to quiet the mind through meditation. It’s about learning to shift out of habitual mind activity into stillness and create space to feel this energy, the interconnectedness of life.

Reiki and energy healing workshops help us tap into the greater life force behind healing. They offer natural healing methods to help enhance the balancing and growth of mind, emotions, body, and spirit.

And yoga, too, is multi-faceted. Movement can be a bridge, like the breath, to quiet the mind and connect it and the body to inner stillness.

Other workshops explore the intricate energy system embodied in the seven chakras. When we bring these chakras into balance, we feel calm, supported, and at home in the world. Yoga, meditation, sound healing, and aromatherapy can all contribute to achieving that balance.

WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

Workshops are held at the Unity Church of Raleigh, 5124 Departure Drive, 27616, and may be attended in person or remotely. You may pre-register for Saturday workshops on-line by midnight Thursday before the workshop or register on-site at 9:30 a.m. on the day of the workshop. The workshops run for two hours, beginning at 10:00 a.m.

APRIL 2022

- **April 2, Saturday:** *Unleash Your Creative Expression: Sacral Chakra Balancing*, Presenter: Stacey Paige, Yoga Instructor / Spiritual Coach
- **April 9, Saturday:** *EFT: Tapping Your Way to Emotional Freedom*. Presenter: Mark Larimer, MD, Primary Care Physician
- **April 16, Saturday:** *Forgiveness: Stages of and Steps to Forgiveness*. Presenter: Rev. Annie Nelson, Life Coach / Hypnotherapist
- **April 23, Saturday:** *The Enneagram and the Point of View of the Shadow*. Presenter: Ellen Barron, MDiv

MAY 2022

- **May 7, Saturday:** *Harness Your Personal Power: Solar Plexus Chakra Balancing*. Presenter: Stacey Paige, Yoga Instructor / Spiritual Coach
- **May 14, Saturday:** *Calm the Heart, Open the Mind: Meditation Basics for Everyday Living*. Presenter: Shari Gaines, Integrative Reflexologist, Reiki Practitioner, Yoga Instructor, Spiritual Coach
- **May 21, Saturday:** *Self-Empowered Healing*. Presenter: Joanne Pizzino, MD, MPH
- **May 28, Saturday:** *Enneagram Series: Psychological and Spiritual Growth*. Presenter: Ellen Barron, MDiv

For more information about the seminars and presenters, or to register, please visit our website: www.unityholisticwellnesscenter.org.

What all of these workshops have in common is that they take us out of the activity—the “busy-ness”—of the mind and help us move to an open and balanced space, where healing can occur. In turn, we awaken our consciousness for our own well-being and that of others. **h&h**

For further information, or to register for a seminar, contact:

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