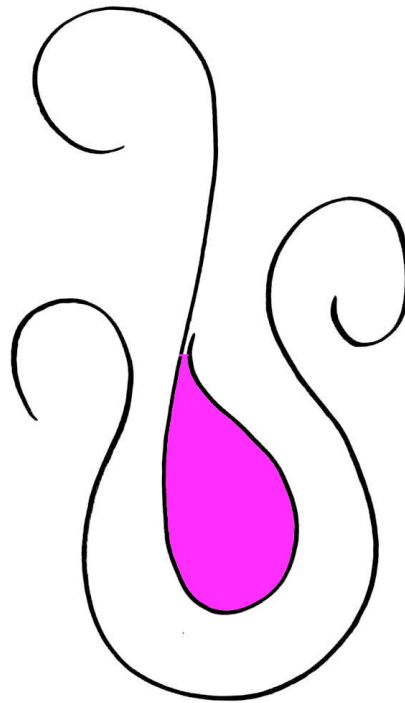


**Elder**  
a grandparent in spirit  
body slows, spirit  
blossoms  
values community  
leads by example



**EldersBloom**  
elders heal with Reiki  
heal themselves  
heal others  
heal the world

Seventh Annual University of Maine Clinical  
Geriatrics Colloquium: Complementary and  
Alternative Therapies for Older Adults

May 7, 2012

EldersBloom  
Trip Report  
by Jeffrey Hotchkiss, Reiki Master



EldersBloom Trip Report May 7 Geriatric Colloquium  
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At 4:30 a.m., on Monday, May 7, 2012, it was still dark out. Waiting in the park-and-ride at Exit 17 of I-295 in Yarmouth, Maine, I heard my cellphone ring. It was Jodi Priest, Reiki Practitioner, telling me she would be there in a few minutes.

She found my bright yellow car with no problem, parked hers, hopped in mine, and we started off toward Augusta.

From Augusta to Belfast, from Belfast to Northport, we talked about healing and Reiki\* and what to expect at the conference. As the sun rose, it revealed a postcard-perfect day, just the weather that Point Lookout



was made for.

There, we joined some 130 other people, for the Seventh Annual University of Maine Geriatrics Colloquium: Complementary and Alternative Therapies for Older Adults. We attended presentations and workshops throughout the day, however we were there mainly to publicize the work of EldersBloom, and to give Reiki to as many of our fellow attendees as possible – teachers, caregivers, medical professionals and more. Along with Hearts and Hands Reiki – also an exhibitor – we gave Reiki treatments to almost 1 in 4 conference goers throughout the day. Reiki was mentioned in almost every presentation that I attended; in fact, a Reiki Master was one of the panelists in the late-morning panel discussion.

This was tremendous validation for the part Reiki has to play in elders' wellbeing, and priceless exposure for EldersBloom.

More details of the colloquium follow. Note especially the reported leadership of the military in this area. At the end of the report, you will find useful links for further exploration of some of the topics.

\*see last page of this report (page 12) for a summary of EldersBloom and a brief description of Reiki.



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Gratitude

I want to extend my deepest gratitude to the generous donors who made it financially possible for Jodi and me to attend. They were: Ellen D. Murphy, Joan Weaver, Joseph Wolfberg and another generous soul who wishes to remain anonymous. Your contributions were deeply appreciated and, we fondly hope, will bear fruit in relationships and projects to further elder healing.



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### Registration

Right from registration, it was a great day. Lenard Kaye, the Director of the UMaine Center on Aging, greeted us along with Lindsay Day, MSW Candidate, who had guided me through the signup process in the weeks before the conference. He saw our theme and commented on how well it connected with the theme of the colloquium – great recognition and validation!

### Setup

We set up in the hallway outside the large events room, with two chairs for giving Reiki, and two small tables for handouts, signs and donation envelope. Mary Beane, wife of good friend and Reiki Master Bob Beane, happened to be right next to us, with the Maine Gerontological Society. On the other side of our exhibit, I joyfully reconnected with Martha Spruce, of Hearts and Hands Reiki, accompanied by Kinda McBride, who managed their exhibit while Martha did full table Reiki treatments. I was very happy to see Martha – we met years ago, as part of a group clarifying state regulations affecting Reiki teaching at the time.

One of the photos displayed at our table:



### Warmup

Before the presentations started, many of us were led in Tai Chi exercises, which put us in a calm, energized and balanced state to start the day.

### Opening

Opening remarks by Gail Werrbach and Lenard Kaye noted the dynamic that today's adults are seeing alternative health practitioners in large numbers, and that as the baby boomers age, they will inevitably change the landscape of how elders are cared for in America. I smiled and nodded at that echo of the



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basic premise of EldersBloom – more people learning Reiki, and more people aging, equals more elders giving and receiving Reiki.

### Keynote

The keynote speaker, Dr. Ron Mosiello D.O., from the Kennebunk area, gave a comprehensive overview of topics, issues and history surrounding complementary and alternative medicine (CAM). Some highlights:

- there's a difference between “serving” and “fixing” a patient
- percentage of Americans using CAM is steadily rising, from 36% of adults in 2002 to 38.3% in 2007
- contrast between the “germ theory” of disease, as championed by Pasteur, and the holistic theory put forth by Beachamp, both in the 19<sup>th</sup> century
- overview of the history of medicine: Ayurveda, Chinese, Egyptian, African, American Indian, Aborigines
- common approaches: herbal, manual, and energy medicines – more detail on his specialty of manual medicine, but respectable treatment of herbal and energy as well
- in weighing the merits of CAM and conventional medicine, we must consider the number of adverse incidents with properly prescribed medications

See more of Dr. Mosiello's comments under Links at the end of this report.

### Meditation

For the next presentation, Betsy Wisner, PhD, LMSW, from Texas State University, gave an overview of meditation and its benefits for older adults. She defined two types: “mindfulness”, as exemplified by the work of Jon Kabat-Zin, and “concentration”, as exemplified by Transcendental Meditation, and Herbert Benson's Relaxation Response Method. She also touched on Yoga, Qiqong, and Tai Chi Chuan. For all of these, she suggested adaptations to make these practices more accessible for older adults, such as modifying Tai Chi movements to be done while sitting in a chair – something I have seen at an elder facility just before giving a Reiki talk some years ago.

### Panel discussion

The morning finished with a panel discussion, which brought up some key issues and opportunities.



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- Robin Russel, PhD, JD, Professor at University of Maine School of Social Work, emphasized ethical concerns for CAM practitioners. Scope of practice was a key concern, for example: if a client is threatening immediate self-harm, think first of calling 911, before you try to use an alternative treatment. She also mentioned a survey of social workers that indicated many of them were giving spiritual guidance, which is not part of their scope. During the question period, I asked about the “trust gap” between CAM practitioners and conventional healthcare practitioners, but there was not time to fully explore that question. It could be worthy of a conference in itself.
- Lisa Dunning, Health Programs Coordinator, Eastern Area Agency on Aging, and Reiki Master, talked about her own recovery from a serious accident, aided by Reiki. Her passion for Reiki showed through unmistakably. I had to step out to do a chair treatment during her remarks, and thus did not get all the details.
- Gregory W. Nevens, EdD, with many qualifications and roles in integrative medicine, spoke about the promising developments that portend good things for CAM. He mentioned that the head of CMMS (Medicare) is pushing for more integrated medicine<sup>1</sup>. “Combat acupuncture” was a term I’d never heard before, but it turns out that the Defense Department is aggressively pursuing alternatives for pain management and trauma treatment (also see “auricular therapies”). His remarks confirmed the impression I already had from watching online videos of the Veterans Administration cultural transformation efforts. (See links at the end of this report.) Modern history shows that, when the military adopts something new, it inevitably finds its way into civilian life. Racial integration, project management and the Internet are all examples from my lifetime. So, watch for accelerating acceptance of CAM techniques, led by the military.

### Q&A – VA in person

During the Q&A period, an attendee raised her hand and asked about the lack of CAM being pursued at the VA in Togus. Dr. Tim Richardson and I both rushed over to the questioner after the panel finished, and assured her that good things were indeed happening at Togus. I told her about Reiki and massage for

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<sup>1</sup> Note that “integrated” means enhanced coordination between medical and mental health practitioners. Not to be confused with “integrative” medicine, meaning enhanced coordination between conventional and alternative healthcare practitioners.



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homeless veterans at the annual Stand Down day, treating increasing numbers every year. Dr. Richardson has been the Chief of Staff at VA Maine (Togus) since 2000, and gave me this quote via email while I was writing this report:

“We are moving ahead with CAM therapies for our Hospice inpatients through a contract with Hospice Volunteers of Waterville. We have a CAM subcommittee of our Patient Centered Care committee and are currently working to provide Yoga for our Veteran patients with chronic pain, PTSD, and Chemical dependency.”

### Lunch and Reiki

Then, lunch, and more chair Reiki treatments. We had just enough room in the hallway to do the treatments. Martha, of Hearts and Hands, was giving full table treatments all day in the room behind us. So, our end of the hallway became a Reiki sanctuary. Jodi was very busy all day, skillfully tending to the needs of her clients, as if she had been doing Reiki for years instead of months. People took lots of handouts and business cards, and there were several inquiries about learning Reiki. We also gratefully received cash donations, though our only sign was a labeled envelope lying on the table.

Busy giving Reiki treatments, we were not able to listen to the luncheon speaker, Gregory Nevens, whose subject was Realizing a Truly Integrative Model: Needed Paradigm Shifts. I'll look for opportunities to fill in the blanks on that topic.

### Workshops

After lunch, there were three breakout workshops: Healing with Music, Expressive and Experiential Approaches with Older Adults, How can Art and Plants Help in Healing?, and Animals as Therapeutic Agents. Jodi attended the Healing with Music workshop, given by Daryne Rockett, a dedicated social worker at the Bangor vet center, and sublime harpist. Jodi's comments:

“The workshop Healing with Music given by Daryne Rockett was extremely enjoyable. Daryne brought her harp and took us through some amazing stories of her elder care using music. Daryne explained how music can effect the mind and body to ease pain, anxiety and even help nonverbal patients communicate. Other benefits she shared were raised oxygen levels and decreased stress.

“Faster upbeat notes stimulate brain cells while the slow low notes can help relax us. Daryne demonstrated each type of effect on her harp for us.”



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I enjoyed the workshop given by Donald J. Hanson on therapeutic animals – mostly about dogs, the difference between a service dog and a therapy dog, and considerations for breeds, roles and behavior. He spoke from an authoritative knowledge of canine behavior, needs and the regulations and businesses that train the dogs. A key learning was that owners need training, and there was plenty of focus on what it takes to take good care of the dogs so they can take care of us.

Though there were not enough of us to attend all three workshops, we did receive the Powerpoint notes in our packets about the Art and Plants workshop. It looks reminiscent of some of the work that Elder Circle, Inc. was innovating some thirty years ago. Elder Circle is the “parent” nonprofit for EldersBloom, founded by Joseph Wolfberg, gerontologist at University of New England, and beloved “grandfather” of and mentor for EldersBloom.

#### Panel discussion

The ending event of the day was a panel discussion, facilitated by Moshe Myerowitz, DC – a chiropractor with strong opinions, with panelists Kate DeHaven, MSW, LCSW, Clinical Social Worker at the Regional Medical Center at Lubec, and Judy Cyr, retired. I was especially touched by Judy Cyr’s account of her remission from cancer, aided by Reiki. Jodi and I were again busy giving Reiki treatments in the hallway, so I was not able to attend the complete event.

#### Thoughts and Conclusions

Once before, in 2009, I attended this annual Colloquium. Its topic then was *Hidden But Not Forgotten: Early Trauma and Later Life*. After the first presentation, the first questioner raised her hand and asked about the role of Reiki and other somatic therapies, in supporting healing for elders, as they remember and re-experience early trauma. Expecting to attend and only listen, I found myself talking to many there about my experience with Reiki. It was very timely for me, as only a few years before, I had re-experienced my own early childhood trauma, and was using my Reiki skills to support and expedite more traditional counseling therapies, to good effect.

At EldersBloom, if we want to see “elders heal with Reiki”, we have to consider the totality of healing needs, honor the principle behind Robin Russel’s comments in the morning panel discussion about scope of practice, and recognize what Reiki can offer, and know when to ask the client if they have other professional support for their healing needs. This is especially true when an elder is suddenly re-experiencing memories suppressed for a lifetime. Reiki can be marvelously helpful for this, but attempting to completely replace





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experienced counseling and therapy would be most dangerous – hence the “complementary” part of “CAM”.

Comparing the interest level three years ago to this year’s colloquium, it does seem that Reiki is rapidly becoming a household word. It seems to be growing in practice and acceptance, in spite of the open questions about integration with other modalities and reimbursement or funding. The speed of Reiki’s growth is aided by its accessibility, simplicity, and ease of learning.

Looking at the topics covered in the May 7 colloquium, it seems the definition of what is CAM, complementary and alternative medicine, is fluid and often confusing (see Links under NIH/NCCAM for the “national” definition). Funding continues to be a challenge for CAM practices, although there are some hopeful signs on the horizon. Meanwhile, people continue to learn and practice Reiki, vocally praise the benefits, and avidly line up for treatments when they are offered for free or low cost. As demonstrated at the colloquium, Reiki is often in people’s thoughts when they consider CAM.

EldersBloom’s mission was well-served by attendance at the colloquium. We received donations and made great contacts for the future. Jodi did wonderful work with her newly-attuned Reiki hands. Together with Hearts and Hands, we gave Reiki to a significant portion of attendees. Along with the usual benefits of a conference – information, networking, a day away from the office – they received deep healing, calm and balancing. These are people who serve elders every day. To take care of the caregivers is a great gift and high calling.

Again, I offer my deepest gratitude to those who have helped us along the way during the few short years of EldersBloom’s existence, and to those who generously donated to send us to this colloquium. This event was a big boost to our shared project.



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Links

Note that website links are often transitory, so I make no guarantee for how long these will be active and useful to you.

<http://mainecenteronaging.umaine.edu/>  
<http://mainecenteronaging.umaine.edu/geriatricscolloquium>

The University of Maine Center on Aging's website. The second link, at the date of this writing, shows the detailed information for the May 7 colloquium. Within less than a year, I imagine it will show the 2013 agenda.

[http://mainecenteronaging.umaine.edu/clinical\\_geriatrics\\_colloquium](http://mainecenteronaging.umaine.edu/clinical_geriatrics_colloquium)

And, received in an email from the center, above link contains the Powerpoints of the presentations – you'll need Powerpoint on your computer to view them.

<http://nccam.nih.gov/health/whatisacam>

The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine at the National Institutes of Health website's definition of CAM.

<http://www.eldersbloom.org/>

The official EldersBloom website.

<http://www.hearts-n-hands.com/>

The website for Hearts and Hands Reiki, a co-exhibitor at the colloquium.

[http://hosted2.ap.org/ARLID/a5050f4ad4f44dafab85bb41a15281cf/Article\\_2012-06-13-Body%20of%20Germs/id-fcca4363e2c346429d44b102e1dee502](http://hosted2.ap.org/ARLID/a5050f4ad4f44dafab85bb41a15281cf/Article_2012-06-13-Body%20of%20Germs/id-fcca4363e2c346429d44b102e1dee502)

Associated Press article on symbiotic bacteria in the human body. Unsure how long the above link will be active. I emailed this link to Dr. Ron Mosiello, D.O., the keynote speaker, and he has permitted me to summarize his reply. He



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wrote that it has been common knowledge for years that bacteria live symbiotically within our bodies, however medical practice has been slow to exploit that knowledge – for example, rarely do doctors prescribe probiotics along with antibiotics, to restore the gut flora which the antibiotics destroy. He also decried the obscuring of Beauchamp’s (see notes under Keynote above) contributions to understanding of health and wellbeing, and was especially condemning of insurance and pharmaceutical industries’ economic power that results in poorer patient care: “...what kind of health care people receive in society is based more on economics than [sic] on what is actually best.”

Just a few links showing the momentum behind the military’s push into integrative medicine and CAM:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qm44rUwh1Jw>

Dr. Tracy Gaudet’s speech on cultural transformation at the Veteran’s Administration. She was hired from Duke University’s integrative medicine program.

[http://www.bravewell.org/current\\_projects/military\\_medicine/](http://www.bravewell.org/current_projects/military_medicine/)

The Bravewell Collaborative is headed up by Christy Mack, wife of Morgan Stanley hedge fund manager John Mack, and herself a Reiki Master. As a private operating foundation, it does not report financials publicly, however it does appear that considerable resources are going into its projects, especially promoting creative solutions in military medicine.

<http://www.armytimes.com/news/2011/07/army-on-brink-of-new-ways-to-fight-pain-071111w/>

A sample article touching on the subject of “combat acupuncture”.



Elder

a grandparent in spirit  
body slows, spirit blossoms  
values community  
leads by example

EldersBloom

elders heal with Reiki – heal themselves, heal others, heal the world

EldersBloom is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit foundation that brings Reiki healing\* to elders.

We do this by:

- offering Reiki talks and demonstrations to elder communities
- creating a framework for Reiki providers to work with elders, and for elders to learn Reiki for self-healing and healing others
- continually keeping up with research on Reiki and its benefits for elders
- creating visibility for Reiki among all people involved in aging and elderhood

\*Reiki is hands-on healing, practiced by millions around the world. It is embraced as an effective therapy at many hospitals, improving patient wellbeing. It is not a religion; people of all beliefs practice Reiki. It awakens the body's wisdom for balance and inner peace.

Tax-deductible donations are welcome, to:

EldersBloom  
363A Main St.  
Yarmouth  
ME 04096

We are always looking for Reiki practitioners and teachers, and people with nonprofit skills, to help this project blossom.

For more information, contact Jeffrey Hotchkiss, phone 207-450-2633, email [jefreiki@maine.rr.com](mailto:jefreiki@maine.rr.com). Or go to <http://www.eldersbloom.org>.