A group of local therapists and people who have an interest in healing or being healed attended an event in Matanzas Inlet and got a delightful surprise. Wild dolphins and manatees joined the event which was dedicated to a day of healing and peace for the planet. The dolphins maintained their standard distance of 100 yards and radiated their approval from a distance, but four manatees actually came up and touched the participants’ legs while therapy was being performed on floating clients. The manatees maintained contact for petting with all the people present and then one manatee stayed for over an hour getting petted and then receiving CranioSacral Therapy from over seven therapists from the Jacksonville CranioSacral Therapy study group. This rare occurrence happened June 10th in the intra-coastal just south of Crescent Beach and Fort Matanzas.

Some sources say that 2005 is the Bearer of Compassion and the aquatic totem animal is the walrus and manatee. In this theory the manatee symbolizes compassion, unity, and non-conditional governance. The group at Matanzas Inlet dedicated the day’s healing energies to peace in the world and to bring our sons and daughters back home. In a circle of joined hands in waist deep water each person set their intention for world peace and inner harmony. The manatees and dolphins responded.

For the past 4 years David Dolan LMT (licensed massage therapist) from Jacksonville Beach has been hosting these events as a benefit for the Upledger Foundation in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida (www.upledder.com). The Upledger Foundation sponsors several programs involving therapy for PTSD in Vietnam Veterans, the Compassionate Touch program for grade school children which promotes self-esteem and decreases violence, and the BioAquatic Exploration program in the Bahamas which teaches therapists and laypersons how to use CranioSacral Therapy in the ocean and interact with dolphins for a healing purpose. David is an instructor in this program along with his co-teacher Diane Ellerbe LMT from Neptune Beach, Florida.

The CranioSacral Therapy (CST) technique was the therapy being applied as the manatees interacted with participants. CST is a light touch hands on therapeutic technique based on the science of Osteopathy and developed by Dr. John Upledger (Upledger Institute). The technique balances the central nervous system and concurrently brings balance (healing) to several other body systems such as the endocrine, immune, and musculoskeletal systems. In the Bahamas, the CST is applied to floating patients in the ocean with domestic dolphins from the “Dolphin Experience” in Port Lucaya, Grand Bahama Island. This program named BioAquatic Exploration (Ocean Therapy) is sponsored by the Upledger Foundation as mentioned above. The foundation also has a patient intensive treatment program involving the dolphins that is quite unique. Dolphins and humans form a healing community and work together using CranioSacral Therapy for the benefit of the floating patient.

This is the first time in the experience of those attending the event in Matanzas Inlet that wild manatees have gotten into receiving CST. The effects on the therapists and participants were that of being in a surreal dream. The manatee slowly rolled as if to invite them to apply therapy on all sides and to direct them to areas in her body that wanted attention. When CST is applied to dogs and horses, the animals often move and shift to get the therapists hands to treat the areas they

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Schedule for Local Ocean Therapy events at Matanzas Inlet (Crescent Beach):

**JULY 1ST**

**JULY 22ND**

**AUGUST 5TH**

**AUGUST 12TH**

**SEPT 9TH**

Contact: Dolphin Therapeutics, David W. Dolan LMT 904-296-0420 or 904-563-1057
want. When the animal has had enough therapy, they usually walk away. Another unusual aspect of this happening was that the manatee clearly did not want to move away and continued the therapy for over an hour with sometimes as many as seven therapists applying therapy simultaneously. Time seemed to stand still for those involved and the concern about the temperature of the water which was noticed before the manatees showed up all of a sudden vanished.

On two occasions when a therapist hand was on the chest/heart area, the manatee folded her pectoral fins over the human hand and firmly held it there with her fins as if to say “Ummmnnn, thank you.” Passers-by with little children joined in and these two kids got a chance to pet the manatees head and tail while their parents held them in waist deep water in the intra-coastal. Many said that it was a “peak experience” for them as in the Abraham Maslow perspective.

Dolan quotes Dr. Stanislav Grof’s concept of “ocean ecstasy” in his new book titled, “Ocean Therapy,” which is characterized as “feeling whole, unified and integrated; effortless and at ease; completely yourself; free of blocks, inhibitions, and fears; in the here and now; being pure psyche and spirit; with no wants and needs; simultaneously childlike and mature; and graced in a way that is beyond words.”

For more information on upcoming events and CranioSacral Therapy (CST) or to make an appointment contact David Dolan LMT at 904-296-0420. See ad page 29.
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