

# Health

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## Breaking tradition

Newly opened center combines unique methods of health care

By Peter Pegnam

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**S**ome of the things they do for health care at the recently opened Synergy Center in Tucson, Ariz., are considered strange by many people.

Professionals there speak of flotation tanks, regression therapy, energy transfer, reflexology, therapeutic touch, past life psychotherapy, and other such things.

But there are more common approaches to health care there, too, such as yoga, nutrition advice, counseling, massages, and classes.

The center's founder is quick to admit that some nontraditional health-care approaches have a bad



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reputation among most Americans. "They don't understand it," says David Kaler, founder of Synergy Center. "They think we're doing hocus-pocus stuff."

The opening in June of Synergy Center brought together at one location a variety of nontraditional health-care practitioners.

The center was Kaler's dream. It's a place, he says, "where we can put this holistic information and use it and not be so frightened of the alternative techniques, and (use) preventive medicine to stay well instead of waiting until the whole body gets tremendously ill."

Organizations gathered there include:

- Harmony-Health Foundation.
- Cloud Nine Flotation Center-Relaxation Oasis.
- Natural Balance Holistic Health.
- Institute for Cosmic Awareness.

Besides those groups, more than 20 individual health-care practitioners use the facilities on a time-share basis.

"We have so many people in this town in alternative therapy, really highly skilled, but they can't make a living at it," Kaler says about the part-time practitioners. "We need help paying rent. They need a place to practice on a part-time basis."

Kaler's ultimate dream is to build a 44,000-square-foot structure with an auditorium, administration buildings, juice bars, bookstores, herbal and other preparations for sale, and a sanctuary, all run by a nonprofit organization.

Even a medical doctor wants to be a part of the concept, says Kaler's wife, Marilyn, a counselor at the center.

### Traditional physicians skeptical

And that's important, she adds, because it helps bring credibility.

"Many times the traditional medical community is skeptical of nontraditional health care," she says. "However, there are doctors who are perfectly willing to see the person as a whole and are not themselves threatened by new or ancient techniques."

The Kalers hope the dream building, now on the drawing board, is a reality in three to five years.

David Kaler, also the executive director of Harmony-Health Foundation, holds a degree in behavioral science from the University of California at San Jose.

His specialty is hypersentience technique, something he has practiced for 15 years. Hypersentience, or past-life regression, involves the use of hypnosis.

"I tell my clients it doesn't matter if you believe in past lives or not," Kaler says. "I use it as a therapeutic tool. What they tell me... tells me what's going on."

Kaler, 49, is a former administrative assistant at International Business Machines Corp. In October, he left IBM after 24 years there.

Kaler, who believes that "healing comes from within," says this natural approach is increasing in the United States. "Physicians are realizing it's not just the liver that's not working — there's something else that caused the liver not to work."

Among the other people practicing at the center is L. Marc Haberman of Natural Balance.

"I utilize all types of body work,

from shiatsu, acupressure (including massage), touch healing, therapeutic touch, just about every type of body work there is all working together," Haberman says. "Aromatherapy and vision training are the two most exciting things I do."

Aromatherapy, which uses essential oils to bring about a state of health and balance, has been around for thousands of years, he says.

In a massage, the oils he uses are absorbed through the skin into the bloodstream. They also can be administered through the sense of smell and occasionally internally.

In explaining his approach to vision therapy, Haberman says: "People develop visual problems in most cases not because of any physical problem but because of our own perception and the way we react to things."

### 'I know that it exists'

Haberman says he does not fully understand how it all works.

"There are many things going on that I'm not necessarily aware of, that I necessarily understand in the energy that is exchanged, but I accept them and I know that they work."

"I don't think it is important to understand everything that we do. I think there's too much of a black-and-white approach that exists in this society, that you need to understand something. I would say two-thirds of what I work with I cannot explain, but I know that it exists and that it works," he says.

Also operating at the center is Kalyn Wolf, who runs Cloud Nine.

Her tools include two float tanks, filled with warm water and hundreds

of pounds of epsom salts.

A person floats like a cork in the water, in total darkness if desired.

The water is kept at 93.5 degrees, the same as skin temperature.

"What happens is you start losing track of where your skin ends and the water begins. What you're left with is what's going on in your mind," Wolf says.

"Some people have out-of-body experiences" while in the tanks, Wolf says. "I don't. I do it for relaxation, stress management, and self-development."

Each visit lasts an hour.

One of the tanks that Wolf operates is 8 feet tall, 4 feet wide, 8 feet long, and is equipped with stellar-vision — a realistic night sky on the ceiling and walls.

"You can have an experience of floating in space."

The Institute for Cosmic Awareness offers what it calls psychic development and spiritual awareness classes. There are more than 40 members. They meet for "sharing services" on Friday evenings.

Among the time-sharing practitioners using the center on a part-time basis is Bruce Sadilek, 33, who does nutritional counseling based on a pH test.

Sadilek's emphasis is on weight loss and weight control.

The pH testing of blood and urine samples is not very complicated.

"I don't treat or cure," he says. "We sit down and look at a dietary analysis they (the patients) put together for me."

"It lets me see what they eat and make suggestions to their diet to help them establish something a little more nutritious for them."