

Little Footprints of Light

by Barb Cant, Karen Gillespie Haeg,
Candace Linares and Jill Maltrud



Healing Touch has been touching the lives of patients and families at Children's Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota for over 10 years. Four therapists share their experiences while working in the hospital.

**Barb Cant, RN, NCMBT,
Certified Healing Touch Practitioner:**

Children are amazing creatures both in sickness and health and are true teaching models if approached with open, loving hearts and hands. As a Massage Therapist and Certified Healing Touch Practitioner at Children's Hospital I have many such teachings. One patient stands out in my thoughts and will forever be etched in my heart. She was an 11-year-old diagnosed with Acute Myelogenous Leukemia (AML). Massage and Healing Touch were offered to her as Integrative Therapies to ease the severity of her symptoms. This patient experienced both of these therapies and would consistently ask for Healing Touch saying she was able to "go easily to her happy place." She would then fall into a deep, restorative sleep. The techniques I usually used with her included **Magenetic Passes: Hands Still** and **Hands in Motion**, **Chakra Connection** and **Magnetic Clearing**.

This patient experienced a significant decrease in both nausea and anxiety during and after a Healing Touch session. She and her Mom loved and appreciated Healing Touch and believed so strongly in its benefits. Frequently she could not eat because of nausea, but following a Healing Touch session she would

have a voracious appetite for at least 24 hours - making her, her family and her caregivers very happy. I will always remember how she greeted me each time I entered her room. With a smile on her face she would say, "I am so happy you are here. I need you so much!" She looked forward to our time together each week. Unfortunately, after a two-year struggle with Leukemia this beautiful girl lost her battle. Her Mom told me that her precious daughter could not have gone through all she did without the experience of Healing Touch and how it brought profound comfort and healing on many levels. Children never cease to amaze and inspire me through this beautiful work that I am so blessed to do.

**Karen Gillespie Haeg BA, NCMBT,
Healing Touch Level 2 Student:**

Healing Touch for children is Healing Touch for the whole family. Dr. Teri Reid from the Pain and Palliative Care team paged me to provide Healing Touch to offer comfort care during the end of life transition for an eight-month-old girl. Camille suffered a cardiac arrest during the night. I entered the room and saw her lying peacefully on the bed with, her eyes closed and her parents standing on either side holding her hands. I heard music and the beep of the heart monitor. I made eye contact with Camille's Mom and Dad. Both tearfully returned my gaze and quietly nodded their consent. Mom said, "Camille loves Healing Touch." I noted the grief in her voice and instantly remembered a beautiful session we had the previous month when Camille would not sleep. At that time I provided energy clearing for Camille while

her Mom held her. I left that session watching a smiling Mom gently rocking her sleeping daughter.

Now, Camille's eyes are again closed, but today her bereaved parents intently gazed into her face. I set my intention for the highest good of all and performed the **Chakra Connection** and **Chakra Spread** for Camille. Her energy field was still, soft and quiet, except at her crown. I then proceeded to offer Healing Touch to Camille's mother and father. Her Mother's energy field was full, expansive and I felt warmth above her heart chakra. Her compassion and love for her daughter filled the room. Camille's Dad appeared grateful and open when I offered to provide Healing Touch. As I performed the **Chakra Spread** on him I felt the same gentle and quiet energy I sensed in his daughter. I also became aware of a deep release from his heart chakra.

Looking over at Camille, I saw her eyes were now open. Her Mom and Dad gave an audible sigh of gratitude. They looked into Camille's beautiful blue eyes and told her how much they loved her and she returned their gaze. Later in the afternoon, I was paged back to Camille's room where Mom was tenderly holding her daughter. She looked up at me and said, "*The greatest gift Camille gave me is Healing Touch. I now know we can touch each other without touching.*"

**Candace Linares BA, NCMBT,
Healing Touch Practitioner Apprentice:**

It has been my experience that the way in which kids respond to Healing Touch is without judgment or preconceived ideas about how it is "supposed" to feel. They just like the way it allows their body to feel better. "*Can you do the hands on top of me?*" This is a quote from one of the many children receiving chemotherapy treatment for Leukemia at Children's. This child's Dad would stay at the bedside with him and often explain that he too would derive comfort and rest from the Healing Touch his son was receiving. This could be called distance healing for those present in the room. This little eight-year old boy would get himself ready for Healing Touch by laying very still and closing his eyes. I believe he was purposely anticipating a positive outcome from Healing Touch. His parents would say, "*Billy always falls asleep after Healing Touch. We love that there is something he can find comforting while he is in the hospital.*" His parents would also comment that they appreciate Healing Touch because HT can

be given without direct physical touch saying, "*Our child is tired of being poked and prodded. This is a perfect non-drug way to help him feel better.*"

**Jill Maltrud BS, NCMBT,
Healing Touch Level 3 Student:**

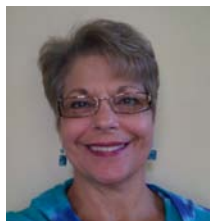
"Thank you, that was such a gift." To help hospitalized children and their families get through their days a little bit easier is rewarding and fulfilling, but the real gift is what they receive in return. I was consulted one afternoon regarding a four-year-old boy with Mitochondrial Disease. He was hospitalized for feeding issues and was in need of calming and relaxation techniques. When I entered his room his gracious mother was at his bedside looking forward to this visit. Her son was tossing and turning in his crib, spontaneously moving all of his extremities. His head was rocking back and forth and he would not make eye contact with his mother or me.

I knew from the moment I entered their room that he would benefit from Healing Touch. I asked his mother if she knew about energy work and after it was explained to her she replied, "*It makes sense, his disease has to do with energy, I'm open to trying anything!*"

While she stood next to his crib I began with **Magnetic Passes: Hands in Motion** and progressed to **Magnetic Clearing**. It was at this point, after several passes that the boy began to calm and relax. His body stopped moving and he grew very still. Then, he turned his head and looked at me. Not just a momentary glance, but a look that spoke 'into' me, and then he slowly turned his head and looked 'into' his mother. Quietness. Calmness. Then -- laughter. A boy's angelic laugh filled the air. His mother gasped, grew teary-eyed and said, "*I could feel it! I could feel the energy. Thank you, thank you so much, that was such a gift to hear him laugh. It is so rare to hear him do that. Thank you.*"

While each experience is different, our paths merge along the way to the same mission -- to spread healing energy and light to where it needs to go. No child needs to live with pain or anxiety. It is our hope that more children will become aware of their own energy and realize they too can leave behind their own little footprints of light.

About the authors:



Barb Cant, R.N., is a Certified Healing Touch Practitioner and Nationally Certified Massage therapist. She currently works at Children's Hospitals & Clinics of Minnesota providing Healing Touch and massage therapy.



Karen Gillespie Haeg, a level 2 Healing Touch student, is a Nationally Certified Massage and Bodywork therapist and Certified Infant Massage Teacher. She is also a level two Reiki Master. Karen finds great joy working with children. She is the Mother of two daughters, ages six and seven, who love to receive Healing Touch.



Candace Linares is a Nationally Certified Massage therapist at Children's Hospitals & Clinics of Minnesota. She has a private practice specializing in Healing Touch, Cranial Sacral Therapy and Swedish massage. She is also a mother of an active 8-year-old boy!



Jill Maltrud is a Nationally Certified Massage & Bodywork therapist at Children's Hospitals & Clinics of Minnesota. She is also an instructor for National American University's Therapeutic Massage Program, teaching Stress Management, Ethics for Bodyworkers and Specialty Massage, which includes Healing Touch. Jill left the world of television news to pursue what she now knows is her true calling.

Children's Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota's approach is not meant to replace conventional medical treatment. Rather, the goal is to provide access to the best practices available in complementary and natural therapies in conjunction with conventional medicine in a culturally competent manner. Since 1999 Healing Touch has been used along with other modalities like Massage, Aromatherapy, Reflexology, Acupressure and Cranial Sacral Therapy through the Integrative Medicine Department, which has recently merged with the Pain and Palliative Care Department.