

"My Seventeen Years with Healing Touch Program"

by Cynthia Hutchison, DNS, RN, MSN, HTCP/I, Program Director HTP

In 1992, my friend Maureen McCracken, RN, MSN, HTCP/I, encouraged me to take a Level 1 Healing Touch class, stating she thought it was something I would love. I traveled to nearby Washington, D.C., and took my Level 1 class with Sharon Scandrett-Hibdon, RN, PhD, HTCP/I. (Sharon was president of the American Holistic Nurses Association when they embraced Janet Mentgen's original HT Program as their first Holistic Nurses Certificate Program in 1990.)

Maureen was right. I walked away from that weekend knowing that I had "come home." I steadily continued my journey with HT and became an instructor in 1994. In 1995, with Janet's encouragement, I began the HT Research Program. Later I taught teaching upper levels, became a member of HT's non-profit Foundation Board, and eventually was invited by Janet in 2003 to be mentored as her successor for the position of Healing Touch Program Director. It's been a rich and wild ride!

Ever since my first class, I have incorporated HT into my personal and professional life. Seventeen years later, I can say that what I have learned through Healing Touch has penetrated every aspect of my life including family, friendship, finances, travel, teaching, my artistic life, my relationship with nature, my spiritual, mental, emotional, physical, cultural and social life. The phrase that was coined at my Level 4 class in Pennsylvania in 1993 has manifested into deeper and higher levels... "Healing Touch changed my life!" From extensive travels to teach HT over the last fifteen years, I have heard that same testimony many hundreds of times from people. I expect you all have heard it and/or spoke it as well.

I have witnessed thousands of stories over the years as students and practitioners of HT have shared highlights of their personal and spiritual growth that was spurred on by giving or receiving HT. While we can all relate to the "little ways" that HT brings benefit and comfort, as sentient beings, most of us are deeply touched by the *not uncommon dramatic stories* we hear about healing from severe trauma, inoperable diseases, intractable pain, immobility, mental/emotional illness, tortuous grief and spiritual distress. While each story in and of itself may



Above: Cynthia and Janet after Janet honored her successor as HT Program Director, Spring 2005 at Shadowcliff Retreat Center, Grand Lake, Colorado. Janet called instructors together for a final gathering to discuss her HT organizational plans for the future.

seem anecdotal, the sheer volume of stories that are shared in classes, clinics, and practices worldwide create undeniable support that "something happens" when a heart-centered practitioner works with a willing recipient in a sacred space inviting divine Universal energy to facilitate a healing response of body, mind and spirit. While HT practitioners are pleased that HT research has been active for over a dozen years, we do not personally need it as proof for ourselves that HT is effective. Not only is it effective, but HT is efficient, non-invasive, safe, affordable, and is administered in a gentle, respectful way honoring of each client's dignity.

Nurses and allied health care professionals who have learned HT describe a refined and deepened awareness and ability to be a healing presence in the client-practitioner relationship. It enhances enhanced their ability to use their already valuable mainstream skills so that they can be even more effective with a person in need within the health care system in which they work. But what fills many of us with so much joy is that our founder, Janet Mentgen, opened the doors to anyone interested

and sincerely motivated to do the work, whether or not they were health care professionals, to join and embark on the path of becoming Healing Touch Certified Practitioners and to, therefore, be recognized as legitimate and professional practitioners of energy medicine.

When I taught in Lima, Peru in 2004, my heart was touched by all the people who were using HT to soothe the maladies of their families and community members. HT was often the only remedy available to them due to their poverty. These folks were, however, rich in spirit and faith as they consciously used their hands to console, comfort and alleviate all sorts of conditions. The person who touched me the most was a young mother who used HT on her abusive husband while he slept. With tears in her eyes, she shared that over a few months time, she noticed how he eventually softened and became kinder and more respectful. She attributed his change of behavior and heart to her HT treatments, which she offered to his spirit and higher self through her loving hands and heart during his sleep.

While we are all impressed when someone describes a physical healing of symptoms or disease, the healing of one's spirit is of special interest to me. As for myself, Healing Touch opened up a whole new realm of spiritual reality to me that I had started to explore in prayer, spiritual books and studies. It was the actual practice of HT however that allowed me to experience human energy bodies directly. The act of "doing the work" and then, at the end of the session, listening intently to each client's response to the HT treatment accelerated my understanding of just how magnificently and beautifully we have been created by our Creator.

Doing the work of HT has increased my faith. It has empowered me to trust that indeed, I can help others with my hands and heart. It has impressed on me irrefutable personal proof that we exist beyond our physical bodies. I know in my heart of hearts and mind of minds that when we hold a loving intention for another, we can facilitate a healing response if the other is open to such. We have been empowered to help heal each other. What a blessing!

I know my story is similar to your story except for the details. Some of the joy I receive in my travels as I teach is hearing correspondent stories of healing despite geographical location, culture, language, race or sex. After all the details are told, it all comes down to giving and receiving LOVE. Healing Touch is just one big LOVE FEST to which everyone is invited! And it's nice to know that all the elements of HTP also make it a professional, universally standardized and scientific program, so we can all rest assured that when we are aligned with the teachings of HTP, we can ALL sit in together; we can ALL share; we can ALL agree; and we can ALL CELEBRATE!

Please join me in celebrating Healing Touch Program's 20th anniversary year of Janet Mentgen's original and only Healing Touch Program!



Above: Janet at her last HT conference passing on the leadership of HTP to her daughters and son: Bill Mentgen, Lynn Gillespe and Lisa Mentgen-Gordon. September 2005, a few days before she died (9/15/05).

About the author:

Cynthia Hutchison is the Director of the Healing Touch Program™. In the early 1980s, she began studying natural health, holistic healing and energy therapies. She is an avid student of spirituality and energy medicine. As a doctorally prepared nurse from the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. (1987), Cynthia is also knowledgeable in the mainstream health sciences with a strong background in nursing and holistic health care. With a master's degree as a clinical specialist in mental health, she has maintained a private practice in Healing Touch for many years. In 1995, Cynthia initiated the research program for Healing Touch and became the first Director of Research. She was invited by Janet Mentgen (founder of HT) in 2003 to serve as the Assistant Program Director. Cynthia became the Program Director in May of 2005 (several months before Janet's death), and was asked by Janet to carry on her legacy of the Healing Touch Program. Teaching internationally and nationally at all levels of the core curriculum, plus Advanced Practice courses and Instructor Training (Level 6), she brings much enthusiasm, empowerment and creativity to her classes. A mother of three awesome daughters, Cynthia has lived in Boulder, Colorado since 1993.