

HEALTH

Educators sponsor wellness retreat at Moody Gardens

From staff reports

Carolyn Kinney and Denise Rodgers share more than a common vision and passion for the special work they do. Through completely different circumstances, both women experienced tragedies that at first turned their worlds upside down. Discovering that healing occurs on many levels, both have since learned that sometimes the most devastating experiences become a significant catalyst for spiritual transformation.

In spite of the many frightening, painful and unhappy moments along the way, both women claim that their stories are far more joyous and transcendent than what most would think. Both experienced personal near-death health crises immediately following the death of a loved one.

Carolyn Kinney, R.N., Ph.D., a nurse-therapist and holistic nursing educator, is Associate Professor of Nursing at the University of Texas at Galveston School of Nursing, and resides in Austin. She is on the faculty of the school's doctoral program based on the focus of healing. She has devoted much of her career to bringing holistic principles into mainstream healthcare and academia.

Six years ago Kinney's younger brother died suddenly and unexpectedly. Less than a month later Kinney was diagnosed with breast cancer and decided to undergo radical mastectomies. "Experiencing those two incidences, back-to-back, got my attention. I realized that it was time I made some changes in the way I approached life. My priorities became reorganized and I realized my life was forever changed," says Kinney.

Denise Rodgers of Tulsa, OK, is an author, mind/body educator, researcher and medical intuitive. She is the founder of the Association for Development of Mind/Body Potential, a 501© (3) nonprofit corporation dedicated to the exploration of the healing power of the mind.

Years ago, soon after the murder of her husband, Denise experienced being shot, beaten and left for dead, while her 4 year old daughter looked on. Shot through the chest

and forearm, Rodgers was faced with little hope from the medical community in repairing the damage that would leave her permanently disabled. Not willing to accept her prognosis, Denise embarked upon an educational healing process delving into the untapped healing potential that she believes we all possess, but are never taught to use.

Throughout her healing journey Rodgers realized she was in need of more than physical healing. She rapidly began to experience a healing of her heart, mind and spirit as well. Within several years, Rodgers was completely healed of what doctors thought impossible and implausible. More importantly, Rodgers experienced what she calls a "spiritual renaissance," where she began to discover greater meaning and purpose in life.

Since then, Rodgers has realized a great sense of mission in helping others to tap their own healing potential, devoting the past 16 years to the continual exploration of the mind and its healing and creative potential. She has created, offered and evaluated Mind, Body & Spirit programs in a variety of arenas. Originally offering her programs to the general public as well as the corporate and professional worlds, more recently her programs have been successfully used by patients with Multiple Sclerosis, and various forms of Cancer.

Denise and Carolyn are currently collaborating on several projects. A research project funded by the Houston chapter of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation is underway for breast cancer survivors through the University of Texas School of Nursing at Galveston with additional site locations in Austin and Tulsa.

Kinney has just completed teaching two 12-week versions of their Mind, Body & Spirit program, one offered to a group of doctoral students and another to a group of faculty members at UTMB. "The students and faculty benefited from the program in similar ways as the participants in the breast cancer survivor groups. While a major tragedy can serve as a wake-up call and stimulate an

increased awareness for the need for developing our spiritual side, it is not a requirement for an opening up to a more meaningful and heart-filled life."

Both women believe "integrating holistic principles into conventional healthcare is something far more than trendy, it is the wave of the future. It's just as important for people to heal spiritually, mentally and emotionally as it is for their physical body to heal. This is why it is called holistic — all dimensions of the self are taken into consideration," they agree.

Kinney and Rodgers are once again expanding and diversifying their programs to include intensive wellness retreats by offering a Mind, Body & Spirit program May 22-26. This educational intensive retreat is open to the general public and will be held at the Moody Gardens Resort & Spa in Galveston. Participants will draw from a variety of spiritual practices, developing ways to unlock their creative potential and intuitive faculties, as well as understand and interpret their dreams. In addition, participants will practice meditation and guided imagery techniques. They will also learn how to utilize the innate healing powers for self-healing.

"People often find themselves caught up in a ceaseless dance of perpetual motion, caught up in 'doing' rather than 'being,'" said Kinney. "All of our programs are designed to help you slow down and focus the mind so that you can listen to the wisdom of the inner Self, the part of ourselves that we seldom hear much less trust," she added.

Participants will learn how their thoughts, how their consciousness creates their reality. They will learn techniques for redirecting their consciousness towards their true desires and goals in life. These retreats are only open to women at this time but the duo plans to begin offering them to men as well.

For information about the 5-Day Intensive Mind, Body & Spirit Wellness Retreat on May 21-26 at Moody Gardens Resort & Spa, contact Denise Rodgers at (918) 743-9492 or Carolyn Kinney at (512) 328-0058.