

Inner Dancer

by TONI GILBERT RN, MA, HNC

As a private practice nurse, I met Patricia (then in her late 30s) for the first time just after she was diagnosed with breast cancer, and we worked with guided imagery, dreams, and the art of Tarot cards to help her through the tough times. Five years later, Patricia called to tell me that her doctor said she had an inoperable tumor in her brain. She said, "I called you because I need to take care of any unfinished inner business."

I invited her to come to my office right away, and while I waited for her to arrive, I closed my eyes and whispered a short prayer for guidance and then settled into quiet meditation. During meditation, I searched my inner consciousness for imagery. Sometimes I don't see anything but darkness, which helps quiet my mind so that I can be centered and present for the client. But this time I saw a slender woman in a flowing white and light blue dress dance across my inner field of vision. She communed as she danced that I should do movement meditation with Patricia.

When I brought my consciousness back to my office, I put on soft instrumental music, opened my office door, and began gently dancing around the room. I knew this action wouldn't seem strange to Patricia, who was familiar with movement meditation, yet this was the first (and only) time that I had used movement therapy to greet a client.

When Patricia walked into my office, I invited her to join me in a slow movement meditation. This type of meditation allows the movement in the dancer's body to release emotional energy that needs to be dealt with. She gladly



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accepted the invitation, and we smiled and danced as the moment dictated. As we danced, I remained fairly quiet and just let her tell me what was consciously on her mind.

We danced and talked pleasantly for several more minutes, and then suddenly she collapsed into a fetal position on the floor, crying out as if she was in pain. At first I was startled at this extreme reaction, but I stayed centered. The only thing I could do was to wait, and as I waited, I intuitively made circular motions over her collapsed body, with the intention of soothing the energy that must have been emanating out from her in this cathartic state.

I let her lay on the floor until she felt ready to get up. I was silent but continued to work with the energy that I couldn't see but knew must be there. Finally,

after what seemed like an eternity, she looked up. I could see that she wasn't troubled by the emotional release, so I waited quietly, and this encouraged her to talk about her experience. With a calm countenance, she said, "At first I felt very emotional and just needed to let out all of the worry and hurt inside of me. Then in the middle of strong emotions, I could feel a warm energy, like warm water, being poured over me. I felt like I was being blessed, and it was very comforting."

Patricia went away that day feeling at least a temporary relief about her life situation. I *knew* that she had received some kind of healing that I do not fully comprehend or know how to adequately explain. The last time we had contact, she told me about her new interest in her church and volunteer work. She also

told me not to worry about her because there were people to help her when her time came. She seemed at peace as she prepared to die.

As you can see, it isn't just a personal story; it is the story of eternal healing. It is a spiritual saga that often blesses us with quick glimpses of the *Powers That Be* at work in our own lives and the lives of those in our care.

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