

Spas, Traditional and Complementary Therapies:

A review of the jargon

By REKHA BHABRA

When we look at the science of wellness and well-being, it is not uncommon to realize that there are some things which, while they do not have a scientifically recognized reasoning, will still have an extremely potent effect!

Complementary therapies and alternative medicines are therapies or techniques that have had a great deal of influence when it comes to enhancing health and helping reinvigorate the body, and under this umbrella term, you'll find many practices, products and philosophies that are not considered under conventional medicine.

While complementary therapies are considered in some ways to be unorthodox and experimental, there are many cases where they can affect a healing or release from pain or fatigue that conventional medicine simply can't touch; some health care providers will cover both conventional and complementary therapies and techniques, pointing to their efficiency.

When looking at what practices or techniques can fall under this wide heading, you'll find that many of them will sound quite familiar and may even be offered in your area spa. According to Dorothea Justin Moduying Sabah's representative from the Association of Complementary Therapies Malaysia, there is a lot of confusion in the health wellness spa industry. Complementary therapies are generally holistic, meaning that they treat the whole person, and have a beneficial effect on the persons physique and aura. Dorothea asserts that spas refers to a legitimate spa operation devoted to enhancing the five senses encouraging overall well being through treatments which include the use of water, renewing mind, body and spirit. The Spa treatment menu must incorporate the use of water as an element of the therapy.

Some of the therapies and techniques that restore balance to the chakras and also work on specific levels of the aura are: osteopathy, homeopathy, massage, shiatsu, ayurveda, acupressure, herbology, acupuncture, intuitive aromatherapy massage, flower essences, meditation, color light therapy, crystal healing, gem elixirs, tai-chi, qigong, and yoga among many others.

Dorothea is saddened that in Malaysia therapists do not receive the classification of a profession and instead classified as "tukang urut" (masseur in the English language). One has to study human anatomy and physiology, massage, health and fitness studies and nutrition. The spa business is booming especially in Sabah with the opening of countless centres, Dorothea calls for the governance of its services and the wellbeing of the workers in the industry. The Education Department should offer registered courses and local authorities should protect the welfare of the industry workers.

Sabah is especially special as it has its own Kadazandusun Holistic Spiritual Healing. With our spiritual leaders such as Bobohizan and great warriors "Panglima" as well as our grandparents with a wealth of alternative medical therapies, Dorothea takes pride in our own traditional treatments which could be branded and marketed internationally. She calls for a collaboration among people in the industry to promote Sabah as a premier destination for wellness travel.

Some aspects of Kadazandusun Spirituality Dorothea asserts in light of the Harvest Festival season is as follows:

Otusian (revenge)- The belief that by accidental or purposeful intent and action, one can actually cause the environmental condition to react untowardly and experience something bad in return. Othusian ensured respect for the environment, particularly plants and animals.

Oguhian (revenge)- The belief that one should not belittle others or one's family members will face shame or experience something bad in return. Oguhian ensures the respect for other people.

Ovusung (cursed)- The belief that by condemning one's elders, an unexplained series of bad luck or misery will pursue the disrespectful individual. Ovusung ensures that respect for elders is given utmost importance.

Opuunan (ill omened)- The belief that something bad will happen to someone who refuses the food offered by another. The belief could be interpreted as a form of social responsibility and concern for the welfare of others. Opuunan ensures the shared accountability of one another's welfare and well being.

