

Anth 301
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Healer Case Study

Linda Dow

Linda Dow is a spiritual healer, Reiki master and author of *The Gift of Hope: When Lightning Strikes a Lost Sheep, True Stories of Healing and Other Miracles*. Her life was changed forever in 1988 when she asked for a sign from God and an hour later she was knocked off her feet by lightning. "A golf club was struck directly, but being knocked to the ground with both arms and legs straight out in front of me didn't bother me as much as the ringing in my ears and spots in front of my eyes," writes Dow. She was merely asking whether she should return to the Catholic Church, but at that moment she believes she was given the Gift of Healing. "Knowing people were in pain," all happened since that lightning strike.

Spiritual healing is founded on the belief that certain individuals have the ability to cure or heal through a close connection to a higher power. Dow embraced that gift but sought professional training on her journey to becoming a healer. She attended the Barbara Brennan School of Healing.

Brennan's system of healing combines hands-on healing with spiritual and psychological processes. Through the Brennan Healing Sciences School, Dow studied the Human Energy-Consciousness System where the physical body rises out of an energy field, thus an imbalance in this field will eventually cause a disease. In Brennan's bestseller *Hands of Light, a Guide to Healing through the Human Energy Field*, she writes, "Healers do not work miracles. Healing can only do what the human body can do. The gift of healing rests in everyone." Brennan states her work as a healer is a work of love. A healer becomes a channel to help the patient heal energy and soul imbalances and to help re-awaken hope, as well as the spark of God in each individual.

Dow reiterated that when I had the pleasure of interviewing her in San Diego. I was invited to my neighbor's house for a private meeting with Ms. Dow. She greeted me at the door and offered me water as she led me in. She was in town for the weekend after a retreat to the Sanoviv Medical Institute and Spa in Rosarito, Mexico for the annual Collette Larsen Reunion. She graciously spent over two hours of her time with me. When we sat down, I asked her for permission to record this interview on my phone, as well as take notes. Dow said it was fine, so I began to ask her questions.

Q: Where is the site of the healing?

A: Most often at my home on the massage table. Before the patient arrives, I sit in guidance before they arrive. I center and ground myself so I can connect to their spirit and pulses. I look at their physical body from the front and the back. Sometimes I see a bright light or black, and I write that down and share the scan with them. I ask them what they want to work on, but what I perceive isn't always the same as that. But at least 90% of what I get in the scan is right on. That's where I feel God has given me the info I need. It's not really me. It's God and I'm the conduit. I am the channel which God comes through to help people heal.

Q: What type of patients visit you?

A: Patients seeking physical, emotional, mental and spiritual healing seek guidance. I get a lot of people who come in with physical ailments. A good friend from BBSH said I am masterful at healing physical illnesses, and by me, I mean God. I can see into people's bodies. Lots of physical stuff. Majority of people who come to me have cancer. Emotional clients who come to me may be going through a divorce or are suicidal or depressed, or they're seeking a life purpose. I don't figure out what is emotionally wrong with someone. I am told by God what it is. Hara healing has a specific purpose, and that is to find a life purpose. Hara is an effortless giving up of bad habits, as well as moving towards your true purpose. You find something else to focus on and put your time towards, and you may end up forgetting about your bad habit, like going to MacDonald's for breakfast everyday or picking your nails. Now you can get on with your life and leave the rest in the past effortlessly.

I've worked on people who thought they were possessed. They just don't feel like they are connected to God. They can feel the love I have for God just by being in the same room as me because God is so present there. If people are having trouble relating to God, most people can relate really easily to animals, so I start there. Once they get that, they can transition to God. It's a fun transition to watch. I have been called to go to the hospital to work on people in comas. They came out of their coma two hours after I finished working on them.

Q: How would you describe what you do? What modalities do you use?

A: Besides being a Reiki master, there are 250 different techniques I learned while in school on how to heal someone. The hardest question to answer is, "What do you do?" Well, I don't know how to answer that. I guess I could list all 250 things I can do for them. They're getting physical stuff and being connected back up with God... I never really know what's going to happen between them and God.

Q: What causes an illness or a disease?

A: Imbalance – which deals in all of the energy fields; and, when a physical illness comes in, it penetrates the gold (Aura).

Q: Do you view the body and the mind as one in the healing process?

A: Yes, the mind is really powerful in the healing process. You can teach people to use visualization to tell their body something isn't there, like a tumor. From this standpoint, the two are totally connected. Sometimes when I'm doing a healing with some people, I am imaging the Divine Mother coming in cradling that person and literally rocking them back and forth. Neither one of us were rocking, but we felt it, both of us. That's how powerful that is.

Q: When you begin with a patient, do you ask family questions?

A: I have them fill out a double-sided intake form. I ask them what their relationship is between their mother and father and if they have siblings. For example, if their relationship with their mom was really rough, and they come to me with breast cancer on the left breast, broke their left ankle as a kid, and they've had a frozen shoulder on the left side, then that's all feminine energy. People with cancer are always giving to everyone else and not themselves. The right side is male relationships and career. And if they have a problem on their right side and we talk and they break down crying, then we've got something there.

Q: How long is a treatment?

A: A treatment can go anywhere from 20 minutes to 45 minutes long. If they want a complete session, the best would be a two-hour session so I can go over a lot more with them. I balance their chakras and tell them if they are low on any specific ones. Then I have them take off their shoes and lay on the massage table, and then I do a session. After the session, I make sure they know to drink lots of water throughout the day and don't talk for a couple of hours, as well as don't watch TV or read. The longer they stay in that energy, the more they will get out of their time spent with me.

Q: What do you consider a success?

A: Success would be someone who comes to me with issues, and after a session, they feel different. Some people feel like they are walking on air, lighter, like the cloud was taken off their head. Some people don't feel anything at all, and that is very rare. But they

still may have had a resolution to a problem we discussed later on, weeks after the treatment. I personally try to distance myself from the outcome. If I get too invested in it, I'm not going to be a clear channel, and I will feel like I don't need God anymore to heal if I know what happens.

Q: So if someone doesn't believe in God, are you able to get through to them?

A: In my experience, I don't know if I have had any atheists in my office. I don't think someone who doesn't believe in God would want to see a spiritual healer.

Q: Is the power with the healer or the person seeking the healing?

A: I believe people can heal themselves, they just don't believe in the strength of God. For some people, it is frightening to say that God healed me. It is easier to say Linda healed me because they don't think they deserve it.

Q: Do you consider your position as a healer as a calling?

A: Yeah! You know my story of the lightning strike – I was really just looking for a sign to go back to my childhood religion, which was Catholicism. I don't believe everyone needs to be Catholic, but they need to take the conscious journey and find the religion that fits them.

Q: If it is God's will to be healed, then why can't a person just pray to God?

A: I believe they can, but they have to believe they deserve it. That's where the problem lies.

Q: If a patient is not healed, is it the will of God?

A: No. I believe God wants us all to be happy. He wants us all to be healthy so we can shine our light brighter because all we are doing is shining His light brighter. Sometimes people give up. They won't say it, but they just give up. At this point it is between them and God. It isn't up to me. It's up to God. When we cry, God cries. God cries for us. He feels our pain.

Q: Why did you feel a need to seek additional training or schooling?

A: That's a really good question. After the lightning I would know when people were in pain. I wanted to have some credibility, and I knew nothing about healing. I wanted to go to school to get a certification so I could feel like I was working from a place of credibility. All of this is for myself. There was a lot of personal growth that happened at the Barbara Brennan School of Healing. Barbara Brennan told me if you're not a clear channel, you're not going to get an accurate reading. Over my first four years of schooling, we had to do 72 psychotherapy sessions.

Q: Do you see your ability as a blessing or a burden?

A: Both. Beyond question, it is a blessing. And sometimes it feels like a burden because everyone that comes to me is in pain. I like to make people realize that their healing can be so much easier.

Dow has had a private spiritual healing practice since 1990. She has always believed the body has an incredible ability to heal itself. Two of the modalities she uses most often are Chakra Balancing and Reiki healing.

The word Reiki is composed of two Japanese words, Rei and Ki, meaning universal life energy. In a spiritual context, Rei can be defined as the higher intelligence that guides the creation and functioning of the universe. It is wisdom that filters through everything. On a human level, it can help us in times of need and to act as a source of guidance. Rei is also called God.

Reiki is an ancient laying-on hands healing technique that uses life force energy to heal, balancing the subtle energies within our bodies. Reiki addresses physical, emotional, mental and spiritual imbalances. The Reiki practitioner serves as a vessel that supplies healing energies to the patient where they are most needed.

Ki is the non-physical energy in all living things. If a person's Ki is high, they feel strong and ready to take on life's challenges. When your level of Ki is low, you feel you can increase your Ki by using breathing exercises or meditation.

The source or cause of health comes from the Ki that flows through and around the whole person, rather than from the functional condition of the physical organs and tissues. If the flow of Ki is disrupted, the physical organs and tissues are negatively affected. Therefore, it is a disruption in the flow of Ki that causes illness. In addition, Ki responds to one's thoughts and feelings. Negative thoughts restrict the flow of Ki as well.

During a Reiki treatment, Ki energies flow out of the practitioner's body through the palms of their hands while they are touching the patient's body. The desired outcome from a Reiki treatment is to replace illness with balanced health.

Chakra is a Sanskrit word which means wheel. Throughout the body there are main energy centers, which are connected to major organs or glands that govern other body parts. Each of these energy centers is referred to as Chakras. A chakra is a wheel-like spinning vortex. These spinning wheels are connected to a color-vibrational frequency.

The seven main chakra centers are aligned along the spine and each main center is connected to our being on several levels: physical, emotional, mental and spiritual. Blocked energy in any of the chakras can lead to illness. To help balance a chakra, one must bring in the chakra color. For example, the heart chakra is filled with the color green and governs the thymus gland. To understand the chakra system, you must understand the language of the colors expressed in the aura. When all seven chakras are working in alliance, harmony and balance is established.

Dow believes she is a vessel for God and believes it is God's work that heals. Spiritual healing began early in our history. In the Bible, both God and holy people are said to have had the power to heal. And for the devout, there is no question that seeking the help of a higher being has the power to heal. Yet even cynics turn to religion and prayer for comfort when they are sick.

Dr. Harold Koenig is the director of Duke University's Center for Spirituality, Theology and Health, and an expert on how spiritual involvement can influence physical and mental health. For years his institute has conducted research related to health and religion. "Studies have shown prayer can prevent people from getting sick and when they do get sick, prayer can help them get better faster," says Koenig.

His findings have indicated that religion is related to better coping, better mental health and better physical health. The benefits of religious practices, or involvement in a faith-based community are that those individuals have more hope, are more optimistic and experience less depression and anxiety.

Before setting a course of care for his patients, Koenig takes a detailed spiritual history. He attempts to obtain information about their religious beliefs, backgrounds or rituals; or, if they are not religious, he re-directs his questions to ask what in their lives gives them meaning and purpose.

Dow uses a detailed questionnaire (or intake forms) to access the needs of her patients. But as she relayed in our interview, oftentimes what they choose to focus on may not be the root of the problem in her mind.

At the end of my interview, Dow gave me a complimentary 15-minute session for speaking to her about her healing. Dow told me that after the session, she wouldn't be able to talk to me. She does her channeling and then sends you on your way. I understood what she meant, so we went upstairs so I could lie down on the massage table. Dow told me to drink lots of water the rest of the day and, to get the most out of her session, she suggested I stay away from my phone, refrain from watching TV for an hour, just be with myself and don't read either. This is so the body can continue the healing work.

As I took my shoes off, my neighbor Diane, who introduced me to Dow, helped close the blinds and the windows so the room was silent. I laid down on my back with my head at one end of the table and feet at the other with my hands beside me. Dow said I could close my eyes or keep them open. I closed them. I wanted to see something and focus on any feeling that may occur. Dow grounded herself on an exercise ball with her feet flat on the ground and her hands on my feet. She told me to relax as she pulled my energy from my head down to my feet.

After a couple minutes I started to feel warm and got some pain in the right side of my forehead. It felt like a one-sided headache. As Dow grabbed different parts of my feet she came across a soft spot on my left foot next to my pinky toe. I have always had pain there, which started when I was a pole-vaulter in high school in about 2008. It was very painful back then and not so much now. Dow told me my pain in my forehead was caused from the pain in my left foot since the two are connected. It made sense since we learned about the connections throughout the body from our lectures on acupuncture.

Dow then moved up from my feet to my forehead and, with her hands hovering over me, she was aligning my chakras to balance out my body. She came around and held my head to channel in new energy after she had gotten rid of the bad energy she pulled from my feet. As she did this, our stomachs started to growl back and forth. Mine, then hers, then mine and then hers. It was odd. I guess we both knew it was almost noon. It reminded me of how a yawn goes back and forth. So after our stomachs stopped talking, she then started to rebuild the energy field around me called the gold Seventh Level. As she put her hands above my head, she slowly made an arch with them as if she was forming a shield around me, so no bad energies could enter. I felt warm and, after about five minutes of lying there, it was time to go since she had finished and was already downstairs.

As I came down and got my stuff, she told me to drink lots of water again and thanked me for interviewing her. I gave her a hug and then left. I felt good and hungry, since it was lunchtime.

Linda Dow had a warm presence about her when we first met. I was already excited to interview her, so that contributed to this feeling. But by just being around her, I can see how her clients feel a connection.

