

Kay Jamieson

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AS STAGE manager for the Festival of Perth in 1988, Kay Jamieson met the classical Indian dancer Mallika Sarabhai, who'd come to Australia to perform in Peter Brooks's production of *The Mahabharata*. A strong friendship developed, and in 1994 Kay spent 12 months living and working at the dance academy that Sarabhai runs in Ahmedabad, in north-western India. It was an experience that changed her life.

Founded by Sarabhai's mother in 1949, the arts academy teaches classical Indian dancing, folk drama, music, and folk-dancing from all over India. "It provides accommodation [and medical care] for people as part of their salary, if you like. Being dancers, they're always injuring themselves."

The academy had recently taken up the practice of pranic healing. They found "that since they'd started doing [it] their medical expenses had dropped by 60 per cent. Pranic healing is a no-touch scientific form of healing using energy. Apparently, it was prevalent in ancient India and China and has been revitalised in the last 10 to 15 years.

"There's an energy field that surrounds the body, that's the same shape as the physical body, which scientists call the bioplasmic body and which clairvoyants usually call the human aura. Apparently, using something called Kirlian photography [aura photographic imaging and analysis], they've shown that disease can actually affect this field, which sits about four to five inches outside the skin.

"They say that emotions and thought can affect the energy field, which in turn can affect the physical body. So the idea of pranic healing is to balance the energy of the energy field, which can either heal or can prevent ailments in the physical body. It's to do with the mind. We read all the time that negative thoughts can affect us, [and] we accept that stress makes us vulnerable. This is just a different way of talking about it.

"When I first saw it being done, I was probably as sceptical as most other people and thought, this is just a load of hogwash; but then seeing the transformation in people [I thought], there has to be something to it. I watched it being done, I had it done to me, and in the end I started to do a course.

"When I first came across the people doing the healing, it didn't come across as funky or New Age, because they truly believed in what they were doing. Mallika and her mother became very proficient at doing this. I've seen them heal dancers in pain, who were not able to dance, and they've gone back and danced. I've seen people walking almost bent double and a healing has helped them. I've had headaches go from a healing. I've had a serious cut disappear almost completely within 24 hours, that would [otherwise] probably have taken at least a week.

"I don't know how it works. I guess it's like anything – you have to be open to it. Again, if it's only the mind that they're activating, then the mind must be a very powerful thing." ■

A leading proponent of pranic healing, Choa Kok Sui, has written several books on the subject. There are pranic healing centres in Perth, Melbourne and Sydney, servicing other States as well.

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