



Alternative Healthcare Access Campaign Fall 2010 Newsletter

Taking off the Masks

Love takes off many masks we fear we cannot live without and we know we cannot live within.

- James Baldwin Writer & Civil Rights Activist

For many people, massage and bodywork help us release the persona we display everyday and come more in touch with who we really are. Taking off our mask can be uncomfortable and it can be shocking. Bodywork helps reveal parts of ourselves that we hide. Sometimes we hide the shining parts of ourselves so we don't outshine others. Sometimes we hide the darker parts we haven't yet come to terms with.



I am also confronted by my Mask of Caretaker. This Mask convinces me I can meet all the needs of the people in my life. Working at Roots I gain great clarity about this fallacy: I cannot rescue any of these folks. I can only be a part of their process for about 3 hours a month. At this point I meet the Boss of all Masks: the Mask of Fusion. This mask, which the Mask of Caretaker denies and tried to cover up reminds me I do not have endless energy. I could not provide treatments for all the Roots guests even if they let me stay all night. These night shifts help me to discover a deeper level of understanding my own inner workings.

Somehow, at Roots Young Adult Shelter, on a small landing raised above the main area of the shelter by just five shallow steps, AHAC volunteers and I are able to create a space where the shelter's homeless youth can take off their masks. Recently we have been offering chair massage treatments twice a month. As with many paying massage clients, it takes guests a few minutes of awkward conversation and unconsciously tensing their muscles to touch before they can relax. Then the magic happens: they get to be themselves. They get to drop the Mask of Toughness that protects them from robbery. They get to drop the Mask of Apathy that protects from emotional hurt. They get to drop the Mask of Weariness and experience comfort and well-being for a few minutes. They are more able to express their true selves.

I too get to look at my masks at clinic. I am confronted by my Mask of Entitlement as I remember that while my income is low, I am privileged feel empowered and sleep each night in security and peace.

Clinic at Roots happens late, from 9pm-10:30pm. Every evening before clinic I think to myself, "What am I doing traipsing out across town on a Tuesday night to go give massage? I am always so tired the next morning." And at the end of every shift, as I pack up the massage chair, I am bubbling over with excitement over the lessons learned that night and experiences shared. These feelings and lessons linger on through the next day propelling me forward through my work day. I am so grateful to AHAC & its volunteers, the Roots staff, and most of all to the Roots guests for teaching me so much.

-Saralynn Finn, November 2010

Request for Donations

Are you planning to get a new computer? Did you already upgrade and have an older laptop lingering around your home or office?

Make a tax deductible donation of your old computer to AHAC and help us increase our capacity to provide alternative healthcare to homeless and low income folks in our community!

Email us today at ahacseattle@gmail.com for more information.

As of June 2010 55 AHAC volunteer practitioners have delivered 5523 treatments to 2019 clients!

This includes 1430 massage treatments, and approximately 4,000 naturopathic and acupuncture treatments!

Thank you to all of our volunteers & donors who made these services possible!



Soothe your Cough with Alliums

For centuries, herbs from the Allium family (onion, garlic...etc) have been praised for their incredible immune supportive properties. As winter approaches, this very easy onion syrup recipe can be prepared in your kitchen and added to tea or taken directly for an excellent immune boost. Even kids enjoy the taste!!

Onion Syrup Recipe:

One large sliced onion, 2 sliced cloves of garlic, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup raw honey or sugar. Layer the onion, garlic and sweetener alternately in a covered container (canning jar, pyrex container... etc).

Let stand 2-3 days or bake 2 or more hours at low heat. Strain and use as is, or add to herbal tea for increased immune support. Can store covered and refrigerated for one month.



AHAC Steering committee would like to say good by to Marty Hartman and thank her for her contributions to AHAC as Steering Committee member.

We would also like to invite you and those you know to consider joining us on the Steering Committee. Specific roles and talents that would contribute to our organization are:

- a *Community Ambassador*, to promote AHAC's mission and events and help us thrive
- an established *Health Care Provider* who integrates service into his or her practice
- a *Grant Writer*, to help with growth
- a *Treasurer* with accounting skills, including financial visioning and donation management
- a *Leader* who will join us in identifying and assigning all the tasks we must do to keep AHAC healthy

Most of all we seek people with
creativity and dedication,
to help AHAC be financially viable and sustain itself.

Interested applicants should contact the Steering Committee at ahacsteeringcommittee@gmail.com for more information about our application process.

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