

## Tools for healing

Petaluma's IONS publishes comprehensive book on consciousness and healing

By JANE LOTT  
FOR THE ARGUS-COURIER

For the past 30 years, scientists at the Institute of Noetic Sciences (IONS) in Petaluma have been exploring the issue of consciousness and healing as part of the institute's mission to expand the understanding of human possibility. Their approach, known as integrative medicine, takes a holistic view of human health and existence.

The institute takes its name from the Greek word "nous" which refers to inner knowing. IONS research teams are attempting to find ways in which the inner knowing of the body and the outer knowing of science can be integrated for a new vision of medicine. It is a vast and complex subject.

Explaining this integral approach to healing is no easy task. But Marilyn Schlitz, vice president of IONS research and education, has attempted to do just that. As co-editor and a contributing author of the institute's latest book, titled "Consciousness and Healing: Integral Approaches to Mind-Body Medicine," Schlitz, along with research associate Tina Amorok and colleague Marc Micozzi, has collected nearly 50 philosophical essays on the subject.

The selections, written by such noted experts as Joseph Chilton Pearce, Jon Kabat-Zinn, Larry Dossey, and a host of others, encompass everything from a definition of integral medicine to a future model of social transformation. The collection is a



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**Dr. Marilyn Schlitz is vice president of research and education at the Institute of Noetic Sciences.**

comprehensive -- and integrated -- study of the subject. Schlitz, who was appointed by Congress to the advisory board of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, calls the book "a road map for the next 30 years."

In a way, too, it is a call to action.

Recognizing the crisis of the healthcare industry, these healthcare practitioners, scientists and doctors are offering a new paradigm of what medicine and healing can become.

"Because of the economic incentive (in modern medicine), we've lost the philosophical," said Schlitz.

### CONSCIOUSNESS AND HEALING

■ "Consciousness and Healing: Integral Approaches to Mind-Body Medicine" is available at bookstores such as Copperfield's and at the IONS Web site at [www.noetic.org](http://www.noetic.org). Cost is \$24.95 plus tax.

■ Petaluma healthcare providers will have an opportunity to participate in a consciousness and healing retreat at the institute from April 2 through 8. A presentation by Dr. Marilyn Schlitz and others will focus on the role of consciousness in health and healing. For more information, visit the IONS Web site at [www.noetic.org](http://www.noetic.org).

■ From June 4 through 10, the Institute of Noetic Sciences offers a five-day voyage into consciousness presented by the Monroe Institute. Called Gateway Voyage, this experience focuses on healing via progressively deeper states of altered consciousness. For more information, contact the Monroe Institute at (866) 881-3440 or visit the IONS Web site.

"What we're advocating is to begin to look at new ways."

The book delves deep into possibilities; and because of the magnitude of the subject, it requires a certain commitment to read. But the authors have tried, they say, to make it "user-friendly" -- even including a DVD of interviews with some of the authors.

"We're trying to take what can be a pretty lofty topicÉ," said Schlitz, and "translate it into socially relevant applications."

One of these applications is a project with Petaluma's Committee on the Shelterless, with the goal of helping participants develop their internal capacities.

Another is a study under an NIH grant of the impact of distant healing -- in other words, the power of prayer in medicine.

"Each of these things is small," Schlitz admitted. "But they contribute to a larger whole."

In much the same way, the work of some of the book's contributors also adds to the greater body of knowledge of body-mind healing. Marin octogenarian Anna Halprin is a good example.

A dancer and teacher for most of her life, Halprin often used an art technique in her classes for enhancing creativity. She asked students to draw themselves, then to dance their drawings.

One day she found in her own drawing a large black mass, which she refused to dance into reality. Later, when she had it checked out, doctors found malignant cancer. Reasoning that she discovered the cancer through her expressive art, Halprin decided she would assist her doctors in eliminating it through that same expressive art.

Twenty years later and still cancer-free, Halprin teaches others with life-threatening illnesses how to heal. Not necessarily to cure themselves -- that is the realm of medicine. But healing, she says, is a different matter.

"Those who have lived through the trauma of facing death gain insight into life," Halprin says in her essay.

To her, dance is a means of affirming your life force - - no matter how long you have left to live.

Halprin's form of physical therapy is just one of the ways the old paradigm of medicine is shifting towards the integrated paradigm IONS is studying.

"Galvanizing a constituency of skilled, capable, empowered people can really begin to shift what is possible," Schlitz explained.

"What we've tried to do at the Institute of Noetic Sciences is create a coalition of like-minded people who represent a voice of hope and reason for something better that can be born."

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