



DR. GLADYS TAYLOR MCGAREY: MOTHER OF HOLISTIC MEDICINE; MOTHER TO A FAMILY OF HEALING

BY BLAKE HEMMEL

Internationally recognized as the Mother of Holistic Medicine, Dr. Gladys Taylor McGarey has contributed extensively to the world of healing. Helping found the American Holistic Medical Association, the Academy of Parapsychology and Medicine, and the Foundation for Living Medicine, Dr. Gladys has long been a pioneer in the field of natural medicine. She also helped create the first acupuncture symposium in the U.S. in 1972 at Stanford University.

Dr. Gladys spent her childhood in the jungles of north India, where her parents were medical missionaries. Inspired by her parents, as early as age two she decided she wanted to be a doctor; several of her siblings and children have followed the same path. “It’s genetic. It’s kind of a family disease,” she joked.

She moved to the U.S. when she was 15 and attended medical school in the Midwest. She met her husband in Ohio and they opened their own practice in her husband’s hometown, before moving to Arizona in 1955 and setting roots. Since then, she has traveled the world teaching and inspiring others.

At 96 years young, Dr. Gladys currently practices and sees patients in Scottsdale at the Foundation for Living Medicine, which she created in 1989, formally called The Gladys Taylor McGarey Medical Foundation. The Foundation’s initial purpose was to bring together holistic and allopathic medicine through research and education. It now promotes physician training, mindfulness, and an approach to healing which encompasses the whole person spiritually, emotionally and physically.

“I think that there’s a shift in our consciousness, in the consciousness of humanity, from the masculine face of medicine to the feminine face of medicine,” said Dr. Gladys. “The masculine face of medicine is a war machine. Everything that I was taught in medical school had to do with killing: you kill bacteria, you eradicate AIDS, you detonate diabetes,” she continued.

When Dr. Gladys described Living Medicine, she explained that it is founded on what she calls “the Five I’s.” “The first,” she said, “is Life. If you’re not alive, then none of this counts anyway. The second is Love. You don’t get any real healing without love. The third is Laughter. You have to be able to laugh at things, otherwise the world just gets too heavy. The fourth is Labor. You have to be willing to work at it. And the fifth is Listening. We have to listen to ourselves. We have to

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In addition to the Five I's, natural birthing is another passion for Dr. Gladys. Birth, she said, “has become so much of a process that we don't think we have any control over it. We even talk about ‘delivering’ babies. You deliver pizza, you don't deliver a baby,” she continued. She advocates passionately for conscious conception, conscious birthing, and bringing the power away from doctors and back to women during birth.

In addition, another important aspect of Living Medicine is that it embraces pain, according to Dr. Gladys. “Pain is a messenger,” she said. “Without pain, you're either unconscious or you're dead. And yet, look at all the ads on TV. How many of them are telling you to get rid of pain? We need

to deal with pain, we need to work with it.”

When asked of which accomplishment she's most proud, Dr. Gladys answered, “My children.” In the same way that she carried out her family legacy in a unique way, Dr. Gladys' six children have all paved their own paths to healing and medicine. “In spite of the fact that I was busy doing my work,” she said, “they've all been able to catch the flame and do it in their own way.”

Looking forward, Dr. Gladys is excited to be working with Red Mountain Community College to create the first ever Center for Living Medicine in the coming years. There, she hopes to educate students on Living Medicine and begin implementing holistic practices.

Dr. Gladys is also the author of five books: “Living Medicine,” “Born to Live,” “The Physician Within You,” “The World Needs Old Ladies,” and her latest, “Budhu's Path to Enlightenment.” She has also received numerous awards and served on many boards and associations. ■

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For more information about Dr. Gladys and the Foundation for Living Medicine, visit thefoundationforlivingmedicine.org

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