



Susan Hirshberg, owner

# LIVING WITH DELIGHT AT HEART OF THE TREE

BY **REBECCA SCHNEIDEREIT** PHOTOS **TOM ENGLAND**

**A**t 2045 Harvard Street, you'll find Heart of the Tree, a space devoted to personal support, healing and positive growth. It's an enterprise presided over by Susan Hirshberg: a Reiki master, certified craniosacral therapy practitioner, animal behaviourist and general devotee of good health. "It's a very sweet space," Susan says of Heart of the Tree. "One of the things I hope people feel is just

this warmth and welcoming energy. [We're] accepting of people just the way they are... whoever you are, I'm so glad you're here."

Susan's two primary therapeutic approaches at Heart of the Tree—Reiki and Craniosacral Therapy—are alternative light touch therapies designed to augment an individual's capacity for natural healing. Although

the two schools have different origins, Susan can combine both to deliver a gentle but powerful experience to clients, who visit her with complaints from chronic pain to insomnia to unmanageable stress. "My hands are trained a bit like a wine taster's tongue," Susan says of her practice. "They're able to pick up very subtle things." Clients enjoy a deep state of relaxation while Susan helps them gain access to their innate ability to heal themselves.



"It's all about listening and forming this very compelling connection between someone's body and my hands."

One of Heart of the Tree's most unique qualities is Susan's willingness to reshape and personalize her treatments according to each client's desires and needs. Having an unusual professional background herself, Susan understands the importance of suiting the therapy to the client, and she has the resources to accomplish such customization. "I was originally a scientist," Susan explains. "I bring a lot of those other kinds of ideas into wherever it is I work." Thus, Heart of the Tree currently offers animal behaviour therapy, as well as various classes (including a Reiki class for clients who wish to become better attuned to the healing art) in addition to therapeutic treatment.

The newest offering at Heart of the Tree is the WiseHeart program. Susan, who created WiseHeart, describes it as "a long term, highly customized program to help people find their inner truth so they can live with delight." In the WiseHeart program (which takes place over the course of about a year), clients concentrate on making profound changes to the specific issues which will make the most difference in their lives. Such changes can then ripple out, vastly increasing the return on the value of an investment in one's future. The WiseHeart program may involve Reiki and Craniosacral Therapy; Body Voice, or movement therapy; dramatic therapy and behavioural interpretation, classes of various kinds—or more practical life skills, such as conquering household clutter. "These programs are not based on my ideas about what a client needs,"

Susan says. "Instead, we work together to find those deep body truths which everyone holds about where they need to be, and how they want to get there. Because each client is a different person, the specifics of the program will vary. But what is true for everyone is that the program is all about you: your desires, your needs, and your solutions."

In today's world, living with delight is something we can all hope to rediscover, and at Heart of the Tree, Susan Hirshberg helps turn those hopes into real-life journeys. FLH

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