

Allah's Waves

By Liza Borodkin, C.S.T.

It's midnight. Jamilla's day was long; tomorrow begins early, and might even be longer. She looks longingly at her bed, but not just yet... she first rolls out a small carpet, kneels down, and prays to Allah. One of the most powerful women in Bahrain, educated in the West, recipient of many international awards, the only woman in the entire country to have served in the military – she stays awake until midnight for her prayer.

People change when what they do no longer works for them. Or when no one can help them. Or when the new country in the Persian Gulf that hasn't yet grown a soul amidst its luxury Mercedes' and tall office buildings hosts people whose soul history goes back to the Conception of the Earth. In the big rush for money, somehow no one has thought of adequate medical care. As long as you can roll out a small carpet and drop to your knees, Allah will take care of you.

And so they come, fearful of Black Magic, skeptical to the bone, because to be fair – who wouldn't be skeptical about putting themselves in the hands of a western woman whose practice is a word hardly any Bahraini can pronounce – Craniosacral what?

Day after my arrival, Jamilla, also the founder of Bahrain's natural healthcare center called Health House arranges for a public presentation. She gets the basic download from me the day before, as she herself has no clue about CST, but heard enough from a Bahraini woman I had treated on distance to invite me to work at her center for a week. That said it all – you could cover your office walls with awards, recognitions, and diplomas, you could write an eloquent article and publish it in the mainstream newspaper, you could create the sexiest glossy brochure with big white-teethed smiles and serene beach views, but what it takes around here is a word – a recommendation from a friend, neighbor, doctor... In the town of only 700 thousand people, the news spreads lightening-fast: someone can help me. When I finished that morning's talk attended by only 15 people, I didn't realize that the words Stillness, Recognition, Listening would light up their eyes and draw them ALL in. And then their family members, then friends, then neighbors, then colleagues, then their own patients. On that first day, people were coming non-stop until 9 pm. The Pilgrimage to the Tide has begun.

In the next 13 days, there were 90 sessions, two half-day introduction workshops, and a waiting list I could fulfill only at the expense of sleep.

It's my 9th session today, I don't have it in me to turn away an 80-year old woman who after the 2nd session got up from a prayer without pain for the first time in years. She's almost begging. On the tenth hour, I don't know how I can possibly help her, or even be present with my inability to help, but she's relentless. She doesn't know what the hell I had done, how this “thing” works, but she wants to walk. Period. I remember our first meeting. The dark silhouette of the black burka walked through the door– a man supporting her on the right, a man on the left, another man just-in-case. She needed them all to move forward. Or just to move. Her son stayed in the room to translate from Arabic. She doesn't speak a word of English, but her eyes do. So eloquently. Her lower back has been hurting for years, she says. Oh, yes, and the blood pressure. We helped her get onto the table (not an easy task). The tide came in. The magic started. She felt something happening and began to pray. Suddenly the body felt cold, legs numb, she was no longer there. I put my hand to the chest and said “breath”. She didn't understand a word of what I said, but my deliberate asthmatic-sounding inhales and exhales got the point across. I had to repeat this about 10 more times. She walked (!) out the door after the session, met her family, and said to them “I felt blood pulsing and pushing through my veins. I don't know what happened, but I feel better”. After the 2nd session she got up from a prayer unassisted, without pain. Perhaps for the 1st time, when she talked

to Allah, she was there for the conversation. She already brought her daughter, son, daughter-in-law, and grand-daughter. This is just one story. And for that Bahraini visit, it was typical. From desperation and through faith, the minds were soaking up the work.

“Mom is ecstatic”, said Salwa on her return visit. “After seeing you, she slept for seven and a half hours without waking, first time in over 5 years. She's been sleeping like this for the last three days. She's coming to see you again tomorrow”. Salama the Mom walks in with a big smile on her face. “Oh, Liz, you would not believe, I've slept so well, so well...”. She lies down on the table. The same pattern as last time recurs – as soon as she begins to drop in, she promptly kicks herself out of it. Then, after 40 minutes of this in-and-out struggle, there is suddenly the Silence. The big surprise, but then not at the same time. It must have lasted a whole minute. Whole Endless Minute. She opens her eyes, not flutters them open, but slowly lifts the eyelids. “You know how my Mom died?”, she says... “It was five years ago. I talked to her on the phone late one night. I asked, “Mom is everything ok?” She said, “Yes, daughter, everything is fine. Sleep well, my dear”. Next morning, early, I got a phone call. Mom had passed away during the night”. A little tear-wide stream rolled out the corner of her eye. “I listen at night now. What if something happens to one of my children? Or grandchildren?” I let her digest that thought for the next few eloquently-quiet moments. She knows now why she doesn't sleep.

It almost seems like discrimination to choose just these stories, and not others. Why these people? Well, why not? The truth is every story was so rich, so beautiful, so difficult, and yet so simple. Simple in its tenaciousness to bring me back to the same insight over and over - that through Stillness is the only way to do this work. It's worth quoting what people were saying: I feel like a new person... I feel re-born and happy to be back into life (after a session with strong birth ignition overtones)... I felt seen beyond my masks... I am a worthy person; no one should have to diminish themselves (from a Western woman who had married a Bahraini and was forced to please the in-laws and pray 5 times a day)...

As it often goes, some folks wanted to learn the work. Amongst those in the group, there are 3 M.D.'s who want to incorporate it into their practice. There are two daughters who want to work on their sick fathers. There is a teacher who wants to help autistic children in her specialized school. During the very first exchange session (a whole two hours after the first workshop began), one patient student went into a full-on birth process, while the practitioner described it in detail as he was holding her “baby-like body”. Another student did her first session on her father the day after the workshop. She said Dad slept for 12 hours without waking afterwards. Good lesson in humility. This is how quickly the new generation learns. There is a chance that humanity will heal itself even sooner than we hope.