Abstract

Homeopaths, herbal healers, Curaderos, parteras and New Age seem to be co-existing on many level.

We have entered an age in which people are taking more responsibility for their health. We have learned that doctors do not belong on pedestals and that they are not miracle workers who can mend what ails us. As we enter this new age, ancient medical knowledge surfaces up to conventional society and this ancient medicine, usually of an indigenous origin, heal the mind, body, and soul. According to many curanderos and New Age healers there are illnesses that doctors can do little to alleviate because these illnesses resonate deep within the soul. As with much of indigenous medicines, curanderismo as does New Age healing, carries its supply of stereotypes. Some people think that it is the medicine of poor and ignorant Mexicans, or they think that curanderas are witches that can bring back former lovers and put hexes on people. While this may be true that there are curanderas who cheat people, an authentic curandera will treat a patient with soul retrieval rituals, platicas, massage, herbs, and other forms of alternative healing. She or he will not charge thousands of dollars, and sometimes they will accept trade for the healing. In curanderismo, it is not the illness that is treated but the person. According to curanderas who practice authentic healing it is based on love and not fear.

This paper will look at interviews conducted on homeopaths, herbal healers, and curanderos of different types in Mexico. Special attention will be given to the discourse of these healers and where they see their place in medicinal practice today...some combining new age practices while others all together staying away from these ideas.