

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR: *Kimberly LaRue, 45*

Life coach uses hands-on method for total healing

By GRETEL SARMIENTO
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How do you tell people to keep their minds peaceful and in the present when the present is so distressing and dark?

Leave it to Kimberly LaRue, 45.

Her job is not to be unrealistic but to help people cope better with the times.

"The thoughts are like clouds and the mind is like the sky. People need to come back to that big open sky," she said. "But that is not something that we are taught."

LaRue is a licensed massage therapist, yoga instructor and holistic life coach, who holds yoga and meditation classes at Palm Beach Dharma Center in Lake Worth.

A native of Chicago, she now lives in West Palm Beach with her husband of two years, Eric Holmgren, who is a personal trainer. She also teaches yoga and water aerobics at The Breakers, where she's worked for the past two years. On Wednesdays, you can find her at the Sari Share Center for Integrative Cancer Care in West Palm Beach, where she teaches patients and caregivers how to meditate and release tension.

The mind, she said, is the biggest obstacle when it comes to freedom and harmony.

"People can go to prison and be liberated in their minds. Some people who never go to prison live imprisoned all their lives," she said.

It's also very important that people find sometime to connect with themselves.

"They get caught up in the circle of life and working, working, working," she said. "People even put work before themselves."



ELIZA GUTIERREZ/Staff Photographer

Kimberly LaRue, a West Palm Beach resident, is a licensed massage therapist, yoga instructor and holistic life coach. She teaches at Palm Beach Dharma Center in Lake Worth.

LaRue admits she does too, but with discipline the mind can be trained.

One simple exercise is the three-step meditation.

- 1) Sit or lie down and begin to relax your body.
- 2) Relax your breath. Make it even and calm.
- 3) Relax your mind.

Alternative healing, she believes, should be approached as additions, not substitutes, to traditional medicine. Advanced technology is useful and can diagnose things she can't. But sometimes traditional medicine gets too technical.

"I do hands-on healing. I pay attention to people," she said. "Doctors don't even touch people anymore."

LaRue and her husband are organizing the next exotic yoga retreat to Bali, Indonesia. This is the second year they offer it. Those interested can visit www.exoticyogaretreat.com
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Q&A What's the best advice you've been given?

"Always be joyful. To live our lives with love and kindness."

Who is your hero or someone who has inspired you?

"My husband, Eric Holmgren. We met one month after I moved here in 2004. I've seen him become an incredible person. He's on my side."

What has been your biggest challenge?

"My mind. It takes work every day."

What is your favorite childhood memory?

"Running through big open fields and in the forest, in the suburbs. Being surrounded by nature, flowers and trees."

What's your favorite junk food?

"Chocolate chip cookies. French fries are my favorite comfort food. But my favorite snack food is mangosteens. They are pure heaven."

And what event in history would you like to have witnessed?

"I really am enjoying history as it is right now."