

Lomilomi Kumu Offers Insights on Spirit and Body Connection

by Kate Brenton

“Lomilomi is a way of life,” Kumu Alva Andrews explains simply at his clinic in Waimānalo. “What you see is the oil and the fluidity of the strokes, what you experience is the connection that the practitioner has to something larger than themselves. It is the integrity and humility of the practitioner that feeds the beauty of her craft.”

Alva Andrews is a native of Hawai‘i, a father, grandfather and Vietnam War Veteran. He has worked as a counselor to native Hawaiian court adjudicated, and incarcerated youth for Hui Kū ‘Ōpio o ke Ko‘olau. From a young age, Uncle Alva was

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exposed to the practices of health and healing through his grandparents, and especially his grandmother. As he grew older, his cultural education progressed to Kumu Lomilomi, with a particular focus in Hawaiian bone-setting. On O‘ahu, he shares with clients and students the practices and philosophies of Pā Ola Hawai‘i: “A Holistic Hawaiian Approach to Quick Healing.” He explains the idea of quick healing to be focused in your intent as a practitioner to alleviate the current pain in the body.

“There are spiritual, mental, and emotional dimensions that must be factored into the holistic approach that we as Hawaiians use,” Kumu Alva continues. “For us then, lōkahi, or unity is what is needed to ensure permanent good health. We firmly believe, as our ancestors do, that the body cannot be healed

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until the spirit is healed.”

This is the key to what Uncle Alva teaches and practices. “Sometimes, people come to see us and complain of a back issue and wonder why we work on their shoulders,” Uncle Alva shifts his weight, smiles and leans closer, “because that back is a part of one body, and so is the shoulder. We address the whole body, as we address the whole person. When a client walks into our clinic we sit, kūkākūkā, get acquainted, and listen to what is happening in their whole life, not just look at a sore foot and pretend it is not attached to a person, which includes their life, their happiness, their stress, their diet, and



John Zak

Kumu Alva Andrews shares Pā Ola Hawai‘i: A Holistic Hawaiian Approach to Quick Healing.

so on. A holistic approach to healing, means we address all of our client, body, mind and spirit (‘ano), and with the client’s assistance we journey to bring all of these aspects back to balance.”

Uncle Alva also stresses the importance of teaching Hawaiian culture and practices such as lomi, hula, and ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i to maintain the balance and pride as a cultural people. “We have kūpuna with priceless wisdom and we need to listen to them, to honor them. They are the way for our future. Kaua‘i’s has a most precious resource, in Auntie Angeline. She is legendary; what she has done in her lifetime is an amazing achievement for all of us. Auntie Angeline is the embodiment of lomi: love.”

When asked about his recent journey to Kaua‘i visiting clients, friends and students Uncle Alva’s smile widens, “Kaua‘i is such a beautiful island with the most wonderful people. I was so honored by the warm welcome we received, and cannot wait to return.”

Kate Brenton resides on Kaua‘i as a Lomilomi practitioner, writer and teacher. Follow her at wisdomofone.com.