

## Trip to New Orleans

November 20th - November 29th, 2005

Greetings. How is everybody doing lately? I forwarded the email of the Acupuncturists Without Borders about three months ago. I went to New Orleans with them last month. I met Diane Eggleston from Arizona who is also a Toyohari member. It's so nice to see a very familiar face. I would like to share my thoughts and how I used Toyohari technique down there. First of all, seeing the large scale of devastation was simply mind boggling. I have never expected to have such a strong impact on me until I saw the destruction and felt the damages in my hands. I stayed in "Tent city" set up by FEMA in Algiers. There are two full meals plus sack a lunch, hot shower in a trailer, outdoor sink, port-a-potty, full-service laundry, army cot, air conditioned room, and a recreation tent with a 50 inch television that was turned on all the time. You need a pair of earplugs to block the generator noise when you go to bed. Blackwater securities were at the gate checking the people's ID. Roughly 200 people lived in the Tent city: workers from the City of Portland Water Dept., Common Ground medical staff ([www.commongroundrelief.org](http://www.commongroundrelief.org)), massage therapist, Zen Buddhist instructor, Relief workers, Police Ice (narcotic officers), and Blackwater security guards. Surprisingly everyone was very friendly and pleasant. They kept the facility very clean. So far, it was very comfortable to stay considering what's going on out there.

The streets of New Orleans were just astonishing. The streets were full of trash such as household electro items and furniture. And broken glasses were everywhere on the street. Cars were covered by mud and dust. I was told that 300,000 cars were abandoned. Many traffic lights were not working. Huge trees were ripped from the ground and boats sat in the middle of the street. Spray paints on the houses said; "u loot, u dead", "1 dog trapped under", "will be back soon", "R.I.P." and much more. It had a very distinguished smell in the 9th ward - it's muddy, moldy and what else..? Driving in the evening in the 9th ward was very challenging without any streetlights, and often the street signs were gone or facing to a different direction due to the hurricane. It was the creepiest feeling I ever felt. Militarily cars, police, sheriff, and national guards were everywhere in town. In the middle of the disastrous areas, someone remodeled a few houses very nicely. It had a for sale sign of \$169,000.

Here are a few people I've met among many: At Hyatt hotel (treating for FEMA and 911 employee), a female National Guard with a gun greeted us at front lobby. It was an unexpected scene. At this point, the unusual scene became normal. I approached a Militarily Police man to try acupuncture and asked if I was scaring him by needles. Then I realized that he had a gun. Well, who is scarier now? A couple stood by our treatment area at FEMA site in the 9th ward, questioned what we were doing. We explained them good for stress reduction and post-trauma. She immediately started to cry, and he had watery eyes. I asked them, "Would you like to try?". They nodded. As soon as the wife sat down on the chair, she put on her sunglasses and saw a few drops of tears running on her cheek. I couldn't say a word (I was about to cry too). I glanced her husband. He had tears in his eyes and told me "she's going through a lot". They lost everything. A female staff at Covenant House was smiling although she lost everything. She got separated from her daughter and didn't know where she has gone for 4 days. After they got reunited, it didn't matter what she's lost. A 911 worker at Hyatt, she had to stay and

work. Her family except her father evacuated safely. She still doesn't know where he is. Another 911 worker stayed with a caller until she drowned. The caller asked to stay with her. A homeless man was obviously drunk and incoherent at Washington Park. He kept mumbling with an alcohol bottle in his hand, "you don't understand, I was swimming. Water was coming." A relief worker at Tent city, he said, "there is a reason for every action." It's another challenge that he has to go through in his life. He just has to keep moving forward. A man shot and killed two men after he called help to Police. Police told him to protect himself.

The clinic sites for AWB are Common Ground clinics sites (in Algiers, in the 9th ward and in Kenner), Covenant House (homeless), Odyssey House (halfway house), Hyatt Hotel, Tent city, Vietnamese Church in Baton Rouge and in New Orleans East, Animal Rescue of New Orleans, and Cruise boat. And the clinic sites are still growing due to the local demand. AWB set up the treatment style based on a NADA ([www.acudetox.com](http://www.acudetox.com) <<http://www.acudetox.com/>> ) protocol. It's primarily an auricular acupuncture for stress related symptoms, post-trauma and drug addiction. This type of treatment was used for many fire fighters, police, rescue workers and residents of New York after the 911.

I never leave my home without my moxa kit & Yanagishita teishin. I also took the gold plated sphere balls for Kikei treatment. I expected to treat not only the victims or relief workers but also the acupuncturists. I never had a chance to do Kikei treatment. But whenever I had a chance, I took people's pulse. I knew that I would see many post-trauma & psychologically disturbed people. I contacted Yanagishita sensei before I left and asked him some advice. With that information handy, I treated a several people using the Teishin. Many people's pulse quality was sunken and deficient considering we treated many people at outdoor parking lots and warm climate.

I can't tell how much the extra Teishin treatment helped on those people but I was satisfied to feel the balanced pulse quality (or it could be my imagination?). Talking about Katakori, people have serious one down there. I also did a lot of rice grain moxa too. It was challenging when it was outdoor & windy. Because of the environment and circumstances, many people were suffering by the respiratory conditions and muscle ache. I didn't even think of treating the toothache condition until I saw a lady whose dentist has gone somewhere. There was a lady who graduated from the I Ching school in England. She was also taking pulses and doing something. We never really had a chance to discuss about that. Anyway

Although their initial reaction often was "what? Acupuncture?#", they liked the treatment. People were open to share their thoughts and we were there to listen and give them human touch. There is nothing you can compare what the human hands can do to each other. They were so appreciative for us. Some gave us a huge hug, and even gave us donation that we don't expect from the displaced residents. It was always nice to see their smiles after the treatment.

The last day I saw a butterfly flying in the Tent city. How peaceful is that? I also saw only flower, a few sunflowers bloomed by the I-10 ramp in downtown. They were surrounded by the shuttered house, mud and dust. How did they survive after the hurricanes? Our Ki is all connected. As Meridian Therapist,

we constantly talk about regulating the Ki. As long as the nature is so imbalanced, how can we keep our Ki balanced? What are we supposed to learn from this?

I am very humble. This trip taught me life in depth from the various degrees. What does really matter to you in this life? I am very inspired by their courage and strength. That's something you can't describe in words. You must experience it.

If you or you know of someone are thinking or planning to go there to help, please do so. It's very rewarding.

I was fortunate that I was able to go. I'm glad that I could be part of their healing process. Best wishes to you all,

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