

JAHARA[®] JOURNAL

10th Anniversary Edition

2007 – 2008



Jahara[®]

The Gentle Power of Water™

welcome

Welcome to the Jahara® Journal – 10th anniversary edition! It has been a wonderful journey receiving articles and photos and slowly creating this great collaboration of stories and research about the Jahara® method. It is my honor to present to you articles written by some of our certified Jahara® Specialists. They represent just a handful of the many specialists who practice Jahara® in their lives and in their profession. Enjoy.

CHANTELLE JAHARA PINTO
Editor

Levitating Against The Current

Mario Jahara AUSTRALIA

Many years ago, while I was living in the US, I met a Native American priestess. In the following months, I saw her many times. She was old, witty, and gracious – and she knew many stories. Still today, when I start to feel that humans are about to get crushed under their own heaviness, I remember her very favourite: the shaman’s legend.

Whenever facing circumstances that threatened the tribe’s existence, shamans would nullify their own weight, so to fly to another dimension. From such an advantage point, they could see the situation from a different perspective, and then find strength to change reality.

Working in the water, I often have dreams of flying in slow-motion through the sky. In fact, if we know how to hold our body so to unleash the upward thrust of our structural muscles, no other environment can give us humans the sensation of flying as the water.

Ten years back I started Jahara®. Then, like now, I had a clear vision about it. I wanted a method that would reflect a good-for-all spirit, in which mutual support would prevail over competitiveness. Loyalty and friendship would be valued over personal ambition.

For me, such choices are nothing but a matter of intelligence. These values are more significant to the heart and soul than any professional success one could individually achieve. Hence, the Jahara® system’s ultimate concept is Invisibility – when the ego of the therapist, or specialist, is in the background.

In an age where people seem to be so self-absorbed, and one’s idea of ethics is often shaped by one’s self-interest, I was well aware that with the Jahara® ideal I was going to be swimming against the current. Nonetheless, this is my truth, and I was ready to live it alone, if it attracted no one.

We are now celebrating 10 years of Jahara®, and I have plenty of company! To each one who has in any way supported the Jahara® vision, from the heart I say, *thank you. Welcome to our flying school!*

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Jahara® And The Medicine Wheel Sheila Pyatt UNITED STATES

The concept of the Medicine Wheel is an ancient one. Variations on a universal theme can be found world-wide, from the Far East to the lands of the Celts and Slavs. Here in the Americas, the Medicine Wheel has provided Native American people with a flexible tool to aid them in understanding life in all of its myriad expressions. In my study of the Medicine Wheel over many years, I have discovered its value in helping me to achieve a deeper understanding of Jahara®. We can overlay the concepts of Jahara® on the Wheel and experience them in a unique manner.

The Medicine Wheel can be understood as a mirror. As the Old People say, “The Universe is the Mirror of the People and each person is a mirror to every other person.” Hyemeyohsts Storm tells us that any idea, person or object can be a Medicine Wheel, a Mirror for man. The tiniest flower can be such a mirror, as can a wolf, a story, a touch, a religion or a mountaintop.

The circle of power – the Medicine Wheel – served many purposes: It was a map of the Mind. It was a chart to lead its user to the discovery of the Inner Self, to the divinity within, and to knowledge of the true purpose

of one’s life. The shape of the Wheel is a very positive, energy-filled symbol that grows in the mind of the person. The reason for this is that the Circle is primal to Creation. It is the shape of all things created.” (*Lightning Bolt, pages 200-203*)

Although we are born with an orientation to a specific direction, and experience life from that perspective, it is essential that we travel to all four directions continually to maintain balance and alignment in our lives.

The representation of the Sacred Wheel and the assignment of the gifts and characteristics of each of the Four Directions differ according to Nation and tribe. Using the format presented to me by my teachers, we will place the five basic concepts of Jahara® on the Sacred Wheel. You may want to visualize yourself giving a Jahara® session, perhaps in a warm spring, during your favourite time of day.

With a slow, gentle footwork of 1–2–3 circle we can form a wheel or sacred hoop. As we turn toward each of the four directions there is a gift for us to receive.

Support

In the South I experience the realm of the physical as I feel the alignment of my client’s body and the softening of tense muscles. As the water erases age I experience the innocence and trust of the child cradled in my arms. It supports me as I support my client.

Adaptability

In the West lies the realm of the adolescent. It is the direction of death, rebirth and transformation. I flow through the element of water, not as doer, but as one who shares this slow, sacred dance with the client. I adapt to his needs in the moment.

Effortlessness

In the North lies the realm of the adult. It is the direction of Spirit and wisdom. I breathe deeply of the air element. I relax and work to the rhythm of my breath. I am learning to get out of my own way, to let myself be and be led. I experience effortlessness.

Expansion

In the East lies the realm of the old, wise ones. It is the direction of memory, understanding and illumination. Here too, lives the heyoka, the Sacred Clown who does things backward. I have opened my arms wide to hold everything, to want everything, to know everything. Now I let go so I can hold all. My expansion is joyful and I laugh with the Sacred Clown.

Invisibility

In the center of this Sacred Wheel I gently land my client, he returning to himself, and I to my own essence. He has not seen me because I have disappeared in the water. I have become the water.

As the symbol of the Medicine Wheel or “Sacred Hoop of Existence” grows within me, so do the concepts of Jahara® deepen and mature in my life and practice.

I am full. Ho!

Sheila Pyatt is a Jahara® Specialist and nurse who has been studying Jahara® since its beginning in 1996. “I experience being a nurse at its deepest level when I work with special needs children in the water or give a Jahara® session.” Currently Sheila is developing a Hydrotherapy Program incorporating Jahara® at the George Mark Children’s House in San Leandro, California. This Center provides end of life care for children with terminal illnesses as well as respite care for children with disabilities.

Yoni has been receiving hour-long Jahara® sessions with me once a week since 2000. When we began working together, he was a 24 year old man diagnosed with Athetosis Cerebral Palsy. He wanted to manage and improve his physical comfort, and minimize any advance of his symptoms. Yoni was also seeing a physician, Dr. Paul Jordan*, in the United States, and in this article I will refer to his evaluations on Yoni's progress.

In the beginning of our work together, Yoni did not feel comfortable in the water and I had to provide a lot of support for him, in a close TCS™. He never spoke to me about how he felt in the sessions; however, I could easily observe physical changes, such as his breathing becoming deeper and his body softening during the session.

Over these past six years of working with him in the water, I have made the assumption that Yoni has found a place of silence in his body in these treatments. Beyond that, his functional skills are being maintained, and even improved, with the help of Jahara®.

Telling The Story

Every year Yoni travels from Israel to New York for a progress evaluation with Dr. Paul Jordan. Every year, Yoni asks me to write a letter to his physician reporting his physical condition and how we have been working on it with Jahara®. In the past 3 years his doctor had responded to me in his progress evaluations. I found that our mutual reports might be a great way to tell you Yoni's story with Jahara®.

2002: My First Report

In my first report to Dr. Jordan on September 2002 I wrote:

Yoni has been participating in aquatic therapy for over two years. He is receiving a weekly hour session in a warm water pool. The session includes floating in the water using application of long, gentle stretching and tractions, massage, triggers points and movement relaxation.

I continued by listing the treatment activities and goals:

1. Overall stretches of extremities to increase range of motion, prevent contractures.
2. Elongation of spine. Gentle traction of the cervical spine.
3. Mobility of the chest and rib cage with emphasis on deep breathing.
4. Overall relaxation to reduce muscle tone and spasticity.

2003: Introducing Jahara® ActivExercises™

Dr. Jordan encouraged Yoni to keep with his Jahara® aquatic therapy sessions. On January 2003, I reported back to him:

I continue using gentle overall traction with emphasis on his left side. I have also added walking exercises for balance and stability. We are doing passive and active stretching and elongation of Hamstring muscles. This affects the rest of the session and results in diminishing spasticity on lower extremities and trunk, but with no significant impact on the upper extremities...

At this time, based on Yoni's complaints, I introduced Jahara® ActivExercises™ to his sessions. I had to make it light, because Yoni did not have the motivation to be active. My therapeutic goal was to help him control his feet movements. Yoni has fluctuating muscular tonus, what causes involuntary movement of his feet. This involuntary movement creates tension and instability when walking, especially on uneven ground.

2004: Improving ADL (Activities of Daily Living)

On February 2004 I wrote to Dr. Jordan:

Since my last report, we continued working on balance and stability. I have also added manual techniques to reduce tension on his feet.

By that I meant Shiatsu and trigger points, which I used while Yoni was on Jahara's "Position 1" against the wall. This position encouraged Yoni to maintain healthy body mechanics while I was applying the manual techniques.

In his progress report that year Dr. Jordan wrote:

Overall functional ranges of motion have improved while showing greater control or balance of muscle activity during transitions of movement and walking. His ability to walk distances has improved considerably, which I could see happening through the increased endurance as well as enhanced muscle tone. This appears to be changing and evolving through the effort placed in his therapies/physical activity. Yoni understands that the exercises and/or therapies need to be continued for the rest of his life. He has experienced times where he has not gone through the therapy program or has not done any exercises, and finds that he is "tighter" with less balance and develops compensatory pain.

Mario Jahara comes to Israel yearly to train our upcoming Specialists. At that time I am so busy that I have to stop giving individual sessions, so Yoni has to take a break from our therapy program. This year I asked Yoni how was it for him without our weekly treatments. Yoni's reply was "my walking was harder without Jahara®". Then I realized that, while Yoni's spasticity reaction



due to his CP is accumulating day by day, the Jahara® treatment is really helping to release this tension, what in turn helps Yoni with his ADL – particularly with his walking activity.

2005: Acknowledgement

On February 2005 I wrote to Dr. Jordan:

While floating Yoni using the Jahara® method, I feel that he is more relaxed in the water and he is now floating in alignment. His spine is more in alignment and he has less complaints of pain in his back.

It was wonderful to receive Dr. Jordan's progress evaluation:

I am not familiar with the Jahara® method, but I will see if I can find out more about this technique philosophy, since it has actively worked to Yoni's benefit in 'carry-over' of functional skills. In the interim, I have taken a look at the Jahara® techniques on various websites, including the center in Israel. For a young man, such as Yoni, I can see why the benefit from this philosophy and treatment has had a positive change in ADL skills, as well as reducing some of the previous complaints regarding muscle spasm.

He continues:

Clearly, Yoni has greater/enhanced selective-isolated motor control than observed during past visits. Much of this has been gained through his perseverance and desire to work with the trainer in aquatic therapy programs on an active, rather than passive basis.

2006: Conclusion

At the end of February this year, I wrote to Dr. Jordan:

My impression is that Yoni's physical condition has been maintained in good health. There is only one complaint that repeats itself in these last few months. Yoni repeatedly mentions his tension and pain in the shin muscles.

On March, Dr. Jordan replies in his progress evaluation:

The areas of right, lower leg discomfort is clearly focal muscle tension, possibly focal dystonia, of the anterior lateral muscle group, including mild tendinitis distally. Yoni, at times, feels as though he cannot control the involuntary right lower leg muscle tone fluctuations in

transitions of movement, as well as during walking.

Dr. Jordan then recommended replacing the TriLok™ ankle splint that Yoni uses to control his walking. I continued to work on reducing the tension in his legs by combining Jahara's ActivExercises™ with Aligned Floating.

Dr. Jordan concludes:

All in all, there is clearly positive progress that continues to be observed from a functional standpoint, with greater symmetry if compared to visits of a few years ago. Clearly Yoni should continue with his aquatic therapy program.

Summary

The benefits Yoni has received from his weekly Jahara® sessions for the past few years include:

- Improved overall range of motion and prevented contracture.
- Decreased muscle tension and spasm.
- Reduced pain sensitivity.
- Improved body awareness and posture.
- Improved balance, stability and walking patterns.
- Improved breathing.

With acute injuries, a few Jahara® sessions can help the client to move on with their life. But for Yoni, there is a need for a consistent rehabilitation program. In a chronic condition like CP, we need to continually work in order to improve function and quality of life.

Once, Yoni told me: *I come here because I like it here.* Coming from a person who hardly expresses any emotions, this meant a lot to me.

I find this work very rewarding. I thank Yoni for his commitment to Jahara®. I also thank Mario Jahara for being a major inspiration for me and for many other therapists in the aquatic field. Finally, I acknowledge the opportunity I have had to be guided and encouraged by Yoni's physician, Dr. Paul Jordan.

* Dr. R. Paul Jordan. Board Certified: Podiatric Orthopedics and Primary Care Medicine. Advisor: U.S. Department of Education and Medical Services, Washington, DC. Fellow: American Academy of Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology.

Tova Rosen has an MA in Kinesiology. She is the owner of "Aqua T-Pool" – the Jahara® training and aquatic rehabilitation center in Israel. Tova is the program director of the Jahara® Organization, and has been teaching and working professionally with Jahara® since 1999.

Jahara® With Babies Iris Rosen ISRAEL



Swing position 3



Swing position 4

Iris Rosen is a Jahara® Specialist in Hod HaSharon, Israel who offers water activity classes for babies and their parents. She began her business, Aqua Baby™, during her Jahara® training. Incorporating her Feldenkrais knowledge with Jahara®, she adapted and developed Jahara® movements for small babies. Iris applied Jahara's 5 concepts and philosophy in her classes, which has inspired profound insights to parents about how to relate with their babies in the water.

This photo essay was created by Iris to illustrate a few Jahara® movements that she includes in her Jahara® for babies classes.



Position 4



Baby Simple Side Change



3 - 4 Center parallel TA



Free Fall parallel TA

Pre/Perinatal Patterning And The Five Jahara® Concepts

Barbara Schmid SWITZERLAND

Jahara® sessions are given in 35 degree C (96F) warm water pools. This aspect alone can inspire a basic feeling of trust, and the subsequent deep relaxation can make it possible for clients to regress back to their earlier years. These experiences can be used by the patient as a resource in daily life.

William Emerson created a kind of body map, a description and translation of pre-and perinatal movements, and using this we can identify the stages of the prenatal and birth story of each client.

If we know how to respond accurately to pre-and perinatal body language, we can respond deeper and more specifically to clients needs. This opens another dimension when working with patients in the water.

Personally I think that Jahara® is the only aquatic method that provides enough support to the client, a support which has space and proximity at the same time. Also, the principle of Invisibility – a benevolent presence everywhere – wonderfully describes the ideal relationship between mother and pre-nate.

We all respond to prenatal and birth patterns, to a high degree. I have seen intensely depressive and nervous people who suffer year-long sleeping disorders regenerate after 10 Jahara® sessions, to a state of wellbeing previously unknown to them. Distinctively, all of this is understood without speaking, the only words were from their stories, without the need for interpretation.

Here are the prenatal and birth stages as I have learned from William Emerson:

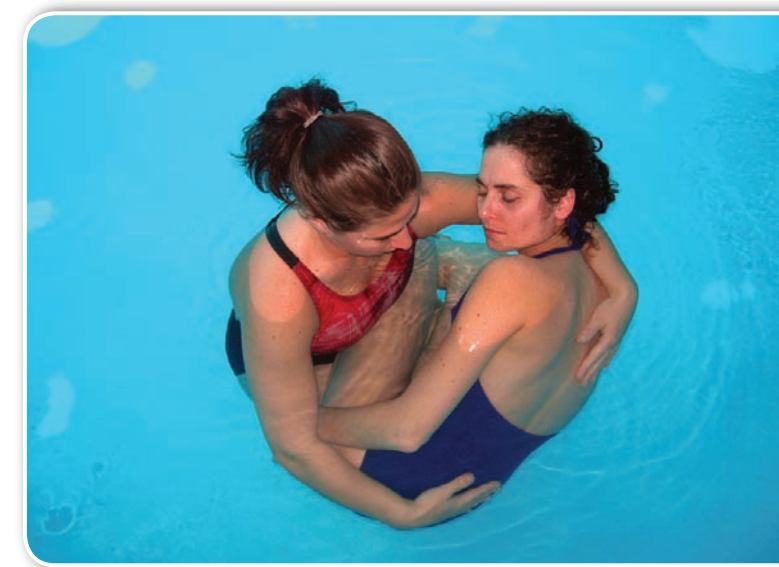
Sperm Journey

Sperm is created by the body after puberty arrives; millions of them, from sperm stem cells in the testicles. They hang around happily (probably) in clusters until they mature and are nurtured by nursing cells. Then comes their great time in an explosion of pressure and fluids they get passively whirled all together through the spermatid cord into a very hostile environment in the vagina. Most of them get inactivated and die here – and there are some strong survivors that start to move actively (undulating motion of feet and legs) against the stream of uterine fluids toward an unknown goal. Sometimes they move alone against all resistances, and some move in groups. Every sperm develops its own tactics of survival in this heavy journey. Their energy packs get used up and the next ones get activated

(exhaustion and hyperactivity in alternation). I, as a sperm make the right decision to take the tube where THE EGG is waiting. About 30 sperm reach the egg, and then she chooses ME. Now comes the docking on, letting go of my tail, being devoured, and letting go of the contents of my head and chromosomes. There are all kind of feelings and experiences involved with this event.

Egg Journey

Eggs are created in the ovary during the third month of gestation; they stay there in a premature state until the hormone rush of puberty. Most of them die. At puberty there are about 40 000 still alive, and in each menstrual cycle 8 – 12 of them are mature, and 2 or 3 of them are the chosen ones to jump. These 2 or 3 eggs have the same set of chromosomes; they are twins. And there is a very close and long-time sisterhood between them, with all of the positive and negative possibilities. From the ovary the egg experiences a timeless free fall to the fallopian tube. This can be experienced as flying bliss or falling terror. In the fallopian tube the cilia move and roll and massage the egg gently down (gentle rocking / rolling, turning from side to side). Nurturing occurs through fluids, which are brought by the egg itself and also from within the fallopian tube. The egg places some of its chromosomes in a so-called polar body at the periphery of its body. And then the big event arrives: egg meets sperm and gets invaded, or egg welcomes the sperm in. Every story is different. And we react to these primal patterns often in social events. How do I enter a social meeting with a group of people; how free do I feel to exert different adequate behaviors?



Barbara is a Jahara® Advanced Specialist, psychiatrist, psychotherapist, Gestalt therapist and has a private homeopathy and kinesiology practice. She works regularly with aquatic therapy since 1995, and owns a small water therapy center in Wila, Switzerland.

Conception

Chromosomes of sperm and egg are free-floating in the egg and are somehow restructuring. The individual is born; its limitation offers structure. This can mean anything to the new individual, from bliss to a complete trap.

Now the egg doubles repeatedly within its skin, rolling down or being moved down along the tube to the uterus until it's on top of the uterus, and another free fall has to follow in order to find its nest in the uterine wall. The cells have divided so many times that the egg skin gets too small. The egg hatches, which is necessary so that the egg can make direct contact with the uterine wall.

Implantation of the cells into the uterus is a miracle of dialogue: Mother has to accept / receive / welcome / nurture a strange body, which is only half familiar to her. Normally the immune system reacts immediately to annihilate such a stranger; but here, after some time, the mother is actively growing blood vessels to join the tentacles of the fetus. Having accomplished this step together, the fetus grows, builds organs, and at day 28 after conception (s)he has built all the basic patterns of organs, bones, neurological connections and skin.

It only has to grow, float in nurturing warm liquid, and receive all it needs through the umbilical cord. There is enough space and time. It could be paradise, but the fetus is also very vulnerable because (s)he experiences all of the surroundings, noises and feelings on the hormonal level of mother. Still, for many people, month 2 – 7 is a paragon; and using Jahara®, we can free a way to this unique paradise again.

Following the eighth month, space starts to become limited and at the same moment there is direct contact possible: Kicking, feeling, touching – a whole new wonderful body sensation to explore. This body limitation reaches a climax in the birth adventure, and then continues its active dialogue with mother while it winds itself out of her body with a clear individual pattern of turns and pushes. The pattern and stuck points of birth can be perceived and overcome in every Jahara® session. We can help the client overcome this pattern not by pushing or forcing, but by giving more of a support that uses a different principle. Then the client can find its way out by himself, contributing to the development of his healthy self-confidence.

JAHARA® METHOD & PRE/PERINATAL PSYCHOLOGY



When Jahara® Meets Alexander Eloa Teixeira BRASIL

The Alexander Technique has exerted a significant influence on the development of Jahara®. Prior to the development of his technique, Mario Jahara had studied the work of Frederick Mathias Alexander. Jahara® and the Alexander Technique have a strong affinity for each other. Both techniques are based on gentleness and presence. The land-based Alexander Technique places subtle emphasis on muscle re-education. Alexander has greatly advanced the work of mind-body integration.

Jahara® was born in the water, a kingdom of vast emotions. Although Jahara® is heart-centered and intuitive, its movements are very efficient and economical. Effortlessness is one of the core concepts of Jahara®. When I practice both techniques, I notice they contribute to the development of breath awareness. I believe this awareness represents a quantum leap in therapeutic work.

Since its inception ten years ago, Jahara® has continued to develop its concepts and principles. This modality has a dual focus. While the client experiences his personal journey in the water, the practitioner maintains the physical alignment of her client's body and her own during the entire session.

Although they bear distinct profiles, Jahara® and Alexander share similar traits. Both stress education and health promotion. Both techniques emphasize coordinated movement in the use of one's body. Alexander developed his entire theory on psychophysical re-education, teaching students ways of moving their bodies in a fluid and harmonious manner.

Those familiar with both techniques can see the relationship between the Five Concepts of Jahara® and the fundamental theories of Alexander. For example, the Jahara® Concept of Support is closely related to Alexander's theories relating to "Primary Control and Sustaining Muscles." The concept of Effortlessness practiced in Jahara® is similar to Alexander's theories of "Inhibition." The experience of Expansion in Jahara® is similar to Alexander's theory of "Directions." Jahara's concepts of Adaptability and Invisibility are similar to Alexander's ideas relating to use of muscles for sustaining "flexion, extension and breath."

It is my hope that Jahara® practitioners will explore the benefits and the potential of the Alexander Technique to enhance their practice of Jahara®. The basic elements of both techniques are similar and very compatible.

Eloá Teixeira, Jahara® Specialist and Teacher, and one of its representatives in Brazil, graduated in Alexander Technique and is a Zen Shiatsu practitioner and teacher.

Jahara® In Hydrotherapy Education Osnat Douer ISRAEL

Why Jahara® has become a leading aquatic therapeutic technique in hydrotherapy courses in Israel

As the Hydrotherapy coordinator of Wingate College in Israel, I chose Jahara® to be the main Hydrotherapy therapeutic technique which is taught at the college.

Here are some qualities about Jahara® that justify its success:

The Student's And The Patient's Health

Jahara® is a unique method because it takes care of the therapist's health as well as the patient's. My students will work long hours in the water when they graduate to become hydrotherapists, supporting the patient's body in their hands. In Jahara® the therapist works with his shoulders submerged at water level and his entire body is supported by the water, therefore it is the water that carries the weight of the patient. This can prevent pain or discomfort, even after giving a continuous sequence of treatments. Additionally, there is no fixed sequence of exercises in Jahara®; the therapist is free to choose the appropriate exercises that are needed for specific patient conditions. The intension of Jahara® is to create alignment and expansion of the patient's body and for the therapist to maintain healthy body mechanics throughout the treatment. One of the main concepts of Jahara® is Effortlessness. Such a concept can be realized when the therapist is in harmony with the water flow, using only the essential muscles that are necessary for the motion. Jahara® is an optimal method when one wishes to protect and conserve the therapist's body for many years.

Rehabilitation

Jahara® is most suitable for a variety of disabilities and impairments, including imbalance and asymmetric patterns, pathologic muscular tonus, muscle weakness, decreased range of motion, fixing and contractures, instability and coordination problems, and decreased mobility.

Psychological aspects that Jahara® can positively affect include anxiety and stress, a lack of self-confidence and self esteem, fears and depression; characteristics that lead to avoidance and isolation.

The Jahara® method can be integrated into the rehabilitation process, and improve each of the conditions above. By using the TCS™ under the head, and the TA™ under the knees, we create a support that is fundamental for our patients. Traction transfers a message of symmetrical posture of the body to the proprioceptors. Other Jahara® elements, such as leading the patient only towards the head in continuous motion, flowing in circular movements, can reduce stress and tension, physically and mentally.

There are many movements in Jahara® that are very efficient for maintaining and improving the patient's range of motion. Jahara® ActivExercises™ are most suitable for postural correction and for control of physical movement. Such ActiveExercises™ allow the patient to become responsible for his own body and thus empowered through the achievement of motor control.

Attitudes

Elements that are incorporated into Jahara®, such as connection, touch, breathing, improving the overall well-being, and pain reduction makes Jahara® a preferred method to be taught in Hydrotherapy courses.

Jahara® has an influence upon the attitudes of students because it teaches modesty and professional integrity, not to be arrogant, not to think that they have power, and encourages more heart and less ego. Jahara® allows the water and the moment to create the changes within the patient.

Jahara® relies on the "less is more" attitude; and by doing that, it protects the therapist and the patient simultaneously.

Osnat Douer is a Jahara® teacher and has a MA in Adapted Physical Activity. She is appointed lecturer and director of the Hydrotherapy department at Wingate Institute, Israel, and is currently doing a PhD in Rehabilitation Sciences and Physiotherapy at Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium.

Here is a letter from a client who has polio and post polio syndrome after he received 8 Jahara® treatments:

I want to thank you for having the privilege to learn something new, something new that made me understand that it is possible to relax in the hands of someone else.

I used to hesitate. I lacked faith in Jahara®; and now I have reached the point where I can not wait for the next Jahara® treatment.

As a person who has always played competitive sports, I learned that there is a different way of connecting to our body - using Jahara®.

I enjoyed the feeling of calming down during and after the treatment.

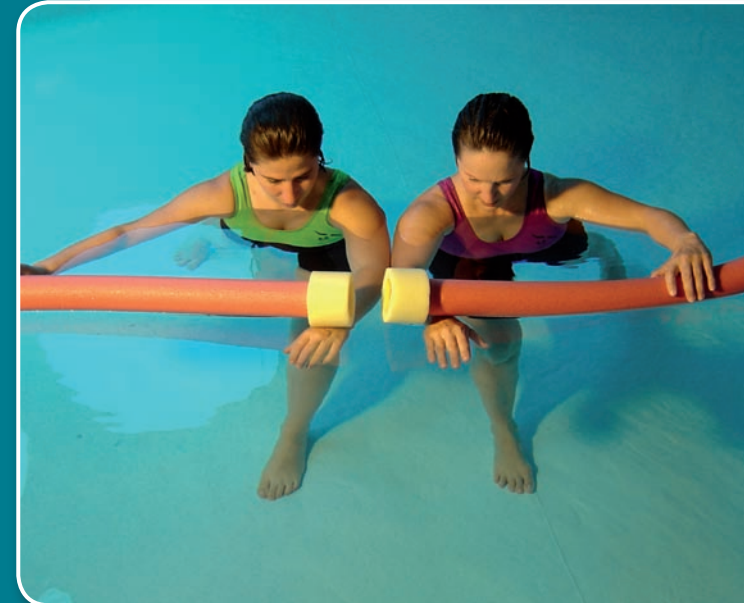
I enjoyed the feelings of my feeling of stress and pressure melting in the water and disappearing, at least for some time.

I enjoyed the relief of the pain in my shoulder and other parts of my body — pains that have been a part of my everyday life.

I asked my wife to try Jahara® as a means to learn that it is possible to take time out from one's life and just to let go.

Awaiting for my next treatment,

*Many thanks,
Moshe Levy*



Jahara® Of Gold

Timor Horvitz ISRAEL

What are Jahara® ActivExercises™? They are therapeutic exercises that the client engages in using their musculoskeletal system consciously. The movements are based on Aquatic Footwork™, are designed to enhance the awareness of the client's body alignment, and also to develop healthy body mechanics. The water's support provides further assistance towards attaining structural alignment and kinesthetic awareness.

It is recommended to incorporate the ActivExercises™ early in a Jahara® session, in order to raise the level of awareness during the aligned floating component. It is also possible to incorporate ActivExercises™ in group classes; to work with patients on improving balance, reducing pain, strengthening the deep alignment muscles, increasing awareness through breathing, and improving movement and postural patterns.

During the last year that I have worked with elderly clients, I explored how Jahara® could benefit them. Biological changes involved in the process of aging affect the lifestyle and the physical activity that a person would engage in at an older age, such as: functional changes in the skeleton and joints, decrease in muscle function, decrease in psycho-motor control and an increasing feeling of loneliness and depression. They cause many elderly people to remain passive in their homes, denying them of physical or social activities. Jahara® can provide a safe and supportive environment that enables older people to focus on their abilities rather than their disabilities.



The first groups of elderly clients that I worked with were members of the elderly club at kibbutz Maagan Michael, and together we set up "Jahara® of Gold"- a recreational activity group where members learned Jahara® ActivExercises™. In our first lesson we concentrated on understanding the different characteristics of water, breathing awareness and working on core muscles. This class was based on position 1. We started with walking in water, and concentrating on different body parts. Following this we continued position 1 with their backs to the wall using the Wall Hammock exercise. We placed emphasis on the pelvic tilt and breath, and observed the effect it had on the body.

After completing these exercises, we transitioned from position 1 to Half-Standing position, facing the wall, and concentrated on transitioning from sitting to standing. We also paid attention to the pelvic tilt, worked on the core muscles, the breath, and how to push off from the heels using correct alignment. We continued to work in pairs in position 1, practiced Seesaw and then completed the session with the bicycle exercise.

Beyond the benefits of movement, breath awareness and the social interactions that were created in the pool, the participants were able to practice and adopt movements that can assist them in their daily activities; for example: getting into the car, transitioning from sitting to standing and putting on clothes. Not of less importance was the overall improvement in how they were feeling once they left the water.

Other aspects that support a successful class include: Making sure the facilities are up to standard and accommodate the needs of the population, filling out a questionnaire and receiving a doctor's approval. This style of class can suit a variety of people with special needs, including anyone who is interested in improving their awareness, posture, and making body movement more effortless.

As one elderly man said "It doesn't matter how long I still have in this life; it's more important to have as much fun as possible with whatever is left."

Timor Horvitz is an Jahara® Advanced Specialist and lives at Kibbutz Maagan Michael, Israel

Research: The Effect Of Jahara® In Women With Fibromyalgia

Dagan Arad, Efrat Porat, Noga Ben-Anat, Osnat Douer, Timor Horvitz and Tova Rosen ISRAEL

Fibromyalgia Syndrome (FMS) is complex. It is characterized by pain amplification, musculoskeletal discomfort and systemic symptoms, including: pain, fatigue, sleep disorder, chronic headaches, irritable bowel syndrome, temporomandibular joint dysfunction syndrome and more.

In FMS, there is a generalized disturbance in the way pain is processed by the body (Morris, Cruwys and Kidd, 1998). The definition of FMS as widespread allodynia and hyperalgesia (Russell, 1998) describes it well. Allodynia means that non-painful sensations are translated into pain sensations. Hyperalgesia means that pain sensations are amplified.

Literature on the subject suggests that the most effective way to decrease symptoms of FM and enhance self-efficacy, is to combine education with cognitive behavioral techniques and exercises. Furthermore, the educational aspect of physical behavior was found to be fundamental to the maintenance of improvements.

Jahara's approach aims to benefit on a physical and emotional level at once. One of the fundamental ideas of Jahara® is to create Expansion. Expansion is the opening and the self-release of the mental and physical body.

Some of Jahara's therapeutic effects include:

- Pain reduction.
- Kinesthetic awareness and healthy body mechanics.
- Awareness of proper body alignment.

- Increased core muscle strength.
- Improved balance and coordination.
- Improved body control.
- Greater fluidity and relaxation of breath.
- A positive feeling of structural expansion.
- Increased range of motion and flexibility.
- Release of muscle tension and muscle "guarding".
- A long-lasting feeling of wellbeing.

A group of 6 Jahara® Advanced Specialists and teachers carried out a pilot study to determine the effect of a Jahara® aquatic therapy program on pain and quality of life in women with Fibromyalgia.

For this study, 13 women were assigned a 6 week intervention program that included seated immersion, group ActivExercises™ and individual floating therapy sessions. Participants completed the Visual Analog Scale (VAS) pain questionnaire before and after each session. They also completed the SF36 quality of life questionnaire before and after the interventions.

In the end, a detailed analysis indicated the following results:

- Significant level of pain reduction.
- Significant improvement of the general health condition.
- Significant improvement of vitality and mental health.

The conclusion of the study was that a systematic Jahara® program as an intervention for woman with FMS will improve their physical condition and physical functioning.

An expanded research based on this study is currently being developed.

Our acknowledgments to the participants of the research; to Dr. Yeshayahu Hutzler, for the academic and research consulting; to Prof. Buskila and Dr. Ablin for their support; and to Mario Jahara.



Time To Dream

Jenny Aharon ISRAEL

Sitting on the shores of the Red Sea and staring long at the water and the Red Mountains of Jordan, I allowed myself to dream. Quietly reaching a sense of emptiness, allowing the understanding to filter through and develop into awareness, I accepted the reality of what I needed to do...

Jahara® - Falling In Love

In the Summer of 2001 at the Dolphin Reef in Eilat, Madlen, my Swedish friend who had taken a number of courses in Jahara® asked me, "May I?" She approached me cautiously in the water and placed a Third Arm™ floater under my legs, extended her arm towards my head and, as if she were casting a wonderful spell of magic, I laid back into the warm water and embarked on a journey into a different awareness. She moved with circular, slow motions, gently stretching me, and I found myself lengthening, broadening and expanding into space.

At that very moment I knew that when she put me back up onto my legs I would start a journey and this would be the way – through water. Several weeks later we were already sitting with Tova and Anne in the opening circle of my first Jahara® course, in King Solomon's Wadi – in the Eilat Mountains. Tova brought a treasure of crystals with her from her last meeting with Mario in Brazil and let everyone chose a stone. I chose a beautiful purple agate. Tova asked that we hold the stone tightly in our hands and make a wish for something for ourselves as we began the course. At this point the die was cast and by the end of the course the initial images of the diamond in the desert was firmly in my mind.

The Route

During that first Jahara® course I understood that Jahara® was something very structured, full of principles, stages and purpose; and as I became more deeply involved, so my awareness expanded into the understanding that this was the path that would lead me through my entire life, and not only in the water. The work in the water began; many hours of learning and enjoyment, with a group of individuals who soon became mutual participants in a unique experience. Through the work in the water the awareness arose that there was a need to open a yearly course in Eilat, and while we were instilling others with this passion, the course opened. We met once a week for a period of close to almost a year. Over this period of time the vision was set and strengthened: a Jahara® center in the desert. This is the route, the dream to follow.

Over the years, since becoming familiar with Jahara®, the dream of establishing the center grew and intensified; so much so that I could feel the touch of the water, the sensation of the wooden deck around it, the sounds, the people, and the joy. But this was all still in my imagination!

At Passover 2004, at the end of the year's course, Mario Jahara came to Eilat especially for us. Again an opening circle and again we're asked to close our eyes and dream...

After a period of total quiet – dreaming – and introspection, the silence was broken and I dared to verbalize my dream – to Mario Jahara no less! In the circle I opened my eyes, looked into his and said "I am



going to build a Jahara® center in the Arava Desert". He looked back at me, with an gaze for a long time and finally said, "I know that you will do this. It will happen much faster than you think and when you do, call me and I will come". This is what the early Jewish writings coined "being carved in stone". Conceiving an idea and harboring it, relishing it and formulating it over time, and when it is finally spoken out loud – the implementation stage has begun.

The Dream – The Reality: Kushi Rimon

We finished the course with great joy and as the implementation stage had already matured from fiction to fact, I held the confidence to begin my search for a suitable place in the desert – and someone who might invite me to come and build my center there, who was also willing to invest in its development. Does it sound delusional? Not for Kushi Rimon!! I had the opportunity one desert evening to tell Kushi about my plans (with great enthusiasm). He smiled at me with his usual gracious smile and invited me to come to road stop 'Km 101' the following day and see if I could find a location there that appealed to me. And so, west of road stop 'Km101' facing the 'Eshet Mountain' ridge and the primeval desert sunsets, in a Biblical garden abundant with the traditional seven species, I said to Kushi Rimon – "HERE", excitedly turning around and around and making circular movements resembling those of Jahara®.

He laughed, and the next day the sound of the tractors could be heard, digging the beautiful, round pool in the middle of the garden.

Laying The Foundations And The Jahara® Principles

It's pretty obvious from the way things developed that we really didn't wait for an architect, blueprints and maps. There were 3 workers on the site: Uri Rosen wandered from here to there and then back again, Mama Wienie was the 'bouncer', and Kushi would pop in for visits. I was trying to keep things organized throughout the exciting process.

We knew that the foundations would be based on the five concepts of Jahara® and we built them as such:

1. **Support** – Construction on the flank of a hill.
2. **Adaptability** – We used desert stones and materials as much as possible (Kushi Rimon's idea).
3. **Expansion** – High construction with a far ranging outlook.
4. **Effortlessness** – We built the pool round and almost womb-like, covered but nevertheless open, so that whoever is in the pool can see out but cannot be seen.
5. **Invisibility** – I feel that this principle has been integral to the entire process of creating the center from beginning to end.

The Dream Come True – A Desert Home For The Jahara® Family

The construction stage was not easy. It was like giving birth, in every aspect. We dug, we pondered, we built, we cried and we laughed. In April 2005 we opened the center with Mario Jahara as the guest of honor (remember that he promised to come?) and with other dear and close friends.

Today the center is standing firm, a warm and open home for the Jahara® family that is expanding throughout Israel and the world. This same expanding awareness is attracting many visitors, either for a one-off taste or a long course of treatments, introductory workshops, advanced refresher courses for Specialists or just a casual desert get-together.

Thanks To You

The supporters and loved ones, who helped and believed in the fulfillment of the dream; to Tova Rosen – for the clarity and focus throughout the process; to Neta Shezaf – for the sensitivity and the passion; to Anne Toulemonde – who planted the magic; to Mama Wienie – who paved the way; to Kushi Rimon – who so generously offered his land and his heart; to Uri Rosen – who makes things happen; to my son Tohar – for the inspiration; to Grandma Jahara for the spirit and finally to Mario who brought the spirit to life.

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