

# Hawaii

MAGAZINE

MARCH/APRIL 2003

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The Hawaii Wellness Institute in the Kalihi Valley allows visitors to become balanced.

## WELLNESS INSTITUTE

To achieve balance in life, sometimes we have to escape from it. Deep in the heart of Kalihi Valley, the Hawaii Wellness Institute is a welcome oasis. Set on one-and-a-half tranquil acres, it provides the perfect setting to, as one of its recent newsletters states, "enhance awareness, to relax into nature, to inspire humor, and to promote celebration and creativity."

Founded in 1999, the institute is a non-profit educational organization whose menu of offerings includes wellness retreats; personal development workshops; and a variety of treatments, including hypnotherapy, meditation, and *lomilomi* and hot rock massages. President and founder Dr. Sunny Massad holds a Ph.D. in psychology and has created her own trademarked system of wellness counseling known as "UnTherapy," which is based on the premise that happiness hinges on a healthy spirit, and that by bringing the heart and soul back into balance with the incessantly busy mind, the human spirit is nourished.

Starting in April, the institute will offer the Hawaii Sacred Retreat and Cultural Experience on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Each two-hour session provides participants with fascinating insights into Hawaii's unique culture through the eyes of knowledgeable *kupuna* (elders).

For example, one session may focus on the medicinal properties of Hawaiian plants and herbs. A discussion is followed by a tour of the institute's lush gardens where you'll identify many varieties of indigenous plants, herbs and trees. Other experiential adventures revolve around the Hawaiian language, *lei* and *lei*-making, *hula* (including a dance lesson) and more.

Priced at \$25 per person, each session is based on "edutainment," which Massad defines as a combination of storytelling and live music shared by the institute's talented *ohana* (family) of *kupuna*. Call for schedule details. Hawaii Wellness Institute: (808) 848-5544. — Cheryl Chee Tintinomi ♦