



Webscout:

Alternative and complementary therapies

by Joeyn Flauaus

For almost all readers of *The Write Stuff*, writing about conventional methods of diagnosing or treating diseases is daily business. Wouldn't it be interesting to look at the other side of the fence to explore the world of complementary and alternative therapies (CATs)? Which CATs are popular at the moment? Are they effective?

In general, CATs comprise therapies used instead of, or in addition to, conventional and traditional medical treatments. CAT practices are often based on belief systems that are at odds with the findings of science. They often use spiritual, metaphysical, untested and innovative methods of treatment and healing. CATs are sometimes adopted by conventional practitioners and no longer considered alternative if they have demonstrated to be safe and effective (e.g., acupuncture).

Below you find a selection of websites introducing you to some CATs and a website analysing the benefits and scientific evidence of efficacy (or lack thereof) of the CATs. Judge for yourself!

<http://www.thrive.org.uk>

"Thrive" is a British charity that makes use of gardening to change the lives of disabled people. The healing aspects of gardening are being used as a therapy or as an adjunct to therapy. Garden therapy (or social and therapeutic horticulture) programmes result in increased self-esteem and self-confidence of participants by developing social and working skills, literacy and numeric skills, the development of responsibility etc. People recovering from a major illness or injury (e.g. stroke patients, car accident victims) or having mental health problems can benefit from the therapeutic aspects of gardening as traditional forms of communication are not necessarily required.

<http://www.createwritenow.com>

Writing therapy uses the process of writing for inner exploration. Writing about your feelings aims to gradually ease pain and to strengthen your immune system. Writing therapy can take place with a therapist or through mailing or the Internet. Writing therapy targets patients who deal with mental and physical illnesses. This special kind of therapy is attractive for patients who prefer an anonymous setting as they don't need to expose their private thoughts and anxieties in person.

<http://www.chiropractic-uk.co.uk>

Chiropractic is an alternative medical approach to managing conditions that are due to problems with the joints, ligaments, tendons and nerves of the body, particularly those of the spine. Chiropractic uses a type of hands-on therapy called spinal manipulation or adjustment to activate the self-healing abilities. The aim is to improve the function of the joints, relieve pain and muscle spasm without the use of medication.

<http://www.quackwatch.com>

Quackwatch—Your Guide to Quackery and Health Fraud. If you are concerned about the benefits and the efficacy of alternative therapies or you simply want to know why 'unconventional' therapies seem to work visit this page.

If you find a page or a blog that should be mentioned in the next issue, or if you have any other comments or suggestions, please email me at: joeyn@trilogywriting.com.

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Goggling and Word tips

A colleague translates crime novels from English into German in her spare time. Sometimes she asks me about English words. The last question was, 'What exactly is a twisted wire chair?', Goggle had not been much help. Had she tried Goggle Images? We did this and found enough pictures for her to write a description in German.

Almost as a matter of course when I am writing something I use the right mouse to check synonyms in Word in case there is a better word which did not immediately come to mind. This produced nothing for 'tongue-in-cheek'. Neither did my paperback *Roget's Thesaurus*. Put the phrase into Goggle followed by 'synonym' and numerous resources pop up, providing alternative choices.

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