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Samantha Meservey

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MIDTOWN THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

BY SAMANTHA MESERVEY

NNB Student Reporter

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — The small storefront bursts with incense and candles. As you walk through the door you are immediately greeted by a fiery smell and sunlight bouncing off crystals.

The Looking Glass is a new-age shop located in Midtown that specializes in metaphysical supplies and spiritual healing.

Shop owner Chris Otazo met his wife Sara Otazo in the little store. With similar interests in Holistic qualities both enjoy working there together. The mission is to empower others by helping them on a spiritual journey.

The Looking Glass concentrates on a form of healing called Reiki which is a Japanese technique that uses energy and small amounts of touch to create stress reduction and relaxation.

"We only touch the customers' shoulders and then the energy goes where it needs to," Chris Otazo said.

The shop has a varying group of customers including people living with HIV or Lupus. Chris Otazo explains how about 30% of first time customers are skeptical the holistic healings will produce results.

"Most costumers are referred to us by friends and family, they wouldn't have come on their own," Chris Otazo said.

He also explained how many people who tried countless different forms of western medicine come to The Looking Glass hoping an alternative healing will cure them.

Sara Otazo recently realized how popular new age healing has become.

"It is the new thing, people you wouldn't think would ever come in here are here all the time," she said.

The Looking Glass provides customers with numerous types of healing. One popular form of healing is Chelation.

Chris Otazo describes Chelation as bringing the lines of life through mother earth then through the body for detoxification. The process allows toxins and waste to leave the body.

Polarity healing is different from Chelation but just as popular. This form of healing focuses on balancing out energy fields. By balancing a person's energy stress and disease are thought less likely to occur.

Other forms of healing offered at The Looking Glass are sound healing, crystal bed healing, and life coaching.

Sara Otazo admits that the life coaching has less to do with healing and more to do with advice giving. She understands that some people hit a cross road in life and just need some spiritual, outside



Samantha Meservey | NNB
The Looking Glass located on Central Avenue displays countless new age healing products in the store window.

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guidance.

"We try to help people on their path, we look inside them and use our intuition to help," she said.

Both Chris and Sara Otazo believe the healing is done by God, not themselves. Through them God is able to channel energy and heal the patients. Chris Otazo believes once a customer is healed they should not have to be healed again, unless they mentally allow the sickness to redevelop. Life coaching and balancing therapies are a routine procedure while healing should only be done when a disease or anxiety manifests again.

The Looking Glass allows customers to take control of the experience by charging a fee of \$1.00 per minute for healings. The customer is permitted to choose how long they want a session to last. Chris Otazo suggests at least 15 minutes for a proper healing experience.

"We try to make it as affordable for everyone as possible," he said.

Along with healing services The Looking Glass also provides hundreds of different healing products including crystals, candles and jewelry. Sara Otazo, who grew up with a fascination for crystals explained how their healing is recognized by western medical professionals.

All the inventory at The Looking Glass is special to the two owners, they agree there is a special reason why it produces such strong healing.

"We put love into all our inventory which enhances the healing properties," Sara Otazo said.

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