

SOMETIMES IN LIFE, the most rewarding experiences can also be the most challenging and unexpected. For Lauren Freiman, a licensed Malibu-based acupuncturist and herbalist, this is most certainly the case.

"If somebody would have told me when I was eighteen that I was going to be an acupuncturist, I would never have believed them!" she said.

As a Los Angeles native studying marketing and international business at New York University, she found herself dealing with chronic upper respiratory and sinus infections that interfered with her life as a college student. She took the usual course of action: went to all the best doctors, took antibiotics, had MRIs and x-rays.

"According to them I was fine," she said. "But I knew something was wrong, something was out of balance. So I started looking for answers."

Walking through a Barnes & Noble sale section one day soon after, she spied a book on Chinese medicine for \$9.99.

"It was an entirely different approach to looking at health and disease," she says. "A lightbulb went off in my head."

While it initially registered, it wasn't until after graduation that she truly began to look at natural health as a real priority. Despite having landed a great job in the Big Apple, the chronic infections were still disturbing her life to the point where she knew that she had to resolve her health issues. She decided to move back to LA to focus on recovery, and it was here that her parents suggested she try acupuncture.

True Health

Lauren Freiman, L.Ac., explains the balance and harmony achieved with acupuncture and Chinese medicine.

BY LAURIE HARTT

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROXANNE McCANN



"After the first treatment, I could feel that something had shifted," she noted. "After five or six treatments and the incorporation of dietary changes and daily qigong practice, I was completely better."

It was at this point her path truly began to change directions.

"I was totally fascinated. I had felt terrible for four years, and suddenly I was feeling well for the first time. I felt inspired to offer this opportunity for healing and transformation to others," Freiman said.

After enrolling at the Emperor's College of Traditional Oriental Medicine in Santa Monica, she graduated with high honors and a master's degree and is now a licensed acupuncturist and herbalist. Her practice, Malibu Acupuncture and Herbs, is celebrating its four-year anniversary, where she treats everybody from moms and dads and kids to surfers, celebrities, professionals and students, all for different health issues.

Acupuncture is known for its use in pain relief, especially for arthritis, sciatica, sports injuries, sprains, strains, muscular tension and headaches. What a lot of people don't know, Freiman explained, "is that acupuncture can be used to treat anything and everything. This includes health conditions like anxiety, depression, insomnia, substance addictions, stress, infertility, prenatal and postpartum care, menopausal symptoms, thyroid disorders, acne, allergies, asthma, diabetes, heart disease, neurological disorders and many other health issues."

In a nutshell, acupuncture and Chinese medicine serve to stimulate the

body's natural resources, thereby allowing the body to heal itself. Acupuncture activates the body's parasympathetic nervous system, which is the "rest and relax" sibling to the more often activated sympathetic nervous system, or "fight-or-flight," that we operate under during stress and, these days, on a daily basis.

Learning to manage stress and the resulting health problems it often creates is one of the main focuses of Freiman's healing techniques.

"I really find it's a mind-body-spirit healing that occurs. A place of health is where all three are balanced," she said.

When people's energy, sleep and health improve, they are moved into a place of higher alignment with themselves. Their relationships become more fulfilling, and their purpose and passions in life become clear.

Her practice is unique because she incorporates integrative medicine and other modalities targeting individual needs, along with the traditional acupuncture and herbs. In today's fast-paced way of life, health conditions require more comprehensive treatment.

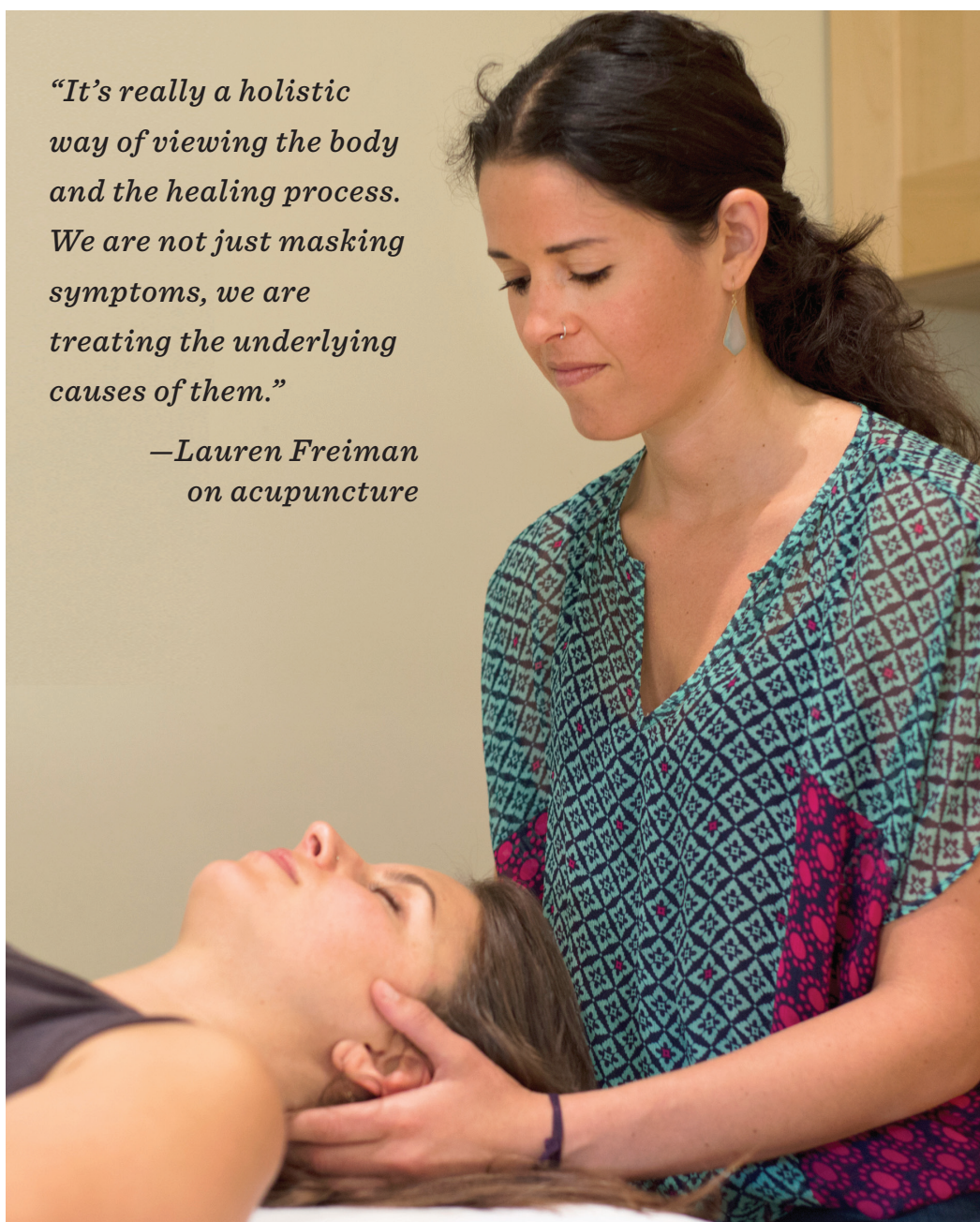
"It's really a holistic way of viewing the body and the healing process," she said. "We are not just masking symptoms, we are treating the underlying causes of them."

Does she miss the big city lifestyle of New York?

"No! I don't miss it at all! I'm a Pacific Ocean girl at heart and this is an entirely different and more rewarding cup of tea for me," she said. "I love what I do. It's great work when you can help change someone's life for the better." ■

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*—Lauren Freiman
on acupuncture*



Lauren Freiman treats pain and other health conditions through the five-thousand-year-old practice of acupuncture.