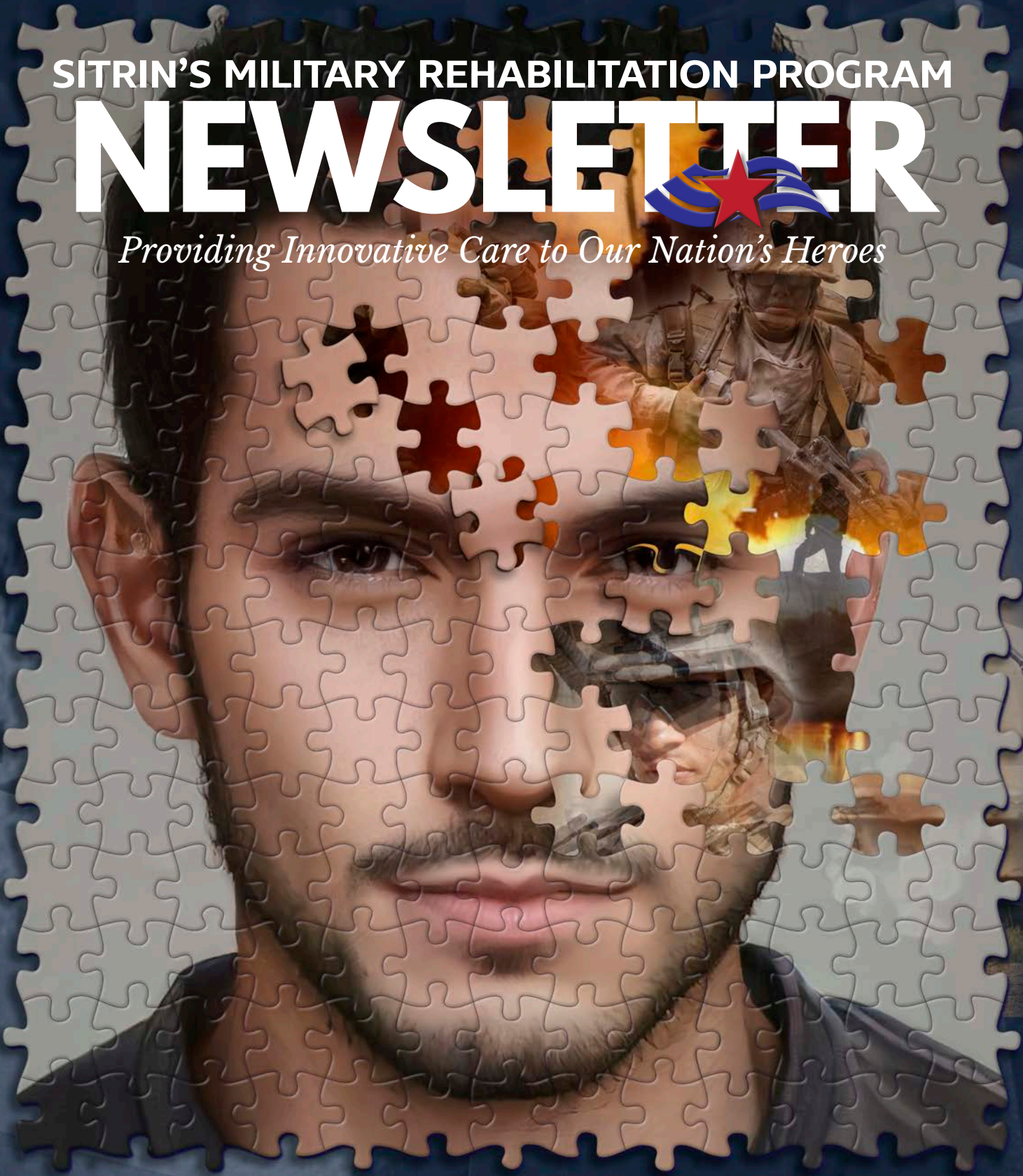


SITRIN'S MILITARY REHABILITATION PROGRAM

NEWSLETTER



Providing Innovative Care to Our Nation's Heroes



IN THIS ISSUE

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ISSUE 1

- 2 – AN UNEXPECTED BENEFIT OF THE PANDEMIC
- 2 – STAFF SPOTLIGHT: MEGAN THOMAS
- 3 – MCC: GREAT LOT SPORTSMAN'S CLUB – SNOWSHOEING
- 4 – MEET A VETERAN: BILL WARES
- 6 – POLARITY THERAPY AT SITRIN
- 8 – MILITARY CIVILIAN COALITION (MCC) EVENTS


An Unexpected Benefit of the Pandemic

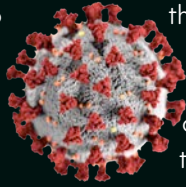
Practically overnight, the arrival of COVID-19 dramatically changed America's health care system and altered the way outpatient care is delivered. Sitrin's team quickly pivoted to find solutions that ensured the safety of patients, employees and the broader community.

Sitrin modified its facilities and protocols for in-person care and also began offering virtual appointments – or telemedicine – to help cut down on in-person contact. This included services offered for veterans through Sitrin's Military Rehabilitation Program.

During the early days of the pandemic when seemingly everything shut down, the need for

care did not go away, and in some instances was even greater. Telemedicine made continuing care possible when infection rates were highest, and in the long run has become part of standard protocol that will increase access to care for veterans.

Now with the option of virtual appointments, veterans are still able to connect with Sitrin's care team even if they lack transportation or face other barriers that prevent them from attending an appointment in person. 



STAFF SPOTLIGHT:

MEGAN THOMAS

Over the years, Sitrin's Military Rehabilitation Program has continued to grow and expand its services to meet the needs of the veteran community. In the interest of a true comprehensive care approach, Sitrin welcomed Megan Thomas, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, to the team to lead group therapy just before COVID hit.

While the pandemic put a pause on group therapy, Thomas is now working with veterans through individual counseling. She typically meets with veterans once a week for 45-minute sessions that are tailored to focus on their unique life situations, working through challenges such as depression, anxiety, PTSD, and family-related situations.

Thomas comes to Sitrin with a wealth of experience in her field. She previously worked for the Neighborhood Center in Rome, helping all different types of clients through individual counseling. She also currently works in the Marcy Prison System providing therapy to inmates in an effort to prevent sexual abuse in the community.

Additionally, Thomas is a certified dog trainer and aims to train therapy and service dogs in the future. It was this goal that naturally sparked her passion for


"It's not typical sit-down therapy," said Thomas.
"It's a unique approach, involving everything from yoga to equine therapy."



military rehabilitation and veteran causes.

Thomas says she finds it most rewarding that she can assist veterans as they reacclimate to civilian life. "I appreciate that my job allows me to be a part of it even though I'm not a veteran," she said. "I like having that alliance together."

Thomas also said it's important to her that she's part of a larger approach to veteran care, which she finds true as a member of Sitrin's Military Rehabilitation team.

"It's not typical sit-down therapy," said Thomas. "It's a unique approach, involving everything from yoga to equine therapy." Thomas also emphasized that she's looking forward to post-pandemic life when they can restart additional programs that connect the veteran community even further. 

MILITARY-CIVILIAN COALITION (MCC) – SNOWSHOEING

Great Lot Sportsman's Club, Inc.

Each winter, the Great Lot Sportsman's Club welcomes members of Sitrin's Military Rehabilitation Program to participate in five guided snowshoeing expeditions on the scenic trail system in West Leyden.

Every outing begins with a one-mile walk to the main cabin, where experienced guides lead guests on various hikes throughout the forest, ranging in distance from two to four miles. Along the way, the trails offer beautiful sights and sounds of nature, passing by ponds, streams, wildlife, fresh animal tracks and more. Some conditions present a more challenging hike than others, but the tranquil environment always makes for a peaceful journey.

Post-hike, guests return to the cabin to warm up and enjoy a complimentary lunch. This year, the Sportsman's Club also provided outdoor fireplaces and benches to ensure a safe environment for all.

The events were open to all veterans and the general public.

As all of Sitrin's Military-Civilian Coalition activities aim to do, the snowshoeing



The Great Lot Sportman's Club gathered at the cabin in West Leyden. Members Andy Bailey, Guy Case and Jim Ray are also veterans with 70 years of combined service.

Front Row: Deniese Haskins, Guy Case, Andy Bailey, Tim Baxter

Back Row: Scott Robbins, Jim Ray, Steve Frazee, Jeff Baxter, Robe Schrader



expeditions provide an opportunity for veterans to connect with the community, promoting camaraderie among participants.

Thank you to the Great Lot Sportsman's Club for their hospitality and warm, welcoming spirit!



BILL WARES



Graduating high school on the heels of 9/11, Bill Wares was eager to spend the next chapter of his life fighting for his country.

"I felt that if you were able to do something, you should be doing something," Wares said.

After speaking with recruiters from different branches, Wares enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps as an 18-year-old in 2002.

"I understood what it meant," Wares continued. "The mindset was: Join the Marines if you want to fight."

Wares' time in the service brought him to North Carolina, Okinawa, Japan, the Philippines, Hawaii, and ultimately landed him in Iraq for his last deployment from 2005 to 2006. As a



corporal, he was responsible for leading a team in safely dispensing millions of gallons of fuel to U.S. and Coalition aircraft, which was critical for base and tactical operations.



"We always had to be alert, and we always had our rifles on us," Wares added.

Wares also recalled that it was not unexpected to wake up to an explosion in the middle of the night.

Going from combat zone to classroom in less than six months, he quickly transitioned between vastly different realities when he decided to enroll in college back home in Utica, NY, at the end of his enlistment.

"I found myself sitting in class with young, local kids, while just months ago I was getting mortared in Iraq," Wares continued.

While he wasn't facing the threat of warfare on a daily basis, Wares said his new life as a student did not come without its own stress.

"In the military, we had a 'go, go, go' mindset; someone is on you every day about something, but as a student you can do whatever you want," Wares reflected. "No one is checking on you; if you stay out all night drinking and don't make it to class, no one cares. You have to self-manage, and if you don't, the pressure builds up, and you see the consequences at the end of the semester."

Wares moved to Tampa, FL, where he finished school and juggled a number of jobs. He said it took the help of a friend and fellow veteran to

realize he was dealing with some repercussions from his time in the service. He struggled with drinking, and his friend noticed that he had been experiencing major mood swings and outbursts.

"It's hard to admit that you have something wrong and that you probably need someone's help," Wares said, thankful to have the support of his friend.

Wares began working with the VA to find services to help with some of the challenges he

services with Dr. Joanne Joseph.

"They've helped me with techniques for recognizing when I'm getting anxious in a situation," Wares said. "I can tell them about things I'm going through and find different strategies for managing or avoiding outbursts."


Today, he is co-teaching reading in third grade at the Utica Academy of Science Charter School, and working toward his certification for grades one through six, anticipating that he will be teaching his own class in the fall.

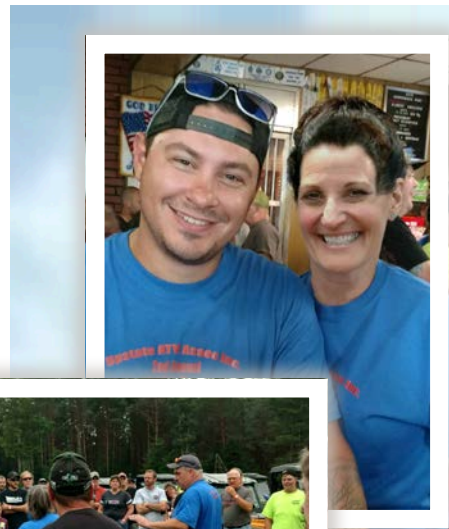
Aside from earning a number of military awards and changing the lives of children every day, Wares is also making a positive impact by supporting charitable programs and organizations.

"As broke as I've been, I like doing things for other people," Wares added.

In 2019, he organized an ATV ride, raising more than \$6,000 to support fellow veterans through Sitrin's Military Rehabilitation Program.

"It's been great working with Sitrin," Wares said. "They were really appreciative of the money, and it's nice to be able to tell supporters that the money raised stays local."

Although he could not hold the fundraiser in 2020 due to COVID precautions, Wares intends to continue the event in the future when possible. 



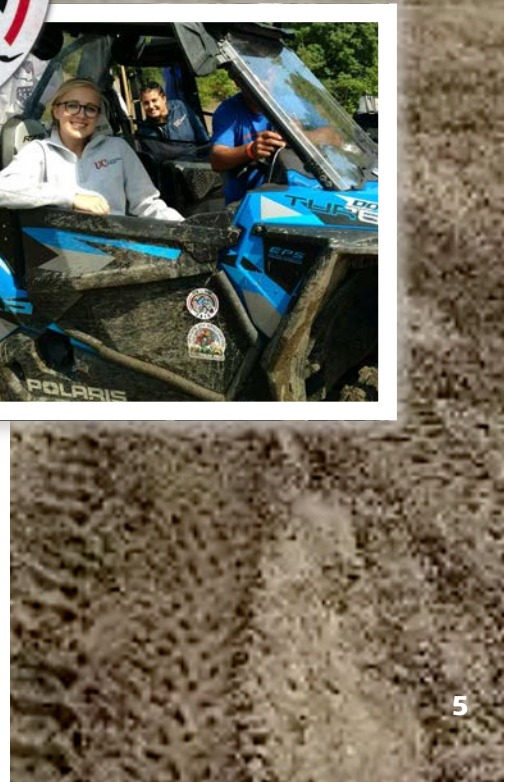
Air testing a huge fuel bladder for leaks before filling up with aviation fuel, critical for U.S. & Coalition aircraft operations.

was facing, though when his grandparents became sick, he uprooted his life in Tampa and moved back to Utica. Starting the process over again was daunting for him.

"Establishing trust with someone new is hard," Wares revealed. "You talk about a lot of personal stuff."

Struggling to find a steady job, he also lacked insurance, and couldn't afford to pay for services out of pocket. The local VA recommended Sitrin's Military Rehabilitation Program, as it offers many alternative services to help post-9/11 veterans reach their goals.

Sitrin's Military Rehabilitation team built a comprehensive treatment plan for Wares, including occupational therapy with Jackie Warmuth, vice president of clinical development, and psychological



Polarity Therapy: Restoring Balance in the Body

Like all living things, the human body is made up of energy.

That energy flows throughout the body just like an electrical system. For energy to flow freely, there must be a complete circuit of movement

to and from the source. When it becomes blocked or imbalanced, we experience pain, discomfort, illness, and anxiety.

This is the guiding principle of Polarity Therapy.

Developed by Dr. Randolph Stone with over 60 years of practice and study, Polarity Therapy is a non-invasive form of energy healing that's rooted in Ayurvedic medicine, one of the world's oldest holistic healing systems. Polarity Therapy calms and sedates the central nervous system and overall mind-body stress, by moving energy through gentle bodywork and holding a series of polarized contacts.

There are a variety of techniques that help to clear the paths of energy fields, including spinal realignment, therapeutic touch, eco-therapy, and movement exercises. In some cases, practices like deep breathing, yoga, nutrition, and hydrotherapy may also be incorporated into Polarity Therapy to correct and reconnect the body's circuit board.

This unique form of energy healing can help patients who suffer from a range of health problems, including allergies, anxiety, arthritis, back pain, chronic fatigue, depression, headaches, IBS, migraines, PTSD, and more.

When the energy fields are in balance and the energy of life is flowing freely, the body will feel relaxed, peaceful, and energetically renewed.

HOW ENERGY FLOWS IN THE BODY

In order for humans to move, think and feel, the nervous system must send signals throughout the body and to the brain. There are three different currents that keep energy moving in our bodies:

1. The Traverse Current

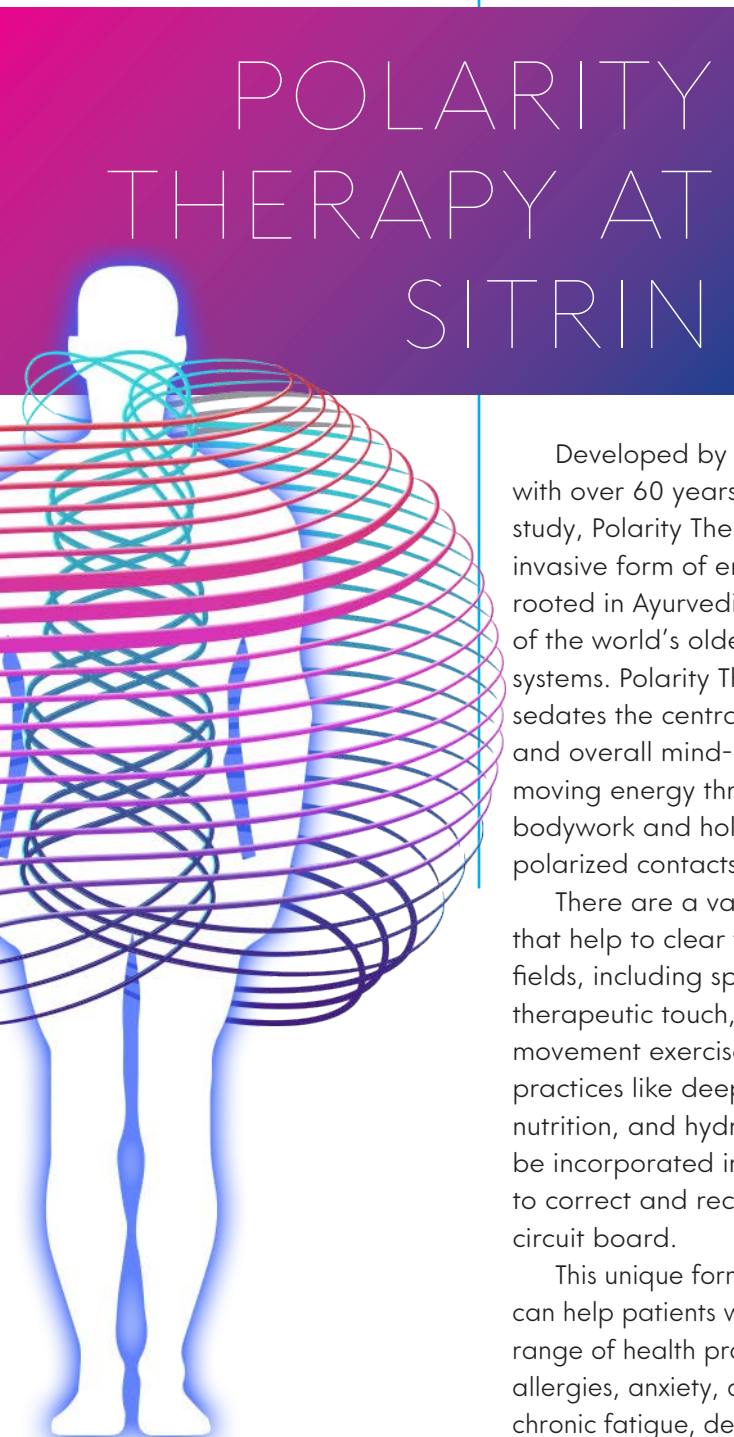
- It begins in the poles of the body (top and bottom) and circles through the body in an east/west pattern.
- Works to bring the energy from the ends of the nervous system back into the core of the body.

2. The Spiral Current

- Energy movement forms at the umbilicus and radiates outward.
- Works to provide healing through movement and warmth.

3. The Long-Line Current

- This movement pattern begins at each of the seven centers of energy (chakras) and moves in an outward and vertical pattern.
- This current carries energy throughout the body to the five senses.



Polarity Therapy at Sitrin

After serving 23 years in the Army, Chad Tooke retired as an E-8 Sergeant. Related to his time in the service, he's struggled with PTSD and a number of lingering injuries, including torn labrums and arthritis in his shoulders, permanent tennis elbow, and degenerative disease in his neck and back.



Tooke said he's seen a therapist to address these issues for years, but connected with Sitrin for help with his PTSD and has been using Polarity Therapy.

As many service members returning from duty are faced with physical, psychological, and emotional changes in their lives, Sitrin's Military Rehabilitation Program meets them with a wide range of services to promote healing. In addition to providing traditional therapies, Sitrin's program embraces alternative tools like Polarity Therapy for a holistic healing approach.

"It centers me," Tooke said. "It's very relaxing and relieves a lot of stress."

Sitrin's team has helped Tooke through a range of exercises, including calming breathing techniques and therapeutic touch.

"It's not a therapy some people would think about or even be open to," Tooke added. "I encourage people to keep an open mind; it has helped me more than I thought it would."

Given that many service members are in some form of pain or discomfort - whether it be physical, emotional or

mental - Polarity Therapy is a natural fit to support their healing process.

"As a therapist, I do not cure their pain; rather, my role is to help the service member explore, tolerate, accept and finally let go of it," Jackie Warmuth, VP of Clinical Development at Sitrin, said.


Warmuth is a Licensed Occupational Therapist, Associate Polarity

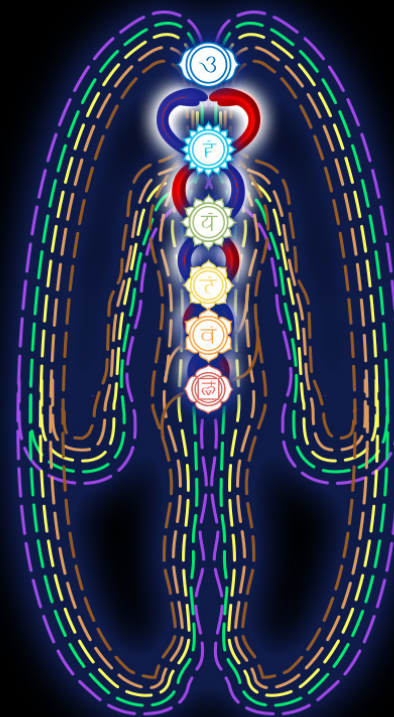
Practitioner and an Ayurvedic Health Coach.

"Ill health, pain, and suffering are all processes, not things," Warmuth added. "When a service member's polarized energy currents flow freely, we call it health."



In addition to Polarity Therapy, Sitrin's Military Rehabilitation Program offers activities such as drumming therapy, eco-therapy, dance therapy, gardening, Equine-Assisted Therapy, camping retreats, and ongoing group events through its Military-Civilian Coalition.

"A lot of veterans don't ask for help because they see it as weakness," Tooke continued, explaining that this stigma often means PTSD goes untreated. "I think Sitrin has a great program, and I'd like to see more people utilize it." 



CHAKRAS – THE ENERGY CENTERS OF THE BODY

Polarity Therapy incorporates the chakra system, which refers to the energy centers we have in our bodies. There are seven major chakras, all located along the spine. To allow the flow of energy, chakras need to stay open and balanced.

– Crown –

Represents spirituality

– Third Eye –

Awareness and center of consciousness

– Throat –

Communication and center of voice and hearing

– Heart –

Love and healing

– Solar Plexus –

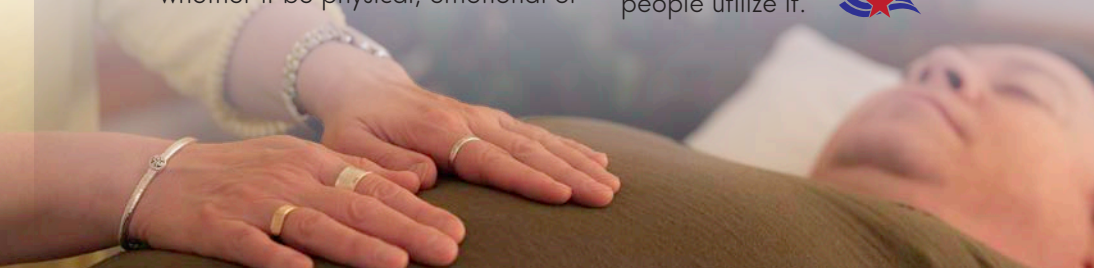
Wisdom and power

– Sacral –

Sexual Creativity

– Root –

Elimination of solids and liquids (rectum and bladder)



MILITARY-CIVILIAN COALITION HIGHLIGHTS

Hiking



Warrior Retreat



Cane Self-Defense Seminar



Fly Fishing



Snowshoeing



Biking



Gardening



For more information on upcoming events,
contact Jackie Warmuth at (315) 737-2435.

*A special thanks to Stephanie Sullivan for
writing newsletter content.*

SITRIN

The Help. The Hope. The Healing.

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