

Kahuna updates ancient practices

By Pierre Bowman



Mornnah N. Simeona
"Ho'oponopono brings a balance"

Healer uses ancient arts

I

THE FOUNDATION OF
I
INC

Mornnah N. Simeona describes herself as a radical kahuna.

For a lot of folks, simply being a kahuna – a priest of the ancient Hawaiian religious arts – is radical enough. But Simeona says she has taken ancient practices and “revamped the system” so “naturally I’ve become a radical because I’m changing a concept.”

Simeona is a kahuna lapa’au – a healer – and if her approach is radical, it apparently is working. In 1980 she formed a corporation called The Foundation of I Inc., and has essentially plugged into the trends of the human potential movement and holistic approaches to health.

She conducts her business out of an office above a used furniture store on Piikoi Street and has spread her ideas on the Mainland in a number of venues including Harlem Hospital the medical facility affiliated with Columbia University in New York City.

Her office also runs Pacifica Seminars, which is presenting a four-day symposium called “I-identity of Man” beginning Friday at the Sheraton-Waikiki. Harlem Hospital, among other institutions has glowingly recommended the symposium, which is described as “an intercultural perspective of man’s origin, welfare and destiny.”

Simeona says she expects 500 at the symposium. They’ll pay \$250 for the sessions, which will include four lunches and a dinner, making the whole thing rather pricey and a rather convincing tribute to the progress Simeona has made as a radical kahuna.

When one asks Simeona about the symposium her answer turns out to be long, involved – and lucid.

“I was very young,” says the 69-year-old Simeona, “and I’d seen god. That’s kind of a vain admission. But I’d seen him when I was 2. He talked to me.”

She says her vision of god came to her in the form of the major Hawaiian gods – Kane, Lono, Ku, Kanaloa.

“They would walk in like people and converse with me,” she says, “and from them I’ve had my teaching.”

What Simeona says she understood from age 2 that the “thundercloud, the ocean, the mountains, even the blades of grass,” all of them were part of god. She also learned as a tiny girl that she had the power to heal. Her first patient was her father, who had a broken leg that wouldn’t heal. With her ministrations, the bone knit, she says.

Reprinted with permission by The Honolulu Advertiser July 1982

She learned with her mother, what is called la'au kahea – “prayers to bring energy to heal,” she says.

The neighbors, of course, disliked us very much,” she says. “They’d say, “There go those kahunas.” When you say kahuna there’s a feeling of witchcraft.

Simeona says that feeling is incorrect.

While still a young girl, growing up in Waikiki, Simeona says she came to realize that the strength of the spirit came not from objects, but from the inner self.

“It was a matter of identity. All was created by divine force” she says. “The goddess of healing came to me in a vision. She said. ‘Discard what you’re using. It belongs to somebody else. The water of life is the god Kane’s. Just use water. And if you don't have water, just use imagining.”

“I use water – as a medium of cleaning, purifying, healing.”

Through the years Simeona often kept her identity as a kahuna to a minimum.

She has been a teacher to retarded children, on the nursing staff of the blood bank and owned and operated health spas at the Kahala Hilton and Royal Hawaiian Hotels.

Finally in 1980 she decided to open her modern practice of her art.

“Before that I didn't feel people were ready to receive it,” she says. “People have to realize they have a mind to work with. They’re going back to nature.”

Central to Simeona’s practice is her updated ho’oponopono – the ancient Hawaiian problem-solving process.

“It’s not like any awareness class,” she says, “It is a prayer, a communication between the individual and the divine... Ho’oponopono just brings a balance. You can do it in a matter of moments. It’s bringing man to know who he is . . .

“The Hawaiians knew this but it got so lost in the shuffle. I’m not talking from the premise of religion, but from the premise of philosophy, Hawaiian philosophy. Religion is a structure that subjects us to confinement. You can believe in this god or that god, but there’s the medial strip of living . . .

“If we once had that peace of mind, why can't we have it again? It’s the most beautiful thing . . .

“Because I’m Hawaiian, I’ve got to share this with the world. And I wish my people knew.”

Simeona sadly notes that 90 percent of her clients are non-Hawaiians. She says she hopes that will change.

“My heart cries out to share it with my own people,” she says.

In the meantime, there’s her symposium, which will incorporate viewpoints ranging from Jewish to Buddhist to Hawaiian, to Maori.

“I thought perhaps it might be nice to get people together to share their thoughts,” says Simeona. “We’re a multi-cultural community. What a wonderful thing to share how we view the I-dentity of man. Perhaps it’s the appropriate time to have man take stock of himself.”

Reprinted with permission by The Honolulu Advertiser July 1982