

Actor, professional jazz dancer, doctorate in psychology, dance therapist, author.....are only few from her long list of credentials.

PAULA HORAN, the world renowned, Body Mind Therapy guru, tells StyleSpeak, how this generation of spas should be wellness and healing centers rather than pampering haunts.

Photos: Paula Horan  
Words: Saroni Roy



“The Indian spa industry has to get into genuine healing and not just pampering. There are a lot of people who want a genuine spa.”

## PAULA HORAN

# Water Baby

**When** I was young I was super shy and would just stay home and read books. My parents were into Community theatre and dragged me into it. Playing different roles on stage helped me out of my shyness and I got totally wrapped up in acting” says Paula, who wrote and directed her first play when she was barely seventeen.

At university in England she studied Drama but soon fell in love with Psychology which became her major. “Since childhood I was fascinated by the healing psyche and playing different roles teaches you that. You learn to figure out people.”

“My first spiritual crisis was at age 13. I was depressed and quite suicidal .....its not like my parents were bad but I hated school and I didn't like my life. When I was about 20, I read the autobiography of Mahatma Gandhi and Yogi Ananda. And I noticed that each of them faced major spiritual crisis at the age of 13!”

Paula's spa philosophy focuses on **Body-Mind Therapy** - a combination of Rebirth in Breathing, and Body Psychology. “We store our memories not only in our brain but our entire body. For instance, if you have been raped you will be storing a lot of charge in your sexual organ area. I teach my students to look at a person's body and read it and see where the block is. Then they know the points to be pressed and with the therapy they can bring out the stored emotions and let the patient free from those blocks.”

She was so drawn to it that she learnt all the different techniques of Body Mind Therapy, one being **Chua Ka**. “I teach my students how to go extremely slow and deep into the body with the deep tissue massage, into the tied knots in the body, and release the toxic acid crystals into the blood stream to be released into the lungs and then exhaled.”

Paula feels that there is a serious need for training in India. “We created the **Indian Body Mind Therapy Association** where we are trying to produce excellent therapists.” The **Taosomatics Bodymind Research and Training Institute**

in Goa offers a diploma course which presently consists of 9 modules. Besides this, Paula is busy training in various 5 star hotels and currently is the Managing Director of Seven Palms Spa Consulting Pvt. Ltd in Goa.

Body Mind therapy is very specialized; it needs education and serious training to be good. “What's happening in India is that the spas are grabbing therapists from other popular spas who may not be that great, but just because she/he comes from a popular spa they appoint him/her and then they have them train their therapists. It's like the telephone effect. The best student only learns 35% from the teacher. My excellent students have gone through my training at least 3 times before they start working”

A good therapist, most importantly, needs to **'guide the receiver'**. And since the receiver is well guided and can thus visualize the process, the stress-release will take lesser time and effort by the receiver. According to Paula, an **Esalen Massage** works well with a fatigued person. “I teach muscle-sculpting for the face. It is really deep work, minutely slow so that it doesn't hurt. The face feels totally different post this therapy since every muscle is released. A lot of tension accumulates on our face over time, so I recommend an Esalen with deep tissue for the face and then for the body”.

“If you are a salon and want to offer spa treatments in a small way - add an Ozone Bath.. It's a steam bath using Ozone instead of Ayurvedic ingredients. It has the effect of an aerobic workout and cleans viruses and toxins in the body.”

According to Paula, if the fatigue persists, it's not just a matter of more rest and she suggest meditation daily. Sometimes some of the **Gates Method** - emotional

integration work helps because there might be something in their lives that is bringing up these issues. Most human beings get into total amnesia about their bad past experiences. “The mind locks that experience like a cyst in the body and are therefore resistant to certain feelings or touch. It is possible to heal these people through Body Mind therapies.”

Paula has been working with the Indian Spa industry for more than sixteen years. Setting up a wonderful spa, right from its conception, décor and training, all comes naturally to her. “It is going to be very big” she says. Currently



she wants to focus on Body Mind therapy, training, and spiritual work. "I am completely drawn to Gyana Yoga - the work of Sri Ramana Maharshi, now."

For many years Paula just taught and written books on Reiki and Gyana Yoga. "Three years ago I decided to live in India and stop visiting this country as a tourist. My friends suggested that I open an institute where all my skills in body and mind work can be utilized. So I came up with the Taosomatics Institute". The Gates Method practiced at this institute is based on the concept that in this life what incarnates is a conglomeration of all the desires and feelings unfulfilled and resisted in other lifetimes. "It allows people to feel that karma energy stored in the physical structure and let it go. What's important is what's blocking you now and that comes up."

About her future plans she says, "I would love to set up an Institute cum Spa in India. So the people who are trained are the ones working in the spa. I am a water baby, I love beaches and swimming, but I want to go to the Himalayas to finish some tasks, my past life desires so I need to visit these places." **SS**



### Quirky bytes

**Favourite cuisine:** Japanese, Italian, Thai, and certain Indian foods like Tandoori, Paneer Tikka, Veg Kebabs.

**Favourite holiday destination:** What brought tears to my eyes are the pictures of the Earth the Blue Beauty. That would be the ultimate destination! All problems seemed miniscule when you look at the Earth from a distance.

**What do you like the most about India:** I love Indians because they are the greatest anarchist and I hope that they stay that way!

**Most fun thing to do:** Teaching people how to swim and body surf! To swim you have to relax and let go, you can't stay tight.

**Favourite Spa:** Man Tak Chia's - Tao Garden Health Resort, Thailand.

**Good Spa Concept:** Jindal Health Farm, Bangalore.

**Piece of advice:** People should go at least once a week for a healing therapy in a city like Mumbai, and for a 21-day retreat in a year.

**Philosophy of life:** "Live your life fully and love your life! All suffering is in the mind. You don't like your life change your thoughts. Focus on what you want and not on what happened".

### Dr. Paula Horan is author to 7 books.

Paula's forthcoming book - **Fierce Innocence:** "We are surrounded by jadedness and have to be extremely fierce to cut through it to get back to our innocence".

Paula Horan's previous book - **Healing with Oxygen** talked about Ozone and its healing properties. "You can't breathe Ozone but you can put it in the body in various ways, the easiest being through skin. Ozone is highly volatile, so you don't need pressure to insert it. It is a purifier and it eats up viruses and cancers.