

Chiropractor offers services to city's homeless

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It had always been a dream for one Nanaimo chiropractor to help less fortunate people.

The idea was born one day years ago while in college in Toronto, when Norm Detillieux would cross paths with homeless people in the big city and want to help them with something other than cash.

It has been six years since he began practicing in Nanaimo; at first in the downtown area where some of his future clients would frequent.

Never forgetting about his dream to help others, Detillieux approached the Salvation Army to offer his services for free to those in need. Within two weeks, he was helping heal people.

Now practicing at the Salvation Army every week for three years, Detillieux has his regular clients of men and women who come to visit him; often sharing stories or struggles of their lives.

His aim is to help people help themselves through an approach based on healing and wellness.

"For me, it's been a real blessing," said Detillieux. "In a community, there is much more value in giving services."

He has helped people in Nanaimo who sleep on the streets and others who are down on their luck.

For most, his services help those who otherwise would not have been able to afford a chiropractor.

Detillieux sees approximately 15 to 20 people in his weekly two-hour sessions.

His help has been life-changing for some, say Salvation Army officials, who report stories of clients now able to work again after debilitating pain has lessened. Nagging pain can affect someone's entire outlook on life, said Detillieux, from altering moods to shifting lifestyles.



CREDIT:

Dr. Norm Detillieux

"Having something like that has been phenomenal for them," said Anderson. "It's definitely been an added bonus."

The thought of looking for work for one Salvation Army client was daunting with a messed-up back, said Salvation Army spokeswoman Dawne Anderson.

He is now in far less pain since sessions with Detillieux and is able to contemplate the notion of being able to work again.

"It's totally life-changing for him," said Anderson. "Because of Norm and helping him, he's able to think of looking for work."

For Detillieux, helping people heal, especially those who may need it most, is thanks enough for him.

The best part of his job, he says, is getting to see people get better.

It also strengthens a sense of community, said Detillieux, by fostering friendships and building other relationships.

In his Nanaimo studio, he has helped everyone from families the elderly, including expectant mothers to a six-year-old boy who was suffering from migraines.

Several other professionals also offer their services to help people in need at the Salvation Army, including a hairdresser and acupuncturist.

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