

JAPAN'S N°1 ENGLISH MAGAZINE

FREE!

METROPOLIS

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DANCE
*SEE GEISHA STRUT THEIR
STUFF IN AKASAKA*

THE LAST WORD
*I GOT MY ASS KICKED
ON A TOKYO TRAIN!*



**THE CITY'S BEST
OUTDOOR CAFÉES**

**SPECIAL
PULL-OUT
GUIDE!**

**GOLDEN
WEEK &
SUMMER
FLICKS**

**METROPOLIS' MOVIE MAN PREVIEWS
THE CURRENT CROP OF CINEMATIC SPECTACLES**

MEGURO COUNSELING CENTER

WHEN THE GLASS SEEMS HALF-EMPTY, CONSIDER SEEKING PROFESSIONAL HELP

BY KARRYN CARTELLE



COURTESY OF DOUGLAS BERGER

IN THIS ELECTRONIC AGE IT SEEMS

only fitting that Dr. Douglas Berger, director of the Meguro Counseling Center, likens life's problems to that of a computer system. "There are two types of troubles of the mind," he explains. "Software issues, which are personality problems, such as narcissism or over-dependency, and hardware issues, where something is wrong with the way the brain functions, as in schizophrenia, depression, and anxiety disorders".

At Berger's Meguro Counseling Center, he and the associate director, Dr. Douglas Eames, can help with a number of psychological problems,

in both individual and group settings. Berger has over 20 years of experience as a psychiatrist, while Eames specializes in helping with phobias and anxiety using cognitive-behavioral therapy, relaxation training, and biofeedback.

Unfortunately, solving psychological problems is hardly as easy as running antivirus software or upgrading a component. "A computer has a trash can to throw away unneeded or disturbing documents," Berger says. "Humans have no way to permanently rid themselves of emotional waste." This, he says, is where psychotherapy can help.

For software (personality) problems, "persons have certain core-issues like feeling unloved, feeling belittled, etc., that can drive maladaptive behaviors," he says. "These are disorders, not an illness per se, and can be treated with psychotherapy." When one's hardware has gone awry, a combination of medicine and counseling is often used in order to help bring the person back into a state of balance.

Berger notes that "a relationship with a therapist in a peripheral therapy such as natural healing, aromatherapy, or life coaching may be helpful to get over transient states of low mood or loneliness; the problem is when someone with more complex personality issues or an illness of depression, etc., uses one of these therapies as a way to avoid facing the personal weakness one must overcome in order to confront the problems effectively".

The Meguro Counseling Center works with a range of patients, including cross-cultural couples and families who may suffer from misunderstandings that impact on their relationships. They provide counseling for children and adolescents as well, addressing issues like eating disorders, depression and substance abuse.

close-up

COURTESY OF KARRYN CARTELLE



If taking up martial arts like judo and karate seems too aggressive, but you would still like to learn how to protect yourself, check out the **Self-Defense & Energy Skills Workshop** next month in Meguro.

Focused on "seeking strength from within," the three-hour course introduces the concept of chi (*ki* in Japanese)—life-force energy—and teaches participants how to harness their innate power to protect themselves.

The instructor, Shogo Oketani, a master of judo, kendo and karate, will cover breathing techniques that strengthen and focus concentration, self-defense methods (including punching, kicking, "submission holds" and using "common tools" as weapons), and also ways to replenish your chi to increase self-confidence.

The workshop on June 28 at Meguro's Sun and Moon Yoga Studio is open to all. Oketani also offers workshops in private and corporate settings.

¥5,000. June 28, 5-8pm. Sun and Moon Yoga Studio: 204 Higashi-Guchi Bldg, 3-1-5 Kami-Osaki, Shinagawa-ku. Tel: 03-3280-6383. Nearest stn: Meguro. www.sunandmoon.jp

A new party is taking the world by storm—one baby step at a time. Launched in Philadelphia, **Baby Loves Disco** is a clubbing event geared for tots between 6 months and 7 years old. Through word of mouth, the parties have popped up in cities throughout the US. Regular BLD events now take place in nearly two dozen American cities, as well as in England, Sweden and Israel.

And last month, Tokyo became the latest city to host a Baby Loves Disco event. Each month BLD will hold a party at a local café or club, with the venue being adapted to the needs of younger patrons. On the dancefloor, children can move to the beats of a DJ spinning '70s and '80s hits. There's also a chill-out zone with toys, puzzles and books; diaper changing/milk stations; healthy snacks, a juice bar for the kids and an open bar for moms and dads.

Part of each party's proceeds will go to the **Orange Ribbon Foundation of Japan**, a network of friends and family working to prevent child abuse and neglect.

The next party is May 25 at 57 (www.fiftyseven.co.jp) in Roppongi. Tickets can be purchased through the Baby Loves Disco website. The party runs for three hours and tickets cost ¥6,000 for adults and ¥4,000 for children under 12. Infants who are not yet walking can enter free.

See www.babylovesdisco.co.jp for details. For more information on Orange Ribbon visit www.orangeribbon-net.org. KC



COURTESY OF SIOBHAN HANSEN