



This stud says he can cure cancer with his mind. **Karen Catchpole** investigates the hottest thing to hit alternative medicine since peyote.

I SUDDENLY FEEL NAKED. I'm sitting across the kitchen table from 20-year-old Adam, the self-described "dreamhealer," while he describes my aura. "In the daylight, I see a slight distortion around you," he says, looking at me intently. "It's a fuzzy, glowing form of energy." Well, hello to you, too.

Adam spends quite a bit of time staring at auras—not because he's trying to freak people out, but because, he claims, he can tell if someone is sick just by looking at them. "When someone is

ill, their aura reflects this as energy being blocked," Adam says. "Energy healing can eliminate these blockages and restore health." Just like prune juice. Except Adam believes that with enough concentration, *everything*—from cramps to tumors—can disappear.

I'm no New Age type (hell, I don't even do yoga), but Adam is being touted as alternative medicine's most promising practitioner, and he looks a bit like Jake Gyllenhaal, if you ignore the unfortunate blond highlights. So here I am in Vancouver, enjoying →

→ pea soup made by his mom, Liz.

"He has stalkers!" she says, sounding both proud and worried. Like some sort of messiah, Adam's growing celebrity has attracted thousands of sick people—plus a few critics. Liz is so wary of the attention that she makes me promise not to reveal the family's last name. But she ought to get used to the hoopla: Adam has already published three books (available in 14 languages in 21 countries), and he's a creative consultant for a CBS pilot based on his bizarre life.

Adam's life took a turn for the paranormal about four years ago. "I had a dream about going to this remote place where I would see a large bird," Adam says. Although he'd never been there before, he says he knew instinctively that the place was Nootka Island, a largely uninhabited hunk of rock off the Western coast of Vancouver Island. "The vision of the bird and Nootka was as real to me as reality," Adam says.

So on his 16th birthday, Adam's family traveled to Nootka. Persuading his parents to take him on the bird hunt wasn't that hard because, they swear, they'd witnessed things like Adam's spontaneously doing an aerial somersault on his bike and pencils mysteriously flying out of his hands. "I wanted validation that what I was experiencing was real, and I wanted my family on board," Adam says.

"Before the boat was even tied up, Adam jumped off and ran down a path," says Frank, Adam's dad. "He turned off the trail and said, 'We have to go this way.'"

Adam and his dad ended up standing in a clearing where, sure enough, a huge bird appeared. "It was like *Alice in Wonderland*. I couldn't believe it," Frank says. "Seeing the bird from my vision opened something up in me," Adam says. But his old-fashioned parents had a hard time accepting the experience. "We're Fred and Wilma Flintstone, in many aspects," Liz admits.

"It's weird stuff," Frank adds.

And it gets weirder. In 2001, Adam had an unusual experience with Liz, who suffers from multiple sclerosis. "I wished Mom wasn't in such terrible pain, but I thought I couldn't do anything about it," Adam says. "But when I held my hand over her head, I saw a quantum holographic view of the problematic energy, which looked like a green pulsating ball of light. I pulled it out of her and into me. I got an instant headache, but Mom immediately felt pain-free." Okay ...

Later, Frank read in a newspaper that rock legend Ronnie Hawkins had inoperable pancreatic cancer. Frank showed Ronnie's photo to Adam. "I could energetically see that the tumor, although large, was in one place, so I thought I could help," Adam says. Frank e-mailed Ronnie's office, and the musician agreed to a series of long-distance healings—the ultimate house call. Ronnie says that when Adam stared at the photograph, concentrating on the tumor, he felt his insides heat up. Within a few months, the tumor was gone.

"I've come to believe that the Big Rocker works in mysterious ways," writes Ronnie on Adam's Web site, dreamhealer.com. "I don't understand [what Adam did for me], and I don't criticize what I don't understand."

Adam didn't charge Ronnie (he's since charged some clients up to \$75 per session). Ronnie, however, did give Adam an autographed shirt. Imagine the inscription: "Thanks for saving my life. Have a T-shirt."

After lunch, Adam reluctantly agrees to show me his bedroom, and as we climb the stairs, it occurs to me that Adam and his family are like a Canadian version of Midwesterners. He's embarrassed by the framed 8x10 school photos of

himself on the walls (his mom's idea) but proud of the bottle of Jean Paul Gaultier cologne from his girlfriend. My favorite design element, though, is the Periodic Table of Sex Positions poster tacked up above his bed. Adam sees me staring at it, smiles and unconsciously strokes his stomach the way guys with ripped abs do.

In many ways, he's a typical 20-year-old. He met his girlfriend about a year ago at a club where he was working as a bouncer. "After a month, I told her I'm an energy healer," Adam says. "She was surprised but supportive. Now, pretty much every girl I meet recognizes me from TV," he says, referring to recent profiles on shows like *Inside Edition*. "Every time a new TV spot comes out, I get e-mails from people from high school, too," he adds. "It's frustrating. People I haven't talked to for years will be friendly—then, of course, I find out they have a dying grandpa." Don't you hate when that happens?

Three years ago, model Christina Walls, then 20, was diagnosed with 28 tumors in her lungs. Christina, who was the first runner-up in the Miss World Canada pageant in 2005, met Adam at a workshop about a year ago and later did one-on-one healing sessions with him. "Since I've been seeing Adam, my CT scan has shown no tumor growth, which is completely new," she says. "If I continue doing visualizations, I believe we will shrink them."

Adam's message of harnessing the mind/body connection is gaining mainstream medical cred, too. My own gynecologist suggested that I visualize my uterine fibroids shrinking before having them removed. And a study at Harvard showed that women who were told their jobs as hotel housekeepers counted as a workout lost an average of two pounds and lowered their blood pressure, while maids who were told nothing enjoyed no such benefits. Perhaps all this isn't so crazy.

David Oates believes Adam's ability is for real.

Two years ago his daughter, Symone, then 17, fell 70 feet off a rooftop parking lot in Adelaide, Australia, suffering severe brain injuries. Two days later, David contacted Adam. "When I first looked at her, I didn't think she was going to live," says Adam of his initial session with Symone, who was in an induced coma. "But the next time, I saw neurons reconnecting, so I kept working on her."

Less than two months later, David reports, Symone spoke for the first time at the exact moment Adam says he began that day's healing. "Without Adam's help, Symone would be in a vegetative state," David says. Now his daughter spends her weekends seeing bands.

If one of Adam's patients doesn't show signs of improvement, however, his parents will step in to break up the connection. "I'm trying to maintain a normal 20-year-old's life. I only have so much energy, so I have to conserve it," Adam says. He recently started holding workshops in order to reach more people—and make a little money doing so.

"Adam was going to have to get a job anyway," says his sister, Sarah. "This is just his job."



ADAM'S GOT SOME PRETTY FANS

Adam treated model Christina's (top) tumors and read Rachel's aura. But he helps ugly people, too.

park my Chevy Silverado at the Los Angeles Marriott, where more than 500 people have shelled out \$119 each to attend Adam's workshop. "Dr. Phil charges up to \$550," says Liz, who helps organize the events, "and Tony Robbins charges up to \$1,200 per video seminar." I scan the crowd: It's a mix of sick people hoping for miracles (one guy's on oxygen), curious types and self-proclaimed healers intent on improving their skills (this is L.A., after all).

Adam says, "I'm trying to focus on getting people to utilize the mind/body connection for themselves—to get away from the abilities I have and focus on the abilities everyone has. If you get better, it's your own fault."

Sprinkled throughout the ballroom are women like 20-year-old Jessica Schreiberstein, one of the aforementioned healers, who ducked out of finals week at USC to be here with Lauren Sherrell, a curious friend. During a break, they deal tarot cards on a sofa.

Adam walks onstage in jeans and a tight T-shirt. When he asks if anyone wants to have their aura read, nearly every person in the room thrusts a hand into the air, including 21-year-old Rachel O'Reilly, whose mom bought her a ticket to the workshop as a birthday gift. ("I just knew I was going to be picked," she tells me later.) Once Rachel is onstage, Adam asks her to relax. "It's harder to see your aura if you're tense," he explains. He looks at her intently before identifying where Rachel's energy is disrupted: the right side of her neck, her legs and her stomach, where he says she carries her emotions.

I think, "Don't we all feel emotions in our stomach?" But later, a still-amazed Rachel tells me his reading was all true: "A few years ago I was in a car accident and got whiplash, which still affects the right side of my back, and I've had injuries in both knees."

Halfway through the six-hour workshop, Adam leads us through a group healing. First, we scooch our chairs together while he has us "think about [our] auras meshing into one orb, like soap bubbles popping together." Then the lights go out, and he tells us to close our eyes and focus on the ailments we want to address.

Adam herks and jerks around the stage as if only marginally in control of his body. His hands shoot out as if he's grasping at something invisible, and his head rolls around on his neck. It's a bit frightening—like seeing someone possessed. I know because I peeked.

After five minutes, he collapses into a chair and the lights come on. I'm relieved the session doesn't culminate with a bunch of obviously planted folks standing up and theatrically casting off their crutches, but it's a little anticlimactic.

Toward the end of the day, Rachel gets in line with about 100 others, clutching Adam's third book, *The Path of the DreamHealer*. "It isn't so much that I want Adam to sign my book, I just want to ask what color my aura is," Rachel says, even though Adam says the color doesn't mean anything. Afterward she reports, "He said my aura was yellowish green. I was hoping for peachy-pinky-gold, but oh well." She shrugs.

Having arrived at the workshop skeptical, I now think this guy isn't a total crock. What difference does it make if the healing is facilitated by Adam's energy or just a placebo effect? His patients seem pleased with the results, and that's what's important, right?

Perhaps they're a little *too* pleased. Almost three hours after the workshop has ended, Adam is still sitting outside the ballroom signing books. He doesn't get up until the last person has left, and his mom hurries him out to catch his flight back to Vancouver, economy class. I rush off, too. I have some fibroids to shrink. ■■■■



A few new things to do in bed

ADAM SHARES SOME TIPS ON HOW YOU CAN HEAL YOURSELF.

Step 1: Hit the sack

"A lot of healing takes place when we sleep," Adam says. "Do the following techniques at night so that while you're sleeping, things will head in the right direction." (Hence the name "dream-healer.")

Step 2: Focus on the pain

Concentrate all your energy on the sick or injured parts of your body.

Step 3: Set yourself on fire

Adam offers a bunch of visualization techniques, ranging from lightning striking your injury/illness to flames engulfing it. These are a little apocalyptic for me, so I imagine what Adam calls "smart energy packets" racing through my body—just like Pac-Man—to combat the bad stuff.

Step 4: Rinse and repeat

Adam suggests repeating his visualizations for five minutes every night (in addition

to whatever traditional medical treatments you're undergoing) until your cramps, cancer or colitis clears up. If you want to steal even more of his moves, buy your own Periodic Table of Sex Positions poster. Ha.

—Karen Catchpole