



### PART III

#### *Learning Objectives for Part III:*

- ***Using the body (hands, head and heart) to transform clients***
- ***Touch and Reflexology***
- ***The art of movement***
- ***Bodyways***

## TOUCH

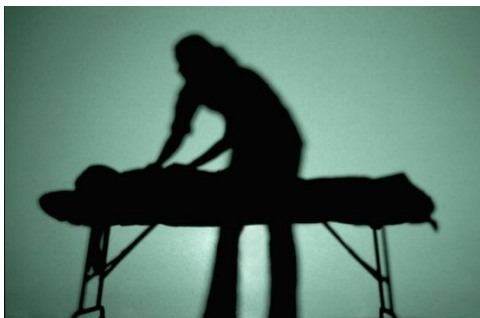
Healing through the simple process of touch has a long history. Touch is something that we are all born with the ability to both give and receive. It is one of the first sensations we feel upon our arrival into the world, and is therefore one of the most important in terms of its ability to allow us to feel the safety and security of loving relationships in our lives. If this sensation of love and security is allowed to thrive with nurturing parents as providers, we set a foundation and begin to learn more about how to both give and receive love.

Touch should not be underestimated because it permeates into all aspects of life. From the way we shake someone's hand to the classic hug, we are defined by how we touch or how we receive it. There are social and cultural norms for touching, though. Reflect for a moment about how touch is regarded in different parts of the world, within different cultures – where there are either implied or clear rules about the human touch. We learn the difference between those times when touching is appropriate or when it is not warranted. We become aware of different types of touching and then determine if we feel that the sensation of being in contact with another is a positive or negative experience.

In terms of its ability to heal or promote healthy survival, touch plays an important role in how our instincts develop or evolve. This is not something that we are always conscious of, but nonetheless, become part of our hard wiring. This is seen in our ability to use touch for healing or for survival. When we are able to extend a helping hand (touch) to another person in pain or one who is suffering, we are able to provide a sensation of comfort and soothing for the soul. Being able to use touch for injured or sick persons has become a human characteristic that we tend to take for granted.

In practical terms, one would need to look no further than Bodyways or Bodywork for the power of touch. A holistic approach seeks neither relaxation nor remediation as its goal, but both tend to be positive side effects. "Curing" is not the intention. Instead, the objective is a higher level of organization, structure, function, and

well-being. Holistic practitioners achieve this through balancing a particular body system – energy, neuromuscular, or myofascial, for example. A practitioner who coaches clients holistically might use Bodyways or Bodywork to do work directly on the connective tissue system of the body – be it to improve function, structure and posture for the client. This, in turn, results in better overall functioning and even psychological transformation and disease prevention. In a holistic way of seeing things, every part of our body and every aspect of our being is connected and affects every other part!<sup>1</sup> Nothing in our bodies acts independently or separately. If we alter just one dimension of a system (as in our bodies), there will be a subsequent influence on all of the others. What changes your structure changes your function, and also changes your mind and heart.<sup>2</sup>



*Therapeutic touch (commonly shortened to "TT"), also called Non-Contact Therapeutic Touch (NCTT), "Healing Touch," or Distance Healing, is an energy therapy practitioners say promotes healing and reduces pain and anxiety. Practitioners of therapeutic touch state that by placing their hands on, or near, a patient, they are able to detect and manipulate the patient's energy field<sup>3</sup>*

## REFLEXOLOGY: TAKING A NEW LOOK

It isn't surprising that many people have dismissed reflexology. After all, there just isn't any obvious reason why a simple massage of the feet would have any kind of important therapeutic benefit.

Sure, we can all agree that it might be pleasurable - even very relaxing - but, that is about it, right? There is absolutely no precedent for the basic premise of reflexology that areas of the feet correspond to other parts of the body, and, that stimulation of these areas of the feet therapeutically relaxes the corresponding parts of the body!

And yet, advocates of reflexology have made far-reaching claims about reflexology. Some recipients have their arthritis completely cured, been cured of their headaches, back aches cleared up, asthma symptoms relieved, sinuses cleared, have been freed of their PMS., ovarian cysts disappeared, stomach ulcer healed – and on and on.

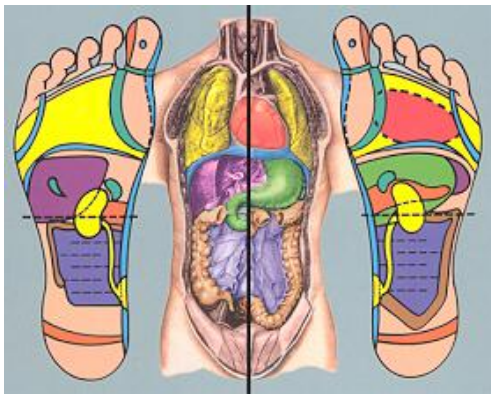
In the December 1993 issue of the prestigious American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology a research paper presented by William Flocco and Dr. Terry Oleson showed reflexology reduced women's PMS symptoms by 46 percent for the eight weeks of weekly treatments. This was sustained with 42 percent reduction of symptoms for eight weeks after treatment. It was not as effective as drug treatments. However, reflexology had none of the side effects of drugs. The conclusion was that reflexology should be considered an effective therapy for PMS. This is the first scientifically accepted reflexology research study conducted in North America.

### REFLEXOLOGY AROUND THE WORLD

Scientific research of reflexology has been conducted in other parts of the world. When compared to North America, there has been a much more receptive attitude to reflexology in Denmark, with the result being that there are approximately 3500 practicing Danish reflexologists versus 3000 practicing medical doctors. Some of these reflexologists are working in medical settings including hospitals, and large corporations employ reflexologists for their employees. It is apparent that these corporations find the resultant reduced sick leave and improved productivity of their employees' worthy of employing reflexologists.

Simultaneously, three Danish research studies report positive results from reflexology treatment for persons suffering from poor blood circulation, kidney stones and constipation. Another study indicates that reflexology was beneficial for women in a number of different circumstances during childbirth.

Research conducted in Australia evaluated reflexology's benefit for patients suffering from arthritic pain, unexplained internal pain and tension headaches. The study reported positive results. Similarly, in Switzerland, a research study evaluated the benefits of reflexology for persons with terminal cancer, all of whom were suffering from pain. The results showed that reflexology not only relieved their pain, but also added quality to the patient's life.



In China, X.M. Wang of the First Teaching Hospital, Beijing Medical University published "Treating type II diabetes mellitus with foot reflexotherapy". This study reports numerous symptoms greatly reduced by reflexotherapy and concludes that it is an effective therapy for type II diabetes mellitus.

In summation, from around the world, scientific research has shown that reflexology is an effective therapy for a diverse range of health conditions: PMS., kidney stones, constipation, childbirth, arthritis, internal pain, tension headaches and the pain suffered by persons with terminal cancer, and, diabetes mellitus type II. Maybe it is time to take a second look at reflexology and all the claims that have been made.

It appears that reflexology might be the difference between requiring drugs/surgery, and helping your body to heal itself. In a preventive sense, it's the difference between getting sick and staying healthy. Reflexology therapeutically reduces stress and tension throughout the whole body. Blood and lymph circulation improves, nerve supply to the cells is improved, and

*"Awareness of movement is the third state of existence, after waking and sleeping: In this state the individual knows exactly what he is doing while awake, just as we sometimes know when awake what we dreamed about while asleep"*

*Moshe  
Feldenkrais*

the release of toxins from the body is increased. These physiological benefits facilitate improvement in the body's assimilation of nutrients, elimination of wastes, and the functions of the immune system.

Reflexology is also a very effective complement to other natural health therapies. For example, it can facilitate more effective chiropractic adjustments that hold for longer. Reflexology complements massage and other physical therapies by reducing stress and tension in the internal glands and organs of the body, and, by relieving stress from parts of the body that are too painful to be directly worked on: i.e. whiplash. Reflexology complements nutritional and herbal therapies and colon therapy by facilitating more efficient assimilation and elimination in the digestive system. It would be extremely useful for any CHLC to use reflexology due to its effectiveness through therapeutic touch.



*With touch-based therapies in mind, there is a good chance that clients can increase their awareness and to improve the ways that they move already. This type of sensory awareness requires that the nervous system continuously monitors and relays information about our inner states.*

## THE ART OF MOVEMENT

Holism is directly tied to the vital role a healthy mind has on nurturing a peaceful mind in health. Holism also embraces the energy of a spiritual self that lives, breathes and has emotion. Movement is activity and is fundamental to all life forms. When searching for a complement to the title holism, movement comes to mind, naturally. It defines how life sustains, grows, and changes. In healing, movement produces the reactions that vitalize our cells, nourish our tissues, and harmonize our organs. Our mind has movement of thoughts, whereas our spirit has movement in feelings. Ideal health strives for the equilibrium reached when all levels optimize and balance each other, and seeks a steady-state movement.

Holism movement integrates an arrangement for clients so that there is a focal point for each aspect or dimension of coaching. These arrangements can take a session or two, or weeks of interaction, to resolve. For some clients who are prescribed Bodyways, the action or movements can be a lifelong prescription. A certified Mind Body Fitness Coach would be ideal for this dimension of holism.

To understand movement, it is best to remember the words of Moshe Feldenkrais, who stated that "movement occurs only when the nervous system sends the impulses that contract the necessary muscles in the right patterns or assemblies and in the right sequences in time". To carry out any decision – to go forward or hold back – we bend or flex certain muscle and extend or straighten others. In fact, the muscles work in pairs, as agonists and antagonists. However, if one side of this equation overcontracts, the

opposing side has to overstretch. The result is postural imbalance, weakness, limited range of motion and quality of movement<sup>i</sup>.

With this type of awareness required, where do the CHLC start? Yes, we ultimately strive to coach clients toward their holistic health goals, but we have to have a reference point to start from. We need to be able to understand our clients well enough to do many positive things with them as their coach. Since movement is a basic need for all humans, sometimes our client's awareness has to be stripped down to fundamentals in order to begin facilitating holistic health changes or transformations.

## BODYWAYS

Bodyways (sometimes called Bodyworks or similar) can be the means for your client gaining a new viewpoint on their and holistic health. By definition, Bodyways are used in alternative medicine to describe any therapeutic or personal development technique that involves working with the human body in a form involving manipulative therapy, breath work, or energy medicine. In addition *bodywork* techniques aim to assess or improve posture, promote awareness of the "mind-body connection", or to manipulate a putative "energy field" surrounding the human body and affecting health.

Suffering is a great motivator. Many people first turn to Bodyways because the pain of an injury or a chronic condition forces them to seek alternatives. This can mean interventions without orthodox treatment – or surgery and drugs - to get relief. In some cases, the result has simply made them dependent on medications. Practitioners report that frequently clients come



to their doorsteps when they have nowhere else to go. In desperation and in exasperation, they finally try a Bodyway to deal with their arthritis, backaches, repetitive stress syndrome, or other occupational strains, to help heal old football or dance injuries, stress, or for recovery after childbirth or an automobile accident. While a client may come to use Bodyways as it being their last resort, it's also the first step toward a new awareness of being in their body and thus a new relationship to their lives.

Recommending the appropriate Bodyway can be a challenge for a holistic life coach. Some coaches will know several different types of Bodyways, such as various types of massage, but how you coach your client with will depend on their specific needs. A Mind Body Fitness Coach is qualified to direct this part of holistic healthcare extremely well, due to the knowledge they have related to the many Bodyways and the details that lend themselves perfectly for deciphering a clients' needs.

Many of us, including our clients, have been conditioned to look to authorities and experts rather than to learn for ourselves. The more our client can develop an accurate picture of their body - from within and from without - and the more easily you can coach them to feel different parts, the more you will help them to know what they need in order to take care of themselves. In some cases, this will also help your client learn what they should share with any health care practitioners who are collaborating in their healing.

Other client motivators for turning to Bodyways comes from a more positive frame of mind, and a natural drive toward healthy or optimal functioning. Your client will want to feel good yet they will sense that they can expand

beyond their present limitations. Or maybe your client will want to gain greater flexibility or to improve their posture. It doesn't matter what the client reason is for needing to work with Bodyways. Whether they want to just get better, feel better in order to function better, persuading your client to use Bodyways will open a whole new world for them and may bring them not only the relief they long for but also more knowledge and power that they may not be aware they had. That's what fulfilling your potential as a coach is really all about.

## REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup> Knaster, Mirka, *Discovering the Body's Wisdom*, (1996); *Deciding on a Bodyway*, p101; Bantam Books Publishing, New York, NY

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