



Editorial

Most of this issue is devoted to an article entitled “Seven good reasons to have a massage”. Gerry Pyves sums up my motivation beautifully - why I have weekly massage and why I am a therapist. I observe the benefits on many of my clients.

What's new?

In the Summer I completed my Reflexology training, and I am offering this therapy to clients. It works well on it's own, particularly for pregnant women, or in combination with Massage or MLD. I am excited, as I had promising results in my case studies. If you ever had Reflexology you may find that Touching Well Reflexology is different as I use the No Hands method of working the reflexes of the feet combined with the theory of reflexology. The resulting therapy is very powerful indeed.

Talking about pregnancy, there is now (again) a home birth support group in Nottingham. The group meets at the Iona School in Sneinton (310 Sneinton Dale) on the third Friday of the month in the morning, from 9.15 onwards.

On the last page I have written about my visit to the Földi Klinik. It was inspiring to experience what can be done in a specialist lymphoedema clinic, that 3-6

Work like you don't need the money.
Love like nobody has ever hurt you.
Dance like nobody is watching.
Sing like nobody is listening.
Live as if this was paradise on Earth.

Randall G Leighton

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weeks daily intensive therapy are indeed the best option. I always feel awkward when clients ask what it takes, and I have to answer that the intensive phase of therapy is called so for a reason. But it does get results! Finally, a timely reminder that we offer gift vouchers, just the thing for those people who don't need another ornament on the mantle piece. Alternatively, we sell bongers, “massage canes” and Hopi Ear candles.



Wishing you a spring in your step,

Regina Dengler

Optimists live longer and are healthier

A study lasting 30 years from the Mayo Clinic concluded that an optimistic view of life halves the risk of premature death and gives you better quality of life, including mental functioning in old age. This outlook on life is even more influential than wealth. Here are some examples mentioned in the paper:

1. Optimists see setbacks as temporary, changeable, and even a chance to learn and

**"Whether you think you can or can't,
you're right"**

Henry Ford



grow. Pessimists tend to look at setbacks as permanent and hopeless.

2. Optimists explain positive events as having happened because of them, while pessimists

tend to think that positive things happen to them because of luck or a fluke.

3. Optimists are not disempowered by failure. If they don't do what they intend to do, they acknowledge this and try again, while pessimists think that they are a failure and no good. (Mayo Clin Proc. 2002 Aug;77(8):748-53).

Seven good reasons to have a massage

#1: It is the oldest medicine...

Touch is probably the oldest medicine and massage is certainly the oldest natural therapy on the planet. It is certainly one of the most 'natural' as it employs no potions or gimmicks. Massage offers you something which no other therapy can offer – namely, the power of touch.

Deep and sustained touch can utterly transform your life – for the better. As your body changes, so too do your thoughts, your emotions and your whole connection with yourself. In this respect, Massage is probably the most total therapy available. The profoundly nurturing touch of Massage helps us to 'catch up' with ourselves and allows us to become whole again.

#2: Let's get it straight ...

Structural imbalances can develop without your even noticing. There is always a need to do what we can to achieve structural re-alignment. Areas that you didn't even know were tense can easily be loosened by Massage. How to understand structural imbalance? Structural imbalance is when your bones go out of alignment. This in turn can cause a whole host of problems from the subtle (slight reduction in speed of nerve impulse transmission) to the gross (the excruciating pain of nerve impingement). So what controls the position of your bones? Your muscles.

Physical tension can best be understood by thinking of your muscles like a suit of clothing

covering your body. When we get stressed, the clothing shrinks. What happens to shrunken clothes when you wear them? They tear and they distort. Even ordinary movements cause them to misalign and tear – movements that previously caused you no problems at all. With Massage, your whole musculature can be pleurably stretched and all these restrictions released. Often, it is only when you are actually being massaged that you even realize how tight you have become. As a result of this structural realignment you can walk with balance and poise through life, once again.

#3: Connecting mind and body ...

In truth, much illness and unhappiness originates from a disconnection between the mind and the body. Touch is simply the most powerful way to reconnect with the deep self-healing potential within each of us. Massage is one of the most effective ways to bridge the gap between mind and body. This reconnection enables us to re-open the dialogue between our minds and our 'gut instincts'. In short, Massage can help us to follow our instincts about the right path to take in life. Through Massage we can go forward and make the correct decisions in our lives – because we are re-connected with this inner 'body-wisdom'; a wisdom that we all have. Sometimes this 'body wisdom' means knowing when to just stop and breathe, or take a short rest. Connecting with your 'body wisdom' is all about your very own truth, right now.



➔ **#4: Letting your energy flow ...**

The oriental images of acupuncture meridians (or channels) are now being confirmed by modern scientific instrumentation. Blockages in these channels can develop into illness in the future. Being smoothed over and 'steamrolled' by a powerful Massage can get your energy flowing once again. With Massage, you locate these blockages and release them without any pain or effort at all. Just like a mountain glacier flushing away rocks and debris in a spring melt Massage is ideal for releasing blocked energy anywhere in the body. The flowing touch of Massage allows all the energy channels in your body to move and circulate once again. You can walk through your day feeling the energy in your whole being literally vibrate. It is all about being fully alive, as opposed to becoming a member of the living dead!

#5: Recharging the battery ...

Your body is a homeostatic organism – in other words, it seeks to rebalance itself continually. Sometimes you may need the gentle and occasionally still touch of Massage for your body to remember its innate self-healing abilities. We all get depleted, and Massage puts us back into self-healing mode. It is amazing how much can be put right without you even knowing what is going on inside your body! The immune system is at the centre of all good health and Massage sends a signal deep into your immune system to say "activate". There is magic in your body and Massage can re-ignite its flame... ➔

Massage benefits osteoarthritis patients

"Massage therapy is a safe and effective way to reduce pain and improve function in adults with osteoarthritis of the knee." This is the conclusion of a 16 week trial into Massage therapy at Yale Prevention Research Centre and at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey.

Arch Intern Med, 2006 Dec;, 66(22):2533-8

Massage decreases aggression in pre-school children

In this study pre-school children with aggression and "deviant" behaviour at day-care centres received either daily Massage or listened to a story. Children who received Massage showed significant decrease in aggression scores after 3 months, six months and 12 months. Parents of the children receiving Massage rated



a significant decrease of somatic (physical) problems of their children. Staff observed that the massaged children's social problems decreased, compared to the control children. Attention problems tended to decrease, especially at home. A continuous decrease in aggressive behaviour and somatic problems over a 12-month period was observed in the children receiving Massage. In conclusion, daily touching by Massage lasting for 5-10 minutes could be an easy and inexpensive way to decrease aggression among preschool children. (*Acta Paediatr.* 2008 Sep;97(9):1265-9) It is interesting that this study comes from Sweden, where baby Massage and Massage in schools is common place. This was the "missing" age group, and presto – it is beneficial for them, too. I am convinced that not only aggressive four and five year olds would benefit. Massage can be done by parents, and other relatives. I am more than happy to give some help. In the next issue I'll give you some ideas.

Training at the Földi Klinik

For my professional organisation MLD^{UK} I have to update my skills every two years. In 2006 I went back to Holland to my original trainer, and this year I decided to go to Germany to the Földi Klinik. This is a 142 bed specialist hospital in the Black Forest, where people with oedema stay for 3-6 weeks (or longer) to have their swellings assessed and treated. Patients have MLD twice a day, most are bandaged, and they have a full exercise programme. This is a fantastic place for people with lymphoedema, including those who have other medical conditions as well, such as diabetes, heart conditions, metastatic disease. People come from all over the world, and for the British a day would cost about £110, including MLD, bandaging and other physiotherapy (on top of this are medicines, medical investigations and compression hosiery). Most German patients come every (or every other) year, and have MLD twice a week in the mean time. Wouldn't it be good to have this in England, too?

My course lasted for five days. I observed (and helped) the therapists at the clinic for a day. We also practiced and reviewed MLD and bandaging, discussed case studies (including

one of my clients - very useful), and had lectures. These included cellulites (inflammation) and treatment of lymphoedema in advanced cancer.

We discussed the misconception that the cancer cells can be spread by Massage. The current research suggests that it is unlikely that MLD will spread cancer or promote metastasis. The process of metastasis involve complex biological and chemical interactions, depending on the biological characteristics of the tumour, receptive tissue for the tumour cells (vascular endothelial growth factors) and a weak immune system. If you are unlucky enough to have lymphoedema after cancer treatment, get your oedema treated by a specialist. This does *not* affect the outcome of the cancer treatment but it *does* affect your quality of life! (Cancer 2008, 112:950-4).

This brings me to a final point. The lymphatic system can be compromised after breast surgery and/or radiation. There is a new device which can test whether the lymphatic system of the arm is coping well or is close to lymphoedema. I am wondering whether to invest in such a device. For this I need some feedback, so let me know what you think.



#6: Time to detoxify...

There is nothing which can stimulate a de-tox like a powerful Massage! This may include some deep work on the colon as well as lots of vigorous work on the muscles. Sometimes we just need a good old cleansing.... Massage literally squashes all the cells in your body and stimulates the release of toxins. These travel out of the cells and into the major circulation systems of the body ready for elimination. You know this is happening because the blood gets temporarily toxic and as it passes through the subtle areas of your brain you experience headache. This is good – a sign the treatment was powerful. Rest and lots of water facilitates this process.

#7: And finally

All the above reasons are great. But there is another reason that goes even deeper. Being touched is about getting support on this difficult journey called life. No matter how you look at it, being human is tough. We make mistakes, we have arguments, we get upset, we struggle. There is something intrinsically painful about the human condition. Massage can soothe your journey. Every human being needs and deserves the support that Massage can provide on life's journey. It's really that simple.

Gerry Pyves March, 2008, <http://www.nohandsmassage.com/privmem00/summaryaug08Final.pdf>