### Preface

This important new work that you are holding, *New Foundations in Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork*, is unique in approach and format. In writing this text, our objective is to provide a concise, focused, and practical approach to massage technique for students of massage therapy. No matter what connection you have with therapeutic massage—beginning student, practicing massage therapist, sports therapist, massage instructor, alternative healing practitioner, or medical health practitioner—this text will serve for both training and reference purposes.

The system of study within this book will enable the reader to employ a vast amount of up-to-date knowledge toward practical applications for successful healing techniques. We have incorporated well-illustrated and well-organized material relevant to an optimized application of massage therapy principles and techniques. We also developed numerous pedagogical aids for use by students and instructors wishing a complete program for the study of therapeutic massage.

We reviewed and analyzed information and perspective from practicing therapists, instructors of massage therapy, and massage therapy students to present the following objectives:

- Provide a focused examination of anatomy with an emphasis on physiology as it applies to therapeutic massage. We combined anatomy and the physiology of body systems to give the student or practitioner a complete guide to the function and structure of the human body, and then the ability to use precise medical/professional terminology in describing them.
- Continue the learning process by giving in-depth information on how massage can benefit the body by maintaining health and eliminating certain disease processes. Specific chapters explain the role of massage in increasing circulation of blood and lymph and the direct mechanical effects of rhythmic applied pressure toward blood flow. With this objective in mind, we have included chapters that are massage-specific in regard to injury and rehabilitation. Also discussed are the effects of increasing the body's ability to remove waste material, toxins, and impurities through the lymphatic and integumentary systems, and better manage disease and debility.
- Present information, perspective, and practical guidance for working with all segments of the population—from the very young to the very old, from those who have to live with disabilities to those who have endured hardships.
- Provide a thorough and comprehensive explanation of therapeutic massage and complementary bodywork modalities (both Eastern and Western), written by the developer or recognized expert in the field, as enhancements to or a launching point for specialization in the therapist's massage practice.
- Give the student a foundation for proper handling of client relationships and documentation, such as HIPAA guidelines, and professional and ethical standards, along with an understanding of successful business practices.

**Objectives** 

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### Pedagogical Features and Special Ancillaries

We have incorporated the following features to make the text more practical and valuable:

- Full-color photographs and illustrations throughout the text give the student a realistic view of the application or point being studied.
- A number of "how to" photographs and illustrations to show step-by-step procedures and techniques.
- Numerous reference mentions to assist the student or practitioner in accessing material located elsewhere in the text.
- Repetition is used throughout the text to enforce learning and build clinical terminology and confidence in the beginning student.
- Learning Outcomes at the beginning provide a glimpse ahead to important sections for quick understanding of flow and organization.
- Key Terms at the beginning of each chapter and bolded when first introduced in the chapter familiarize the students of important concepts.
- An Introduction for each chapter gives the students an idea of what is going to be taught.
- Technical Emphasis boxes in each chapter incorporate counseling, ethics, and teaching skills for positive application of massage techniques.
- Exam Point boxes highlight critical areas of understanding for certification and review.
- Special Application (Procedures) boxes demonstrate real-life experiences and provide informative sidebars.
- A Summary at the end of each chapter gathers key points that are presented in the chapter.
- Applying Your Knowledge questions at the end of each chapter help to reinforce the information the student just read in that chapter.
- Case Studies at the end of each chapter give the students an opportunity to apply the concepts and learn by discussion.

There is a website for both students and instructors. The students can benefit from additional quiz questions, animation exercises, and labeling exercises. The instructor can view the Instructor's Manual, PowerPoint presentations for each chapter, and an image bank of all the illustrations in the text, which can be printed and used as handouts.

An Instructor's CD-ROM is available. The CD contains the Instructor's Manual, PowerPoint presentations for each chapter, and EZ Test questions for each chapter. McGraw-Hill's EZ Test is a flexible and easy-to-use electronic testing program. The program allows instructors to create tests from book specific items. It accommodates a wide range of question types, and instructors may add their own questions. Multiple versions of the test can be created and any test can be exported for use with course management systems such as WebCT, BlackBoard, or PageOut. EZ Test Online is a new service and gives instructors a place to easily administer their EZ Test-created exams and quizzes online. The program is available for Windows and Macintosh platforms.

The Instructor's Manual includes an overview/introduction to massage therapy, instructor teaching tips, two sample syllabii, an answer key for all chapter review questions with feedback, and a lesson plan for each chapter.

### Summary

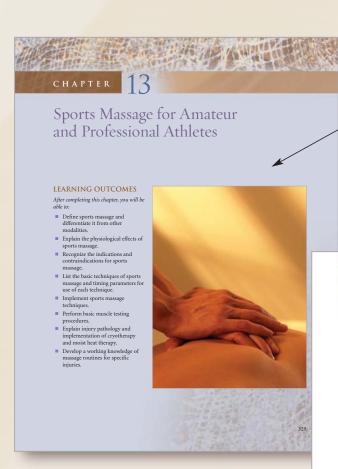
While writing this text, our guiding principle was that therapeutic massage has become a core discipline in the modern health care continuum and that it will continue to grow in importance through more rigorous training and certification of its practitioners and through more research into its obvious benefits. These benefits, which include the pre-

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vention or treatment of certain diseases and the contribution to overall health, vitality, and well-being, are being better understood each day. We have attempted to create a work that teaches fundamental concepts as well as effective reasoning and decision-making skills, so that our readers may go on to fruitful and rewarding positions in professional practice. Therapeutic massage deserves its rightful place in a health care continuum that respects modalities that can save health care dollars while dramatically improving the quality of individual lives.

We hope we have created a valuable new resource for educators and students in the classroom setting, for massage and bodywork practitioners in the field, and for all requiring a continuing education resource.

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**Every chapter opens with the Learning Outcomes, Key Terms, and an Introduction that** helps prepare the students for the learning experience.

> A thorough explanation of massage modalities written by the developer or expert provides the students with a working knowledge of these specialties.

Myofascial By John F. Barnes, PT The health professions have generally ignored the importance of an entire physiologithe fascial system that profoundly influences all other structures and sys tems of the body. This glaring omission has severely affected our effectiveness and the lasting quality of our efforts. Including Myofascial Release in our evaluatory and treatment regimes allows us to provide a more comprehensive approach to our clients that is safe, cost-efficient, and consistently effective.

is safe, cost-efficient, and consistently effective.

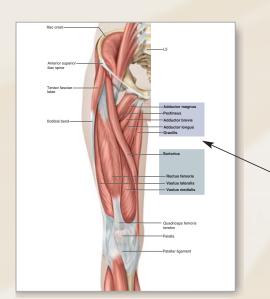
Fascial restrictions can exert tremendous tensile forces on the neuromuscular-skeletal and other pain-sensitive structures. This enormous pressure (approximately 2000 pounds per square inch) can create the very symptoms that we have so long been trying to eliminate. This knowledge frees us from only trying to eliminate. This knowledge frees us from only trying to eliminate. This knowledge frees us from only trying to eliminate. This knowledge frees us from only trying to relieve symptoms and gives us the tools we need to find and eradicate the cause-and-effect (symptoms) relationship for a permanent resolution of our client's complex problems.

Myofascial Release techniques are utilized in a wide range of settings and diagnoses; pain, movement restriction; spasm; spasticity; neurological dyfunction (i.e., cerebral palsy, and head and birth injury); cerebrovascular accident; scoliosis; menstrual and pelvic pain and dysfunction; headaches; temporomandibular pain and dysfunction; geriatrics; sports injuries; pediatrics; chronic fatigue syndrome; fibromyalgia; traumatic and surgical scarring; and acute and chronic pain.

Development of the John F. Barnes Myofascial Release Approach

Development of the John F. Barnes Myofascial Release Approach
What has come to be known as the John F. Barnes Myofascial Release Approach represents a journey that began in my teens with a devastating weightlifting accident. Over
four decades of exploration and refinement have led to a widely practiced and highly
effective approach to the evaluation and treatment of pain and postural anomalies
based on restrictions in the fascial system (figure 16.5).

My initial back injury at age 17 led to over a decade of debilitating chronic pain.
Surgery to remove a crushed vertebral disc provided improved function and lessened
pain. However, my back continued to be problematic. Throughout this experience, I began to experiment with self-treatment techniques to relieve my pain symptoms. These
techniques centered on the very prolonged holding of specific stretch positions. I began
to successfully apply these techniques with my patients without an understanding of the
mechanism by which they worked. Upon attending an osteopathic course dealing with
connective tissue and soft tissue mobilization, I realized that the techniques I had developed were very similar but had several important differences. I found that I was
holding the positions for much longer periods of time—at least 90 to 120 seconds. The



**Dynamic illustrations** and photographs present a realistic view to enhance learning.



"The depth of information and tone of the authors' voice is obvious to me that they care deeply for the profession and all the future clients as well as for the student and professional therapist." Sheryl Daniel-Academy of Natural Therapy, Eaton, CO.

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**Exam Point boxes highlight critical** areas of understanding for certification and review.

**Technical Emphasis boxes incorporate** counseling, ethics, and teaching skills for positive application of massage techniques.



Chapter Summary

Being an accomplished massage therapist involves far more than setting up an office and hanging out a sign. You should possess good communication skills so that you are and tanging out a sign. For should possess good communication skins so that you are aware of your clients' needs and comfort level and can explain to your client what to expect during the massage session. You also need to be motivated to compile and keep accurate records so that you are able to run a smooth and organized office. It is likewise important for you to understand basic medical terminology and insurance procedures

The key points in Chapter Summaries help students retain what was just learned.

Review questions at the end of every chapter reinforce massage therapy competencies.

#### Applying Your Knowledge

- 1. What is the definition of scope of practice?
  - a) Parameters the massage professional works within
- b) Fee schedule allowed
- c) Extensive training needed to practice d) All of the above are correct
- 2. What is the right of refusal?
- a) Right of the therapist to refuse to treat a clientb) Right of the state to not license a professional
- c) Right of the client to stop or refuse further treatment
- d) a and c
- 3. What is an emotional release by a client on the table?
- a) Experiencing past or recent unpleasant memories b) A sexual release
- c) Both a and b
- d) None of the above is correct.
- Besides changing strokes and changing the music, name another way to diffuse sexual arousal during a massage.
- a) Use another body part such as elbows or forearms b) Switch to another modality such as stretching
- c) Turn the lights up
- d) All of the above are correct
- 5. Tricky situations tend to develop due to a lack of what
- a) Ethical standards
- b) Business practices

- c) Common sense
- d) All of the above are correct.
- 6. What factor is important to setting boundaries?
  - a) Respecting personal space
- b) Respecting the client's comfort zone
- c) Upholding ethical standards
- d) All of the above are correct
- 7. What is the definition of disclosure? a) The client's right to refuse treatment
- b) The therapist's declaration of their reason for invoking the right of refusal to work on some
- c) The requirement to fully and truthfully fill out the client intake form
- d) The law that specifies all therapists must declare monies earned
- 8. In reference to client records, CPI is an acronym for w
- a) Cardiopulmonary infarction
- b) Coronary pulse interference c) Confidential patient information
- d) Covert patient intent
- 9. Under what conditions can you use a photograph of client at your facility?
- a) Written consent of the client
- b) Oral consent of the client
- d) Cannot ever use it
- 10. Privacy rules pertain to all forms of communi
  - a) True
  - b) False

- d) Rhomboids
- 7. Reflex massage is indicated during pregnancy.
  - a) True

8. The infant massage routine developed by McClure encompasses three tradtions: Indian milking, Swedish massage, and:

- a) Acupressure
- b) Stretching c) Reflexology

- Case Studies/Critical Thinking
- A. Your client is in her second trimester of pregnancy. How will you position her for massage? What techniques will you employ? What type of hydrotherapy, if any, will you use? What precautions will you take?
- B. A pregnant woman who has been told by her doctor that she falls within the high-risk category schedules a massage with you. How will you handle this situation?

**Case Studies/Critical Thinking** questions provide the students an opportunity to apply the concepts and learn by discussion.

"This text is very thorough and well written. I really like the quizzes at the end of the chapters and the pathology for the systems. It also connects to everyday life." Susan Hughes-Miller-Motte Technical College, Wilmington, NC.

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### Reviewer Acknowledgement

Laura Abbott, MS, NCTMB Georgia State University Atlanta, GA

Don Ash Upledger Institute Palm Beach Gardens, FL

William Ashmall, MA, LMT Onondaga School of Therapeutic Massage Syracuse, NY

Jennifer Barrett, BS, LMT Queensborough Community College Bayside, NY Mary Berger, CMT Kirtland Community College Roscommon, MI

Paul Bolton, DC National Holistic Institute Emeryville, CA

Susan L. Bova, NCMT, CMMMT Penn Commercial, Inc. Washington, PA

Michelle Burns Advanced Holistic Healing Arts Austin, TX

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Steve Capellini Miami, FL

Sheryl D. Daniel, BA, CMT, NMT, BMT, HNC,

Reiki Master

Academy of Natural Healing

Eaton, CO

Tim L. Davidson Heritage Institute Jacksonville, FL

Julie A. DeJoe, NCTMB

Westfield, NY

Jennifer M. DiBlasio, AST, ACMT Career Training Academy, Inc.

New Kensington, PA

Dana J. Douglas, NCTMB

Mount Nittany Institute of Natural Health

State College, PA

Charlotte Elipoulos, RN, MPH, ND, PhD

Glen Arm, MD Elizabeth Fegley

International Academy of Daytona Beach

Daytona Beach, FL Alexandria M. Fialka Southeastern School North Charleston, SC

Lora Freeman

Chicago College of Healing Arts

Chicago, IL

Judith Gawron, MSPT, LMT Berkshire Community College

Pittsfield, MA

Donald J. Glassey, MSW, DC, LMT, NCTMB

International Academy South Daytona, FL

Cher Goldman, LMT, MBA

New York, NY Melissa J. Grey

Miller-Motte Technical College

Wilmington, NC

Patricia M. Grimm, PhD, RW, CMT Baltimore School of Massage

Baltimore, MD

Ramona Gruber-Hester

Miller-Motte Community College

Wilmington, NC

Amy R. Holibaugh

Community College of Vermont

Morrisville, VT

Colleen Holloway Success Beyond Work Grasonville, MD

Susan L. Hughes

Miller-Motte Technical College

Wilmington, NC Holly Huzar, LMT

Center of Natural Wellness School of Massage

Albany, NY

Robert J. Ianacone Sonoma College San Francisco, CA

Lisa Jakober, Director of Education National Massage Therapy Institute, LLC

Philadelphia, PA

Marc H. Kalmanson, MSN, ARNP, LMT, RYT Dragon Rises College of Oriental Medicine

Gainesville, FL

Dawn E.R. Kirby, CMT Denver Career College

Thornton, CO Kimberly Konrad Valparaiso, IN

Julianne Lepp

Rising Spirit Institute of Health

Atlanta, GA

Theresa Lowe, LMT

Central Maine School of Massage

Lewiston, ME

Catherine A. Mastroianni, DC, CCSP

Ashmead College Seattle, WA

Donald McCann, MA, LMT, LMHC, CSET

Structural Energetic Therapy

Lutz, FL

Lisa Mertz, PhD, LMT

Queensborough Community College/City University

of New York Bayside, NY

Karen A. Mitchell, NCTMB, LMT, ACMT St. Louis College of Health Careers

Fenton, MO

Jay M. Nelson, LMT, LMP (Member ABMP, NCTMB)

Concorde Career Institute

Portland, OR

Deborah Ochsner, MS, CMT

Institute of Business and Medical Careers

Fort Collins, CO

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Jody L. Olson, LMT

Minnesota State Community & Technical College

Wadena, MN

Cassandra E. Orem Oasis Health Systems, Inc.

Baltimore, MD Lesley M. Pearl McKinnon Institute Oakland, CA

Anita Phillips, CMT Sonoma College San Francisco, CA

Susan Pomfret, MA, LMT, Program Coordinator Central Arizona College

Apache Junction, AZ

Dr. Grace Reischman, BA, DC, LMBT#1149NC

South Piedmont Community College

Monroe, NC

Keven Robinson Virginia College Homewood, AL

Selena Royal Mayes, LMBT Miller-Motte Technical College

Cary, NC

Dorothy Sala, LMT, CIMI

Teamwork, LLC Salem, CT

Jill Sanders Stanard, ND Oregon School of Massage

Portland, OR

Gregory Scelsi

Baltimore School of Massage

Baltimore, MD

Theodore M. Schiff, LMT, CR Instructor

Branford Hall Career Institute

Springfield, MA

Suann M. Schuster, MA/LCMT

Great Lakes Institute of Technology/Massage

Erie, PA

Shana Scott

Georgia Medical Institute

Norcross, GA

Shanwnte Simmons, CMT

Rising Spirit Institute of Massage Therapy

Atlanta, GA

Cheryl L. Siniakin, PhD, LMTI, NCTMB Community College of Allegheny County

Pittsburgh, PA

Cherie Sohnen-Moe

Sohnen-Moe Associates, Inc.

Tucson, AZ

Tina A. Sorrell, RMT, LMT, MTI, NCTMB

Plano, TX

Michael A. Sullivan, BS, CMT Anne Arundel Community College

Arnold, MD

Susan B. Thomasson, Med., MT(ASCP)SH, LMBT

Therapeutic Massage Training Institute

Charlotte, NC

Dr. Marilyn S. Veselack

Institute of Therapeutic Massage of Western Colorado

Grand Junction, CO

Efthimios Vlahos

Northwestern Business College

Chicago, IL

Sara J. Wallace

Miller-Motte Technical College

Wilmington, NC

John Neil Wheatley

**Rising Spirit Institute** 

Atlanta, GA

Laura Woitte, Therapeutic Massage Program

Coordinator

National American University

Sioux Falls, SD

Kim Woodcock, NCTMB

McCann School of Business & Technology

Sunbury, PA

Kevin C. Zorda, LMT

Branford Hall Career Institute

Windsor, CT

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## Therapeutic Massage: An Overview and Introduction

Massage is fundamentally based on the desire to heal, give comfort, and promote relaxation. From its early beginnings, the profession traversed back and forth over a wide chasm of acceptability to disfavor. The earliest writings were of Chinese and Japanese massage, followed by Hippocrates' mention of massage as treatment for various ailments. Massage was held in high esteem for decades until a series of unfortunate circumstances removed this therapeutic art from the limelight. These unfortunate events include scandals that erupted in Roman culture—and later in England—that led to the proliferation of sexual favors and "massage parlors." The Middle Ages, a historical period marked by superstition of anyone who sought to heal others, brought persecution to those who practiced massage. These circumstances contributed to driving massage underground and out of the mainstream of accepted health care (see chapter 1, History of Therapeutic Massage).

With the help of professional organizations such as the American Massage Therapy Association and many dedicated therapists, massage therapy has once again been elevated to a prestigious vocation. In fact, increasing acknowledgement by physicians and the insurance industry is proof we have come full circle in our perception of massage therapy as a legitimate profession. Of course, the individual client has always been the therapist's most ardent supporter. Many people who are drawn to the field suggest they have experienced a "calling" to do such work: massage therapists innately hold the desire to heal. "Laying on of hands" or possessing the "healing touch" is a powerful guiding force.

Of our five senses, touch is our primary and greatest sense. Every living organism responds to touch, even if hearing or sight is not present. Without touch, we cannot, as human beings, procreate naturally. Our skin touches the air and determines the correct response to heat and cold, pain or pleasure. And when touch is withheld, we become depressed, confused, and may experience feelings of abandonment. With touch, not only do we heal, we also thrive, becoming more physically and emotionally balanced individuals.

In children, touch is so important that babies who are deprived of touch tend to have stunted growth and may even die. Untouched and seldomly held children who survive may continue to be emotionally damaged throughout their lifetime. Touch affects our entire being; it reaches out from us to touch others, whether it is in the form of a pat on the back, a high five, or a handshake (see chapters 10, Maternity, Infant, and Pediatric Massage; 11, Massage for Special Populations; and 12, Massage for Survivors of Abuse).

When we are touched, many physical changes take place within our body. With appropriate touch, our heart rate stabilizes, body temperature normalizes, brain wave patterns are more connected and controlled, and our immune system jumps into action.

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Touch plays such a large role in our lives that we include it in our verbal vocabulary. We say "someone has lost his touch" or is "out of touch," or "I will get in touch." We have "touchy subjects," and we can want something so badly that we can "almost touch it." Amazingly, the effect of touch can now be scientifically measured. Many studies by health care professionals have proven that touch is vital to a healthy life. Touch has mutual benefits for both the giver and receiver. You feel better when you receive touch, but you can feel equally as good when you touch someone else.

Massage is a form of **professional touch.** Professional touch is defined as touch from a skilled practitioner that is performed to bring about a specific therapeutic outcome. Massage professionals have the joy of serving others through their desire for the most innate and basic need—touch (see chapter 20, Law, Ethics, and Professionalism).

### The Benefits of Massage

It is widely recognized that the first benefit of massage is an increase in circulation, thereby promoting overall good health. For the whole body to be healthy, the individual parts and the sum of those parts must also be healthy. The individual cells of the body depend on an abundant supply of blood and lymph. These fluids supply nutrients and oxygen to the body as well as carry away wastes and toxins. It is easy to understand why good circulation is so important to health and why massage can be so beneficial.

Knowing about the physiological effects of massage makes it possible to better understand the overall health and fitness benefits (see chapter 5, Physiological Effects of Therapeutic Massage). What takes place under a massage therapist's hands has profound importance not only for those interested in general health and fitness, but also for those wishing to "tune up" their bodies for sport and exercise. By helping to reduce physiological fatigue and aid recovery from the exertion of working out or playing sports, massage enables better training with longer, more effective workouts, thus facilitating better performance and preventing injury.

Massage also aids recovery from soft tissue injuries such as sprains and strains, whether such an injury is to a professional athlete or "weekend warrior." This recovery is possible because the growth and repair of tissues are accelerated by efficient circulation in the injured areas and appropriate stimulation of the healing tissues. Therefore, massage therapy can often help accelerate and improve recovery as well as reduce discomfort from such mishaps (see chapter 13, Sports Massage for Amateur and Professional Athletes).

### Massage and Body Systems

Massage fosters homeostasis, or balance, in the body by directly and indirectly influencing all body systems. Specifically, touch facilitates the smooth flow of energy and communication among the cardiovascular, digestive, urinary, respiratory, lymphatic, and nervous systems, to name a few.

One of the most profound affects of massage is on the lymphatic system. Lymph fluid carries impurities and waste away from the tissues and passes through glandlike structures spaced throughout the lymphatic system that act as filtering valves. The lymph does not circulate as the blood does, so its movement depends largely on the squeezing effect of muscle contractions. Consequently, inactive people fail to stimulate lymph flow. Massage can dramatically aid the movement of lymph in active or inactive persons. Besides increasing venous flow and lymph drainage, massage can increase the body's secretions and excretions.

Massage can aid nutrition by improving circulation. Greater overall health awareness has also increased nutrition awareness, yet many do not understand that the most carefully planned diet is partly wasted if blood vessels are not developed and open so

that nutrition can reach the cells. Massage promotes an increase in the production of gastric juices, saliva, and urine. There is also increased excretion of nitrogen, inorganic phosphorus, and sodium chloride (salt). This suggests that the metabolic rate (the utilization of absorbed material by the body's cells) increases after massage.

Massage can often enhance skin condition. Massage directly improves the function of the oil and sweat glands that keep the skin lubricated, clean, and cooled. Tough, inflexible skin can become softer and more supple following massage.

Massage is also known to affect internal organs. By indirectly or directly stimulating nerves that supply internal organs, massage causes the blood vessels of these organs to dilate, bringing a greater supply of blood to them.

Adherents of massage therapy realize that they have found a form of drugless therapy. Headaches, insomnia, digestive disorders including constipation and spastic colon, arthritis, asthma, carpal tunnel syndrome, sinusitis, and minor aches and pains are some of the problems that can respond to massage therapy. Massage can have a calming effect on nervous people who have been dependent on pharmaceuticals for rest and relaxation—or worse, for basic functioning. Massage balances the nervous system by soothing or stimulating nerves and neural pathways, depending on which effect is needed by the individual at the time of the massage.

Simply stated, the foundation stone of therapeutic massage is what Hippocrates, the "father of medicine," defined as *vis medicatrix naturae*, or the body's natural recuperative powers (see chapter 1, History of Therapeutic Massage). Massage therapy essentially promotes health by boosting the body's own processes and its Chi (Qi, Ki) or vital life force.

Many "manual therapies" are used in the practice of modern medicine and allied health care, such as chiropractic, osteopathy, physical therapy, sports medicine, and massage. All incorporate some form of manipulation or movement of the body in the process of healing or creating health optimization. There are also many "manual therapies" in use in alternative or complementary forms of healing and health maintenance, such as those used in yoga, qi gong, tai chi, Aryuvedic medicine, Chinese medicine, Rolfing, and acupuncture/acupressure. Massage therapists, like many healing practitioners, manipulate the soft tissues of the body to "normalize" those tissues, or restore healing energy that optimizes the function and the relationship of the mind and body. In doing so, massage therapists seek to promote overall health and treat specific illness through the alleviation of physical tension and energy blockage in the body (see chapters 15, Eastern Practices and Energy Work; 16, Introduction to Other Modalities; and 19, Eastern and Western Principles of Movement).

Massage has powerful and positive psychological effects. Since massage animates the tactile sense—the body's primary sense—it brings people into the "here and now" and away from tension generated by constant preoccupation with problems. It also loosens muscle tension or "armoring," the physical counterpart to how we defend and protect ourselves from psychological pain. Massage can rid the body of these holding patterns, thus contributing to a release of repressed emotions (see chapter 17, Body-Mind Connection).

Modern and alternative therapies may differ dramatically in their orientation, focus, and approach, but all share the goal of restoring the body's inherent healthy energies via "laying on of the hands."

The above-mentioned therapies were intended to be used without additional medical support or intervention. The reason massage therapy has evolved into such an attractive healing option is that it can be applied as a stand-alone therapy *or* as part of a continuum of modern, multimodality health care practice.

With such a valued position in modern health care comes the need for standards, certification, and training. What may become confusing are the many forms of massage therapy and which of those forms are accepted (and certified) within modern health care. We should first consider the varied curriculum and certification process.

Relationship of Massage to Other Manual Therapies

### Massage and Bodywork

There are so many different disciplines, schools, variations, and techniques of massage and so many relationships between massage and other healing arts that a complete list of "massage forms" becomes difficult to produce. As a first step, the term *massage therapy* is often replaced with *massage and bodywork* in an attempt to be more inclusive of these various related, overlapping, or continuous approaches.

Many modern massage and bodywork techniques were developed out of a need to better heal injuries or establish well-being, while others developed as a cultural tradition. Many practitioners developed their own techniques after studying one therapy and deciding there was a better way. Often, therapies were combined to come up with a new way of doing something and to make it "new" or proprietary. Still others, particularly those wrapped around strict obedience to an individual's philosophical bent, were developed to do nothing more than make money. From a potential quagmire of confusing forms of professional massage therapy and bodywork has come a narrowed field that will no doubt be further refined to serve modern health care, with many other forms remaining outside of that arena. Thus, more consistent standards will be the rule in massage and bodywork performed in the world of reimbursable health care, while less formal or accepted forms of practice will remain in the realm of out-of-pocket alternative health care.

#### American Massage Therapy Association

Founded in 1943, the American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA) is the oldest and largest international, member-driven organization representing the massage therapy profession. It has more than 54,000 members in 27 countries.

On an ongoing basis, the AMTA develops and reexamines guidelines for the ethical practice of massage to keep such guidelines current and to reflect needs of the profession and the consumer. The AMTA has a *Practice Standards* document and a Code of Ethics, and is developing behavioral guidelines for its members. Such standards help to ensure a safe and nurturing environment for all who seek the benefits of massage.

The AMTA further upheld massage therapy standards with establishment of the Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation (COMTA) in 1989. Operating independently, COMTA is determining benchmarks of massage therapy education. COMTA-accredited educational programs must demonstrate compliance with COMTA standards through a comprehensive self-study, onsite observation by external professionals and educators, and evaluation by an independent commission.

The AMTA is a key contributor to the advancement of the art, science, and practice of massage therapy through promoting and providing for continuing education in the profession.

Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation (COMTA) and Other Accrediting Bodies

The stated mission of the Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation, a nonprofit independent body recognized by the US Department of Education, is to maintain and improve quality assurance in massage therapy and bodywork education by recognizing postsecondary schools and programs through an accreditation process. Schools and programs achieve this recognition by continually demonstrating their compliance with and commitment to standards developed and monitored by the commission. This process ensures that students receive quality education, the industry receives competently trained practitioners, and the public receives quality services.

Additional national and regional accrediting bodies exist to ensure quality in education. For example, the ACCSCT, Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges of Technology awards national accreditation while SACS, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accredits schools in the South (northern and western regions are handled by separate bodies). The ACCSCT visits schools yearly to review the curriculum. Along with an independent, unbiased observer, a team from ACCSCT observes classes and clinics in session, inspects labs and clinics, and interviews students currently enrolled in the program. Additionally, there are bodies such as the Commission on Occupational Education that govern smaller occupational schools.

The National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (NCBTMB) was created in 1992 as an independent, not-for-profit organization whose National Certification Exam has become the standard for licensure used by the majority of the 36 states (and the District of Columbia) that regulate the practice of massage therapy or bodywork. The goal of NCBTMB is to ensure a high level of proficiency in the practice of massage and bodywork. Certain standards of ethical practice are adhered to by those who have received NCBTMB certification. NCBTMB recognizes the importance of maintaining the public trust. Each candidate for certification must read and agree to uphold NCBTMB's **Standards of Practice** and **Code of Ethics.** The code stresses professional conduct, consumer protection, and integrity of services. Currently, more than 80,000 massage therapists have national certification.

National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork

The NCBTMB Certification Program is accredited by the National Commission for Certified Agencies, the accrediting branch of the National Organization for Competency Assurance. A nine-member board of directors is elected by the certificant population and includes a wide range of practitioners. Of the nine-member board, two are public members that represent the public interest of consumers.

Another milestone in the profession of massage therapy and bodywork was reached in late 2005, when the Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards (FSMTB) was established as an organization through which the various massage therapy state boards could communicate with each other. Besides supporting its member boards, the FSMTB's goal is to ensure that the practice of massage therapy is provided to the public in a safe and effective manner.

An important focus of this new organization is to work with the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork to address all issues concerning certification, including allowing for state boards to have input into the makeup of the exam and creating a standardized curriculum that would be upheld from state to state. The most exciting outcome of the FSMTB's work may very well be the portability of licenses from state to state.

FSMTB researched 10 different board federations in other professions, such as nursing, physical therapy, and medicine, as models of successful organizations providing the highest levels of quality assurance and protection of the public. The FSMTB recognizes that the majority of well-run professions have a national licensing exam that is owned and operated by its member boards. With this in mind, FSMTB is actively exploring the option of creating a new massage therapy credentialing examination that would meet the specific needs of entry-level licensure at the state level as well as attempting to work with the current exam's board, the NCBTMB.

Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards

### Educational Requirements and Coursework

At present, close to 800 massage schools and many more community and private colleges offer diploma and associate degree programs in massage therapy in the United States. Generally, individual states create statewide standards and determine total hours of training required for licensure or registration, although a few states, such as California, have different standards in different counties and cities. Some types of massage and bodywork, such as Reiki, polarity therapy, Trager, and structural integration work such as Zentherapy and Rolfing, are exempt from massage licensing. Adoption of the possible FSMTB outcomes for the profession of massage and bodywork would create standardized curriculum and criteria across the nation.

Every massage therapy school will have different entrance requirements and a school-specific curriculum to follow. Some programs are quite robust, requiring 1000 hours of study, while others are more relaxed with a less rigorous program. The majority of schools that graduate certifiable students require at least 500 hours of study. Almost all schools will require an incoming student to have a high school diploma, and a postsecondary education is very useful for the more advanced programs.

Many well-rounded programs require an interview to assess personal qualities and characteristics such as communication skills, empathy/compassion, trust and understanding, and listening skills. Some schools may also require prior knowledge or training in certain subject areas, such as the basic sciences (anatomy, physiology), psychology, the humanities, and business. Many schools offer supervised clinics, which are available to the general public, allowing students the opportunity to work on a variety of clients and conditions.

# Current National Certification Exam

The National Certification Examination in Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (NCE) is the exam component. As of June 1, 2005, the NCBTMB began administering two exams and certifications. The National Certification in Therapeutic Massage (NCTM) is directed toward the more minimal 500-hour massage program, while the National Certification in Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (NCTMB) continues to denote passage of a comprehensive, 1000 hour-type program that often includes training in Eastern modalities. Students have the option of taking either the NCTM exam or the NCTMB exam, depending on their intent and their state's requirements (e.g., Florida continues to use the NCTMB exam only for licensure). Both exams reflect the increased criteria for massage therapy at the national certification level. However, it must be remembered that even after certification, practitioners still have to comply with state and local laws that regulate the profession.

#### **Endnotes**

Note 1: Explorations in the theory and practice of massage and bodywork

http://www.thebodyworker.com/typesofmassage.html

Note 2: American Massage Therapy Association

http://www.amtamassage.org

Note 3: The National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork

http://www.ncbtmb.com

Note 4: Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards

www.fsmtb.org