

Releaf Massage Therapy

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Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

Movement Education

Wellness in Motion

Lara Evans Bracciante

Someone may tell you it's all in your head. Yet you know it's not, because you're feeling it, in excruciating detail, in your body. Movement education pioneers agree that it may have started in your mind--way back when your body and your brain were learning together how to crawl, stand and walk--but it didn't end there. Movement education theorizes that when the body establishes responses to its emotional or physical environment, those responses are carried forward long after the original stimulus is gone. In other words, that pain in the neck, back, or head may just be the latest chapter in a story that began long ago.

the mind, anew. This is done through a series of sessions where practitioners may use hands-on manipulation to teach the student different ways to move, sit, stand, reach, bend, lift, and walk. This type of bodywork is especially beneficial for people suffering from chronic difficulties, but also for anyone trying to achieve higher levels of physical and mental wellness. Athletes, dancers, and musicians have credited movement therapy for enhanced performance. There are many variations of movement modalities, including the ones featured here. Similar in their goals, they offer subtle differences in technique and philosophy.

"Health is the greatest possession."

-Laozi



By teaching body awareness, movement education can have profound effects on health.

Learning New Patterns

Movement education--an umbrella term also known as re-education movement, somatic movement education, repatterning, and movement therapy--employs the philosophy that one's body structure and movements get stuck in habitual, unhealthy patterns. Movement approaches unwind the patterns and teach the body, as well as

Alexander Technique

The Alexander Technique was created by F. Matthias Alexander (1869-1955), a Shakespearean orator who began losing his voice while on stage. In trying to alleviate his chronic laryngitis, he realized that reducing neck tension

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eased head compression, which in turn eased spine compression. By using his entire body to initiate an action, his movements became more unified and efficient.

Today, Alexander Technique therapists certified by the American Society for the Alexander Technique (AmSAT), the major certifying body, must have completed 1,600 hours of training over a minimum of three years to be certified. During a typical session, lasting 30 to 60 minutes, the client wears comfortable clothes and receives instruction on conducting everyday movements. The instructor may lightly touch the student while she moves to determine how much tension the muscles are involving and redirect the movement. Through gentle, physical and verbal guidance, the therapist teaches the student to release maladaptive behaviors.

Feldenkrais Method

The Feldenkrais Method was developed by Russian-born Moshe Feldenkrais (1904-1984). Living primarily in Israel, Feldenkrais's career in movement education evolved when an old soccer-derived knee injury vastly improved after he injured his other knee. He began researching and proposed that nearly our entire spectrum of movement is learned during our first few years of life. By communicating with the central nervous system via the skeletal system, old patterns can be replaced with new ones that lead to improved physical, mental, and emotional functioning.

Feldenkrais education has two components: group sessions, in which the teacher guides students through movement sequences, and one-on-one sessions, lasting 45 to 60 minutes, in which the student is fully clothed. The teacher uses gentle touch and movement to help the student become aware of existing patterns and new, more functional possibilities.

Hellerwork

Joseph Heller determined that movement education and deep-tissue bodywork emphasizing vertical realignment of the body can release chronic stress and tension. Hellerwork involves eleven sessions: in each session,

one hour is devoted to bodywork and thirty minutes to movement therapy. The therapist also uses verbal dialogue to explore emotional factors that may be causing tension. As a preventative technique, the goal of Hellerwork is to produce permanent, corrective change in alignment and movement.

Trager Approach

The Trager Approach originated with Milton Trager (1908-1997), who was born with a congenital spinal deformity. After receiving bodywork, he discovered he had a knack for healing touch.

Three elements make up Trager, including tablework, Mentastics -- Trager's term for "mental gymnastics" -- and recall. During tablework, the client lays on a massage table in a warm room wearing either loose-fitting clothes or underwear. The practitioner uses gentle, rhythmic touches to free the

body from restrictive movement. The session lasts from 60 to 90 minutes.

After tablework, the student receives instructions in Mentastics, which teach how to recreate the freedom and pleasurable sensory state experienced during the tablework, encouraging positive tissue response. Each time Mentastics are practiced, the changes become more permanent. The third component, recall, promotes relaxation by learning how to remember the feeling you had during tablework.

Are You Aware?

Movement education is proving to be an empowering form of healthcare available to anyone interested in self-improvement. By teaching awareness, movement education has the potential to not only make a person's body feel better, but also raise consciousness about other aspects of one's life.



Movement therapies can address postural problems as well as other seemingly unrelated issues.

Stay Hydrated

Jennie Hastings Stancu

Has your therapist told you about the importance of drinking water?

After all, our bodies are composed of approximately 60 percent water, and all of our bodily functions are sustained by water. Dehydration is one of the most common detriments to our health, and one of the easiest problems to fix. Make staying hydrated simple and seamlessly interwoven throughout your day.

START EACH DAY OFF RIGHT

Start your morning with a tall, room-temperature glass of water with lemon squeezed into it, before you start taking any tea, coffee, or food. Front-loading hydration is helpful to the body. And be luxurious with your water--for a special treat, add mint, cucumber, or lemon.

HALF YOUR WEIGHT

It is difficult to know how much water is enough. One rule of thumb is to take half your body weight in pounds, and drink that many ounces of water per day.

So if you weigh 150 pounds, this would equal 75 ounces of water. For many of us, however, this might not be enough. If you are working hard, or you live in a particularly dry climate, you might need to drink even more than this.

WHAT ABOUT BPA?

You've probably seen the phrase "BPA free" on water bottles, and you may want to gravitate toward these. BPA stands for bisphenol A, which is a chemical found in polycarbonate plastics and epoxy resins.

According to Mayoclinic.org, some research has shown BPA can seep from a container into foods and beverages, and this is concerning because of possible health effects BPA has on the brain and behavior. Look for non-plastic bottles, or look for the "BPA free" logo.

OTHER DRINKS

Drinking herbal tea is a good way to stay hydrated. You can also augment your hydration with electrolyte-fortified water or sports drinks. However, be

aware that a lot of these drinks have incredibly high levels of sugar in them. Hydration isn't a healthy habit if you drink a day's worth of sugar in every glass. So check the label before you buy.

Jennie Hastings Stancu is a licensed massage therapist and author.



Stay hydrated to keep your body functioning optimally

The Power of Tea Tree Oil

Is your medicine cabinet full of ointments, oils, and creams that each treats one specific ailment? Maybe you can cut down on some of the clutter by adding nature's own wonder drug, tea tree oil, instead.

What is Tea Tree Oil

Produced in Australia from the tree *M. alternifolia*, tea tree oil acts as an antiseptic, fungicide, insect deterrent, and more. It has been used in Australia by aborigines for generations and, since the country's colonization, has spread to the rest of the world.

Tea tree oil, which can be found as an essential oil as well as in creams, ointments, shampoo, and even toothpaste, can be used to treat a staggering variety of conditions, including: acne, arthritis, athlete's foot,

burns, cuts, dandruff, eczema, gingivitis, infection, insect bites and stings, lice, muscle sprains, psoriasis, and rashes. And that's just a partial list!

Potential Benefits

The exact cause of tea tree oil's effectiveness is difficult to ascertain, and researchers are still looking into just how much the natural remedy can do for us. Newer studies have looked at its ability to stop the spread of sometimes-deadly methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus in hospitals.

Use Safely

While there are plenty of benefits to using tea tree oil, its strength can also be problematic, even dangerous. The Mayo Clinic advises that it's not safe to ingest or take tea tree oil internally, and it is considered particularly harmful if

ingested by pets.

Also, like most natural remedies, the US Food and Drug Administration does not regulate tea tree oil as it does other medicines, leaving no standard quality of tea tree oil products. And, while many people enthusiastically support tea tree oil, it is no substitute for professional medical care.

Yet, many people agree that, if nothing else, tea tree oil should be a part of your first aid kit in case of bites, burns, or scrapes. But who knows? You might find yourself using it for much more than that.

*"A healthy
outside starts
from the inside."*

-Robert Urich

Happy New Year! We hope 2022 brings you joy, health, love and abundance.

We continue to strive to offer you the best treatments and next level service. Each LMT has a unique approach and I am so honored to say that we all value education and growth. We are always learning to expand what we offer to our clients, and we are excited to share our knowledge and service this coming year.

I personally will be using more sound and frequency in treatments with tuning forks, as well as energy work both at the office and virtually with Aligned Alchemy. If you have any questions please send me a message. I would love to chat more.

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