

El Deana's Custom Essentials

Vol. 1 No. 3

Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

Helping Veterans and Wounded Warriors

This nation's military veterans and wounded warriors continue to fight, long after they come off the battlefields. They fight to be whole again and to reclaim their physical and psychological health. Many forms of massage and bodywork can help them do just that.

Therapeutic Massage

With its ability to meld body and mind, massage is an excellent way for veterans to reintegrate. Not only can this kind of therapeutic touch address the physical wounds, it can help bring a sense of normalcy back into daily life. "Gratifying physical experiences, such as massages ... may be experiences that patients build up that are not contaminated by trauma, and which may

significant reductions in physical pain, physical tension, irritability, anxiety/worry, and depression after massage. As a result, researchers are hoping to show in Phase 2 of their study that massage could diminish our veterans' needs for opioids for pain management, a significant concern for the US Department of Defense and the veterans themselves.

Many of our military personnel returning from battle zones come home less than whole. In cases of amputation, massage can help control edema, deal with neuromas, improve skin health, and loosen scar tissue. For more on this topic, read "David's Heroes" in the November/December 2014 issue of



Reiki's noninvasive nature makes it an effective choice for treating PTSD.

serve as a core of new gratifying experiences," writes Bessel van der Kolk, author of *Traumatic Stress*.

Research on massage and veterans, funded by the National Institutes of Health, has shown considerable promise for this hands-on therapy. An initial 2014 study found that veterans reported

Massage Bodywork magazine. Find it online at www.massageandbodyworkdigital.com/i/398416.

When visiting a massage therapist for the first time, expect a comprehensive intake process to facilitate your session. If you

Continued on page 2

*November is
the month to
remind us to be
thankful for
the many
positive things
happening in
our life*

Office Hours and Contact

El Deana Pearson
661-470-5417
eat.love.message@gmail.com
peace-love.massagetherapy.com
Call for an appointment
Ask about current specials!

In this Issue

Helping Veterans and Wounded Warriors
Footprints for Health
Massage for Seniors

Continued from page 1

are a veteran or wounded warrior, your therapist will want to discuss the extent of your injuries with you, the medical procedures you've undergone, and any ongoing health issues, as well as medications you're currently taking. All of these questions help inform the therapist how to work most effectively and safely with you, so be honest and forthcoming in your responses. As with any massage, be sure to let your therapist know if anything makes you uncomfortable during your session--whether it's that the room temperature is too hot or the massage pressure is too deep. At any time, you can end the session if the work is too intense or you need a break.

CRANIOSACRAL THERAPY

Craniosacral therapy (CST) has shown considerable promise in helping military veterans and other posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) sufferers. The developer of CST, the late John E. Upledger, DO, OMM, believed this subtle hands-on therapy could make a difference. When he invited veterans to be part of intensive CST programs in 1999, he found that their depression and anxiety levels dropped considerably after the therapy was administered, and that feelings of hopelessness, which had once been pervasive, quickly dissipated.

Further evidence for CST came in 2004-2005, when military personnel returning from duty in combat regions were exposed to the therapy at California's Naval Hospital Lemoore. "The results were absolutely profound," says retired commanding officer Sandy DeGroot, who oversaw the program. "It's very hard for [those returning from active combat zones] to come back fully and be in the present moment. The CST work allowed them to release trauma held in the body."

REFLEXOLOGY

According to author Paula Stone, reflexology is a highly effective therapy for PTSD, a condition that affects more than 5.2 million Americans every year. "Acute sustained stress erodes the very fabric of our being, while acute trauma can tear it. Whether prolonged or sudden, traumatic life experiences wound a person in body, emotions, mind, and soul, and can result in PTSD. Compassionate bodywork,

including reflexology, can help heal the body and the person."

She says two benefits of using reflexology for clients with PTSD are (1) it can be utilized when massage and other touch therapies cannot and (2) the client remains clothed. "Reflexology improves the client's sense of well-being, improves sleep, reduces anxiety, and often reduces the need for pain medications, especially following surgery or cancer treatments." Stone says foot reflexology improves the function of all body systems. "Immediately noticeable are improvements in the flow of bioelectrical energy, blood, lymph, and nerve impulses. Reflexology also works energetically by balancing the body's energy systems. It works in harmony with a broad spectrum of energy therapies, such as polarity therapy and Asian medicine."

FINDING HELP

Other modalities that have offered relief for members of our nation's military include breath work, Healing Touch, myofascial release, reiki, Therapeutic Touch, trauma touch therapy, and even yoga. More are being added to the list every day.

If you or someone you know is a veteran or wounded warrior, and is suffering, reach out. Contact your local Veterans Affairs offices, visit the Wounded Warrior Project

(www.woundedwarriorproject.org) or Comfort for America's Uniformed Services (CAUSE; www.cause-usa.org), and make an appointment with your massage therapist or bodyworker.

For more information on PTSD, visit the National Center for PTSD, US Department of National Veterans Affairs, at www.ptsd.va.gov.



The fight is not over for many wounded warriors after they come home.

Footprints for Health

You walk on them all day, but did you know your feet do more than carry you from one place to the next? They also have a unique connection to balanced health and well-being. In a form of bodywork known as reflexology, the feet are said to contain reflex areas that mirror and connect to all parts of the body--and pressure on these points can actually influence your state of health.

Reflexology is viewed primarily as a stress reduction or relaxation technique. Using the thumb, finger, and hand, gentle pressure is applied to reflex areas of the feet in order to decrease stress and bring the body into equilibrium.

Although simplistic in application, the effects of the treatment can be profound. Through activation of nerve receptors in the hands and feet, new messages flood into the body system, changing its tempo and tone. In essence, the foot or hand becomes a conduit for sharing information throughout the body. Function in the connecting area is

improved and, at the same time, the body experiences overall relaxation and benefits to the circulation and elimination systems. When the body's systems are at optimal functioning, self-healing is enhanced.

Scientific studies have documented the benefits of reflexology for a variety of ailments, ranging from reduction of pain, improvement in circulation, and release of tension, to improved effectiveness of medication, as well as benefits for diabetes and headaches.

In this sense, reflexology is not a medical treatment for specific symptoms or diseases, but rather a way to facilitate the body's inherent healing power.



Treat your feet, and body, to reflexology.

Massage for Seniors

Bodywork Improves Quality of Life

Almost 35 million Americans are age 65 or older, and about 2,000 more reach this age every day. As the U.S. demographic shifts to an older population, it's important to find ways of helping our elders maintain their health and vitality. Massage for seniors is gaining importance as an alternative therapy to increase quality of life, and many massage therapists are getting special training to better serve this growing population.

SENIORS' SPECIAL NEEDS

While similar in technique to other forms of massage, geriatric massage considers the special needs of the elderly. The specialty trained practitioner knows about positioning for greatest comfort and will often have the client rest in the same position for the entire massage. Mobility challenges

may dictate the massage be done in a bed or wheelchair. The therapist may also work both sides of the body at the same time to enhance body awareness, or only work hands and feet, if the client prefers. Sessions may be limited to 30 to 45 minutes, as older clients often do better with shorter, more frequent, massages.

The geriatric massage therapist is aware of health issues associated with aging and how to safely work with this type of client and with associated physicians. Consequently, the practitioner is able to individualize the massage service based on the client's health, mobility, and comfort level.

BENEFITS OF GERIATRIC MASSAGE

A recent study conducted at the Weaver's Tale Retreat Center in Oregon looked

at the effects of massage for elderly clients. The results of the two-year study showed that participants experienced a decrease in breathing rate of 50 percent and an improvement in range of motion, posture, body awareness, skin color, and muscle tone. Furthermore, it is well documented that caring touch benefits emotional well-being in seniors -- a population at greater risk of suffering from depression.

Massage therapy can add to the quality of a senior's life, both physically and emotionally. Consider booking a session for someone you love, and make a difference in their life.

When shifts & transitions in life shake you to the core, see that as a sign of the greatness that's about to occur.

This month's issue is dedicated to our Veterans. One huge goal of mine is to help those with PTSD. Many of those who have served our country come back changed dealing with PTSD on a regular basis. Massage is a great way to help our veterans settle back into their regular lives.

One day, one massage at a time I hope to help people be the best that they can be.

Mention that you read this newsletter, and receive 15% off your service.

I hope to see you soon!

El Deana Pearson

peace-love.massagetherapy.com
Lancaster, CA 93535



Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals