

The Definitive Spa and Body Therapist's Handbook

The Definitive Spa and Body Therapist's Handbook

*The 5 Keys to unlimited energy,
balance and bliss*

J Tara Herron



B O O K S

Winchester, UK
Washington, USA

CONTENTS

Dedication	xi
Prologue	
Primal Spa	1
Preface	3
Evolving beauty	4
The evolving therapist	6
Therapist at heart of the spa	7
Introduction	
The Five Keys	9
Insight into the Five Keys	9
Intelligent Wisdom	9
The Story of Two	10
Giving and Receiving	12
Growing Spa Awareness	13
Chapter One	
Key Number One – Your Body	15
Potential effects of giving body work	16
Balance through posture	17
Height of your couch	17
Balancing your seat	18
Are you short circuiting?	19
Working from your lower body	20
Core Strength Centre of Gravity Stretch One	21
Core Strength Centre of Gravity Stretch Two	22
Aching hand and wrists	22
Hand soak revival	22
Finger and wrist stretch exercise One	23

Finger and wrist stretch exercise Two	23
Wrist Release One	23
Wrist, hand and shoulder release Two	24
Whole Hand Revival	24
Finger Joint Release	24
Carpal Tunnel Syndrome	24
Ways to treat CTS	25
Ways to prevent Carpal Tunnel Syndrome	25
Hands-free massage	25
Scoliosis of the spine	26
Help exercises for scoliosis	27
Sciatica	27
Useful remedies and blends	28
Homeopathic Remedies	28
Aromatherapy	28
Vitamins and Minerals	29
Self massage	29
Confident hands – peaceful hands	31
Primary hand care	31
Couch comfort	32
Checking the sagittal plane	33
Super body breaks – exercises	34
Body Maintenance Tips	37
Exercise regularly	37
Core strength exercises	38
Receive a body work session	39
Helpful yoga poses for release, strength and balance	39
Deep Relaxation Therapy	43
Progressive muscular relaxation exercise	45
Cleansing your body	46
Sleeping peacefully	47

Stay hydrated	47
Personal profiling through ayurvedic governing elements	47
Discover your Dosha	48
The Tri Dosha	49
Food source	50
Your Body Clock	53

Chapter Two

Key Number Two – Your Breathing	56
Body mind and breath	57
Alchemy of the breath	58
The passage of your breath	58
Awakening the breath	59
Your abdominal brain	60
The journey of your breath	61
The crying breath	61
Breathing laughter	62
Your sixth sense	62
Healing through the hara	63
Prana and breath	63
If you are not breathing your client is not breathing	64
Meditating on the breath	65
Breathing exercises for your personal well-being	66
The essential stress release breath	66
Super boost energy breath	67
Breath awareness meditation	68
Mind-brain balancing breaths	70
Breathing during therapy sessions	71
Breathing in Treatment	71
Earth energy re-cycle breath	71
Initiating opening breaths	72

Working together	73
Encouraging your client to breath	74
This is not cathartic	74
Breath as an instrument for letting go of pain	75
The technique for deep work	75
The technique for light work	75
Healing and Integration Breath	76

Chapter Three

Key Number Three – Your Mind	78
Karma	79
Trans-form-ation and habitual holding patterns	80
One mind- the equation of thought	81
The Alchemy of your Mind	82
Psycho-neuro-immunology	82
Psychological boundaries	83
Ask yourself	84
Your Intent	84
Intention in action	85
Affirmations of Intent for the Therapist	85
Ritualising the intent	85
Affirmations as part of a ritual	86
Affirmation for Self-confidence	86
Completing Cycles and Conscious Closure	87
Closing Treatment Affirmations	87
The Power of the Spoken Word	87
Embracing resistance	88
Acceptance creates a space for change	89
What not to say	90
Therapists words of support	91
Be Here Now meditation	91

Daily practice for the conscious therapist	92
Group Consciousness	94
Chapter Four	
Key Number Four – Your Spirit	95
Opening the Door to Spirit	95
The Healing Field of Energy	96
Acknowledging the Soul of Your Client	97
The Healing Crisis	98
Awakening The Team Spirit	99
Cultivating Joy and Compassion	99
Loving Kindness	100
The Four Main Principles of Metta Bhavana	
Meditation	100
Acceptance	100
Gratitude	101
Forgiveness	101
Loving Kindness	102
Metta Meditation practice	102
Metta in the Therapy Room	105
Chakra Awareness	106
Chakras and Pranic Healing	107
The Seven Chakras	108
Energy Balancing Techniques in Treatment	116
Physical Symptoms and the Chakras	116
Techniques for Energising your Hands	116
Asking for Guidance-Receiving Help	117
Opening Chakra Balance	117
Completion Chakra Balance	117
A Journey through your Chakras	118

Chakra Meditation Practice	118
Completion Polarity Breath	120
Creating a Sense of Ritual	121
Visualisation for Protection	123
Reflection	123

Chapter Five

Key Number Five – Your Space	124
Healing Waters	124
What is a spa	125
Mineral hot springs	126
Retreat spas	127
Thalassotherapy spas	128
Destination spas	128
Day spas	130
The Urban High Street Day spa	130
Medi-spas	131
Club spas	131
Hotel spas	132
Cruise ship spas	132
Spa spaces	132
Hamмам	132
Rasul	133
Steam rooms	134
Saunas	134
Ice rooms	136
Cold plunge pools	136
Aroma rooms	137
Wet rooms	137
Kraxen stove	137
Hot tubs	138

The Definitive Spa and Body Therapist's Handbook

Hydro-pools	138
Watsu pools	138
Flotation Tanks	139
Dry Flotation Beds	140
Relaxation spaces	140
Therapists Dynamics	141
Male and female therapists employment	141
Client responses	142
Complaints	143
Accreditation	143
Insurance	145
Increasing your chances of employment	146
Induction and training opportunities	147
Creative product sales	148
Cleanliness is next to godliness	149
Conscious clearing of your work space	149
Spiritual room cleansing	150
Objects of focus	151
Crystals in the workspace	152
Useful Dynamic Crystals	153
Sound pollution	159
Pure hearing	160
Hearing meditation	162

Sample paragraphs 1

This handbook draws on the Ayurvedic analogue of `wholeness` as the cornerstone philosophy for understanding the inter-relationship of all the elements needed to operate wholeheartedly as a hands on therapist. It is one thing to have an intelligent grasp of therapeutic techniques on practical or theoretical levels, but is that really enough? In today's world people come for spa therapy because they want to feel really good, deep down inside, not just for superficial reasons or to treat one particular symptom. Therapists need and want to know how to respond to this universal factor in such a way that you utilise all aspects of your body, mind and soul so that you include and balance yourself in the process of treating others.

Ayurveda, which means `the science of life`, explains its fundamental philosophy of `wholeness` by describing what happens when only the highly potent medicinal element of a plant is extracted, leaving behind the plant itself. This is understood as extracting the `**intelligence**` of the plant but leaving behind the `**wisdom.**`. Taking the medicine but not the healing! This means that the essence is aborted from its natural environment and therefore loses touch with its original source of energy, life and spirit - the plants` **consciousness!** And as like attracts like, the way the plants` potential power works will be diminished by not being its `whole plant self,` and therefore not *wholly digested* thoroughly by the receiver.

Sample Paragraphs 2

Primarily there are two people in the treatment room; two people in touch with each other and breathing together. Two people listening together and experiencing each other. The

physical proximity of body work, massage or beauty treatment could *not* be much closer. This proximity generates a certain chemistry, a special relationship where an alchemy, the potential for change and transformation, is organically taking place.

The client may never have met you before yet they are entrusting you with their naked body, with all its beauty and imperfections, lying on the couch for you to touch them. This simple manoeuvre carries with it the threads to an ancient history of massage rituals and use of oils to anoint and heal, as far back as the Ancient Egyptian and Mayan cultures and probably before that. Massage-based treatments also resembles very primal experiences we have as human beings from being babies swaddled in towels by our parents and carers, to being nursed or healed when ill, to the preamble of a more sexual intimacy. All these shrouds and memories can be brought to the couch in the hidden recesses of the clients psyche and genetic inheritance as human beings.

Sample Paragraphs 3

Your mind is the map, your body is the territory

J T Herron

Your body is your vehicle; it is your major tool and prized equipment that requires maintenance and fine tuning to be able to run the marathon of long body work sessions time after time. Your body is a complex network of subtle and dense physical components that are constantly being employed to perform specific movements.

Practicing body-work therapy is like a sport that demands balanced, well trained techniques to sustain your focus, stamina and effectiveness. Therefore, it is vital to counter balance the

effects of negative stress on the body with techniques that help you maintain physical balance, flexibility and core strength. These techniques will help you build your store house of resources, tap into universal energy, prevent weakness and repetitive strain injury. And, keep you grounded.

Body therapy can also be compared to playing a musical instrument where we have to know the instrument well to be able to 'tune it up' and play it harmoniously. This also applies to how you use your own body as the key instrument in creating an effective treatment. And, like all instruments that are played repeatedly, your body can easily become out of tune and worn down, feeling out of touch with your inner harmony, attunement and core centre. First we have to understand the signs of disharmony in the physical aspects of our body to be able to correct it; to know where it is out of tune; not only having a firm grasp of the anatomy, but also of the more subtle elements of balance.

Often blind people make powerful therapists due to their sense of touch and feeling being far more developed as they do not rely on the eye to automatically guide them.

Like brail, massage and body therapies reveal the meaning of what is written through feeling the shape and texture of the formation beneath your hands. Try closing your eyes sometimes during a massage and you will feel how you begin to see with your fingers and develop a greater sensitivity to what is going on beneath the surface of the clients' skin and your own sensory awareness. You will also become more attuned to your inner balance and posture which is intensified when your eyes are closed and you cannot see three- dimensionally.

So your first priority is to tune up your own body, take care and nurture your well being and vital energy as an important part of

the equation of the client-therapist dynamic.

Sample Paragraphs 4

Balance through your Posture

Your spine is the rod, the central trunk that supports your posture keeping your back upright and balanced. Maintaining a flexible yet strong spine, like a young tree that bends in the wind is a vital part of your physical well-being. As the saying goes 'young trees bend in the wind, old trees fall.' This is also referring to the sap, the fluids that flow freely through your body which are replenished through de-toxification, exercise and rehydration.

Dehydration is one of the main causes of energy blockages in the body. The roots of poor posture stem from your spinal alignment and if an imbalance is held for long, will automatically weaken the muscles and put undue pressure on your joints.

When the vertebrae are imbalanced this in turn puts pressure on the central nervous system and the corresponding sympathetic nerves, which channel energy to all your internal body parts. This pressure can reduce the amount of energy flowing to those important organs and limbs, especially the ones you need for work which include your heart, lungs, abdomen, hips, legs, feet, shoulders, arms, neck, head and hands.

Maintaining a healthy spinal alignment as you work around the massage couch influences many systems of your body network.

Scoliosis of the spine

Scoliosis of the spine is a condition that can be developed in childhood where a distinct curvature of the spinal vertebrae becomes part of your skeletal holding pattern. This condition can

cause further stress on the back support muscles and central nervous system. These symptoms can not only be painful but in turn may lower energy levels considerably due to pressure on the sympathetic nervous system that is responsible for channelling energy to all the vital organs. Long hours of standing or sitting around a couch with your arms and neck in a certain posture can further irritate a curvature of the spine.

If you suffer from this or think you might it is definitely worth going for periodic visits to a cranial osteopath or cranio-sacral therapist or chiropractor that has been recommended to you. There are some excellent ones and well.. some not so excellent! In addition to this you need to join a Hatha or Iyengar yoga class that focuses on postures in a gentle way to help you stretch, align and redress the balance. The suggested poses presented later on in this chapter will give you a worthwhile routine to practice.

Keep in mind that your body is the key instrument of your work so maintaining a happy and stress-free physical state is your priority. If you carry an excessive amount of tension whilst you work your level of connection with your client will be greatly reduced. In addition, the blockages in your body will create potential areas of further congestion as energy will not be able to flow freely through you.

Helpful exercise for scoliosis

At the end of long sessions practice this re-balancing stretch.

Stand straight with your arms extended above your head.

Make sure the palms of your hands are facing each other.

Inhale and stretch up.

Exhale and bend slowly to the right.

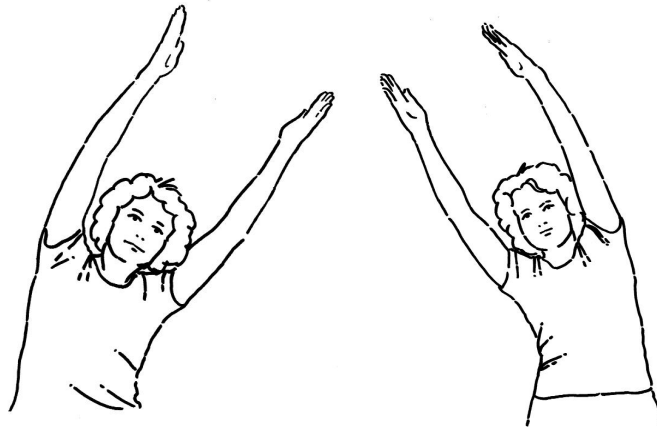
Inhale and return to the centre.

Exhale and bend slowly to the left.

Inhale and return to the centre.

Repeat this SLOWLY twice on each side and then breathe with hands in central position above your head.

Just let your arms float slowly down to your sides.



Sample paragraphs 5

.....Now breathe in through that open nostril into the abdomen and

close it off with your middle finger. Again both nostrils are closed.

Hold the breath for 5 seconds then release the opposite nostril and exhale.

Continue in this way for 6 rounds.

To complete this practice gently place your hands on your legs and be aware of both nostrils breathing freely.



Breathing during therapy sessions

The following exercises are to be used in the treatment room at various stages to help you empower and protect yourself.

In the chapter `Your Body` we discussed exercises that prevent you from `short circuiting`, helping you to draw on a more infinite and resourceful source of energy. All body care exercises are further enhanced by integrating breathing into them. The following are excellent for this purpose.

Earth Energy Re-cycle Breath

This exercise originates from the Chi Quong tradition which focuses on circulating and harnessing the energy of the breath within certain postures. A posture is essentially a physical configuration of a more subtle network of energy that generates a specific quality of being. The following exercise draws on utilising the infinite source of earth energy and circulating it around the body.

As you work around the couch you may become tired or lacking in the quality of energy you need to fulfil the treatment. This exercise will effortlessly fuel your movements from the physical to the subtle aspects of the treatment.

Imagine that as you breathe in, the breath flows in through the soles of your feet, up from the earth beneath you.

Feel the breath travel up your legs and spine, all the way to your shoulders.



Then as you exhale imagine the breath flows down your arms,

And into your hands,
recharging them with vital earth energy.

Continue to re-cycle the breath in this way

Simply continue to work with your focus on the infinite source of energy coming in through your feet and out of your hands.

You will feel recharged in no time.