

- ✓ Use massage as a reward for children who complete their homework.
- ✓ Offer the family chef a massage in return for preparing a special meal.
- ✓ Make the idea of massage non-threatening by offering the simple, seated, back and neck massage (fully clothed) from Chapter 12.
- ✓ If someone says no to massage, respect that person's feelings, but offer a tidbit of information that may help, such as the location of the headache-reduction massage point in the webbing between the thumb and index finger (see Chapter 13).
- ✓ When a family member does agree to receive his or her first-ever massage, start out easy, with very light pressure, so you don't turn them off to the idea. Do some gentle warmups first, and then use more intense maneuvers after the person is used to your touch.
- ✓ Be willing to be the first one to offer massage and to continue offering it even if the favor is not reciprocated for a while.



Massaging my father

My father went to Emory University Hospital once for heart surgery, because his arteries were blocked. The entire family was scared.

My mom and sister and I accompanied him, and we watched as they wheeled him into the operating room, which was filled with high-tech, expensive equipment that we didn't understand. Hours later, he came out okay, but the nurses had to strap him to his hospital bed so he wouldn't accidentally roll over on the tubes and wires that sprouted from his body.

I stayed by his side all night, watching his pain and discomfort increase until he asked me to try to do something about it.

"Would you mind giving me a little massage, Son?" he asked.

I agreed, and then slid my hands along the hos-

pital mattress under his back until I could curl my fingers up and work on his knotted muscles. The operating table had been as hard as a block of concrete, and being strapped in one position for hours turned out to be the most painful part of the operation.

"You know, Steve," he said, his face just inches from mine, "After what I've been through, it feels great just to be alive. And what you're doing feels indescribable."

So, every hour or so during the night, I awoke from sleep in the chair beside him, stretched my fingers beneath his back again, and offered the best massage I could. We didn't speak many words, but the father-son communication between us had never been stronger. It's an experience that bonds us to this day.



Sometimes, other people just plain aren't into massage. Don't force your family members into it if they're not comfortable. More commonly, they'll be ready and willing to experiment with massage, but only on the receiving end, leaving you perpetually in the role of giver. If, no matter what tactics you use, you still end up being the only person in your family wild and crazy enough to give massages, I say go ahead and do it! You'll be creating a closeness that wouldn't be there otherwise, and your family will eventually express their gratitude in other ways.

Baby Massage

"Where touching begins, there love and humanity also begin — within the first minutes following birth." — Ashley Montagu



My wife and I were waiting in line at the grocery store one day with our four-month-old son sitting in his stroller. Suddenly, the woman behind us reached over and started massaging his toes. "Massage is very good for babies," she said, "especially here on the big toe. If he's depressed or angry, this will make him feel better." We were amazed, and it must have shown on our faces, because she looked up at us and smiled reassuringly. "Don't worry," she said, "It really works. I saw it on TV!"

Regardless of how you feel about strangers touching your child's feet in supermarkets, this story does point to the widespread acceptance of baby massage and child massage by people everywhere.

Cultures from around the world embrace the concept of baby massage:

- ✓ People from India have massaged their babies for centuries.
- ✓ Eskimos and native people from East Africa have long histories of using baby massage, too.
- ✓ In Bali, children are held in constant physical contact for the first six months of life, and only then are their feet first allowed to touch the ground.

Touch is part of the fabric of life, from the moment we first emerge from the womb into our parents' arms. Unfortunately, the more "civilized" and technologically advanced we become, the less time we seem to have to touch our babies, and that's why spending some quality time massaging babies is so important.

Why baby loves massage

If you spend a little time around babies, you may start to think to yourself, "Hey, babies are different than normal humans. They seem hyper-sensitive. Every little touch is magnified a hundred times. Is it just me, or do babies feel things differently than we do?"



Babies do indeed feel things more intensely than adults. This is caused by an abundance of special touch-sensing organs in the skin called *Meissner's corpuscles*, which are five times more prevalent in children three years old and younger than they are in adults. Babies have 80 Meissner's corpuscles per square millimeter of skin versus 20 per square millimeter for adults and 4 per millimeter for seniors.



Meissner's corpuscles are especially good at detecting light, fleeting movements across the skin, and so this type of movement is especially effective on babies.

Also, researchers at the Touch Research Institute (TRI) in Miami have found that massage can actually help premature infants grow faster and leave the hospital sooner. Touch is a lifesaver for infants, who crave it as deeply as they crave oxygen, or light. So, when you add to that the pleasure it provides, it's no wonder babies love massage.

Baby massage moves

One thing about babies: They're really, really small. You can tell how small they are when you try to massage them and one of your hands covers their entire back. Besides, most of the time they're either squirming around like tadpoles, or lying fast asleep. So, what techniques are you supposed to use on such tiny, wriggling creatures?

Here are a few pointers to get you started:

- ✓ Choose a time when the baby is tranquil to give the massage, perhaps after a bath, shortly after waking up, or right before bedtime.
- ✓ Use light touch to stimulate the Meissner's corpuscles in your baby's skin, providing extra pleasure that makes him want to stay in one place longer.
- ✓ The massage may only last one or two minutes before the baby squirms away, but that's okay. Just give as much as you can.
- ✓ Don't be afraid to make firm (but not hard) contact. Babies are more resilient than they look and like a nice, solid, reassuring touch. If you use only very light, tickling touch, the baby misses some of the benefits of massage.

Baby massage routine

The following moves are easy to do, as you can see from Figure 18-1. The hardest part will probably be getting your baby to sit still for them.

1. **With the baby lying face up, run your fingertips lightly up over his abdomen, chest, and face, and then bring them back down again, as shown in Figure 18-1a.**

Remember: This move is just to stimulate the Meissner's corpuscles, so it doesn't need to be firm at all. You can add some extra effectiveness to this move by saying "Whooooosh!" as you bring your fingers up over the baby's body. After a little practice, your baby begins to anticipate this deliciously pleasurable move and smile when you approach him with outstretched fingers.

2. **With your hands on the baby's sides, sweep your thumbs up over his abdomen, moving them outwards. Then lightly brush the thumbs back over the skin and repeat four to five times.**

This is a calming stroke that's good for the internal organs. *Note:* This move (shown in Figure 18-1b) requires relatively firm pressure, and you may need some oil or lotion, as well.

3. **Using your thumbs, make little circles with moderate pressure into the fleshy area of baby's little tush, as shown in Figure 18-1c.**

He may try to squirm away from you while you're doing this move, but you may catch him smiling as he does so. This move feels great.

4. **Apply an itty-bitty version of kneading to the baby's chubby little thighs, as shown in Figure 18-1d.**

Babies appreciate a little attention to these muscles, especially as they become more active and stand on their legs longer.

5. **Help your baby stretch his legs by grasping his lower leg, pushing his knee up toward his chest, and then gently stretching the leg out straight toward you (see Figure 18-1e).**

Repeat this move three to four times. Support his opposite hip with your other hand to keep him steady while you do this move. Babies naturally love to stretch, just like dogs and cats, so this move feels especially good.

6. **If you can get him to sit still long enough, you can apply a light (and very quick) version of the reflexology moves from Chapter 14 to your baby's feet.**

Babies are born with a complete set of reflexology points on their feet, and, in general, they love to have them stimulated, especially those little toes (see Figure 18-1f).

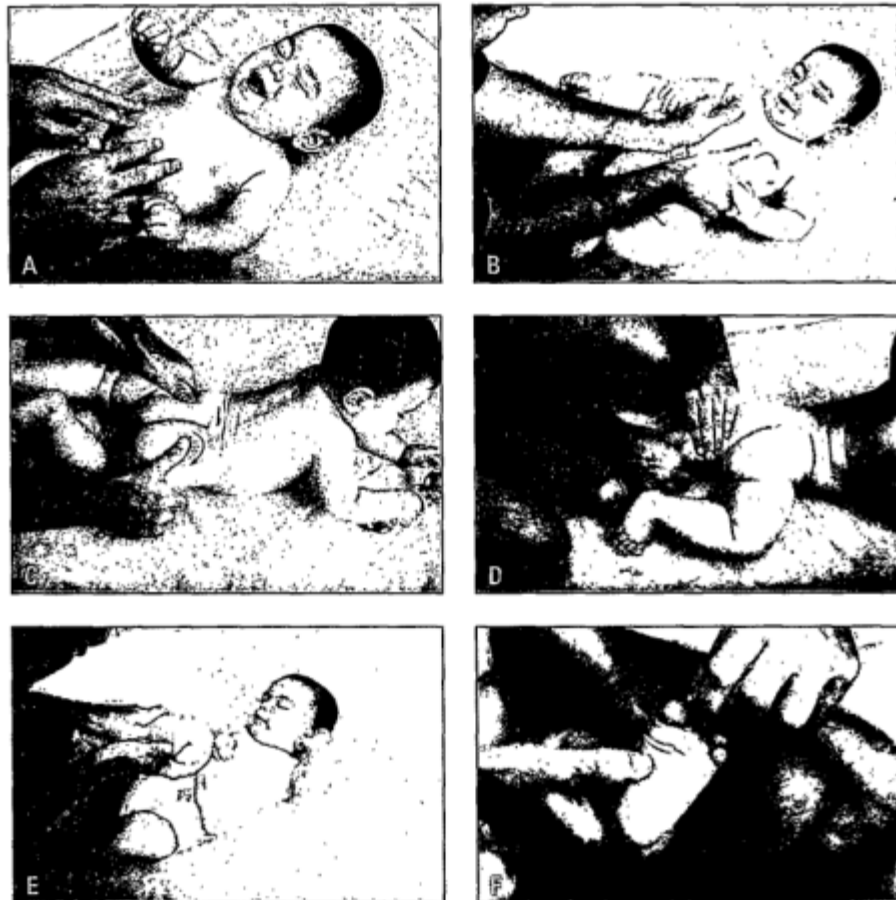


Figure 18-1:
Massaging
Baby
Capellini.

Baby massage training

Babies don't need any special training to begin enjoying massage, but mommies and daddies can certainly benefit by learning a few tips from baby massage experts. Some good videos are available on the subject, and classes are given in many areas for parents, foster parents, grandparents, and anyone else interested. The massage techniques taught are not just for newborns either. Toddlers enjoy massage, too.

If you really get into it, you can become a certified baby massage instructor yourself. Some good training programs in the U.S. are offered by a woman named Vimala Schneider McClure, who experienced baby massage firsthand in India and brought it back to the U.S. She founded the International Association of Infant Massage, which now has over 2,500 members, and she wrote *Infant Massage: A Handbook for Loving Parents*, (Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Company).



Contact one of the following numbers or visit the following Web site if you're interested in baby massage:

- ✓ International Association of Infant Massage (IAIM); contact person: Vimala Schneider McClure; telephone: 800-248-5432
- ✓ Cinnabar School, P.O. Box 34326, Westbrook, Calgary, AB, Canada T3C 3W0; telephone: 403-246-6720; www.babymassage.com
- ✓ Tender Loving Touch; contact people: Elain Weisberg and Rita Day; Louisville, KY, telephone: 502-458-7007

Not for Women Only

Massage can be enjoyed equally by men and women, of course, but there are certain circumstances in which women definitely receive a little something extra from the experience. I'm talking about that trio of specifically female conditions:

- ✓ Pregnancy
- ✓ PMS
- ✓ Menopause

When a woman receives a massage during any of these times in her life, it not only benefits her, but all the people she lives with as well. Keeping females happy with massage is especially important for all males who live anywhere in their approximate vicinity.

And who are the women closest to you? Usually they're related to you in one way or another. Mothers come to mind right away, for example. Massage is one of the best things you can do for your mother, whether it comes directly from your hands or as a gift (check out the coupons from Spa Wish in the back of the book for an easy way to purchase massage gifts for your mom, regardless of what city she lives in). Wives and girlfriends deserve special massage attention, too, because they have the ability to instantaneously cut off a man's supply of something that he loves very much indeed — his happiness.

If a lot more women received a lot more massage, there would be a lot less strife in a lot of families. Think about it.

Massaging mommy-to-be

If you are living with a pregnant woman, you can't do too many things for her that would make her happier than a nice massage. In fact, she'll absolutely love you for even offering.



Labor day massage

I was once asked by a client to accompany her into the labor room and assist with some massage during delivery. This sounded like a good idea, so I read up on the subject and consulted with several experienced colleagues. When the big day came, however, things didn't turn out exactly the way we all expected.

A few minutes after arrival in the hospital birthing suite, I reached down to massage my client's feet between her rather powerful contractions.

"Don't you touch me!" screamed my normally demure client in a voice that reminded me of Linda Blair in *The Exorcist*.

Perhaps I was the wrong gender. For centuries, women have stuck together at the crucial time of labor, offering each other the support and understanding that only *they* know how to give. A man, even with the best of intentions, often just can't seem to get the touch right at moments like that.

About half an hour later, standing a respectful few feet away, I watched with amazement as my client's daughter made her appearance in the world. The massage could wait for another day.

Doulas



Some women blend the lines between working as a massage therapist and a childbirth assistant. In many countries, women calling themselves *doulas* go through the process of labor with a woman, offering encouragement, support, and often touch.



If you'd like more information or are interested in becoming a doula or childbirth assistant yourself, contact the Association of Labor Assistants and Childbirth Educators, P.O. Box 382724, Cambridge, MA 02238; telephone: 617-441-2500; e-mail: alacehq@aol.com; Web: www.alace.org.

Pregnancy massage pointers

Giving massage to a pregnant woman is perfectly safe, and there are even special massage tables with big holes in the center (so the woman can lie down on her stomach) made especially for that purpose, but there are a few points you should keep in mind for safety's sake:

- ✓ A pregnant woman should not lie facedown on her abdomen but rather faceup or on her side (unless a special table like the one described in this section is used).
- ✓ In the later stages of pregnancy, she should not lie facedown or faceup, but only on her side, because the extra weight of the fetus can put pressure on her aorta and cut off circulation when she's on her back.



- ✓ Make sure that she's comfortably supported at all times, using pillows and other cushions beneath her legs and head.
- ✓ Use only very light and soothing touch directly on the abdominal area.
- ✓ Stay away from the points near the heel that correspond to the reproductive organs in reflexology, because they're supposed to help induce labor. Refer to Figure 14-3 for the location of these points.

For more information on this topic, see the sidebar in Chapter 10, "Pregnancy: A contraindication?"

With these guidelines in mind, you can confidently offer massage to your favorite pregnant person. A high percentage of pregnant women report back pain, sciatic pain, leg cramps, swelling of the ankles, and other problems that massage can help ease. So, she will definitely appreciate your efforts.



To find out more, a good book on the subject is *Mother Massage: A Handbook for Relieving the Discomforts of Pregnancy*, by Elaine Stillerman (Delta Books).

PMS (Please Massage Soon)

Few people realize that the real words behind the acronym PMS are "please massage soon." The phrase was coined back in the 1970s when some men started noticing that their wives or girlfriends periodically seemed to need an especially large share of love and attention. Massage was the perfect answer, and so many a man offered his sweetie some tender touch at those times when she seemed to need it the most.



If your honey comes to you looking stressed-out or on the verge of tears for no apparent reason and asks you for a massage, do not ask any stupid questions. Just start massaging. Immediately.

Meno-possibilities

All kinds of crazy things start happening with a woman's hormones about the time she's going through menopause. Many of these things have an effect on the way she looks and the way she feels.

Massage can help create continued possibilities for health, good looks, and pleasure as a woman enters this stage of life. Massage is extremely beneficial at this time, because the increased circulation and the actions of the oils and creams used are good for the delicate collagen and elastin fibers that are beginning to break down, causing wrinkles. You're not going to rub away the wrinkles, but you can definitely add a healthy glow to gracefully maturing

skin. The emotional reassurance and comfort given through caring touch do a lot to renew a woman's balance, too.



The facial and the full day of spa pleasures I outline in Chapter 15 are sure to be appreciated by menopausal women, as well as a massage.

Senior Massage



As Art Linkletter once said, "Old age is not for sissies." All sorts of things start to happen to a body after it's been around for a while. In addition to the expected stiff joints and achy muscles, many seniors feel a deeper pain as well, the pain of loneliness.

Massage can help with the stiffness. It can help with the aches. And sometimes it can even help with the loneliness. Massage treats the little things that eventually become the big things. A little stiffness, for example, could lead to the awkwardness and lack of coordination that eventually ends up causing a fall. When seniors feel more relaxed and coordinated after a massage, they are less likely to fall.

Little daily doses of touch can make the difference between a lonely life and a more fulfilled one. We are each born yearning for touch as babies, and, as we age, the need for contact is still there, though we often suppress it.

A new movement is afoot for seniors these days. As the population in industrialized countries gets progressively older, people are not taking to the idea of retirement like they used to. A few years ago, the word *retirement* used to mean "ready to die." Now it means, "twenty more years of activities and then maybe slowing down a little." Massage can play a big part in keeping seniors vital and healthy during those years.



In Chapter 5, I mention one of the world's favorite seniors, and a great fan of massage, Bob Hope. He's had a massage almost every day of his life for over 50 years, and he says it's been an important part of what's kept him going. As of this writing, he's nearing the 100-year mark. Maybe we could all learn a few things about aging from him.

Reach out and touch someone older

You can easily extend massage to seniors. Most are extremely grateful for the contact. All you really need is a tiny bit of courage to take that first step. Go ahead . . . reach out and touch someone older. Try these suggestions to get started:

- ✓ Visit a senior citizen neighbor and spend a little time with her. Offer to give her a light shoulder and neck rub.
- ✓ Visit a retirement home and volunteer to make the rounds and talk to the residents. When you do, hold each one by the hand, making simple contact.
- ✓ Self-massage is great for seniors, too. If the opportunity is there, go ahead and teach the self-massage moves in Chapter 13 to a special senior. This is also a great way to share your enthusiasm for massage with your own parents or grandparents.

You should follow a few guidelines when massaging seniors:

- ✓ Seniors are generally more frail than younger folks, so use gentler movements when giving them a massage.
- ✓ They're not made of porcelain, however, and you don't need to treat them like they're going to break at any second. Start off softly, and progressively increase the vigor of your massage until you reach a comfortable level.
- ✓ Make extra sure to ask for lots of feedback so you know what you're doing is okay.

A chance to give back

In studies conducted at the Touch Research Institute, it was found that seniors received almost as much benefit from giving massage as they did from receiving. Teaching seniors how to massage their grandchildren, for example, is a wonderful way to help them feel involved and in touch with the younger generations.

You may be surprised how good the simple act of giving a massage can make someone feel. The contact is what counts. If you think Granny's a loner who enjoys being off in a corner, give her another chance and have her help you massage the baby. You may be surprised.

Professional senior massage



If you're headed in the direction of becoming a massage pro yourself, and you think you may want to specialize in offering your services to seniors, special organizations and trainings are available just for you. Contact the Day-Break Geriatric Massage Project in California (call 707-829-2798 or visit them on the Web at www.daybreak-massage.com). They have books, videos, trainings, and a symposium for massage therapists who specialize in senior massage.



Final contact

A friend called once and asked me to come over to give a massage to his father, who had recently suffered a stroke. It took both of us several minutes working together to get his father up on the massage table, because he was weak and partially paralyzed. The stroke had also taken away his ability to speak.

For almost an hour, I did the best I could to help relieve some of the stress and fear that this man was going through. His muscles quivered. His

eyes looked directly into mine. Near the end of the massage he reached his hand out and held onto my arm, and I felt a powerful silent communication pass between us through the touch. For 10 seconds, 30 seconds, a minute, he just held me.

The next day I was scheduled to come massage him again, but that morning I received a call. He was gone. Now, several years later, I can still feel the strength of his grip on my arm.

Massage can offer some serious help for older people suffering from Parkinson's Disease, stroke, poor blood circulation, and other conditions. In some cases, patients have avoided amputations and terminal disability through the massage they've received. Many seniors, such as widowed people for example, are seldom touched, yet they're the people who need it the most. Massage can help.

Touch at the end of life

Massage can offer much needed reassurance for those people near the end of their lives. Some massage pros have specialized in this type of work, giving massage in hospitals and hospices. A sizable number of clergy, members of the National Association of Bodyworkers in Religious Service (NABRS), are also involved.



You can learn more about offering this type of massage in the book *Compassionate Touch: Hands-On Caregiving for the Elderly, the Ill and the Dying*, by Dawn Nelson (Talman Company).

Chapter 19

The Lover's Touch: Massage and Intimacy

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In This Chapter

- ▶ Using sensual touch with your partner
 - ▶ Setting the sensual mood
 - ▶ Figuring out which moves feel good for your partner
-

Let's face it: Sometimes, massage can just plain be sexy. Regardless of how therapeutic it is. Regardless of the fact that it was recommended centuries ago by ancient respectable guys like Hippocrates. Regardless of how favorably many physicians think of it today. Regardless of the way it's used by superstar athletes in smelly locker rooms. And regardless of the hundreds of thousands of professional practitioners out there who help heal millions of people through their non-sexual touch.

As a practitioner of therapeutic, non-sexual massage myself, I am amongst those who would like to convince you that there's a *big* difference between sensual touch and therapeutic massage. But that doesn't mean sensual touch can't be therapeutic. In fact, the famous musician Marvin Gaye sang a song on that very topic. You guessed it — "Sexual Healing."



This chapter offers a few basic ideas to get you started with some sensually oriented massage. You can take many of the suggestions from the rest of this book, too, and add a little spice to them. Be careful who you use your sensual healing techniques on, though, because they can be quite powerful.

Sensual Touch

You need a few important ingredients in order to create a great sensual massage. These include the following:

- ✓ A naked supermodel
- ✓ A gallon and a half of musk-scented massage oil from ancient Persia
- ✓ Any CD by Barry White

Just kidding! Actually, having any of those ingredients on hand may indeed improve your chances of experiencing the ultimate sensual massage, but they're certainly not necessary. The following are the three things that you definitely need for a good sensual massage:

- ✓ The right intention
- ✓ Spontaneity
- ✓ Sensitivity

The right intention

So how do you go about being sensual with your chosen partner after you've decided you'd like to share a sexy massage together? The trick is to change your *intention*. You can tell the difference instantaneously when someone has a sensual intent with their massage moves. You may be surprised how the very same moves performed on the very same part of the body can have incredibly different effects, depending upon who's giving the massage, and what his or her intention is. You can feel it in the touch.

A fine line lies between sensual and sexual massage, and believe it or not, sometimes sensual is better. Sensual massage is more relaxed. It doesn't expect anything. Sex is something that gets done, while sensuality just *is*.

Once in a while, simply enjoy the touch without thinking about where it may lead. Relax there in the arms of sensuality for a time, taking some pressure off of you and your partner. You may like what you find.

Spontaneity

Perhaps the most important rule for sensual massage is, "Go with the flow." If you feel like the most appropriate place for the massage is out on the beach at midnight, then take your bottle of oil and head outside. Then again, the

kitchen floor can become an exotically sensual environment when you lie down on it with your partner. Wherever you are, look around for items that can enhance your experience. You're bound to be able to use something that you have on hand — a texture, a sound, or a taste — like a big, juicy, ripe strawberry, for example.

Sensitivity

With sensual massage, you have to be especially sensitive to your partner's emotions during the session. Envelope him or her in a sense of warmth, caring, and safety. You don't have to beat your partner's tension into submission or accomplish anything at all really. Just *be there* with him or her.

Soft hands



TIP

In sensual massage, the idea is not so much to soothe your partner's sore muscles, but to enchant him. So, you don't need to use as much pressure or strength as you do in a regular massage. Practice using *soft hands*, letting your fingertips and palms drift over the surface of the skin without trying to achieve any therapeutic purposes. This technique changes the massage mood, making it more sensual.



JARGON ALERT

A massage called Tantra

You may want to know about a special, sensual, energy-raising technique called *Tantra*. This technique combines meditation and lots of interesting activities you can use to change sexual energy into sensual/spiritual energy. You and your partner can engage in sensual massage, for example, to heighten your experience of togetherness, instead of rushing straight into the whole sex thing and then rolling over and falling asleep afterward.

If you're into enhancing your sensual life, you can choose among many workshops, videos,

and books. Pick up one of the books by Mantak Chia, for example, which you can find on the Web at www.tantra.com. And while you're there, you can have fun discovering other aspects of Tantra, such as art and instructions from the *Kama Sutra*, an ancient text on sensuality. Plenty of couples workshops on the subject are available, too.

Have fun!

Setting the Sensual Mood

Sensuality is all about creating a sensual mood, right? So, it follows that your inner chamber, as I describe in Chapter 9, is especially important during a sensual massage. But just how exactly are you supposed to make it sensual? You can use candles and incense, but how about something a little more daring?

You may want to check out a few of the items listed below to help you and your partner get into the appropriate sensual mood. After all, you don't have all day to lie around waiting for the proper mood to strike. You're a busy person, and you have lots of other things on your mind. If you're feeling adventurous, try the following suggestions, and see what happens.

Flavored massage oils

Okay, I admit it . . . flavored massage oils are a little on the hokey side. But you can't knock it till you try it, right? These days, there are flavors for every taste. You can even find, believe it or not, a cappuccino-flavored massage oil, which must be for those times you need a quick pick-me-up and don't want to suffer the extreme embarrassment of falling asleep with your tongue in your partner's navel.



Of course, the idea here is to enjoy the flavor of the oil while you're licking it off, but be careful not to get addicted to this pastime. Don't swallow whole pints of the stuff, because it could jeopardize your health. Like all oils, edible ones have a lot of cholesterol and fat, too. And nothing would be worse than gaining weight by licking your mate, which can lead to the worst of all excuses for not giving your honey a sensual massage: "I'm on a diet."



If edible oils interest you, check out the Wild Syde on the Web at wildsyde.com or call 800-433-6459 or 732-714-0306.

Little devices

Little devices that buzz and vibrate can be quite a pleasurable addition to a sensual massage experience. You can purchase such devices guilt-free at trendy shops in cities around the world these days, or you can order them through the mail.

Videos

All kinds of sensual massage videos are out there for you to use to help get you in the mood, but they share one big problem: The models are too good looking. For most people, watching one of those videos without feeling a little inadequate is difficult. If you do watch them, just keep reminding yourself that those people spend ten hours a day exercising, seven days a week. When they're not exercising, they're at the tanning salon, or the local health food restaurant having a bowl of lettuce for lunch, dressing on the side.

Sensual Moves

Here are a few moves that you can use when you're creating your sensual massage together. You may notice that some of these moves are not really moves at all, but attitudes. In a sensual massage you take more liberties with your partner. You drape yourselves over each other more, coming closer and dissolving the giver/receiver barrier.

Creating fuller contact

In therapeutic massage, you usually bring just your hands and arms into contact with your partner, for the most part. In sensual massage, on the other hand, it doesn't matter how much of your body comes into contact with your partner. In fact, the more contact the better, as shown in Figure 19-1. For massage maneuvers applied to the back, the neck, and the head, sit right down on your partner's tush. Just make sure not to rest all your weight on him, though, because you may cut off the circulation.



Figure 19-1:
Sitting on
top of your
partner is
great in
sensual
massage.

Limb draping

When you're massaging your partner's limbs, let the entire leg or arm rest across your body. This creates a sensation of support and intimacy, especially when you combine it with light, lacy moves with your fingertips on the inner thigh area, as shown in Figure 19-2. Ooh la la!

Figure 19-2:
Sensually
draping your
partner's
limbs over
your body
adds to the
experience.



Hair gliding

The fine ends of your soft, silky hair can be instruments of exquisite pleasure. Simply let your hair hang down and brush lightly across your partner's skin anywhere on his body while you're giving the massage, as shown in Figure 19-3.



Do not attempt this move if you have a buzz cut or a spiky Mohawk hairstyle, because you could inflict serious damage.

Belly touching

Ever notice how you instinctively cringe and protect your chest and abdomen when danger is present? You do this because the front of the human body is incredibly vulnerable and sensitive. This vulnerability is bad for self-defense from attacking wolverines, but it's great for sensual massage. Simply use a series of light, gliding strokes all up across the abdomen and chest, as shown in Figure 19-4. These moves are not meant to affect the muscles, as the chest massage moves in Chapter 11 are, but rather just to stimulate the skin (and the mind) of your partner.

Figure 19-3:
In sensual
massage,
using your
hair is part
of the fun.



Figure 19-4:
The chest
and
abdomen
are
vulnerable,
sensitive
areas —
perfect for
sensual
touch.



The most sensual organ of them all

Simply rubbing your hands and fingers over a person's erogenous zones can be, well, erotic, but it's not the only game in town. If you've been with your partner for a long time, you may want to explore some newer, less obvious zones.

One particular organ is too often neglected, and it can be the most sensual one of all. On all humans, it's found in the same area. Everybody responds to stimulation there in a different way, though, making seduction and sensuality an endless surprise.

Of course, I'm talking about the brain. If you can get inside your partner's imagination, you can lead him on an infinite number of new erotic experiences without ever leaving the safety of your house. Try it the next time you're sharing a sensual massage together.

Fantasizing is okay

If you find yourself repeatedly imagining that you're receiving your massage from a naked movie star on a beach in Tahiti, don't worry. That's normal. In fact, you may even use the fantasy to make the sensual massage more sensual.

Encourage your partner to share a few juicy morsels from her fantasy life while you're applying these sensual moves. You may be surprised how the combination of your familiar touch and the fantasy of an exotic, unfamiliar situation adds to your experience.

The ultimate aphrodisiac

I once had the pleasure of massaging Dr. Ruth Westheimer, and I'll never forget what she said to me at the end of the massage. Still lying on the table, she glanced up at me with her trademark mischievous grin, and said, "Don't you want to ask me a question?"

"A question?"

"Yes, you know, about love, or sex?" Her eyes twinkled.

I couldn't pass up the opportunity for some free expert advice, and so I asked Dr. Ruth what the

most powerful aphrodisiac in the world was. Oysters? Ginseng? Bark from the yohimbe tree in Africa?

"Whatever works for you, works!" said Dr. Ruth, and the phrase has rung true all the years since she spoke it. You and your partner can create the ultimate, personalized sensual massage experience that's right for you. Just remember Dr. Ruth cheering you on from the sidelines, which should put a smile on your face, and then go for it!

Chapter 20

Have Hands, Will Travel: Doing Massage for a Living

In This Chapter

- ▷ Determining whether massage is the career for you
- ▷ Creating your own massage adventure
- ▷ Understanding the future of massage

So, now, after practicing your new techniques and discovering the incredible benefits of massage, you may be thinking to yourself, "Hey, all this massage stuff is just *too much fun*. I'd like to find out how I can spend a large percentage of my own time making others feel better like all those fantastic professional massage therapists I've been reading about. And besides, it may help to pay the rent."



May I then shamelessly take this opportunity to suggest to you a fantastic book on exactly this subject, a book that was, coincidentally, written by me? The book is *Massage Therapy Career Guide for Hands-On Success*. It is packed with over 300 pages of essential information for the person who is seriously considering a walk down the massage career path, and for the person who has already begun that journey.

Right here in this chapter, you're going to get enough information to make a sound decision on whether massage therapy may be the right career choice for you. You also find several tips and connections to get you going in the right direction.

Is This the Career for You?

The first thing you should do when considering a career in massage is ask yourself a series of tough questions to determine your true motivations and chances for success. Answering the following questions, excerpted from *Massage Therapy Career Guide*, may give you a good preliminary idea about how well suited you are to this profession.

The ten traits of a born massage therapist

1. Do people swoon and tell you that you have "great hands" when you simply place them upon their neck and shoulders and squeeze a little? Yes/No
2. Do you feel sympathetic pain someplace in your own body when someone else tells you about their own pain? Yes/No
3. Do you feel very comfortable with your own and others' bodies? Are you free from excess inhibition and body image hang-ups? Yes/No
4. Do you have the ability and desire to work several hours a day at a very physical endeavor requiring significant stamina? Yes/No
5. Is it easy for you to remain in silence for an entire hour (or several hours in a row), without indulging in conversation if a client doesn't wish it? Yes/No
6. Have people ever told you that your presence makes them feel peaceful or calm? Yes/No
7. Do you take your own health seriously by exercising, watching what you eat, and using moderation? Yes/No
8. Does the idea of changing your lifestyle and livelihood seem exciting rather than horrible? Yes/No
9. Is the human body a source of wonder and intrigue for you, making you want to learn more about how it works through intensive study? Yes/No
10. Are you willing to invest a significant amount of time and money for schooling, supplies, association memberships, and equipment? Yes/No

Count up the number of "Yes" responses and compare your total with the following:

- ✓ 9–10 Head to the nearest massage school to enroll.
- ✓ 6–8 Begin serious investigation about the possibilities; send away for more information from massage schools.
- ✓ 3–5 Seek the advice and inspiration of established massage therapists in your area who may be able to give you some insight about what daily life in the massage field is really like.
- ✓ 0–2 Consider more deeply what your needs and motivations are for looking into massage as a career.

An honest look at yourself

Before you take the plunge, you really need to stop and ask yourself: Am I really into touching all those strangers all day long for the rest of my life?

This is not a career for everybody. It takes a certain kind of person to be a massage therapist. And if you are that kind of person, what you may discover, after a short while, is that those “strangers” you may be touching are not really strangers after all, but fellow human beings whom you can relate to on a meaningful level through your newfound skills.

Massage gives us an acceptable avenue for empathy. Practicing professionals can touch others in a caring, compassionate way, helping them with their problems, easing their stress, and letting them know they’re not alone. Massage therapists are paid to *be there* for people.

That’s no small thing.

So take an honest look at yourself. Does that deep desire to help and empathize with others outweigh whatever reservations you may have regarding the nitty-gritty reality of dealing with the not-always-wonderful public? If so, maybe you have quite an adventure ahead — a massage adventure.

The Massage Adventure

After you make this fundamental choice and decide to pursue your career in massage, then you have to prepare yourself for your new role in society. Yes, people may look at you with different eyes when they see you carrying around one of those big massage tables that look like padded suitcases. How will they react? What will the neighbors say?

It’s strange to think of yourself as this new person, isn’t it? It’s almost like becoming a police officer or ship captain or any other profession that involves the wearing of a uniform. You’re on display as what you are, and it may be uncomfortable at first.

These sensations gradually fade away, though, as you begin to associate more and more with other people who make a similar career decision. The first place you begin to meet your fellow travelers is usually in massage school.

Getting trained

Chances are that you already know somebody who knows somebody who has taken up massage as a career. It's ever more popular, with people from many different backgrounds.

There are over 800 massage schools in the U.S., where training usually lasts about 6 months. In some areas, though, you can get certified in as little as a hundred hours, and in others you need more than 1,000 hours, which can take up to a full year. Other countries can require significantly more training, such as Canada for example, with schools that have 2,000- or even 3,000-hour programs, lasting up to three years. Most schools offer part-time classroom hours for those students who work another job, and some even have Saturday classes once a week for extended periods.

Here are some of the things you explore in massage school:

- ✓ Anatomy
- ✓ Physiology
- ✓ Massage (duh!)
- ✓ Applicable ethics, history, law, and so on.
- ✓ Hygiene
- ✓ Allied therapies, such as hydrotherapy
- ✓ Professional conduct and ethics
- ✓ And much more

Sounds like an actual academic program, doesn't it? That's because it is. Massage school is not just rubbing and relaxing all day, but that doesn't mean it isn't fun. Most graduates have very fond memories of their massage school days. And, just like in other schools, you establish new friendships, possibly spark romance, and change life paths.

Choosing a school

All massage schools are not created equal. And the one you choose may play an extremely important role in your overall experience of massage. Some schools have a very grass-roots feeling, and attending them makes you feel like a part of the massage revolution as it unfolds across the globe, touching people's spirits, as well as their bodies, in many important ways. Other schools are more interested in providing their students with a no-nonsense, technically oriented approach to massage based more strictly on a medical model.

All schools let you attend an open house or a class to see whether the school's "personality" is the right match for you. Take advantage of this opportunity, and make sure to ask plenty of questions when you meet past and present students.



Another way you can check the standards of a school is to see whether it is accredited by an official organization. In the U.S., for example, schools accredited by the Commission on Massage Training Accreditation/Approval (COMTAA) or the Integrative Massage and Somatic Therapies Accreditation Council (IMSTAC) had to meet some very strict guidelines. You can be rest assured of the quality. Information about these accrediting organizations is available from the American Massage Therapy Association and Associated Bodywork and Massage Professionals.

The prospect of attending a massage school may excite you, but you have no idea how truly valuable the experience is until you go through it yourself. Some of the high points include:

- ✓ Camaraderie
- ✓ Increased knowledge and self-confidence
- ✓ Exposure to new techniques and systems
- ✓ A return to the stimulating, youthful lifestyle of the student
- ✓ Credentials you can travel with
- ✓ Self-transformation (See the sidebar later in this chapter.)

Chapter 21 lists ten of the best places to study massage.



An information-packed book about massage schools is available from Associated Bodywork and Massage Professionals (ABMP). It's called the Touch Training Directory, and you can order it by calling 800-458-2267 or 303-674-8478 or by visiting www.abmp.com.

Determining cost

Massage school may cost anywhere from several hundred dollars a semester at a vocational technical school up to around \$15,000 at some of the top schools, with the average seeming to hover in the \$5,000 to \$6,000 range. Schools in countries outside the U.S., based more on a medical education framework, can cost quite a bit more.

As you can see, massage school usually entails a substantial investment. And that doesn't include the equipment and supplies you need to get started after you finish school. You need things like a massage table, business cards, and so on. So you need to think long and hard before plunking down that much dough for an education in touch therapy. This thought process is good. Think

Transformation through massage school

It's a rare person who can go through massage school and not be transformed on some fundamental level. What makes this so, you ask? Several things:

- ✓ Everybody there is making a change of some sort in their lives, which makes for a lot of very open people, ready to share themselves with you, and ready to have fun!
- ✓ People enrolled in massage school are there to take charge of their own lives in an entrepreneurial sense and a health sense, too, so you're likely to do some important networking with kindred spirits. Many business relationships have been forged in the classroom.
- ✓ Many students are often scared out of their wits that they won't be able to support themselves after they graduate; this makes them feel vulnerable, and vulnerability is a

very endearing quality in most people. It lets you all communicate on an honest level.

- ✓ School offers you a time-out from the race you've been running in your life up to now. It gives you time to take stock of what's most important, of where you've been and where you truly want to go.
- ✓ When you begin literally touching people on a daily basis, as you will in school, you quickly get back in touch with what's real, and what matters. Life matters. Health matters. People matter. What you're doing is important, and as you realize this more and more each day, your life may transform.

Attending massage school is no guarantee for a changed life, but it's a pretty good bet that you may come away with some insights and direction that you never even considered before you began. Just stay open.

of it as a filtering system that keeps the less-than-serious from getting into the profession. Even with the costs, many tens of thousands of new massage therapists enter the worldwide market every year.

Obtaining licensing and certification

After you graduate from school, you receive a certificate stating that you passed the course. Then, in many areas, you have to take that certificate and apply to take yet another exam to get your license. The license legally allows you to practice massage in your area. You never thought it would be so complex, did you?



The laws regarding licensing can indeed be confusing, and they're different everywhere you go, so the best advice I can give you is to do some thorough research into the regulations in your own area. Just a little accidental slip-up could turn you into an outlaw massage rogue, which would not be good for your professional reputation.

Discovering your new lifestyle

Freedom at last! After you make it through schooling, certification, and licensure, you're out there in the real world massaging real people — for real money. This new lifestyle you create for yourself is nothing like the boring 9 to 5 routine at your old job. But with your old job, you knew when you were working and you knew when you were off. Now, it seems like you're always either coming back from giving a massage, just about to give a massage, or thinking of ways you can get more people to sign up for massages.

Ah, there's the real rub; there's never an end to the massage work that needs to be done.

When you work for yourself doing massage, you have to create some new rules and boundaries, like any self-employed person, so that your work life doesn't swallow you whole. Whether you work in a spa, a clinic, a doctor's office, or in your client's homes, you're going to need new boundary rules (see the sidebar about boundary rules in this chapter).

So how much will you make? (the real story)

Many would-be massage therapists add up the numbers. "Let's see, 50 dollars per massage, doing just 5 massages a day, 5 days a week, makes \$1,250 per week, times 50 weeks . . . oh my god! I'm going to be rich. Rich, I tell you!"

As a result of such calculations, many unsuspecting people have found themselves several months later sitting in a classroom studying the function of the gluteus maximus muscle. They bide their time, going through the motions, just waiting for their chance to graduate and become massage millionaires.

Well, it doesn't always work out exactly that way. In fact, it seldom ever does. The average annual salary of a massage therapist in the U.S. is under \$20,000 per year, according to one association's statistics, and the number of massage school graduates who end up not working in the field at all is surprisingly large as well.

The truth is that, like any business, the massage business is a hard business. It may be a little more "romantic" than some other fields, but the day-to-day reality of it includes an awful lot of good old-fashioned hard work, combined with many things you may not have thought you would need, like marketing savvy, business plans, self-promotion, and managerial skills.



You can, indeed, make a very good living doing massage, and that may continue to be the case as more and more people worldwide realize the benefits that massage offers. But don't do it just for the money. You need to have another, deeper, reason, too, or you may end up like certain old rock-and-roll stars and massage therapists, eventually burning out.

Boundary rules

The rules you come up with for yourself as a massage therapist are completely personal. No two massage therapists need follow the exact same guidelines. The important thing to remember is to stick by whatever rules you set. This increases your self-esteem, makes life a lot easier for you, and lets your clients know that you're serious about your business.

The following are just a few suggestions of potential boundary rules. Yours may be much different. Practice saying your new rules out

loud in front of the mirror a few times to yourself, as if you were talking to a client. Eventually, they seem natural.

- ✓ I don't work on weekends.
- ✓ I don't work after 8 p.m.
- ✓ I only take new clients by referral.
- ✓ I don't accept tips/I do accept tips.
- ✓ I have a 24-hour cancellation policy or the massage must be paid for in full.

The tip of the iceberg

You may have heard stories about massage therapists who get incredible tips from wealthy clients, and you may have wished that you, too, could receive such large gratuities. This is very natural. Yet, some people say that if you receive tips for massage, you do a disservice to the industry. They say tipping turns massage into a service (like a waiter serving food to your table) rather than a treatment (like a doctor helping you find relief from a particular problem). You wouldn't consider tipping your doctor, would you?

The problem here is just the tip of the iceberg, so to speak, of a larger underlying issue about how we want others to perceive massage. In the end, it's up to you whether to receive tips or not. It's hard to turn down that cash staring you in the face as someone hands it to you. Believe me, I've accepted a few whopper tips myself over the years. There's really nothing wrong with it, in the right circumstance, but it's also good to be aware of the larger issue. (See Chapter 8 for more information.)

Becoming a real pro

After you're out there and actually making a living giving massage, you may soon find that there's more to the job than just the hours spent working hands-on. In order to become a real pro, you need to network your way into the industry and become a part of it, just like you would become a part of the telephone industry, say, or the music industry. And that means . . . going to parties!

That's right. You have to go to some organized massage parties, also known as conventions, that are held every year in various locations. Speaking of associations, it's a great idea for you to join one of them, at least for a year on a trial basis, to see how the contacts, information, and sense of community can help you get going with your new career.



Make sure to subscribe to an industry magazine or two, and read each issue from cover to cover. This may help you feel like an insider as you become familiar with all the people, places, and history that make massage what it is today.

Where the Profession Is Headed

In a nutshell, up. Yes, up is the direction the profession of massage therapy is heading. And I'm talking on a worldwide scale here. If you're looking to get in on a growth industry, you really couldn't pick a better one than this, because the number of human bodies out there available to be massaged is growing at a tremendous rate. Sometime around the publication of this book, for instance, world population is going to surpass the 6 billion mark. So there's no shortage of clients. And there's more wealth now than there ever has been before, so many people can afford to pay for massage. An even bigger trend, though, and one that has already started, is that insurance companies may pay for massage because it's a cost-effective, health-care alternative.

That's right — in the future, as a massage therapist, others may respect you as a part of the evolving medical field, and your services may be paid for through insurance billing. This is already happening, but it may soon become more common.

And in addition to the respect and success that you can claim, there's a "certain something" that makes massage special, too. It's in the simple human act of touching — of contact. That's our true specialty, and let's hope it never changes, no matter how successful we become.

Where you can go as a massage therapist

If you spend the time to gain some expertise in massage, people may eventually be seeking you out for your services, rather than the other way around. Believe me, this feels very good. It is the exact opposite of sitting in your underwear on Saturday morning searching through the want ads hoping there's someone out there who can appreciate your abilities.

After you work to establish yourself as a massage therapist, you may be at an entirely different place than you have ever experienced up to now. A good place. It's a place that often leads to other places, as those who gain success turn around and teach their skills to others in a variety of ways.

Many massage therapists compound their success by turning to teaching at massage schools, at weekend workshops, and in books and videos that they create for other massage therapists. Some massage therapists even go on to become consultants, speakers, and sought-after health experts.

And just think, it all starts when you make that simple, profound decision, to reach out and touch other people. Through massage you can do that.

The gift beyond price

If you decide to pursue massage, you may discover some things about life and about yourself that you never would have guessed otherwise. You will literally “get in touch” with your own existence in a new way. You change. You grow. This is the most valuable gift you receive, and it comes to you when you start to dedicate yourself to giving to others. What a concept.

Go ahead! Give it a shot! It is truly a path worth pursuing.

Best of luck to you.

Part VI

The Part of Tens

The 5th Wave By Rich Tennant



In this part . . .

Even with all the nifty photos and detailed instructions in this book, there still might be times when you'd rather just have somebody else make the massage decisions for you. Instead of figuring out all the moves for yourself, for example, wouldn't it be nice to slip away to one of the most fantastic spots on the planet and have a professional give you a massage? You'd probably like me to suggest the top ten places to do just that, wouldn't you?

And, in the same vein, wouldn't it be convenient if I were to cut to the chase and say to you, "Okay, here are the ten simplest massage moves you can perform on anyone (including yourself), anywhere, anytime, to relieve stress"? That would take a lot of the work out of learning massage. I bet you'd like that, wouldn't you?

Ah ha! I thought so, but you're not lazy. It just means that you've been reading for a long time now, and you're a little tired. You'd like some understanding here, a little compassion.

So that's what this last section is all about. Here in The Part of Tens, I relieve you of your burden of figuring things out and just go ahead and list things for you. In the process, you'll discover the answers to such burning questions as "What's the best place to get a massage in Morocco?" and "How can I massage my cat's ears?"

In addition, you are made privy to a short list of top places to study massage professionally so that you can go out and wow the world with your newfound healing gifts. I even help take the pressure off you on birthdays, Mother's day, anniversaries, and other special occasions by listing ten ways to give massage as a gift.

Who's your buddy?

Chapter 21

Ten Top Places to Study Massage

In This Chapter

- ▶ Ten top U.S. schools
- ▶ Ten top international schools

If you decide that, after reading this book, there is absolutely no way that you can go on with your life without rushing out to become a professional massage therapist, I would just like to say . . . congratulations! You have made a very wise and dynamic career decision. One of the very first places this decision may take you is a massage school of some kind or another. Massage schools each have their own personality, history, reputation, strong points, weak points, and so on. Choosing the right school to spend some important, life-transforming time in over a period of several months or a year is not a decision you should enter into lightly.

In the same way that you end up making friends with the people you are physically close to (in school, at work, as part of white house internship programs, and so on), you usually end up choosing a massage school that is somewhere in the vicinity of your house or apartment. However, if you have the luxury of mobility and can consider schools in a variety of locations, I have compiled a list here that may help. Keep in mind that these schools are some of my personal favorites as well as those recommended by colleagues. There are many other fine schools around. In the U.S. alone, approximately 800 massage schools dot the landscape, and that number just keeps growing.



If you'd like to see a much more extensive list of schools, I suggest the *Touch Training Directory*, published by Associated Bodywork and Massage Professionals. It costs about \$15, and you can get it by calling 800-458-2267 or 303-674-8478 or visiting www.abmp.com.

Massage Schools in the U.S.

And now, if you'd like to consider some really dreamy places to attend massage school in the U.S., check out the following suggestions.



Keep in mind that you can go experience a weekend workshop or a week-long intensive class before deciding to commit to a full course of study at many of these listed schools. This is a highly recommended way to get to know your prospective fellow students, faculty, and the facility itself. Call each school to receive a catalogue of workshops.

Atlanta School of Massage, 2300 Peachford Road, Suite 3200, Atlanta, GA 30338; 770-454-7167; www.atlantaschoolofmassage.com.

Like many massage schools, the Atlanta School of Massage started out as a small dream in the minds of people who really liked doing massage themselves. Then it grew. And grew and grew. Now it has a management board of its own, and a large, full-time staff. In addition to traditional training programs in Swedish massage, sports massage, and so on, ASM developed one of the first extensive spa therapy training programs offered at any massage school. Students can receive certification for specialties in spa services (see Chapter 15 for more info on spa treatments).

California Healing Arts College, 12217 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite 206, Santa Monica, CA 90025; 310-826-7622; www.chacmassage.com.

This school, run by a very together woman by the name of Lucinda, has a great referral system and graduate internship program. Students here get one of the best opportunities anywhere to transition themselves into the actual workplace, which is often a shock after spending several months in the rarefied and idealistic air of the massage school environment. The school takes advantage of its urban location in L.A. to get students ready for the real world.

Down East School of Massage, P.O. Box 24, Waldoboro, ME 04572-0024; 207-832-5531; www.midcoast.com/~dsm.

Imagine a private reserve in the woods of Maine, complete with a pond and one dirt road called Moose Meadow Lane. Then add a modern, three-story school building, a devoted, caring owner, and a topnotch, fully accredited massage training program. You then have the ingredients for an intense yet tranquil massage learning experience in one of the most beautiful settings anywhere.

Educating Hands, 120 SW 8th Street, Miami, FL 33130; 305-285-6991; www.educatinghands.com.

This is another school I'm rather biased about, right here in my own hometown. Educating Hands has been around for many years, and owner Iris Burman has dedicated herself to graduating students who use their hands to express their hearts. It's a fun, yet comprehensive, fully accredited program, and the beach is only ten minutes away.

Esalen Institute, Highway 1, Big Sur, CA 93920; 408-667-3000;
www.esalen.org.

As touted in Chapter 2, Esalen can be considered a kind of epicenter for massage consciousness in the U.S. Situated on the dramatic northern California coastline, it acts as a magnet for some of the best teachers in the world. Instructors have developed their own particular massage style there (not surprisingly called Esalen Massage), which you can learn while in residence. Not a bad way to spend your school days.

Heartwood Institute, 220 Harmony Lane, Garberville, CA 95542;
707-923-5000; www.heartwoodinstitute.com.

"A school that is more accurately lived than simply attended" is the way this campus set on 240 acres of rolling mountains, meadows, and forests is described. Located way, way, way up in northern California, this is the place to go if you want to experience the "whole enchilada" during your massage training experience. There's organic food, fresh air, stunning views, and a comprehensive holistic philosophy that permeates your time there, making it one of the most unforgettable episodes in your life.

Kripalu Center for Yoga & Health, P.O. Box 793, Lenox, MA 01240;
413-448-3400; www.kripalu.org.

Set on a hill overlooking a lake in the Berkshire Mountains of western Massachusetts, Kripalu has had a long, illustrious history of training massage practitioners, especially those interested in the "spiritual" side of massage. Instructors at this residential facility practice a lot of yoga and meditation, making them the perfect peaceful practitioners to teach stressed-out folks from the big city. You may want to test the waters at this somewhat eclectic place before you commit, though, especially if chanting in Sanskrit at 6 a.m. is not your cup of tea.

Scherer Institute of Natural Healing, 935 Alto Street, Santa Fe, NM 87501;
505-982-8398; www.schererinstitute.com.

If you're going to go to massage school someplace, why not gorgeous New Mexico, where you can hike, ski, soak in hot pools in the desert, and eat some of the best Mexican food anywhere? The Scherer Institute has had nothing but rave reviews from the press and from friends who've gone there. Now with a second facility in Taos, they offer a holistic experience that is unsurpassed.

Suncoast School of Massage, 4910 Cypress Street, Tampa, FL 33607-3802;
813-287-1099.

All right, I admit it, Suncoast is my alma mater, and the owners, Dan and Telka Ulrich, are long-time friends. I may indeed be somewhat biased about this school, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't consider going there, because

it's excellent. The program has consistently turned out highly skilled and competent massage therapists, some of whom even go on to write books about massage.

Swedish Institute, 226 W. 26th Street, New York, NY 10001; 212-924-5900.

Okay, so spending months out in the splendid beauties of nature at some massage school in the mountains eating nothing but organic fruit is not your idea of a good time. Perhaps you would prefer the fast pace and abundant nightlife of a major metropolitan area instead. What metropolitan area is more major than New York City? In fact, one of the oldest massage schools in the country is located right in the heart of New York City. This doesn't mean you can spend all your time pursuing that acting career or goofing off, though. The program is quite comprehensive and takes 1,224 hours to complete.

International Schools

Therapeutic massage is growing in popularity outside the U.S. — perhaps even faster than it is inside — as many people around the world come to see the value of “alternative” therapies. The following are some neat schools in several countries.

Australian School, 104C Warrigal Rd, Burwood VIC 3125, Queensland Australia; tel. 03 9830 0555.

Many massage schools in Australia receive extra assistance from the government so people can afford to get a massage education there. The Australian School of Therapeutic Massage offers a good basic course and is recommended by an Australian massage association.

Clare Maxwell Hudson's Massage, 87 Dartmouth Road, London, England NW2 4ER, UK; tel. 00 44 181 450-6494.

Clare Maxwell Hudson has written a number of popular books on massage, and she has a well-known school in London as well. The school started out with basic courses in 1984 and has since evolved into a full-fledged training institute. Much of the class work can be completed part-time, on weekends, to allow for the schedules of busy professionals. Owner Hudson believes one of the most valuable parts of her training is the work placement in hospitals that students are offered each semester. This is a good place to get hands-on guidance from an internationally recognized expert.

**Federation of Masseurs, 24 rue des Petits Hotels, 75010, Paris, France;
tel. 01 44 83 46 00.**



The Federation of Masseurs Kinesitherapeutes is not actually a school. It's an organization that can lead you in the right direction when you're seeking massage training in France. Things are different in France for massage therapists because their training is a part of the medical system, and graduates, known as *kines* (key-nays), are highly respected professionals within the medical community. If you're planning on studying at one of the schools in France, you need a keen desire to work in medical settings, and, of course, it helps if you know how to speak French.

**Federazione dei Massofisioterapisti (F.N.C.M.), Massofisioterapisti Via Aosta 16, Trento, 38100 Rome, Italy; tel. 03 94 61 915 499;
www.geocities.com/CapeCanaveral/Lab/2521.**

This is another network of people teaching and developing massage techniques. Working with the ministry of health to uphold professional standards, the FNCM also lists classes in many different massage modalities given throughout Italy.

Institute of Thai Massage, 17/7 Morakot Road, Hah Yaek Santitham, Chiang Mai, Thailand; tel. 66-53-218632; www.infothai.com/itm.

If you're like most people, the first time you receive a Thai-style massage, you immediately want more, and you may even feel the desire to share the great pleasures and health benefits of this ancient art, called Nuad Bo-Rarn in Thailand, with others. Maybe that's why so many people make the pilgrimage to Chiang Mai to study with Master Chongkol Setthakorn, head teacher at the Old Medicine Hospital there since 1985. Five levels of courses are available, each lasts five days for a total of 180 hours.

Karlsbad Spa Training, Czechoslovakia, contact Dr. Jonathan Paul DeVierville, The Alamo Plaza Spa, 204 Alamo Plaza, San Antonio, TX 78205; U.S. tel. 210-223-5772; www.karlsbadspa.cjb.net.

Dr. Jonathan Paul DeVierville, Ph.D. is a veritable fountain of information about water. In fact, he knows so much about water and hydrotherapy that he has decided to dedicate his life to sharing the healing message of spas. Each year in May he takes a small group of lucky students to Czechoslovakia with him to study the traditional forms of hydrotherapy and other healing methods used in the spas there.

Northern Institute of Massage, 100 Waterloo Road, Blackpool, England FY4 1AW; tel. 44 1253 403548.

This school has been around since 1924, and they have graduated over 35,000 students (many of whom are still alive). The students spread out across the English-speaking world to ply their hands-on trade. In the past ten years, the school has seen an upsurge in activity as more and more people in the U.K. become interested in alternative therapies. The school has even opened branch offices in other countries — two in Ireland, and one in the Caribbean. Call if you're interested in schooling, or even if you're a visitor just traveling through — workshops are open to everybody.

South Australia Health Education Center, 38 Currie Street, Adelaide, Australia SA, 5000; tel. 08 8410 1975; www.message.net.au.

If you'd like a massage school experience down on the south coast of Australia, and you want to study with people serious about their massage (the principal and several instructors were invited to the Commonwealth Games to offer sports massage to the athletes), this is the school for you.

Sutherland-Chan, 330 Dupont Street, Suite 400, Toronto, Canada; tel. 416-924-1107; www.sutherland-chan.com.

If you'd like a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, cosmopolitan experience while studying massage, in a peaceful, laid-back Canadian city, Toronto may be the place for you, and the Sutherland-Chan School & Teaching Clinic may be the perfect school. It's located right in the middle of downtown Toronto, which features excellent housing and actual humans walking around at night. Sutherland-Chan has been around since 1978. The program is a hefty 2,200 hours, and fully 70 percent of the students already have a college degree when they arrive. What really sets the school apart is its intense clinical outreach program. In order to graduate, every student performs supervised clinical work in area hospitals.

West Coast College of Massage Therapy, 555 West Hastings Street, Vancouver, Canada V6B 4N4; 888-449-2242; www.collegeofmassage.com.

You have to get ready for some serious schooling if you study massage in Canada, which requires between 2,000 and 3,000 hours of training, depending on which province you live in. The direction and emphasis of training at the West Coast College is based on the medical model approach to healthcare, according to Ron Garvock, dean of massage therapy at this school in Vancouver. This three-year program costs \$25,000 Canadian dollars, which perhaps makes it the highest standard in massage education in North America. They also have campuses in the Toronto area and are expanding into Victoria and Niagara as well.

Chapter 22

Ten Outstanding Places to Receive a Topnotch Massage

In This Chapter

- ▶ U.S. massage spots
 - ▶ International massage spots
-

You're going to get double your money's worth out of this chapter because it actually includes not ten, but twenty, spectacular places to receive a massage, ten in the U.S. and ten in other countries. How can we afford to do this, you ask? Well, we spare no expense when it comes to letting you know about potentially the most spectacular massage experience of your life.

Let's face it, just about anywhere you are when you're receiving a massage is an outstanding place. Close your eyes and off you go to paradise. But trust me on this, your experience may be enhanced if you manage to make your way to one of the many truly incredible environments that are waiting for you out there. Any one of the following locales may set your imagination soaring and stimulate your sense of the beautiful in life. You may also find it quite an adventure getting to some of these exotic spots, so buckle up and get ready for some of the most pleasurable explorations of your life.

U.S. Massage Spots

Here are some great places to go in the U.S. when you're seeking your next fabulous massage experience.

Enchantment, 525 Boynton Canyon Road, Sedona, AZ 86336; 800-826-4180; www.arizonaguide.com/enchantment.

This is one place I'm almost reluctant to name because it's such a special secret hideaway, but because you were kind enough and smart enough to buy this book I suppose you deserve to find out about it. First, go to Sedona, a

small town two hours north of Phoenix, Arizona. Then follow Boynton Canyon Road a few miles out of town where you enter a spectacular valley sacred to the Native Americans who once lived in cliff dwellings there. The massage you receive in the spa is more than a massage. Be prepared for an exchange of energy between you, the massage therapist, and the powerful vibrations of the canyon itself. It's filled with something mystical.

Esalen Institute, Highway 1, Big Sur, CA 93920; 408-667-3000;
www.esalen.org.

This is the only spot to make it onto both the ten top schools list and the ten top massage spots lists. This place deserves it. Some people say that the consciousness of the entire planet has been shifted in a positive direction by people who receive massages on Esalen's deck overlooking the Pacific. Here, a bunch of talented, sensitive people practice a form of massage that is meant to fine-tune your body and your awareness to an entirely new level. And you experience the whole thing while listening to the majestic fury of the Pacific Ocean pounding the rocks hundreds of feet below. I think you should go there and check it out.

Green Valley Spa, 1871 West Canyon View Drive, St. George, UT 84770;
800-237-1068; www.ishopper.com/greenvalley.

Just a two-hour drive from gaudy Vegas, Green Valley is a true oasis in the Utah desert — a magical place. To receive your massage, you enter a womb-like inner chamber where it's hard to tell whether you're inside or outside. All the ingredients used on your skin are plucked by hand from the surrounding hills, and every detail of the environment is chosen to create a special experience, down to the color of the fruit in the water you drink. I personally cannot say enough good things about this place.

Harbin Hot Springs, P.O. Box 782, Middletown, CA 95461; 707-987-2477;
www.harbin.org.

Well, this spot is not for everyone. There are, after all, dozens of naked hippies walking around, seemingly oblivious to the fact that there are lots of other people in close proximity who are not naked hippies. Harbin can indeed feel like a throwback to the sixties or seventies, but the sublime waters gushing from the underground spring are more than enough to make up for the funky surroundings. Take turns dipping your body (naked or not, no one will judge you) into the hot spring and then the cold stream for some intense stimulation before heading into the massage center for your hour-and-a-half appointment with bliss.

Kohala Spa, 425 Waikoloa Beach Drive, Kona, HI 96738; 808-886-1234;
www.kohalasp.com.

Ever wanted to receive a therapeutic massage from a native Hawaiian healer in preparation for a swim with the dolphins in a natural lagoon pool immedi-

ately outside the massage room door? Me too. Well, the Koala spa is where you can do just that, and you can also enjoy the amenities at one of Earth's finer resorts. This could be one of the greatest things you may ever experience, in the realm of massage or any other realm.

Little Palm Island, 28500 Overseas Highway, Little Torch Key, FL 33042; 800-343-8567; www.littlepalmisland.com.

If you're in the Florida Keys and you're searching for a secluded resort on its own private island where you can receive a massage in a mangrove tree house, then Little Palm Island is probably the place for you. This is Gilligan's Island gone upscale, with about two dozen thatched-roof bungalows, a pool, a bar, water sports, and an incredible gourmet restaurant. What else do you need?

Nemacolin Woodlands Resort & Spa, 1001 LaFayette Drive, Farmington, PA; 15437; 800-422-2736; www.nemacolin.com.

Tucked away between silos and cow pastures in the Laurel Highlands out near West Virginia, you will find a surprisingly beautiful place called Nemacolin Woodlands Spa that would be considered a jewel in even the most exclusive areas. The newly renovated spa was designed by the well-known artist Clodagh, who has created more of a spiritual experience than a building. Within its walls, you'll discover an opportunity to commune with the harmonious elements that have been brought together — water and wood, stone and light, sophistication and earthiness. After you're thoroughly relaxed in these surroundings, request to receive your massage from a massage therapist who's been on staff for a few years, long enough to have been trained by one of the country's premier massage instructors, Bob King. Nemacolin flew Mr. King in for a special private training, which is indicative of the way they do just about everything — first class.

The Peaks, P.O. Box 2702, Telluride, CO 81435; 800-789-2220; www.thepeaksresort.com.

Swoosh down the slopes in this incredible alpine valley, straight into the embrace of a topnotch luxury spa where a squadron of massage pros wait to take care of you. Telluride's a lovely place in the summer, too. The only downside to receiving a massage here is that you may be lying down for an hour with your eyes closed instead of out exploring the spectacular countryside

Spa of the Rockies, 1 Crystal Park Road, Manitou Springs, CO 80809; 719-685-1198.

This is a little-bitty place, but it has a big heart, and it's really cool. You can find it up a side street in the old mining town of Manitou Springs, near Colorado Springs and spectacular Garden of the Gods Park. Try to visit in the winter so you can soak outside beneath the chilly night sky in a big hot tub;

then come inside to the sauna where your massage therapist joins you, beats you with wet oak branches, and covers you with organic honey before leading you to the massage room. Now I call that service!

Ten Thousand Waves, 3451 Hyde Park Road, Santa Fe, NM 87501; 505-992-5000; www.primenet.com/spareporter/waves.htm.

Besides offering a long list of very talented massage therapists on staff, Ten Thousand Waves gives you that all-too-rare opportunity, a chance to wear a kimono in public! Yes, they hand you a kimono when you check in at the desk. Next, you're off to the lockers, then out to a clothing-optional hot tub environment that is surrounded by breathtaking mountain scenery. After saunas and soaking, your massage therapist takes you to a light-filled chamber for some high-quality bodywork. As an added bonus, you can head into Santa Fe afterwards for some of the best green chili on the planet.

International Massage Spots

It's true, the world is big, and there are thousands of tremendous massage experiences waiting out there for you, but the following list at least offers a few good places to get started.

Amandari, Kedewatan, Ubud, Bali, Indonesia; tel. 011 62 361 975333; www.amanresorts.com/dari_m.html.

So, say you're bored. And you have an extra \$25,000 or so burning a hole in your pocket. Why not come to Bali and live for several weeks at the incredible Amandari Resort? Locals believe the area to be a spiritual place, with nearby paths meandering through the jungle valley down to a sacred pool. While you're there, you can partake in the spiritual atmosphere yourself during a one-hour Amandari massage. During this sublime procedure, you will recline beneath a thatched-hut structure out by the tranquil lotus pool while being anointed with indigenous Indonesian oils by a highly skilled native practitioner. It doesn't get much better than this anywhere on Earth.

Camp Eden, Currumbin Creek Road, Currumbin Valley, Queensland, Australia, 4223; Tel. 61 (7) 5533 0333 or (800) 074 157; www.campeden.com.au.



If you don't mind getting a leech stuck on your big toe, as I did when running the fitness course through the rainforests of lush Camp Eden, then you may surely enjoy a visit to this remote-yet-close health retreat. Camp Eden is near Surfer's Paradise along the east coast of Australia, where the weather is lovely, the people magnificent, and the massage therapists' fingers as strong as those of a man wrapping his hand around a can of Foster's lager after a long day herding sheep in the outback.

Casa del Sol, Av. Gral. Diego Diaz Gonzalez #31, Col. Parres, 62550 Cuernavaca, Mexico; tel. 52 (73) 21-0999, toll-free 01-800-999-9100; www.misiondelсол.com.mx.

Ethereal beings clad in white escort you through a complex of buildings constructed of the most natural materials available: clay, wood and stone. You are ushered into inner chambers for your massage, which is more than a massage, because at the same time you are surrounded by the philosophy of Mision del Sol, which attempts to bring your internal environment into total harmony with an ecologically balanced external environment. The end result, hope the resort's owners, is to increase human consciousness to a universal level. At the very least, you get a killer massage.

Charlie's Spa at San Souci, Box 103, Ocho Rios, Jamaica; 800-203-7456.

This is the place to go if you're the type who would like to receive a massage in a picturesque little gazebo out at the end of a walkway surrounded on all sides by the aquamarine waters of the Caribbean. All the while, you hear faint strains of reggae music wash up from the distant beach bar, and a giant sea turtle named Charlie floats effortlessly by in a nearby fresh water grotto. If you're the type who would like this experience, definitely call this spa.

Javana Spa, Plaza Bisnis Kemang, Building 2, Kemang, Jakarta, 121730, Indonesia; tel. 011 62 21 719-8327; www.javanaspa.com.

Up in the cool hills outside of hectic Jakarta, you find a tranquil, spectacular place — Javana Spa. The altitude (1,200 meters) makes for fresh air and a feeling of escape from the humid tropical world of mere mortals below. Hike through forests to hidden waterfalls, then head back to the spa for your massage that includes natural oils and ingredients found right on this Pacific island. If you're feeling brave, ask for their traditional Indonesian massage, an intense experience that is "not for the faint of heart" as one resort official put it. Also, make sure to book your appointment in one of the rooms facing out toward the rainforest. The lush sights and sounds of tropical wildlife provide an exotic backdrop for your experience.

La Mamounia, Avenue Bab Jdid, Marrakech, Morocco; (212-4) 44-89-81, fax (212-4) 44-46-60; www.mamounia.com.



This resort, often described as the best hotel in Northern Africa, was the haunt of Winston Churchill, and it was one of the few places where he felt serene and removed enough from world affairs to practice his favorite pastime, watercolor painting. To receive your massage, you enter the *hamam*, or Turkish bath. There an entire ceremony takes place in a beautiful white marbled, Moorish-tiled steam room that is perfumed with natural, delicately boiled herbs. You're scrubbed with a natural paste, then bathed and toweled before the massage, which is also done in the steam room. The whole process takes about two hours, and afterwards you may feel like a character out of a romantic international novel.

Les Thermes Marins, 2 Ave de Monte Carlo, BP 215, Monte Carlo, France; 98004; tel. 377-92-16-40-40.

If you're feeling kind of ritzy, put your Ray Bans on, hop in your yacht, and head to Monte Carlo for Les Thermes Marins, a spa with a sea view. And it's not only a view you get, but sea therapy as well. After a soak in a natural seawater bath, request an hour-long massage before heading out to the casinos for the evening. This retreat has been called "the most luxurious thalassotherapy center, or seawater spa, in the world," but the price for a full day including four treatments won't drain your bank account.

Spa Deus, Via Le Piane 35-53042, Chianciano (SI) Italy; 39-(0) 578-63232, www.spadeus.it.

If you come under the spell of the Tuscan sun and can't wait to start your Italian getaway, but don't know where to begin and would like to get a massage while you're thinking about it anyway, definitely book an appointment at Spa Deus. They offer a good blend of European and American philosophies, and if you ever tire of the fine massages and healthy lifestyle choices there, you can head out in your rented Fiat for a little tour of the magnificent countryside.

Spiritual Massage, Angela Moraes, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; tel. 5521 274-5195; e-mail: solgavea@mandic.com.br.

If you happen to be in Rio de Janeiro and you want a spiritual experience, call Angela Moraes, who offers something called *Massagem Espiritual*, which is Portuguese for spiritual massage. You may not know this, but Brazilians are famous for their spiritual inclinations, as well as their more, um, worldly inclinations. Just being in Rio is a kind of spiritual experience in itself. Call Angela to make it extra special. She has a healing center in a gorgeous area near mountains, beaches, and forests, but still right in the city.

Wat Po Temple, Bangkok, Thailand

If you're in Bangkok, just ask anybody where Wat Po is, and they may be able to tell you. It's kind of hard to miss sprawling temples with massive golden Buddhas, right? The massage you receive there has a reputation of being "intense," but in a good way, of course. And it won't be in a darkened private room with flute music playing, like you may expect, but in an open public pavilion with several beds all together, and you wear loose-fitting clothing. And be warned, the massage is so wonderful, and the price so affordable, you may end up here for hours!

Chapter 23

Ten Inventive Ways to Give Massage as a Gift

In This Chapter

► Creating great massage gifts

If you really want to get on somebody's good side, here's a little secret: Give them a massage gift. You don't necessarily have to give the massage yourself (in some cases this could even be inappropriate), but you do have to put forth the effort to create the massage gift, arrange for it, pay for it, and so on. You may be surprised at how incredibly warm a reception your gift receives. Massage, ultimately, is always a gift for the person who's receiving it. Even if you're paying for it yourself, there's something very special about the physical act of receiving the massage. It's natural to respond as though it were a gift. The giver works so hard, on such an intimate level, that you can't help but feel connected to him, and grateful. Try some of the suggestions that follow to accentuate this quality of the massage you offer to others.

Spa gift certificates

Purchase a gift certificate that's good at over 700 great day spas in the U.S. and give it to a deserving individual. To order your certificate, call 888-SPA-WISH, and make sure to check out the coupon in the back of this book, because it gets you a discount! Way cool.

The massage birthday gift

For that special someone's birthday, your anniversary, or any other special occasion, hire a professional massage therapist to come over as a surprise gift. This could lead to some major gratitude immediately following the massage, so make sure you have a bottle of champagne chilled just in case.

The spa date

With so many spas around these days, it's possible for many people to get away to one for a night or two. Arrange in advance for a "spa date" on which both of you get multiple massages by a pro. Pack a good book, a bathing suit, and you're all set.

The royal treatment at home

Drop the kids at grandma's house and head home to cook your partner's favorite meal, arrange flowers, light candles, and warm the aromatherapy oil. Then put the skills you attain from this book to good use by giving a great massage. This is good for major brownie points in your favor.

B&B and massage

Take a trip to a quaint and charming little bed & breakfast and trade massages with your partner in this new, romantic environment.

Leave a little rub behind

When you're a houseguest, leave behind a massage gift certificate from a local massage therapist to show how much you appreciate your host's hospitality.

Massage for charity

Buy a gift certificate from a local massage therapist and offer it as a door prize for your church or community club auction.

Wedding day rub

Buy a massage for (or better yet, give a massage to!) a friend who is getting married. I received a massage on my own wedding day and have given massages to friends on theirs. You can always manage to make that extra hour appear on the big day, no matter how hectic things seem to get, and it really helps to calm the nervous bride or groom.

The massage economy pack

Negotiate with a local massage therapist to purchase a whole series of massages at a discount, and then share them with your partner, family, friends, business associates, and anyone else you can think of.

You're the gift

After you read this book, offer free massages to all of your friends and each person in your family. Do this even if you think you're not "good enough" at giving massage yet. If you give from your heart, people may respond accordingly. It's the gift that counts, not the wrapping.

Chapter 24

Ten Massage Techniques That Your Dog or Cat Will Love

In This Chapter

► Pleasing your pet with massage

You don't have to be a highly trained expert in several esoteric massage techniques in order to make your dog Sparky roll over in ecstasy when you rub his belly. However, maybe there are a few tricks here you haven't experimented with before. Your pet is sure to be overjoyed that you've read this book (and this chapter in particular) and are now ready to spend quality time trying out some new maneuvers. In fact, Sparky may have been the one who slipped that bookmark onto this page when you weren't looking.

Animals can teach us humans a thing or two about massage. Just watch a cat, for instance, over a period of five minutes (when it's not asleep), and you'll see what I mean. They are "in the moment" all the time, responding to their inner "call of the wild" to do whatever comes naturally. You can follow their lead with these massage moves. Yes, that's right, go ahead and get crazy with your techniques, letting your instincts take over as you bond and communicate with that special creature in your life. I limit the discussion to cats and dogs here because those are the most popular pets, but there's no reason you can't try these moves out on hamsters, gerbils, or Vietnamese pigs as well.

Paw pressure

Some people reserve their paw petting just for the furry tops of the paws, which is a big mistake. If you slide your fingers into the webbing of the paw pads underneath, you reach some areas that are hard to get to otherwise. Ever see your pets vigorously nibbling away at their own feet? This is the area they're trying to get, and if you help them out, they'll appreciate it.

Outer ears

Too many pet owners content themselves with a cursory scratch of the ears, when what your pet really wants is an all-out assault on the base of the back of the ear where it connects to the head. This seems to be an area that can never get enough intense rubbing. Use the tips of your index and middle fingers, really digging into the cartilage there that makes up the ear.

Inner ears

Inside the ear is a gold mine of prospective massage points, and it would be silly of you to stay away just because the inside of the ear is pink and potentially "yucky." Go ahead, promise yourself you'll wash your hands immediately afterwards, and then rub away on the little ridges and rolls within the cavern of the ear, exploring for new areas of pet pleasure.

Belly rub

The ever-popular belly rub is quite simple for most of us to perform. Just start rubbing, and your pooch keels over, kicking his paws up in the air in animal surrender. Experiment until you find the exact spot that causes the most frenetic paw movements. This is "ground zero" in belly-rub territory.



Watch out if you use belly rubbing on a cat because it will quite likely try to grasp your arm with its front paws and start clawing you with the back paws. This is the natural feline "disemboweling" reaction, meant to eviscerate any unlucky little rodents it catches out in the yard.

"Knee" kneading

Did you know that what we usually think of as the "knees" on our pets are actually the wrists? It's true, and it's also true that this is a little-known area of intense pet-massage satisfaction. Just try massaging your own wrists for a few seconds. Feels good, right? Animals love it, too. Use your fingertips to rub little circles in all directions around the joint, down onto the paw a little bit, and back up onto the leg slightly, too. Pinch in between the bones and tendons, and do a few joint movements while you're at it.

Chin wedgies

Just at the tip of the jutting underside of your dog or cat's chin you'll find the spot where the two sides of the jaw come together. The little triangle of soft tissue that you'll find there is a site of supreme sensitivity. Use your pinkie finger if necessary to reach into this area and rub back and forth with firm pressure. If you do the maneuver correctly, your pet becomes your slave and may do anything you ask it to, as long as you continue to provide such pleasure.

Tall tails

Right on top of the base of the tail, where it connects to the back, is a magical spot. Grind into it with enough finger pressure, and your pet's tail will begin to rise (cats) or wag (dogs). A "tall tale" is a sure sign that they like this very much.

Underarms

We tend to not pay that much attention to human armpits, often skipping them altogether during full-body massages. This is understandable, because some armpits are not places most of us would want to go, but it's also sad for our pets, whose armpits are licked clean on a daily, if not hourly, basis. You can give a good massage into this area by using all four fingers held flat. Slip them between the leg and the body and rub your fingertips into the many tendons, muscles, and ligaments you find attached there.

Nose nudgies

Press straight down onto the front of the nose with firm pressure and rub up and down just slightly, avoiding the nostrils. Try pushing until your pet pushes back and you begin to get into a little dance with each other, leading your pet around by the nose, which is kind of cute. At least it's cute for about 30 seconds or so.

Doggy and kitty chiropractic

Starting at the tail, use your fingertips to massage each vertebrae, working your way up the spine one bone at a time. Try mini-kneading maneuvers and some circular rubbing, making sure to get between the bones, too, into those little notches.

Chapter 25

Ten Quick and Easy Massage Techniques for Easing Stress

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In This Chapter

► Achieving quick stress relief with massage

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There are certain circumstances that are not completely conducive to giving or receiving hour-long full body massages complete with music, candles, and scented oils. Like when you're in a crowded elevator, for example, or if you're sitting at a departure gate at JFK airport. In places like those, it's important to remember not to take all your clothes off and start rubbing (either yourself or another person) because that may give massage a strange reputation.

Luckily for you, there are some quick little massage moves you can use every day in public places to help relieve stress. And none of them require you to embarrass yourself.

Easing Your Own Stress

The following are five quick and easy ways to ease your own stress with massage.

Eye hooks

This move feels better than it sounds. Hook your thumbs up into the inner upper corners of your eye sockets, pressing in against the nose bone and up against the ridge of the brow. Hold for 5 to 10 seconds. This is great for headaches and sinus congestion (see Chapter 17 for a photo).

Headache point

Known to shiatsu practitioners as Large Intestine 4, or LI4, this point is noted for helping to relieve headaches. It's located in the webbing of your hand between the thumb and index finger. The problem is that most people don't press exactly the right spot when they try to stimulate this point on themselves.



The spot is not directly in the center of the meaty part of the webbing, but rather in against the bone of the hand. To press here effectively, grasp the webbing between thumb and index finger with your opposite hand, squeeze it, and then move your thumb in against the side of the hand. See Chapter 11 for a look at this move.

Jaw circles

We all carry whole bunches of tension in our jaw muscles (yes, even you). One good way to alleviate this is to use your fingertips and make tiny little circles right into the center of your jaw muscles. Open and close your mouth slowly at the same time to increase the effect.

You may also want to try gently pulling your chin down until your mouth begins to open, relaxing the jaw muscles. You may be surprised at how tightly you hold your mouth closed, perhaps out of a fear of looking like a dufus. Go ahead, you're all alone; let your mouth hang open for a minute. It'll feel great.

Ear reflexology

According to the zone theory, each point on the bottom of your foot reflects areas in other parts of your body, as you find out in Chapter 14. Did you know that your ears also reflect every other part of the body? Yes, it's true. The Chinese even have an extensive system of treating many disorders with pressure on the ears.

You can give your whole body a boost by simply rubbing your ears with a vigorous little kneading movement between your thumb and first two fingers. Start at the lobe below and walk your fingers up around the outside to the top of the ear, giving little tugs outward as you go. Even if it does nothing for the rest of your body, it makes your ears feel great.

Foot drainage

Most everyone agrees that a foot massage feels great, but what if you're all alone and you only have a few minutes? Well, then try this one move to affect the bladder and adrenal reflex points on the bottom of the feet. It's a good way to stimulate detoxification and elimination while providing some stress relief at the same time.

With one foot up on the opposite knee, press in with your thumb, sliding it back and forth along the arch between the heel and midway up the foot. Check Figure 14-1 to see where this reflex is.

Easing a Partner's Stress

Following are five ways you can help others relieve their stress.

The vice grip

Tightly grasp the top of your partner's right shoulder (the area between the shoulder and neck, consisting mostly of the trapezius muscle) with both of your hands and have her turn her head very slowly to the left. Then have her hold the position at the extreme end of the turn for 10 seconds before slowly turning back. You can switch shoulders if you'd like or repeat on this side if only one shoulder is tight. This is an excellent way to help reduce major stress in the neck and shoulders.

Head squeeze

Although it may look like you're trying to squeeze your partner's head like a gigantic melon, you're actually doing him a big favor with this move, especially if he has a headache. With your elbows well out to the sides, press in with the heels of your hands, using very firm pressure against the sides of your partner's head, just above and in front of the ears. Hold for 10 to 15 seconds, asking your partner how the pressure feels. Discontinue if he experiences any discomfort. This is especially effective on tension headaches and has even been known to help with hangovers.

Hooking the skull

Standing behind your partner, place your thumbs at the base of his skull, on the muscles at the top of his neck. Then use a cat-pawing motion to dig your thumbs further into the muscles there, as if you were trying to hook your thumbs up under his skull. This will really loosen up the entire neck.



Make sure not to press directly into the spine with this move, as it may be uncomfortable. Stay about an inch to either side.

Scalp circles

Place your fingertips firmly against your partner's scalp and make little circles while pressing down. Make sure your fingers don't slip across atop the hair but remain firmly pressed against the scalp as you move the skin and thin muscles below. Then, after a few seconds, lift your fingers and repeat the circles on another spot on the scalp.

Wing lift

Have your partner bring one hand around to her lower back, which will lift her shoulder blade up a little. Then use your fingertips to hook into the muscles beneath the shoulder blade and pull steadily upward with light pressure on the blade itself, which will stretch the entire upper back and also have a loosening effect on the arm. Repeat on the other side.

Appendix

Massage Resources

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Massage, like any new field you're just getting into, can be a little confusing at first. There are so many resources you could use, so many directions you could search in. This appendix lists just a few of the many tools that could help you, but you'll find more than enough here to keep you busy for a long time.

Massage Books

There are lots of informative books on massage specialties. So, if you really feel the need to own another book besides this one, don't worry, you won't hurt my feelings. In fact, here are some suggestions:

Capellini, Steve, *The Royal Treatment: How You Can Take Home the Pleasures of the Great Luxury Spas*. New York, New York, Dell, 1997.

Claire, Thomas, *Bodywork: What Type of Massage to Get — and How To Make the Most of It*, William Morrow, New York, 1995.

Ford, Clyde, *Compassionate Touch*. NY: Simon and Schuster, 1993.

Knaster, Mirka, *Discovering the Body's Wisdom*, Bantam, New York, 1996.

Krieger, Dolores, *Accepting Your Power to Heal: The Personal Practice of Therapeutic Touch*, Santa Fe, Bear & Co., 1993.

Miller, Erica, *Day Spa Operations*. Albany, Milady, 1995.

Montagu, Ashley, *Touching: The Human Significance of the Skin*, Harper & Row, New York, 1971.

Nelson, Dawn, *Compassionate Touch: Hands-On Caregiving for the Elderly, the Ill and the Dying*, New York, Talman Company, 1993.

Pierpont, Margaret, *The Spa Life at Home*, Longstreet Press, Atlanta, 1997.

Thomas, Zach, *Healing Touch: The Church's Forgotten Language*. Louisville, KY, Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994.

Massage Magazines

In the U.S., there are three main magazines read by massage therapists. All of them include tons of information to help you get “plugged into” the massage world.

Massage Magazine: 1315 West Mallon, Dept. 50, Spokane, WA 99201-2038, 800-533-4263, ext. 50.

Massage Therapy Journal: 820 Davis Street, Suite 100, Evanston, IL 60201-4444, 847-864-0123.

Massage & Bodywork Quarterly: 28677 Buffalo Park Road, Evergreen, CO 80439-7347, 303-674-8478.

Massage on the Web

Given the velocity of change on the Internet, I can't absolutely guarantee that all of the following links will be completely current. However, you can rest assured that they will provide you with mega-amounts of information, more than you could possibly digest in one lifetime. So log on, start surfing, and prepare to launch into the World Wide Web of massage.

General sites

www.dharmanet.org/TBI/webring.html: This massage “Web ring” is a good place to start because it links together many sites all focused on massage therapy, and you can travel from place to place, always remaining within the ring. *Note:* especially helpful if you have a Web site on the subject of massage that you want to promote.

www.qwl.com/mtwc/guide/techniques.html: This site is known as “Massage Therapy Web Central,” and you’ll be able to find tons of links here for massage.

www.carpaltunnelmassage.com: Check here for insight into massage moves that can help with repetitive stress pain in the wrist.

www.babymassage.com: This is a site with a video available for instruction in (surprise!) baby massage.

www.childbirth.org: Here you’ll find everything you could possibly want to learn about childbirth, including baby massage and massage for pregnant people.

www.daybreak-massage.com: This is the site for people interested in offering massage to seniors (also called geriatric massage). They offer training and certification.

www.innerpeacemusic.com: This is the site for Stephen Halpern, a musician who has devoted his career to providing healing through sound. Many massage pros choose his music to accompany their massage.

www.hometown.aol.com/ESMSatHome/schools.html: Check here for links to many horse massage schools.

www.NCBTMB.com: The site for National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage & Bodywork (NCBTMB). This organization offers certification for massage pros in every state of the U.S..

Massage therapist locator sites

massagetherapynetwork.com: This site links therapists with customers and vice versa.

www.althealthsearch.com: This is a good place to find a practitioner in your area. It covers a lot of territory with over 180,000 listings.

www.massagenetwork.com: Look here for tons of info from around the world, locating therapists, etc.

www.massageresource.com: Travel to this Web site first if you're seeking therapists, schools, info, etc.

www.massagetherapyhomepage.com/directory.html: This page will help you find a school or therapist anywhere in the world.

Massage products

www.pressurepositive.com: This site has several massage products for sale, such as the "Backknobber" and others.

www.bodybalancing.com: This is the home site for the Body Balancer tool.

www.mtswarehouse.com: Here's a site for discounted massage tables of many makes and models.

www.monmouth.com/~bestofnature: This company bills themselves as a "massage supply superstore." The site definitely has a large number of products.

www.relaxtheback.com: These are the ergonomic experts with a large chain of retail stores featuring back-friendly furniture, tools, and some massage items.

www.wildsyde.com/kamamain.htm: This page on the Wild Syde Web site lists a sizable selection of edible massage oils, including the infamous "cap-puccino" flavor.

www.massagetools.com: This is the Web site for the manufacturer of the Thumper vibrating massage device.

www.massagematters.com: A massage entrepreneur in the Atlanta area offers this special site featuring just a few well-chosen, high quality massage items.

Healing retreat and spa resources

www.spas.about.com: This may be the most comprehensive source of information about spas on the Web. Your experience here will be lead by a spa guide, Julie Register, who has spent many hours researching and cataloguing information as well as forging useful connections with many professionals in the spa industry.

<http://209.41.63.136/spa/spa.htm>: Check here for travel and related information about the original town of Spa in Belgium.

www.spawish.com: This is the 1-800-FLOWERS of the spa world. Get in touch with Spa Wish to order a gift certificate good at hundreds of day spas across the U.S.. Also, check out the coupon in the back of this book.

www.spadiscoveries.com: This is the International Spa of the Month Club Web site. This outfit will send you new spa products from top resorts every month.

www.spamagazine.com: This is the Web site for *Spa* magazine.

www.spafinders.com: This is the place to go when you're searching for spa vacations.

Equipment and Supplies

The following is a list of companies that make equipment for use by massage pros or the public, as well as some retail outlets where you can go to purchase massage items.

Living Earth Crafts: 600 East Todd Road, Santa Rosa, CA 95407, 800-358-8292, www.livingearthcrafts.com

Living Earth Crafts offers portable, stationary, and spa tables, plus oils, books, T shirts, videos, massage tools, and more.

Golden Ratio Woodworks: 2896 Hwy. 89 South, Emigrant, Montana 59027, 800-345-1129 or 406-333-4578, www.goldenratio.com

Golden Ratio offers a full line of tables, chairs, and allied products. They also made the extremely cool *Massage For Dummies* massage chair featured in some of the photos in this book!

The Body Balancer: Body Balancing Ltd., P.O. Box 51977, Palo Alto, CA 94303, 800-437-7004

This is where you can order the Body Balancer, featured in Chapter 10.

Natura Essentials: 2845 Harriet Ave South, Minneapolis 55408, 888-606-0055, www.naturaessentials.com

This company features an incredible collection of some of the finest aromatherapy products you can find anywhere, including candles, essential oils, diffusers, and more.

Trigger Point Co.: P.O. Box 391171, Anza, CA 92539, 800-763-2430.

This company manufactures the popular Thera Cane self-massage tool.

Educating Hands Bookstore: 120 SW 8th Street, Miami, FL 33130 305-285-0651 or 800-999-6991, www.educatinghands.com

This store-in-a-school near downtown Miami offers a great selection of books, videos, tables, chairs, massage muscle-builders, and accessories.

Downeast School of Massage Bookstore: 99 Moose Meadow Lane, Waldoboro, ME 04572, 207-832-553, www.midcoast.com/~dsm

This store offers lots of books, study aids, charts, videos, models, music, lotions, oils, and accessories including the Thermophore moist heat pack.

Best of Nature: 176 Broadway, Long Branch, NJ 07740, 800-228-6457 or 732-728-0004, www.bestofnature.com

Billing themselves as "the largest massage supply superstore," Best of Nature offers tables, chairs, sheets, oils, accessories, creams, and more.

Inner Peace Linens: P.O. Box 940, Walpole, NH 03608-0940, 800-949 7650, www.innerpeace.com

What's the use of lying on an expensive padded massage table if it's covered with a cheap sheet? Contact Inner Peace for 100-percent cotton flannel massage table linens.

Massage Oils and Creams

Take it from me: if you're going to apply long firm massage strokes to the hairy leg of an Italian man, you'd better use some kind of lubricant, or you're going to have one angry Italian on your hands. You can find massage oils and creams at many health food stores and specialty shops, but in this section I've listed a few top-of-the-line products that the pros use.

Biotone: 4757 Old Cliffs Rd., San Diego, CA 92120, 800-445-6457 or 619-582-0027, www.biotone.com

This is a popular massage cream and oil manufacturer.

Heritage Products: Box 444, Virginia Beach, VA 23458, 800-TO-CAYCE, www.caycecures.com

Heritage produces the Edgar Cayce Aura Glow oil, the formula for which was inspired by the renowned healer.

Pure Pro Massage Oils: 955 Massachusetts Avenue, Suite 232, Cambridge, MA 02139, 781-933-8638, 877-373-5298, www.relaxu.com

These nice folks will send you a free catalogue if you ask for one nicely.

Tara Spa Therapy: P.O. Box 222639, Carmel, CA 93922, 800-552-0779 or 831-648-1932

Tara Spa Therapy carries Bindi Body Oil (my favorite). They also have a line of ayurvedic products, and much more.

Catalogues

These catalogues specialize in all kinds of products that are good for you and your body. Some also offer unique items like meditation pillows, prayer bells and such.

Harmony: 800-869-3446

This catalogue offers "products in harmony with the earth," and all the models look clean cut and happy.

Basic Massage Lines: 1207 W. Kingshighway, Paragould, AR 72450, 800-643-4751, www.bmlmassage.com

Like the name says, this company carries basic massage lines for pros and amateurs alike, offering one-stop shopping.

Inner Balance: 800-482-3608

This catalogue offers "natural solutions for health," and it has a number of massage related items.

Best of Nature: 176 Broadway, Long Branch, NJ 07740, 800-228-6457 or 732-728-0004, www.bestofnature.com

This is a no-frills massage, spa, aromatherapy, and body care product catalogue, mostly for the pros.

Self-Care: 2000 Powell Street, Suite 1350, Emeryville, CA 94608-1858, 800-345-3371, www.selfcare.com

Called "America's foremost specialty catalog of products for healthy living," this company carries large selection of health and wellness related products.

Explorations: 800-720-2114

A little bit on the "mystical" side, this catalogue offers great stuff for energy awakening, spirituality, relaxation, etc.

Organizations and Associations

Check out the organizations and associations listed here if you would like some information or you just want to chat with someone who knows what they're talking about.

American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA): 820 Davis Street, Suite 100, Evanston, IL 60201-4444, 847-864-0123, www.amtamassage.org

American Oriental Bodywork Therapy Association (AOBA): Laurel Oak Corporate Center, Ste 408, 1010 Haddonfield-Berlin Rd., Voorhees, NJ 08043, 609-782-1616, www.healthy.net/aobta

Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals (ABMP): 28677 Buffalo Park Road, Evergreen, CO 80439-7347, 800-458-2267 or 303-674-8478, www.abmp.com

International Massage Association (IMA): 3000 Connecticut Ave. NW, #308, Washington, DC 20008, 202-387-6555, internationalmassage.com

International Institute of Reflexology: 5650 First Avenue North, Saint Petersburg, FL 33733-2642, 727-343-4811, www.reflexology-usa.net

International Spa Association (ISPA): International Spa & Fitness Association (ISPA), 546 East Main Street, Lexington, KY, 40508, 888-651-4772, 606-226-4326, www.globalspaguide.com

International Sports Massage Federation: P.O. Box 25983, Santa Ana, CA 92799-9610, 949-642-0735

National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage & Bodywork: 8201 Greensboro Drive, Suite 300, McLean, VA 22102-3810, 703-610-9015, www.NCBTMB.com

National Association of Bodywork in Religious Services (NABRS): 337 Tranquil Avenue, Charlotte, NC 28209

Touch Research Institute: Department of Pediatrics, University of Miami School of Medicine, P.O. Box 016820 (Dept. - 820), 1601 NW 12th Avenue, Miami, FL 33101, 305-243-6781, www.miami.edu/touch-research

Get in touch with these organizations if you're searching for information, schools, and therapists in the U.K., France, Italy, and Australia.

Australia: Massage Australia, P.O. Box 38, Wentworth Falls NSW 2782 Australia, tel. 02 4757 3050 or 61 2 4757 3050, www.messageaus.com.au

The U.K.: The Institute for Complementary Medicine, P.O. Box 194, London SE16 1QZ, tel. 00 44 171 237-5165

Italy: Federazione Nazionale dei Collegi dei Massofisioterapisti (F.N.C.M.), Via Aosta 16, Trento, 38100 Rome, Italy, tel. 03 94 61 915 499 www.geocities.com/CapeCanaveral/Lab/2521

France: French Federation of Masseurs Kinesitherapeutes (FFMKR), 24 rue des Petits Hotels, 75010, Paris, France, tel. 01 44 83 46 00

Massage Specialties and Trainings

There are so many massage specialties and trainings out there that an entire book could be written just trying to explain all the different kinds. And in fact several books on that very topic have been written. This appendix is not here to confuse you about the subject, but rather to help if you're seriously interested in massage and bodywork as either a practitioner or a recipient and you'd like to start looking into some of the specialties that are available.

With each listing, you'll find contact numbers for trainings offered. These are by no means the only trainings available, but they represent some of the best. Also, if you're looking for a practitioner in a particular specialty, many of the training centers have lists of qualified people.

Note that some of the Web sites listed are not directly affiliated with the training centers but contain much relevant information.

Ayurveda

Many practitioners in the West are now offering massage and other treatments based upon this 5,000 year old system of natural healing from India.

Ayurvedic Institute: 11311 Menaul NE, Suite A, Albuquerque, NM 87112, 505)291-9698, www.ayurveda.com

Baby Massage

You don't have to be a massage pro in order to massage your own baby. Different types of classes are offered for therapists and novices.

Association of Labor Assistants & Childbirth Educators: P.O. Box 382724, Cambridge, MA 02238, 888-222-5223 or (617)441-2500, www.alace.org

Cinnabar School: P.O. Box 34326, Westbrook, Calgary, AB, Canada T3C 3W0, 403-246-6720, www.babymassage.com

Kate Jordan Seminars: 8950 Villa La Jolla Drive, Suite 2162, La Jolla, CA 92037, 760-436-0418, pregmassage@aol.com

Nurturing the Mother: 8703 Rollingwood Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27516, 919-929-4253

Chair massage

To learn how to give effective massage using the specially built massage chairs available today, contact these providers.

TouchPro Chair Massage Workshops: 800-999-5026

Seated Massage Experience: Touch 4 Productions, P.O. Box 260395, Tampa, FL 33685-0395, 800-868-2448 or 813-249-2911, www.seatedmassage.com

Connective tissue massage

These therapies usually “dig in deep” to re-pattern the way your body is held together by its basic glue, or connective tissues. They’re great for changing poor postural habits, increasing energy, and improving physical function.

The Anatomy Trains by Tom Myers: 20 Roundabout Way, Scarborough, ME, 888-546-3747

The Rolf Institute of Structural Integration (Rolfing): P.O. Box 1868, Boulder, CO 80302, 800-530-8875 or 303-449-5903, www.rolf.org

Guild for Structural Integration (Rolfing): P.O. Box 1559, Boulder, CO 80306, 800-447-0150, www.rolfguild.org

Aston-Patterning: P.O. Box 3568, Incline Village, NV 89450, 702-831-8228, www.astonpatterning.com

Hellerwork: 406 Berry Street, Mt. Shasta, CA 96067, 800-392-3900, www.hellerwork.com

Energy work

Energy work is massage and bodywork that focuses on treating the invisible pathways of energy running in the human body. This energy has different names in different cultures. In Asia, it’s known as *chi*, *ki* and other names. The following types of massage and bodywork deal primarily with this energy, affecting the entire body through that process.

Jin Shin Jyutsu: 8719 E. San Alberto, Scottsdale, AZ 85258, 602-998-9331, www.JinShinJyutsu.com

American Polarity Therapy Association: 2888 Bluff Street, #149, Boulder, CO 80301, 303-545-2080, www.PolarityTherapy.org

The Reiki Alliance: P.O. Box 41, Cataldo, ID 83810, 208-682-3535, www.reikicentrum.nl/reiki4all

Shiatsu: Ohashi Institute, 12 W. 27th Street, New York, NY 10001-6903, 800-810-4190, www.ohashi.com

Healing Tao: 1205 O'Neill Hwy, Dunmore, PA 18512, 717-348-4310, www.healing-tao.com

Therapeutic Touch: Nurse Healers & Professional Associates, 175 Fifth Ave, Suite 3399, New York, NY 10010, www.therapeutictouch.com

Freedom of movement massage

These techniques have been developed by people in the performing arts, sports, the medical professions, and other backgrounds. All of them open the body/mind to higher levels of freedom and expression, creating improved wellbeing at the same time.

The Alexander Technique: North America Society of Teachers of the Alexander Technique, P.O. Box 517, Urbana, IL 61801, 800-473-0620, www.alexandertechnique.com

Feldenkrais: The Feldenkrais Guild, P.O. Box 489, Albany, OR 97321-0143, 800-775-2118, www.feldenkrais.com

Pilates: Physical Mind Institute, 1807 Second Street #28129, Santa Fe, NM 87505, 800-505-1990 or (505)988-1990, www.the-method.com

Pilates Institute: Sydney City Lvl 2, George Street, Sydney NSW Australia 2000, tel 02 9267 8223, www.pilates.net

Trager: The Trager Institute, 21 Locust, Mill Valley, CA 94941-2806, 415-388-2688, www.trager.com

Geriatric massage

If you would like to help senior citizens in a profoundly important and simple way, reaching out to them through massage is an excellent choice, and taking the training offered here is a good way to begin.

Daybreak Geriatric Massage Project: 216 Pleasant Hill Ave. N., Sebastopol, CA 95472, 707-829-2798, www.daybreak-massage.com

Horse massage

I know it may be hard for you to believe, but it's true: There are courses for people who want to learn how to massage horses, which is actually quite a big business these days.

Equissage: P.O. Box 447, Round Hill, VA 20142, 540-338-1917, www.equissage.com

Don Doran's Equine Sports Massage: 14735 SW 71 Avenue Road, Ocala, FL 34473-5102, 352-347-3747

Jack Meagher Institute of Sports Therapy: Equine Sports Massage, P.O. Box 1244, Concord, MA 01742, 413-772-1815

Mind/body/emotion massage

These methods work in a very profound way to help people uncover and deal with emotions and memories that might cause painful conditions.

The Rosen Method: The Rosen Method Center, 825 Bancroft Way, Berkley, CA 94710, 510-845-6606, www.mcn.org/b/rosen/default.html

Rosen Method Center Southwest: P.O. Box 344, Santa Fe, NM 87504, 505-982-7149, www.mcn.org/b/rosen/swrc.html

The Rubenfeld Synergy Center: 115 Waverly Place, New York, NY 10011, 212-254-5100, www.hometown.aol.com/rubenfeld/synergy/index.html

Pain relief massage

Although every style of massage can potentially help reduce pain, there are certain styles that specialize in pain reduction and reversal of trauma. The following is just a few of them.

The Bodywork Research Institute: 123 E. 8th Street, Suite 121, Frederick, MD 21701, 301-698-0932, trains people in massage techniques to relieve the painful symptoms of fibromyalgia.

Craniosacral Therapy: Upledger Institute, 11211 Prosperity Farms Road, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410-3487, 800-233-5880, www.upledger.com

Hoshino Therapy Clinic: Center for Biotherapeutics, 430 South Dixie Hwy, Miami, FL 33146, 305-666-2243

Neuromuscular Therapy Seminars: 1121 Prosperity Farms Road, #D-325, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410-3487, 800-311-9204 or 561-622-4334, www.iahe.com

Reflexology

International Institute of Reflexology: P.O. Box 12642, St. Petersburg, FL, 33733-2642, 727-343-4811, www.reflexology-usa.net

Spa therapy training

This category is for those people who would like to specialize in giving massage, hydrotherapy, and other treatments in the spa setting, as well as spa owners and managers.

The Bramham Institute & Spa: 1014 N. Olive Ave, West Palm Beach, FL 33401, 800-575-0518, www.spamastery.com

Thai massage

Many people make the pilgrimage to Thailand every year to learn the techniques of this traditional system, which includes a lot of stretching and moves similar to shiatsu.

Institute of Thai Massage: 17/7 Morakot Road, Hah Yaek Santitham, Chiang Mai 50300 Thailand, tel. (66-53) 218632, www.infothai.com/itm

Water massage

Some very interesting types of massage can be done in the water. The buoyancy helps to free people of chronic pain and ease certain fears.

Watsu: Massage School at Harbin Hot Springs P.O. Box 570, Middletown, CA 95461, 707-987-3801, www.waba.edu

Aquassage: 800-957-4808, www.massagetherapynetwork.com

A college degree in massage

If you want a college degree and a massage license, how about going to school where you can get both at the same time? At the New Center College, you'll earn an Associate of Occupational Studies (A.O.S.) degree with a major in Massage Therapy, the first of its kind in the United States.

The New Center College for Wholistic Health Education and Research: 6801 Jericho Tpk., Syosset, New York 11791-4413, 516-364-0808, ext.126, www.newcenter.edu

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