

Joe Linn Massage Newsletter

June 2014

Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

Stop Judging Your Beautiful Self

Massage Fits You (yes, YOU!)

Rebecca Jones

Sol Benson loathed her body. It went beyond mere embarrassment at how "fat" she was. Deeper still was the conviction that her body was unworthy of love, underserving of nurturing.

And it was that alienation from her own body that for years kept Benson, a professional dancer who has waged a lifelong battle with anorexia, from getting massage. "I stayed away because getting a massage was being good to myself," said the 45-year-old Colorado mother of two, whose own mother and brother are massage therapists. "If I'm on a weight loss cycle, it's like 'I don't deserve love, I don't deserve food, I don't deserve to feel good about myself.'"

Benson explains, that helped the process. Her nonjudgmental ways helped Benson maintain balance. If, however, Rose had brought up weight, or in this case, the lack thereof, Benson admits it could have sent her into another purging cycle.

Managing Body Image

Benson's story illustrates just how complex the issues of body image can be in 21st century America and just how valuable bodywork is in mending distorted body image.

Developing a positive body image is about becoming present, grounded, open, aware, and unafraid to find what's

Every atom in your body came from a star that exploded.

-Lawrence Krauss



Self-acceptance is the first step to a healthier lifestyle and a happy relationship with yourself.

Benson credits Mary Rose--a Boulder, Colorado, massage therapist who has developed a special style of acupressure for the physically fragile--with understanding her psychological fragility enough to help her turn massage into a tool for healing, rather than a doorway to despair.

at the core and work through it. It's about being mindful, and listening to what your body has to say--a big step on the way to a healthier lifestyle and not necessarily an easy one to take. It requires courage and hard work to learn self-acceptance. And bodywork can play a key role in this endeavor.

It was the tender care from Rose,

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Office Hours and Contact

Joe Linn Massage

Joe Linn

415-497-3176

By appointment only

Hours available Monday - Saturday

Call today to schedule your massage.

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With America in the grip of an obesity epidemic--while at the same time holding up waif-like thinness as a cultural ideal--many people are worried about excess pounds and the harsh judgments that accompany them. Embarrassment at the thought of uncovering imperfect bodies for the close contact of a massage or bodywork session drives away untold numbers of potential clients.

The problem isn't limited to issues of weight. Many people avoid massage because of embarrassment about acne, surgical scars, birthmarks they consider unsightly, or some other physical deformity or flaw.

"A really common one is, 'I have such ugly feet,'" Rose says. "I always laugh and say that in 20 years, I haven't seen an ugly foot yet. People just have bad attitudes about their feet. In general, people are so self-judgmental."

Relax, Really

Massage therapists specialize in the human body. They don't judge; rather, they see anatomy.

"This is something that's so prevalent and something we deal with daily," says Jonathan Burt, 27, a Detroit massage therapist and massage instructor. "I can't tell you how often I've heard, 'I have to wait until I get into shape before I come in for a massage.' Clients think they have to be in shape before they can relax." Newsflash: Relaxation is not exclusive to model body types.

Given the increased blood flow that results from massage, as well as the benefits to the lymphatic and other body systems, Burt believes overweight people and others who suffer from limited mobility are the people most likely to benefit from a good massage. That's why he especially treasures his larger clients.

The idea of taking your clothes off for a massage is often more intimidating than the reality. In fact, practitioners make draping an art form, ensuring the client doesn't feel exposed. And by the way, says Burt, you're not the only imperfect body around here. "We all have flaws," says Burt, who gave his first massage at age seven, when his grandmother, a double amputee, asked him to massage her stumps. "Myself, I'm not the

American Gladiator. I inform people I have flaws as well, and I'd be more than willing to help them overcome their self-consciousness."

Viewpoint: Compassion

We're all in this together, and your massage therapist is operating from a place of compassion. Your practitioner is there to create and hold a safe space for you. Says Charlie Murdach, 38, a Portsmouth, New Hampshire, massage therapist, "For me, it's meeting the person where that person is and addressing that person in an appropriate and compassionate way."

Murdach, who has been a massage therapist since 1990, says he has yet to meet a potential client that he can't help, regardless of that person's physical condition. He believes this is due to the massage therapist's ability to avoiding

forcing anything, but to also being open to the possibility that miracles can happen.

Murdach explains your practitioner's role: "Whatever is going on with that person, whether it's a deformity or some type of disability, I make sure I can step up and hold the waters calm for that person. It doesn't matter if they're missing an arm, or have a deformed hand, the person who is standing there desires to move forward."

Getting a massage can do wonders for body image and help bridge the disconnect between the physical and emotional. A wounded psyche can lead you to believe you don't deserve a massage; this is when you most do! You are worthy--book your massage today.



Bodywork can boost self-esteem and confidence, and even improve body image.

A Walking Workout

Have Fun While Burning More Calories

Imagine the lone hiker, backpack laden with sleeping bag and bedroll, wielding a well-worn walking stick as she climbs the side of a snow-covered mountain. For centuries, trekkers have used walking sticks, partly as a defense against attacking wildlife, partly to aid in balance, and partly as support on long, arduous climbs. But in recent years, many hikers have replaced the single wooden walking stick with hiking poles.

Held in both hands and used to distribute weight more evenly through the four limbs, wilderness hikers have found poles invaluable for safety, efficiency, and comfort on long hikes. What wilderness hikers have known for some time now is that walking poles are a great way to relieve pressure on knees, ankles, and the back. They encourage better posture and provide a total body workout by engaging the upper body.

Now, hiking poles are showing up in urban areas as fitness walkers discover the benefits they provide. Nordic

walking--similar in technique to cross-country skiing--is a great way to get a whole body workout, increase oxygen consumption, and burn more calories than regular walking or even speed walking. This total body workout burns 40 percent more calories and consumes 25 percent more oxygen. Poles can be purchased at most outdoor sporting stores, along with rubber tips for use on paved paths.

TECHNIQUE

Adjust your poles to approximately 70 percent of your height and loosely secure the straps around your wrists. Hold the poles at an angle behind you so they propel you forward with a slight bend at the elbow. Use an opposite hand-and-heel motion as you walk--right heel strikes as left pole tip contacts the ground. And you're on your way! Don't be shy with your poles. Remember: You're burning 40 percent more calories.

For more information, visit

www.walking.about.com/od/nordicwalking/index.htm.



Add walking poles, and burn more calories.

Flax Facts

Reap the Health Benefits of This Little Seed

Flaxseed, the humble little brown seed with a nutty flavor, is a powerhouse in the nutrition world. It's able to reduce blood pressure, decrease risk of heart attacks and stroke, improve skin quality, help control blood sugar levels, reduce cholesterol, and even prevent breast and colon cancer--all in a single seed!

But what makes flax so powerful? Flaxseed contains high concentrations of alpha linoleic acid, a form of omega-3 fatty acids, which serve as the basic building blocks of cell walls. Additionally, flax is high in lignans, powerful antioxidants known for alleviating menopausal symptoms and fighting breast cancer. There are three forms of flaxseed, making it easy to incorporate into your diet.

FLAX OIL

While available in capsule form to be taken as a supplement, flax oil is best consumed as a food to get the most benefits from it. Many nutritionists often recommend purchasing the oil in small quantities, storing it in the refrigerator, and consuming a daily intake of two tablespoons. You can add a tablespoon to your morning smoothie or substitute flax oil in the vinaigrette dressing for your salad.

Flax oil breaks down to trans fats when heated, so it should never be used in cooking. While lower in lignans than other forms of flax, the oil is sometimes processed to preserve the lignans. Check the label for details.

FLAXSEEDS

Whole seeds are sure to have all the nutritional benefits of flax. Simply add

these to your granola or salads for a nutty flavor. If a little tough on the teeth, grind them in a coffee grinder and sprinkle on foods. One note: raw, whole flaxseeds contain chemicals that can affect thyroid function. To get around this, simply toast the seeds in the oven for twenty minutes at 250 degrees, or limit your consumption of raw seeds to three to four tablespoons a day.

FLAX MEAL

Ground flax meal is another option to get the powerful nutritional value of flax. Add a tablespoon of it to your smoothies for extra fiber, or stir it into your oatmeal in the morning.

*It's a good idea
always to do
something
relaxing prior to
making an
important
decision in your
life.*

-Paulo Coelho

Welcome June!

Happy Father's Day to all Dads! Enjoy your big day.

Congratulations to all the graduates of 2014! Life's path lies before you.

Self-care is very important. The article Stop Judging Your Beautiful Self, reminds me how vulnerable we all are and how we need to love ourselves first.

I really enjoy my morning walks and so the Walking Workout interested me. I have not tried hiking poles, but I think I will.

Flax Facts shows us the importance of Omega-3 fatty acids, which serves as the basic building blocks of cell walls. I love to add it to my juice or sprinkle it on my oatmeal.

The first day of summer is almost here, be sure to enjoy all the extra daylight! Remember my office is air-conditioned for your comfort. I look forward to seeing you on your next visit.

Be Well,
Joe

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