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The Body's Core Line and Central Linkage

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Consider the last ten clients on your treatment table. What were their somatic complaints? Now, imagine that you could loosen and lengthen the central linkage of the human body from occiput to sacrum.

And, that the effect of this loosening and lengthening would assist and improve the therapeutic effect of almost any style of massage treatment.

Consider how this might simplify and potentiate the desired outcomes for these same ten clients? This is a premise I have been exploring and empirically testing for the past year and it seems to work exceptionally well for clients.

The Starting Point

Here are the anatomical ports of call I have been addressing: decompress the occiput upon the atlas, lengthen the esophagus, stretch each hemidiaphragm and decompress the tissues around the heart/lung complex, stretch the ligament of treitz, mobilize the mesenteric root of the small intestine and finally, enhance the range of motion within the ankle/foot complex. These changes may be achieved using any manual therapy modality you have learned to effectively utilize.



There are numerous additional steps that could assist this proposed protocol to be even more effective yet, as described, it succinctly addresses the body's core line. It traces the linkage from the occiput to the sacral base to the ankles. It reduces the resistance to the heart's expansion. It eases the diaphragm's vertical and downward excursion and it revives and enhances the capacity of blood and lymph returning to the heart from all areas of the body below the diaphragm.

This protocol addresses the body's three major innate pumps for moving its fluids: the heart, the diaphragm and the ankle/foot complex. Mobilizing the heart/lung complex reduces compressive resistance to expansion of the heart muscle itself and stimulates the function of the root of the lung allowing more surface area for the production of new blood. Mobilizing the mesenteric root of the small intestine also increases its surface area, allowing for more absorption of nutrition. Increasing the mobility of dorsiflexion/plantarflexion of the ankle/foot facilitates the movement of blood and lymph back to the heart/lung complex. Osteopathy considers the ankle/foot complex as the body's 2nd heart.¹ Together, these manipulations are proposed to reduce compression throughout the axial spine.

As a profession, I invite all bodywork educators to pool their collective intelligence and creativity toward developing other therapeutic protocols that

facilitate the range and efficiency of these movements and functions. Also, consider how this proposal allows those in our profession to define what they do. Simply stated, "therapeutic massage stimulates your body's inherent capacity to move its fluids along their 60,000 mile journey from the heart and back again." Not a bad one-liner when speaking to a prospective client.

Therapeutic Intent

The philosophical shift here is to transform our therapeutic intent from manually enhancing the flow of venous and lymphatic fluids to specifically assisting the body to "re-calibrate its ongoing capacity" for self-perpetuating healthier function. The process becomes more analogous to tuning-up one's engine. The results continue with the client and contribute to their quality of life over a longer period of time. With the present emphasis on national health care, our ability to describe the benefits of what we do is what will make the difference in how we are regarded as effective health care practitioners. We know everyone benefits from bodywork and massage yet, we need simple ways of describing "how."

If any of these anatomical structures initially described are unfamiliar, please Google them, seek out your most recent continuing education teacher or ask around among your professional peers. Most of what has propelled me in this therapeutic direction was learned at the Upledger Institute from Drs. John Upledger, Richard MacDonald and Jean Pierre Barral. The Institute supports many excellent teachers.

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