

## Student Handbook

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# **Welcome to Trinity School of Therapeutic Massage**

Welcome:

Congratulations on your choice to become a certified massage therapist. In doing so we understand that by becoming more in touch with your own body, mind and soul you will have a deeper understanding of your clients needs. Trinity's programs are designed to be an experience that will make an extraordinary difference in your life.

The student handbook is designed to help you understand the theme, purpose and theory of our programs. It will be most effective used along with your weekly assignments and bodywork sessions. Together we will identify your needs from every level allowing you to step into your power opening you up to the possibility that you can and will achieve your desires to become a successful therapist.

Massage is one of the oldest healing techniques used to help us overcome psychological and physical health problems. It has probably been used since the dawn of human evolution and has been found to have been used in countries all over the world and in the early part of this century was still used in orthodox medical hospitals and clinics, but fell out of favor when high tech. medicine began to dominate our health care system.

Massage is one of the easiest ways of attaining and maintaining good health and well being. It's a healing instinct, innate in all of us, to rub an aching knee, or stroke a furrowed brow. Headaches, aches and pains, insomnia, tension and stress can all be alleviated with one simple instrument -- our hands.

The basis of massage is touch. There is increasing medical evidence to show the great value of touch. Touch is so natural that without it people become depressed and irritable. Observations show that children brought up in families where parents and children touch each other are healthier and more able to withstand pain and infection than those children deprived of touch. They tend to sleep better, are more sociable and generally happier.

Despite all the evidence to show the benefits of touch, we are still hesitant about touching each other. We think this is due to confusion between sensuality and sexuality. Because we are so afraid of the connection between sex and touch, we have formalized touch. There are only a few occasions when adults are allowed to touch each other freely. Massage removes the taboos of touching and allows people to touch in a positive way.

## Benefits of Massage

Massage has amazing effects on the health of the person being massaged. It improves circulation, relaxes muscles, aids digestion, and by stimulating the lymph system, speeds up the elimination of waste products. These direct benefits, combined with the psychological benefits of feeling cared for quickly produce a wonderful feeling of well-being that cannot be matched by modern drugs.

*What is Trinity massage body work about? Trinity = Body, mind & Soul*

### *Body*

Human anatomy is primarily the scientific study of the morphology of the adult human body. Anatomy is subdivided into gross anatomy and microscopic anatomy. Gross anatomy (also called topographical anatomy, regional anatomy, or anthropotomy) is the study of anatomical structures that can be seen by unaided vision. Microscopic anatomy is the study of minute anatomical structures assisted with microscopes, which includes histology (the study of the organization of tissues), and cytology (the study of cells). Anatomy, physiology (the study of function) and biochemistry (the study of the chemistry of living structures) are complementary basic medical sciences which are usually taught together (or in tandem).

The human body consists of biological systems that consist of organs that consist of tissues that consist of cells and connective tissue.

The history of anatomy has been characterized, over time, by a continually developing understanding of the functions of organs and structures in the body. Methods have also advanced dramatically, advancing from examination of animals through dissection of preserved cadavers (dead human bodies) to technologically complex techniques developed in the 20th century.

Each student will get to know their body at the deepest level, as we explore the anatomy and physiology of our bodies we discover just how amazing the human body is. Once we discover what a miracle our bodies are we then explore how to better serve them. By strengthening, nurturing and loving them

- Headache
- Chest pain
- Pounding heart
- High blood pressure
- Shortness of breath
- Muscle aches
- Back pain
- Clenched jaws
- Tooth grinding
- Stomach upset
- Constipation
- Diarrhea
- Increased sweating
- Tiredness
- Sleep problems

- Weight gain or loss
- Sex problems
- Skin breakouts

## Mind

One way to think about mental health is by looking at how effectively and successfully a person functions. Feeling capable and competent; being able to handle normal levels of stress, maintaining satisfying relationships, and leading an independent life; and being able to "bounce back," or recover from difficult situations, are all signs of mental health.

Stress symptoms often mimic symptoms of other problems. You may think illness is to blame for that nagging headache, your frequent forgetfulness or your decreased productivity at work. But the common denominator may be stress. Indeed, stress symptoms can affect your body, your thoughts and feelings, and your behavior. Stress may be affecting your health, and you may not even realize it. Recognize common stress symptoms — then take steps to manage them.

### **BENEFICIAL BIOCHEMICAL EFFECTS OF REGULAR MASSAGE**

Research indicates that massage can be of value in helping reduce stress, anxiety and depression. Massage causes the body to release many therapeutic mood and health enhancing chemicals; it increases dopamine and serotonin and reduces the stress hormones cortisol and adrenaline. It increases the relaxation alpha brain waves and also increases pain relieving levels of endorphins. Massage lowers noradrenaline and lowers the stress hormone ACTH (Adrenocorticotrophic hormone). Massage boosts the immune system, stabilizes blood sugar levels, improves lung function and peak air flow, it generally reduces the number of visits to the doctor whilst increasing work productivity.

Regular massage can help to reduce our anxiety levels. Research by Tiffany Fields, at the Touch Research Institute at the University Of Miami School Of Medicine in the USA looked into the therapeutic value of massage in reducing anxiety and depression. The data from this study indicated that massage produced marked reductions in anxiety and depression in people who were massaged, but not in a control group who were not massaged. Mood and sleep patterns also improved they slept more soundly and for longer periods of time. The subjects massaged were found to have lower levels of cortisol stress hormone in their saliva and depressed people also had lower levels of urinary cortisol and noradrenaline which increase in times of stress.

Other studies have confirmed this research. Adults with chronic anxiety problems, people with muscle tension, aches and pains etc, who did not improve after being given anti-anxiety medication/antidepressants, muscle relaxants and relaxation training, were given a course of massage. Afterwards most reported less tension, pain and need for medication.

- Anxiety
- Restlessness
- Worrying
- Irritability

- Depression
- Sadness
- Anger
- Mood swings
- Job dissatisfaction
- Feeling insecure
- Confusion
- Burnout
- Forgetfulness
- Resentment
- Guilt
- Inability to concentrate
- Seeing only the negatives

## Soul

Since antiquity, spirituality has been a part of massage. For instance, we know after the fall of Rome, written accounts document medically-trained monks practicing massage and anointing with oils. We also know that around 1st century B.C., the Therapeutae, a pre-Christian order, included spiritual healing as part of physical healing. In fact, the Greek philosopher Philo of Alexandria writes that these philosophers "profess an art of healing better than that current in the cities, which cures only the bodies, while theirs treats also souls."

It's somewhat disheartening that after more than 2,000 years there has been little progress in "treating the soul." Instead, addressing physical manifestations has remained par for the course in the massage profession since Cornelius E. De Puy (the father of massage therapy in the United States) published his first journal on the subject in 1817. In turn, a large schism has developed between spirituality and massage practice. Also unfortunate, because discussing religion is often taboo, even amongst the closest of friends and co-workers, and because so many different belief systems exist, it's sometimes difficult to establish a common line of communication.

Ultimately, body workers have more in common than not. Regardless of religion, or the lack thereof, most feel there is an underlying spiritual motivation to their work, further compounded by the belief in the connection between practitioner and client. Some attribute this to God, Earth, Higher Power or nature. Call the source whatever you like, most practitioners feel something special occurs when bodywork is performed.

- Overeating
- Under eating
- Angry outbursts
- Drug abuse
- Excessive drinking
- Increased smoking
- Social withdrawal
- Crying spells
- Relationship conflicts
- Decreased productivity

**As a member of Associated Bodywork and Massage Professionals, I hereby pledge to abide by the ABMP Code of Ethics as outlined below.**

#### **Client Relationships**

- I shall endeavor to serve the best interests of my clients at all times and to provide the highest quality service possible.
- I shall maintain clear and honest communications with my clients and shall keep client communications confidential.
- I shall acknowledge the limitations of my skills and, when necessary, refer clients to the appropriate qualified health care professional.
- I shall in no way instigate or tolerate any kind of sexual advance while acting in the capacity of a massage, bodywork, somatic therapy or esthetic practitioner.

#### **Professionalism**

- I shall maintain the highest standards of professional conduct, providing services in an ethical and professional manner in relation to my clientele, business associates, health care professionals, and the general public.
- I shall respect the rights of all ethical practitioners and will cooperate with all health care professionals in a friendly and professional manner.
- I shall refrain from the use of any mind-altering drugs, alcohol, or intoxicants prior to or during professional sessions.
- I shall always dress in a professional manner, proper dress being defined as attire suitable and consistent with accepted business and professional practice.
- I shall not be affiliated with or employed by any business that utilizes any form of sexual suggestiveness or explicit sexuality in its advertising or promotion of services, or in the actual practice of its services.

#### **Scope of Practice / Appropriate Techniques**

- I shall provide services within the scope of the ABMP definition of massage, bodywork, somatic therapies and skin care, and the limits of my training. I will not employ massage, bodywork or skin care techniques for which I have not had adequate training and shall represent my education, training, qualifications and abilities honestly.

- I shall be conscious of the intent of the services that I am providing and shall be aware of and practice good judgment regarding the application of massage, bodywork or somatic techniques utilized.
- I shall not perform manipulations or adjustments of the human skeletal structure, diagnose, prescribe or provide any other service, procedure or therapy which requires a license to practice chiropractic, osteopathy, physical therapy, podiatry, orthopedics, psychotherapy, acupuncture, dermatology, cosmetology, or any other profession or branch of medicine unless specifically licensed to do so.
- I shall be thoroughly educated and understand the physiological effects of the specific massage, bodywork, somatic or skin care techniques utilized in order to determine whether such application is contraindicated and/or to determine the most beneficial techniques to apply to a given individual. I shall not apply massage, bodywork, somatic or skin care techniques in those cases where they may be contraindicated without a written referral from the client's primary care provider.

## Image / Advertising Claims

- I shall strive to project a professional image for myself, my business or place of employment, and the profession in general.
- I shall actively participate in educating the public regarding the actual benefits of massage, bodywork, somatic therapies and skin care.
- I shall practice honesty in advertising, promote my services ethically and in good taste, and practice and/or advertise only those techniques for which I have received adequate training and/or certification. I shall not make false claims regarding the potential benefits of the techniques rendered.

Confidentiality can be defined as the client's guarantee that what occurs in the therapeutic setting remains private and protected. First and foremost, the issue of confidentiality concerns the client's rights to privacy and safety. These rights belong equally to every client you see regardless of age, status or relationship to you or another client. These same rights apply to both verbal and written interactions you have with anyone other than the client.

As a model for confidentiality in the somatic professions, we turn to the profession of psychotherapy where these issues have been examined and developed over many years.<sup>11</sup> The ethical guidelines of most helping professions include a statement about confidentiality (with the goal of helping practitioners make ethical decisions regarding confidentiality). Nevertheless, these ethical statements often fall short of satisfactorily defining the parameters of the client's

right to confidentiality. As with other ethical questions throughout the book, practitioners may find it challenging to apply confidentiality guidelines in complex situations.

Most people are clear about major confidentiality breaches such as sharing important personal information about a client with a third party, yet subtle situations occur where boundaries are easy to cross. Consider the following scenarios:

A well-known politician comes to you for treatment. Do you think twice about sharing this exciting news with your friends?

Your best friend sends his wife to you for a session. Do you stop and consider if it is appropriate to answer his questions about her session?

You schedule a session with a 13-year-old boy who will be accompanied by his mother. Prior to the session do you think about whether to work with the boy alone or with the mother present?

If you answered "yes" to any of the questions posed in the scenarios, you have already begun to deal ethically with the issue of confidentiality in your work.

### **Maintaining Confidentiality**

Confidentiality guidelines for somatic professions generally state that information shared between client and practitioner during a session remains private. These guidelines are usually further interpreted to mean that client names, details of treatment and information shared by clients during sessions are not discussed by the practitioner with anyone else.

Behind confidentiality issues are two assumptions: that an important and personal relationship exists between client and practitioner, and that trust is an essential element in this relationship. The client who knows that his right to privacy is honored is more likely to develop the trust necessary for a successful, healthy outcome of the therapeutic encounter. For example, it may be very tempting to tell your friends about the well-known politician/athlete/musician/film star who is your client, or to do a little name-dropping at a social function. You might even be tempted to use this client's name or title in your advertising (e.g., "acupuncturist to the mayor!") All of these actions, however, cross the ethical boundary of confidentiality. The mayor, like every client, has the right to privacy about her sessions with you.

### **Limits of Ethical Confidentiality**

The limits of confidentiality can be an area of confusion and misinformation on the part of both practitioners and clients. Not all health care relationships are held to be "privileged" relationships. Unlike a psychotherapist, medical or psychological information about the client is not necessarily legally held in confidence by the practitioner. Therefore it is vital that a well-researched and clear policy statement regarding confidentiality be presented and the practitioner discloses any exceptions to absolute confidentiality.

Two major considerations underlie the limits of professional confidentiality: the practitioner's obligations to the law; and the practitioner's obligations to others.

Regarding your obligations to the law: the legal system may have the right to subpoena your client lists or even your client records. Client files contain information so that you can properly work with any given client. Although you want your files to contain accurate and thorough information, your actual treatment records should only include information as it relates to the treatment and not superfluous notes (e.g., refrain from inscribing details about a client's eccentricities or personal relationships).

Some reasons for breaking confidentiality include: there's a clear and imminent danger to the client or another individual; a client discloses an intention to commit a crime; you suspect abuse or neglect of a child, an elderly person, or an incapacitated individual.

Confidentiality and its limits do not exist in black and white terms. When making ethical decisions, practitioners choose among various levels of thinking and functioning. From one vantage, abiding by the law may seem clear-cut; from another vantage, doing what is best for your client may mean questioning the law; from still another vantage, protecting a third party may mean breaking the client's trust. The practitioner must combine knowledge of the situation with a clear understanding of the ethics involved, and temper these with wisdom and experience.

Practitioners may also reveal details of therapy encounters to their supervisors or supervision groups. In these discussions the names of clients are withheld although other pertinent information and treatment particulars may be shared.

### **Minimize Confidentiality Problems**

When you tell your clients up front about the limits to the confidentiality of your work together, they are much better able to give informed consent regarding treatment from you. Therefore, early in your professional relationships let your clients know that you hold your work together as confidential, and that you may discuss your work with your supervisor and that legal or ethical obligations may require you to break confidentiality in extreme circumstances.

The practitioner should avoid making unilateral decisions about breaking confidentiality. Even in some of the legal instances described above, if you must make the decision to break confidentiality, you should discuss your decision with the client beforehand. In this way, while the client may not agree with your decision, she is informed of your reasons.

When you want permission to discuss the professional relationship elsewhere, you should have a specific reason for doing so. This reason should be discussed with the client, and the client needs to give specific written consent. For example, you may wish to correspond about the client with another health care provider, or to use details about the client's condition, treatment and outcome in an article or presentation. The client's permission should specify exactly what details, such as name, dates of visit and treatment records he is authorizing you to share, as well as any specific limitations on where, when and how you may share the information.

In general as soon as you perceive a potential problem surrounding confidentiality, the situation should be discussed with the client. When the 13-year-old boy and his mother are in your treatment room together, whatever one shares the other hears and confidentiality between the two of them is implicitly set aside. At the first session these clients should be informed about whether you will work or speak with either of them privately; if so, specify whether you keep what one says to you confidential from the other and what limits you may put on this confidentiality. In this way both son and mother utilize the therapeutic encounter more successfully.

## **Massage Therapy Career Overview**

Massage therapy is an excellent way to help people recover from injury, relax from a stressful day, or simply enjoy themselves. There are over eighty specific types or modalities of massage, and many therapists learn multiple techniques in order to better serve their clients. Knowing which technique to use on which patient is very important, because everyone's needs are different and the same technique used on an elderly person would not work for an athlete.

Due to the physical nature of the work and time needed in between sessions, full time massage therapists typically give massages anywhere from 15-30 hours a week. In order to prevent injury, it's very important that the massage therapist use a proper technique in their work.

About two-thirds of massage therapists are self employed, which means that you'll probably be able to set your own hours. However, it also increases the importance of developing trusting relationships with customers, because securing repeat customers are key to building a successful business.

Thank you for your interest in massage therapy we look forward to working towards your goals of becoming a professional certified massage therapist.

Trinity School of Therapeutic Massage