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What is this technique?

Who can receive it?



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Comfort Touch

Nurturing Acupressure Massage for the Elderly and the Ill

By Mary Kathleen Rose

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and from the website:
<http://www.comforttouch.com/>



Comfort Touch



an Introduction

Comfort Touch

What is Comfort Touch and how can it be distinguished from other forms of massage and bodywork?

- *Safety concerns and the condition of the client:* Comfort Touch is a form of bodywork designed to be safe and appropriate for a broad range of people, for whom other styles of massage would be contraindicated. For example, in the elderly the skin can be very fragile and Swedish massage strokes of effleurage or petrissage can actually tear the skin or cause bruising of the blood vessels.

- *The setting of the massage:* Comfort Touch can be practiced anywhere. No special equipment is required. The client can be fully clothed in a chair, recliner or on a bed of any height.

- *The positioning of the client:* Comfort Touch is usually performed with the client in the supine position. The prone position is contraindicated due to the limited mobility of the client, as well as concerns about breathing. It is also difficult to communicate with a client in the prone position. Techniques are adapted to be performed in the supine position, as well as the seated or side-lying positions. Pillows and towels are used liberally to position the client comfortably.

- *Specific techniques of Comfort Touch:* The techniques of Comfort Touch are largely derived from Asian bodywork (shiatsu and acupressure), which gives great adaptability and flexibility to the work. It incorporates an understanding of the energetic qualities of the meridian

system of the body, as well as major motor points of the muscles.

- *Principles and intentions of Comfort Touch:* This work is characterized by the intention to offer comfort. Other general principles that govern the work are described below.

The Principles of Comfort Touch

There are six principles that guide the practitioner of Comfort Touch. An easy way to remember them is to use the acronym "scribe," which relays the intention and quality of touch used in this work. Comfort Touch is:

- Slow -- Moving slowly creates a restful atmosphere and allows for a safe and appropriate experience for both the giver and receiver of touch.

- Comforting -- The person is made comfortable and offered a soothing, nurturing touch. The intention is to ease pain, not to try to cure or fix the person. The word "comfort" literally means "with strength." To comfort also means to acknowledge the individual's inner strength and resources.

- Respectful -- A respectful attitude is always maintained toward the client, appreciating the vulnerability s/he may feel about being touched. Verbal and non-verbal feedback about the touch is monitored. A respectful attitude that is compassionate and non-judgmental contributes to a safe and healing atmosphere for the client.

- Into Center -- The direction of pressure

in Comfort Touch is in to the center of the particular part of the body being touched. Pressure is applied perpendicularly to the skin, thereby preventing tearing of the skin or bruising of the tissues. The focus of intention is into the core or central axis of the part of the body being touched. This specific direction of pressure and accurate focusing inward of intention allow for a penetrating touch, even with light to moderate pressure. Both the giver and receiver of touch experience a profoundly deep sense of connection.

- Broad -- In general, all strokes are applied with a broad even pressure. This contributes to a feeling of soothing comfort and connection. While the pressure may be firm, the broadness of contact prevents the likelihood of injury or discomfort. The entire surface of the hand, especially including the palm, make uniformly even contact with the part of the client's body being touched.

- Encompassing -- The touch surrounds the client's body. When touching a large area, such as the back, the shapes and contours of the body are acknowledged. A limb or a toe, for example, is encompassed and enfolded. Encompassing touch contributes to a feeling of wholeness, of being cared for and acknowledged as a worthwhile human being.