

INCORPORATING MYOFASCIAL RELEASE TECHNIQUES IN A RELAXATION BASED MASSAGE PRACTICE

by Art Riggs

Although myofascial release techniques are extremely useful in a therapeutic medical setting for treating injuries, for any form of postural/ structural integration, and for freedom of movement and increased athletic performance, they can add a powerful adjunct to any bodywork practitioner. As a Rolfer® and teacher of deep tissue massage and myofascial release, it is disheartening to talk to so many relaxation based massage therapists who are either intimidated by misconceptions about the complexities of the skill or feel that there needs to be a sharp distinction or dichotomy between “nurturing relaxation” and “therapeutic” bodywork.

The reality of any massage practice is that virtually every client, in addition to wanting a massage that is relaxing and feels good, will have some area of dysfunction presenting symptoms of pain, soft tissue thickening, or joint restriction that result from myofascial restrictions that interfere with his or her life. Bodywork is an increasingly competitive field, and the success of any practice lies in offering lasting benefit to resolution of these problems, often through the use of an eclectic set of tools including myofascial release techniques. If you wonder why some clients obviously enjoy your work but don't reschedule, consider if you are doing a disservice to yourself and clients by restricting the scope of your practice and not capitalizing on the benefits of myofascial release as a part of your relaxation based massage.

Myofascial release is not a high tech new invention; hands on healers have been doing it for hundreds of years before the term was popularized a few years ago. Like any complex skill, it is not an all-or-none knowledge. A deepening understanding of anatomy, the layers of the body, and the sensitivity of touch that comes with practice all can hone your skills after even an introductory instruction.

The basic premise is rather simple: *Grab and Stretch* areas of fascial thickening rather than simply sliding over or compressing tissue while using excess lubrication. This skill in no way needs to conflict with whatever type of massage your practice. Simply shift gears in any troublesome spot with more emphasis upon the delicious feeling of tissue melting and lengthening under your touch. Your bodywork practice and your clients will be grateful.

Art Riggs is a Certified Advanced Rolfer®, teacher of bodywork, and the author of *Deep Tissue Massage: A Visual Guide to Techniques* and the acclaimed seven volume (11 hour) DVD series that accompanies the book.



**Bodywork Professional Development presents
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**Integrative Full Body
Deep Tissue Massage Workshop
presented by Art Riggs**

Edinburgh ~ 11 & 12 September 2010

Too often students leave upper level workshops excited about the new material learned, only to find difficulties implementing their new knowledge into their existing practices. This two-day workshop will provide you with the skills to smoothly integrate your specific deep tissue and myofascial release skills into a fluid full body massage, and will be a great refresher if you feel you need some review.

You will learn:

- Communication skills to educate your clients on the advantages of deep tissue massage and myofascial release to deal in detail with specific areas of their bodies that need extra attention while still performing a full body massage instead of spot work.
- Evaluation techniques and session planning for a smooth and integrated massage to leave your clients feeling the benefits of deep work while still being integrated
- Clear, anatomical and physiological protocols to connect all parts of the body into a fluid massage style
- Draping suggestions to utilize different body positioning options
- Options for tying together the massage to leave your clients feeling relaxed and energised

If it has been a while since you have taken your deep tissue training, this will be a great opportunity to hone your skills with plenty of time to work, get some great bodywork yourself, and to add clarity to your work that will energise your practice.

Venue: Rm H9, Napier University (Merchiston campus), Colinton Road, Edinburgh EH10 5DT
Investment: £210 [Early Bird £190 paid in full by 31/05/10] (£75 non-refundable deposit)
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