

Bodywork: The use of the therapist's body to perform effective work with minimum strain or injury.

Chiropractic: A health discipline that primarily deals with the joints of the vertebrae and their proper adjustment.

Therapeutic Massage Therapy: Manual manipulation of the soft tissues to resolve specific problems of pain or dysfunction.

Connective Tissue: The supportive tissues of the body, made of a ground substance and fibrous tissues, taking a wide variety of forms. Although bone, blood, and lymph are technically connective tissues, the term is normally used in massage therapy and bodywork to refer to tendons, ligaments, and fascia.

Myofascial Therapy: A systematic approach to structure through the fascia that works along Langer's line.

Cross-fiber Friction: Deep stroking perpendicular to the fiber of a muscle, tendon, or ligament with the fingertips, thumb, or elbow.

Fascia: Bundles of muscle and fibrous connective tissue continuously enveloping the whole body, individual muscles, and parts of muscles.

Hellerwork: A type of structural integration emphasizing fascial manipulation developed by Joseph Heller, MD, based on the work of Ida Rolf.

Ischemic Compression: Compression of a point in muscle tissue, usually of a trigger point, that obstructs the flow of blood in the tissue.

Kyphosis: Excessive flexion (convex curvature) of the spine.

Langer's Lines: Lines indicating the principal axis of orientation of the subcutaneous connective tissue fibers. These lines vary in direction with the region of the body surface.

Latent Trigger Point: A trigger point that refers pain or other sensations only when compressed; however, it may limit lengthening of the muscle in which it resides, or cause muscle shortening in its referral zone.

Lordosis: Excessive extension (concave curvature) of the spine.

Massage Therapy (Swedish): Manual manipulation of the soft tissues for relaxation, pain relief, or other healthful purposes.

Myofascial Release: A system of fascial work intended to release, stretch, and influence the orientation of the fascia.

Neuromuscular Therapy: A systematic approach to myofascial treatment that attempts to interrupt the neuromuscular feedback that maintains pain or dysfunction. The two types are British (Leon Chaitow) and American (Judith Walker-Delaney, Paul St. John).

Osteopathy: A type of medicine that combines conventional medical diagnostic and treatment techniques with physical manipulation.

Physical Therapy: A type of medical therapy in which passive movement and exercise are the primary means of treatment.

Primary Trigger Point: The original trigger point from an injury, which may generate other satellite trigger points.

Reciprocal Inhibition: The relaxation of a muscle in response to the contraction of its antagonist.

Release: Palpable relaxation and softening of myofascial tissue. In myofascial stretching, the therapist experiences release as a lengthening of the tissue. In compression of tender or trigger points, the therapist feels a softening in the tissue, and the client reports a lessening or cessation of pain.

Rolfing Massage Therapy: A massage technique aimed at the vertical realignment of the body, and therefore deep enough to release muscular tension at skeletal level. It can contribute to the relief of long-standing tension and neurose

Satellite Trigger Point: A secondary trigger point activated by a primary trigger point. Satellite trigger points will not respond to treatment without resolution of the primary trigger point.

Scoliosis: Any lateral curvature of the spine. The most common types are postural, idiopathic, neuromuscular, and congenital.

Skin Rolling: A fascial treatment technique in which the therapist picks up folds of skin and superficial fascia with the fingertips using alternating hands.

Stripping, Skin Scrapping Massage: Moving pressure usually along the fiber of a muscle from origin to insertion, using tools (Gua-Sha, Grostic), thumb(s), fingertips, the heel of the hand, knuckles, the elbow, or the forearm.

Swedish Massage: A general term for relaxation massage, derived from the type of massage taught by Per Henrik Ling.

Trigger Point: A point in muscle or connective tissue that is painful in response to pressure and that refers or radiates pain to some other area of the body. Trigger points in muscle are found in taut bands in the tissue.

Esalen Massage Therapy: This approach melded classic Swedish massage with sensory awareness practice and slow, flowing t'ai chi. The practitioner works with the receiver, rather than on the client. Today the Esalen massage signature flow is punctuated with deep tissue detail, joint mobilizing, stretches, and energy work. Tension melts away and yields to a state of harmony