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THERAPEUTIC INSIGHT: THE MYOFASCIAL RELEASE PERSPECTIVE—WHAT IS A MYOFASCIAL RELEASE THERAPIST? PART I

by John F. Barnes, P.T., L.M.T., N.C.T.M.B.



Myofascial release therapists recognize and embrace the value of silence; thinking and talking places one in a state of disassociation, always one step away from the action. People put out energy and are not capable of receiving the information that is critical in making proper analytical decisions. We never learn when we are talking or thinking, so without feeling, intellectual decisions are guesswork.

In the therapeutic setting, it behooves us to have an open, centered focus, which I teach is the healing zone to access the clients and our inner wisdom. As therapists, it is our responsibility to discipline ourselves, to be centered and to educate our clients in the value of silence so they can access their healing wisdom. Only when the therapist and patient are deeply centered in mutual silence do the depths of their wisdom become accessible for authentic healing to occur.

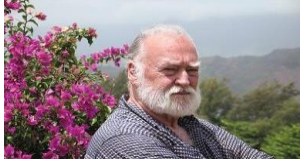
Intellectual information alone is insufficient. It is only through the development of our proprioceptive awareness that allows for the sensitive palpation of the multitude of anatomical structures that can provide the intimate understanding of that individual's unique configuration. Most traditional physicians and therapists either have no palpation training or the emphasis has been on only the tactile senses. The tactile senses embryologically emanate from the ectoderm, the nervous system. The training I provide is a combination of the tactile senses and the proprioceptive sense that embryologically emanate from the mesoderm, which lies in the tendons, muscles and predominately the fascia. One of the many attributes of our proprioceptive senses is our ability to detect motion and change in our environment with our mind-body.

I emphasize the development of the therapist's ability to be in silence at the center of the cyclone. When the therapist quiets himself physically and mentally and touches another for a sustained period of time, the other person or animal becomes the therapist's environment. This enables the highly skilled therapist to feel deeply and accurately into the body, to "know" exactly where the person's or animal's problems are, and then to be able to feel when a release occurs and when a correction has been accomplished. Myofascial release takes the guesswork out of health care.

Myofascial release therapists use their proprioceptive awareness to ascertain where the fascia has lost its fluidity and has solidified; where there is restricted motion within the system; where there is a bio-energetic blockage that is leaking thermals and creating vibrations that are out of synchrony with the whole. In other words, myofascial therapists don't just feel with their hands; they also feel and perceive with their minds.

Sincerely,

John



John F. Barnes, P.T., L.M.T., N.C.T.M.B., is an international lecturer, author and acknowledged expert in the area of myofascial release. He has instructed more than 50,000 therapists worldwide in his Myofascial Release Approach, and he is the author of Myofascial Release: the Search for Excellence (Rehabilitation Services, Inc., 1990) and Healing Ancient Wounds: the Renegade's Wisdom (Myofascial Release Treatment Centers & Seminars, 2000). He is on the counsel of advisors of the American Back Society, as well as on MASSAGE Magazine's Editorial Advisory Board and is a member of the American Physical Therapy Association. For more information, visit www.myofascialrelease.com.