

Acupressure Massage Therapy for Relaxation and Reducing Insomnia...  
a workshop for massage therapists' continuing education

Available at [www.massagetherapyvt.com](http://www.massagetherapyvt.com)

#### Introduction & Welcome!

This online workshop has been created from studies in Beijing, on Tuina & Acupressure, and from 9 years of applied experience in private practice and in a hospital setting. This program contains notes and slides with links to supportive literature, technique application video, certificate for 1.5 continuing education credits upon successful completion of a written exam, and contact information for questions.

#### A bit on my background:

I began practicing massage therapy in 1985 when I was a jeweler, after suffering from what I thought were migraines. I found that manual therapy helped muscle tension which was the best fix for my headaches. Years later in 1997, after accident resulting in a coma, I experienced a life redirect. After rehabilitation, I decided to formally study bodywork. I became a massage therapist and physical therapy assistant, then later, and a chiropractic assistant. Since then, I

have maintained an office for private practice, and offices at our local university, The University of Vermont, where I provide massage therapy for students with the help of an assistant. Since 2011, I have worked in the Vermont Cancer Center providing oncology massage therapy.

A brief note about the history of Chinese bodywork:

Tui Na, "the oldest known system of massage and physical therapy in the world" (Chi Wellness Clinic), can be traced back to the Shang Dynasty of ancient China, 1700 B.C.E.

Now, Tui Na is taught in major medical schools in China "as a separate but equal field of study"(Acupuncture Today

What is Tui Na?

Tui Na is a style of Asian bodywork which uses "various strokes, shaking, stretching, and joint movements" along energy channels to balance the body's energy, as well as physical and emotional systems. 'Tui' translates to 'Push', and 'Na' to 'Pull'.

Tui Na bases its therapeutic orientation on "the Traditional Chinese Medical theory of channels and collaterals (meridians or pathways)" and the flow of Qi (energy).

( more on Tui Na: <http://plaza.ufl.edu/lcji/massage-types/tui-na.html> )

Studying with Dr. Wang, Beijing, 2010

Photo above, from Beijing with instructor Kenneth Lubovitch, 2010

Photo on the right, a handout from the VT Cancer Center for patients.

The treatment protocol we are practicing in this workshop, for relaxation and reducing insomnia has been adapted from my training at two different hospitals in Beijing in 2007 and 2010. This routine has helped thousands of people 'drift off' in the last nine years, working with cancer patients. This treatment protocol also helps change pain perception, improves mood and relaxation.

Anxiety cessation and sleep have many layers! Let's consider some of underlying issues or factors which prevent relaxation, falling asleep or falling back to sleep.

- Cognitive/emotional stress

Mediation can be very relaxing, however, if your mind is a hamster wheel of stresses- problems without answers, you may need something a little more powerful to help quiet the mind chatter. Affirmations; desired outcomes stated as if they already are in the present can be great strategies.

For example; Prayer can be just enough to focus on, so that your mind can get a break from the other relentless thoughts which produce stress.

Affirmations can be considered non-denominational 'Prayer' and also a great strategy to quiet the conscious mind. For example, the word 'POSITIVE ' can be used as an acronym, and each letter in the word can represent an attribute you want to reinforce. 'P' stands for 'Positive in thought and action'. 'O' stands for 'Organized and Open to inspiration'...and so on. Be creative!

- Exercise

It can be much easier to rest if we've exerted ourselves for at least a little while during our day. 'Spark' by Dr. John Ratey is a fantastic book about the neuroscience of exercise. Dr. Ratey explains how muscle tension contributes to free-floating anxiety.

This book is full of great motivation, and offers strategies for dealing with anxiety through movement.

- General health and pain levels

If your client is experiencing some pain, you can preface your treatment with a point in the hands:

- Nutrition

Magnesium citrate, found in a product called natural calm can help with stress related insomnia. This supplement is suggested only if it's use is physician approved.

Research link-

[https:// www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/ pubmed/26591563/](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26591563/)

- Physical space for rest:

Darkness is essential to sleep. The absence of light sends a critical signal to the body that it is time to rest. ... Melatonin, a hormone produced in the brain's pineal gland, is often known as the "sleep hormone" or the "darkness hormone."

[https://sleep.mysplus.com › article1](https://sleep.mysplus.com/article1)

<https://sleep.mysplus.com/library/category2/article1.html>

Essential oils; not just for spas. There is real science behind the way our olfactory senses help engineer endocrine responses. Lavender is common and lovely, but other oils can be quite affective such as clove. Clove bud oil can help create a sense of comfort and in 14 years of use, I've not heard one single complaint.

This photo is from a workshop by

Dr. Bryan Hawley, who has an excellent webinar on essential oils,

available at: [info@drbryanhawley.com](mailto:info@drbryanhawley.com)

Music, Sleep app called Headspace. In her book 'Healing Spaces', Esther Sternberg explains why pleasant sounds can help us shift into parasympathetic dominance, or the 'relaxation response'.

## Using The Treatment Protocol

A simple way to stimulate these points is to press with fingertips in a rotary movement or a pulsing up-and-down movement for a few minutes at a time. It is recommended that you use this information under the guidance of your physician. Use moderately firm pressure to massage and stimulate each point.

Technique video- <https://vimeo.com/360179232>

## PDF of Treatment Protocol

### Mechanisms at work in this treatment protocol

Parasympathetic nerve response, AKA, 'the brakes' on the adrenal & cortisol driven fight or flight mode.

Almost any rhythmic pressure can aid in achieving a relaxation state, but I find a few points are specially located and have the effect of a shortcut to your desired goal; Wu Lu, & GB20, found on the handout above.

### B. Turning off pain signals with Meissner's Corpuscle

"Tiffany Field, PhD, director of the Touch Research Institute at the University of Miami School of Medicine, who's conducted a number of studies on the benefits of massage, including on people with arthritis. In Field's research and other recent studies on the effects of massage for arthritis

symptoms, regular use of the simple therapy led to improvements in pain, stiffness, range of motion, hand grip strength and overall function of the joints. In fact, says Field, what matters most is the level of pressure used in the massage – preferably moderate to light. Her 2010 study, published in the International Journal of Neuroscience, showed that stimulating pressure receptors, or nerves under the skin that convey pain-reducing signals to the brain, with moderate pressure leads to reduced symptoms.

“The critical thing is using moderate pressure,” says Field. “Light pressure, just touching the surface of the skin or brushing it superficially, is not getting at those pressure receptors. Light pressure can be stimulating, not relaxing.”

C. Decrease in muscle tension decreases anxiety.

Again, in his book, ‘Spark’,  
Dr. John Ratey explains how muscle  
tension contributes to free-floating  
anxiety.

Another link to information on the  
relationship between muscle tension  
and anxiety:

<https://somaticmovementcenter.com/anxiety-muscle-tension>

Special Reminder

If you remember one point, let it be ‘Wu Lu’,

The center of an attachment for temporalis.

The efficient change in relaxation status and the accessibility of this point make it one of the ‘Go to ‘

acupressure points.

If accessible, GB20 and Feng Men are also very effective.

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## Marketing

We live in a wondrous time of information sharing. Please feel free to copy and paste points in this routine and create handouts for your clients. When you teach people to help themselves, you do not replace yourself. Keep in mind that you want to also promote the routine for general relaxation so that you are part of a wellness strategy for your clients. They will still need to come back to you for expert care. You do provide a sense of guidance and caring when you offer support beyond your doorstep.

This caring professionalism will cycle people back to you!

## Exam

Exams & certificates can be purchased by writing to: [ceu.kwileyinfo@gmail.com](mailto:ceu.kwileyinfo@gmail.com)

Thank you & sweet dreams! 😊