

Put Hands on your Comrades!

(Consensually!)

Bodywork for healing

Revolutionary Bodies

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Intro :

I've been doing body work massage therapy for 15 years now.

This zine is a reductionist primer on basic massage technique and tips. Honestly, this is such a vast field of knowledge that was hard to condense into a few pages & every body you work on is different - what works for some won't work for others.

The most important thing to remember when working on anyone is to ASK & LISTEN!

Techniques should be adjusted according to the recipient's comfort level.

Conversation should be had prior to massage to know what the person is hoping to achieve during a session and it's important to know what boundaries they may have.

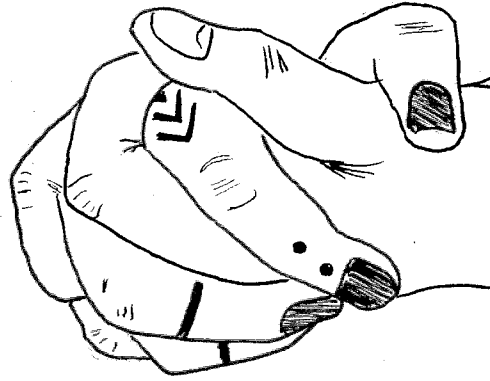
If you're doing a full body massage but a person tells you they don't like their feet getting touched -

Guess what?

You're only making it to their fuckin ankles, respect their personal boundaries!

It is an honor to be entrusted to work so intimately with anyone - So don't take it lightly!

My hope is that you can apply these techniques in your circles to help comrades reduce physical stress & anxiety - put hands on your Comrades so we can continue throwing hands in the streets together !



For those of us who were denied a loving touch,
For the ones who are on constant guard

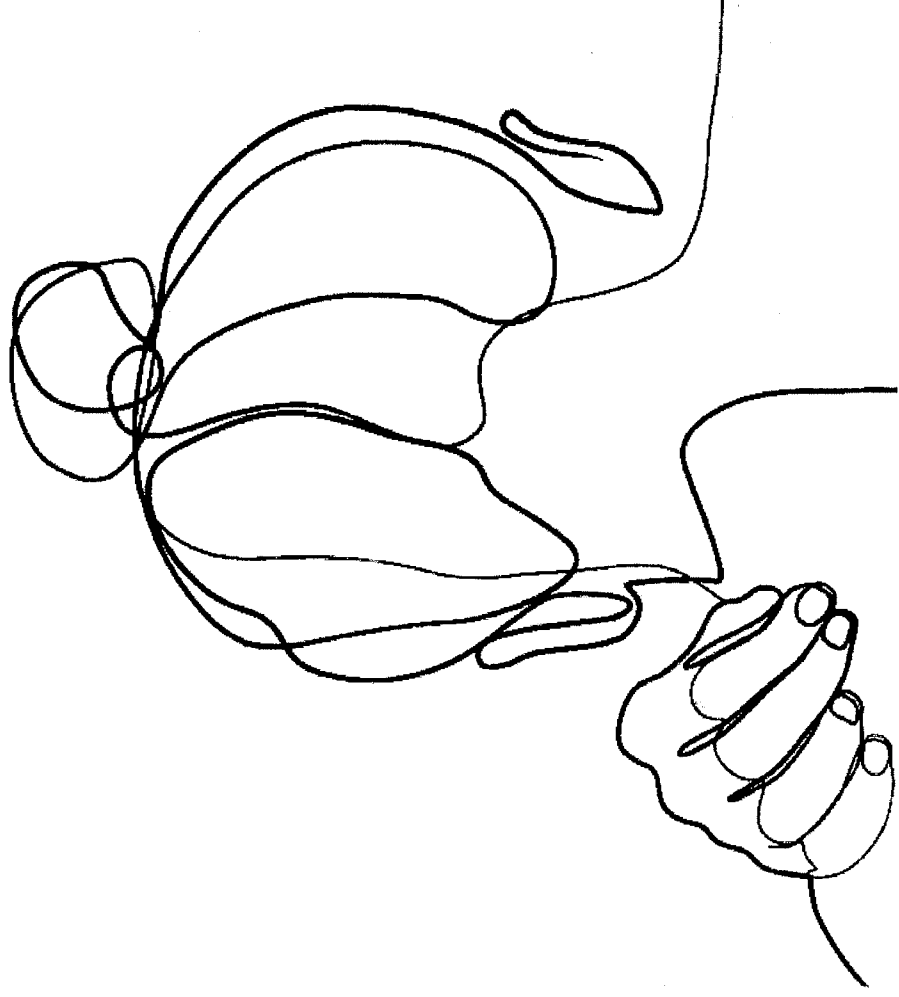
& can never relax,

For the person who aches after selflessly
helping the comrades back on their feet,

& for that one comrade who always said I have

"a nice touch" ♥

This one's for you!



Touch is revolutionary! It comforts, it heals - it can strengthen bonds & create new ones as well!

But in the capitalist society we live in, it's not only a commodity that many people cannot afford to benefit from - it's also been made taboo.

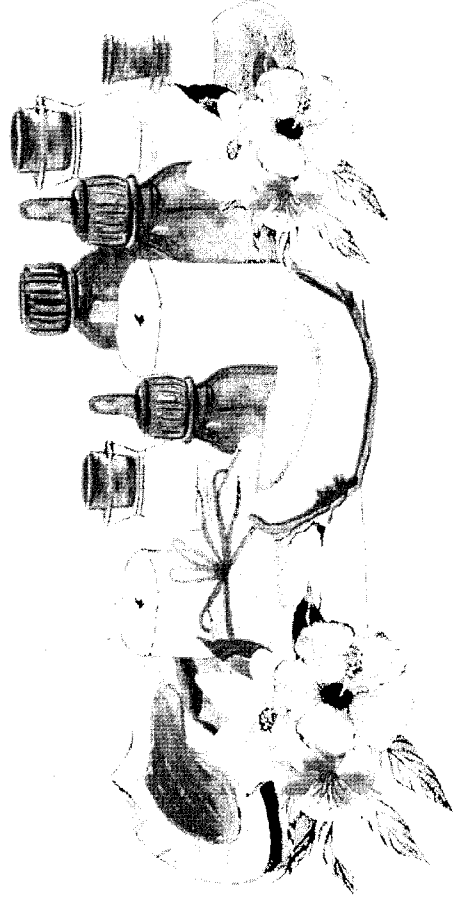
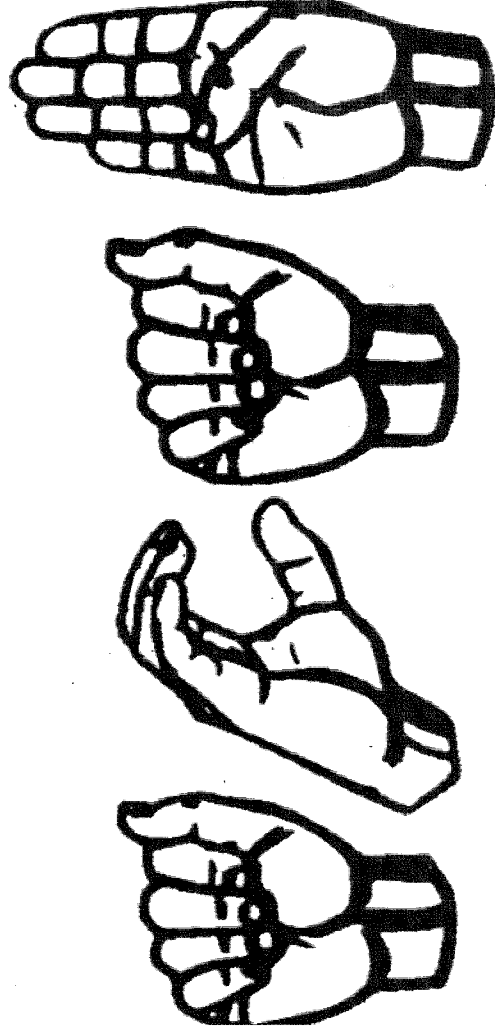
Your touch is a weapon against capitalism.

Imagine how much more dangerous we would be together if we normalized affection & comfort through touch.

Imagine the organic chemistry you & the comrades will have when you can literally feel their emotions as they speak to you through a shoulder rub?

And if it sounds ridiculous, it's because society has done it's job in making touch taboo for you. Therapeutic touch has been around since we've sprouted limbs & has been practiced for countless millennia.

Normalize asking for touch, & learn to reciprocate it!



Setup -

When u think of massage sessions most people typically envision the candles, spa sounds & white linens.

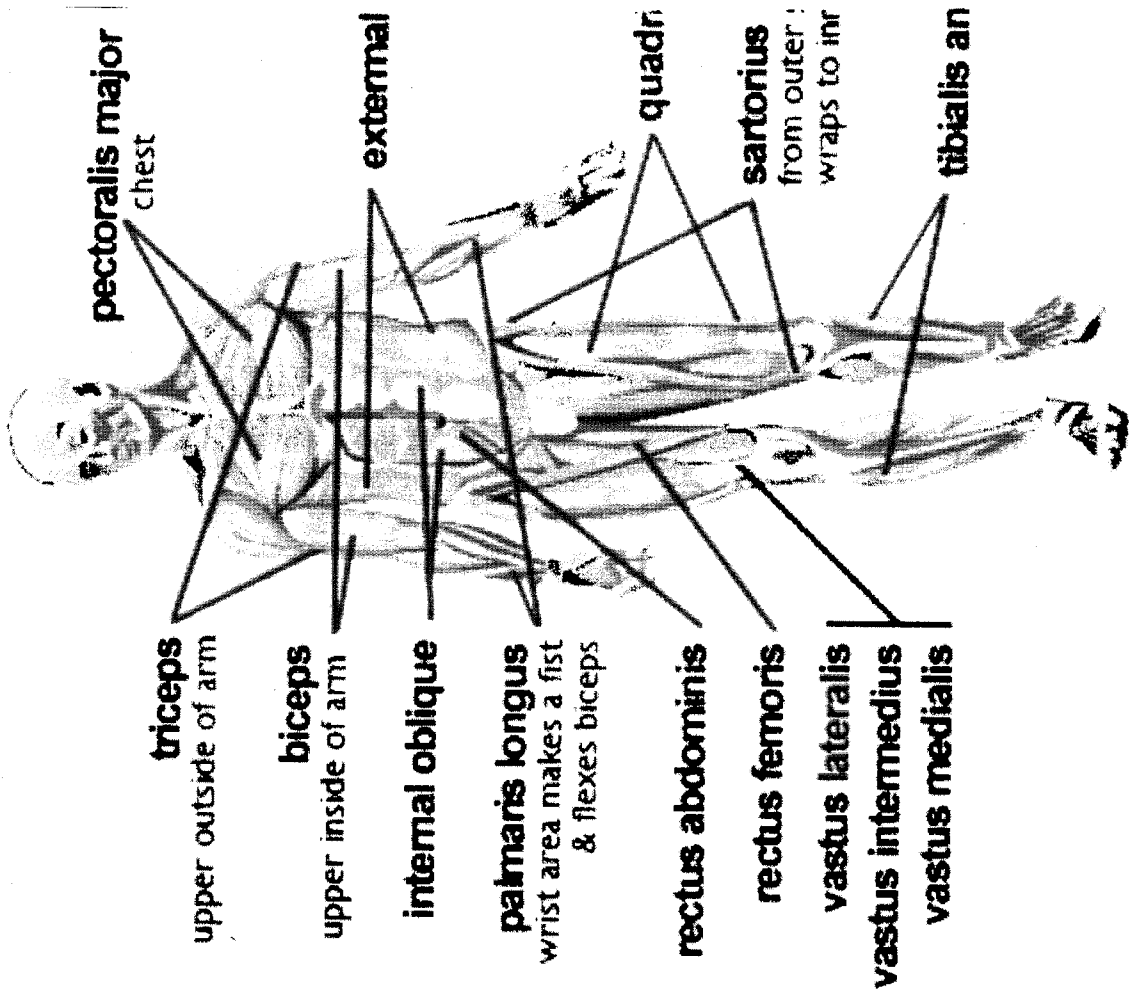
Which is all cool if you have a setup like that - but a lot of my massages have taken place at people's homes, with & without a massage table.

When working on my comrades most of the time it didn't even matter where we were, only if we had time.

If possible it is preferable for the recipient to be laying face down on a flat, padded surface.

Lotions/oils make it easier to perform moves on skin - FYI ask if the recipient wants lotion/oil on them & be sure to use something hypoallergenic for the more skin sensitive comrades.

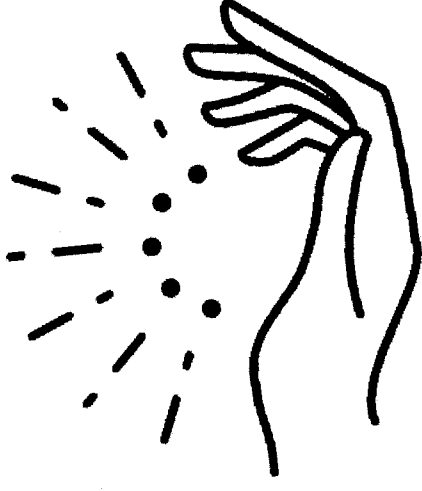
Super simplified view of the



Anterior (front) view

What NOT TO DO during a massage

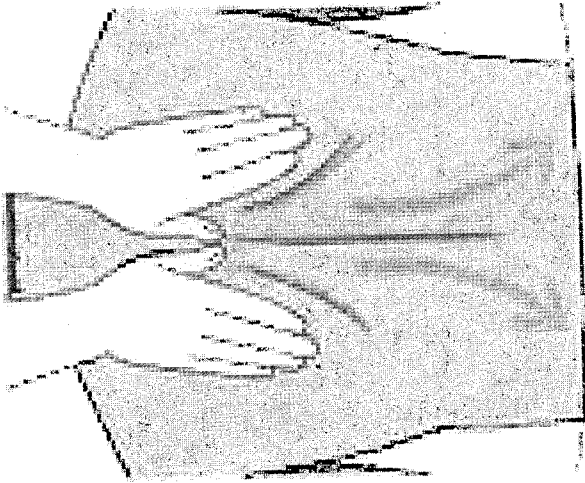
Do not massage over the spine & do not try to crack bones. Unless you are a trained chiropractor go ahead, but otherwise then why the fuck u wanna try to crack ur comrades neck? Serious injury can occur if you are not careful, so don't try it!



Remember!

Communication is key during the session, if the receiver is quiet ask how they are feeling, always make sure they are comfortable. Consistently checking if they want more or less pressure applied makes the experience much more enjoyable for them & avoids injury.

4 Basic Massage Moves



Stripping (Effleurage)

Long gliding strokes along the muscle, using both (or one) of your palms, forearms or knuckles. This is usually the first move used to “warm up” an area and also helps apply lotion/oil to the area being worked on.

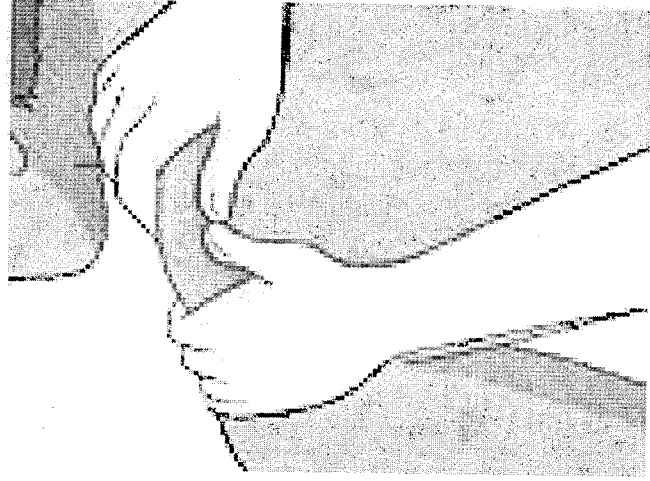
Deep Tissue Massage

This type of massage does not have a specific focus. Unlike Swedish massage which is used more for full body relaxation, deep tissue massage is a more rigorous targeted technique. As its name suggests it involves applying pressure and slow deep strokes to reach deeper layers of muscle, targeting the connective tissues. This helps to break up scar tissue as well that forms following an injury & reduces tension in muscle tissue. It may also promote faster healing by increasing blood flow & reducing inflammation.

Before working on the area specified you have to warm up the muscles using a lighter touch/stroke. Once you've warmed up the area you use deep kneading & stripping motions with varying amounts of intense pressure. Its more intense but at no point should it become extremely painful for the recipient

Use palms and fingers to knead and manipulate your tissues, but the elbows and forearms may also be used to apply increased pressure.

It is not unusual to have some lingering soreness for a few days following a deep tissue massage using a heating pad or cold pack wrapped in a towel may help to relieve soreness. Comrades who may have bleeding disorders, are taking blood thinners or have blood clots should not receive deep tissue massage.



Kneading (Petrissage)

A move using both hands just as the name implies. A kneading, rolling, wringing & lifting motion to feel for knots in the muscle being worked on. This moves helps to ease the knots in muscle & helps improve circulation.

Decompression after an Action

Massage can be especially useful after an intense event - with this type of situation it's important to remember to communicate with each other & read the room. Many of us already come into these spaces with past traumas & anxieties, when we take back control of all that for even just a moment decompression is extremely important afterwards.

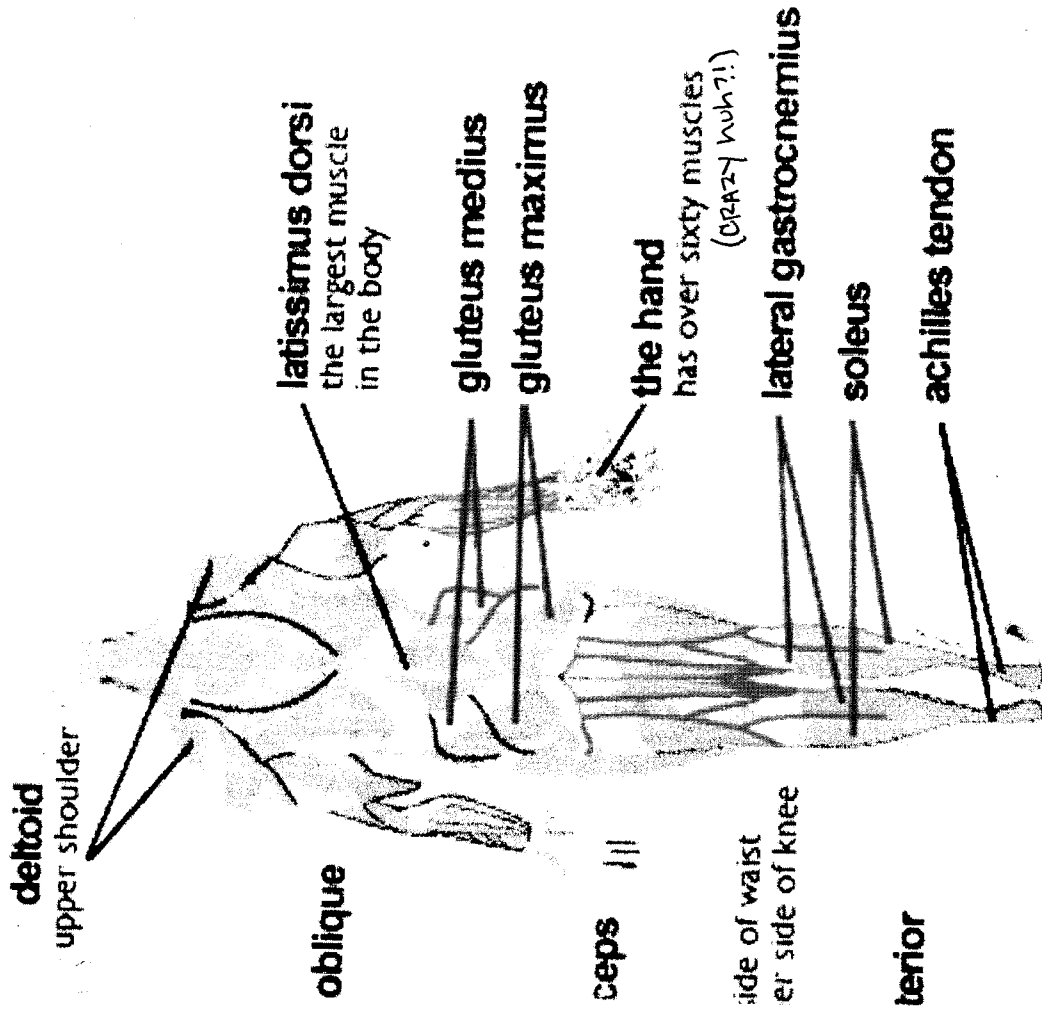
There's a huge advantage to being able to decompress with comrades - you trust each other enough to be on the ground together, now you can help each other release tension.

Massage should happen hours after the action is over, in a safe location when everyone is accounted for. Adrenaline takes a while to wear off & sometimes a person may not be aware of any injury they may have sustained.

While working muscles during this time be aware & validate your comrades feelings, this may be a time where they not only need physical relief but emotional as well. You will notice that muscles may become rigid as they recount the events in their head.

It can make for a more difficult session because the body can become overstimulated, so pressure of the movements should be adjusted according to what feels good for you comrades at the moment. Pay attention to muscle spasms, fluctuation in breathing & sudden pains in certain regions of the muscles.

major muscles of the body



Posterior (back) view.

Gentle tugging motions applied to the shoulders & back of the head also help relieve stress.

After kneading, apply friction to gently stretch muscles.

When working hands or feet, gliding strokes done between the joints are where it's at!

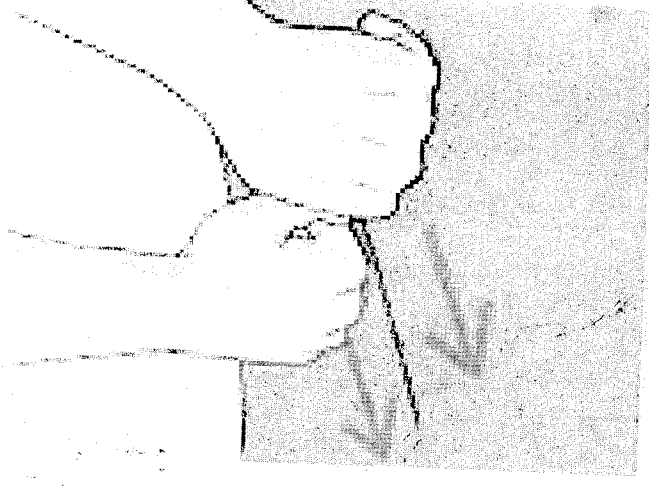
At various points during the massage you'll come across "knots" or trigger points, these are tensed up sections of muscles. Kneading and applying friction to these areas can help ease them. You want to spend more time working these areas since they are usually the root of all physical tension & the sensation may be uncomfortable at first for the recipient but never painful - gently working the area will begin to 'loosen' the muscle up.

These moves can be repeated on the desired area until relaxation is achieved. Then if the recipient wants they can turn faceup and the moves can be repeated along the front of the arms, legs, shoulders & even face.

When massaging the face, adjust the strokes to be applied using your fingertips. Following the jawline & brow is especially relaxing! Be careful when working along the delicate areas such as next to the eyes!

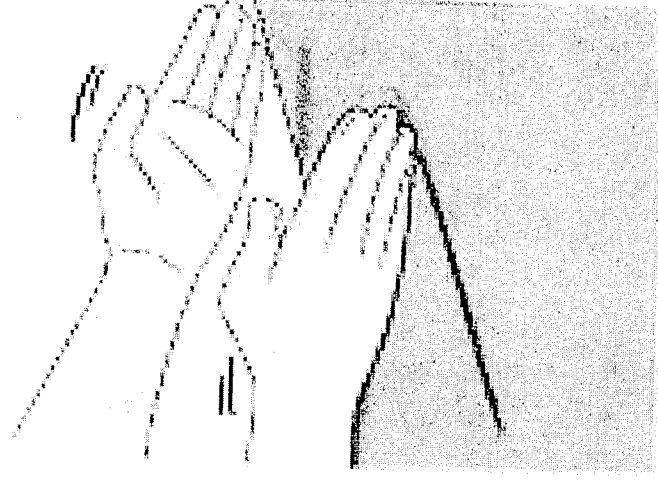
Friction

A deeper warming stroke that is used to further relax a muscle so that it's easier to work with. Strokes can be rapid, circular or criss cross motions going against the direction of the muscle.



Tapping (Tapotement)

You've definitely seen this stroke. It's the rhythmic tapping done along a muscle. Pace yourself for this one, the percussion movement can be done using your palms, soft fists or sides of hands in a 'chopping' motion.



Swedish Massage

It's the most popular & common massage used for general relaxation. If you've had bodywork done before more than likely you've had this done.

It is a full body massage that targets the superficial layers of muscles incorporating the 4 strokes on the parts of your body that tend to hold the most tension - such as your neck, shoulders & back.



Starting at the shoulders strip the muscles down towards the lower back.



Then begin kneading the shoulder areas gradually applying more gentle pressure



You'll feel the tense muscle eventually relax - its a warm "melting" sensation for recipient



Benefits of Massage!

There is a long list of benefits that massage offers to the receiver!

Massage helps alleviate stress, anxiety, can be comforting when u have a case of the 'sads', improves circulation, helps boost your immunity, can help flexibility & posture, helps to lower blood pressure, helps ur body eliminate toxins ect ect. Overall there is so many benefits for your body & you can even massage yourself. But of course nothing beats having a comrade helping you out so in the next pages I'll list different massages that are easy to learn and you can apply to eachother.

