

Reflexology Works™

Ed Wilson

Reflexology is a body therapy in which *palpation* and thumb and finger compression is applied to specific reflex points on the feet and hands that relate to organs, glands and systems of the body. Pressing these points promotes relaxation, reduces pain, improves circulation and lessens the impact of stress-related illnesses and emotional disorders.

Reflexology Works™ has a strong foundation in the system originally created in the 1930s by Eunice Ingham. This more recent interpretation of the traditional Ingham method has some significant, recognizable differences. Expanding on the tradition of focusing only on the feet and hands, Reflexology Works™ includes compression, kneading, friction and shaking of the legs, feet, arms and hands. A session begins with visualization, *affirmation* and specific attention to breathing. The soft tissue manipulations and larger passive movements promote the flow of energy through the ten “zones” of the body in order to stimulate self-healing and a greater sense of balance.

Warm-up and stretching movements prepare the feet and hands for more specific thumb and finger walking. These *techniques* are interspersed throughout the session and serve as a change of pace for both the client and therapist. While no tools are used during a treatment, clients are encouraged to work with a footsie roller, golf ball or other round objects, as part of their self-care maintenance.

While there are a number of theories about how reflexology works, Reflexology Works™ is based on the following precepts. Pressure applied to specific reflex points (receptors) signals the brain to respond by producing pain-suppressing chemicals to alter the pain response. Also, persistent pressure opens up energy blockages and breaks up accumulated matter enabling it to be absorbed into the blood and lymph streams to eventually be released as waste products. Additionally, the placebo effect suggests that individuals who are familiar with this form of therapy, and believe in the ability of the practitioner, experience positive reinforcement and are helped by this treatment, which further supports their belief.

During this 30-60 minute session, the client lies on a *BodyWork* table or reclines in a Reflexology chair and remains fully clothed except for bare feet, legs and arms. Generally, no lubricant is used, but cream or lotion may be applied during a more *general* foot *massage* offered as a final touch.

Reflexology Works™

TouchAbilities®

Technique	Component	Skill
Breathing	Breathing	Tracking, Directing, Pacing
Visualizing	Cognitive	Visualizing, Focusing, Intending
Affirming	Cognitive	Focusing
Warm-up & Stretch	Compression Kinetic	Pressing/Pushing, Twisting/Wringing Holding/Supporting, Mobilizing, Stabilizing
Flicking	Oscillation Kinetic	Shaking Mobilizing
Thumb & Finger Walking	Compression	Pressing/Pushing, Squeezing/Pinching
Hook In & Back Up	Compression	Pressing/Pushing
Pinpointing	Compression	Pressing/Pushing
Joint Movements	Compression Expansion Kinetic	Pressing/Pushing, Twisting/Wringing Pulling/Lifting Holding/Supporting, Mobilizing, Stabilizing
Plantar Softening	Compression Kinetic	Pressing/Pushing Holding/Supporting, Mobilizing, Stabilizing
Traction	Kinetic Expansion	Mobilizing, Stabilizing Pulling/Lifting
Fintertip Rolling	Compression Gliding	Pressing Planing, Rubbing
Tapotement	Oscillation	Striking, Shaking
Solar Plexus Point Pressure	Compression	Pressing/Pushing
Client Education/Homework	Cognitive Compression	Visualizing, Inquiring, Intending, Transmitting Pressing/Pushing