



HOLISTIC MODALITIES

Acupressure

Based on the same system as acupuncture, but fingers and hands are used, instead of stimulation with needles, to restore the balanced flow of the body's life energy (qi or chi, pronounced "chee"). This force moves through the body along 12 energy pathways or meridians, which practitioners unblock and strengthen. Common styles of acupressure include Jin Shin, which gently holds at least two points at once for a minute or more, and Shiatsu, which applies firm pressure to each point for three to five seconds.

Acupuncture

An ancient Chinese technique that stimulates the body's ability to sustain and balance itself, based on the theory that an electromagnetic life-force (qi or chi, pronounced "chee" is channeled in a continuous flow throughout the body via a network of meridians. Disease is understood as an imbalance in the meridian system. Diagnosis of an imbalance is made by "reading" the pulse, face, tongue and body energy. To correct it, a practitioner inserts acupuncture needles at specific points along the meridians to stimulate or disperse the flow of life-force. Acupuncture principles include the yin and yang polarities and the associations of the five elements of fire, earth, metal, water and wood with bodily organs. Air Purification: The process of reducing contaminants in the air.

Alexander Technique

A system of reeducating the body and mind to support and facilitate proper posture and ease of movement. Through gentle manual guidance, accompanied by verbal directions, the Alexander teacher coaches the student to become aware of unnecessary tension and to unlearn longstanding patterns of movement. The Alexander Technique is used to help improve chronic conditions such as back, shoulder or neck pain, nervous tension, poor coordination, breathing problems and vocal strain. It is frequently used by athletes and performing artists to improve performance level.

Aromatherapy

An ancient healing art that uses the essential oils of herbs and flowers to treat emotional disorders such as stress and anxiety, as well as a wide range of other ailments. Oils are massaged into the skin, inhaled or added to bathwater. Often used in conjunction with massage therapy, acupuncture, reflexology, herbology and chiropractic or other holistic treatments.

Art Therapy

Uses the creative process of making art to improve and enhance physical, mental and emotional well-being and to deepen self-awareness. The therapist makes a diagnosis and determines treatment plans by encouraging a client to express his or her feelings and unconscious thoughts through the nonverbal creative process and by observing the forms and content created.

Ayurveda

The oldest medical system known to man, and a comprehensive spiritual teaching practiced in India for 4,000 years. Ayurveda focuses on achieving and maintaining perfect health via that balance of the elements air, fire and water; illness is considered an excess of any element. A patient's body type,

determined according to Ayurvedic principles, is the basis for individualized dietary regimens and other preventive therapeutic interventions. Ayurvedic prescriptions might include purification procedures for the restoration of biological rhythms; expanded consciousness through meditation; nutritional counseling; stress reduction; enhancing neuromuscular conditions; and behavioral modification.

Bioenergetics

A psychotherapy that works through the body to engage the emotions. Performing specified postures and exercises causes the release of layers of chronic muscular tension and defensiveness, termed "body armor." The unlocking of feelings creates the opportunity for understanding and integrating them.

Biofeedback

A relaxation technique that monitors internal body states and is used especially for stress-related conditions such as asthma, migraines, insomnia and high blood pressure. During biofeedback, patients monitor minute metabolic changes (e.g., temperature, heart rate, and muscle tension), with the aid of sensitive machines. By consciously thinking, visualizing, moving, relaxing, etc., they learn which activities produce desirable changes in the internal processes being monitored.

Bodywork

Massage and the physical practices of yoga are perhaps the best known types of bodywork; both have proven successful in relieving tension and stress, promoting blood flow, loosening stiff muscles and stimulating the organs. Massage therapies encompass countless techniques, including Swedish massage, shiatsu and Rolfing. The same is true for yoga. Other types of bodywork include martial arts practices like aikido, ki aikido and Tai chi cuan. Some others are the Alexander Technique, Aston patterning, Bowen, Breema bodywork, Feldenkrais method, Hellerwork, polarity therapy, Rosen method, Rubenfeld synergy and Trager. Finding bodywork that improves mental and physical health is a highly individual process. Several types may be combined for the greatest benefit.

Chinese Medicine

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is one of the world's oldest and most complete systems of holistic health care. It combines the use of medicinal herbs, acupuncture, food therapy, massage and therapeutic exercise, along with the recognition that wellness is mind, body and emotions depends on the harmonious flow of life-force energy (qi or chi, pronounced "chee").

Chiropractic

Based on the premise that proper structural alignment permits free flow of nerve activity in the body. When spinal vertebrae are out of alignment, they put pressure on the spinal cord and the nerves radiating from it, potentially leading to diminished function and illness. Misalignment can be caused by physical trauma, poor posture and stress. The chiropractor seeks to analyze and correct these misalignments through spinal manipulation or adjustment.

Counseling/Psychotherapy

These terms encompass a broad range of practitioners, from career counselors, who offer advice and information, to psychotherapists, who treat depression, stress, addiction and emotional issues. Formats can vary from individual counseling to group therapy. In addition to verbal counseling techniques, some holistic therapists may use bodywork, ritual, energy healing and other alternative modalities as part of their practice.

Craniosacral Therapy (CST)

A manual therapeutic procedure to remedy distortions in the structure and function of the craniosacral mechanism-the brain and spinal cord, the bones of the skull, the sacrum and interconnected membranes. Craniosacral work is based upon two major premises: that the bones of the skull can be manipulated,

because they never completely fuse; and that the pulse of the cerebrospinal fluid can be balanced by a practitioner trained to detect variations in that pulse. CST is used to treat chronic pain, migraine headaches, temporomandibular joint disorder (TMJ), ear and eye problems, balance problems, learning difficulties, dyslexia and hyperactivity.

Dance/Movement Therapy

A method of expressing thoughts and feelings through movement, developed during the 1940's. Participants, guided by trained therapists, are encouraged to move freely, sometimes to music. Dance/movement therapy can be practiced by people of all ages to promote self-esteem and gain insight into their own emotional problems, but is also used to help those with serious mental and physical disabilities. In wide use in the United States, this modality is becoming established around the world.

Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT)

A self-help procedure founded by Gary Craig that combines fingertip tapping of key acupuncture meridian points while focusing on an emotional issue or health challenge. Unresolved, or "stuck," negative emotions, caused by a disruption in the body's energy system, are seen as major contributors to most physical pains and diseases. These can remain stagnant and trapped until released by the tapping. EFT is portable and easy to memorize, so it can be done anywhere.

Energy Healing

The art and practice of realigning and re-tuning the body between the physical and the etheric and auric fields to assist in natural healing processes. Working directly with the energy field in and around the body, the practitioner is thought to channel and direct energy into the cells, tissues, and organs of the patient's body to affect healing on physical and nonphysical levels simultaneously. Sessions may or may not involve the physical laying on of hands.

Feldenkrais Method

Founded by Israeli physicist and engineer Moshe Feldenkrais (1904 - 1984,) the Feldenkrais Method® helps to improve the connection and communication between your body and your brain. Through an enjoyable and exploratory process, students become aware of their habitual movement patterns, and discover better, personalized ways to move, using their innate abilities to think, sense, and feel.

Functional Medicine

A personalized medicine that focuses on primary prevention and deals with underlying causes, instead of symptoms, for serious chronic diseases. Treatments are grounded in nutrition and improved lifestyle habits and may make use of medications. The discipline uses a holistic approach to analyze and treat interdependent systems of the body and to create the dynamic balance integral to good health.

Guided Imagery & Creative Visualization

Uses positive thoughts, images and symbols to focus the mind on the working of the body to accomplish a particular goal, desired outcome or physiological change, such as pain relief or healing of disease. This flow of thought can take many forms and involve, through the imagination, all the physical senses. Imagination is an important element of the visualization process; it helps create a mental picture of what is desired in order to transform life circumstances.

Healing Touch

A non-invasive, relaxing and nurturing energy therapy designed to help restore physical, emotional, mental and spiritual balance and support self healing. A gentle touch is used on or near the fully-clothed client to influence the body's inner energy centers and exterior energy fields. Healing Touch is used to ease acute and chronic conditions, assist with pain management, encourage deep relaxation and accelerate wound healing.

Herbal Medicine

This oldest form of medicine uses natural plants in a wide variety of forms for their therapeutic value. Herbs produce and contain various chemical substances that act upon the body to strengthen its natural functions without the negative side effects of synthetic drugs. They may be taken internally or applied externally via teas, tinctures, extracts, oils, ointments, compresses and poultices.

Holistic Healthcare

A healthcare practice with considers and treats all aspects of a patient's needs; psychological, social and physiological. Holistic healthcare generally includes a variety of alternative to traditional Western medicine, which tends to be reactive rather than proactive, and which often relies on pharmaceutical treatment of symptoms.

Homeopathy

A therapy that uses small doses of specially prepared plants and minerals to stimulate the body's defense mechanisms and healing processes in order to cure illness. Homeopathy, taken from the Greek words, homeos, meaning "similar," and pathos, meaning "suffering," employs the concept that "like cures like." A remedy is individually chosen for a person based on its capacity to cause, if given in an overdose, physical and psychological symptoms similar to those the patient is experiencing.

Hydrotherapy

The use of water, ice, steam and hot and cold temperatures to maintain and restore health. Treatments include full-body immersion, steam baths, saunas, sitz baths, colonic irrigation and the application of hot and/or cold compresses. Hydrotherapy is considered effective for treating a wide range of conditions and can easily be used at home as part of a self-care program.

Hypnotherapy/Hypnosis

A range of hypnosis techniques that allow practitioners to bypass the conscious mind and access the subconscious. The altered state that occurs under hypnosis has been compared to a state of deep meditation or transcendence, in which the innate recuperative abilities of the psyche are allowed to flow more freely. The subject can achieve greater clarity regarding his or her own wants and needs, explore other events or periods of life that require resolution, or generally develop a more positive attitude. Often used to help people lose weight or stop smoking, it is also used in the treatment of phobias or stress and as an adjunct to the treatment of illnesses.

Integrative Manual Therapy (IMT)

A combination of diagnostic and treatment methodologies that assess and treat pain, dysfunction, disease and disability. Developed by Sharon Giammatteo over 30-plus years, IMT is intended to address the complex needs of patients. IMT practitioners identify and address the underlying causes of dysfunction using a comprehensive and holistic approach. While IMT diagnostics and treatment modalities are predominately hands-on, IMT also integrates a wide range of diagnostic and treatment technologies, nutritional programs (i.e. natural supplements, diet and herbs), and IMT body-based psychotherapeutic approaches to develop a customized solution for a patient's needs.

Integrative Medicine

This holistic approach combines conventional Western medicine and complementary alternative treatments, in order to simultaneously treat mind, body and spirit. Geared to promote health and prevent illness, it neither rejects conventional medicine nor accepts alternative therapies without serious evaluation.

Kinesiology/Applied Kinesiology

The study of muscles and their movement. Applied kinesiology tests the relative strength and weakness of selected muscles to help identify decreased function in body organs and systems, as well as imbalances and restrictions in the body's energy flow. Some tests use acupuncture meridians; others analyze interrelationships among muscles, organs, the brain and the body's energy field. Applied kinesiology is also used to check the body's response to treatments that are being considered.

Life Coach

A professional who helps clients identify their personal and/or professional goals and design a plan or institute techniques for achieving them. They life coach works with clients to recognize and overcome and obstacles that may interfere with achievement of those goals.

Magnetic Field Therapy

Based on the belief that electromagnetic energy and the human body have a vital and valid interrelationship, thereby making it possible to use magnetic field therapy as an aid in diagnosing and treating physical and emotional disorders. This process is thought to relieve symptoms and, in some cases, retard the cycle of new diseases. Magnets and electromagnetic therapy devices are now being used to eliminate pain, facilitate the healing of broken bones and counter the effects of stress.

Massage Therapy

A general term for the manipulation of soft tissue for therapeutic purposes. Massage therapy incorporates various disciplines and involves kneading, rubbing, brushing and tapping the muscles and connective tissues by hand or using mechanical devices. Its goal is to increase circulation and detoxification, in order to reduce physical and emotional stress and increase overall wellness.

Meditation

The intentional directing of attention to one's inner self. Methods and practices to achieve a meditative state are based upon various principles using the body or mind and may employ control or letting-go mechanisms. Techniques include the use of imagery, mantras, observation, and breath control. Research has shown that regular meditation can contribute to psychological and physiological well-being. As a spiritual practice, meditation is used to facilitate a mystical sense of oneness with a higher power or the universe. It can also help reduce stress and alleviate stress-related ailments, such as anxiety and high blood pressure.

Naturopathy

A comprehensive and eclectic system whose philosophy is based upon working in harmony with the body's natural healing abilities. Naturopathy incorporates a broad range of natural methods and substances aimed to promote health. Training may include the study of specific approaches, including massage, manipulation, acupuncture, acupressure, counseling, applied nutrition, herbal medicine, homeopathy and minor surgery, plus basic obstetrics for assistance with natural childbirth.

Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP)

A systematic approach to changing the limiting patterns of thought, behavior and language. Through conversation, practitioners observe the client's language, eye movements, posture, breathing and gestures, in order to detect and help change unconscious patterns linked to the client's emotional state.

Nutrition

Embracing a wide range of approaches, nutrition-based, complementary therapies and counseling seek to alleviate physical and psychological disorders through special diets and food supplements. These will be either macronutrients (carbohydrates, fats, proteins and fiber) or micronutrients (vitamins, minerals and trace elements that cannot be manufactured in the body). Nutritional therapy/counseling often uses dietary or food supplements, which can include tablets, capsules, powders or liquids.

Osteopathy/Osteopathic

Physicians: Osteopathy uses generally accepted physical, pharmacological and surgical methods of diagnosis and therapy, with a strong emphasis on body mechanics and manipulative methods to detect and correct faulty structure and function, in order to restore the body's natural healing capacities. Doctors of Osteopathy (DO) are fully trained and licensed according to the same standards as medical doctors (MD) and receive additional, extensive training in the body's structure and functions. Physical therapists (PT) are being trained in osteopathic manual techniques as well and are considered certified in functional manual medicine (CFMM).

Qigong and Tai Chi

Combine movement, meditation and breath regulation to enhance the body's flow of vital energy (qi or chi, pronounced "chee"), improve circulation, and enhance immune function. Qigong traces its roots to traditional Chinese medicine. Tai chi was originally a self defense martial art and descended from qigong and employed to promote inner peace and calm.

Quantum Touch

Founded by Richard Gordon, Quantum-Touch is a method of natural healing that works with the Life Force Energy of the body to promote optimal wellness. Life Force Energy, also known as "chi" in Chinese and "prana" in Sanskrit, is the flow of energy that sustains all living beings. Quantum-Touch teaches how to focus, amplify, and direct this energy, for a wide range of benefits with surprising and often extraordinary results.

Reflexology

A natural healing art based upon the principle that there are reflexes in the feet and hands that correspond to every part of the body. Correctly stimulating and applying pressure to the feet or hands is thought to increase circulations and promote specifically designated bodily and muscular functions.

Reiki

Means "universal life-force energy." A Japanese method of activating and balancing the life-force (ki, pronounced as "chi", also written as qi). Practitioners use light hand placements to channel healing energies to organs and glands, or to align the body's chakras (energy centers). Studies show various Reiki techniques can ease emotional and mental distress, heal chronic and acute physical problems, and facilitate spiritual focus and clarity. For this reason Reiki is used widely in cancer hospitals. Reiki is often used to complement the work of chiropractors, massage therapists, nurses, and others for whom the use of touch is essential and appropriate.

Shiatsu

The most widely known form of acupressure, Shiatsu is a Japanese word meaning "finger pressure." Practitioners of the technique apply varying degrees of pressure to balance the life energy that flows through specific pathways, or meridians, in the body. Shiatsu is intended to release tension and strengthen weak areas in order to facilitate even circulation, cleanse cells, and improve the function of vital organs. It may be used to help diagnose, prevent and relieve many chronic and acute conditions that manifest on both physical and emotional levels.

Sound Healing

Employs vocal and instrumental tones, generated internally or externally. When sounds are produced with healing intent, they are thought to create sympathetic resonance in the physical and energy bodies. Sound healing also is used to bring discordant energy into balance and harmony.

Spiritual Healing/Counseling

Practiced in two forms. In one, the healer uses thought or touch to align his or her spiritual essence with that of the client. The healer works to either balance the spiritual field or shift the perceptual base of the client to create harmony between mind and body and to draw the client into the active presence of the divine spirit. In the other, the healer transforms healing energy into a vibrational frequency that the client can receive and comfortably assimilate, facilitating self-healing.

Trager Approach (Psychophysical Integration)

A system of movement reeducation that seeks to address the mental roots of muscle tension. By gently rocking, cradling and moving the client's fully clothed body, the practitioner encourages him or her to see that physically restrictive patterns can be changed. The Trager approach includes "mentastics", simple, active, self induced movements that can be done by the client during regular daily activities. Trager work has been used to address a variety of neuromuscular disorders, and to the stresses and discomforts of everyday living.

Yoga

Practical application of the ancient Indian Vedic teachings. The word yoga is derived from the Sanskrit root *yuj* which means "union" or "to join," and which refers to the joining of man's physical, mental and spiritual elements. The goal of good health is accomplished through a combination of techniques, including physical exercises called asanas (or postures), controlled breathing, relaxation, meditation, and diet and nutrition. Although yoga is not meant to cure specific diseases or conditions directly, it has been found effective in treating the symptoms of many physical ailments.