

# Introduction

Profession of massage therapy has established standards for practice.

Using these standards, a therapeutic relationship can be created and sustained.

Professionalism and legal knowledge support ethical decision making.

*Ethics are ideas of right and correct conduct that are based on moral and cultural standards as defined by society.*

*Standards of practice are based on ethical rules, but they are more specific. Standards of practice are ethical principles applied to professional situations.*

# Professionalism and Therapeutic Massage

## MTBOK:

A description of the massage therapy field

A scope of practice for massage therapy

A description of the competencies of an entry-level  
massage therapist in terms of knowledge, skills, and abilities

Terminology as it applies to the field of massage therapy



# Scope of Practice

Knowledge base and practice parameters of a profession  
(i.e., what we can do)

Includes:

- Assessment

- Treatment planning

- Treatment through the manipulation of soft tissue, circulatory fluids, and energy fields, affecting and benefiting all of the body systems

*The scope of practice for massage therapy includes treatment for the following therapeutic purposes, including but not limited to: enhancing health and well-being, providing emotional and physical relaxation, reducing stress, improving posture, facilitating circulation, balancing energy, remediating, relieving pain, repairing and preventing injury, and rehabilitating*



Massage therapy is a bodywork system, but not all bodywork systems are massage

*Other bodywork and somatic practices, such as shiatsu and applied kinesiology, have separately developed systems and philosophies, scopes of practice and educational requirements. As a specific professional practice, massage therapy can achieve client goals through the use of methods based on the definition of massage. Other bodywork systems, in achieving these outcomes, use different methods or have a different philosophy and specific language.)*

# Professionalism

Criteria for a profession:

A specialized body of knowledge (MTBOK)

Extensive training

An orientation toward service

A commonly accepted code of ethics

Legal recognition through certification or licensure by a professional association

A professional association

*Ethics and professionalism are very important to the therapeutic massage profession.*



# Extensive Training

Two main categories of practice:

Wellness

Spa setting

Massage franchise/national massage chains

Independent massage practice

Health care

Sports and fitness setting

Clinical/medical/rehabilitation setting

*These categories and practice settings overlap extensively. However, categorizing information is useful when we are attempting to understand the big picture.*

*Because massage therapy has a history of multiple practice settings, and one person can practice in multiple settings, the situation can become complex.*



## General educational requirements

Undergraduate majors classified as either academic majors or career majors

Federal law defines vocational education as instruction for careers below the baccalaureate level

*The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) categorizes education in this way.*

## General educational requirements, cont'd

Career majors divided into sub-baccalaureate and baccalaureate majors:

At the baccalaureate level, career majors are considered professional (non-vocational).

At the sub-baccalaureate level, they are considered vocational.



# Where does education in massage therapy fit in?

Most massage therapy education provided in less-than-1-year certificate or diploma and associate's degree programs.

# Entry-Level Practice: Spa Setting

Encompasses range of massage services for wellness- and pleasure-based massage

Can be considered a massage specialty requiring additional education and experience

Career development:

Employee pathway

*These services can overlap with sports and fitness massage and massage directly related to health care in the so-called medical spa.*



# Entry-Level Practice: Massage Franchise

Fast becoming largest employer of massage therapists

Career development:

Employee pathway

*Franchises offer a subscription-based model for clients, making massage affordable.*

*Because franchises handle all the marketing and business responsibilities, they provide an excellent entry-level opportunity.*

# Entry-Level Practice: Independent Massage Practice

Most complex due to varied structure options

Career development:

- Self-employment

- Independent contractor in various environments

- Massage clinic (independent of franchise)

*These career paths can serve as entry-level jobs; however, the demands of the clients and complex outcomes for the massage typically require a commitment to advanced education and experience.*



# Entry-Level Practice: Sports and Fitness Setting

Covers spectrum of massage outcomes

Career development:

Self-employment

Employee

*The sports and fitness career path covers a spectrum of massage outcomes, ranging from wellness to medical intervention typically (but not exclusively) based on issues related to environments that support exercise and sports performance.*

*Continuing education is necessary for a practitioner to become confident and proficient in this area.*

# Entry-Level Practice: Clinical/Medical/Rehabilitation Setting

Emerging as a primary avenue for massage practice

Use of massage therapy in hospitals has become more common

*Reasons massage may be offered in hospitals include stress-related issues, pain management, pregnancy massage, aid to physical therapy, mobility/ movement training, and palliative care.*

*Continuing education is required to enable the practitioner to become confident and proficient providing this type of massage therapy.*



# Entry-Level Practice: Education Requirements

500 to 750 contact hours (10 to 15 credit hours) may be sufficient for basic wellness massage methods

1,000 contact hours (20 to 24 credit hours) probably is more appropriate for supporting professional development in wellness area

*Programs of 500 to 1,000 contact hours do not provide sufficient time for integration of clinical reasoning methods; extensive physical assessment procedures; and the study of pathology, pharmacology, and psychology, as well as other information the massage professional needs to work effectively with other health care professionals and with complicated, multifaceted health concerns.*

*The same can be said for sports massage or working with athletes. To work effectively with athletes, the professional must have an in-depth education in the dynamics of sports activity, the injury process, and rehabilitation.*



# Educational Trends

Moving toward two trends:

Vocationally trained wellness massage service paraprofessionals and professionals in the health care area

Degree-holding professionals in the allied health care system

*Most models fall in the service or paraprofessional realms, but increasingly, programs offering degrees have come about both in the United States and abroad.*

# Orientation to Service

“To meet a need.”

Although reimbursement is expected for services rendered, the desire to meet a need takes precedence over financial return.

*Providers of therapeutic massage have an orientation toward service, sometimes to the detriment of sound business practices.*

*Although caring for the people we serve is important, it is just as important to generate the necessary and appropriate income base to support the professional practice and a reasonably comfortable lifestyle for the professional.*



# Code of Ethics

Agreed-upon set of behaviors developed to promote high standards of practice

No agreement has been reached on a specific code of ethics to serve the entire massage profession

# Certification/Licensure

In states that regulate massage therapy, massage therapists must meet legal requirements to practice

May include fulfilling minimum number of hours of initial training and passing an examination

*Currently, all U.S. states (except six at this writing), the District of Columbia, at least half of the Canadian provinces, and many other countries have formal licensing or legislated certification for massage professionals.*



# Membership in Professional Organization

Several organizations represent the therapeutic massage profession

Each of the various bodywork methods (e.g., reflexology, shiatsu, polarity) has its own professional organization

*Although diversity is good for a profession and supports professional development, the lack of coherence in the field of therapeutic massage often confuses the public, ourselves, and other professionals.*

# Finding a Name

According to MTBOK, we are “massage therapists,” and we provide “massage therapy.”

*A question still exists as to whether the current educational requirements support the terms “professional” and “therapist.”*



A technician has expertise in a technical skill or process.

A practitioner practices an occupation or profession.

A therapist treats illness or disability.

*A technician has the least training and the most limited scope of practice in a professional group.*

*A practitioner operates from a greater knowledge base and within a larger scope of practice than does a technician. Another term that could be used is Paraprofessional*

*A therapist has the highest educational background and has the broadest scope of practice.*

# Definition of Therapeutic Massage

Approaches to therapeutic massage include:

Asian

Structural and postural integration

Neuromuscular

Manual lymphatic drainage

Energetic (biofield)

Craniosacral and myofascial

Applied kinesiology

Integrated



*Detailed knowledge of each approach is not necessarily important for several reasons: The information about each changes rapidly; and these systems and styles all are variations on a theme: a core body of knowledge exists from which the different approaches have evolved, and they each can be explained based on physiologic effects. Thus, it is important to know the core knowledge and the physiologic effects.)*

# Definition of Therapeutic Massage

The term *bodywork* covers various types of hands-on modalities

Individual systems observe different styles

Overlap of methods

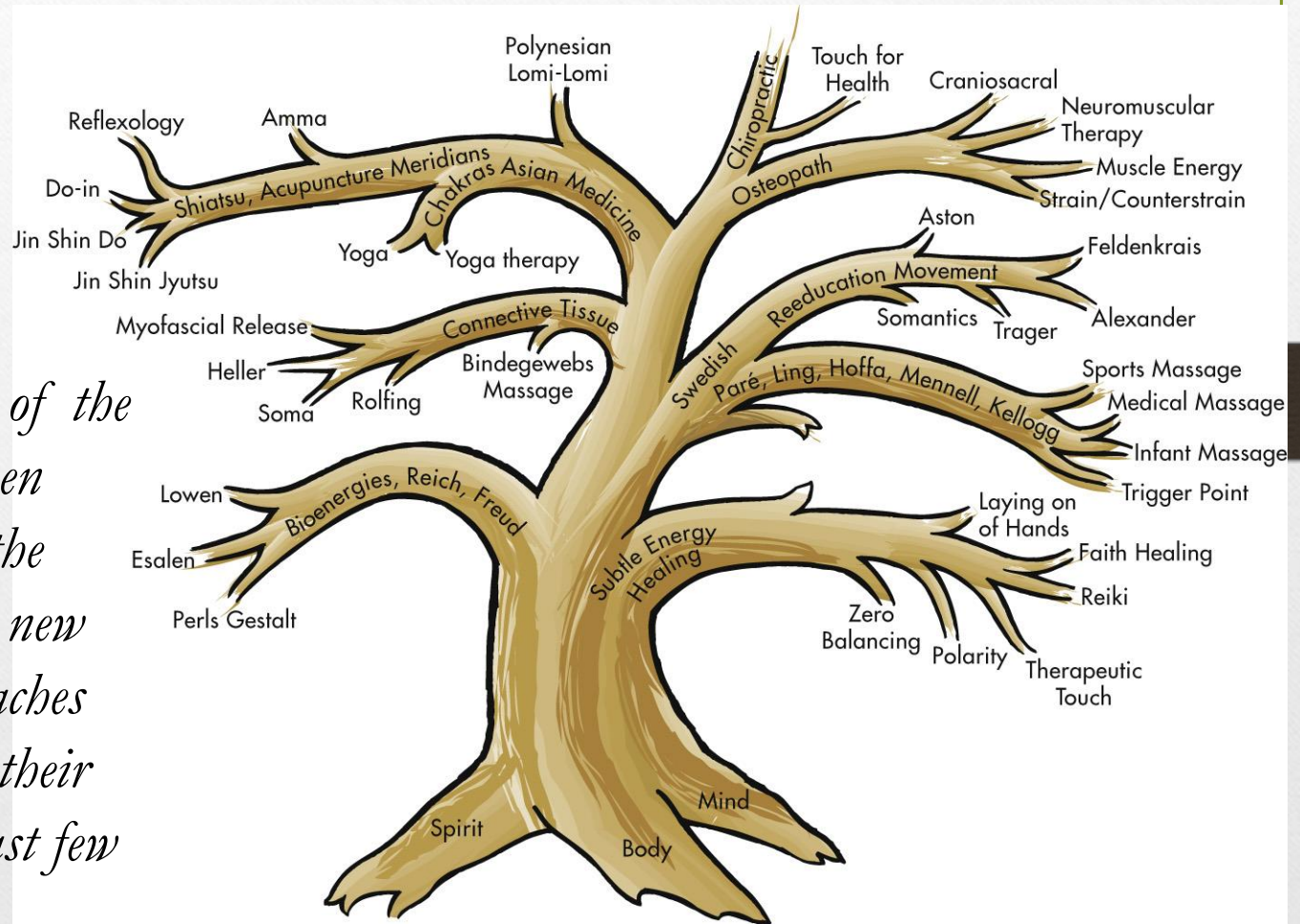
*By carefully examining any style or system of massage, the student can see that basic methods are used to stimulate sensory receptors.*



# Therapeutic Massage Tree

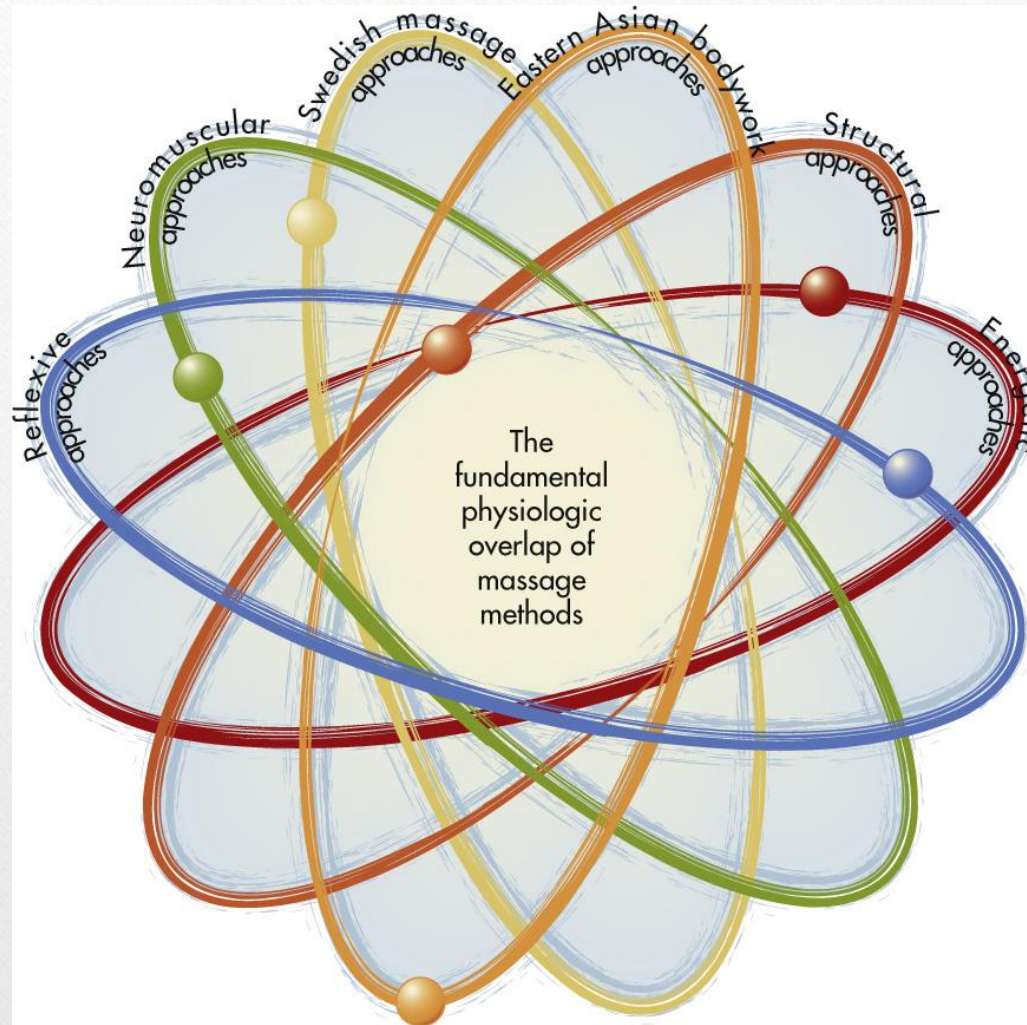
Diversity of approaches all stem from the same roots.

*Although most of the systems have been developed over the centuries, a few new massage approaches have come into their own over the past few years.*





# Overlap of Massage Methods





# Defining Massage

Definition must encompass all the methods used by various approaches

Massage is a collection of skills, not a single skill



## Box 2-4 Definitions of Therapeutic Massage

### Massage Therapy Body of Knowledge\*

Massage therapy is a health care and wellness profession. The practice of massage therapy involves a client-centered session that is intended to fulfill therapeutic goals and in which the therapist has no personal agenda. Massage therapy also meets the well-researched need for touch and human connection. Massage therapy is about one human being touching another with clear intention, focused attention, and an attitude that is compassionate and nonjudgmental. During a session the massage therapist incorporates a wide variety of techniques and approaches to address the client's varied focuses, which may include any or all of the following:

- Treating an injury or a condition
- Relaxation
- Reducing stress
- Wellness
- Enhancing personal growth
- Encouraging awareness of the body
- Facilitating the balance and interconnection of the body, mind, and spirit

### Definition Derived from Licensing, Certification, and Professional Organizations

Therapeutic massage is the scientific art and system of assessment and systematic, manual application of a technique to the superficial soft tissue of the skin, muscles, tendons, ligaments, and fascia (and to the structures that lie within the superficial tissue) using the hand, foot, knee, arm, elbow, and forearm. The

manual technique involves systematic application of touch, stroking (effleurage), friction, vibration, percussion, kneading (pétrissage), stretching, compression, or passive and active joint movements within the normal physiologic range of motion. Included are adjunctive external applications of water, heat, and cold for the purposes of establishing and maintaining good physical condition and health by normalizing and improving muscle tone, promoting relaxation, stimulating circulation, and producing therapeutic effects on the respiratory and nervous systems and the subtle interactions among all body systems. These intended effects are accomplished through the physiologic, energetic, and mind/body connections in a safe, non-sexual environment that respects the client's self-determined outcome for the session.

### National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM)<sup>†</sup>

The term *massage therapy* (also called *massage*, for short; *massage* also refers to an individual treatment session) covers a group of practices and techniques. More than 80 types of massage therapy exist. In all of them, the therapist presses, rubs, and otherwise manipulates the muscles and other soft tissues of the body, often varying pressure and movement. The hands and fingers most often are used for this purpose, but the forearms, elbows, or feet also may be used. Typically, the intent is to relax the soft tissues, increase the delivery of blood and oxygen to the massaged areas, warm them, and reduce pain.



# Scope of Practice

Defines knowledge base and practice parameters of a profession

Overlap can occur

Defined and regulated by the government agency that has jurisdiction over the location of the practice

*The individual practitioner is responsible for becoming fully informed about and compliant with regulations.*

*Professionals must be able to determine the parameters of ethical practice within their scope of practice. True professionals understand the limits of their technical skills and scopes of practice and choose to work with other professionals for the best possible outcome for the client.*

### Box 2-5 Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Massage

#### **Ethical Principles**

The four basic principles that constitute the code of ethics for massage professionals are as follows:

- *Respect for the dignity of people:* Massage professionals must maintain respect for the interests, dignity, rights, and needs of all clients, staff, and colleagues.
- *Responsible caring:* Competent, quality client care must be provided at the highest standard possible.
- *Integrity in relationships:* At all times the professional must behave with integrity, honesty, and diligence in practice and duties.
- *Responsibility to society:* Massage professionals are responsible and accountable to society and must conduct themselves in a manner that maintains high ethical standards.

#### **Standards of Practice**

The principles of the code of ethics form the basis of the following standards of practice for massage professionals.

1. Respect all clients, colleagues, and health care professionals through nondiscrimination, regardless of age, gender, race, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, socioeconomic status, body type, political

affiliation, state of health, personal habits, and life-coping skills.

2. Perform only those services for which the massage professional is qualified. Massage professionals must honestly represent their education, certification, professional affiliations, and other qualifications. They may apply a treatment only when a reasonable expectation exists that it will be advantageous to the client's condition. The massage professional, in consultation with the client, must continually evaluate the effectiveness of treatment.
3. Respect the scope of practice of other health care and service professionals, including physicians, chiropractors, physical therapists, podiatrists, orthopedists, psychotherapists, counselors, acupuncturists, nurses, exercise physiologists, athletic trainers, nutritionists, spiritual advisors, and cosmetologists.
4. Respect all ethical health care practitioners and work with them to promote health and healing.
5. Acknowledge the limitations of personal skills and, when necessary, refer clients to an appropriately qualified professional. The massage professional must consult with other knowledgeable professionals when:

*Continued*



**Box 2-5** Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Massage—cont'd

- A client requires diagnosis and opinion beyond a therapist's capabilities of assessment
- A client's condition is beyond the massage professional's scope of practice
- A combined health care team is required
  - If referral to another health care provider is necessary, it must be done with the client's informed consent.
- 6. Refrain from working with any individual who has a specific disease process without supervision by a licensed medical professional.
- 7. Be adequately educated and understand the physiologic effects of the specific massage techniques used to determine whether any application is contraindicated and to ensure that the most beneficial techniques are applied to a given individual.
- 8. Avoid false claims about the potential benefits of the techniques rendered and educate the public about the actual benefits of massage. Strive to maintain an evidence-based practice.
- 9. Acknowledge the importance and individuality of each person, including colleagues, peers, and clients.
- 10. Work only with the informed consent of a client and professionally disclose to the client any situation that may interfere with the massage professional's ability to provide the best care to serve the client's best interest.
- 11. Show respect by honoring a client's process and following all recommendations and by being present, listening, asking only pertinent questions, keeping agreements, being on time, draping properly, and customizing the massage to address the client's needs.

*Note:* Draping is covered in Chapter 9. The Ontario guidelines specify the following requirements for draping (Regulated Health Professions Act, 1992):

- It is the responsibility of the massage professional to ensure the privacy and dignity of the client and to determine whether the client feels comfortable, safe, and secure with the draping provided.
  - The client may choose to be fully draped or clothed throughout the treatment.
  - A female client's breasts are not undraped unless specified by referral from a qualified health care professional and the massage professional is working under the supervision of such a health care professional.
  - The genitals, perineum, and anus are never undraped. The client's consent is required for work on any part of the body, regardless of whether the client is fully clothed, fully draped, or partly draped.
12. Provide a safe, comfortable, and clean environment.
  13. Maintain clear and honest communication with clients and keep client communications confidential.

Confidentiality is of the utmost importance. The massage professional must inform the client that the referring physician may be eligible to review the client's records and that records may be subpoenaed by the courts.

14. Conduct business in a professional and ethical manner in relation to clientele, business associates, acquaintances, government bodies, and the public.
15. Follow city, county, state, national, and international requirements.
16. Charge a fair price for the session. Gratuities are appropriate if within reasonable limits (i.e., similar to percentages for other service providers, such as 10% to 20%). A gift, gratuity, or benefit that is intended to influence a referral, decision, or treatment may not be accepted and must be returned to the giver immediately.
17. Keep accurate records and review the records with the client.
18. Never engage in any sexual conduct, sexual conversation, or any other sexual activities involving clients.
19. Avoid affiliation with any business that uses any form of sexual suggestiveness or explicit sexuality in advertising or promoting services or in the actual practice of service.
20. Practice honesty in advertising, promoting services ethically and in good taste and advertising only techniques for which the professional is certified or adequately trained.
21. Strive for professional excellence through regular assessment of personal strengths, limitations, and effectiveness and through continuing education and training.
22. Accept the responsibility to oneself, one's clients, and the profession to maintain physical, mental, and emotional well-being and to inform clients when one is not functioning at full capacity.
23. Refrain from using any mind-altering drugs, alcohol, or intoxicants before or during professional massage sessions.
24. Maintain a professional appearance and demeanor by practicing good hygiene and dressing in a professional, modest, and nonsexual manner.
25. Undergo periodic peer review.
26. Respect all pertinent reporting requirements outlined by legislation regarding abuse.
27. Report to the proper authorities any accurate knowledge and its supportive documentation regarding violations by massage professionals and other health or service professionals.
28. Avoid interests, activities, or influences that might conflict with the obligation to act in the best interest of clients and the massage therapy profession and safeguard professional integrity by recognizing potential conflicts of interest and avoiding them.



## Box 2-6 Occupational Definitions and Scopes of Practice

The scope of practice described for the following professions is derived from regulations typically established to govern these occupations. The regulations predominantly used for these descriptions are the administrative rules of the Michigan Occupational Regulations' Department of Licensing and Regulation and the Occupational Regulations section of the Michigan Public Health Code.

### Acupuncture

Acupuncture is a form of primary health care based on traditional Chinese medical concepts. It uses acupuncture diagnosis and treatment, in addition to adjunctive therapies and diagnostic techniques, to promote, maintain, and restore health and prevent disease. Acupuncture includes but is not limited to insertion of acupuncture needles and application of moxibustion (medicinal herbs burned on or near the skin) to specific areas of the human body.

### Athletic Training

Athletic training is the study of athletic performance, injury prevention, and rehabilitation. It includes training regimens; evaluation and assessment of injury; treatment, rehabilitation, and reconditioning of athletic injury; therapeutic exercise; and use of therapeutic modalities.

### Chiropractic

Chiropractic is the discipline within the healing arts that deals with the nervous system, its relationship to the spinal column, and its interrelationship with the other body systems. Chiropractic uses radiography to detect spinal subluxation and misalignment and adjusts related bones and tissues to establish neural integrity through techniques that use the inherent recuperative powers of the body to restore and maintain health. Examples of these techniques include the use of analytic instruments, the provision of nutritional advice, and the prescribing of rehabilitative exercise. Chiropractic does not include the performance of incise surgical procedures or any invasive procedure that requires instrumentation or the dispensing or prescription of drugs or medicine.

### Cosmetology

Cosmetology is a service provided to enhance the health, condition, and appearance of the skin, hair, and nails through the use of external preparations designed to cleanse and beautify. It includes the application of beautification processes, such as makeup and skin grooming.

### Dentistry

Dentistry is the discipline of diagnosis, treatment, prescription, and surgery for disease, pain, deformity, deficiency, or injury of human teeth, alveolar processes, gums, jaws, and dependent tissues. Dentistry also is concerned with preventive care and the maintenance of good oral health.

### Esthetics

An esthetician is a person who works to clean and beautify the skin.

### Medicine

Medicine is the diagnosis, treatment, prevention, cure, or relief of human disease, ailment, defect, complaint, or other physical or mental condition by attendance, advice, device, diagnostic test, or other means.

### Naturopathy

Naturopathy is the combination of clinical nutrition, herbology, homeopathy, acupuncture, manipulation, hydrotherapy, massage, exercise, and psychological methods, including hypnotherapy and biofeedback, to maintain health. Naturopathic physicians use radiography, ultrasound, and other forms of diagnostic testing but do not perform major surgery or prescribe synthetic drugs.

### Nursing

Nursing is the systematic application of substantial specialized knowledge and skill, derived from the biologic, physical, and behavioral sciences, to the care, treatment, counsel, and health education of individuals who are experiencing changes in the normal health process or who require assistance in the maintenance of health and the prevention or management of illness, injury, and disability.

### Osteopathic Medicine

Osteopathic medicine is an independent school of medicine and surgery that uses full methods of diagnosis and treatment in physical and mental health and disease, including the prescription and administration of drugs and vitamins; operative surgery; obstetrics; and radiologic and electromagnetic diagnostics. Osteopathy emphasizes the interrelationship of the musculoskeletal system with other body systems.

### Physical Therapy

Physical therapy is the evaluation or treatment of an individual by the use of effective physical measures, therapeutic exercise, and rehabilitative procedures, with or without devices, to prevent, correct, or alleviate a physical or mental disability. It includes treatment planning, the performance of tests and measurements, interpretation of referrals, instruction, consultative services, and supervision of personnel. Physical measures include massage, mobilization, and the application of heat, cold, air, light, water, electricity, and sound.

### Podiatric Medicine

Podiatric medicine is the examination, diagnosis, and treatment of abnormal nails and superficial excrescences (abnormal outgrowths or enlargements) on the human feet, including corns, warts, callosities, bunions, and arch troubles. It also includes the medical, surgical, or mechanical treatment and physiotherapy of ailments that affect the condition of the feet. It does not include amputation of the feet or the use or administration of general anesthetics.

### Psychology

Psychology is the rendering to individuals, groups, organizations, or the public service involving the application of principles, methods, and procedures of understanding, predicting, and influencing behavior for the purpose of diagnosis, assessment, prevention, amelioration, or treatment of mental or emotional disorders, disabilities, and behavioral adjustment problems. Treatment is provided by means of psychotherapy, counseling, behavior modification, hypnosis, biofeedback techniques, psychological tests, and other verbal or behavioral methods. Psychology does not include the prescription of drugs, performance of surgery, or administration of electroconvulsive therapy.



Limits of practice—respect the scope of practice of the other professionals:

Acupuncture

Athletic Training

Chiropractic

Cosmetology

Dentistry

Esthetics

Medicine

Naturopathy

Nursing

Osteopathic medicine

Physical therapy

Podiatric medicine

Psychology

*Understanding that professionals cannot do everything, and that there is a time to defer to other professionals' knowledge.*

# Wellness and Personal Services

Focus on education and massage methods that encourage normal self-regulating mechanisms of the mind and body

Key goal:

Maintain and enhance client's health

*Wellness and personal services are aimed at normalizing the body systems.*

*In addition to massage skills, the massage professional must be educated and skilled in teaching prevention measures and encouraging a general wellness lifestyle for clients.*



Allows therapeutic massage professional to work most independently

Most varied clientele

*Managing stress is a large part of this career track, so that clients do not become ill and require medical attention.*

## Massage approach:

External manual stimulation of the nervous, circulatory, and respiratory systems; connective tissue; and muscles

Other relaxation responses to increase client's well-being

*The plan for the massage session is developed by combining information, desired massage outcomes, and directions from the client with the skills of the massage practitioner to provide an individualized massage session aimed at normalizing the body systems.*

*What are some of the goals of the massage session? Generalized stress reduction, decrease in muscle tension, symptomatic relief of pain, increased circulation, other benefits similar to those of exercise.*



# Health Care and Sports Massage Services

Health care and sports massage parameters:

Develop, maintain, rehabilitate, or augment physical function

Relieve or prevent dysfunction and pain

Enhance the well-being of the client

*The professional world of health care requires specific training for the skilled application of massage to promote rehabilitation and performance and to manage pathologic conditions.*

*What are some of the methods used in clinical and rehabilitative massage? Assessment of the soft tissue and joints, as well as treatment by soft tissue manipulation, hydrotherapy, remedial exercise programs, and client self-care programs.*



# Scope of Practice for Therapeutic Massage Professionals

*Wellness massage practitioners do not work with sick or injured people unless directly supervised by licensed and qualified professionals, such as physicians, nurses, and physical therapists.*

*They help most of the population, who are not sick but are stressed and uncomfortable, to feel better and cope with stress.*

<p><b>Normal Adaptation</b> Client displays resourceful functioning with good ability to respond to and recover from stress.</p> <p><b>Massage Training</b> 500+ hours of education.</p> <p><b>Health Care Supervision Required?</b> No.</p> <p><b>Support Professionals</b> Fitness trainers, cosmetologists, wellness educators, prevention and healthy lifestyle focused health care and mental health professionals.</p>	<p><b>Ineffective and Strained Adaptation</b> (Scope of practice encompasses Normal Adaptation) Client displays ability to function with effort and reduced ability to respond to and recover from stress. Recovery time is increased. Client demands extraordinary function of body.</p> <p><b>Massage Training</b> 1000+ hours of education.</p>	<p><b>Poor Ability to Adapt</b> (Scope of practice encompasses technician and practitioner levels) Client displays function breakdown — substantially reduced ability to respond and recover or extensive healing period required such as with surgery and trauma.</p> <p><b>Massage Training</b> 2000+ hours of education.</p>
<p><b>Health Care or Athletic Trainer Supervision Required?</b> Possibly. No for wellness service and mild dysfunctional patterns. Moderate to identifiable dysfunctional pattern — Yes, but indirect; attention to referral needs is important.</p> <p><b>Support Professionals</b> Athletic trainers — exercise physiologist, health care and mental health professionals — spiritually based support.</p>		
<p><b>Health Care Supervision Required?</b> Yes. Direct supervision for all clients in this category; Possibly for dysfunctional category; No for wellness clients.</p> <p><b>Support Professionals</b> Entire multidisciplinary team — health care/mental health professionals — spiritually based support.</p>		

- ☒ Comprehensive scope of practice for therapeutic massage
- ☐ Wellness personal service scope of practice for therapeutic massage
- ☐ Dysfunctional and athletic patterns scope of practice for therapeutic massage
- ☐ Illness/trauma scope of practice for therapeutic massage

# Limits of Practice

Legal limits

Personal limits:

- Type and extent of education

- Personal biases

- Life experiences

- Specific interests in terms of the type of client served

- Physical limitations, such as size and endurance levels



*Respectful practice of therapeutic massage limits the scope of practice so that the practitioner does not encroach on the scope of practice of other professionals.*

*Limits of practice free us from falling into the trap of believing we must be all things to all people.*

Client's ability to adapt

Categories of adaptation:

Effective or good ability to adapt

Ineffective or moderate and strained ability to adapt

Poor ability or inability to adapt

*The ability of the clients to adapt to internal and external stressors can indicate where they are on the health to illness continuum.*



# Effective or Good Ability to Adapt

Generally in good health

Functions well

Able to conduct satisfying work

Copes with stressors well

Flexible

Massage goal:

Maintain and enhance health and well-being

*Massage professionals should be able to teach general methods of stress management, including effective breathing, progressive relaxation, and quieting responses (meditation-type activities); they should be able to give general dietary recommendations; and they should emphasize the importance of appropriate exercise programs.*



# Ineffective Ability to Adapt

Stressed and/or chronically ill

Functions with effort (performance strain)

Beginning to break down

Needs intervention to cope with stressors

*A massage professional who works with individuals in this category requires a broader-based education that should encompass stress response, the origin of physical and mental difficulties, methods of improving functioning, standard health care interventions, and training protocols.*

Massage goals:

Help move toward normal functioning

Regain personal control of the body/mind/spirit systems

Achieve and maintain optimum health

*A multidisciplinary team approach may need to be involved in developing a treatment plan.*



# Poor Ability or Inability to Adapt

May be experiencing illness or injury

Ability to function/cope is lost

Require comprehensive intervention

*Massage must be used very carefully during acute illnesses as the client may have difficulty handling any additional adaptation demands created by massage.*

Massage goals:

Supports health care approaches

Palliative (comfort) care

*A massage therapist working with individuals facing these severe situations and conditions must be part of a health care team monitored carefully and supervised by a health care professional.*

*The massage professional needs additional training in many areas.*



# Body/Mind/Spirit Connection

Feelings are body functions

Cannot be separated

Multidisciplinary team approach works best

*Professional skill levels, the parameters of the scope of practice, and avoidance of dual and multiple roles in the professional relationship artificially divide the body, mind, and spirit functioning of the person seeking assistance.*

*A multidisciplinary, integrative approach to care is best, with professionals working together to support a comprehensive care plan that addresses all the client's needs.*

# Determining Limits of Practice

Make sure responses to client are from a body and massage perspective

Is issue body, mind, or spirit related?

Respect other professionals

Maintain appropriate scope of practice

*The severity or complexity of a situation determines whether simple listening, without advice being given, is sufficient or whether a professional referral is indicated.*



# Evidence-Based Practice

The conscientious, explicit, and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care of individual patients.

*Evidence-based practice requires that decisions about health care be based on the best available, current, valid, and relevant evidence.*

*These decisions should be made by those receiving care, informed by the knowledge of those providing care, within the context of available resources.*

Find, read, and analyze research

Analyze accuracy of clinically based evidence of massage benefit when research is not able to validate massage result

Use clinical reasoning to apply the information to massage practice

*To function in the evidence-based health care structure, you must be able to do these things.*



Apply information derived from clinical reasoning process to develop outcome-based massage sessions

Justify decisions on indications for and contraindications to massage applications for individual clients

Address each client in a client-centered manner, individualizing the massage based on valid evidence

*To function in the evidence-based health care structure, you must be able to do these things.*

# Evidence in Evidence-Based Practice

Evidence generated from range of sources:

Academic journals

Massage Therapy Foundation

Research and systematic reviews of research

The Internet

Data gathered from other massage therapists

Knowledge gained from experienced massage therapists and other health professionals



*Once evidence has been gathered, the following questions must be answered:*

*How relevant is the evidence to what we are seeking to understand or decide?*

*How does the evidence represent the population that concerns us?*

# Evidence-Informed Practice

Practice knowledge and experience

The opinions of colleagues and other professionals

Intuitive or gut feelings

The wishes and experience of clients

Evidence from research in massage or other, similar disciplines

*Research cannot always be related to practice. When we provide therapeutic massage for a client, we want to be as evidence based as possible and be evidence informed when definitive evidence does not exist.*



# Ethics

Defines the behavior we expect of ourselves and others and society's expectations of a profession

Also a system of principles that tie together in a reasonable, coherent way to make our society and lives as civilized as possible

*Problem-solving approaches are utilized all the time in the clinical practice of massage therapy.*

*The steps for problem solving an ethical dilemma and for determining the cause of upper-back pain are not so different; they are just the same process applied to different problems.*

## Mandatory ethics

Compliance with the law is the only motivation in ethical behavior

## Aspirational ethics

Professional strives for the highest possible benefit and welfare for the client

*Through their behavior, professionals can comply both with the law and with professional codes.*

*Professionals can monitor their own behavior by asking themselves often whether they are doing what is best for the client and whether their behavior is ethical.*



# Ethical Principles

## Respect

Esteem and regard for clients, other professionals, and oneself

## Client autonomy and self-determination

Freedom to decide and the right to sufficient information to make a decision

## Veracity

Right to the objective truth

## Proportionality

Benefit must outweigh burden of treatment

## Non-maleficence

A professional shall do no harm and prevent harm from happening.

## Beneficence

Treatment should contribute to the client's well-being.

## Confidentiality

Privacy of information must be respected.

## Justice—equality

*These broad concepts direct the development of standards of practice.*



# Standards of Practice

Provide specific guidelines and rules that form a concrete professional structure

Direct quality care and provide a means of measuring the quality of care

Based on ethical principles

*Any professional endeavor must be able to measure effects of treatment in order to sustain itself as a profession.*

# Code of Ethics

## Ethical principles

Respect for the dignity of people

Responsible caring

Integrity in relationships

Responsibility to society

*Standards of practice usually are more concrete than ethical principles*



# Informed Consent

Informed consent requires that clients

- understand what will occur

- participate voluntarily

- be competent to give consent

Guardians must provide consent for minors or for others unable to do so.

Discussions leading to consent can clarify ethical “gray areas.”

*In all cases, the professional is responsible for providing the client with this information.*

# Components of Informed Consent

What are the goals of the therapeutic program?

What services will be provided?

What behavior is expected of the client?

What are the risks and benefits of the process?

What are the practitioner's qualifications?

What are the financial considerations?

How long is the therapy expected to last?

What are the limitations of confidentiality?

In what areas does the professional have mandatory reporting requirements?



*Each of these components might seem like common sense, but it's important to make sure that nothing is overlooked in the bustle of the intake, when the client might be anxious or in pain.*

# Intake Procedures

## Needs assessment

Based on client's history and physical assessment

Used to devise initial treatment plan

## Initial treatment plan

States therapeutic goals, duration of sessions, number of appts needed to meet goals, cost, intervention to be used

Establishes objective progress measurement for identifying when goals have been reached

*Single or random massage sessions usually do not require a full needs assessment or a treatment plan; instead, possible contraindications to massage are identified.)*



# Sequence for Obtaining Informed Consent

The massage professional:

1. Provides general explanation of massage, supported by written information

2. Informs client about

Scope of practice for massage

Reporting measures for professional misconduct and recourse policies

Professional's training, experience, and credentials

Any limiting factors that may affect the professional relationship

3. Massage professional discusses business and professional policies and procedures, including consequences of noncompliance by the client; gives written information

Client brochure and policy statement

4. Client signs an informed consent form

*Therapists can make sure clients are informed by reviewing the information aloud.*



# Client Brochure and Policy Statement

Give clients written policy information, such as a brochure, describing:

- Type of service

- Training and experience

- Appointment policies

- Client/practitioner expectations

- Fees

- Statement of sexual appropriateness

- Recourse policy

# Needs Assessment and Initial Care/Treatment Plan

Includes:

Specific outcomes (i.e., the therapeutic goals)

Frequency of visits (number of appointments per week or month) and duration of visits

e.g., 30, 45, or 60 minutes

Estimated number of appointments needed to achieve the therapeutic goals

e.g., 10 sessions, 15 sessions, ongoing



*First, the client's goals and desired outcomes for the massage sessions are determined.*

*The client agrees to proceed with the next part of the session, which consists of history taking using a client information form and a physical assessment using an assessment form.*

*The information is evaluated to develop a care plan for the client; this is called a needs assessment.*

*Care plans usually envision a series of sessions.*

Includes:

General methods to be used

e.g., therapeutic massage, muscle energy methods,  
neuromuscular methods

Objective progress measurements

e.g., pain reduced on a scale of 1 to 10, 50% increase in  
range of motion, sleep improved by increasing 1 hour  
per night

*The client provides informed consent for the care or treatment plan by  
signing the appropriate form.*



### Box 2-9

## Needs Assessment and Development of the Initial Care or Treatment Plan

First, the client's goals and desired outcomes for the massage sessions are determined. The client agrees to proceed with the next part of the session, which consists of history taking using a client information form and a physical assessment using an assessment form (see Chapters 4 and 11). The information is evaluated to develop a care plan for the client; this is called a *needs assessment*. Care plans usually envision a series of sessions.

A care or treatment plan is developed that spells out the following:

- Specific outcomes (i.e., the therapeutic goals)
- Frequency of visits (number of appointments per week or month) and duration of visits (e.g., 30, 45, or 60 minutes)
- Estimated number of appointments needed to achieve the therapeutic goals (e.g., 10 sessions, 15 sessions, ongoing)
- General methods to be used (e.g., therapeutic massage, muscle energy methods, neuromuscular methods, trigger point techniques)
- Objective progress measurements (e.g., pain reduced on a scale of 1 to 10, 50% increase in range of motion, sleep improved by increasing 1 hour per night, episodes of tension headache reduced from four per week to one per week, feelings of relaxation maintained for 24 hours)

The client provides (informed) consent for the care or treatment plan by signing the appropriate form.



## Box 2-10 Informed Consent Process

A new client arrives for a massage. (Let's assume in this case that both the client and the massage therapist are women.)

The massage professional shows the client an informational brochure explaining massage, the reasons it works, the procedures and process of massage, the benefits of massage, and the general contraindications. She asks the client to read the information. The massage professional then discusses the information with the client. In general terms the massage professional explains alternatives to massage, such as exercise and self-hypnosis, that provide benefits similar to massage.

The massage professional then tells the client about her professional background. For example, that she graduated from a state-licensed massage therapy school 2 years ago, after a training program of 1000 hours; that she has been nationally certified by the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage; that she has been in professional practice part

time for 2 years and averages eight massages a week; and that she has taken additional training in myofascial approaches and massage for elderly people (approximately 100 hours for each). The client also is given information on methods of reporting misconduct by the massage therapist to state agencies, national professional organizations, and the police.

The massage therapist gives the client the policy and procedures booklet or statement and asks her to read it. After she has done so, the massage professional goes over the booklet with the client, point by point, so that she understands the massage therapist's rules and requirements. The massage professional makes sure to discuss the requirements to report abuse and any threat of deadly harm, in addition to the release of files by court order.

The massage professional then hands the client a consent form (such as the following example).

I, (client's name) \_\_\_\_\_, have received a copy of the policies for Massage Works operated by Sue and John Grey. I have read Massage Works' policies, and I understand them. The massage procedures, information about massage in general, general benefits of massage, contraindications to massage, and possible alternatives have been explained to me. The qualifications of the massage professional and reporting measures for misconduct have been disclosed to me.

I understand that the massage I receive is for the purpose of stress reduction and relief from muscular tension, spasm, or pain and to increase circulation. If I experience any pain or discomfort, I will immediately inform the massage practitioner so that the pressure or methods can be adjusted to my comfort level. I understand that massage professionals do not diagnose illness or disease or perform any spinal manipulations, nor do they prescribe any medical treatments, and nothing said or done during the session should be construed as such. I acknowledge that massage is not a substitute for medical examination or diagnosis and that I should see a health care provider for those services. Because massage should not be performed under certain circumstances, I agree to keep the massage practitioner updated as to any changes in my health profile, and I release the massage professional from any liability if I fail to do so.

Client's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Therapist's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Consent to Treat a Minor

By my signature I authorize (therapist's name) to provide therapeutic massage to my child or dependent.

Signature of Parent or Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

For clients who will have several sessions, the next step is completion of the needs assessment and initial care or treatment plan (presented in detail in Chapter 4).

### Modified Informed Consent Form for Single Session

For clients who will be seen only once (e.g., the professional is working on a cruise ship, doing sports massage at an event, or doing promotional chair massage at a health fair), the following modification in informed consent can be made.

I, (client's name) \_\_\_\_\_, have received a copy of the policies for (name of business) \_\_\_\_\_, operated by (owner) \_\_\_\_\_. I have read the rules and policies, and I understand them. The general benefits of massage and contraindications to massage have been explained to me. I have disclosed to the therapist any condition I have that would contraindicate massage. Other than to determine contraindications, I understand that no specific needs assessment has been performed. The qualifications of the massage professional and reporting measures for misconduct have been disclosed to me.

I understand that the massage I receive is for the purpose of stress reduction and relief from muscular tension, spasm, or pain and to increase circulation. If I experience any pain or discomfort, I will immediately inform the massage practitioner so that the pressure or methods can be adjusted to my comfort level. I understand that massage professionals do not diagnose illness or disease or perform any spinal manipulations, nor do they prescribe any medical treatments. I acknowledge that massage is not a substitute for medical examination or diagnosis and that I should see a health care provider for those services.

I understand that a single massage session or massage used on a random basis is limited to providing a general, nonspecific massage approach using standard massage methods and does not include any methods to address soft tissue structure or function specifically.

Client's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Therapist's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Consent to Treat a Minor

By my signature I authorize (therapist's name) to provide massage work to my child or dependent.

Signature of Parent or Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



# Confidentiality

Confidentiality is the principle that a client's information is private and belongs to the client.

To allow professionals to exchange information, the client must sign a release of information form.

Confidentiality also refers to public recognition of the relationship.

*Confidentiality can be broken legally under some circumstances, such as when a court orders the records to be released, or when professionals are required to report abuse and threat of deadly harm.*

# Release of Information Form

## Box 2-11 Release of Information Form

The following is an example of a release of information form.

I, (client's name) \_\_\_\_\_, grant permission for \_\_\_\_\_ (therapist's name), a massage practitioner, to provide or exchange information with (other professional's name) \_\_\_\_\_ about the following conditions \_\_\_\_\_ for the time frame beginning \_\_\_\_\_ and ending \_\_\_\_\_ (dates). This permission may be revoked at any time either verbally or in writing.  
Client's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*To allow professionals to share information, the client must sign a release of information form.*



# HIPAA

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996:

Standardized electronic style for patient health information transactions

Formation of medical savings accounts

Fraud and abuse control program

Transport of health insurance coverage

Simplification of administrative terms and conditions

*HIPAA has been in existence for about a decade now, and most clients will already be familiar with at least some of its provisions, even though they might not know the law is so recent.*

Three primary areas:

Privacy standards

Patients' rights

Administrative requirements

*HIPAA protects the privacy and security of patient information.*



# Chain of Trust

Security measures include the following:

Obtain written consent for e-mail relating to health records.

Put a confidentiality notice on all faxes and e-mails.

Do not leave files where accessible to unauthorized individuals.

*If patient/client data are shared with a third party, a certain level of trust must be established to ensure that the external party to whom data are passed can guarantee that they will maintain data integrity and confidentiality; this is called the chain of trust.*

Keep appointment books private and practice management software password protected.

Do not discuss any medical information with a third party without written authorization from the client.

*Avoid using e-mail and faxes for confidential information.*



# Data Storage

HIPAA declaration should include:

Use of the client's information

Type of storage method used to secure the client's files

Situations in which disclosure of information may be required

Information on how clients can obtain copies of their records

*Massage therapists also need to inform clients of how electronic client record keeping is used.*

*A HIPAA declaration that clearly describes the process for management of a client's records must be available for the client to read and sign.*

# Protected Health Information

PHI includes:

Name

Address

E-mail address

Birth date (except year)

Social Security number

*HIPAA defines protected health information (PHI) as confidential, personal, identifiable health information about individuals that is created or received and is transmitted or maintained in any form.*



# Training in HIPAA Requirements

Massage professionals must obtain the appropriate training for HIPAA compliance.

Training varies based on place of employment.

*HIPAA's Privacy Rule stipulates that all members of the enterprise workforce receive training that is appropriate to their organizational roles.*

# Professional Boundaries: Needs and Wants

Needs

Sustain life

Wants

Lead to sense of satisfaction

Needs and wants may become confused in mind of client

May lead to transference or countertransference

*The massage professional should have a clear understanding of personal motivation in the therapy setting and a thorough understanding of professional boundaries and ways to maintain them.*



# Boundaries

Physical boundaries

Personal boundaries

Professional boundaries

Client's boundaries

*Look honestly at your fears, frustrations, prejudices, biases, and personal and moral value systems.*

*Personal boundaries provide guidelines for setting professional boundaries.*

*Determine and consider the client's needs and wants to maintain the best professional relationship possible.*

# Determining Boundaries

## Box 2-12 Determining a Client's Boundaries

An effective way to determine a client's boundaries is to ask questions. For example, the massage professional might ask the client the following questions:

- Is there any part of your body that you would rather not have massaged?
- Do you prefer any particular kind of music?
- I am a smoker, and I know the smell lingers. Will that bother you? (What will you do if the client says "Yes"?)
- I have three different massage lubricants. Which would you prefer?



# Right of Refusal

The client has the right to refuse the massage practitioner's services at any time.

Massage professionals may refuse to massage or otherwise treat any person if a just and reasonable cause exists.

*You may refuse to work with anyone as long as you explain the reasons and the fact that these reasons ultimately would affect the quality of care for the client; this is called disclosure.*

*Clear professional boundaries support an effective therapeutic process for both the client and the professional.*

# The Therapeutic Relationship

A power differential is a power imbalance between the client and the professional, stemming from the difference in skills and knowledge.

*Even when services are exchanged between peer professionals, the power differential exists because one is placed in the position of controlling the situation.*



# Transference

Transference is the client's personalization of the professional relationship.

Clients are susceptible to transference in a therapeutic setting.

# Manifestations of Transference

Demands for more of the therapist's time

Bringing the therapist personal gifts

Attempting to engage the professional in personal conversation

Proposals of friendship or sexual activity

Expressions of anger and blame



*If the client's expectations are not met, the person may blame the professional.*

*If the client's expectations are met, the person may project the credit to the therapist instead of acknowledging his or her own efforts.*

*In both cases the professional takes on a superhuman image that sooner or later crumbles, often leaving the client disillusioned and disempowered*

# Countertransference

Countertransference is the professional's inability to separate the therapeutic relationship from personal feelings.

Presents itself in feelings of attachment to the client

*Examples may include sexual feelings, excessive thinking about a client between visits, a feeling of professional inadequacy if the client does not make anticipated progress, or a sense of the client as being special; it also can manifest as favoritism, anger, or revulsion toward a client.*



Countertransference often is fed by the following personal needs of the therapist:

The need to fix people

The need to remove pain and discomfort

The need to be perfect

The need to have the answer

The need to be loved

*The client's problems may serve as a reflection of the professional's personal life experiences.*

*The massage professional is wise to consider his or her own personal needs and develop a reliable sense of self-awareness.*

# Managing Transference and Countertransference

Massage professional's responsibility to reinforce the boundaries of the professional relationship

Explain to clients why these feelings may occur

Help clients redirect transference activity to appropriate people or situations

*Clients may need to be referred to another professional, with appropriate disclosure for the reason for referral, to help them understand that the boundaries of the professional relationship are being breached and that the existing situation is inappropriate.*



Acknowledgement of transference or countertransference is 1st step in resolution

Seek information from more experienced professionals

*It is a breach of professional boundaries to allow countertransference issues to develop and linger or to be acted upon.*

*Peer support, supervision, and mentoring are important for the massage professional dealing with transference and countertransference.*

# Dual or Multiple Roles

Dual or multiple roles result when scopes of practice overlap, and a professional has more than one area of expertise.

Examples include:

Providing massage in the professional environment for family members

Providing professional services for a personal friend



*Dual or multiple roles increase the power differential as the client becomes disempowered; this often leads to enmeshment and dependence on the part of the client and burnout on the part of the therapist.*

*As in all ethical dilemmas, decisions about conduct are gauged against the client's welfare.*

*The clinical reasoning process is an effective way to analyze an ethical dilemma and develop a plan to address the issue.*

# Massage Therapy and Intimacy

Feelings of intimacy may arise due to physiologic and psychologic responses to stimulation.

Both the professional and client must understand the physiologic “feelings” to maintain a professional relationship.

*The work of a massage practitioner is sensory stimulation; therefore, by its very definition, body stimulation is sensual and may become intimate.*



When the lower abdominal area is stroked, the nerve signals of the genital area also are influenced.

Sexual arousal response is part of the relaxation response.

Physical sexual arousal may occur.

*A more thorough knowledge of the physiologic and psychological network leads to a better understanding of the responses by both client and practitioner.*

*Sexual arousal is possible not only for clients but also for practitioners as they begin to relax and entrain with the massage.*

# Diffusing Sexual Arousal

## Box 2-13 Diffusing Feelings of Sexual Arousal

1. Recognize the physiology and interrupt it; change what you are doing.
2. Be aware of your own psychological state and change it; become more alert.
3. Adjust the intent of the session to stimulate a more sympathetic output response by using stretching, compression, joint movement, and active participation by the client.
4. Change the music, lighting, and conversation and the client's position.
5. Stop working with your hands and use your forearms.
6. Explain the feelings in a professional manner using clinical terminology.



# Touch Intimacy

The intention of a touch is a determining factor in the interpretation of the touch.

Interpersonal communication skills of the practitioner are important here.

*Misunderstanding the psychological or physiologic responses, the client may interpret them as an indication of feelings of love or that the therapist is a new best friend.*

*Clients may look to the professional for emotional support beyond the ethical scope of practice for massage. Encourage them to find the support they require from another source.*

# Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment

Sexual misconduct is any type of sexual activity that occurs between the professional and the client.

Sexual harassment occurs in the work setting between peers or with supervisors.

*Sexual harassment is clearly defined by law, whereas sexual misconduct often is more subtle and difficult to prosecute unless clearly coerced sexual acts have been committed.*



# Maintaining the Professional Environment

Maintaining professional space helps create professional boundaries.

As the therapist closes the session and leaves the client's space, it is important to change both physiology and body language.

# Greeting Body Language



*When greeting a client, the massage professional leans toward the client and gently draws him into the space of the massage session.*



# Closure Body Language



*When the massage is complete, the massage professional gently withdraws from the client by using body language that moves away from him.*

# Managing Intimacy Issues

If a professional relationship cannot be maintained with a client, stop providing therapeutic massage and refer the client to someone else.

*If a client refuses or is unable to change an inappropriate response to the massage, the client must be refused further treatment.*



## Managing sexual misconduct

Explain that sexual services are not provided

End massage immediately and go to a safe place

Never work behind a locked door

Asking for sexual activity is solicitation, and it is illegal.

*Any situation in which behavior could be questioned must be avoided; One such situation concerns male massage therapists who want to do home-based appointments for women who are alone in the house. A good solution is to pair up with a female practitioner and do these massages as a team. It is also important that a parent or legal guardian be in the room when massage services are given to a child under 18 years of age.*

# Ethical Decision Making

Decisions are thought-out responses based on principles, information, and the complexities of the situation.

Decision making requires a person to consider the facts, possibilities, logical consequences of cause and effect (pros and cons), and impact on people.

*Most people have never learned comprehensive decision-making skills.*

*Most people effectively consider only about half of the relevant and available information when making a decision.*

*The decision-making process acknowledges the importance of factual data; intuitive insight; concrete and objective cause and effect; and the feelings, experiences, and influences of the people involved.*



The professional may wish to ask himself or herself the following questions:

Can I handle the professional power differential from a position of respect and empowerment for the client?

Do I have the knowledge and skills to respond effectively to the situation?

Am I avoiding dual or multiple roles with the client?

Am I maintaining the boundaries of the therapeutic relationship?

Am I within the established scope of practice for therapeutic massage?

Am I respecting the scope of practice of other professionals?

Do I have the highest good of the client in mind?

Is what I am doing supporting the highest good of the profession?

Are my professional and communication skills effective?

Would I want anyone else to know what I am doing?



# Problem-Solving Approach to Ethical Decision Making

*Clinical reasoning* involves why and how to provide massage.

Massage therapists with well-developed clinical reasoning are able to generate, implement, and evaluate approaches to care.

*Critical thinking is a process that can be applied to many different situations, both in the massage therapy profession and in everyday life; clinical reasoning is a form of critical thinking that targets a specific therapeutic practice, such as massage therapy.)*

# Problem-Solving Model for Decision Making

Step 1: Gather the facts to identify and define the situation.

Step 2: Brainstorm possible solutions.

Step 3: Logically and objectively evaluate each possible solution identified in step 2; look at both sides and the pros and cons.

Step 4: Evaluate the effect of each possible solution on the people involved.



Step 5: Choose a solution and plan implementation after processing steps 1 to 4.

Step 6: Implement the plan and set a date for reevaluation.

Step 7: Determine the logical consequences if the plan is not followed.

Step 8: Reevaluate and make necessary adjustments; then, implement the refined plan.

*Most people have never learned comprehensive decision-making skills.*

*Most people effectively consider only about half of the relevant and available information when making a decision.*

*The decision-making process acknowledges the importance of factual data; intuitive insight; concrete and objective cause and effect; and the feelings, experiences, and influences of the people involved.*



# Communication Skills

Communication is the act of exchanging thoughts, feelings, and behavior.

Touch is a powerful mode of communication.

Influenced by many factors

*Many ethical and professional dilemmas result from communication difficulties. To make ethical decisions and resolve ethical dilemmas, we must communicate effectively.*

*Communication skills are required to retrieve information, maintain charting and client records, and provide information effectively so that the client can give informed consent.)*

Body language = strongest communication method

Most effective

Words = weakest communication method

Least effective

Words have mixed meanings

*Congruence in what is heard, what is seen, and what is felt is important. When congruence is lacking, the kinesthetic message seems to have the strongest effect.*

*When speaking, the tone of voice is more important than the actual words spoken.*



# Preferred Communication Patterns

Determine which modes of communication a person prefers:

Visual

Auditory

Kinesthetic (feeling)

*People who prefer the visual mode make pictures in their mind, use descriptive words (paint word pictures), use “see” words and make eye contact when communicating.*

*People who prefer the auditory mode use “hear” words; are very attentive to tone and rhythm of speech; and often hum, talk to themselves, and listen with their eyes closed.*

*People who prefer the kinesthetic mode may find talking and listening fatiguing, use a lot of body language and “feel” words, and may have to touch something or someone to understand.*



Almost everyone processes visual and auditory messages through the kinesthetic mode.

Visual/kinesthetic = most common

Auditory/kinesthetic = 2nd most common

*When providing information, it is important to deliver the message in the style the person receiving it prefers.*

*This often requires massage professionals to communicate in a way that is different from their preferred style, and it takes practice.*

# Listening

Reflective listening is restating information to indicate that the message was received and understood.

Active listening is clarifying a feeling attached to a message without adding to or changing the message.

*Effective listening involves the development of focusing skills; effective listening occurs when we listen to understand, not merely to respond.*



# I-Message Pattern

## Box 2-17 I-Message Pattern

The steps for creating an I-message are:

1. Describe the behavior or problem you find bothersome (facts).
2. State your feelings about the situation (impact on people).
3. State the consequence (logical cause and effect).
4. Request the preferred behavior or action (possibilities).

The pattern is:

When \_\_\_\_\_ happens, I feel \_\_\_\_\_.

The result is \_\_\_\_\_, and what I would prefer is \_\_\_\_\_.

When delivering I-messages, remain pleasant, respectful, and honest. Be aware of your body language, tone of voice, and quality of touch.

# Conflict and Conflict Resolution

Conflict is an expressed struggle between two or more parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce resources, and/or interference from the other party.

Arises from number of factors:

- Varied perspectives on a situation

- Differing belief systems and values

- Differing objectives and interests

*If we can pinpoint the type of conflict, we are more likely to be able to resolve it.)*



Conflict exists at 2 levels – external and internal

Areas of common ground include:

Overlapping interests

Interdependence

Points of agreement

*Inner conflict may be evidenced by confusion, inconsistency, or lack of congruity.*

*People in conflict have both common ground and differences. The common ground can serve as the starting point for conflict resolution.*

## Factors necessary for mediation and negotiation:

Concern about the impact of the dispute on the relationship

Time concerns

Expense

Impact on affected others

Lost opportunities

Stress

Lack of closure

Uncertain compliance

Areas of existing common ground



*Conflict resolution does not necessarily resolve tensions between people.*

*Conflict resolution may align matters sufficiently to allow each person to make progress toward his or her goals rather than stall in an uncertain and stressful state of disagreement.*

*Doing battle and winning or losing supports a corresponding belief that every situation involves a “right” and a “wrong.”*

*If we respond to conflict this way, we have limited our awareness and understanding of the nature of conflict and of alternative means of responding to conflict, such as mediation and negotiation.*

# Types of Conflict

Relationship conflicts (personality conflicts)

Data conflicts

Interest conflicts

Value conflicts



*Relationship conflicts occur as a result of strong negative emotions, misperceptions or stereotypes, poor communication or miscommunication, or repetitive negative behaviors.*

*Data conflicts occur when people lack information necessary to make wise decisions, are misinformed, disagree on which data are relevant, interpret information differently, or have collected data differently.*

*Interest conflicts are caused by competition over perceived incompatible needs. Conflicts of interest result when one or more people believe that in order to satisfy their needs, the needs and interests of an opponent must be sacrificed.*

*Value disputes arise only when people attempt to force one set of values on others or lay claim to exclusive value systems that do not allow for divergent paths.*

# Ways of Dealing with Conflict

Denial or withdrawal

Suppression or smoothing over

Power or dominance

Compromise or negotiation

Integration or collaboration

*Learning about the alternative means of handling conflict gives us a wider choice of actions to use in any given situation and makes us better able to respond to the situation.*



# Conflict Climate

Defensive climate – reflects the type of atmosphere characteristic of competition

Supportive climate – reflects collaboration

*A collaborative environment leads to mutual trust and to an atmosphere conducive to managing differences.*

Maintain written documentation

Nature of the conflict

Type of resolution attempted

Success of the conflict resolution

Outcome

*Written documentation should always be kept during the conflict resolution process. Because conflict already exists, interpretation of the requirement for resolution can become confused. Objective documentation that is agreed upon by the parties helps maintain clarity. If the conflict cannot be resolved independently, documentation of the nature of the conflict is extremely important, in case the situation escalates to legal action.*



# Communicating When Dilemmas Arise

Examine all aspects of the situation.

Plan to talk about it with others involved.

Begin conversation by identifying the problem.

Use the I-message format.

Ask open-ended questions.

*A sense of humor and understanding on the part of both the therapist and the client may help to support an effective solution (reevaluate and make the necessary adjustments).*

# Barriers to Effective Communication

Time constraints

Old patterns

Avoidance

*Effective communication is a skill that can be learned. It is important to recognize these barriers to work on overcoming them if they exist.*



# Credentials and Licensing

Credentials are a form of official verification, earned by completing an educational or examination process, that confirms a certain level of expertise in a given skill.

Government and private professional credentialing both are used in the massage profession.

Private professional credentials not necessarily required by law include:

Diploma

Certification

*Anyone can offer private certification. Therefore, it is important to make sure that any educational program or examination you take is sanctioned and administered by a reputable, regulated provider.*



Government credentials can include:

Licensing—required of all constituents who practice the profession, thereby protecting title usage

Certification—voluntary but required to use the title

Registration

*Governmental certification is administered by an independent board.*

*Governmental registration is administered by the state's department of registry or other appropriate state agency.*

# Laws and Legislation

In U.S., states that have enacted licensing laws are eligible to belong to the Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards.

## State regulation

Many health professionals are regulated at the state level through licensing.

## Local regulation

May apply

Zoning



*The main purpose of a law or an ordinance is to protect the safety and welfare of the public.*

*If licensing is not available in a state, local governments can choose to regulate activities within their jurisdiction.*

# Steps for Complying with Licensing Requirements

1. Investigate state licensing and educational requirements
2. Contact local government and obtain ordinances
3. Investigate massage training schools
4. Investigate zoning requirements
5. Apply for permits and business licenses; pay fees

*The massage professional must comply with the existing standards of practice, both required and voluntary.*



# Dealing with Suspected Unethical or Illegal Behavior

Self-reflect before initiating a confrontation or action.

Motives should be based on a genuine concern for the fellow professional, clients, and the good of the profession, not on personal values or moral beliefs.

Mentoring and peer support

Talking with those involved

Formal reporting

# To Test

Access Code: **JLAS**

*Please write down code. You will be asked for it*

Once you have successfully passed the test (70% correct), please email Kim Jackson at [kim\\_hotschool@yahoo.com](mailto:kim_hotschool@yahoo.com). We will email you your CE certificate within 7 business days.