

## **Geo-Thermal-Therapy: The Science**

**By Tiffiney Lynn**

The body will benefit from any kind of therapy much more efficiently if it is able to stay relaxed during the process of a treatment. Geo-thermo-therapy is the art of massage using heated and cooled stones to bring about homeostasis within the body. It increases blood flow, promotes detoxification, stimulates the organs, encourages all systems to respond to the temperatures being applied to the body, releases blockages within muscles, and allows a deep sense of relaxation.

In the past nine years, geo-thermal therapy, also known as LaStone Therapy, hot rock therapy, river stone therapy, THStone, beach pebble therapy and many more, has become the public's most popular alternative choice to traditional Swedish massage.

Clients experience a deeper sense of relaxation; muscles are quicker to release tension, allowing deep tissue massage to be a pleasant experience. Promoting detoxification, the circulatory system responds to the alternating temperatures with oxygenated blood flow to the areas being addressed. When executed properly, the body feels complete, the mind is rejuvenated, and the soul is spiritually lifted.

## **Applications**

Reflexologists utilize the benefits of geo-thermo-therapy by offering relaxation to the back and abdomen, using the spinal layout and chakra placement, while addressing the feet and hands from a supine and prone position (laying face up and face down). The benefits are numerous, warming the tissue of the feet, hands and ears. It reduces tension held in the reflexes and offers the therapist an opportunity to address the reflexes at a deeper level. Warming the feet can be calming to the nervous system, and cool stones are invigorating. The use of the stones gives the therapist's thumbs, hands and wrists a much-needed rest, while offering a very balancing treatment.

Skin care professionals also have been using geo-thermo-therapy techniques in facials with positive results for both the skin and in their ability to promote relaxation for clients. The skin responds well to the increase of nutrients and blood brought up by the two alternating temperatures, improving skin appearance and muscle tone. The stones also can be used after treatments such as waxing, microdermabrasion, peels and extractions, to alleviate redness or swelling. Clients who are claustrophobic or asthmatic may now benefit from the cleansing power of heat without steam.

Midwives, doulas and bodyworkers who specialize in the childbearing continuum are seeing mothers experience the many benefits of these treatments—deep relaxation is just one. Pregnant women who receive a specialized form of geo-thermal-therapy, in fact, become more internally aware and often experience bonding more deeply, which research has shown to benefit the baby tremendously. Mothers-to-be are caring for themselves and their babies not only physically, but also emotionally, intellectually and spiritually. This kind of care facilitates healthier pregnancies, fewer complications, easier births and calmer, happier babies. Birthing mothers find both comfort and stimulation, as needed, from the stones. When postpartum treatment is received, the mother experiences a deep and profound re-balancing after the body-changing and life-changing birth experience.

**“It reduces tension held in the reflexes and addresses the reflexes at a deeper level.”**

Hyperthermia in pregnancy, caused by high fevers and prolonged exposure in hot tubs, has been suspected of causing a range of serious fetal and maternal complications. Yet, childbearing

women and their babies benefit enormously from receiving the specialized and individualized form of geo-thermo-therapy designed for this unique time. A specially trained therapist is able to use heated and cooled stones safely and effectively before, during and after childbirth. This is an extensively researched and highly specialized bodywork approach, with special attention paid to the contraindications to massage and geo-thermo-therapy in pregnancy/postpartum, how both pregnancy and birthing change the female body, as well as dos and don'ts with pregnant, birthing and postpartum clients. Geo-thermo-therapy is a safe and successful treatment for a childbearing mother's distracting stress, imbalances and misalignments.

Sports therapists have recorded positive results in their field, as well. Therapy sessions using heated stones before an event lessens the possibility of torn ligaments and pulled muscles. Athletes who receive cool treatments after strenuous activity report less muscle fatigue and any inflammation is reduced considerably. After an injury, a client in the hands of a skilled geo-thermo-therapist will experience a vascular gymnastics within the circulatory system that requires the body to perform. When alternating temperatures are applied in the

correct degree for the right amount of time will result in the elimination of inflammation promoting tissue repair at an accelerated rate.

It is not only the clients who can take advantage, however. Massage therapists that train extensively in the field of geo-thermo-therapy discover that by utilizing these techniques, their hands, wrists, elbows and thumbs are alleviated from pain and repetitive injury.

### **New Methods**

The Stone Lymph Drainage is a new method of massage working on the body fluids and particularly lymphatic system, which includes the capillaries, vessels, lymph organs, nodes and the lymph. Treating the lymphatic system with alternating temperatures requires a great precision and extensive knowledge of anatomy and physiology. In addition to that, the lymph vessels are of fragile structure and the capillaries are even more delicate. Stone Lymph Drainage uses massage movements going in and out of the tissue with the circular (spiral) motion, applying heated or chilled stones with each stroke to promote the movement of lymph from one area to another. This rhythmic type of movement—in the same way as the heart beats, pumping during systole and relaxing during diastole—offers the best results for

the patient and the therapist should be able to work without getting so tired and exhausted.

Because the lymphatic system is an all-penetrating system, cleaning as well as regenerating, the main purpose of the Stone Lymph Drainage is to accelerate the lymph flow, which will facilitate any stagnation to move through the system and diminish the spongy tissue being a result of water retention problem.

### **Differentiation**

While there are many forms of expressions in the field of stone massage today, education in the science and spirit of the stones will be a key to differentiation in the treatments success. **PMPR**

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## Inner Music: Inner Beauty

By Karen Kael

Fashion trends: blessing or curse? There are times when fashion can seem like one or the other.

Occasions when a hasty splash of color, a scarf, a tint to the hair can be a godsend and, conversely, times when we wish we didn't have to bother and could appear *au naturel*.

Of course, fashion is not new. From ancient times there have been examples of fashion trends, including the highly visible Cleopatra and numerous others whose embellishments signified great beauty or great wealth—hence, power. Today, as never before, society is experiencing a range of choices in how people enhance their appearance. Generally speaking, however, they have the most impact when tapping into and accentuating their true strength—real self. What people really seek in applying cosmetics is to embellish the qualities that they either know are their strengths or that represent an image they strive to become. When a person glows, everyone realizes it's more than skin deep, and although makeup can enhance, true beauty is within.

### Role of Music

As there has always been fashion, so has there always been music. From the earliest times,

music was used to accompany ritual or evoke a particular mood, stimulating energy, anger or passion. There are types available to suit all tastes, and the availability of music is vast.

Music is everywhere, providing the intros to morning news programs, creating background for sitcoms and commercials, creating ambiance in elevators, hotel lobbies and in spas, and adding greater significance to momentous occasions. While most people know this, they aren't necessarily consciously aware of just how much music surrounds them. Yet, some of the most vivid memories are enhanced by music. Imagine how much less intimate movie experiences would have felt without music, from the piano of silent films to the suspense of Alfred Hitchcock and to the cosmic grandeur of *Star Wars*. Yet, it's not only in the movies that music can be used to create certain moods, to balance, comfort or attract.

The majority of radio stations play music to stimulate; it could be called "audio coffee." Although most tend to go through life in the fast lane, on the surface, barely skin deep, those who wish to go deeper to radiate inner beauty should focus on that very goal. Music can help people discover the beauty within.

Why is music such a powerful necessity in our lives? Music can help people communicate with

themselves—with the real person who is so often buried in the busyness of everyday life. Music can negate stress, helping people to make wiser decisions that will benefit everyone they touch.

During the months following the national crisis of September 11, 2001, upwards of 12 million New Age albums were sold, more than ever before.<sup>1</sup> Simply glancing through the New Age sections you will find albums focused on tranquility and music composed specifically for accessing peace and inner wisdom.

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The resonance of New Age music is like nature. Stand at the edge of the Grand Canyon, a lake, waterfall, willow tree, the ocean or watch a sunset. The resonance creates a more real self. Everything in nature is in accordance or in harmony with natural events. Quite often we find ourselves, in varying degrees, at the other end of the spectrum. In musical terms, dissonant. Sometimes that dissonance, like various forms of music, has its purpose. It allows us to empty out some of the frustrations and angers that are part of our emotional structure; however, these spaces are not desirable to hang out in for

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extended periods of time. If we do, we can become isolated from ourselves in ways that are as effective as the building of brick walls. Quite often as the weekend approaches we begin planning a walk in nature, a trip to the ocean, a round of golf, an activity that places us in the embrace of nature. It is difficult to take a walk through a beautiful park, one that may have commenced with feelings of anger or frustration and after an hour of being within nature's harmony, to hold such a dissonant resonance. It takes a very determined effort not to surrender to what is natural. Nature is alkalinity to our acidity. It invigorates and balances us. Music can do this as well.

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than skin deep."**

When you think of life in the slow lane, practices such as yoga, tai chi or a walk in nature come to mind. If you seek music appropriate to accompany such practices for these sacred times, there's a good chance that by simply sitting quietly with a focus upon the goal of inner peace and beauty for fifteen minutes while listening to the music, the same benefits can be achieved. However, it isn't just about listening to music each day, popping it into the CD player while driving to work or picking up the

children. It's being willing to value yourself enough to create a setting to facilitate a deeper discovery of self. Sacred self is not a religious concept. There are prominent people who exemplify maintaining their own resonance under extremely stressful circumstances, not necessarily because they listen to music on a regular basis but because they have managed to connect strongly with themselves. If that is who you strive to be then music can lead you along the path to discover who you truly are.

### **Make a Statement**

Society is only beginning to tap into the awareness of peace that permeates the world. In its current turmoil, the world's macrocosm is symbolic of the struggle between our microcosmic or individual inner and outer worlds, in which most emphasize external values, rather than internal. But the beauty really being sought is not found on the surface.

The fashion and music industries are important vehicles through which we can more readily express sometimes hidden parts of ourselves. Without saying a word, we can make a statement. It's also true that without saying a word, everyone can be aware of that inner beauty. **PMPR**

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### References

<sup>1</sup>Cox, Ted, NAPRA ReView, "Future Watch," May/June 2002