

## **Drum Self-Massage**

Drum massage on oneself or on another usually is every group's favorite practice, because it is so energizing and fun. Start with some lively drum or marimba music, or other music that is appropriate for the culture. Then show the group different rhythms they can use on their bodies. The group is seated, so with the fingers and hands make "drumsticks" to hit on the lap—tapping with the fingertips, slapping with the palms, hitting with the fists, cutting with the sides of the hands, cupping with cupped palms, brushing lightly, etc. Each hand position has a different sound. With drumsticks in place you can start with one arm and lightly tap or cup or slap up and down the arm for an arm massage; then the other arm; then the shoulders, back, hips, thighs, legs, bottoms of feet, chest, neck, head, and face, working through all parts of the body. After you have covered different parts of the body, then go back and work on the part of the body that most needs relaxation. Depending on the amount of time, you can do this for a couple of minutes or for a longer period. Everyone feels so alive and vibrant with this massage. It's a good exercise for depression and lethargy. This can also be done on another person, and has remarkable healing effects on all kinds of health problems. One researcher has synchronized the drumming to 90 beats per minute to generate deep trance states for healing persons with physical or emotional problems.

## **Circle Massage**

Drum massage can easily be done in a circle with everyone working on the shoulders of the person in front of them. Invite participants to stand and turn to the right. Move closer into the circle so that each person can comfortably reach the back of the person next to them. You can also do regular shoulder and head massage this way, working on the trapezius muscles and back, then a head rub, and finishing off with brisk back circles (clockwise for energy, counter-clockwise to relax) down the spine. A massage circle can be lots of fun. This dynamic is very helpful if the group is tired and needs to be energized. Within this playful context, most people do not have the fears they might have with a one-on-one massage. This is also a good dynamic with youth who might be embarrassed to touch each other in a seated massage.

## **Suggestions for Group Leaders**

In using different kinds of massage with grassroots people who have experienced traumatic stress, it is important for group leaders to be aware of reactions. Always work slowly and respectfully with the person's permission. Some persons might choose just to observe the group doing massage, because they fear being touched or fear their own emotional reaction. Participants should feel completely free to make choices that are healthy for them and should in no way feel pressured to participate in any activity. In some cases the workshop may be the first time in their whole life that a person has ever experienced respect and loving touch. Massage can be a way to bring much healing to families. I will often give homework where participants have to practice what they learn with other family members. One woman who was in a very repressive marriage had permission from her husband to come only to one day of a weekend workshop. She went home and practiced seated massage on him. He felt such relief and healing from his pain, that he sent her back for the second day to learn whatever she could. Hopefully he could also grow to respect the gift of his wife and give her some loving touch, too.

## **Resources for Further Study**

### Books

- Byers, D. Better Health With Reflexology. Ingham Publishing, 1983.  
Davis, Eshelman, McKay. The Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook. Oakland,CA: New Harbinger, 1988.  
Kirsta, A. The Book of Stress Survival. NY: Simon and Shuster, 1986.  
Krieger, D. Accepting Your Power to Heal. New Mexico: Bear & Co. 1993.  
Kunz, The Complete Guide to Reflexology. Reflexology Research Project, 1981.  
Lidell, L. The Book of Massage. NY: Simon and Shuster, 1984.  
Montague, A. Touching. NY: Harper and Row, 1987.  
Rick, S. The Reflexology Workout. NY: Harmony Books, 1986.

### Massage Magazine

American Massage Therapy Journal

## **Music: For Massage**

- Baroque at Bathtime, Phillips.  
Celtic Quilt, Kobialka, Lisem.  
Streams of Dreams, Michael Maxwell, Dan Gibson, Solitudes, Inc.  
Path of the Heart, Max Highstein, Desert Heart Recordings.  
Reiki, Merlin's Magic, Innerworlds Music, Boulder, CO.  
The Poet, Michael Hoppé, Martin Tilman, Teldec Classics International.  
Afterglow, Michael Hoppé, Martin Tilman, Tim Wheeler, Hearts of Space.  
When It's Time for Letting Go: Music to Heal the Heart, Serenity.  
Inner Light, Anjali Quartet, Sri Rama Publishers.  
Drums, Geoff Johns, Sounds True Recordings.

## **Contacts:**

- American Massage Therapy Association, 820 Davis St, Suite 100. Evanston, IL 60201 708-864-0123  
Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals, PO Box 1869, Evergreen, C) 80439 1-800-862-7724  
American Reflexology Certification Board & Information Center, PO Box 246654, Sacramento, CA 95824 916-455-5381