

# Process Acupressure

## ALTERNATIVE THERAPY FOR THE HOLISTIC PATIENT

Although alternative medicine has gained popularity in the 90s, the belief that the body, mind and soul are connected yet interdependent can be traced back 3,000 years to ancient China. The Chinese mapped out energy pathways in the body called "meridians," while the Indians defined the energy centers of the body as "chakras."

**By Debora Romanchock**

One cutting-edge method of alternative medicine is Process Acupressure (PA). PA is based on the idea that the body, mind and soul are fundamentally linked and that the state of one has an effect on the state of the others. Essentially, this health care approach works to harmonize the energy systems of the body by stimulating points located along meridians and in the chakras. "Process" refers to how practitioners work with the material in the session, namely in a flowing way versus a structured protocol.

"The most essential thing we're trying to do with Process Acupressure is to facilitate the person's development; their actual, true, soul-based development. In any given session, we do that by helping them become more aware of what is actually try-

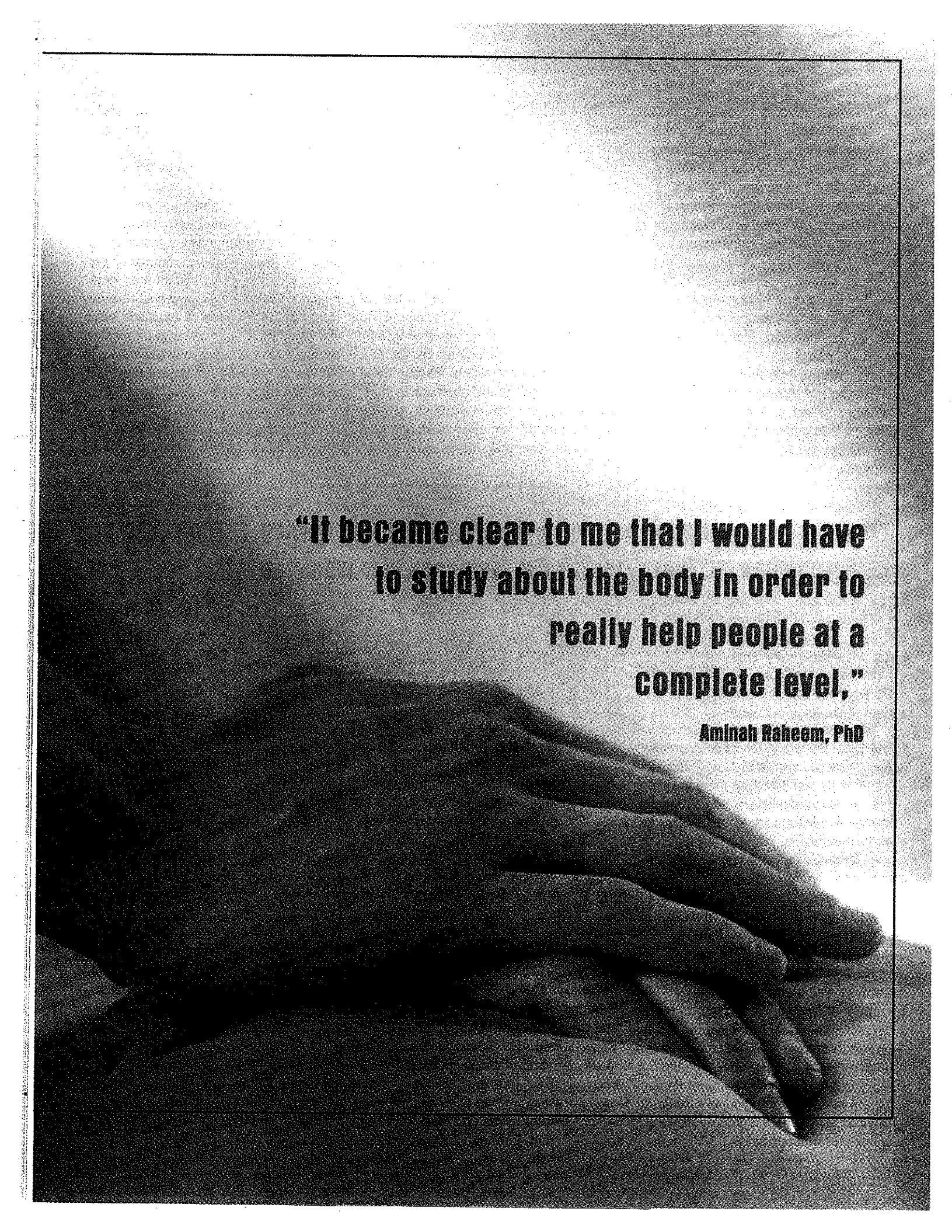
ing to happen in their own growth process," said Aminah Raheem, PhD, Zero Balancing teacher, diplomate of process work and developer of PA.

"We're trying to help empower them to become more sensitive to their own growth patterns as well as to empower them," Raheem added.

Mother, teacher, transpersonal psychologist and author of *Soul Return: Integrating Body, Psyche and Spirit*, Raheem has been studying the whole person for more than 30 years. She developed the holistic method of Process Acupressure after studying psychology, hands-on body modalities and spiritual practice for 25 years.

Raheem became interested in Process Acupressure when she was a psychology student. "As I worked with people, sitting in chairs and talking with them, I found that I would get to a certain place and then

*continued on next page*

A black and white photograph of a hand resting on a surface, with a quote overlaid on the image. The hand is positioned in the lower right quadrant, with fingers slightly curled. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light color. The quote is centered in the upper half of the image.

**"It became clear to me that I would have  
to study about the body in order to  
really help people at a  
complete level,"**

**Aminah Raheem, PhD**

continued from previous page

be sort of stalemated," Raheem recalled. "It became clear to me that I would have to study about the body in order to really help people at a complete level."

A former adjunct faculty member of the Institute for Transpersonal Psychology in Palo Alto, Calif., she facilitated and extensively observed the process of transformation in graduate students. She's taught Process Acupressure and integrative body psychology to students and practitioners in the United States and throughout Europe for many years.

Transpersonal psychology is the branch of psychology that respects and incorporates the aspect of the soul or spiritual nature into psychology, Raheem explained. "In this psychology, we're no longer talk-

PA certification is available for any certified or licensed medical professional: PTs, OTs, RNs, massage therapists and physicians. A majority of medical professionals interested in Process Acupressure are physical and occupational therapists, "They *really* take to our work, because they have enough experience already to see what we are talking about," stated Raheem.

Barbara LeVan, PT and owner of Physical Therapy Plus in Wilmington, Vt., who has been practicing physical therapy for 20 years and practicing PA for four years, became interested in PA as a result of her non-conventional approach in physical therapy, "It's not conventional in that it is holistic. PA is one modality that approaches the body in a holistic way.

enables the patient to take responsibility for their own health and learn how to manage it.

Although PA can address many common physical symptoms, such as back pain; headaches; respiratory, digestive and systemic problems; and colds, flu, allergic and healing from injuries, it is not appropriate for severe medical problems or psychosis. PA is especially helpful with stress related conditions, including post-traumatic stress. But Raheem is emphatic when she states PA should *not* supplant medical attention. "We say to anyone who comes to us with a serious symptom that they have to have medical supervision," she said.

LeVan explained that PA sessions last from 20 minutes to an hour and a half, once a week. Interestingly enough, the patient

**"Your fingers stop wherever you feel the energy is not moving. ... You'll pause until it catches up. Energy moves like molasses, it moves slowly,"**

**Barbara LeVan, PT**

ing just about ego, or superego," explained Raheem.

She combined the meridians, chakras and Zero Balancing to create a protocol that balanced, energized and opened the whole body and therefore the whole person. Raheem credits Arnold Mindell's Process Work for some of the processing techniques in PA. "He has techniques to open the awareness of the person that I recognized as invaluable," added Raheem.

PA's focus varies depending on the client's needs during the session. Process Acupressure uses this knowledge in combination with a contemporary psycho-spiritual understanding to promote health and self-responsibility for wellness.

Raheem's goal is to create a bridge between bodywork and psychology and incorporate awareness of the spiritual dimension.

"The most essential purpose of PA is to expose and empower people's souls so they can then fulfill the purpose they have in this life," Raheem said.

Most people who consult me see me because they want an alternative, holistic approach," explained LeVan.

She believes PA benefits her patients because it provides a sense of well-being and psycho-spiritual growth. She treats approximately eight patients a week with PA. The therapist stressed that PA deals with healing not only on a physical level. "To look at it strictly in physical terms is not the way someone who practices PA would look at it," LeVan explained.

Raheem believes PA is effective for two reasons: First, the acupressure formulas that she teaches for dealing with the body deeply enhance the body's natural healing mechanisms. "[The] acupressure part is extremely effective for various symptoms and strengthening [the] immune system," Raheem said. The second reason is the awareness skills of the practitioners. "After each session, [patients] become more aware of what they are doing in their own bodies that promotes or obstructs their healing," said Raheem. This knowledge

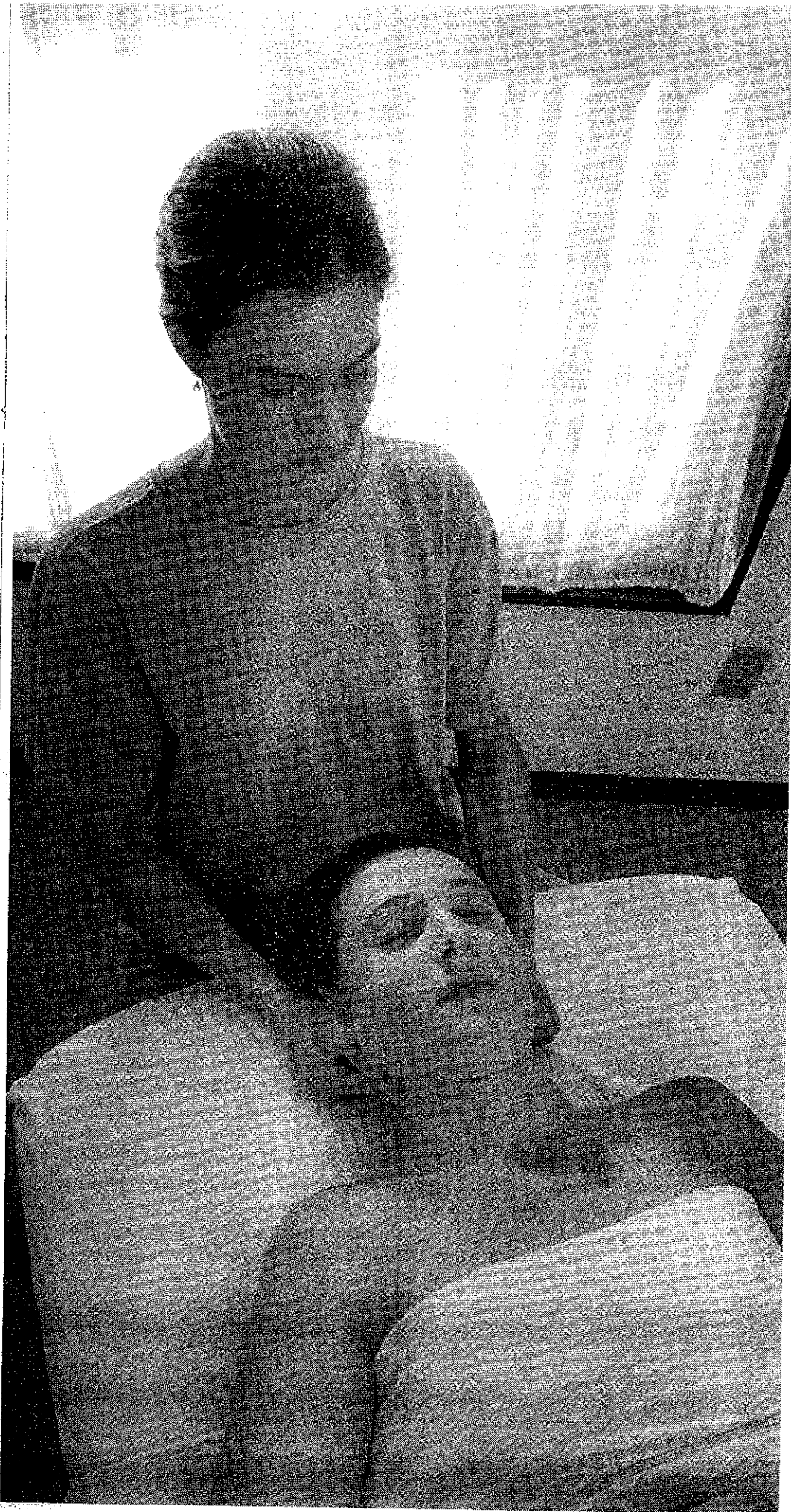
remains fully clothed on a massage table, while the practitioner applies gentle pressure to the acupoints.

Finger pressure is used to stimulate acupoints (the same used in acupuncture) on the body's surface. Pressure on specific combinations of acupoints helps to open and balance energy pathways that have been restricted. This helps alleviate pain and other dysfunctions and creates greater harmony and function within the body as a whole.

Sessions often have several phases. The beginning is called the "Basic Opening," which facilitates the body to receive the work at a deeper level. "That would include not just pressure points with fingertips, but it would mean helping to move the energy vertically through the body," described LeVan.

She sites the leg pull or half-moon vector of the legs as an example of hands-on-intervention, adding that this movement is similar to the Zero-Balancing half-moon vector.





The next step is to apply pressure at key points of the body to get an "Opening of the Body." Then the practitioner would do a "neck pull," by sweeping their fingers up along the back of the head, putting a fulcrum into the occiput. "Your fingers stop wherever you feel the energy is not moving," LeVan explained. "So you'll slide your fingers up along the upper back to the neck. You'll pause until it catches up. Energy moves like molasses, it moves slowly." LeVan explained. The goal is to integrate the energy with the structure.

As this state of relaxation ensues, the patient may become aware of issues within the body, or a soul awareness may take place. The PA practitioner encourages these issues to come forward and then guides the session. They also teach patients how to wake up to "all of themselves," to signals in the body, in their emotional feelings, in what they see and hear.

The patient's "Presentation" represents their current physical, emotional and spiritual state. From this point, the practitioner will formulate an individualized treatment plan.

Eventually, the patient goes into a deeper state of awareness, beneath surface tension, to access clarity or guidance about the issues at hand. Finally, integration and completion of the process occurs and the session arrives at "Closure," when the chakras becomes grounded and balanced.

For medical professionals to be certified, PA requires four levels of training. "People have to do a lot of sessions on patients and give reports. There is a practical exam at the end," she explained.

Raheem, who is affiliated with The Upledger Institute in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., and runs her own company, Process Acupressure Unlimited, in Aptos, Calif., stated that both companies accept only the highest quality of practitioners in their training program. Proud to be close to those in training, she observes their work firsthand.

This year, Process Acupressure

*continued on next page*

continued from previous page

Unlimited has combined the original four levels of certification into two levels: Regular Practitioner and Advanced Practitioner. The Regular Practitioner must study two levels of training, which must be

completed within two years, and advanced certification requires the study of all four levels.

LeVan explained that advanced certification takes about two years to obtain and requires specific coursework in addition to completing many process acupressure treatments on patients. These treatments must be documented in a particular format

to support the reasons for the method of treatments chosen.

Certification also requires the training practitioner to receive several documented PA treatments that indicate which processes were used for each treatment. This documentation is reviewed and evaluated by the certification committee.

LeVan believes most patients who receive PA reach a heightened level of inner peace, they feel more calm and more connected with themselves. "You'll see physical changes in say, pelvic alignment or asymmetries that you may not have noticed before, or significant gains in pain free motion, that I need to evaluate for documentation purposes," said

LeVan referring to the evaluation process.

"We often teach clients how to work on themselves," Raheem emphasized, "In this way they can really speed their healing."

Raheem wishes there were more than 10 PA certified PTs and OTs in the country, "We are just becoming known now. We're at the leading edge."

"The only way of knowing if [PA] works or not is to try it," she said, "It doesn't depend on a theoretical structure, it mainly depends on experience."

By promoting better health and renewed energy, PA actively involves the patient in the healing and growth process. It teaches you to be more aware of your body and your "Process" or particular history, style and patterns of thinking. The patient is taught how to respect and follow this process toward health and growth and to identify the subtle things they do to foster or suppress the natural growth process and change the patterns that are not working. ▼

## *invertrac*<sup>TM</sup>

**LOWER BACK PAIN RELIEF**

- Comfortable • Portable • Easy to use
- Designed for patient in-home use



QUANTITY PRICES	
1.....	\$249.00 ea.
2.....	\$239.00 ea.
3-5.....	\$219.00 ea.

Prices subject to change without notice

**FREE SHIPPING:**  
UPS CONTINENTAL U.S.A.  
30 Day conditional  
money back guarantee

**SUGGESTED PATIENT PRICE**  
**\$349.00**




© O.D. or prepay by check


**LASHAW DISTRIBUTORS LTD.**  
124-7011 Elmbridge Way, Richmond, B.C., Canada V7C 4V5  
Tel: (604) 270-4263 • Fax: (604) 270-2892 • Toll Free: 1-800-667-7795


Web page address [www.invertrac.com](http://www.invertrac.com)  
E-mail address [invertrac@invertrac.com](mailto:invertrac@invertrac.com)

**By promoting better health and renewed energy, Process Acupressure actively involves the patient in the healing and growth process.**


# Tools for Today


*Trigger Point Therapy for Your Patients*



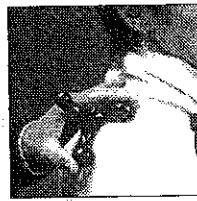














*The Original Line of Deep-Muscle Massage Tools from The Pressure Positive Company.*

For wholesale and professional information, or a distributor near you, please contact:



**THE PRESSURE POSITIVE CO.**

128 Oberholtzer Road, Gilbertville, PA 19525 TOLL-FREE: 1-800-603-5107  
Fax (610) 754-6327 <http://pressurepositive.com>