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GUEST EDITORIAL | M

The Good You Do

BY JOHN UPLEDGER, D.O., O.M.M.

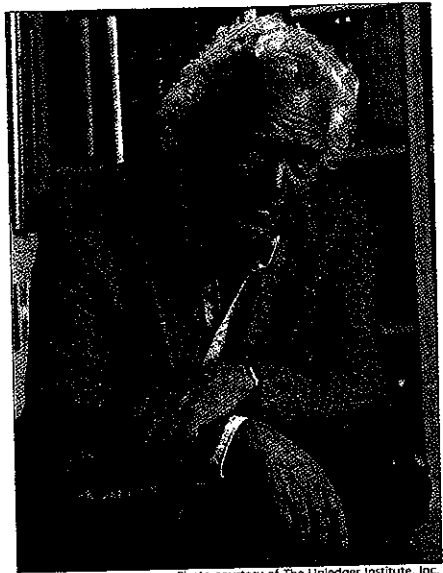


Photo courtesy of The Upledger Institute, Inc.

One of the most important health-related things that is being reduced in our culture is human interaction. We are replacing that with mechanical interaction and isolation. ♦ Isolation destroys health. Isolation is what is growing. People are sitting in front of computers; they are spending time in chat rooms. They are forgetting how to be with each other. They are forgetting how to share love with just another human being, and that is destructive to health, very destructive. Younger people may have not have been exposed to very much human interaction.

You, as massage therapists, are offering the hands-on therapy that people are craving and that will help people get well. I am firmly convinced that high technology is going to go too far. People are going to respond less and less to the kind of high-tech medicine they are getting.

Where is high tech going? It's good stuff but it has to be controlled. It has to be used in moderation. And we can't use it at the expense of personal touch. How much compassion do you get from an MRI machine?

You are the antidote to that lack of human interaction. You're putting your hands on people; you're

expressing love. And the absence of love is so detrimental to health.

I personally think violence and compassion (love) are inversely related. The more you experience compassion, the less violent you are going to be. If you can put your hands on somebody and help them feel better, your compassion for that client goes up, the appreciation for you from the client goes up, and both of you will probably not be violent next week. Violence and compassion are simply not compatible in the same person.

Why is that so difficult to sell? Why is it so hard to understand?

I happen to believe that every cell,

every molecule has its own consciousness. You can talk to tissue, you can talk to a muscle, you can talk to a bone, and you can talk to a gland. There's an inner wisdom inside of every client, and there's an inner wisdom inside of you as a therapist, and these two will connect. The client's body knows exactly what your skills are as a therapist and it will give you—it will show you—what you can handle.

High technology does not consider the potential the human body has for self-healing.

I think loving compassion is the kind of medicine that is needed today. You are using your hands. You have the skills. You just have to push the borders, push the boundaries, to start experimenting. It's amazing how much a client's body will teach you if you give it a chance. If you haven't learned something from a particular session, you haven't had a good session. It's that simple.

If you keep your attitude and intention positive, you're going to do a lot of good, above and beyond the movements that your fingers are making. If you intention properly and make yourself aware of this, you will be offering compassion. Try to feel a little bit of what your client ▶

There are no two clients who are the same.

Every body is different and every body has a story to tell you.

is complaining about, within yourself. Try to feel true compassion.

Part of the beauty of the way you are working, is that you will never be bored. There are no two clients that are the same. Every body is different and every body has a story to tell you. If you are willing to listen, if you are willing to spend the time, if you are willing to be open-minded, it can be beautiful. You'll come out of a day's work feeling better than when you went in.

Don't ever sell your intention short. You can intend something good to happen. You can intend nothing to happen. You can intend something bad to happen. Depending upon your attitude that particular day. So be careful where your mind is when you're working. Keep it in a good place.

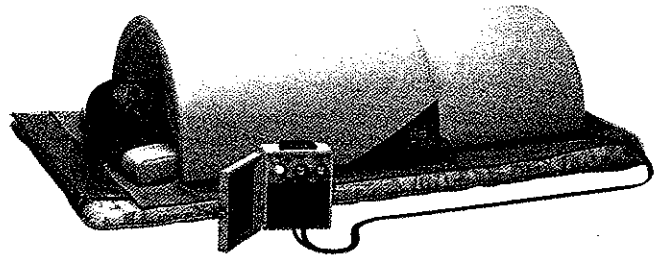
Intend to be helpful. Do not intend to dominate. Intend to offer whatever it is the client needs. And don't go beyond that.

If you maintain a positive intention you will help that person, no matter what they've got. You really will.

You are all body workers. You are skilled in hands-on therapy. Give generously, you will indeed be facilitating the self-healing of your client. I have to believe that you will be fulfilling your purposes for entering the hands-on profession more fully. M

Excerpted by permission from John Upledger's speech at the Florida State Massage Therapy Association conference in July 2000.

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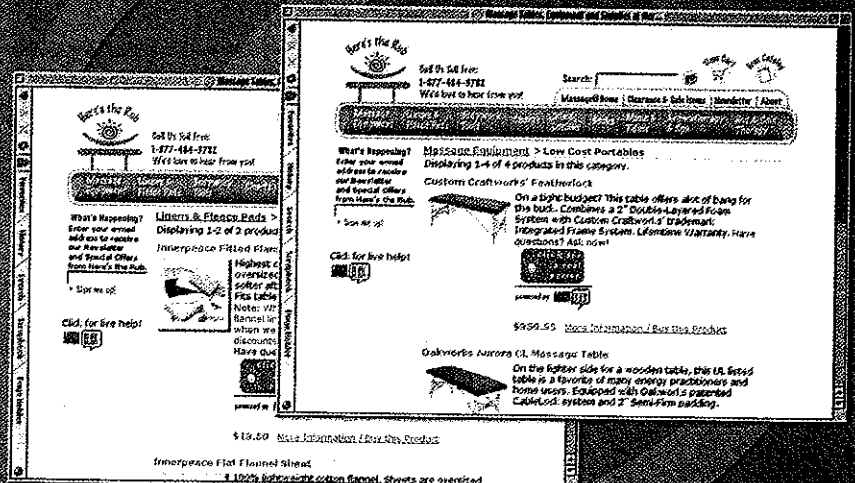
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