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INTERVIEW

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or disease processes. Methods to empower the client to promote self-healing and recovery are presented as well.

For patients and therapists who are familiar with Myofascial Release and CranioSacral Therapy, what can your technique offer them?

They can enhance and amplify their work by learning how to address the energetic component beneath and within tissue. Tissue, bone and even cells are energized more quickly when energy pathways are opened through them. When acupoints are activated, tissue releases more quickly. On the psychological side, PA process skills can be applied effectively whenever bodywork exposes emotional, mental or spiritual stresses or issues.

How important is it to clear a meridian when trying to get structural releases?

Clearing a meridian will definitely assist structural release. Energy is the factor of penetration and integration within the structure. When energy is blocked, structure will automatically be held more tightly. Conversely, when the energy is released, structure is more easily and swiftly released.

Do you need to have a background in acupressure and the meridian system to use this technique?

PA was designed as a comprehensive acupressure system. It is taught in clear progressive segments, from beginning to advanced levels. No acupressure or meridian background is required to begin the training. PAI provides an excellent introduction to acupressure theory and techniques. It teaches how to find and release acupoints; the specific uses of isolated acupoints; and how to balance the entire body through a simple but comprehensive acupressure protocol. PAI stands on its own and can be used extensively to help people, either by itself or combined with other bodyworks.

For those who are specifically

Aminah Raheem, PhD

by Judith M. Rosinski, PT
Special to PT Today

Aminah Raheem, Ph.D., a transpersonal psychologist and an acupressure therapist for 20 years, is the originator of Process

For physical therapists unfamiliar with Process Acupressure, can you please describe the technique?

Process Acupressure (PA) combines traditional acupressure techniques with leading-edge process psychology skills to provide bodyworkers with a body/mind/spirit approach to therapy. The acupressure component includes touch skills for addressing the energy flows of the body in both general and specific ways. In PA, instructors teach therapists how to find, open and relieve congestion in acupoints with finger fulcrums, and how to stay at the interface between the structure of the body (soft tissues and bone) and the energy of the body (meridians and chakras) with touch. We also train practitioners how to read energy conditions within the body, and how to affect overall body tension and stress release.

Simultaneously, the PA psychology skills help the practitioner facilitate the client's psychological process — and even advance it — within the context of bodywork. This work includes an understandable holographic view of how people develop in personality and soul, and non-interpretive ways to read the client's natural body/mind/emotions/spirit process. Strategies also are taught for bringing more client self-awareness to his/her own stress, injury



Photograph courtesy of The Upledger Institute

Aminah Raheem, PhD

Acupressure. Her unique methodology integrates psychology with 20 years of bodywork research that includes the study of acupressure, Zero Balancing and other bodywork methods. Dr. Raheem has taught her technique to hundreds of health-care professionals internationally. She is the author of *Soul Return: Integrating Body Psyche & Spirit* (Aslan, 1990).

interested in acupressure as an advanced modality, PAII and PAIII continue to develop the practitioner's acupressure theory and skills. There is instruction in more than 100 specific acupoints, protocols for balancing various systems as well as for all parts of the body and the meridian pathways. The meridian associations in body parts and symptoms are outlined. The use of the five elements of traditional Chinese holistic therapy and the application of acupressure in assisting organ function are taught as well. Through the three PA courses, practitioners can gain substantial understanding of acupressure and additional skills they can use in their practice.

What types of physical therapy patients would benefit from this work?

PA is especially effective in stress-related cases since it addresses the whole person. Any condition that has a direct energy association, such as tissue tension or blockage of the digestive, respiratory, circulation, elimination or nervous systems, is helped by energy release in acupoints and meridians. Back problems sometimes are relieved by acupressure. Any case that has been slow to respond to other treatment may often be moved through the impasse with acupressure. Virtually all patients can benefit from PA because enhanced energy flow in the body automatically empowers the body's natural healing abilities.

Would learning this technique help physical therapists feel more competent in dealing with a patient's emotional issues, as they occasionally arise while performing soft-tissue techniques?

PA training will definitely bring more confidence and competence to the physical therapist when a patient's emotional issues arise. PA teaches explicit and safe psycho-emotional skills to address and move with such issues in ways that give the patient more self-awareness and greater self-responsibility.

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Many therapists — some of them psychologists — have told me that they are better able to deal with patients' psychological issues after a PA class.

Are there any contraindications to performing this technique?

It should not be used on a body site where poison is concentrated, as in a poisonous sting or bite, since increased blood and energy circulation can carry the poison throughout the system. Other contraindications would be for psychotics or individuals who are in a temporary psychotic condition. PA can sometimes open up a person's

process faster than a psychotic can cope with it. Although PA can be effective with such people, it is not advised except as applied by a trained psychologist.

— Judith M. Rosinski, PT, is a practitioner in central upstate New York. She incorporates Process Acupressure, Muscle Energy, Strain Counterstrain, CranioSacral Therapy, and Visceral Manipulation techniques in her practice. For more information on Process Acupressure, call The Upledger Institute Inc. at 1-800-233-5880, ext. 9248.

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