

# Introduction to Thai Yoga Massage Workshop

Gab Massage®

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The information in this Workbook has been carefully researched, and all efforts have been made to ensure accuracy.

All of the procedures, postures and techniques should be carefully studied and clearly understood before they are attempted at home.

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## Introduction

Massage has been defined in a number of ways. Probably because it materialises in different shape and forms thought out cultures. While most of them have solid benefits and you will collect tools on your journey as a Therapist and change over time. I think that is helpful to adopt a style and learn from it. As a Therapist, I devoted myself to the soft tissue of the body while having while keeping an open-minded holistic approach. Thai massage is very special for many reasons and I am humbled to share with you an adapted version that will be practical and also will make people's lives better.

I truly believe that most people have magic in their hands and by magic I mean a compassionate healing power and that is not to be underestimate. In this short course we will explore the different tools on your toolbox. The same time I think that the same way you need some understanding a minimum of how a car works in order to drive (how to start ignition, how to accelerate, use of breaks, road rules, etc) you also need to have an understanding of anatomy (human body) and physiology (how it works) if you want to massage someone. The good news is that a) You already have a body and b) It is in use. If you add to that a bit of common sense, I will guide you using simple terms, demonstrations and wicker diagrams to get you working out your magic. The secret is to be efficient while preserving yourself, which means you will use body mechanisms in your favour to avoid waste of energy and injury. Otherwise, you will be "pushing your car around" instead of driving. I also encourage you to always get feedback when applying pressure or stretching to find the right balance.

### What is Thai Yoga Massage?

A complete Thai Massage incorporates a combination of acupressure and yoga-like stretching. Thai Massage is different from many Western forms of massage in that there is no oil used, the therapist uses a mattress on the floor (instead of a massage table), and the client remains completely clothed throughout the session. It is so different from what we typically think of as "massage" that it is often instead described as having someone "do yoga to you." Thai Massage is directly related to yogic principles originating in India. It is also in many ways similar to Chinese massage techniques such as shiatsu and reflexology insofar as it is based on the theory of the flow of energy along lines or channels that run throughout the body.

The four principles of Thai Massage - Give a balanced massage, Start with the energy lines then joint manipulations then stretches (warm-up), start always from the lower part of the body, start always from the extremities of the body towards the core.

This course – The intention in simplifying the Thai Yoga Massage into a practical course for beginners is to get you healing and helping others in no time. Please read and reflect the few important considerations outlined below as this will keep you and others safe as well as maximising the benefits you will be delivering. I recommend that you practice only these positions in the beginning then learn new ones and expand your knowledge adding more energy lines to your routine. This workbook will then be your guide to remind you the sequence and positions.

## Preparations

The environment should be a safe place, cleanliness, an uninterrupted peaceful atmosphere, soothing lighting, and neat appearance are all vital to the Western massage clinic. Pray/meditate/thank in preparation to start the healing. Emphasizes humility, honesty, and compassion.

## Considerations

**Pain scale** - Although Thai Massage is typically a deep form of bodywork, the basic techniques introduced on the previous pages span a range of pressure, and not all Thai work needs to be deep. In general, Thais prefer deep, forceful presses and strong stretches. There often seems to be a perception that the more pain, the better. However, this strategy will not always win over clients in the West! With time, you will learn to feel the client's needs with your hands as you work, and you will naturally find the appropriate level of pressure for each individual. The important thing is to be aware of each client's pain threshold – the point at which you can feel their flesh tighten up under your hands. If your client is interested in relaxation, try to avoid this threshold with a lighter touch. If your client likes to be challenged, however, you can take him or her to this threshold, or slightly beyond it. Controlled, strong work will relax the client's muscles, open up the energy flow, and improve flexibility over time.

**Body mechanisms** - 1. Always keep your back straight with an open chest and relaxed shoulders. 2. You can most effectively translate bodyweight through straight elbows, wrists, and fingers. 3. Your strength comes from your legs and hips, not your arms or back. 4. When you need increased leverage, bring your centre of gravity (your waist) up over the client instead of reaching with your arms

**Energy levels and genre** - Energy can be masculine or feminine, in general we start with the left side when the person receiving the message has a female energy and on the other side when it is male. Before and after doing a massage cleanse your energy leaving thoughts and feelings out so your energy is positive and you are focused on the massage.

**Interview your client** - By asking the right questions you can have an idea of how your client is and how you may adapt your positions and pressure to ensure you are not causing any harm. Here are the top 6 questions and why:

**Chronic Injuries, Pains, or Problems on Any Part of the Body** - Massage that may aggravate existing injuries should be strictly avoided.

Heart, Circulation, or Blood Pressure Problems - You should avoid steps that place the legs over the head, as well as all steps involving "Opening the Wind Gate."

**Food Intake** - Determine if the client has eaten recently. Clients should not eat three hours prior to a massage. If they have, be sure to skip the abdominal massage. You may also have to omit some (or all) of the full-body stretches

**Menstruation** - Due to abdominal distention and sensitivity, menstruating women should not receive direct pressure to this region unless the therapist is trained in this specialty and the client requests this service.

**Pregnancy** - Under no circumstances should pregnant women receive Thai Massage or acupressure from a therapist who is not trained in this particular specialty.



Ask for feedback frequently, – In particular regarding the pain level and adjust accordingly.

Arthritis (or other joint stiffness) - This client will obviously need special care for most of the classic routine steps. It is essential to take clients to their limit gradually, slowly increasing intensity. Do not over-tax the joints. If the client experiences pain, ease off immediately. Hot compresses may be used instead.

### The don'ts

Respect your client's head

Don't step over the client's body

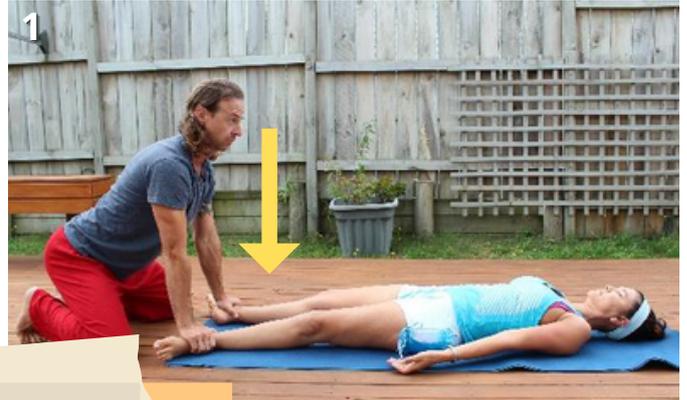
Don't use your feet near the face or head

Don't use your feet to flip the client

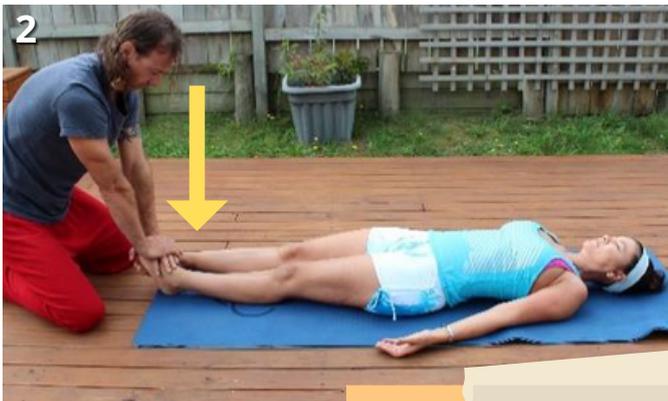
Don't drape yourself or sit on your client

Clean hands, arms and feet prior to massage

Prayer/Meditation



#1 Open feet – Out and centre



#2 Cross feet – Push down. Switch feet.



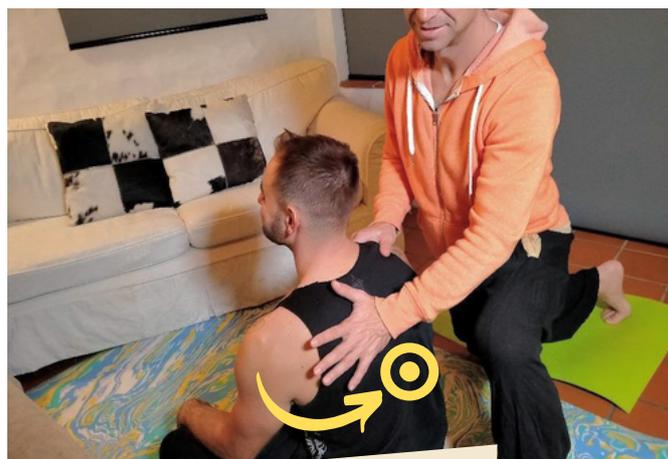
#3 Feet pushed up



# 4 Cobra



#5 Calf Stretch



#6 Shampoo in the back.

back to the sitting position (child position). Hold the back until the person sink in and fully stretch.



#7 Sen lines shoulders using palms.



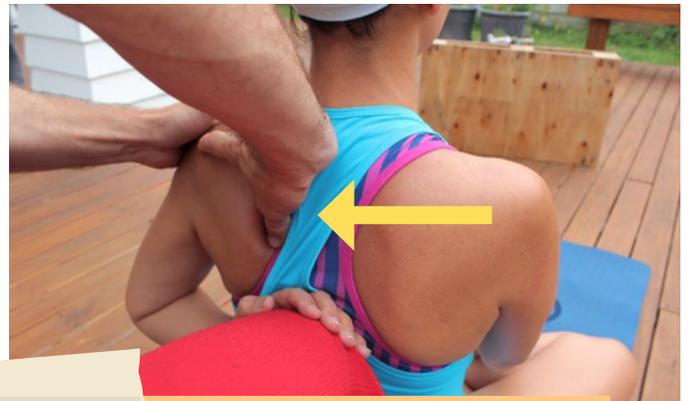
#8 Sen Lines – Forearms.



#9 Sen Lines – Thumbs.



#10 Sen Lines – Elbows..



#11 Hand in the back. Work on scapular

Ask the person to place the hand behind the back. Push lightly the palm of the hand against the back using your knee. Using your thumb from the opposite side push it inside of the shoulders blade. Use your other hand to stabilise the deltoids.



#12 Grab Traps. Hold gently but firm. Apply pressure forward..



#13 Pinch Trapz. Using one finger and thumb, then 2 fingers and thumb then 3 fingers and thumb. Twist pushing with the thumb.



#14 Ask the person to cross the arm on chest. Hold the wrist. Place the knees on the shoulders blades. Rocking back and forth apply pressure ion the shoulders.



#15 Hold deltoids. Shake up and down for about 30 seconds.

