



The London Massage Company

Newsletter 20

Spring is here!! It's official, we can feel it now that we're not numb with cold, we can hear it as the birds are starting to venture out again, singing in the mornings and at dusk and we can see it as the blossoms burst forward and bulbs begin to bloom - Hoorah!! Happy Spring time everyone.

Diary of a Kung Fu Queen

What an interesting couple of months it has been for me now that I have started training in earnest in Wing Chun Kung Fu. I never thought I would attempt martial arts and yet here I am, at the age of 44, the oldest in the class and one of the very few females (some evenings the only female). I toddle off in the cold drizzle to class and enjoy a varied workout that embraces not only some pretty hard core 'warm up' exercises (30 press ups and 60 sit ups), but upper body punching and slapping and chopping drills, kicking drills, and the 'gates', complex arm movements that require concentration and co-ordination. Finally we finish with 30 minutes of self defence and I marvel at the higher grades of student who are defending themselves from an attacker whilst blindfold. Yes, that's what I said, blindfold. Perhaps that's the appeal of this form of martial art, the fact that it relies on sensitivity and the ability to anticipate body

movement through touch. My elbows ache like billyo, not so much my triceps but a small muscle I think is anconeus. To be honest, I didn't give a moment's thought to my anconeus until it doubled in size and I fully appreciated the sensation of localised DOMS (delayed onset muscle soreness).

However, it's not enough to put me off and after two hours of training I 'chop' my way home, punching the air with a born-in-the-U.S-of-A kind of euphoria. My 10 year old son is most impressed, believing his mum to be a Kung Fu Queen, and delights in me showing him my latest moves and drills. Sadly, I suspect I'm rather more like Kung Fu Panda. But I'm an optimist.

Article Reviews

This month I have read seven articles all relevant to therapy.

1) Trigger Points by Sean Fyfe (Sports Injury Bulletin Issue 97 March 2010 p7)

It is always good to review what we know about trigger points, seeing as they seem to be prevalent in pretty much every client in one form or another! Sean Fyfe gives a good summary of what we know about these tricky little blighters and reveals that in a study of 100 asymptomatic

subjects 45% had latent trigger points in quadratus lumborum, 41% had them in gluteus medius, 24% had them in iliopsoas, 11% had them in gluteus minimus and only 5% had them in piriformis. This is interesting because there seems to be a myth that all clients have a 'tight' piriformis and if this were the case suggests trigger points would be far more prevalent in this muscle. Too many therapists press deeply into piriformis and when the client goes 'ow!' conclude that the muscle is tight when in fact most of you reading this know that there is a close relationship between piriformis and the sciatic nerve and it is no surprise that if you stick an elbow into the centre of a client's buttock most of them will indeed wince: this does not mean they have a tight piriformis, surely? What do you think?

(Don't forget our Intro To Trigger Points workshop on May 15th)

2) How to treat a chronically tight calf muscle by Mark Alexander (Sports Injury Bulletin Issue 97 March 2010 p9)
Also covered in this issue of the Bulletin was this interesting article reminding us that when treating a tight calf we need to examine whether nerves might be involved, for

Welcome!

What's up?

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as may of you know nerves can become tethered with fascia and restricted in their normal gliding movement. It was interesting to see that Mr Alexander applies frictioning to the tissue with the client in a supine position, the knee flexed, whereas many therapists reading this might apply frictions to the calf with the client prone, the knee flexed slightly by using a bolster beneath the ankles. In both positions the calf muscles are relaxed and it is good to have alternative treatment positions and to hear how other practitioners perform similar skills.

3) Reliability of scapular positioning measurement procedure using the Palpation Meter, da Costa et al (Physiotherapy 96, 2010, p59-67)

Those of you who attended our recent Postural Assessment workshop had fun locating the position of the scapular on each other and assessing its distance from the spine and well as trying to determine whether it was protracted/retracted, elevated/depressed, or upwardly/downwardly rotated. A recent article in Physiotherapy reports on a study using 30 healthy subjects and the use of a tool to measure scapular position. You may be relieved to know that the tool was found to be reliable for measuring scapula position, but not necessarily any more reliable

than simply using a good old tape measure. What I found amusing with this study was that anyone with a shoulder pathology (past or present) was excluded from the study and given that shoulder conditions are the second most common conditions seen by physiotherapists (after low back complaints) I was amazed that researchers had managed to recruit anyone at all! However, it is good to know there are people still studying anatomy and it's relevance to everyday assessment and treatment of clients, as this is one of my passions as some of you may know.

4) Effects of an acute hamstring stretch in people with and without osteoarthritis at the knee, Reid and McNair (Physiotherapy 96, 2010, p14-21)

Starting in maximum knee extension, elderly patients (both with and without osteoarthritis at the knee) were seated on a dynamic stretching device and received three, 60 second stretches to their hamstrings with a 60 minute rest between each stretch. Interestingly, the authors report. "these results suggest that static stretching achieves a greater increase in joint range of motion than a more dynamic exercise such as cycling or running, and therefore supports the use of static stretching as part of a warm-up routine." Curiously, stiffness in the hamstrings of

both groups was found to be higher following the stretching protocol. We have known for some time that stretching may increase joint range but does not necessarily make muscle tissue more pliable (ie. less stiff). So it's back to good old massage for those of you treating clients with 'tight' muscles because there is no doubt in my mind that muscles are palpably less stiff following massage, a good reason to incorporate both massage and stretching into your routines.

5) Evidence- Based massage: Part 2. Nick and Nicola Dinsdale, (SportEx Dynamics 2010, 23,(Jan) 10-13)

In this second article examining the role of sports massage I love the phrase quoted from Ashton and Cassell (2002) that "sports massage is a concept rather than an actual technique...". What are your thoughts on this statement? Overall I really like this article because it is well written and informative and the authors clearly understand the difficulties faced by sports massage practitioners who, reading the literature, may feel anxious to try to 'prove' that sports massage works when we all know that getting evidence for this kind of manual therapy is notoriously challenging. What a relief the Dinsdales' advice is "don't get beleaguered by all the literature - just go out there and get on with it!" Phew, off to go out there and get on with it!



Two New Diplomas and a Brand New Workshop

We have to share the news and we hope you will too.
This Autumn we're launching some great new qualifications!

Advanced & Deep Tissue Massage Diploma

Our 8-day diploma is a fab alternative to sports massage. We'll teach you exactly which muscles you need to treat and why as well as equipping you with tools and techniques which will sky rocket your skill set making you one of the best deep tissue therapists in the country. You leave the classroom feeling confident and competent in the techniques learnt so you really will learn skills you can put into practice straight away. As always we'll be at the British School of Osteopathy with the 8 days taught in two four-day blocks:

Module 1 - 31st Aug-3rd Sept

Module 2 - 7th-10th Sept

With a practical and theory exam one month later on Oct 9th. The diploma is awarded by us, with all the techniques being insurable. To enroll on the course you must have a Swedish/Holistic massage and an Anatomy & Physiology qualification, Level 3. Take a gander at the syllabus: www.thelondonmassagecompany.com/advanced

Using Essential Oils in Sports Massage Diploma

Our 4-day diploma is the most comprehensive diploma for sports massage therapists wanting to use essential oils to enhance their practice and sports therapy treatments.

Again held at the BSO with the 4 days taken over two weekends:

Weekend 1 - Sept 4th & 5th

Weekend 2 - Oct 2nd & 3rd

The diploma is awarded by us and you will be able to obtain insurance for the oils you will use. To enroll on the course you must already be qualified in sports massage. Be in touch for details of the syllabus:

www.thelondonmassagecompany.com/essentialsport

Tests, Tips and Tricks for New Therapists, A one-day workshop

This workshop is for newly qualified massage therapists wanting to get an feel for deeper, more advanced techniques. With other newly qualified therapists you'll gain skills that you can safely incorporate into your practice will include deep tissue massage, specialised forms of therapeutic stretching (Soft Tissue Release and Muscle Energy Technique), plus useful assessments (Range of Movement and Visual Analogue Scale), tractioning, and some of Jane's favourite treatment tips. We'll be at the BSO, 4th September www.thelondonmassagecompany.com/workshop14

Strapping and Taping A one-day workshop

Need to get your strapping and taping skills up to scratch? Then this is the course for you.

This 100% practical day will have you strapping and taping your class mates practising techniques for pre and post sports activities. Autumn date TBC but please be in touch to register your interest. www.thelondonmassagecompany.com/workshop16



I have been a massage therapist for 17 years. I also taught massage for several of those, have written and taught massage courses and workshops both in the UK and abroad, and recently started mentoring therapists too. I have always loved teaching, and passing on knowledge and information that can help others, and the idea for www.mentoringformassagesuccess.co.uk came about for two main reasons:

Firstly, in all my searching the web for information on practice building and marketing for therapists there seemed to be very little originating from the UK, especially by massage therapists for massage therapists. A whole range of skills is needed to build a successful massage practice, of which the ability to give a good massage is just one. Practice building skills aren't taught in much depth on most massage courses, and newly qualified therapists can easily become discouraged when their business fails to take off. However, this isn't necessarily down to any failing on their part – they just haven't been taught the necessary skills. Mentoring can fill this gap by teaching those skills, in a personalised programme that is tailored to each therapist's individual requirements. Secondly, what I heard time and time again from recent massage graduates was that, having left college, they suddenly felt they were out in the world on their own, feeling

rather lost and unsupported after the camaraderie and group dynamics of the classroom.

Starting out as a massage therapist can be particularly daunting – we spend so many hours learning so much about the body – and yet as a novice therapist I distinctly remember thinking that all that learning only served to make me realise how LITTLE I knew, and my first months in a clinic were nothing like being in the classroom! So it can be invaluable to have someone on your team who believes in you until you have belief in yourself. Someone to cheer you on, help you out with answers to questions as they arise in your practice, and also to reassure you and encourage you. However, mentoring isn't only for therapists just starting out in the massage profession. Each stage of our massage career brings its own unique challenges as we change as individuals and as massage therapists too. Success in our profession demands continual and consistent input into ALL areas of our massage practice and we all have times when we need help to maintain the energy, determination and focus that this level of commitment demands. Even the most experienced and successful people from all walks of life have coaches and mentors to help keep them on track, provide clarity of purpose and renewed focus,

and spur them on to even greater achievements.

What is mentoring?

Mentoring is usually defined as someone who is more experienced, usually older, who has 'been there, done that, got the T-shirt' passing on their knowledge, experience and wisdom to others in a particular field of work or activity. Depending on the needs of the mentee, a mentor will: act as a sounding board; provide information, guidance and advice (if asked); encourage the self-management of learning; encourage the development of self-awareness; ask probing and sometimes challenging questions; encourage the mentee to think ahead, plan, and set goals; provide accountability (again, if asked).

How does mentoring work?

Mentoring is a process which supports learning and development. So, in terms of learning, I can pass on my knowledge and experience in answer to specific requests for information. I am able to 'cherry pick' all the best business, marketing, and practice development tips, advice and strategies that I've gleaned from many different sources and from my own experiences over the years, and this is often a very time-efficient way for the mentee to fill knowledge gaps. However, we are all unique as individuals and therapists; what worked for me may very



well not work for someone else. This is where the second strand of mentoring – development - comes into its own. You've probably heard the saying "give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach him to fish and you feed him for life". Mentoring is about helping you learn to fish. An important aspect of mentoring is not just giving answers in reply to requests for information, it's about helping people develop the skills and aptitudes that will make them self-supporting in their massage careers. The mentoring process helps people develop their own resources, and gives them the skills and confidence to deal with the challenges of our profession. Having the right mindset and attitude is just as important, if not more so, than having the right information and facts, and mentoring can help you develop these. There are techniques and strategies to help us think differently, react differently, and act differently; these are techniques to be learned, practised and implemented, just like our hands-on massage skills, in order to give us the tools we need to build a successful massage business.

What will you gain from mentoring?

Different therapists will have different needs, and take different things from the mentoring process. For some it will be a very factual, practical way to get

questions answered, gain knowledge quickly, and learn techniques, strategies and tips for both the clinical and business areas of their practice. Other therapists will find it useful as a supportive, encouraging and reassuring process. One therapist who I mentored said that the most valuable thing she got from the experience was confirmation that she was doing so much right – which she found fantastically reassuring and a real boost to her confidence. It gave her more belief in herself much more quickly than if she'd been trying to go it alone, and her practice grew more quickly as a result. Because she felt happier and more confident she consequently also got a lot more enjoyment and satisfaction out of her massage work (a sure-fire way to get more clients!). Having a mentor also helps you stand back from your practice and see the blocks and blind spots that are holding you back (but which are so hard to see for yourself). Mentoring helps you identify your strengths and weaknesses, plan objectives and set goals. Working for yourself doesn't have to mean working by yourself, and for many therapists the mentoring process is invaluable for providing accountability for them achieving their goals. Mentoring can also provide you with a bit of "tough love" too. It's all too easy to find reasons and excuses for not doing things that we find

uncomfortable and difficult. In my experience the two most common issues that therapists struggle with most are setting fees, and also marketing themselves. Questions, sometimes challenging ones, help us explore our values and beliefs, and discover what is really holding us back, and often stopping us from taking effective action.

My aim with www.mentoring-formassagesuccess.co.uk is to distil all my experiences, and the knowledge that I have acquired from so many wise people over the years, into a source of support and guidance for other massage practitioners. I would love for more talented therapists to find a way to succeed in what they truly love doing - and the world needs great massage like never before!

Full details can be found on the www.mentoringformassagesuccess.co.uk
Or Helen can be contacted on 07973 432988



Things we think you'd like

WIN A WORKSHOP

Here at The London Massage Company, we've been scratching heads and chewing nails trying to better define who we are. We are looking for a new strapline. One that perhaps says more than our current :

We bring you the best CPD training in advanced, deep tissue and sports massage techniques.

After much UM-ing and AR-ing we thought "Who better to help us with this than..... **YOU.**" YOU, who have sat and listened to our ravings in the newsletters and our wisdom (or ravings!?) in the classroom. YOU who continue to support us (thank you thank you thank you) Perhaps you think the current strapline sums us up, but maybe not. Why did you choose us? Why do you like The London Massage Company and why would you/do you come back to us? The Winner of our BEST STRAPLINE COMPETITION will win a free workshop of his or her choice. The shorter the snappier, the better. All entries much appreciated by *May 1st 2010.*

// Patti's Project - One of our recent graduates from the Sports Injuries & Massage Diploma, is investigating running in older females and males and is looking for people to complete her short questionnaire which can be found here:

<http://FreeOnlineSurveys.com/rendersurvey.asp?sid=65wk48825njpyat714711>

Jane has completed it and can tell you it really does only take a minute or so, and as many of the ladies reading this have done running in the past, or are still running, we thought you kind lot might be willing to support Patti in her project. The deadline for completing the survey is 6th April.

// Innes Barnard runs a massage therapy business called Kimochi Wellness (www.kimochi.co.uk) and is looking for fully qualified therapists to work on a self employed part time basis to do home or hotel visits in London. Please contact her via her site for more information.

// Adriana and Amanda from the charity Afghanaid, have got people running the London marathon on the 25th of April. They are looking for people to provide massages. Please contact them on 020 7706 0825 or intern@afghanaid.org.uk if you're interested.

// CAFOD are looking for masseurs to volunteer for London Marathon - April the 25th 2010. They're looking for masseurs to work on runners from roughly 11am - 3.30pm. If you have your own massage table / mats that would be great, but if not they'd still love to hear from you. CAFOD is an overseas development agency that works in more than 60 countries worldwide tackling poverty and injustice by working with local partners in delivering a multitude of programmes and resources; inspired by the values of compassion, hope, dignity, solidarity, partnership, sustainability and stewardship. If you can help, contact Helen on 020 7095 5333 or at hinde@cafod.org.uk

// We're always asked about good book titles for massage, anatomy and various techniques so we've decided to add put them all in one place and add a Book Store to our site. You can take a browse around to the titles we recommended and by all means, if you have titles you'd recommend then please let us know. www.thelondonmassagecompany.com/bookstore.

// We love....the downloadable (free) monthly calendar of kind acts from the Random Acts of Kindness Foundation. Whilst not all of these acts of kindness are relevant to us it inspired Jane to create her own calendar onto which she is plotting tiny acts of kindness (eg. if you see a front garden or windowbox over which someone has obviously taken a lot of care, slip a postcard through the door telling them how appreciated their garden is)

// You know that here at LMCo we like to walk to the beat of a different drum, well so do these guys - we love it - keep your eyes peel for a platinum blond teaching workshops near you! www.beeunique.co.uk