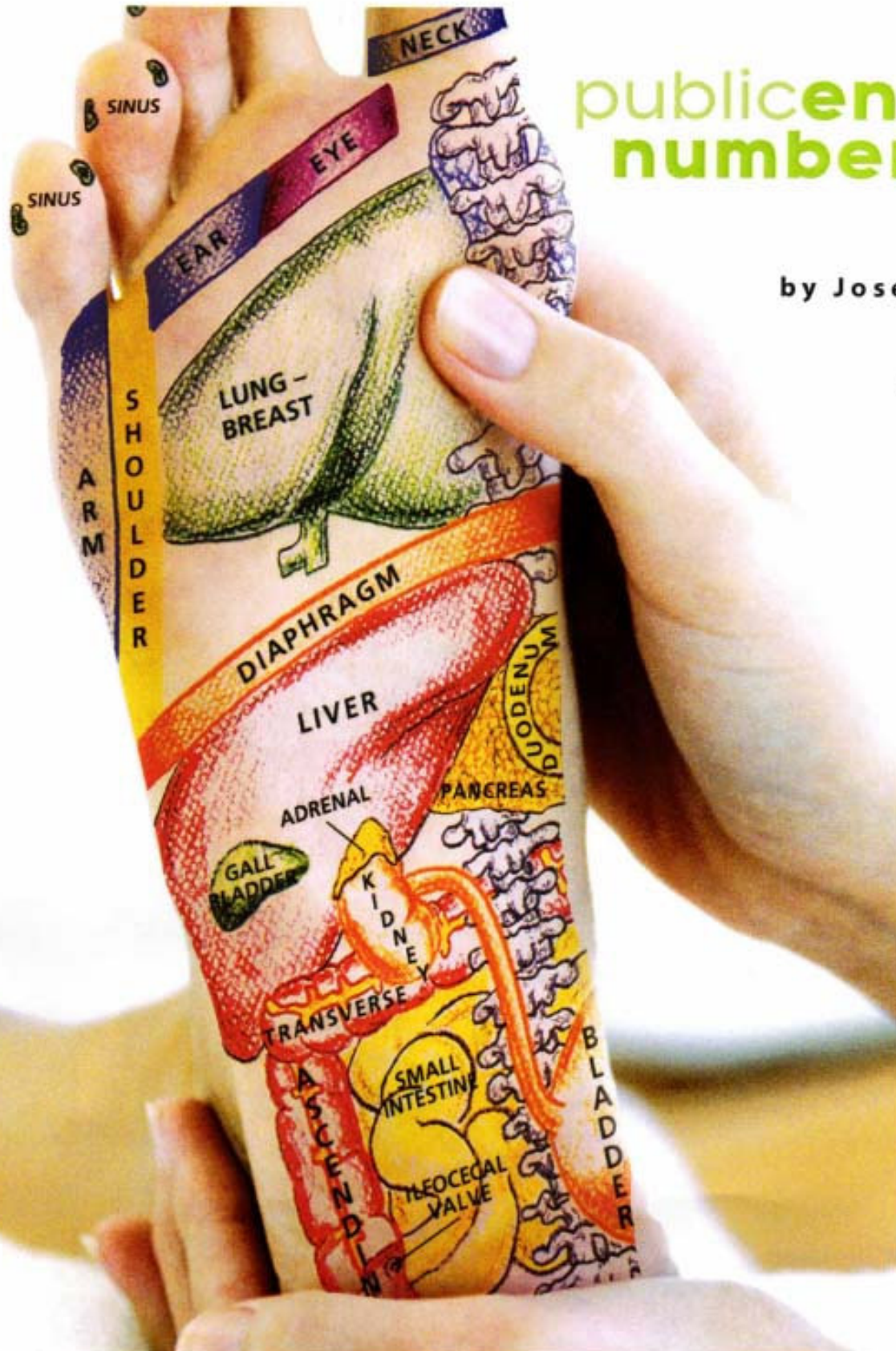


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by Joseph Horan

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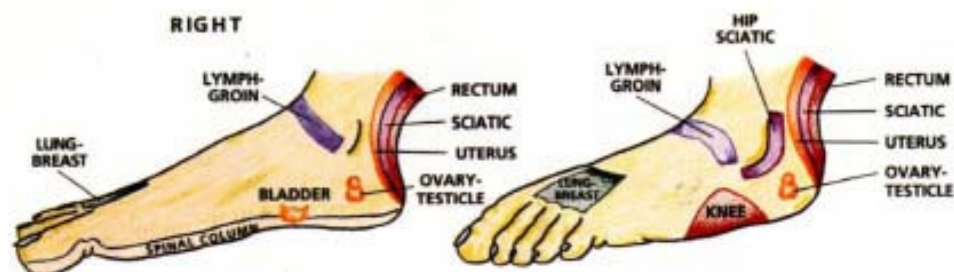
public enemy number one

| by Joseph Horan

Stress is public enemy number one and you have the opportunity at your disposal to help your clients walk away from it.

Stress. We hear that word everyday and all of us experience it. It has long been accepted by the medical community that most health problems can be attributed to, or are, exacerbated by stress. It is up to us to educate our clients on how to combat the negative effects of stress so that they will continue to return for the services we offer, especially Reflexology which is growing at a phenomenal pace at spas and salons across the United States. Learning to apply Reflexology in the correct way should be a top priority if you are interested in enhancing your business.

REFLEXOLOGY IS A NATURAL,
NON-INVASIVE TECHNIQUE
TO IMPROVE HEALTH AND
WELL-BEING.



Stress results from either internal or external causes. Our bodies can experience physical stress because of illness, accidental injury, surgery, poor nutrition, noise pollution, over-work or over exercising and playing too hard. Emotional traumas, family strife and relationships result in physical stress too. Mental stress, such as deadlines, attending meetings and other pressures at work, contribute to wear and tear on our body. Not all stress is harmful; some is actually beneficial when it promotes change. However, the accumulation of stress, whatever the cause may be, results in congestion. Congestion is excessive amounts of blood or tissue fluid that can collect in the hands and feet. Using simple, precise pressure on the feet and hands with Reflexology can relieve and eliminate congestion, allowing the body to balance itself in a natural way.

Welcome to the world of Reflexology where research studies have shown that Reflexology, using only the hands, especially the thumbs, knuckles and fingers—never tools or mechanical devices—can help the body achieve internal harmony in a natural way. It is this multi-dimensional and energetic approach to the body that forms the backbone of this distinctive therapy.

Reflexology has been extensively studied throughout the world substantiating its positive effects. One study, involving over 10,000 people in China, found Reflexology to be 95 percent effective on 68 different medical conditions! The paradox of Reflexology is that it not only helps those who are experiencing physical stress through illness, but it aids those who are healthy to stay healthy.

Reflexology is a natural, non-invasive technique to improve health and well-being. It is simple to learn and apply but it is not simplistic in its results. It is an ancient healing art with a wholistic focus linking the body and mind. It is based on the belief that the feet are mirrors of the body: within the feet and hands can be found reflexes that correspond to the organs and glands of the entire body. Congestion, found in a sensitive reflex point, can be an indicator of where the body is holding stress.

REFLEXES

A reflex produces an involuntary reaction resulting from the direct transmission of a stimulus—in this case, it is pressure through touch—to areas of the feet and hands. Information goes back and forth to the central nervous system from the feet and hands. The central nervous system consists of the brain and the spinal cord. Messages travel to the spinal cord and then up to the brain where they are interpreted. The response is transmitted back to the area of initial touch. The feet and hands have the distinction of occupying the largest space in the area of the brain known as the motor cortex. Therefore, pressure to the feet and hands has a greater impact than pressure to other areas of the body.

Generally speaking the location of the reflexes found in the feet and hands follow the anatomy of the body. The toes and fingers represent the head, the ball of the foot and upper palm represent the chest area, the arch of the foot and palm of the hand represent the abdomen, and the heel of both the hand and foot represent the pelvic area. The body has both depth and width. The organs and glands sometimes overlap and are layered between the front and back of the body. The reflexes are likewise layered. Reflexology stimulates the reflexes in the feet and hands to release tension and stress. Working on the reflexes promotes relaxation, which is the first step in the body's ability to release stress, diminish pain, and balance itself. Simply put, Reflexology utilizes concentrated touch to help the body relax. By reflexing both feet and hands entirely the body's natural healing power begins to flow and balance the entire system.

HISTORY

Though part of the complementary health movement, Reflexology is not a new phenomenon. Its origins date back to ancient times, and evidence of such practices have been documented in several cultures. Pictographs in Egypt dating from 2,500 B.C show medical physicians treating their patients' hands and feet.

**BY REFLEXING BOTH FEET AND HANDS ENTIRELY THE BODY'S
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Reflexology was also recognized in India and China 5,000 years ago. Its roots are similar to acupuncture. Many people are unaware that acupuncture started with touch and the discovery that touching one part of the body affected another part. Acupuncturists work to balance the energy (chi) of the body via pathways called meridians running through the body which relate to the internal organs. As acupuncture developed over the years, stronger pressure was applied using the thumb and knuckle. Later a stick or piece of bamboo reed was employed to achieve more depth. Finally, needles, were used to penetrate the skin and directly reach and stimulate the acupuncture points. Reflexology, on the other hand, has always been touch and continues to stimulate reflex points in a non-invasive way. Only the practitioner's hands and good intentions are utilized; yet they yield remarkable results.

The concept of pressure applied to the body to affect change was used in Europe in the 1500s. The modern history of Reflexology began with Dr. William Fitzgerald, who was the Director of the Hartford (Connecticut) Hospital for diseases of the ear, nose and throat. He has been given the credit for introducing zone therapy, later called Reflexology, in the early 1900s. Dr. Fitzgerald taught that the body was divided into 10 longitudinal zones—five on each side of the body. For example, the big toe and thumb are in zone number one; the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th toes and fingers are in zones two, three, four and five, respectively.

In his practice, Fitzgerald used pressure to prevent or relieve pain, as well as a means of helping the body heal itself. Dr. Joe Shelby Riley refined Fitzgerald's work. Dr. Riley's therapist, Eunice Ingham, later popularized Reflexology in the late 1930s by taking it to the public so people could help themselves. Reflexology is now part of the wholistic health movement as people assume responsibility for their own health and well-being.

THE FOOT-BODY CONNECTION

There are 26 bones, 107 ligaments and 19 muscles in each foot. The feet are the foundation of your structural body that sends stimuli to the brain. The feet have a special relationship to the body. There are four curvatures in the feet and 26 bones, just as there are four curvatures in the spine and 26 vertebrae.

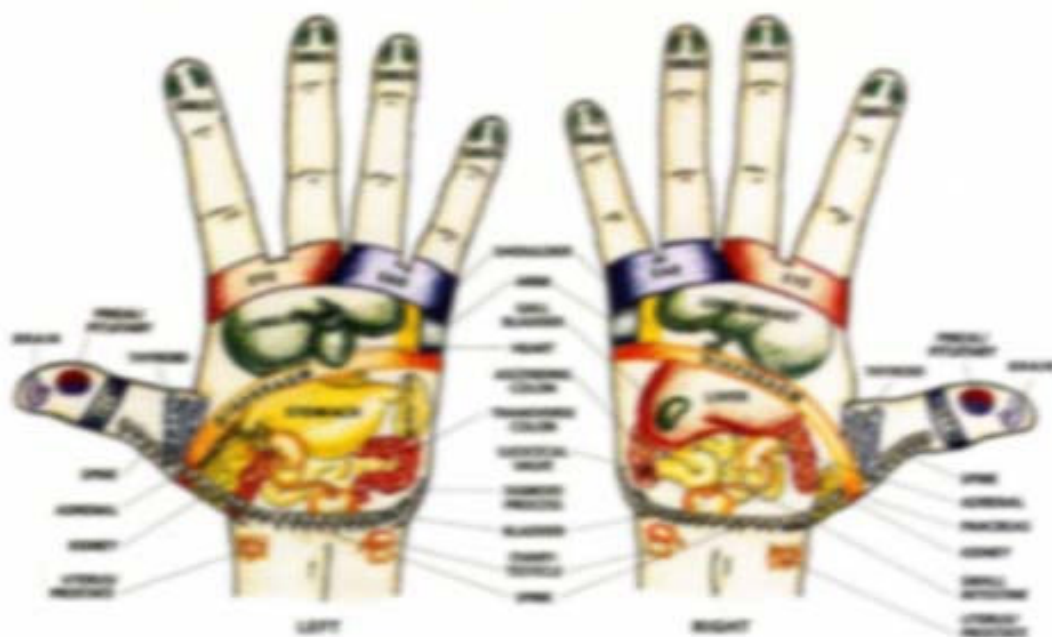
The foot is one of the most complex organs in the human body. It is meant to move in more than 150 different ways; not in just the one way it can when it is encased in a stiff shoe or supported with orthotics. According to the world renowned podiatrist Dr. Simon Wikler, who was a strong advocate of Reflexology, the distortions and weaknesses of the feet in shape, movement, strength and muscle density may be a contributing factor to certain degenerative and autoimmune diseases.

When walking and standing we are totally dependent on our feet. If those feet are under constant stress because of limitations of function imposed by ill fitting footwear, callous, bunions and assorted aches and pains, the whole body is under constant strain. Eventually, the body will respond to this constant stress by breaking down in some fashion. People must become cognizant of the relationship of their feet and the rest of the body; not just take for granted that they will always function for us even when we continue to abuse them.

The feet are the foundation of life, they support us in a phenomenal way and yet suffer the most abuse because they are ignored and taken for granted. With the hands we reach out to life and once again take them for granted. We may manicure, oil and beautify them, but a far greater potential is present. I am always gratified when students discover the potential in their hands to help others reduce stress in the body and gain greater health.

HAND REFLEXOLOGY

The hands have identical reflexes as the feet with the exception that more deposits form on the feet because of the law of gravity. Structurally, the hands are the most intricate com-



ponents of the body. In no other part of the body is so much energy and sensitivity condensed into such a small space. In each hand there are eight wrist bones, five bones in the palm and fourteen in the digits, twenty-seven bones in all! Repetitive motion syndrome, carpal tunnel syndrome, cramping of the fingers, stiff joints, lack of mobility or strength, are common complaints of many people. Hand Reflexology can frequently relieve the pain and immobility that these conditions bring about. The hands are worked using the same techniques as those applied to the feet.

BENEFITS OF REFLEXOLOGY

The effects of Reflexology are numerous and the benefits are multi-dimensional. Reflexology:

- promotes relaxation as it relieves stress and tension;
- promotes balance and normalization of the body;
- improves circulation and the delivery of oxygen and nutrients to the cells;
- integrates the mind-body connection through caring touch;
- assists in pain management and accelerates the healing process in a non-invasive way;
- leaves the client with a feeling of renewed energy;
- is a way to show caring, compassion, and acceptance to others regardless of their age or physical condition.

TOUCH AND COMMUNICATION

I agree with Oruro Ohashi, the famous Oriental practitioner and gifted healer who has a slogan, "Touch For Peace." Touch is so badly needed in the world and has the power to heal. I believe there is no condition that cannot be helped by tender loving care and Reflexology because the main component of Reflexology is touch. It is concentrated touch, affecting

a positive change in the body. Touching the hands and feet is important to health for many reasons:

- First, from a physical perspective, the skin is the largest organ in our body. The sensory stimulation through the central nervous system that we've already discussed, has a great impact on the body.
- Second, physical touch produces electrical and chemical change within the body.
- Third, touch assists a person in mobilizing their own resources of self-healing.
- Fourth, touch is a communicator of caring.

There are varying degrees of touch. It is unfortunate that some are fearful of being touched. The reasons can vary, perhaps they were abused, or have never touched before. Yet, everyone has the innate need to be touched. Through proper touch, communications can be improved between people.

Another inducement for clients using Reflexology is that they do not have to remove any clothing, just their footwear. Through Reflexology they can open up and become more relaxed. As a practitioner I am trained to do other kinds of bodywork, but Reflexology works best for me because it is more concentrated touch and the results are better because the client is able to relax more deeply.

REFLEXOLOGY AND THE BODY CONNECTION

Reflexology is a complementary therapy that focuses on balancing the mind and body relationship through the feet and hands. The Reebok shoe company acknowledged this in its 1995 national ad campaign. They had a foot depicting Reflexology with parts of the body drawn in. The slogan was "Another way to hold body and mind together."

It is well known that our thoughts directly affect our body

**THROUGH REFLEXOLOGY AND RELAXATION THE WHOLE
BODY IS ENCOURAGED TO RENEW ITSELF SO THAT ALL
FUNCTIONS ARE WORKING IN HARMONY.**

and its functions. When we are in a positive frame of mind our body is able to cope better with life's challenges. The body and mind should work together in symmetry and are constantly striving to achieve balance. For example, breathing can be affected by stress and anxiety. When a person is anxious, he or she is not breathing properly. Restricted breathing causes a lack of oxygen circulating to the connective tissue. Often this results in pain and people are not aware of the connection between their breathing and the onset of pain. By being relaxed, oxygen delivery to the cells and parts of the body is enhanced. Through Reflexology and relaxation the whole body is encouraged to renew itself so that all functions are working in harmony.

Reflexology is being used in medical institutions throughout the world as part of complementary care programs. It is not a substitute for medical care, but a complement to other conventional or unconventional forms of treatment. It has been proven that it can improve the quality of life no matter what the condition. Again, Reflexology's value lies in its ability to reduce tension and stress. Working on the reflexes correctly promotes relaxation, which is the first step in the body's ability to diminish pain and heal itself. Reflexology can relieve tension and stress in a natural way and help the body to balance itself. Our body is an incredible organism that has the innate wisdom and ability to heal itself. With Reflexology you have the opportunity to help your clients discover the innate healing ability we all possess.

Reflexology stands by itself as a non-invasive, very effective, stress reducing and health promoting technique. However, other techniques or modalities can be combined with Reflexology to maximize the benefits. It can be integrated into any discipline you already practice. Whether you include these will depend on your training.

To become a professional Reflexologist, you will need in-depth education. Professional Reflexologists practice according to appropriate business standards and follow a code of ethics.

Check the Reflexology Association of America's web site (www.reflexology-usa.org) for an educational program in your area.

Reflexology enhances people's lives and is beneficial for all. It can be rewarding for everyone regardless of age, occupation, and in any degree of health—from active athletes to wheelchair-bound paraplegics, from great-grandparents to children. Reflexology has a calming effect on infants and prepares them for a life of good health. With Reflexology you can provide much comfort to your clients, while you discover your own gifts of touch and healing.

There is little or no extra space needed to start a Reflexology service in your salon and no extra expense for equipment. The only requirement is a caring therapist with proper training. Learning Reflexology and educating your clients to request it will increase your income while improving their health. Clients can come back for Reflexology services often whether or not they are in need of additional spa or salon services at the time.

Stress is public enemy number one and you have the opportunity in your hands to help your clients walk away from stress. Better quality of life for all is only a foot (or hand) away!

Joseph Horan has more than thirty years experience in the holistic health field. He is a nationally board certified reflexologist, licensed massage therapist and Reiki Master, he has written articles on Reflexology for DermoScope Magazines, the Medical Massage Therapy newsletter and is the contributing author on Reflexology to the book Core Curriculum for HIV/AIDS by the Nursing Association of Nurses in AIDS Care. He founded Reflexology Seminars of New York, Inc. (RSNY) in 1994 and teaches both Reflexology introductory and certification workshops across the country.

RSNY...Your Passport to the World of Reflexology



Reflexology is an ancient healing art based on the belief that the feet and hands are mirrors of the body: within them can be found reflexes that correspond to all organs and glands. Stimulating these areas can relieve tension and stress in a natural way helping the body balance itself to better health.

Reflexology Seminars of New York, Inc. (RSNY) is devoted to spreading knowledge about reflexology and helping people learn the skills they need to help themselves and others to improved health using this wholistic, non-invasive discipline.

RSNY Offers:

- Courses – Basic Workshop and Certification Course
- Reflexology Charts – of the Feet and Hands with reflex locations
- Videos – Showing a Reflexology treatment on the Feet or Hands
- Book – *Walk away From Stress with Reflexology* - forward by Louise Hay
- Corporate Lectures
- Corporate Workshops for Stress Reduction



Joseph Horan founded and directs Reflexology Seminars of New York, Inc. He has been a guest on the *Joe Franklin Show*, *Gary Null Show*, *Barry Farber Program* and *Higher Inside TV Show*. He has been mentioned numerous times in Cindy Adams's column in the *NY Post*. His articles have appeared in *Skin, Inc.*, *Dermascope*, *Nurse's Core Curriculum for AIDS*, *Medical Massage Newsletter* and *Reflexology Today*. Horan is a national and international lecturer and workshop conductor. His charts have been seen on CNN. With over 30 years experience in reflexology he is in private practice in New York City.

Reflexology Seminars of New York, Inc.

1173A Second Ave, Ste. 264

New York NY 10021

PH/FAX 212-517-5532

www.reflexologyseminarsofny.org / rsofny@aol.com