

Relax And Liberate

Esalen: The interface and integration of form, energy, structure and soul



Esalen massage is well-known for its long flowing strokes over the whole body; helps release the stresses of everyday life, leaving the receiver feeling whole, integrated and deeply relaxed, in a natural state of well-being. It is best described as the interface and integration of form, energy, structure, and soul. With its nurturing contact, integrating strokes, and detailed attention to the whole body, an Esalen massage provides a state of deep relaxation and healing.

Basic Principles

- The practitioner is working with, instead of on, the client.
- The massage is a moving meditation; the practitioner is committed to being as fully present

as possible for the entire massage session, bringing a full-hearted, meditative presence to the table.

- The practitioner is aware that a client may be affected on physical, mental, emotional or even spiritual levels.
- Long, flowing strokes, integrated throughout the massage give a sense of relaxation, connection and wholeness.

The Session

Taking a few minutes to create a grounded and centered inner space, the practitioner approaches the table with a quiet and sensitive, yet strong, quality of presence, opening a space for intuition to influence the massage session. Instead of looking at the

individual parts as separate from each other, the wholeness of the integrated being is emphasized, incorporating long, integrating strokes to give a sense of wholeness and connection.

The Esalen massage practitioner explores, or plays with the tissue, coaxing it to soften, let go and eventually relax. This non - invasive touch allows practitioners to vary the pressure from light to deep and back again, depending on the area of the body being touched and the quality of the tissue under their hands. An attitude of exploration, instead of a programmed technique, prevails throughout.

The responsibility of the Esalen

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practitioner is to stay fully present and provide a safe space, thus supporting the release of the pain or emotion that was originally trapped in the tissue in the body. The fourth principle which is the long, flowing strokes in an Esalen massage not only relax and prepare clients for a deeper touch, they also easily move the practitioner from one area to another area of the body, supporting the feelings of connection, integration and wholeness. The effectiveness of the long, integrating strokes is becoming more apparent as evidenced the number of other massage modalities that have begun incorporating signature Esalen strokes. Esalen massage easily lends itself to both enhancing and integrating aspects of other massage modalities. Over the years, Esalen practitioners have been fortunate in having the opportunity to experience and work with the creators and disseminators of now well-established bodywork systems and martial art disciplines.

Benefits

Esalen massage increases the blood supply and nutrition to muscles, reduces blood pressure, slows the

heart rate, relaxes muscle spasms, increases lymph flow and affects a host of other benefits common to other massage practices. Esalen massage also uses passive joint mobilization to help relax muscles and increase a client's range of motion, in addition to reaching muscles that are frequently more difficult to contact. Gentle stretching, often incorporated into an Esalen massage, also increases the range of motion of a limb or the mobility of the neck and in addition helps the client realize where a muscle is held and the possibility of letting go.

Probably the most beneficial aspect of an Esalen massage is the ability of the practitioner's focused, flowing massage touch to slow the body systems down, moving from the sympathetic to the parasympathetic nervous system, allowing the client to calm down, let go of stress and drop into a deeply relaxed state. Endorphins are released, the immune system activated, and the body's natural healing systems move towards balance, integrating the body, mind, emotions and spirit into a natural, harmonious place.



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