

SOMATIC TOUCH TECHNIQUE

- **Somatic Touch Technique**

In the Somatic Touch Technique, you will follow all the boundaries and guidelines for touch, safety, informed consent and guidelines for appropriate care and appropriate setting/environment. You can also practice a modified version of this technique virtually by guiding your clients through the steps below and having them apply the hands-on aspects to themselves.

The Somatic Touch Technique is based in Thai Yoga Massage and will focus on touch of the following regions of the client's body:

Head
Shoulders
Clavicle
Hips
Feet
Hands

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In the Thai Yoga Massage training manual, Itzhak Helman shares the long history of Thai massage, 'Traditional Thai massage, or "Ancient Massa-gen (*nuad phaen boran*, as it is called in Thai), can look back at a long history of therapeutic healing. If one traces the evolution of the techniques of healing-massage practiced in Thailand, one discovers the astonishing fact that the earliest roots of Thai massage lie not in Thailand but in India. The legendary founder of the art is believed to have been a doctor from northern India. Known as Jivaka Kumar Bhaccha, he was a contemporary of the Buddha and personal physician to the Magadha King Bimbisara over 2,500 years ago'.

As with all hands-on techniques we never apply significant pressure to joints or organs. We always avoid touching any male or female genitalia or women's breasts. The touch is light, yet a gentle pressure or firmness. You will use both your fingers and the palms of your hands with this technique.

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Step One:

Roll out the yoga mat on the floor and invite your client to lay down. If moving on and off the floor is not accessible to them, you can also do this on a sofa (it is not recommended to work with a client in their bed or your bed – see boundaries and guidelines later within this curriculum for further detail). Have your client lay flat and place one regular pillow under their knees (this relieves pressure on the lower back). Place a pillow under their head. Have them place their arms down at their sides on the ground close to their body and close their eyes if that feels safe. If closing their eyes does not feel safe, invite them to keep them open.

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Step Two:

Head –

We begin just above the eye socket at the base of the eyebrow, work upwards to the top of the head and then down to the temples and cheek bones and end back at the top of the head. At each motion we will ask the client:

'How is that? Are you comfortable? Do you feel that is too much or not enough pressure or is it good?'

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Place both hands in front of your client's face. Place your pointer finger and middle finger gently where the nose and brow bone meet – two fingers on either side of the bridge of the nose and gently apply pressure to the underside of the brow in an upwards pull, again this is a very gentle subtle movement. You will hold this for 10-15 seconds.



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Next, place your thumbs on your client's third eye and the rest of your hands on the temples and gently apply pressure.



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Next, with three fingers of each hand (index, middle, ring fingers) pressing just above the clients' eyebrows, slide your fingers up their forehead with your fingers touching, applying a slight push or pressure to the third eye, then the crown of head, top of the head, then run the fingers down the back of your clients' head and release.



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Grasp fistfuls of hair gently at the roots and slowly and gently tug from side to side. You will keep your knuckles very close to the scalp. Squeeze at the temples with the heels of the hands and make slow, wide, circular movements. Finally, rub lightly with your hands all over the head.



<https://youaligned.com/intro-thai-massage/>

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Step Three:

Shoulders

Using the heels of your hands with your fingers rotated away from the client's body, place the heels directly over the round part of the shoulders, not the tops pressing downward but directly onto the front of the shoulder body. Take a deep inhale and ask your client to do the same, on the exhale, gently lean into the heels of your hands applying gentle pressure. Hold for 10-15 seconds.



*Place hands where red circles are

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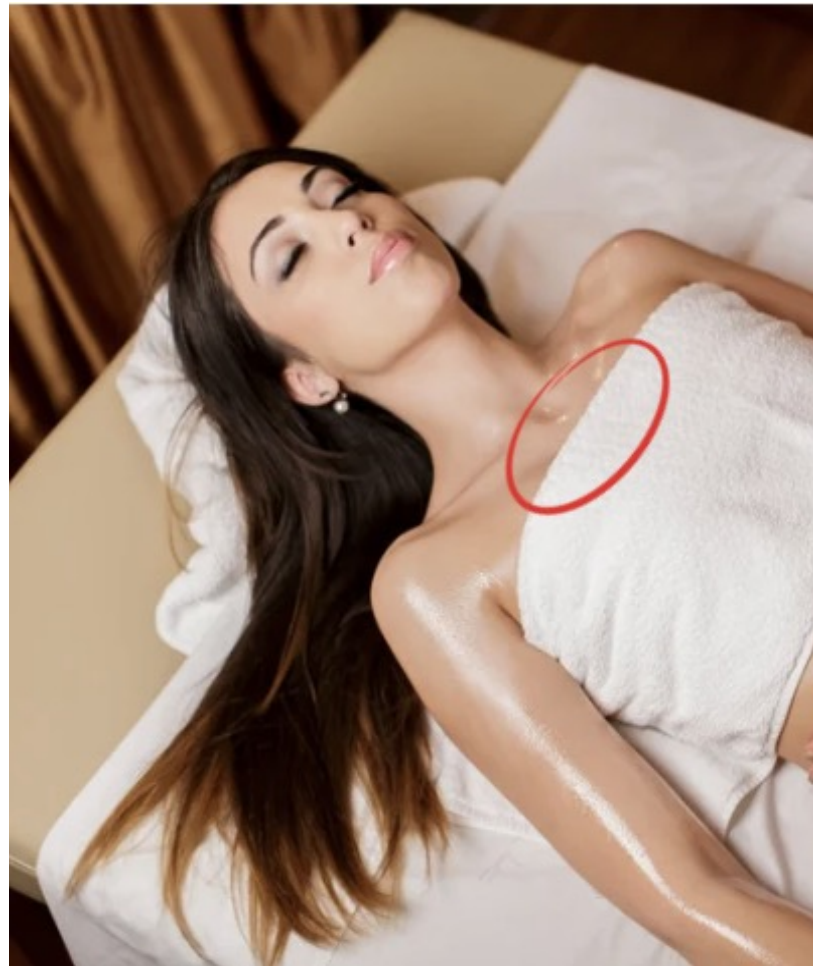
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Step Four:

Clavicle

You do not want to push on the clavicle bone. Using the heels of your hands with your fingers rotated away from the client's body center (fingers out towards shoulders in either direction), place the heels directly above the chest and immediately below the clavicle bone. Take a deep inhale and ask your client to do the same, on the exhale, gently lean into the heels of your hands applying gentle pressure. Hold for 10-15 seconds.



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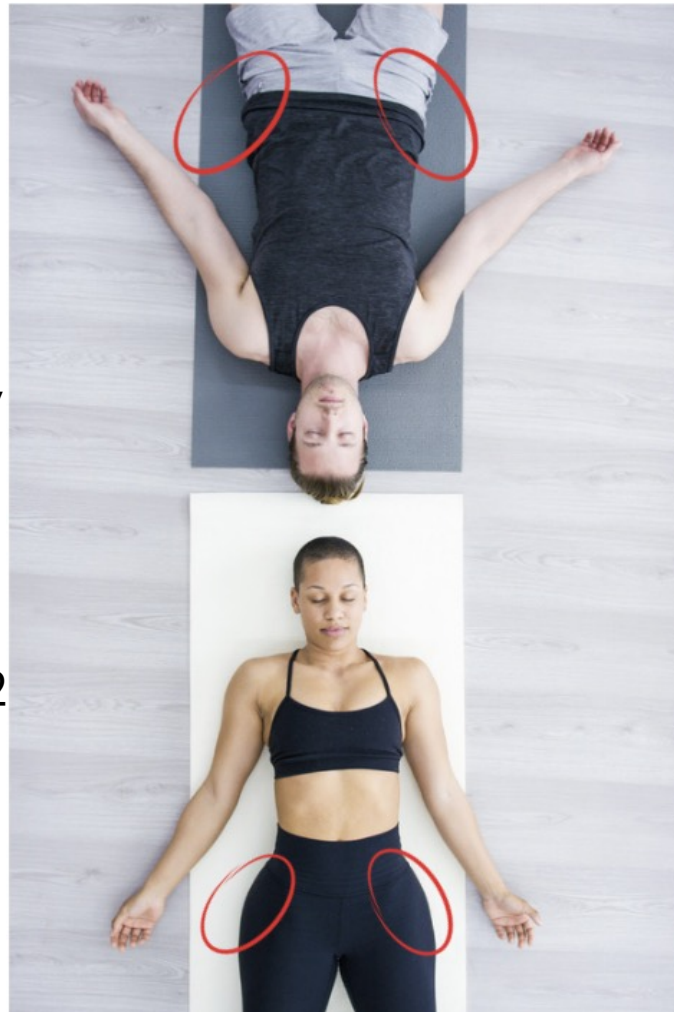
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Step Five:

Hips

You do not want to push on the hip bone or pelvis. You do not want your fingers to come close to the genitals or groin area. Using the heels of your hands with your fingers rotated away from the client's body center (fingers out towards shoulders in either direction), place the heel of each hand directly above the place that the thigh meets into the hip about 1-2 inches higher. Take a deep inhale and ask your client to do the same, on the exhale, gently lean into the heels of your hands applying gentle pressure. Hold for 10-15 seconds.



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Step Six:

Hands

For working on the hands, we will use a common Hospice hand massage practice.

- 'Take your clients available hand and place it in the palm of your own left hand, palm up. Now, make a fist with your right hand and begin to massage the palm with your knuckles—very gently.
- Rotate your knuckles in small circles about an inch wide. Press down gently but firmly. Move over the whole palm of your partner's hand.
- Now move back over the palm again, but this time use the tips of your thumbs. Have your fingers hold the back of the hand. Then press a bit harder with your thumbs. Move them around also in small circles.
- Turn the hand over. Work the entire back of the hand with the tips of your thumbs. Then move on an inch or two onto the wrist.

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- Shift now and hold your client's hand palm down in your own left hand. Look at the back of your client's hand. See the small, raised cords? They're just under the skin. They start at the base of the wrist and run to the first knuckles of the fingers. These are the tendons that move the fingers up and down.
- Now slowly run the tip of your thumb down the "valleys" formed by these tendons. Go from the base of the wrist to the small skin flap between the fingers.
- Use enough gentle pressure so your partner can feel each "valley" distinctively. Go over each "valley" one time.
- Each time your thumb reaches the small flap of skin between two fingers, press the underside of the flap with the tip of your forefinger as your thumb presses from above. Gently pinch your thumb and forefinger together as you finish your stroking and slide them off the hand.
- Now do the fingers. Hold your client's hand palm down in your own left hand. Taking your thumb and forefinger grasp your partner's thumb right at the place where it joins with the rest of the hand.

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- Slide your thumb and forefinger slowly from the base to the top of the thumb. Twist your hand from side to side in a corkscrew-like motion while you're doing it. Pull just a tiny bit as you go. End each motion by gently sliding your thumb and finger right off the tip of your client's thumb.
- Gently do the same thing for each finger.
- And now for the finishing touches. Take a moment and hold your client's hand between both of your own. Try to make contact with as much of the surface of your client's hand as you possibly can. Without speaking, slowly, very slowly let loose of your client's hand. Relax without speaking for a few seconds.
- Now change hands and repeat the whole process.'

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<https://www.hrrv.org/blog/how-to-give-a-hand-massage/>

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Step Seven:

Feet

'A Thai foot massage applies pressure to particular areas of the soles of the feet. Hands, fingers, thumbs and knuckles are used to stimulate certain areas of the feet releasing blocked energy within the body's many Sens lines (Thai-based meridians).'

<https://www.bodhitreespa.co.uk/thai-foot-massage/>

As an integrative somatic practitioner we do not perform full Thai foot massages, this requires deeper training in Thai massage and acupressure point knowledge. We do however draw from Thai massage and utilize them for somatic touch of the feet, here is how...

Begin working on the right foot and then once all steps have been completed, repeat all steps on the left foot.

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Step One:

Using your thumbs press on the soles of the feet starting at the heel, working up towards the center with gentle pushes and up to the meaty part just under where the toes connect. Hold each pressed point for 5-10 seconds before moving to the next.



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Step Two:

Wrapping your hands around the top half of the foot gently apply pressure in a spreading motion as if peeling the foot outward starting from the center underside of the foot. Hold for 15-seconds.



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Step Three:

You will end with full palm to foot. Placing the palm of your hand flat against the bottom of the foot and gently applying a tiny amount of pressure for 15-seconds. Then finish with bringing your palms to cover the top of the foot, and gently hold for 15-seconds.

Begin the next foot at Step One.

A great additional resource is *The Complete Guide to Thai Foot Massage* by [Eleftheria Mantzorou](#)

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Optional Step Eight:

Energy Pulling

Energy pulling is a powerful addition to the Somatic Touch Technique. It can also be used with any other hands-on somatic work such as the Weight & Compression Technique. This is a simple energy healing technique that can be used within your integrative somatic practice. So what exactly is energy pulling? This is a technique that facilitates the balancing of subtle energies within the body. It aids the release of negative or stuck energy and helps to replenish and circulate positive healing energy.

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Step One:

As the practitioner you will close your eyes and visualize a healing light above you. Now Imagine the crown of your head begins to open... and the healing light, a light of pure healing and love begins to fill you and begins to pour into your head filling up your entire body. Pouring down your entire body to your feet, filling your legs, filling your hips, filling your belly, your entire torso. That healing light and love fills your chest and neck, your full head, your arms, and that healing light begins to pour out to overflow out of your hands.

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Step Two:

Place your hands on the client's feet (your palm connecting with the bottom of the feet). If you are doing a virtual session, you can still do this technique but instead of physical contact with the feet you will visualize this step.

With your left hand visualize that the healing light that your body is filled with begins to stream into your client's foot and travel upward into and throughout the body. At the same time with your right hand visualize that you are pulling or drawing out any negative or stuck energy from their body and releasing it into the ground.

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