

An A-Z

Of Complementary Therapies

In this ongoing series, where we invite different therapists to offer a brief outline of the various therapies available.

Previous instalments of the A-Z can be found by visiting the Past Issues page on our website.

Lomi Lomi - Hawaiian Massage

LOver many centuries, the people of old Hawaii developed a unique system of massage that, even today, exquisitely expresses their deep appreciation and understanding of the spiritual wisdom and power of the natural world. Imbued with traces of cosmic magnificence and immense generosity of human heart, Hawaiian Massage bestows blessings and benefits to all levels of body, mind, heart and spirit.

Hawaiian Massage today is a dynamic synergy of two older systems that were mainly practiced by the ancestors, called Lomi Lomi and Kahuna Bodywork. Lomi Lomi is considered to be the traditional massage of Hawaii and the word Lomi means 'to rub or massage'. This was usually practiced by a gifted member of the extended family or local healer, for restoring general wellbeing following malaise or injury. In contrast, Kahuna Bodywork, a more specialised and ceremonial massage, was practiced in the temples or 'Hielau', by the Kahuna priests. Revered as the Keepers of the Spiritual Wisdom, their mastery of mental and spiritual powers enabled them to take massage into higher cosmic dimensions for life-changing healing.

Practitioners of both systems would have devoted decades of study and single-minded application to perfect their craft. Although there were different styles within each, both shared principles and practices that served to enhance communication between the vital healing forces, the giver and the receiver. Invocation, suggestion, breath and ritual ceremony were used to meet specific needs as were herbs or herbal infusions, sea salt scrubs, intonations, joint manipulations, heated lava stones or any food or product that had the properties of similarity or could produce a desired effect. Hawaiian Massage today is usually given without the use of additional applications, as these require separate and specialist training and in fact may distract the client from the deeper spiritual significance of the experience.

Recapturing the forgotten wisdom of Aloha, so vital to the ancient people of Hawaii, Hawaiian Massage creates a state of inner peace, balance and wholeness. Encompassing the whole person, people comment afterwards just how truly nourished, released, revitalised and connected they feel. Blissfully transcending the stresses and strains of modern living that were not present in the old days, it offers renewal and hope for the future. The experience of receiving can be unforgettable and its effects are impressive, ranging from the therapeutic right through to the transformational.

Hawaiian Massage has the ability to go to the core of one's being. It is as though one has received that longed-for awakening touch. Painlessly and effortlessly, wave after wave of healing grace purifies the body, washing away deeply held negativity and blockages. It is especially healing for memories of traumas, poor self image, low esteem, stress, lack of confidence or direction, relationship difficulties, eating disorders and disconnection of body, mind and spirit.

Part of the secret to these wonderful effects is in the beauty and grace of the unique massage techniques used to make this flowing, vibrant and deeply relaxing all body massage. Using hot oils, hands, forearm and body weight the Practitioner literally Hula-dances around the table, making long fluid strokes of varying rhythm and intensity up and down, side to side and all around the body of the receiver. The energising