

Massages more than a luxury

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CORRESPONDENT

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National Massage
Awareness Week,
21-27, 2007,
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"Massage therapy helps the body reboot."

- Sara Toogood, owner of Bodyworks Connections

Technology with a focus in sports and movement. As a practicing massage therapist for over 20 years she has accumulated countless hours of experience and continuing education credits in her profession through professional organizations such as the American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA).

From infancy through adulthood, Toogood can list pages of the healthful benefits massage therapy provides. "Just recently I had the great honor to work on some of the players on the the Florida State Women's soccer team when they came to town for a tournament. It's so important for any athlete, especially student athletes at the start of their careers, to have muscles that are loosened through massage. This will prevent injuries and strains as it allows the tissue some give and flexibility." Toogood is quick to point out that it is not only the student athlete that benefits. The weekend warriors out there will see a big difference in their overall physical well being.

"I had some clients who started a program of diet and exercise," Toogood shares.

"They came in for massages and it helped keep them on track with their exercise routine that they were easing into. That is a huge benefit so that you don't get discouraged with a pull or a strain and stop exercising before you even get into a good routine."

The AMTA lists other benefits to enhanced health through massage including: helping to ease low back pain, helping breast cancer survivors to cope with the changes to their bodies on both an emotional and physical level, helping to reduce pain and muscle spasms in patients who are recovering from heart bypass surgery, and helping with headache pain.

But, what about that "p" word? Will the mere mention of having a massage ever be dissociated with nothing more than a luxury time out? "I will steal an analogy I read in a book once," Toogood says. "Think of yourself as a bank. People are asking you for money and you keep giving it out. Well,

you better be putting something back in the bank. You have something to hand out. Right? Just like a bank, you've got to build up your reserves.

"That's what a good massage therapist will do for you. They will provide you with a psychological, emotional and physical deposit so you can meet the challenges of those daily withdrawals people expect from you. I don't call that pampering. I call that rejuvenation."

To help educate the citizens of Holly Springs about the benefits of massage therapy local massage therapists, Ernie Alasandro, Lisa Fruscella, Donna Pendergraft, Gretchen Maunier, Arvella Roberson, Betsy and David Jandorek, plus Sara Toogood, are going to put their skills to work. They will provide free chair massages to all participants in the Holly Fest 5K race and then they will be available all day during Holly Fest to provide 10 minute chair massages for \$10. For more information log onto www.bodyworkconnections.com or visit www.amtamassage.org.



PHOTO BY G
Massage therapist Sara Toogood helps rejuvenate with a good massage.