

The Fundamentals of Oceanic Bodywork

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1 Introduction

This document is a summary of the basic fundamental principles that constitute the Oceanic Bodywork practice.

It is intended as "reference material", which provides in-depth and detailed information.

Some of the concepts & descriptions listed below are identical to those in the Professional Profile.

2 Origins of Oceanic Bodywork

Oceanic Bodywork® is a unique combination of body work in warm water, with massage, dance, chanting, and energy work, as well as the science of plants and smoke.

Oceanic Bodywork® was inspired by OSHO, a spiritual master, and his intuition & insight into the connection between body, mind and soul; by traditional Hawaiian temple massage; and by the rites of indigenous people (no plural) and the forces of nature.

Oceanic Bodywork® was developed by Nirvano Martina Schulz and Kaya Femerling.

They had a vision to interlace dances from different cultures, live music, drums, singing, sound, and silence, with profound rebalancing massage(no plural), gentle touch, bodywork in warm water, and meditation.

Prolonged visits to the Hawaiian Islands, studies with Shamans in North and South America, as well as years of experience acquired in seminars, training courses in warm water and on land, contributed to the development of Oceanic Bodywork® Fire & Earth, Aqua and Air .

3 The concept of the human being in Oceanic Bodywork

Oceanic Bodywork is based on the following vision of the human being:

Holistic approach

The human being is an indivisible Unity of body, mind and soul, that continuously interacts with the surrounding environment.

Individuality

Every human being is unique.

Lifestyle, perception and self-regulation, as well as the ability to maintain a vital and dynamic balance, are features of an individual.

Collectivity

Human beings are integrated into a network of relationships, both within a community and with the environment.

They need to live in an acceptably safe environment, making the most of their potential in the community, and being loved, recognized, appreciated and respected.

Heterostasis

Human beings are exposed to ever-changing influences, stress factors and risks. Discomfort, disorders, pain,, illnesses, misfortune and suffering, tangle with life in an unavoidable way, and represent challenges that every human being is called upon to face.

This truth requires the individual to have the ability to adapt to difficult circumstances.

Homeostasis

The human body is conceived in such a way that allows it to maintain a vital and dynamic balance, even when beset by changing external influences.

This continuous regulation occurs on both a conscious and an unconscious level, through thought, perception and action, when interacting with everything that is happening on the physical level.

Personal competence

Human beings have an inherent potential that allows them to develop their personalities and give meaning to their lives.

People strive towards self-determination, & the development and achievement of their maximum physical, mental and emotional potential.

Human beings are actively involved in the creation of their own lives and well-being.

4 The basic understanding of well-being in Oceanic Bodywork

With respect to the concept of a human being described above, the understanding of well-being in Oceanic Bodywork is based on the following principles:

- 1) A state of well-being is potentially achievable by anyone.
- 2) Well-being is a dynamic process that is continuously evolving.
- 3) Well-being is a state where a person's awareness is in harmony with the Self, in harmony with his/her own physical, mental, emotional condition, and where this awareness extends to all interactions with the surrounding environment at all the different moments of his/her life.
- 4) Wellness is influenced by our reactions to the many different situations of life that we are constantly faced with.

Therefore, in summary :

Well-being is the ability to face and manage the changing conditions of one's life.

If a person is unable to find the resources, and sufficient resilience, then prolonged periods of stress, or particularly traumatic events, put pressure on their ability to adapt psychologically, physically and emotionally.

This results in dysfunction in the self-regulation process, that requires external support.

In Oceanic Bodywork, discomfort and reduction in well-being are considered to be symptoms and warning signs, signaling imbalances in the self-regulation process.

5 The Oceanic Bodywork approach

5.1 The Objectives of Oceanic Bodywork

Oceanic Bodywork considers wellness as a dynamic process.

It depends on several factors, which are complete in themselves, & which include the body, mind and soul equally.

Oceanic Bodywork starts this process by strengthening self-regulation, self-perception and personal skills.

Strengthening of self-regulation

Oceanic Bodywork works on the self-regulating forces of the human being.

It is able to influence self-regulating abilities with the specific tools of the two body-oriented techniques that it utilizes.

Strengthening of self-perception

Self-perception is an important prerequisite in identifying the elements pertaining to a natural way of life, and in perceiving impulses towards well-being.

Oceanic Bodywork is a body- and process-oriented practice, that invites clients to perceive their body differently.

Discomfort is acknowledged and analyzed, taking the circumstances of people's lives into account.

The raised awareness resulting from the treatment processes allows us to recognize behavioral patterns and conditions of life that promote well-being.

New & necessary guidelines have been developed and tested in the appropriate treatment settings.

Strengthening of personal skills

Oceanic Bodywork helps clients to lead their lives, & manage the circumstances of their lives, in a competent and responsible way.

It targets & reinforces individual resourcefulness and resilience. It therefore increases the clients' ability to use their physical, mental and emotional resources optimally; and it increases their confidence and ability to face new experiences.

It encourages a sense of self-empowerment when forced to face unpleasantness.

5.2 Tools of Oceanic Bodywork

The orientation of Oceanic Bodywork is towards methods, body, processes and interactivity.

The methods, (i.e. Oceanic Bodywork Aqua, Oceanic Bodywork Fire & Earth and Oceanic Bodywork Air), are based on the body, and its constitution, expression and experience.

The specific tools of these methods include contact, movement, respiration, and energy, in conjunction with the interview.

Through the work of contact, movement, respiration and energy, the person becomes aware of his/her psychological, physical and emotional states, and learns how to manage them better.

The Body-centered work is completed and supported by the interview. This feature allows all processes that are set in motion by the body, to be acknowledged and integrated.

The work of contact, movement, respiration and energy uses no technical equipment or instruments of any kind, which might cause injury or damage to the skin and the body.

No natural or chemical remedies of any kind are administered or prescribed.

5.3 Essentials in the practice of Oceanic Bodywork

Oceanic Bodywork focuses on those aspects that support the restoration of self-regulation.

On the one hand, it is necessary to eliminate physical, emotional and mental obstacles, whereas, on the other hand, personal abilities and responsibilities must be strengthened. It is therefore important to focus on resourcefulness, resilience, a sense of coherence and self-empowerment.

Resourcefulness

Resources are available to the human being in order to find inner balance in difficult life situations.

Resources provide protection, & contribute towards mental and emotional stability, physical well-being, quality of life, and performance.

A distinction is made between internal resources (the characteristics, strengths and capacities inherent in the human being), and external resources (such as social support, stable economic and social conditions, or the influences of nature that reinvigorate).

In Oceanic Bodywork, the conscious strengthening of available resources supports self-regulation, and allows one to change perspective from pathogenesis to salutogenesis. From this point of view, resourcefulness includes everything that a person appreciates and considers helpful in a given situation.

Resilience

Resilience refers to the ability to cope with, and successfully overcome, difficult situations, as well as restoring and maintaining a healthy and self-regulating fluid balance.

Difficult situations are considered to be psychological, emotional, physical and social risk factors. The promotion of resilience aims at strengthening, as effectively as possible, general coping mechanisms in the face of prolonged stress, the ability to manage situations that require very fast reactions, as well as the ability to recover after a demanding experience.

Research in the field of resilience places particular emphasis on the following factors, which must be activated in difficult and preventable situations:

positive self-image, confidence and optimism; self-acceptance and trust in one's strengths and abilities; orientation to future objectives; orientation to actions and solutions; emotional self-regulation; the ability to build and cultivate solid relationships; the ability to take responsibility; and

being competent in problem-solving.

In Oceanic Bodywork, attitudes and abilities are activated in the participants, who are then able to strengthen their individual resilience, beginning with their experiences during the sessions.

Sense of consistency

In the context of salutogenesis, well-being is understood as a dynamic process, shaped in an autonomous and responsible way.

A so-called "sense of coherence" plays a fundamental role, and is based on three factors:

a sense of comprehensibility, a sense of confidence and a sense of significance.

A sense of comprehensibility includes the ability to structure and order information in a coherent way, to identify causes, conditions and connections, to explain and elaborate situations, as well as to make realistic assessments and forecasts regarding the requirements necessary to solve problems ... therefore what you are being confronted with is not perceived as inexplicable, chaotic or random.

A sense of confidence includes trust, and the belief that problems can be overcome, and the resources to do so are available. It is thus possible to formulate realistic goals and measures and believe that everybody will succeed.

A sense of significance includes the belief that problems are opportunities for growth.

Empowerment

Empowerment is the ability to activate and autonomously manage a process that is aimed at re-establishing competence in one's own life and creative strength.

5.4 The Principles of Oceanic Bodywork

Oceanic Bodywork supports personal processes which are orientated towards awareness and change, as well as towards greater autonomy and personal competence. Therefore, the OB program organizes its body- and process-oriented activity according to the following principles:

The Principle of the relationship

Oceanic Bodywork focuses on creating relationships

The more confident people feel, and the more they feel that they are in good hands, the more their self-regulation processes improve. Research in this field shows that personal processes depend largely on the quality of the relationship between the client and the bodyworker.

The Principle of dialogue

Oceanic Bodywork focuses on dialogic learning

Oceanic Bodywork is based on "acting and learning together"; the dialogic interaction between the client and the trainer is a central element. Clients actively participate in the process from the beginning. This interaction is an investigative and learning process between the trainers, with their technical knowledge, and the clients, with their personal skills.

The Principle of positive experiences

Oceanic Bodywork focuses on positive experiences

Change comes from the experience of being able to stimulate something, being able to start positive action processes, and as a result making progress. Experience-based learning assesses what has been experienced up to now as important and valuable, allows for resource-oriented improvement and change, and acts as a basis and impetus for further development.

The Principle of solution orientation

Oceanic Bodywork focuses on solution-oriented work.

Solutions are born when it is possible to discover and create new ways of perceiving, seeing and acting.

An orientation towards solutions requires mental and behavioral changes, which in turn require awareness of problems, acceptance, motivation, goal orientation, patience and perseverance.

The Process principle

Oceanic Bodywork focuses on process-oriented work.

The work of Oceanic Bodywork reinforces resilience and resourcefulness right from the beginning. It encourages perspective, and methods of intervention that are orientated towards solutions and motivation. In this way personal processes develop in an efficient and beneficial way.

Through the techniques (method-specific and body-oriented) of contact, movement, respiration and energy work, the person becomes aware of his/her physical state and is stimulated to manage it.

Any physical sensations generated by the process, and expressed by the client, are reflected back. The client is encouraged to stay with and observe these sensations, without interpretation.

In this way, clients recognize the link between their well-being, their disorders, and their relationship with themselves. This in-depth perception of the Self brings them into contact with limiting mental, emotional, movement, attitude and action patterns. In this way it allows them to discover and try out new solutions, either independently or with the support of the trainer.

5.5 Stages of the OB process

The work of Oceanic Bodywork is based on the following phases of the process:

- *Meeting*
- *Processing*
- *Integration*
- *Transfer*

(for a more detailed explanation see the document "Abilities" pt.1)

The four phases comprise a complete cycle of action and define :

- the single phase of the session
- the single session
- as well as the entire personal process.

These phases do not necessarily take place linearly, but may also overlap.

The phases of the process are a reflection of the processes that are linked to change and experience, initiated through physical perception.