

BEING THE RECEIVER OF SHIATSU

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Shiatsu is a traditional Japanese form of healing that is becoming increasingly popular in the UK. In essence it uses human touch to make contact with a person's Ki (life energy, also called Chi or prana). In an ideal state of health Ki flows throughout the body nourishing all parts of our physical, psychological and spiritual being, but unfortunately the Ki often becomes blocked in certain areas causing physical sickness and emotional disturbance. Shiatsu then attempts to clear these blocks, bringing the undernourished parts back into the whole circulation, and reintegrating the whole person.

What does this mean practically? The shiatsu giver uses light but firm pressure with his or her hands, working over the body picking out particular areas of the body and meridians (the same lines of Ki flow as used in acupuncture). A connection is made with the person's Ki where it is blocked, and if possible restoring a strong healthy flow of Ki. This can alleviate physical aches, pains and other physical problems, and may release negative emotions or beliefs held in the body from the past. For some people it also brings them into contact with a deeper part of themselves, their 'inner self' or individual spirit.

Receiving shiatsu is generally a relaxing, de-stressing and enjoyable experience. It often has a wide range of general benefits such as releasing tension, improving energy levels, feeling brighter, more alert and happier, and restoring healthy sleeping patterns. It is also widely used for specific health problems especially in the muscles and skeleton such as back pain, headache and migraines, tennis elbow and frozen shoulder, and to speed recovery from injuries such as sprained ankles and whiplash. Shiatsu can also be helpful for some internal problems such as asthma and other breathing problems, irritable bowel syndrome, menstrual pain and irregularities, poor circulation and high blood pressure to name a few.

For some people the greatest benefit of shiatsu can be on an emotional level. When a person feels stuck within them self or unable to release past grief, anger or other feelings, the support of receiving sensitive shiatsu can be very effective. The touch of the shiatsu practitioner making contact with the emotional Ki in the body can help their release, leaving the person feeling clearer and lighter.

Another common affect of receiving shiatsu is of feeling more centred and in touch with one's inner self. This can lead to reassessing one's life, and getting a clearer view of how to make it more fulfilling and creative. Maybe certain activities need to be dropped, a change in work made, some more exercise taken, or some changes made in eating patterns. This can be a deeper level of healing where a person takes greater control over their life and health.

