

Teaching the Way to a Healthier Life Through Massage

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Lynette Mortimer, who runs Mind and Body Massage Therapy in Red Lodge, is about as passionate as anyone can be about the art of massage and teaching people to respect their body. *"People live from the neck up. When you can get them to live in their body, focus on caring for themselves, that's when they start looking after themselves, they become not so destructive to themselves,"* said Mortimer at her home where she bases her business.

This ties in with her belief that the body holds a plethora of mysteries that can be either emotional, physical or mental. *"As clients learn to trust me, I start to incorporate the mind and the body together in these sessions,"* said Mortimer.

"People run away from their emotions and when I am working on a muscle, I can feel that emotion in it. We store so much of it in our bodies, every emotion, every dramatic experience. If we don't move it, where is that emotion going to go? It will keep coming back." Mortimer, who trained at the Utah College of Massage Therapy, Salt Lake City in 1995, believes that our bodies have a memory way beyond what we can recall. *"My theory is that illnesses come from an inner emotional body response,"* she said. *"Our whole body has a memory, when we get in touch with it, we will have a better life."*

After college Mortimer opened up Big Cotton Wood Sports Massage and Therapy, a sauna and full spa, at Solitude Ski Resort in Utah. She was 22 and ran this for seven years until 2002 gaining experience in stretching and deep tissue massage. *"As a skier and athlete, I find that the most rewarding aspect of the business,"* said Mortimer. *"We worked on a lot of skiers at Solitude. Some were not used to*

skiing, but it was the best way to get them back on the slopes. I spent a lot of time working on techniques to get them back on the runs," said Mortimer.

Today she still works on skiers as well as rock climbers, construction workers, and people from all walks of life. *"Construction workers beat themselves up,"* she said.

Mortimer specializes in deep tissue massage, Swedish, Russian, polarity, sports massage, aroma therapy, herbal wraps, hot stone massage and cranial sacral. She is also a master esthetician.

Mortimer's love of her career stems partly from having three uncles in the wellness professions. One is a massage therapist, another in chiropractic, and the last is a doctor in sports medicine. *"We call each other for advice or if we come across an interesting case,"* she laughs. *"The more you learn about yourself, the better you can help people,"* Mortimer uses a heating pad to warm up the muscles prior to the deep massage and carries out stretching exercises to provide more flexibility and elasticity in the muscles prior to massaging.

This was a process I was to experience later on when Mortimer was kind enough to give me a demonstration of her deep massaging prowess. Never in my life have I known there to be so many muscles in my body. It is uncanny, but she is so right about losing touch with yourself, after all you'd think it would be easy to communicate. I was surprised, and a little ashamed, of my neglect of myself.

Mortimer at all times made me feel comfortable, this was my first ever massage, and explained

everything she was doing. She worked on my hamstrings, lower back and my "very tight" neck muscles and shoulders. She worked the attachments, those parts of the body where muscle attaches to bone and I can vouch that those areas were 'super' tender. I felt like apologizing to them for never having bothered with them before and inwardly vowed to take better care of these attachments in future.

"A lot of tension builds up here," said Mortimer, "and it can be hard to stretch the attachments. By releasing them, it helps the muscle expand, more elasticity." Mortimer also demonstrated the art of cranial sacral whereby she held a point at the base of my head to check out the energy stored within and unravel it and, as she told me earlier, I would feel movement within.

As my head seemed to bop away, she said, *"That's not me. That's the stored energy shifting. Energy is so amazing it feels like I'm moving my fingers."* From this experience and the shoulder work, Mortimer could still trace some damaged muscles back to a car crash I was in 25 years ago which left me with the classic seat belt bruising from right shoulder down to left hip.

"If one thing goes out of whack, it radiates all the way. Everything else inside you starts compensating, shortening and twisting, and to improve on this, you have to open up the body. It is important to get worked on a little bit, and I don't recommend someone coming in for one thing simply because they're are so many other things contributing to that," said Mortimer. It might explain why the space between my shoulder blades is tight, that my pecs have shrunk and I'm rolling forward, over extending the shoulder blades. I have to say it is nice to know what the cause is probably due to, and even though it makes total sense it is an odd truth to deal with.

As for tension, even during the massage, designed specifically to relax you, there were my outstretched arms hard as concrete. It takes some getting used to, and when Mortimer told me to 'play dead,' while she worked away, my attempt wouldn't evoke an Oscar nomination.

Afterward I felt extremely cleansed despite the attachments carrying a sensation that felt like mild sunburn into the next morning during my shower. By the afternoon the sunburn sensation was gone and I felt like a million dollars, I didn't ache, my legs were fluid and full of energy and I felt three inches taller, that last bit took some getting used to.

As Mortimer told me towards the end of the massage, *"You'll find out what muscles there are and you'll definitely have a total body awareness afterwards."*

And I certainly did, to great benefit.

After 14 years in this business, Mortimer view's the whole process as a chance to help others. *"When you work on a body, it is amazing, each time my client's feel something loosen, things shifting. At the first massage the body is trying to work it out, trying to protect itself. It usually takes 24-48 hours afterward for everything to adjust itself, to make it more fluidity,"* said Mortimer.

"Once you found what is wrong, you pass it along. It is so interesting and fascinating, the body is like a puzzle that I'm trying to unravel," said Mortimer. *"Massaging offers a higher quality of life, with less injuries and more elasticity."*

Contact us for an appointment
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