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TAKE CARE OF YOUR HANDS!

EXERCISES FOR RELEASING TENSION

Our society places a lot of importance on the face: we re-touch it to look more seductive, spend a ton of money on make-up, get nose jobs, whiten our teeth, and whatever else we deem necessary so that our face looks perfect from the outside. There is, no doubt, something to the saying that the face is the mirror of the soul. However, the truth is that our hands are what transmit the dimension of human expression.

A question of tact

Perhaps our hands might not be our most glamorous part, but they show a certain complexity and richness of our humanity. The texture of the palm, in itself, is different, and full of sensory receptors which have their own language: touch, an entire world of it's own.

Emotional communication

With our hands we can express delicacy, subtlety, love, strength. We write with them, and we craft and create. Might we

The body often expresses itself through the hands. By relaxing them and allowing them to move with fluidity, we can release and relieve blockages in other areas.

consider this a direct projection from our hearts? In fact, when we greet each other by grasping hands, this gesture brings our hearts closer together. When we hug, we use our arms as much as our hands, and with them the entirety of our bodily energetic field, to transmit our feelings, thoughts and emotions.

A language

As our species evolved, defying gravity, the movement of the hands became more agile, even becoming the embryo of human language. The motor areas of language and movement are not only side-by-side, but are intimately connected within the brain. One example is sign language, where hand symbols create language. By using our hands we activate different areas in our brain: a pathway of neural connections is formed and each pathway is unique to each function.

Creative hands

So much can be said about hands. They bring food to our mouths, and, if it's tasty, we say

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the food is “finger-licking good”. The healing power of our hands has been used since time forgotten to restore health and transmit energy. In meditation we use our hands in certain postures. Also, in the practice of chi kung, specific mudras are used to activate certain energetic circuits.

Show your hands

Using our hands makes us more human, and the fullest expression of this is creativity, where humans are endlessly creative. In that case, we could say that trained hands, hard working hands, are creative hands, and we can be proud of them. However, in these times we seem to value machines more than our own hands. We even hide them if they don't look glamorous enough, or if they are solid hands of a woman who works with them or those of someone who bites their nails to let go of tension.

Changing Sensations

We are not aware that so much of the stress we suffer from is, precisely, the fruit of not being able to express ourselves or communicate, not only through words, but also with our body. We can change and reorganize our sensations and tension substantially just through our hands.

Stress free mobility

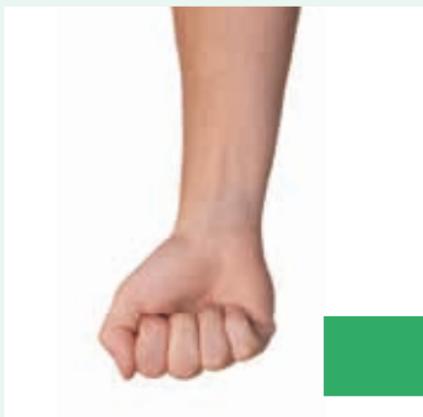
The exercises and explorations proposed here can be done either separately or as a sequence. They help improve mobility and

fluidity in daily movements, thereby preventing tension not only in your hands, but tension created in other areas that can be released through your hands. Keeping your hands versatile will furthermore improve circulation and prevent arthrosis and keep the palmar tendons from retracting.



1 • Relating your hand with your body

- Stand and observe how your arms hang, notice the sensation you feel in your hands in general, and then, in your fingers.
- Begin to walk with your attention on your hands, and then tighten them. Watch what happens in other parts of your body.
- Release the tension and continue to observe how you feel.
- Continue the exercise by applying less tension although keep just enough so that you can sense it, and notice how it relates to and affects different areas quite distant from the part you tighten in each moment.
- You can try this seated as well, or while standing in line or in a waiting room. . .
- It helps identify unnecessary tension in different situations of daily life, including when you are working or just relaxing.



2 • Stimulate your fingers and your body

- Sit down comfortably with your acupressure ring.
- Roll the ring repeatedly up and down each finger (at least 7 to 8 times each one). If you notice more sensitivity in one spot, go slowly without stopping.
- Stand up and repeat exercise 1 explorations. Feel how your arms and hands hang now. Do they feel any different?
- Repeat the exercise on your other hand, making sure you address each finger.
- Acupressure ring work is based on a Korean therapy called Su Jok (created by professor Jae Woo Park). According to this therapy, the palm and fingers contain points that correspond to all organs and body structures
- Daily stimulation with this acupressure ring can therefore balance the entire body.

Start by making a fist and begin to release tension as you slowly open it.



3 • Wide-open Hands

- Glide your index finger along each of the inside edges of your fingers, also massaging the webby area that joins one finger with another.. Repeat this 3 times slowly.
- Do this first on one hand, then the other.
- Now interlace your fingers and rub them, creating some friction.
- This exercise opens up the hand in general, and each finger specifically. It also improves finger flexion and total hand strength.

5 • Gain strength and mobility

- Place a tennis ball on the floor or seat of a chair.
- Put your hands one on top of the other so that the ball is in the center of your palm, near your wrist.

4 • In line with your Spine

- Sit on the edge of your chair and place your hands against the wall.
- Separate your fingers. Your feet should be flat on the floor.
- You will begin to notice that, as soon as once of your hands or fingers loses contact with the wall, this directly affects your back. Try this exploitation with different contacts.
- Now remain still for a few minutes, just feeling the firm support from your hands and feet.
- Stand up, relax your arms and shake them out, and then notice how your arms hang and any sensations in your hands.
- This exercise integrates the hands, shoulder girdle and spine. It stimulates the line of from hand to shoulder to spine.

- Using your bodyweight, very gently allow your hands to sink into the ball.



- Move the ball very slowly (as if you were painting) in different directions for at least one minute.
- Switch hands and repeat
- You will see how mobility improves in your bones and joints. Your hands will get stronger with consistency.

6 · Massage to tonify and relax the hands

- Massage your hands with a bit of oil or cream. Enjoy every second.
- In circular movement, wring each finger 5 times clockwise, and then 5 times counter clockwise. Do this at a moderate pace.
- Draw circles with your thumb on the palm of your hand, using soft but firm pressure and without overstretching your thumb.
- Using your thumb and index finger, “pinch” and draw straight lines on all your fingers, from the base to the fingertip, 3 times on each finger.
- Make a soft fist with your other hand and gently slide it in circles along the entire palm.
- Massage the dorsal side, or top, of your hand in continuation. Use the entire palm of your other hand. Repeat 5 times.
- Draw circles with your thumbs on the top of your hand.
- Repeat the entire sequence on the other hand. Do this work more slowly on the side that tends to be more sensitive.
- When you finish, rub your hands together again softly and sensually, as if you were absorbing the last drop of oil or cream.
- These massages not only improve circulation, mobility and strength, but also yield better balance in movement.



“The circular, wringing, movement wraps around the entire finger.”



BibianaBadenes



C/ del Desert 2, bajo
12560 Benicassim, CS- Spain



www.bibianabadenes.com



+34 964 300 275



Bibiana Badenes



info@bibianabadenes.com



twitter.com/bibianabadenes