

SHIATSU BASICS

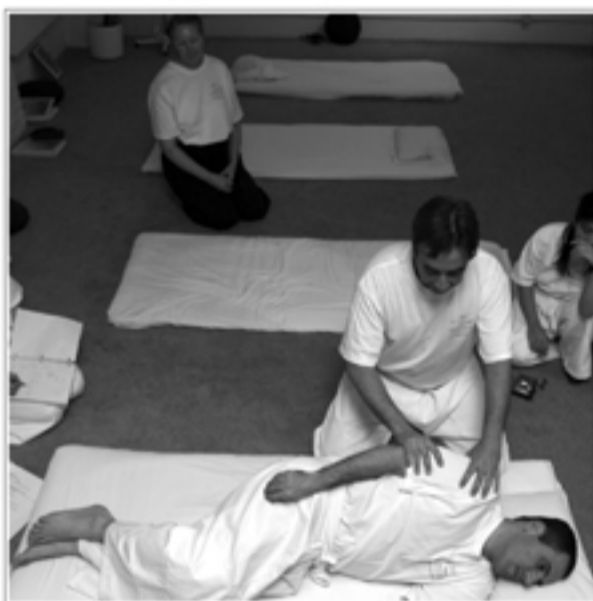
POSTURE

Posture is the proper positioning of the therapist's body when doing shiatsu. It is a crucial element in rebalancing the Ki of the patient and rejuvenating the Ki of the therapist. Proper posture facilitates deep breathing, reduces transference from patient to therapist and empowers technique. Conversely poor posture weakens technique and tires the therapist.



Posture begins with breathing. Gentle, full deep breathing into the dantian -area below the umbilicus - is the fuel which propels shiatsu technique. The breath should not be forced but smooth and even. The back should be straight, with the shoulders and hips aligned. One hip should not be higher than the

other. The arms and shoulders should be relaxed and slight tension should be held in the upper legs, lower abdomen and in the forearms and hands.



The therapist should also be comfortable and familiar with the stances used to power the technique. Proper knee and foot position can vastly improve technique. Common areas of stiffness for the therapist are the neck, lower back, calves and hands (thumbs). Diligent practice strengthens the proper muscles and helps to overcome any soreness or aches that appear.

The arms should be relaxed with the elbows slightly flexed, approximately 1 or 2 fist widths from the ribs. Remember to always put yourself in a position so that you are centered over your patient, this way the

technique will occur between your two knees.

The ground is your friend. Proper posture utilizes the Ki that is directly accessible to us from the earth (ground). The power of the earth allows the innate healing power of the patient to manifest which strengthens and rebalances their Ki.

Posture is as much mental as physical and good technique requires mental discipline to overcome laziness. Mental laziness is self defeating and creates bad technique. When doing shiatsu respect the limits and capabilities of your body so as not to injure



yourself. However, perseverance expands your limits and capabilities and improves your technique. Remember when doing shiatsu that proper posture is one of the pillars of shiatsu and great attention should be paid to it.

-- **LENY CARBONE**
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