

This is one in a series of resource white papers available at live-dreams.com/resources wherein I have organized information and experience that has been relevant in my personal experience and professional practice that I hope will be relevant for you.

Health and Harmony, Wil

Self Care

PURPOSE

While receiving massage and therapeutic body work is wonderful, one typically can never get enough and often get it when it is needed the most. The goal of this resource paper is document the tools and methods I have personally found helpful for my own self-care or in a few cases I find interesting and hope to invest in them at some point. The underlined words are active links to more information about each of the items. The PDF file of this document available on my website allows you to click on the links to see the referenced information.

TOOLS

[Theracane](#) - Trigger Point Tool great for getting to your own back. When I worked as an Engineer I had one at work, one in the car and one at home so that I could use it as soon as I felt discomfort.

[The Stick](#) - Circulatory and trigger point rollers. Great for athletes, particularly before and after events, Also a great bedside item.

[Lay On / Lean On Tools](#) - If you really want to get specific, these items made by Career Extenders are effective.

Foam Roller - Ideally not real hard nor too soft. Sit on it like a log and then lean back and move down onto it till it is where your ribs begin, then lift you bum off the floor and support yourself on just the roller and your feet. As you bend your knees, you roll yourself down over the roller and back up as your extend your knees. Wrap your around around yourself to open up you scapulas if that feels good. After one or two passes, pause with the roller in mid back and lower your head and shoulders to the floor and feel the stretch. Then roll down so that the crown of your head is on the roller and stretch open the back of your neck. Next bring it into the neck and roll your head right and left to massage the muscles at the base of your skull (occipitals). Optionally roll onto you side with the roller under you arm and massage the outside edge of your shoulder blade.

BALLS AND BALL BASED SYSTEMS

Lacrosse Practice Balls - The Champion Sports brand is white and readily available through Amazon, search for “Champion Sports Soft Lacrosse Practice Ball, Pack of 12, White”. They are soft but solid, which allows them to conform the bones (such as scapula and pelvis) and allow the fascial aspects to be ironed out, with gradual steady pressure and your breath. Playing balls are not recommended, as they are really like round rocks and could lead to self bruising. I suggest buying a dozen (or 2 if you have a dog) and put two in various strategic locations: beside your bed, in your car, at you office desk, and in your suitcase, so that you have them when you need them.

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The essence is lay on the ball, letting gravity and body position find the tight muscles, with just enough pressure to allow you nervous system to sense the tension and tenderness, take the deep breath and exhale slowing with sound from your chest as you lean in... not a lot of activity, rolling around etc. Like a body meditation, watch for release over time. The two best spots are the external surface of the scapula (I often lay on my side as the ball presses against the muscle stretching them toward the spine and fall asleep that way) and the crest of pelvis and sacrum for the origin of the gluteal muscles.

[Melt Method](#) - System with educational material (book, DVD, etc.) and small balls and soft foam roller developed by Sue Hitzmann. Classes available through numerous local yoga and exercise studios. I particularly like her teachings and the Hand and Foot Kit. Can be very useful for anyone with foot problems particularly those caused by high heels. Complementary to Yoga Tune Up.

[Yoga Tune Up](#) - System with educational material (book, DVD, etc.) and balls from the size of a tennis ball and larger developed by Jill Miller. I got to know her and her system when I would work on her when she would come as a guest instructor at Cal-a-vie. Complementary to Melt Method.

SYSTEMS

Hanna Somatics - Martha Peterson's Website is a great place to start: <http://essentialsomatics.com/>

HEAT/HYDRO THERAPY

Biomat - A good introduction to this product which I use all the time is available on my website: [My Biomat Story](#). I am so completely sold on the benefits of this product that I have chosen to sell them. You may contact me directly or order them from my line store: [My Online Biomat Store](#).

Soaking - It is very beneficial to do hot soaks after one of my therapeutic bodywork session. Carve out time to relax, Dim the lights or better still light some candles, play quiet relaxing music, and most important add a generous amount of Epsom Salts (Magnesium Sulfate) or even better Magnesium Chloride such as [Life-Flo's Flakes](#).

MUSCLE CRAMPS

See separate Resource Note

FITNESS AND FLEXIBILITY

Motion is Lotion!

Indian Clubs are my latest discovery. They are the basis of an ancient form of combat and more recently conditioning and flexibility. I have beautiful 2 pound Maple clubs from [Ageless Strength](#) (retired in 2019) that I use to warmup before doing massage and to unwind after long bike rides. There are a ton of videos on the web and Youtube to check out. I recently got another teardrop set from www.revolutionclubs.net.

Movement system designed to mobilize joints and maintain them to be healthy : <http://www.intu-flow.com>

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GUA SHA

Gua Sha is Chinese system that involves scraping tissues to eliminate “Sha”, congestion and contamination in tissues. I got the set of tools pictured here on Amazon. Apply some sort of lubrication, oil or lotion, and scrape away. You will need a partner to help get to your back. The tissue can become red to deep purple, but the color will fade in hours to a few days at most. You have to try it to appreciate how impactful and helpful this technique feels.



LINIMENTS AND PATCHES

Liniments really help, especially if you massage them in. They help to restore circulation in the excessively tight tissues. Patches are convenient and give long term application, but you are missing the benefits of massage. The following are some of my favorite products, but there are many to choose from. Unless specially noted they are readily available from multiple sources.

Zheng Gu Shui - spray that absorbs quickly

Po Sum On

White Flower Balm

Tiger Balm

Bengay

Arnica Creams - <https://purepro.com/categories/creams.html>

I am now carrying the full line of KULCBD products, including the Muscle and Joint CBD Cream - <https://kulcbd.com/products/muscle-joint-body-butter>. I have found this product to be highly effective for my own issues as well as with clients. Their facial products are amazing and I am using them in the face massage phase of my sessions. You may purchase them directly from me.

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