



# WHY BODYWORK THERAPY WILL SOON RULE THE WELLNESS SPACE



GOOD ADVICE

by KELLS MCPHILLIPS, JUNE 21, 2019



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When it comes to spotting trends in the wellness world, the words of certain luminaries make our senses tingle. At the most recent Well+Good TALK in New York City, three such experts couldn't stop raving about bodywork therapy, an ancient modality that's on the rise in the 21st century. The umbrella term applies to hands-on treatments that are strategically designed to create energetic and physical shifts in the body. Think acupressure, reflexology, reiki, and massage.

"Fitness fuels us, and it's amazing... but what we're also realizing is there's so much more to being healthy," said Kate Flannery, head of community and partnerships at Athleta. Bodywork is a big part of that "so much more"-ness we're all after. That's why Lily Kunin, founder of Clean Market and Clean Food Dirty City, chimed in to say that she's made it her 2019 wellness resolution to sample bodyworks' vast menu of offerings.

What makes bodywork particularly unique is that practitioners act in tandem with their clients to address issues that are both physical (like pain) and emotional (like stress). “It’s almost like the matrix,” says Daryl Thuroff, DACM, an acupuncturist, herbalist, and massage therapist at the Yinova Center. “You tap into somebody and their energy and you’re able to figure out what’s out of balance. You help them help *themselves* rebalance.”

The scientific research behind holistic practices is still relatively new—and not yet abundant. For example, a small pilot study, published in *The International Journal of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork*, found significant improvements in perinatal mood and anxiety in couples that gave each other a biweekly chair massage. And trigger point compression therapy was shown to help ease shoulder pain in yet another tiny study of six people. The science still needs to catch up with the anecdotal evidence and cultural traditions supporting these practices.

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Many of Thuroff’s clients come into the Yinova Center—which offers bodywork for everything from pain management to fertility—looking to compliment their pre-existing wellness routine, to ease the pain of an injury, to improve their mental health, and so much more. “Bodywork is just now becoming more specific, more of a niche market,” she says, noting that she’s seen the biggest rise in interest over the past decade.

Rebecca Parekh, co-founder and CEO of The Well, believes that this is really just the beginning of bodyworks rise in popularity. In time, practices like reiki will play as key of a role in the American health care system as they do in other countries. “I really passionately and whole-heartedly believe in integrative medicine,” she said. “What’s happening [now] is that more main-stream researchers are actually researching the efficacy of these treatments.” Take note.

Link to coverage: <http://bit.ly/2lwOrPW>