

The Life and Growth of MTI 20 years on!

The Massage Training Institute was created by a group of dedicated and inspirational massage tutors some 20 years ago as they were feeling they wanted something different. There were many other accrediting bodies about but none that quite met the aspirations of this select band.

So, they managed to pool their very individual and talented views and forge a new organisation. They need congratulating!

This early creation quickly became a highly esteemed institute setting standards for holistic massage that have become part of the very new CNHC standards.

Why did they need to do this?

The difference they craved was to bring to the centre of any training the need to work with a client as a whole in a grounded and professional way and to set up an accrediting body for which this was a core essential. MTI thus became the organisation with a well developed, thoroughly thought through approach to holistic massage.

And I am so glad they did! It has given me a professional home both as a practitioner and tutor that I can belong to with integrity, meets my professional demands, feels good and I am really glad they are willing to have me! Thank you!!

It also gives me a massage community, support if I need it, a magazine, group insurance and access to post graduate courses with a standard I am confident with, not to mention [an annual conference that's a lot of fun](#).

MTI too represents what I need represented at national level, so I can carry on massaging and teaching knowing my profession has been protected in the way I want!

Holistic massage –what makes it different?

Holistic massage comes not from a routine or preconceived method but from the solid experience and creative use of a varied toolbox drawing techniques from many traditions. This process can sometimes be unexpected being derived from the client's unique needs, physical characteristics and personality. It works with the whole person not just their body and brings the whole of the practitioner to the session.

It is a nurturing process of touch and response leading to responses in all parts of the client's being. Physically it can work deeply, using a grounded technical understanding not only of our muscular skeletal system but

with all systems of the body. Emotionally it can provide a caring, non-intrusive touch, soothing the busy mind and reducing stress. At a deeper level, holistic massage can release the personal history we have stored in our body tissues which can lead to powerful changes in our energy and provide a vital ingredient in our process of growth.

It is all this and more dependant on the individual and amazing combination of each holistic therapist and client working together, an essential of the MTI approach.

Thus, our holistic approach to massage therapy can touch an individual's whole being - physical, mental and emotional. It holds the possibility of reintegration, is person centred and is guided by principles of sensitivity, practitioner awareness and quality of touch. These enable the holistic massage therapist to work with clients, applying techniques and skills in an appropriate manner.

MTI colleges, how can this be taught?

Just as a holistic massage session adapts and varies with each practitioner and each client so does each college have its own unique characteristics, but all are grounded and held by the exacting standards of the MTI.

Something I love is to watch students at the clinics towards the end of their training and seeing a room full of practitioners each working very differently but all offering a superb professional massage. There is no routine, no prescribed method, each student's individuality has been allowed to flower to meet the differing and individual needs of their varied clients.

How is this achieved?

At professional diploma level

Teaching follows principles rather than rules. Professional courses have a high student:tutor ratio enabling the full development of each student's individual potential. Massage techniques are taught and experienced filling that varied toolbox enabling many different clients with varying conditions and life experiences to be treated. Always practitioner body use is at the fore, an essential to enable a long and pain free career and the continuing ability to give a good massage embodying movement and effective use of body weight. There is an emphasis on practitioner self-awareness and personal growth, so the student develops both as an individual and a reflective and professional practitioner. Holistic Massage may support the emotional journey of clients. As a massage therapist, we feel you cannot do this with integrity if you do not reflect on your own personal growth and what might hinder or help this. And to solidly underpin this approach anatomy, physiology and pathology are taught in depth and always related directly to practical massage. This solid

approach is again reflected in the clinical practice sessions with unknown clients and rigorous external assessment.

To allow this breadth of training to evolve and be absorbed MTI provides a training that is a process over a period of time to enable students to mature and develop and become professional and confident. We believe learning to do 'good' massage with people takes time and practice. This time and maturation also develops graduates who have the skill and confidence to immediately on graduation enter practice and achieve success as very many do.

And all this is supported by tutors who are ridiculously passionate about massage and know that learning only takes place when students are having fun!

At postgraduate level

All the MTI schools throughout the UK continue to embody this dynamic and creative approach in their CPD post graduate programmes. Their unique characteristics become even more apparent here but again there is confidence in the depth and professionalism throughout still following the strong principles outlined above.

Where are we now?

That early band are still at it! Over the 20 years since MTI was born it has continuously and vigorously grown and evolved powered by their intense and continuing commitment and being joined by a stream of other talented professionals attracted by the MTI ethos. And they have been here for me writing this article. In the true MTI way, it was created by the generous sharing of ideas, knowledge and enthusiasm by many people. In particular [Lorraine Horton](#), [Andy Fagg](#) and [Simonetta Logan](#) have been brilliant. Thank you again!

So, if you are a qualified massage practitioner looking for a high quality CPD courses; or if you are a tutor or would like to become one; or are looking to establish your own massage training organisation and want a supportive professional body to work with, [then get in touch](#).