



Reflexology for Emotional Issues and Depression

Full Hour Sessions available with Emmanuelle at Holistic Health & Fitness. www.holifit.com

Reflexology has been helping people since ancient times. Egyptian tombs painted with images of people massaging each other's feet, tell us reflexology has been in practice since 2300 BC. Today, we have learned that reflexology not only helps with physical ailments, but can also improve one's mental state.

Do People with Depression Feel Better after Reflexology?

This article describes one client's experience with reflexology helping depression: "... When I receive reflexology, I don't have to revisit past memories and painful experiences, I do not try to understand anything about myself. I get to experience myself in a way I never have before. I get to relax deeper than I ever have, and just feel myself safe and tension-free. That is the most healing feeling, because it has shown me who I really am, beneath the depression."

In this client's mind, he told his talk therapist, he sincerely believed that reflexology was, "Just as therapeutic as, if not more than, his weekly counseling sessions." (Source: The Journal *Reflexology across America*).

How does Reflexology help with Depression? What's the Mechanism?

Reflexology relieves symptoms of depression by stimulating specific acupressure points/nerve endings in the feet and hands, which in turn:

- Causes increased blood flow to organs and helps eliminate toxins
- Stimulates the lymphatic system and activates the endocrine system.
- Induces a state of relaxation, balancing the sympathetic and para-sympathetic nervous systems
- Encourages a release of the natural feel-good hormones, especially endorphins.
- Decongests energy pathways, allowing for optimal nervous system functioning (Source: naturaltherapypages.com)

Which Pressure Points will the Therapist Use?

"In order to relieve symptoms of depression, a reflexologist may look to stimulate points that correspond to the glands, regulating the release of hormones and neurotransmitters in the body. If these glands are functioning incorrectly, people may experience symptoms of depression. Some of these glands to be treated include the pituitary, pineal, thymus, parathyroid and thyroid glands, whose corresponding points may be found on the ball of the foot, on the inside of the foot, and under the big toe."

Reflexology being used to aid with depression is not a new concept. In Russia, reflexology was originally practiced in psychiatric wards to treat people with mental illness. Reflexologists aim for optimal relaxation during each session, even encouraging clients to fall asleep if their body allows. "Stress and tension are responsible for about 75 percent of all health problems, and since each foot contains more than 7,000 nerves, experts believe it is a great spot to start the soothing.". (Source: *New Choices in Natural Healing*)