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Massage
FOR
DUMMIES®
2ND EDITION

**by Steve Capellini, LMT, and
Michel Van Welden, PT, NT**



WILEY

Wiley Publishing, Inc.

Massage For Dummies®, 2nd Edition

Published by
Wiley Publishing, Inc.
909 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10022
www.wiley.com

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Published simultaneously in Canada

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2010925698

ISBN: 978-0-470-58738-6

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



About the Authors

Steve Capellini: You may be thinking to yourself, “What makes him so special that he should write this book on massage?” Perhaps what most specifically qualifies me is the inordinate amount of time, amounting to many thousands of hours, that I’ve spent cooped up alone in a room with just one other person, touching them all over their bodies and getting paid for it.

What could be more fun? Or weirder? I hope I’ve got the communication skills to get across to you the reasons why an otherwise sane human being would spend such a large percentage of his life in such a strange manner.

And in addition, to give you an idea of some more specific qualifications, here’s a rough chronology of my life in touch:

1977: Received first massage ever, from high school girlfriend Grace, and knew that something important had just transpired.

1983: Attended 108-hour massage class in Los Angeles and became certified. Had to take V.D. test at local health clinic in order to receive license (a local prostitution ordinance).

1984: Massaged members of the cast and crew of a movie being filmed about Ernest Hemingway in Pamplona, Spain, during the famous running of the bulls. Yes, I ran.

1985: First regular massage job, at a spa in Florida, giving 25-minute full body oil rubdowns to cigar-smoking “good ole boys” for \$4 an hour.

1986: Rethought career choice. Started working at a friend’s landscaping company.

1987: Was called in to work at a new spa in Miami, the Doral. Massaged Dr. Ruth Westheimer, who gave me the “secret” of aphrodisiacs.

1988: Became supervisor of the massage and spa treatments department at the Doral, in charge of 40 therapists.

1989: Became a traveling spa trainer, hiring staff and overseeing openings of spas in Vermont, Jamaica, on cruise ships, and more.

1992: Started teaching workshops to massage therapists and business owners. Massaged Red Cross volunteers and army personnel in aftermath of Hurricane Andrew.

1997: Began publishing books on massage and spas.

1998: First child born. Taught him how to massage Mommy and Daddy by the age of three.

2002: Second child born. Taught him how to massage also. He and his big brother began making extra cash massaging Mommy and Daddy.

2003: Became a media spokesperson for Glade, Lands End, Vaseline, California Avocados and others, going on TV shows to tell people how great it is to use certain products to do spa treatments at home.

2005: Began writing large, comprehensive book about spa therapies for massage therapists.

2009: Finished writing large, comprehensive book about spa therapies for massage therapists.

2010: Family continues to grow and children continue to massage Mommy and Daddy. Start working as expert witness in trials concerning lawsuits against spas and massage therapists. Begin writing memoir: *Touchy Subjects*.

Michel Van Welden, PT, NT, received his training at the Physical Therapy Institute of Paris, specializing in orthopedic and neurological rehabilitation, as well as sports medicine and the treatment of burn victims.

For 26 years, he practiced both in hospitals and in his own private clinic. Working hand in hand (no pun intended) with plastic surgeons, he helped develop Plastic Physical Therapy, which increases the positive results of plastic surgery procedures. He also assembled a procedural manual and produced a video about lymphatic drainage and has taught his technique to therapists throughout France and around the world.

Since arriving in the United States, he has become an “expert on the skin” who in May 1998 substantiated the first derivative claim ever approved by the FDA for the treatment of cellulite using a patented massage device. All the other stuff you see on infomercials about cellulite is a lot of malarkey.

Michel is also a wild and crazy outdoorsman. He has run to the top of Mount Kilimanjaro seven times. He also became the record holder for long distance running along the Great Wall of China, covering 1,500 miles, half of the wall's length. His greatest achievement in the sports field, though, was in helping dozens of other people discover their own potentials by leading fitness trips to the Great Wall, Kilimanjaro, the Andes peaks, and other destinations.

Mr. Van Welden is married and is the father of two children and one grandchild. He lives in Miami, Florida and is the proud owner of a medical device distribution company. He can be contacted by email at messagefordummies@me.com.

Dedication

From Steve: I dedicate this book to the coolest massage partner ever,
Brandon Sunthorn Capellini.

Authors' Acknowledgments

From Steve: I thank Atchana, my darling partner and wife, who receives fewer massages from me than she deserves because I'm so busy writing all the time. The rest of my family is equally supportive and enthusiastic, too: Mom and Dad, Tina, Bala and Adi, Jim and Lalitha, Rob, Suzanne, Chris, Ari, and Nicole. And, of course, the Thai side of the family: Lek, Pat, Rangsan, Tina, Rolando and Umpun, in memorium. And the father-in-law I never knew, Sunthorn Chuaindhara; he lives on in our hearts.

I appreciate my co-author Michel Van Welden for his help and for being so dedicated to his worldwide massage research.

I'm very grateful to agent Carol Susan Roth, who believed I was right for this project and made it all possible through her dedication and hard work, and to Lori Huneke for introducing us.

All the folks at Wiley have been a pleasure to work with, including Chrissy Guthrie, Tracy Boggier, and Alicia South. I thank my friend and co-author, Michel Van Welden, and my buddy, Yanik Chauvin, photographer extraordinaire, who provided the pictures; and, of course, the models, Jason Barger and Linda Vongkhamphra, who were featured in the first edition as well, plus Fernando Spitaliere, Laura Esquivel, Annamaria Salley, Barbara Rozel, Jackie Ferrerosa, Alexis Somoano, Desiree Barger, Richard Obregon, the lovely Jessica Yu, and cute little Cade Akai.

Also, there are so many friends and clients from the massage and spa world who've helped with this book: Jai Varadaraj for all her help from India; Lynda Solien-Wolfe for her guerilla massage marketing and the great *Massage For Dummies* chair; Don Payne; John Fanuzzi; Carole Spellman; Ed Wilson; Iris Burman; Dan and Telka Ulrich; Pat Weinman; Harvey and Phyllis Sandler; Dave Kennedy; Amory Rowe; the Dail family up in Maine for their unparalleled hospitality; and especially Nancy Dail for her technical review of this book.

From Michel: For my Mom, for all that she did for me, including going through sciatica pain to show me the way of my future. Thanks.

To all the patients who knocked on my door to receive a massage and ended up sweating in Africa, China, or Bolivia.

To Steve Capellini, for not thinking that all French are arrogant, carrying their baguettes and bottles of wine everywhere they go, and for offering me the pleasure of sharing the success of this book.

To Elizabeth, my loving wife, for her unconditional support and her great Mexican cuisine.

To Sebastien (my son) and Kim (my granddaughter), for all the support they bring to their too-often-gone-away Dad.

To Jocelyne, who taught me how to speak to pigs about massage and convince them that the guy with the white coat and a strong French accent was not the butcher.

To Dr. James Watson, plastic surgeon at UCLA, and Dr. David Adcock, plastic surgeon at Vanderbilt University, for all the hours spent together in the lab and in the Plastic Surgery Department trying to understand a nonsurgical technique.

To Tami Booth for giving me this extraordinary opportunity — to be published in the United States. And to Carol Susan Roth for making it possible.

Publisher's Acknowledgments

We're proud of this book; please send us your comments at <http://dummies.custhelp.com>. For other comments, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 877-762-2974, outside the U.S. at 317-572-3993, or fax 317-572-4002.

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Introduction

For those who've already discovered it, massage is just about the niftiest thing on the planet. Better than chocolate. Better than pizza. It's a great way to feel better, look better, treat people better, and treat yourself better, too. It's 100 percent good for you, with no artificial additives or ingredients, and it's easy to do. In fact, one of the best things about massage is that you don't need a lot of fancy expensive equipment in order to get one or give one. All you really need to get started is a human body. Got one? Great! Then you're ready to go.

About This Book

First, let me introduce myself and explain what qualifies me to teach you about this subject in the first place. I've been massaging people for a living since I was 23 years old. That's well over 15,000 massages. I've trained other massage therapists around the world at resorts, in spas, in workshops, and in massage schools, and I've written a few other books on the subject. But there's something more to it than that. If all I were offering you was technical experience, analytical knowledge, and rah-rah enthusiasm, I wouldn't blame you for approaching this book with indifference or even boredom. Yet another book about the beauties and wonders of massage strokes and maneuvers? Wax on, wax off. Yawn.

What I hope to offer you is more than technique, more than know-how, even more than increased pleasure and greater health in your everyday life. What I try to get across in the pages that follow is a new way to be. I've transformed my own life into an ongoing, unfolding massage adventure and would be most sincerely honored to act as your guide along a similar journey of inner and outer exploration. There's a big, wild world out there, and there's an even bigger, wilder world inside your own body and mind. Massage is an excellent vehicle through which to explore both.

In this book, you find lots of ways to make massage a part of your day-to-day activities so that it becomes as natural as brushing your teeth, driving your car, or peeling the stickers off sale items you buy as Christmas presents. *Massage For Dummies*, 2nd Edition, offers you all the techniques you need to begin doing great massages. You pick up the same moves professional massage practitioners use, and you even get to speak some of their lingo. By the time you're done reading, you can be confident in your ability to massage others safely and create a lot of enjoyment for yourself and your lucky partners.

And in order to help you accomplish this goal, I've enlisted the help of a pretty impressive character, my co-author, Michel Van Welden. He's a physical therapist and naturopathic therapist who's traveled the world teaching other therapists and physicians about massage. An expert on physiology and the skin, he has been personally responsible for getting the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to sit up and pay serious attention to the effects of certain kinds of massage. The way he accomplished this feat was through several highly complex laboratory experiments studying (I'm not making this up) the effects of massage on pigs. I defer to Michel's clinical expertise on many crucial issues, and my hope is that his scientific knowledge sets your mind at ease regarding the effectiveness and safety of massage. Throughout your average, everyday paragraphs in this book, though, it's me, Steve, serving as your guide. Together, Michel and I have created a book that goes beyond any other of its kind to offer you everything you need to know to change your life from a dull, drab, non-massage existence into an exciting massage adventure.

Conventions Used in This Book

Allow me to take a moment to point out and explain a few conventions that I used when writing this book. As you read through it, keep the following in mind:

- ✓ Whenever I introduce a new term or piece of jargon, I *italicize* it and then provide a brief definition.
- ✓ Web sites and e-mail addresses appear in `monofont` to help them stand out.
- ✓ Keywords in lists and key sentences in numbered steps appear in **boldface**.
- ✓ I try to vary the genders of the folks in my examples as much as possible, but if you notice that I refer to females more often, that's just because women are more likely to get massages than men.
- ✓ When I use the term "your partner," I'm usually referring to nonprofessionals massaging each other.

What You're Not to Read

Although I'd love it if you read every word of this book from cover to cover, you certainly don't have to. If you're pressed for time or just want to get down to business, feel free to skip any text that's marked with a Technical Stuff icon. Also, *sidebars* (you'll see these gray-shaded boxes throughout the book) contain fun and interesting info, but they don't contain any essential information, so feel free to skip them as well.

Foolish Assumptions

As I state earlier in this Introduction, this book is for anyone with a body, which should qualify almost every single reader. Disembodied spirits and poltergeists may find it difficult to get the correct amount of friction necessary to perform effective massage maneuvers and should therefore abstain. Certain people in particular will quickly discover the most obvious benefits in reading these pages; you know who you are, and this book is especially for you if

- ✓ You've ever wanted to touch another person with grace, compassion, and caring.
- ✓ You want to share a new level of communication with the people you're close to.
- ✓ You want to increase your well-being and reduce many types of pain.
- ✓ You have a desire to enhance various aspects of your life, including athletic performance, job efficiency, and even your love life.
- ✓ You have a handicap of some kind and want to discover how massage is the therapy of choice for many people with physical limitations.
- ✓ You want to pursue this adventure more seriously and are perhaps thinking about becoming a massage pro yourself.
- ✓ You think knowing how to give a good massage may be a neat way to get more dates.

The world is filled with millions of people who have already started their own massage adventures. In fact, according to the American Massage Therapy Association, almost a quarter of adult Americans (24 percent) had a massage at least once in the last 12 months. Millions more have exchanged massages on a nonprofessional basis with friends and family. Insurance companies are starting to reimburse for it, doctors are including it in their practices, and practically every hair salon in every city is turning into a day spa and offering massage to clients. It's everywhere, and yet, if you're like the majority of people, you still haven't received a massage, and you have quite a few questions about how it works and what it can do for you. If that's the case, this is the book for you.

How This Book Is Organized

Here are the subjects that you find spread out before your eager eyes and fingers as you use this book:

Part I: Discovering Massage

In this part, you find the background information you need to understand how the massage techniques actually work and where they came from in the first place. You can discover all kinds of interesting things about your skin and what's beneath it, for example, and what it is about massage that helps your whole body feel better. If you're up to the task, you can even play that all-time favorite, the Bony Landmark Game, which is loads of fun for the whole family.

Part II: The Art of Receiving Massage

What, there's an art to receiving too, you ask? You mean I can't just lie there like a blob and let someone else do all the work? That's correct. Massage, in this respect, is like the tango, and you know what they say about the tango. In this part, you develop the fine art of tuning in, which allows you to fully enjoy the benefits and pleasures that await you with massage. I describe how you can invite healthy pleasure into your life, choose the right style of massage for you and your body, choose a good massage therapist, and start receiving massages just like the pros do, with all the trimmings like proper breathing, meditative awareness, and other advanced techniques for basically blissing out.

Part III: The Art of Giving Massage

This part is the meat of the book, so to speak, with all the pretty pictures that you may be tempted to flip to immediately and never draw your attention away from again. Resist this temptation, oh hedonistic reader! In fact, go ahead right now (if you haven't already) and flip forward to the photos and then come back after a couple of minutes. Go ahead. I can wait.

There, satisfied? Now promise that you'll look through the other important sections of Part III as well. Make no mistake about it: To give a good massage requires some effort and energy, and you want to prepare mentally beforehand so you don't burn yourself out. You may also discover vital information about when and how not to massage people, including yourself.

Part IV: Massage for Every Body

In the fourth part, you can take your pick from a smorgasbord of offerings, reading through the chapters that intrigue you in whichever order you choose. Whether you're an athlete, a pregnant woman, a world traveler, or whatever, you're sure to pick up a ton of useful info here that you can use to integrate massage into your life. Plus, I give you quick massage tips to ease your own stress at work.

Part V: The Part of Tens

The last part contains lists of ten quick ways you can improve your life with massage, including suggestions for great places to take massage classes and outstanding locations to receive incredible massages.

Icons Used in This Book

Throughout this book, I place lots of little round things in the margins, calling your attention to various details in the text. These pictures are called icons, and I have included some particularly pertinent ones for people learning the ropes of the massage world:



The Message Tale icon lets you know about a real-life massage story from an actual person in the adjacent paragraph. These stories may leave you happy, misty-eyed, or thoughtful, depending on the subject matter, but they all go to prove how powerful an influence massage can be in your life.



Information flagged with this icon is worth remembering (makes sense, huh?), so be sure not to skip these tidbits.



This icon points out information that goes a little beyond strictly need-to-know. Reading it enhances your understanding and appreciation of massage, but if you decide to skip it, you'll still do just fine.



The Tip icon clues you in right away to the presence of some especially important information. Perhaps I reveal a secret technique for massaging your way into Harvard Business School, for example. Perhaps not. You have to check the tip to be sure. At the very least, you may find some quick and easy pointers to make your reading experience as pleasurable as possible.



The practice of massage isn't without its potential dangers. For example, once, after receiving three massages in one day as part of my job interviewing therapists for positions at a new spa, I turned into a human noodle and kept banging my knees into furniture. Seriously, though, you have to watch out for certain things when practicing massage and various reasons why you shouldn't offer massage in certain circumstances (what we professionals call *contraindications*). You can catch them right away when you see this icon.

Where to Go from Here

By now you're probably saying, "All right, Steve. You've convinced me. My muscles are sore and I'm ready to get going. How do I get started with this whole massage thing anyway?"

The best way to use this book is to choose the subject that interests you most and then jump right in at that point. You may be eager to start giving a massage right away, in which case, you can zoom ahead to Part III. I highly encourage you to read all the material in the sections leading up to the how-to stuff, however, instead of simply flipping through the photographs and list of instructions. The attitudes and intentions with which you approach massage are, after all, what make the biggest difference in terms of what you get out of it.

For those of you who like to approach your reading in a systematic fashion, you'll find that each part of the book builds upon the one before it in what is, I hope, a logical manner, so that by the end, you can come away knowing just about as much as you'd ever want to know about massage. Unless of course you start pursuing it as a passion and profession in your life as I have, in which case, the learning never ends.

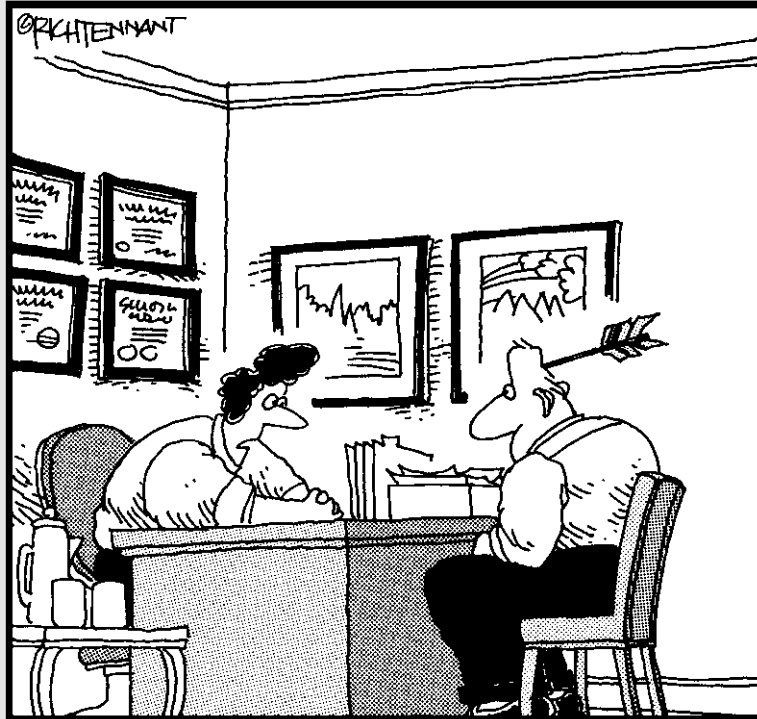
Massage, ultimately, is a way to share with others and to express yourself in a direct, hands-on way, and I hope this book plays a big part in helping you discover this. If you want to share some thoughts about what you learn on your own massage adventure, you can visit me on the Web at www.royaltreatment.com and send e-mail to steve@royaltreatment.com. I'll be most pleased to hear how your journey is going.

Part I

Discovering Massage

The 5th Wave

By Rich Tennant



"I really don't think a simple neck massage
is going to get rid of your headaches."

In this part . . .

As you explore this first part of the book, you may begin to get a sense that you've been overlooking something big, almost as if you'd failed to see an elephant living in your backyard.

Don't feel bad. You're in the majority. Most people have no clue about the rich tradition that massage has to offer, and some who think they do know only the misconceptions that swarm around the whole issue of massage.

Luckily, this first part of the book eliminates such concerns. The dazzling display of information in the first three chapters will leave you with a jaw-agape appreciation for the tremendous benefits massage can have for you, your family, and your friends.

Whether you're already somewhat familiar with massage and are raring to go, or you're a trembling neophyte slightly intimidated by the very concept of touching another person or being touched, Part I quickly ushers you into a new world filled with the millions who already know and enjoy the many benefits of massage. Welcome to the club.

Chapter 1

Not Just a Rub: How Massage Can Improve Your Life

In This Chapter

- ▶ Introducing the benefits of massage
 - ▶ Running through the various types of massage and how they help you
-

What does massage really do for you anyway? Sure, receiving one feels incredible, and watching beautiful people massaging each other on how-to videos looks nice, but what's going on beneath the surface? Is it worth it to actually fork over your hard-earned cash to have someone rub your skin for an hour? Should you spend your precious time and energy learning how to give a good massage yourself? Is massage really effective, or is it just an unnecessary, flashy indulgence, like fish eggs on toast?



Well, being a massage junkie myself, I can't imagine why anybody *wouldn't* want to get a massage anytime, anyplace, for any reason or no reason at all. For me, massage has just always seemed like such an obviously good thing to do, starting way back in 11th grade when Grace came over to visit at my parent's house one afternoon, and nobody else was home. Being a typical 17-year-old, I was hoping that we were soon going to engage in some good old-fashioned hanky-panky, and when Grace told me to loosen my belt and lie down on the carpet, I began singing Handel's Messiah silently to myself.

Grace touched me then on the small of my back, and I'll never forget the sensation. "This is a massage technique that somebody taught me," she said. "How does it feel?"

"Ah, it feels, um, kind of, uh, unbelievable!" I said, and *unbelievable* was exactly the right word. Grace was doing something clearly nonsexual, and I couldn't believe that anything nonsexual could feel so good, that there was a way to be so intimate with somebody and yet not get in trouble with her father if he were to find out about it. In short, I couldn't believe that something that wasn't illegal, immoral, or fattening could be so sumptuously pleasurable.

I asked Grace to keep doing what she was doing, and as she did so, I began devising, right there with my face buried in my parent's green shag carpeting, a future lifestyle that included the absolutely highest number of massages possible.

This early experience pointed out a fundamental truth about massage therapy that those people who judge it without trying it often miss: There is a difference between sex and massage therapy. There, I said it, right here in Chapter 1, and I'm glad. Some people out there will forever mix the two up, which does a disservice to everybody else, especially those people who have shied away from massage over the years because of a perceived less-than-pristine image.

I discovered, in that youthful, eye-opening experience, that massage does indeed feel unbelievable, and that discovery was a great place to begin. Now, years later, after studying and teaching massage and experiencing the myriad facets of massage in both the United States and other countries, I've been introduced to other, deeper reasons for including it in my life, reasons with profound implications for improved health, well-being, and even longevity.

In this chapter (and throughout this book), I share these reasons with you. I also introduce you to various types of massage and finally provide you with a fun, quick activity to get you started on your massage journey.

Appreciating the Basic Benefits of Massage

If I were to go into some of the stories about how massage has helped people change their lives, heal themselves, become rich and famous, and so on, you probably wouldn't believe me right away, because, after all, I'm still in Chapter 1. So I'm going to start out slowly and offer you some of the simplest, everyday ways that massage can help you, some of which still may come as a surprise to you.

Here, then, not ranked in any particular order, are some basic benefits of massage that perhaps didn't pop straight into your head the first time you thought about it. Massage

- ✓ Helps relieve muscular spasm and tension
- ✓ Raises immune efficiency
- ✓ Improves circulation
- ✓ Promotes the healing of tissues