

Heart Health

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American Heart Month. There's so much to say about these American hearts. Narrowing it down though—I have noticed in my work a connection between feelings (e.g. tightness, comfort, openness, pain, hardness) in the area of the heart and emotional (happy, sad, angry, peaceful, loving, hating) feelings expressed by the person I'm working with. So I went looking to see what people of the medical persuasion were saying about the connections between our physical hearts and our emotions. Here's a bit of what I found:

From MedScape.com *Journal Watch*. 2008;7(1) © 2008 Massachusetts Medical Society:

Emotional vitality seems protective against coronary heart disease.

Summary: "The association between depression and coronary heart disease (CHD) has been established. To determine whether emotional vitality decreases the risk for developing CHD, researchers analyzed data from a prospective study of healthy, civilian, noninstitutionalized people. At baseline 6,265 participants underwent medical evaluation and testing for emotional vitality [upbeat attitudes] and were then followed for 15 years."

Subjects with the highest level of emotional vitality had 81% of the CHD risk of those with the lowest levels of emotional vitality.

From "Science of the Heart: Exploring the Role of the Heart in Human Performance"
Institute of HeartMath, Publication No. 01-001. Boulder Creek, CA, 2001:

For centuries, the heart has been considered the source of emotion, courage and wisdom. The Institute of HeartMath (IHM) Research Center is exploring the physiological mechanisms by which the heart communicates with the brain, thereby influencing information processing, perceptions, emotions and health.

Numerous experiments have now demonstrated that the messages the heart sends the brain affect our perceptions, mental processes, feeling states and performance in profound ways.

I encourage you to notice physical feelings in the area of your heart this month. Practice softening and opening using your breath and thoughts. Expand your whole torso with slow easy inhalations. Think thoughts of appreciation. Gratitude. Joy.

In the physical realm—one of the benefits you may experience from your massage is the peace and comfort that settles in to your heart as we work together—softening those knots between your shoulder blades, along your spine and in your chest muscles.

Here's to your health!

Anyone coming in this month to specifically work on heart health:

(say "heart health is my priority" or similar statement)

Get 10% off the cost of your massage!