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Healing Concussions Is In Our Hands... Literally

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Our high impact culture feeds on the same gratification in our sports. In fact, game enthusiasts hunger for the impact- the great tackle, the head-long dive for the base, the willingness of our athletes to sacrifice their bodies for the win, the score and the memorable play.

The youngest of ages are taught that playing a sport is 'All American,' and the bodies pay the price.

One of the prices paid is to the head in the form of concussions and traumatic brain injuries. Since it is highly unlikely we will reshape our culture to de-

emphasize the multi-billion dollar sports industry we so avidly enjoy, we may want to get smart around the preventions and rehabilitation therapies available to us. They are becoming common in ever growing measure.

Here are five worthy of your attention.

1. Let's start with one of the most ancient, **Acupuncture**. This system of healthcare has stood the test of time originating about 3500 years ago in China. Two of its operating premises are first, that Qi (Chi) is the life force or energy that is the source of health on every level (including the energy of the universe.) Second, acupuncture identifies 2000 points on the human body connected by 20 pathways where Qi can be regulated. Regulating in the most general terms means increased if too weak and decreased if too intense. Other words for this are yin and yang. You probably know that acupuncture employs small tipped needles inserted just into the skin at these points, after an evaluation is done to determine the treatment that will be helpful. The needle connects the surface of the skin and the organs to open a healthy flow for health.

2. **Massage** can oftentimes be overlooked as a verifiable healing modality, relegated to the satisfaction of touch and pleasure. This makes it worthwhile in and of itself, but it also packs a powerful punch (or touch if you will.) Massage stretches and loosens muscle and connective tissue; improves blood flow, bringing oxygen and nutrients to deprived areas of the body; drains the lymphatic system; speed the release of metabolic waste; wakes up the sensory receptors and helps close the gates of pain points which send messages reinforcing trauma. Massage also bring the anatomy into alignment and even stimulates health production of hormones to relieve stress, anxiety and depression These are just a few of the benefits if this every increasing therapy.

3. **Healing Touch** is one of the gentlest forms of therapy. In fact sometimes there is no touch at all! This system is considered a holistic energy therapy working with Chi to restore not only the harmony, energy and balance of the physical body, but also the emotional, mental and spiritual bodies of the person receiving. It is non-invasive touch oftentimes offered as a service in

our western medical facilities, including hospitals, attesting to its track record to provide relief AND long lasting progress towards health.

4. **Visceral Release and Manipulation.** French osteopath Jean-Pierre Barral developed this method of applying specifically placed manual force upon the body to bring back healthy relationships between viscera and all the structures of the body. The viscera is the word used for the internal organs- remember the *brain is an organ*. The word structures applies to the membranes, fascia, muscle and bones. When there is trauma oftentimes the internal organs are affected by being pushed out of alignment or given blows that lead to inflexibility. Using this form of manipulation encourages normal mobility and motion and restores the tone of the organ as a whole.

5. **Cranio-Sacral Therapy** is another prominent option for brain health. It is a gentle hands on experience where the practitioner gets in touch with the Cranio-sacral system by evaluating and enhancing the flow of the membranes and cerebro-spinal fluid. The almost imperceptible movements are a mighty force to the fluid system providing immediate and lasting balance. Remember we are largely made up of water (fluid,) so it works with the dominant substance of our bodies. It is widely and ever-increasingly used to help TBI and spinal cord injuries. Check out this testimonial by athlete Ricky Williams: https://youtu.be/qm_qdXVGkNo. CST is shown to help a wide range of challenges including motor coordination, autism, PTSD, chronic fatigue and my particular passion, Alzheimer's disease and dementia. Until we address the root challenge, how can we have sports and reverse the growing cases of concussions and TBI why not learn about, try out, and create brain health through these pathways of health?

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