

TOTAL BODY BALANCING



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Presenter*

Typically, continuing education classes teach manual therapy techniques that only look at the body in pieces and or parts. Classes focus on how to evaluate and treat a shoulder, neck or low back, but rarely do those classes identify the interrelationships between body parts or body systems. Unfortunately, using such a specific approach can result in missing how a problem in another part of the body could be influencing the area of complaint. A shoulder problem can originate from or be influenced by an SI joint dysfunction or a cervical issue, and if not addressed, patient outcomes can suffer. To adequately address those more challenging patients who have other areas of the body that are contributing to the site of pain, a whole-body evaluation and treatment approach needs to be adopted.

Total Body Balancing (TBB) is a specifically designed curriculum based on the principle of holism that uses a maximal approach to evaluate and treat the body as a whole. Developed by Dr. Kerry D'Ambrogio DOM, AP, PT, DO-MTP, Total Body Balancing consists of a criterion based Total Body Evaluation and a Five Phase Treatment approach that releases tension throughout the entire musculoskeletal system (muscle, fascia, joint capsules and ligaments) to improve circulation, modulate the nervous system and open energetic flow. Adapted from the work and techniques of Dr. A.T. Still MD, DO and Dr. John Wernum DO, TBB uses long levers and

rhythmic mobilization to influence ALL body systems, including the lymphatic, visceral, craniosacral, myofascial and musculoskeletal systems, and provides a framework to support and integrate specific local techniques.

D'Ambrogio Institute (DAI) Philosophy is based on three factors: Evaluate, Treat, Re-evaluate. TBB uses a four-part evaluation process to help guide treatment. The acronym A.R.T.S. is used to describe the TBB evaluation.

A-Asymmetry of posture: identify postural clues that may indicate a problem area.

R-Range of motion: evaluate joint movement throughout the body, looking for normal and abnormal patterns throughout all the joints of the body. Spinal ROM is of particular importance in TBB evaluation and treatment.

T-Tension Test or Tissue Tenderness: utilize more advanced techniques of evaluating muscles and joints to help determine the nature of the dysfunction.

S-Special Tests: are Orthopedic and Osteopathic assessment techniques to help guide treatment and confirm other findings during the evaluation process.

TBB teaches the four-part evaluation

process to positively identify the true source dysfunction. By using multiple parts in an evaluation, the understanding of the interconnections between the systems of the body is greatly enhanced. When the process is complete, each of the four parts can act to double check and confirm the findings of the other evaluation steps. Those findings will help guide treatment and justify the treatment approach. In addition, demonstrating the findings to patients will not only increase confidence as a therapist, but also build credibility with patients.

During the re-evaluation post treatment, change and progress can be shown by using the same four-part process during the re-evaluation. Progress and results are the best form of advertising. When patients see progress with their pain relief, they will tell everyone who will listen!

TBB follows a specific 5 Phase Treatment Approach. Evaluation guides treatment, but following the 5 phase protocol guarantees that any tension that may be contributing to the site of pain or dysfunction is not missed. TBB teaches treatment of the patient in the supine, prone, side lying and seated



Positions, starting with the patient supine to release lines of tension throughout the anterior body and finishing with the patient seated to fine tune spinal range of motion. Each treatment position is designed to properly address different body regions and allows for a thorough and complete understanding of the area of dysfunction.

A major advantage of TBB is that the course curriculum teaches how to do a treatment, not just a technique. Anyone can do a technique, without much thought or reasoning behind the movements. However, critical thinking is

required to do a treatment. A treatment takes the findings of the evaluation into consideration. Treatments have specific goal objectives, which help guide treatment and measure success. In the case of TBB, one goal is to remove barriers and improve circulation to, within and from muscles, fascia, nerves, joints and the lymphatic system.

The TBB procedure follows certain rules and protocols. Here are a few examples:

TBB techniques use long lever levers (arms, legs, head/neck or torso) to release tension. TBB incorporates the use of 2 hands. One hand is used as a sensory hand to monitor the body part being treated. The sensory hand can be placed on any part of the body to be treated, including muscles, joints or even organs. The other hand is the motor hand that moves the lever. The

The rhythm is important because treatment should stimulate a parasympathetic response. Stimulating a parasympathetic response helps the body return to the normal neurological state needed for healing.

The Total Body Balancing protocol can be used as a standalone treatment. TBB can also serve as a platform to integrate other techniques, such as

craniosacral, visceral, joint, muscle or facial techniques.

TBB is great for general wellness or maintenance treatments.

Since it works with normal body physiology,

TBB is safe to

use with the elderly or children, athletes or weekend warriors. The video on the D'Ambrogio Institute website <https://www.dambrogioinstitute.com/therapies/index.php> will give you a visual introduction to Total Body Balancing.

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TBB teaches the **FOUR-PART EVALUATION PROCESS** to positively identify the true source dysfunction.

lever can be any body part that offers leverage and a connection to the sensory hand. The utilization of levers allows for a more effective and thorough treatment by reaching areas of the body not easily accessed by fingers and hands alone. This makes the overall treatment more effective and less invasive for the patient.

TBB techniques use rhythmic mobilization to normalize sympathetic and parasympathetic neurological activity.

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