# Healing Touch MASSAGE

by

# Paul Toschi

In *Healing Touch*, Paul Toschi explores the role of physical touch, in the form of relaxation massage, as a means of *nurturing relationships*, as an *expression of love*, care and commitment, and as an *instrument of healing*. A full body massage session is described, along with a wealth of useful information.

# Contents

Introduction	3
What is Massage?	4
The Benefits of Massage	
Physical Benefits	6
Emotional and Mental Benefits	8
Types of Massage	
Relaxation Massage	12
Sports Massage	12
Eastern Massage	13
Relaxation Massage	
The Basic Massage Strokes	14
A Full Body Massage	16
Accessories and Materials	
Furniture and Draping	21
Lubricants and Lotions	24
Involving all the Senses	26
Contra-indications	30

### Introduction

"Jesus ... took the children in His arms, put His hands on them and blessed them."

Mark 10:16

In his book<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Gary Chapman states that people express and receive love in different ways. He identifies these as the five languages of love:

QUALITY TIME • WORDS OF AFFIRMATION • GIFTS

ACTS OF SERVICE • PHYSICAL TOUCH

If your primary love language is PHYSICAL TOUCH, this course will help you to achieve fluency in your expression of care, particularly in the quiet and powerful communication of *massage*.

This is just the beginning. Once you have experienced the benefits of massage and shared them with others, you will want to learn more about this therapy, which is inexpensive and relatively simple, yet beneficial and fulfilling.

You can nurture relationships, minister peace and facilitate healing with the latent gift in your hands. Pass the blessing on!

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1.</sup> "THE FIVE LOVE LANGUAGES, How to Express Heartfelt Commitment to Your Mate" by Dr. Gary Chapman, Ph.D., Strand Publishing

# What is Massage?

To touch another person is to communicate an emotion. Love, empathy, compassion, desire, fun, sharing, peace and comfort are just some of the feelings that we can express by reaching out and touching a friend, an acquaintance, a family member or a lover.

Touch is a language that is not spoken very fluently in our society. Other nations use this wonderful gift much more than we do, and we are in danger of losing the richness, fullness and depth of emotional communication that we are intended to enjoy in our relationships.

The application of massage as a gift to others helps us rediscover the intense pleasure we experienced as infants, when we received security, comfort, warmth and acceptance in our parents' arms.

We rediscover the excitement, the fun, the intimacy, the ecstatic closeness and personal communication in the caress of the person we fell in love with for the very first time.

We feel the pulse of compassion, gentleness, kindness and empathy when we reach out to someone who is hurting and find that our simple touch brings healing. We find a world of love when we learn to speak the language of *Touch*.

This is the essence of Massage.

### A Definition

**massage** *n*. The act of kneading, rubbing, etc. parts of the body to promote circulation, suppleness or relaxation. French *masser* to rub.

Collins Shorter English Dictionary - Harper Collins Publishers

This defines the mechanical application of massage therapy, but by the end of this time together, you will find that exploring the world of massage therapy is so much more.

It is an exhilarating journey!

### The Benefits of Massage

### Physical Benefits

**Improved Blood Flow**. Pressing or rubbing the body has an affect which we have all noticed at some time; the skin becomes red because of the increased blood flow to the tissues. Increased circulation means *a more efficient supply of oxygen, nutrients and infection-fighting substances to the cells of the body.* 

**Suppleness**. Massage includes passive range of motion movements that loosen up stiff and painful ligaments, joints and tendons, thereby *increasing the body's ability to use the joints to their full extent*, helping the body regain supple movement.

**Relaxation**. Our bodies become very tense as a result of bad posture, inadequate work surroundings, driving, lack of sleep, too little exercise, and a host of other reasons that are part of our everyday lives. When the tension in the muscles is out of balance, for instance when the muscles on one side of the back are more tense than on the other, the imbalance can cause serious pain or discomfort. Massage is the perfect method for *relieving stress and restoring balance* to a tired, stressed, aching body.

Waste Removal. The movement of lymph fluid that carries waste products from the body's cells is dependent on the action of the muscles. Normal movement of the body squeezes the fluid along the lymph ducts to where it drains back into the blood stream. Massage increases the flow of lymph as tissues are rubbed, pressed and squeezed, especially when the person receiving the therapy has a sedentary or otherwise inactive lifestyle. This increased movement *improves overall health and enhances the restoration of tissues*.

**Skin Condition.** The application of lotions, moisturisers and exfoliating substances has a beneficial effect on the skin. Regular massage will leave your *skin glowing*, *soft*, *smooth and healthy*.



# The Benefits of Massage

Emotional and Mental Benefits.

### Self-image and Self-respect.

When receiving a massage, the person giving you their care and attention is communicating their acceptance of you in the relationship. Massage therapists who have practiced for any length of time are awestruck at the beauty of the human body, and have learned to look past superficial beauty and the fashion of the day. You are a wonderfully complex being, intricately fashioned and marvelously proportioned.

"I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made:" Psalm 139: 14

Being treated with care, respect and consideration by the person giving you a massage helps you to see yourself as you really are, a living, breathing work of art, created to make a difference in the world.

### Peace.

Our bodies respond significantly to touch. When receiving a massage, the body is stimulated to produce neurotransmitters such as oxytocins, which boost bonding, endomorphins, which dull the perception of pain, relieve stress and strengthen the immune

system, and serotonins, which foster the feeling of satiety, bringing relaxation. It's so easy to fall asleep during a massage, with all your worries far away. Pampered, safe and loved.

### Restoration.

Many of us give a lot to our careers, our husbands and wives, our children and our communities. No wonder we feel emotionally drained at times. Passively receiving care and simply basking in the absolute luxury of a good massage can work wonders to rejuvenate us, give us a reservoir of energy and motivate us to face our challenges again. A massage seems to make molehills out of mountains.

### **Regaining Perspective.**

When we set aside an hour or so for a massage, we seem to just go with the flow, accepting that our business is not going to fall apart, that the family will get by just fine without us and that the world will keep on turning. It's a great time to switch off our frustrations, fears and worries and to give thought to the things that really matter: our relationships and our deepest values.

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them."

Ecclesiastes 12:1

### Meditation.

Massage facilitates a positive outlook on life. It's easy to get away from the negative emotions of hatred, envy, jealousy, pride, greed and strife when you're in an environment that is focused on care, healing, peace and compassion, and in which fragrances, music and calming scenes surround you. This time can be used very effectively to develop the habit of positive thinking.

"Although the world is full of suffering, it is full also of the overcoming of it."

-- Helen Keller

# Think on These Things...

"whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

Philippians 4: 8

### **Types of Massage**

**Relaxation Massage**: This consists of *stroking, kneading, pummelling and pressing* the soft tissues of the body, as well as *moving joints* to the limit of their range in order to relax taut muscles, enhance the nutrition and drainage of the muscles, loosen up stiffened joints and relieve pain. It usually requires the use of a massage table or chair, and is done with the recipient wearing a minimum of clothing, if any, while the areas not being worked on are draped for the sake of modesty.

This does not necessarily involve a whole body massage. Certain areas may be targeted, e.g. a *foot massage*, *neck and shoulders* or *lower back*. It could also be varied for various circumstances or age groups, such as before, during or after pregnancy, for babies or for the elderly.

The massage experience is usually enhanced by the use of calming fragrances, relaxing music, soft lighting, peaceful décor and serene art.

**Sports Massage**: This is very similar to Relaxation Massage, but includes therapy that is deeper, harder and perhaps even painful in its intensity, with the same goals as Relaxation Massage, but with the additional goal of breaking up scar tissue, aligning damaged muscle fibres and hyper-extending joints in order to increase mobility and accelerate the restoration of damaged tissues. It is usually done in conjunction with stretching and other exercises, and requires a detailed knowledge of sports medicine, the stresses imposed on the body by intensive athletic exercise, and the restorative processes of the body.

It can involve the whole body, or be targeted for certain problem areas. It usually requires the use of a massage table or chair, and is done with the recipient wearing a minimum of clothing, with only the area to be massaged being exposed.

**Eastern Massage.** This consists primarily of deep pressure exerted on the major muscle groups, in rhythm with the recipient's breathing. This is done by having the recipient lie on a padded surface on the floor, while the therapist leans over them, bringing their body weight to bear on the recipient. Caution must be observed not to push too hard on the area of the kidneys, knees and elbows and any areas of injury or weakness. It requires the therapist to be supple and athletic enough to move about on their knees, as the technique cannot be applied from a standing position. It does not require the recipient to be unclothed.

For the purposes of this course of study and practical application, we will focus primarily on **Relaxation Massage**, as this is most appropriate to a family setting and requires the least specialist knowledge.







# **Relaxation Massage**

### The Basic Massage Strokes

**Light Effleurage.** A gliding stroke with fingers relaxed, following the shape of the body, to spread oil, get a feel for the recipient's muscle tone and texture and maintain the continuity of the session. It relaxes muscles, relieves pain by the activation of endorphins, increases circulation and enhances vasodilation, reducing blood pressure and heart rate.

**Deep Effleurage**. A deeper gliding stroke or knuckling, which reduces oedema by increasing venous and lymph flow, improves nutritional status of tissues, warms superficial tissue and abrades spent skin tissue (Exfoliation).

**Petrissage.** Picking up, wringing, kneading, squeezing, lifting and rolling tissues, which stretches and broadens muscle fibres, stimulates muscle tone, breaks up adhesions and increases the glandular activity of the skin. When done slowly, it relaxes the nervous system. When done fast, it stimulates it. This has its primary application in sports massage, but is useful in relaxation massage as well, depending on the recipient's needs.

**Direct Pressure Friction** and **Linear or Circular Friction**. A compression of the tissues after they have been warmed up, with one or more fingers or the palm, rubbing in circles, feeling the skin move on the muscles, which compresses and spreads tissues, mobilises muscle/tendon junctions and reduces pain and spasm.

**Heat Rub Friction.** This friction stroke heats skin and warms tissue, which increases vasodilation and relaxes muscles.

**Cross Fibre Friction**. Applied only after a thorough warm-up, at right angles to tissue fibres. This stroke breaks up adhesions, re-aligns scar tissue, and relaxes muscles.

**Tapotement**. Tapping, slapping, cupping strokes which stimulate tired muscles, loosen mucous in the lungs and stimulates the nervous system and internal organs. Avoid use over the kidneys or during pregnancy or menstruation.

**Vibration**. This sedates the nervous system, reduces pain and relaxes muscles.

Coarse Vibration, Jostling or Shaking. This stimulates organs and rejuvenates tired muscles.

**Stretching**. This is holding the ankle or wrist and gently pulling the limb, to loosen the shoulder or hip joints.

**Stroking**. With the tips of the fingers, to establish contact, ease the transition between different areas, and to end the session.

**Forearm**. Spread pressure over a wide area, such as the back.

Fist. To exert pressure on thick muscle areas, such as the buttocks.

### **Relaxation Massage**

A Full Body Massage Sequence (Refer to the PowerPoint<sup>TM</sup> sequence that accompanies this publication)



Have your partner strip to his underclothes (or entirely, if you're both comfortable with that) and have him lie face down on a towel or two on the massage table, with a towel covering the pelvic area. Place a pillow under his shins to elevate the feet, and possibly one or two pillows under

his stomach to straighten out the lower back, if necessary. If he has a large stomach or if she is pregnant, it would work better if they were in the "recovery" position, which will be discussed later. A rolled up towel under his forehead or shoulders would improve his comfort. Experiment with the placement of pillows and rolled towels until he's quite comfortable.

Ask if she has any needs or considerations.

Stand at the foot of the table, tell him what you are about to do, and place your palms on the soles of his feet, your wrists on the outsides and fingers pointing inward, for half a minute, in order to connect and have him get used to your touch.

Inform her of your next move, and without breaking contact with her, move alongside the table to the left, fold the towel over to expose her left thigh and place your right hand, palm up, just under her buttock line and pour a small amount of oil onto your hand (not directly onto her skin). Place your left hand on the towel over her left hip, and with your right hand stroke along the entire length of the back of her leg, spreading the oil gently in a wavy motion.

Repeat the stroke about ten times with varying degrees of pressure, getting the feel of what is comfortable for you both,

Move to the foot of the table, maintaining contact with him, lift his left foot slightly and stretch his leg towards you, pulling firmly but gently with both hands. Release the tension and massage the sole of his foot thoroughly with your thumbs, pressing quite hard, but getting feedback from him whether it is too hard. If it is, ease up until it's pleasurable to him.

Place the towel back over his left thigh, and move to the left of the table, maintaining contact with him. Place your right hand on his shoulder blade, and with the left hand, stroke his arm from shoulder to fingertips, gradually increasing the pressure and "milking" his arm. Finish by holding his hand firmly and stretching his arm away from his shoulder.

Place your right hand on the small of her back and move around the table to the other side. Repeat the strokes on her right leg and arm as you did on her left.

Maintain contact, and place one hand on his sacrum and one between his shoulder blades. Connect for a few seconds. Turn your left hand palm up and pour oil on your hand. Let the oil warm a while, then turn your hand over and spread the oil on his back with long strokes on either side of his spine, using moderate pressure, up to the shoulders, out and down his sides with a wavy motion, easing up as you pull your hands down his sides.

Repeat these strokes about ten times, experimenting with varying pressures and getting feedback on the level of comfort for each pressure.

Standing on one side of the table, apply cross-strokes in figure-of-eight motions with both hands up and down each side of her torso. As you increase the pressure, the skin will fold and roll between your hands. Repeat for half a minute or so, place one hand between her shoulder blades, move over to the other side of the table and repeat the strokes from that side.

Place your forearms together in the small of his back and move them upwards and downwards away from one another, stroking his back with the spread pressure of your forearms. Repeat a few times. (Guys, if your forearms are particularly hairy, this may not be a good stroke for you to use, as your arms might feel like sandpaper to your massage partner!)

Rub in small circles on either side of her spine with your thumbs, moving from the bottom to the top. Repeat.

Place one hand on the small of his back, and with the other knead the muscles on the shoulder blades and progress up into his neck to the base of his skull. Repeat this at least 3 times.

Stroke one arm from shoulder to hand, applying friction with the thumbs and palms. "Milk" her arm, and finish up by kneading the palm of her hand with your thumbs. "Milk" each finger and twist it gently to mobilise the joints of her fingers. Connect by holding her shoulder and her wrist for a few seconds, and repeat on her other arm.

Expose his left leg and buttocks by folding back the towel diagonally. Knead the gluteal muscles with your thumbs and palms and press your fist into them to release tension.

Knead the muscles of her thigh with your thumbs and move down the back of her leg, avoiding the area behind her knee (the knee is a sensitive and fragile area. It's best to stay away from massaging that area.), on down her calf. Moving back up the leg, apply flat pressure to her hamstrings.

Hold his feet in your hands and stroke the top of his foot along the ridges between the tendons. Rub the sole of his foot with your thumbs. By placing your hand lightly at the back of his knee, indicate that you're going to bend his leg, sit down on the table and lift his lower leg into a vertical position. Knead his calves and apply a gentle "donkey-bite" twisting stroke to his calves, stroke his leg up towards his foot and give his foot a general kneading massage.

Repeat for her right leg. Ask her to relax for a few minutes and place your hands on her heels and soles.

Have him turn over and lie on his back. Place a pillow under his knees.

Start on her right leg. Stroke her leg and stretch from the knee. Knead her thigh, knead around her kneecap with the tips of your fingers and stroke all over her thigh with your flat hand, applying pressure. Describe small circles with your thumbs down the front of her lower leg. Apply a firm stretch to the ankles, stretching the full length of her leg back to her hip. Stroke the top of her foot with your thumbs, working in between the tendons. Knead her toes individually. Stroke the sole of her foot vigorously with your thumbs, describing small circles. Finish by stroking her leg firmly but gently from top to bottom. Repeat the entire sequence on her other leg.

Hold both his feet in your warm hands for a few seconds before moving on.

Inform him of your next strokes, and apply oil in a clockwise circular pattern to his abdominal area. Be very careful and sensitive when stroking, as most people feel vulnerable in this area and need to get used to the idea of being touched there. With one hand resting on the belly button, rub the whole torso softly, spreading the massage oil, taking note of his breathing and stroking in rhythm with it. Apply effleurage along the side of her abdomen, up between her breasts and out along her shoulder. Repeat on the other side of her torso.



Move to the head of the massage table and knead her shoulders and neck muscles, loosening up the tension and working out any knots. Do not stroke the front of her neck or the Adam's apple area, as this will cause discomfort.

Move to his right side, lift his forearm, and knead the palm of his hand with your thumbs and the back of his hand with your fingers. Hold his wrist and stroke his arm firmly with your palm. Bend his arm at the elbow and flex a few times. Knead his palm and "milk" his fingers. To finish, stroke his arm hand over hand. Repeat the sequence for his other arm.



Move to the head of the table. Wipe your hands on a paper towel to remove the oil, so that it doesn't get onto her hair, and tell her what you're doing. Effleurage her neck muscles from the indentation at the base of her throat outwards along the collarbones and up the back of her neck a few times. Cup your hands and gently turn her head to one side. Leave one hand under her head and stroke her neck muscles firmly. Repeat for the other side of her neck.



With your wrists together and fingers facing outward, press your palms on his forehead and hold them there for a few seconds.

Press the tips of your forefingers on either side of her nose next to her nostrils.

Pinch-stroke his eyebrows from the centre outwards.



Circle her temples with your fingertips.

Stroke along the line of his jawbones.

Stroke her cheekbones with your thumbs.

Squeeze the lobe of his ear between thumb and forefinger.

Apply soft friction over her skull, and play with her hair.



Place your palms over his eyes and hold them there. Lift your hands slowly.

Ask her to remain relaxed for a few minutes. Cover her with a towel or bathrobe if the room is cool, or if she wants to be covered.



# **Accessories and Materials**

### Furniture and Draping

The recipient of a massage can lie on her back, her side or her stomach, sit upright, leaning forward on a support, sit upright without support, or recline for a foot massage, depending on what is available and what is convenient at the time. These are some of the possibilities:

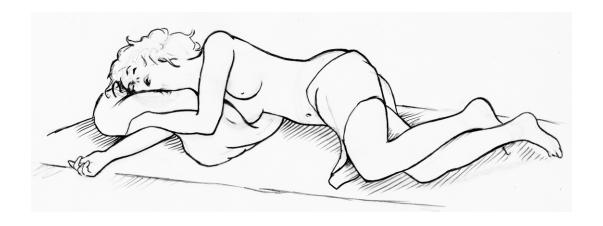


Lying prone or supine on a massage table or on a soft pad on the floor.

You would need a **thin foam mattress**, or a vinyl-covered **massage table** covered with **towels**, **pillows** to place under her legs or under her abdomen, and **towels** to cover her for warmth and for privacy.



Sitting on a straight-backed cushioned **chair** with **towels** for warmth and privacy, and possibly a **pillow** to lean forward onto.



Lying on her side, with **pillows and towels** to achieve comfort, warmth and privacy.

This position is particularly suitable for pregnant women or anyone with a large abdomen. It is also useful for massaging a person's front and sides when they are uncomfortable with being flat on their backs

# **Lubricants and Lotions**

Vegetable oils serve to *lubricate* the movement of the massage therapist's hands over the body of the recipient, oils serve as carrier media for *essential oils and fragrances*, oils *seal the skin* against loss of moisture and oils *transport nutrients* into the skin.

### General Tips and Guidelines:

**Take Care: Mineral oils** and petroleum jelly, like those used in baby oils and other cosmetics are not suitable for skin care. The only beneficial quality they have is that they seal the skin against loss of moisture, but they also block the pores and do not have the beneficial properties of good quality vegetable oils.

**Other substances** can be used as lubricants, such as *talcum powder* or *moisturising lotions*, but in using them the sensuality of using a lubricating oil is diminished, which could be an negative factor for married couples.

**Lotions** are often oils blended with water and other substances by means of an emulsifying agent that causes oil and water to mix. It's difficult to find lotions that don't use mineral oils, but they are available at a price from specialist suppliers.

**Exfoliation**. A pleasant and beneficial sensation can be obtained by using a soft brush to apply moisturising lotion, so that a degree of *exfoliation*, *the removal of dead skin cells*, is obtained while the skin takes on a healthy pink glow as circulation is stimulated.

# **Specific Lubricant and Carrier Oils:**

Some oils that work well on their own, blended or as carriers of other essential oils are:

Grapeseed Oil, Apricot kernel Oil, Olive oil, Coconut Oil, Sunflower Oil, Jojoba Oil, Almond Oil and Rapeseed Oil.

### **Essential Oils**

These are substances that can be added to carrier oils, typically in the proportion of eight drops to a litre of oil. They provide fragrance and are reputed to influence moods and emotions. Various fragrances have properties described as a "high", "midrange" or "low" "note", similar to the composition of a musical chord. For instance a blend of frankincense, rose and lemongrass as the low, mid and high notes will form a pleasant harmony. The high note will be evident first, with the mid and low notes coming into prominence more slowly as the oil is warmed and interacts with the skin.

# **Involving all the Senses**

To create a total sensual experience, the sense of touch can be enhanced and complemented by orchestrating the environment. Plan for the stimulation of sight, taste, smell and hearing.

**Sight**. What makes you and your partner feel good? A candle? A glowing fire? A green forest scene? A dimmed coloured light?

A choice of colours and light intensity can make all the difference in providing a calming, relaxed atmosphere that enhances the massage experience.

Experiment with lighting and décor to find what works best for you. Perhaps setting up a massage table or mat in a secluded part of your garden would create a beautiful setting.

**Taste**. Have something to drink available that will help you unwind. For some that might be a light wine, herbal tea or tropical fruit juice. Massage is an exotic, sensual experience, so choose snacks (chocolate is always a winner!) and drinks to suit the mood.

**Smell.** Fragrances can have a powerful influence on our emotions. Examples are:

Lavender is calming and balancing.

Rosemary, peppermint and eucalyptus are stimulating.

Bergamot is refreshing.

*Lemon* is uplifting.

Tangerine is soothing.

Geranium eases stress.

Clary sage is an aphrodisiac.

With essential oils you definitely get what you pay for. The cheaper substances may be artificial, diluted or contain impurities. Experiment with cheaper essential oils or fragrances until you find what is pleasing by all means, but consider getting a reputable distributor to have a demonstration in your home.

Fragrances and essential oils can be evaporated in a ceramic burner which can be obtained cheaply from a department store. The oil or fragrance is placed in an upper bowl-shaped container, and a small candle is used to heat the bowl so that the substance evaporates.

**Sound**. Have your choice of music playing in the room. Music can be stimulating or calming—it's your choice. Massage can be done in rhythm with the music if you prefer. Another sound that enhances relaxation is that of running, bubbling water in a fountain or water feature.

Why not surprise him with a tape of his favourite poetry, or combine sight and sound and have your favourite romantic movie on the DVD player while you massage her.

By choreographing a massage session, incorporating all the senses, you will be creating a beautiful memory that can only build your relationship.

Take the time and effort to express your love and care with the knowledge you have gained from this book, and you will both be blessed!

# **Relaxation Massage**

### Contra-indications .. or .. If in Doubt, Don't!

If any of the following conditions (contra-indications) are applicable, **do not** apply massage:

**Inflammatory Conditions** such as heat, redness, swelling or pain, or conditions such as arthritis.

Varicose Veins. These are veins that are enlarged or twisted due to damaged valves. It's acceptable to massage the area of spider veins, but avoid obvious varicose veins.

**Blood Clots**. These might be lodged in veins, especially in the elderly after trauma. Massage might dislodge the clot and cause stroke or a heart attack.

**Cardiac Conditions**. These include unstable high blood pressure or arteriosclerosis. Increased circulation may not be tolerated by the heart/body.

**Haemophilia**. Use only light pressure, as any deep pressure might bruise the tissues and cause bleeding.

**Diabetes**. Advanced cases may involve oedema or loss of feeling and decreased circulation in extremities. Circulatory strokes may be beneficial if applied with caution.

**Pregnancy**. Use common sense, and work with a physician or midwife, to avoid precipitating a miscarriage.

Local or Systemic Infections. Examples are influenza, measles, chicken pox, hepatitis, etc., with symptoms such as inflamed lymph nodes or fever.

**Infectious Skin Diseases**. These include warts, bacterial infections, fungal infections or parasites. Avoid spreading them to yourself or others.



### **Use "Standard Precautions"**

Protect yourself and others by washing your hands regularly and by disinfecting your table and laundering your towels and bathrobes between massage sessions.

If you are exposed to blood or body fluids, wash your hands immediately.

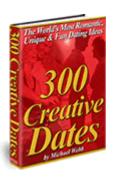
Keep your hands in good condition so that they do not become chapped or cracked.

# Recommended Resources



What you ABSOLUTELY MUST know about the person you are with. This ebook also comes with a free 300 Days of Questions e-course.

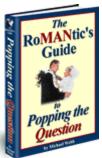
www.questionsforcouples.com



Have you ever had a dull date? No more. This book features nearly 6 years worth of creative date nights. Tips on first dates and asking someone out for a date too. www.300creativedates.com

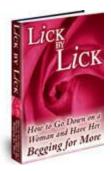


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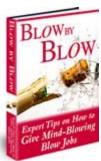


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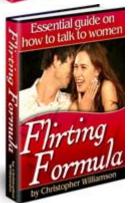
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