

International Online Breast cancer Rehabilitation Summit 2016

Presenter: Eeris Kallil

Welcome to the very first international online breast cancer rehabilitation summit. My name is Denise Stewart – I am your host from Brisbane Australia. Over the week you will be able to listen to speakers from across the world who have come together online, to share their insights and experiences with Breast cancer rehabilitation.

Today we have Eeris Kallil online.

Eeris is a breast cancer survivor and has dedicated her work to help women and men through their treatments and recovery through Oncology massage and Breast Cancer massage

Eeris Kallil is a licensed Massage Therapist , a healing-arts practitioner, a lymphatic therapist and a massage therapy trainer in Breast cancer massage.

Eeris has studied many styles of massage and has developed her own style to deal with the common difficulties that people can face after breast cancer. The Core Alignment Technique is an example of her unique style based on a mixture of passive movements , shiatsu stretches and energy work.

Today Eeris will speak about her Core Alignment technique and how she uses this tech to help people regain shoulder function after breast cancer.

Eeris: I am really excited to talk about the Core Alignment technique- it is something I developed. Actually I am the put together - er. I didn't invent it - I put it together. I owe this to my amazing teacher, Sheri Sunshine. She taught me the Sunshine Technique and it is based in Feldenkrais exercise.

Then after all the years I added a bit of Shiatsu here and Tai Chi here- it become a whole new technique - which I decided to call the Core Alignment technique (CAT) . CAT is based on body awareness , feldenkrais , Tai Chi and energy work and it is very gentle movement and it helps with the cellular memory. In order to improve flexibility and awareness after a trauma or injury. The passive movements to the shoulder and hip area helps the client to recognize where they hold and then release that and prevent the forming new

Core alignment involves the shoulder, hip, neck and spine in movement - all working together. I noticed that when I see breast cancer clients I actually just used the shoulder movements and then I added a bit of work at the spine and the hip and that was all I need to do . I didn't have to do the 75-90 min routine on them. So I thought I would share some of the techniques that I use by themselves.

The benefit of the CAT method for recovering from breast cancer surgery- it can help to relieve the neck stiffness due to surgery , reconstruction or trauma. Because it is a fine movement it can extend the range of motion after surgery. It is a very a very gentle approach and so can be used for fear of movement , pain , emotional stress and memory can stop the body from moving the way it should move. By having someone right there assisting movement helps to release those fears. It can help frozen shoulder and many breast cancer patients do experience this due to scar tissue formation.

It helps scar tissue and cording and it is done a lot in side lying and so is a nice alternative for people who can not lay in prone. After breast surgery many patients can not lay on their stomach or some people have difficulty lying in supine -so it is a nice alternative for these people who can not lay either way. Even if they can - side lying is a nice position for them .

CORE ALIGNMENT TECHNIQUE

BASIC PRINCIPLES

- Establish a safe and supportive environment. Every healer or body worker should have a safe place for their client to come to so their client can relax and release.
- Be FULLY present.
- Work with intention This client is all that you will focus on.
- Listen with your body as a Body worker would should cultivate listening with our body and listen with our hands. We put our hands on somebody we should be able to tell what is going on in their body- as well as heart and mind. Cultivate that listening quality. Once you touch them , you want to feel where they hold.
- Follow the full ROM and not holding them back . They trust you with their body. If I only move a little bit - this may not be for them - I need to follow and see how far can their body move- so I am following them.
- Work with kindness and patience. This work takes a lot of patience - as some people find it hard to let go.
- Do not push and do not rush; Adjust your speed to the clients body. Take it easy and let me do the work for you and guide you through. Work with the client, not against them. Adjust your speed to your clients body. If somebody feels like I am too fast, then they will not release. If I move too slow- it inhibits them and so so finding the right speed for the client .
- Work seamlessly. Be fluid. When you are fluid in your body -it will translate into your client - they will feel it . That will help them to trust and allows them to release and let go.
- Use supportive words when I talk them through relaxation. I will say please let me hold you and guide you through. If they are resisting then I will NOT say”no you are still holding - no that is not right “. No we are not there yet. A better way is saying “ yes that is much better, we are almost there I can feel you releasing - we want just a little bit more. So be aware of your language.

C.A.T SESSION

A full C.A.T session includes shoulder and hips segments in supine and sideline and lasts about 75-90 min.

C.A.T for Breast Cancer rehabilitation is focused on shoulders neck and spine only and can last 30-45 min

C.A.T Can be performed with client fully clothed and no oil is necessary

If scar work is necessary the technique can be performed with a client disrobed. Lubrication is recommended for scar work.

My classes I show both clothed and disrobed versions. For this presentation you will see disrobed clients.

Adjusting the height of the table to your body is very important. The use of correct body mechanics is crucial for good results and enjoyment of both receiver and practitioner. It takes a little while to find the best way to lift the shoulder and lift the hip- so you do not want to stress your own body - keep the table at the right height so that you are working from your core (Hiara in Shiatsu). You want to cultivate that and be able to hold someone with your "core" not with your muscles. Finding the right table height will allow you to enjoy the work and the client will definitely will enjoy it and feel it;.

The first technique I use in CAT is finding out their ROM - how far they can lift their ar. So very gently I guide it along to see what kind of ROM they have. Expect very little range of motion with some people and in some people who may have surprisingly good ROM. It is the body listening skills -not to push - just find the real ROM for the client.

The first techniques warm up the shoulders in supine. I use terms for my hands: mother (stationary hand) and son (hand that does more work) or I use the words head hand or feet hand - depending on which hand is closer to the head or feet. So using my mother hand under the shoulder and sliding the hand on the table - bring the shoulder to the neck. I will say- we want to introduce some more ROM we will stretch ity away.

When I teach the class- body mechanics is very important. I want to stress here that you don't want to push- you don't want to shove the shoulder into the ear. You pull and then move your body with the shoulder as you move your body - the shoulder will move as move your body back the shoulder will come with you.

It is very important to be aware of your body movement.

I repeat this movement a few times and once you start getting a smooth motion - they are learning how to let go and not help . I will start doing - circles full - move to the ear and then bring the shoulder forward (anteriorly) and the circle back into the table. Start with 3-4-5 as many as it takes to get a nice circle of the shoulder. Sometimes it will feel jerky , sometimes they will hold. You can break it into quarters. So I will take it from 9-12 (like on a clock position) - so take the shoulder from 9-12 and back to 9. Repeat and then when they are ready 9-12-3 then back to 9. So the technique here - the breaking down of the circle to help them feel the smoothness of the joint. Then change the circle direction. That was in supine.

Now go into side position. It is important to know I like to start with the non affected side first. For a few reasons. Because it deals with releasing, movement and re-education of memory in the muscle -it is nice to start with an area that is not injury or traumatized, to remind the body” yes this is how my body moves - this is how my body used to move before.. I want to try and keep my body in a good position.

So once the unaffected side is relaxed on the movement- it already sends messages to the affected side that when we work on that side your work will be easy- their body has already experienced the work and there letting go is much much easier.

It is not always possible for the breast cancer client to lie on the affected side. Sometimes if they have lymphoedema you don't want them lying on the affected side too long. Again it depends on the severity of the L/O or

the client's comfort - you need to be able to judge this. If not you just do work on the affected side - but it will be more effective if you do both sides.

Make sure you use pillows under the neck and make sure the neck is aligned so there is no crookedness. Not too high or too low. Make sure the body is well stacked and hips and knees are bent and place a pillow between the knees to get good alignment. Then make sure you check their spine and neck . If they are curved ask them to lengthen.

Then we start warm up again. Start with shoulder and neck. A shoulder stretch: I sit behind the client. My hand is on their shoulder and use the body i lean back and stretch the shoulder away from the ear. Then release the stretch and I lean forward -it is all coming from my body not from my arms. Then you go back and forth a few time.

Shoulder rotation: Towards the ear then anteriorly and then move posteriorly and then stretch back towards me. Again if you need to break it down into quarters. I must warn you that some people have the hardest time in letting go. It may be hard for some people - that is when you use more relaxation techniques. “ just let my body do the work for you”. I might ask them to wriggle their toes - not focus them on the shoulder,.

Then to work on the neck. This area can be tight because of surgery such as reconstruction if the implant is under the pec maj - it will pull the shoulder. So it is really nice to release the neck .

The top picture - thumb rolls along the neck. I set my thumb on the transverse processes set it with a little pressure. My mother hand is on the shoulder and then I move that away -at the same time as some pressure with the thumb. The thumb is rolling a little bit. Then go to the next space above - inferior to the transverse process- . and at the next set do the same shoulder movement away.This creates a nice lengthening for the neck This creates a nice relax of the scalenes . Then you can do a little thumbing around the occiput.

The second picture here with my 3 fingers is the same kind of finesse.- but this time I use my 3 fingers on the muscles next to the transverse

processes and the spinous process. Notice when the patient is lying down - you want the pressure to be 90 degrees to the curvature of the body. So as the neck curves you want to curve your pressure to 90 degrees. That means that when you can go towards the opposite shoulder and then stretch and then move superior and then your pressure goes towards the chin and then **finesse away**. Then the next space - going to the 90 degree will go towards the nose. So adjust angles to the curvature of the body. So it the start and **finesse technique** to warm up the neck muscles and stretch the neck muscles.

Now that the neck and the shoulders are warmed up - I will be standing in front of the client. I will hold their arm with my mother hand while my other hand towards the shoulder. Bring the arm forward- pulling the whole body towards me. Once I hold that stretch - I will then start guiding the arm back to open the chest and bring the shoulder backwards. You go back and forth in the horizontal plane..Here you might feel that it needs a lot more work and more talking to , breaking it down into segments.

In this photo the client is a yoga instructor and so her ROM is very wide. You probably not see that ROM with a breast cancer client right after surgery- so be a bit realistic about your client .

After I have done back and forth motion I will introduce shoulder rotation.

Those techniques really help with fear of movement problems. I am holding the body for you and helping you guide. helping them to stretch their limits a little bit- letting them ask “ Am I in pain ...OHH I can do this- I did not think I could do that.”

So all of this is going on in the subconscious mind - while you introduce the body's possible ROM - that they may have been too fearful to go on their own. It is a really nice and relaxing way to open up the shoulder and the chest.

By the way when I put someone in side position- most clients will say” that is how I go to sleep at night” .That tells me that they feel relaxed and

comfortable. So sidelying is a very comfortable position to receive bodywork and receive changes.

The next segment is to incorporate the hips. So after releasing the shoulders I want to let the body know- “ you have some hips too” and lets see how we can move together. So if someone has a frozen shoulder for 3 months my hips will be compensated for sure. All the body parts need to be integrated and relaxed. So I pull the shoulder toward me while I push the hips away- I am using my body not my strength. I use the tilt of my body- and work with it. Then change hand position hand is on the sacrum push the shoulder toward me and back and forth way - this is very comforting and gentle and brings peace. It undulates the spine and the muscles and balances the way the shoulders relate to the hips. If you notice this mimics the way we walk- in exaggeration you can feel you are getting your groove back in this motion.

This is more of a massage tech I took from Shiatsu- basically it is breaking down the adhesions under the shoulder blade, rhom, supraspinatus and infra. I roll the shoulder blade with my 3 fingers and inch my way up to the neck and from the lateral aspect of the posterior shoulder.

After that I work with the spine. I step my fingers at the base of the spine above the sacrum. Each finger has its little groove at the spinous process and then the pressure goes straight in - right towards the wall- you see the whole spine move in and then you release. Then inch your way up - moving the spine forward. It is a neuromuscular release for the spine - very relaxing . There is no force and very gentle . I travel all the way up to the shoulder blades and down. Repeat that for as long as you have time and it feels good.

The chest opening is very very important for the breast cancer client. The pull of the pectoralis- we tend to be pulled forward due to pain due to shame due to emotional hiding or protecting. A number of my clients say” I have not felt my chest open like that in months “ so it is a very powerful movement bring the arm out- they don't think about that movement.

If you add some palming or thumb around the head of the humerus and deltoid and pectoralis. It is very powerful to release those muscles - create a little twist in the spine and lengthen the spine- it is doing wonders for breast cancer clients.

This is another place- just under the clavicle - there are two lines just under the clavicle and one into the space inferior to that What I do is set the thumb and then stretch the arm out away from me. I hold the wrist and set the thumb and then stretch the arm. Again this is very gentle for the client. Remember this picture is someone with very good ROM- many clients do not have this much movement. For these people I will get them to put their hand on their hip and still rotating backwards opening the shoulder using the pect points and deltoid points. This next photo is a breast cancer client- I use the points at the deltoid.

You want to be very careful if they have a port and avoid this area - best not to touch them at all. In this position the client - it may be good time to do scar work - set the thumb on the scar and criss cross the stretch across the scar It can be pretty deep here - and remember if they are numb be careful of the pressure. If reconstruction - do not interfere with scar tissue that needs to be there - just scar tissue you want to release.

The next photo is flat fingers along the scar- rolling the flat fingers along the scar to bring stretch and blood to this area. In the side technique if they bring their arm up and rest above their head - it opens up to the breast tissue and allows you to work on the side of the breast.

The second picture - thumbing or fingers set and then work away from each other. So there are 2 techniques fingers towards each other and then fingers away from each other.

So that is all for the CAT.

Thank you EERIS!