



By Doree Lewis

Old World Meets New World in BodyTalk

I show up for my first ever BodyTalk session with equal parts anticipation and regret. Anticipation for my inaugural foray into this holistic world that until now I've only read about with fascination. Regret about not shaving my legs on this arctic December afternoon when I know my BodyTalk practitioner is bound to be disgusted by my caveman hygiene. "If she's as enlightened as I hope she is," I think to myself about my practitioner, "she'll be more focused on my energy than on my Darwinian instinct to protect my body on a 22-degree day.

Thankfully, I was pleasantly surprised on both counts: my certified practitioner, Jadyn Sokol, put me at total ease in my quasi-anxious state – plus, she never said a word about my porcupine stems. I liked her already!

In preparation, I had a big Chinese lunch beforehand – you know, to "get in the mood" – as BodyTalk incorporates ancient Chinese elements combined with Western medicine. In truth, it feels like equal parts ancient Chinese medicine, psychology, psychiatry and therapy all seamlessly rolled into one nifty art.

Yet I was still gripped with fear: "Will the therapist read my inner sanctum like a cheap, tawdry novel?" I secretly fretted. Would she be able to read the fear inside me about my re-gifting for my boss, or my secret celebrity crush on Rob Kardashian, or whatever other deep, dark secret she can read through her mental x-ray machine?

Can she take one look at me, feel the tension in my wrists and know the worry that my friend could tell I lied to my best friend about the dress she just bought?

I couldn't sleep the whole night before – thinking my body's going to sing like a canary once she discovers the tension, and she'll soon realize I'm a true menace to society – a re-gifter! – and to top it all off, a re-gifter who doesn't get nearly as much kale intake as she should!

But BodyTalk was nothing like I thought it was. It was better. It wasn't necessarily the profound spiritual experience I might have expected, but that doesn't mean it wasn't meaningful and effective – and for my part, right on the money.

Sokol says she's one of a mushrooming team of BodyTalk enthusiasts around the country and around the world, espousing the virtues of this utterly holistic and utterly cool new-wave practice that believes in our ability to heal our body ourselves using various techniques, both old and new.

"Is she psychic?" I think to myself many times throughout our hour-long session as Sokol correctly prognosticates a problem psychological area after she taps my knee. "Would you say you're feeling insecure lately?"

How does Sokol explain this fascinating practice that supposed devotees like Oprah are embracing? "No one has a problem accepting the premise of TV," she explains. "Same for BodyTalk. I'm helping the body send out a signal, to remote into someone's power."

The principles of energy medicine existed for 5000 years, yet BodyTalk was founded early 90's by a chiropractor and acupuncturist when he eventually realized you don't need needles to do acupuncture. He wholly believed in a body chemistry balance technique.

So how does one prepare (in earnest) for their session? No prep for first timers – no official diet, sleep, and best part, no shaving! As for the session itself, I lie down relaxed on a massage table – with lots of muscle-checking my wrist – as Sokol looks for changes in muscle tone, using the wrist as tool for yes/no answers to questions. She goes through a whole protocol of questioning for healing. And I'm assured it's a

fixed protocol, meaning she's non-agenda focused. For example, if a client complains about a sore throat, Sokol won't solely focus on the throat.

So what's the "typical" makeup of a BodyTalk client?

According to Sokol, it's a varied and diverse population: she's had clients come in with early-onset Parkinson's; another woman just wanted to be more artsy; another has Sialica; one woman had a double hysterectomy / mastectomy. "We weren't working on physical stuff, but emotional stuff," says Sokol. "Re-synchronizing communication within the body, with systems and organs."

BodyTalk walks off the premise that the body could heal itself; that it's the best equipment we can have. "Like a cut gushing blood, the body heals itself," Sokol explains. "This all happens on a cellular level." But if the body can heal and fix itself, then why aren't we perpetually healthy all the time? "Well, every cell is in communication with every other cell all the time, reaching homeostasis. Stress can break down these lines of communication. Communication systems could break down – thanks in part due to environmental stress – but our body is so highly adaptable," she explains. "The body's always doing the best it can, striving for homeostatic."

In her sessions, Sokol is looking for areas of the body that need to facilitate communication with the body. She's looking for missing pieces to the formula.

Are most clients enlightened enough to digest all this? "The fact that everything is connected in the body is mind-boggling to people," she says. "It's also balancing this delicate principle where we have balance and control over our lives. One of the best things about BodyTalk isn't just that we get rid of whatever the problem is, but that we're so much more intimately connected to your self. Or 'I'm cutting that toxic friend out of my life.' When we're so connected with ourselves, that connection to our true essence comes really naturally."

Yet 60% of clients said that they didn't need to go to a doctor once they used BodyTalk.

For everyone else, one thorough session won't successfully remedy all of our problems. "Most of us aren't ready for our problems to go away in one session," Sokol says. "We're so accustomed to the status quo – of ourselves! – that we can't even accept real change to their lives."

Well, Sokol can shave off one from that number. She just converted a BodyTalk detractor.

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