

WHEN OLD MEETS NEW: *Ancient Wisdom in Modern Healing*

We investigate new holistic treatments and discover a surprise: these 'new' therapies are harnessing ancient healing wisdom and applying it to modern life, with fascinating results

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Beauty and wellness trends du jour can be spotted a mile away. You know the pattern: a therapy receives intense media hype or celebrity endorsement (like a certain Kardashian's penchant for blood facials), then it crops up in a few spas only to disappear months later back into the ether.

At the other end of the spectrum are the tried and tested holistic treatments that have been around for thousands of years – you

just might not know about them yet.

A diverse bunch of therapies is quietly but steadily emerging, poised just outside the mainstream. In a world increasingly fascinated with the remedies and rituals of the past, these treatments have never been more relevant. You won't find them at most spas just yet, but expect them to become more widely available as wellness-seekers experience their potent healing benefits and spread the word.

KU NYE MASSAGE: RESTORATIVE MASSAGE, TIBETAN STYLE

Ku Nye, or Kunye, is one of the oldest massage systems in the world. This gentle 4,000-year-old therapy lies at the heart of Tibetan medicine and aims to restore balance to the body's five elements (space, earth, water, fire and wind).

Ku means to oil and *nye* means to apply pressure. The treatment uses heated sesame or olive oil, hot and cold compresses and

herbal poultices to relieve symptoms of stress and anxiety.

Luxury organic brand *ila* offers Ku Nye Massage at select spas, including Ananda in the Himalayas. "The aim of *ila*'s treatment is to honour and respect the ancient Tibetan traditions of healing," explains Maria Law, Wellness Development Manager at *ila*.

ila's version of Ku Nye Massage includes cupping, acupressure, kneading and hot stones. The body's five elements are

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~ Michelle Roques-O'Neil

balanced by the use of organic essential oils, including ultra-powerful Sea Buckthorn Seed Oil.

"It's a niche treatment, but it is growing in popularity," says Law. "I believe it will continue to do so as people start to feel the amazing effects from Ku Nye Massage and the science behind Tibetan medicine."

THE AMETHYST BIOMAT: CRYSTAL HEALING MEETS SCIENCE

Many swear by amethyst's healing properties: the ancient Greeks believed that it had protective powers, Buddhists often use it during meditation and it remains an important tool in chakra balancing.

Those skeptical of the purple quartz's healing abilities may be intrigued by the Amethyst Richway BioMat, a therapeutic heated mat based on years of scientific research.

The Amethyst BioMat stimulates cells, resulting in a healthier immune system and increased vitality. Those with chronic pain, insomnia, migraines and allergies reported improvements in their health after using it.

Three complimentary therapies lie at the heart of the Amethyst BioMat. Firstly, the mat transmits negative ions, which send healing signals to the body's cells. Secondly, the mat sends far infrared light into the body, stimulating the production of healthy cell tissue and encouraging the elimination of toxins. Lastly, the outer layer of the mat is covered with channels of pure amethyst that elongate the infrared wavelength, allowing it to penetrate deep into the body.

The Amethyst BioMat is gaining fans, including American yoga teacher Kathryn Budig. "I tend to use it less in the summer months since it's a heated mat, but when it cools down I'm on it every day," says Budig. "I can feel the benefits of the negative ion

therapy as it helps dramatically with my stress levels."

The BioMat is suitable for use during yoga and meditation. You can even sleep on it and repair your cells overnight.

CHUA K'A MASSAGE: MONGOLIAN WARRIOR MASSAGE

According to legend, ancient Mongolian warriors practised an intriguing ritual before going into battle. Chua K'a is a form of deep-tissue massage used to increase energy flow and clear cellular memory.

What is cellular memory? The Huns believed that life experiences, like emotional or physical trauma, are stored in the body and manifest as aches and pains. When warriors were facing the challenge of a new battle, they didn't want these pains to prevent them from performing their best, so they would spend hours 'cleaning' each bone.

The aim of Chua K'a is to release these stored physical memories, resulting in better health. It's a great treatment for back and muscle pain, insomnia, stress and digestive disorders.

The treatment typically begins with thumb techniques to access the deep tissue, followed by skin rolling to stimulate lymph drainage. Clearing of cellular memory and emotional release can shift one's perspective and attitude, so Chua K'a can be a very powerful modality.

SOMABOARD THERAPY: NOURISHING SOUND HEALING

Sound has been used for centuries to clear the mind and heal the body. Chanting, gong bathing and Tibetan singing bowls are just a few examples of sound therapy.

The latest evolution in the lineage of sound healing is a device called the



IMOGEN FREELAND

“The slapping technique works by promoting circulation and increasing movement of chi in the body”

~ Alex Scrimgeour

Somaboard by Vibrasonix, crafted in the Austrian Alps by Mathias Palmsteiner. This healing board blends modern technology with artisan craftsmanship to produce a unique therapy based on research into the nourishing effects of sound and vibration.

The Somaboard is a hand-carved maple device worn on the back, equipped with a vibrating speaker that transmits sounds and vibrations through the body. Sound stimulates the central nervous system, allowing users to access a deep state of relaxation. The Somaboard can be worn lying on the floor, seated in meditation, or even while doing chores around the house.

“I was inspired by the observation of the physical body, proportional relationships in nature as well as music theory and yoga,” says Palmsteiner. “The initial creation of the Somaboard was a compact and user-friendly interface, which would allow digital information to be transmitted into analog signals, so the body can respond to it in a positive way”.

Benefits of Somaboard use include relaxation, rejuvenation of cells and healthy spinal alignment.

THE MEDITATIVE FACIAL: BRIGHT SKIN, STILL MIND

If you’ve ever found yourself wanting more from your facial, prepare to be excited by a new breed of treatments emerging from luxury aromatherapy brands in London.

The meditative facial combines guided breathwork, visualisation and high-grade aromatherapy to plunge the body and mind into a healing theta state akin to deep meditation. The result? A truly remarkable effect on the skin and the spirit.

Leading the charge is Roques Oneil Therapie founder Michelle Roques-O’Neil, who was named one of the top ten aromatherapists in the world by *Vogue*. And one whiff of her remarkable creations is all it takes to see why.

Roques Oneil Therapie’s Chi Aroma Rejuvenation Facial is profoundly healing and grounding. Roques-O’Neil opens each treatment with breathwork to clear tension in the mind, shoulders and heart. The client is enveloped by her bespoke blend of lavender, frankincense, sandalwood and fragonia. These oils, when used in combination with deep breathing, allow people to ‘drop in’ to the meditative state in a direct way. “We hold so much tension and stress in the face, so working deeply into its muscular structure not only revives your spirit but is very releasing,” explains Roques-O’Neil, who also utilises reiki and acupressure. “Many people come out at the end of the treatment feeling like they’ve been on holiday and their face looks ten years younger – and it lasts.”

London-based therapist Helen Brown also offers the Chi Aroma Rejuvenation Facial. Her soothing touch and ability to create a truly nurturing ambiance make her one of the capital’s top healers.

Soveral is another British brand offering innovative facials. The Signature Facial Treatment transports you to a state of meditative bliss, beginning with a sumptuous lavender cleanser and incorporating cold stone therapy and breathwork.

Founder Alexandra Soveral explains, “The idea is that while you relax into a state of complete bliss, the therapist is able to manipulate the facial muscles at a much deeper level, without causing any discomfort.”

DAO YIN MASSAGE: THE SLAPPING TECHNIQUE

Cellulite and varicose veins: two dreaded skin conditions that affect nearly everyone at some point. Those seeking to improve these conditions will be happy to know that a 2,000-year-old Chinese self-massage ‘slapping’ technique may be able to help.

THIS PAGE: The Somaboard can induce relaxation and rejuvenation while improving spinal alignment. PREVIOUS PAGE: The meditative facial combines guided breathwork, visualisation and aromatherapy. OPENING PAGE: Ku Nye massage can include acupressure, cupping and hot stones



Dao Yin is a branch of qigong, which works to balance chi, or energy, in the body. Alex Scrimgeour Lic Ac, TCM specialist at Zhen-Hua London, explains that, “TCM treats skin conditions like cellulite and varicose veins as areas of blocked energy, so the slapping technique works by promoting circulation and increasing movement of chi in the body. Slapping helps unclog the energy channels, gets the lymph moving and increases blood circulation.”

Methods like rubbing, pinching, slapping and tapping the skin stimulate the flow of energy.

“In TCM, cellulite is thought of as an imbalance in fluid metabolism, resulting in an excess of ‘dampness’. Think of it like a stream that has become slow and full of sediment: slapping can shake up and clear out the damp sediment,” says Scrimgeour.

Before trying this technique for yourself, it’s best to consult with a TCM or qigong expert who can provide exact instructions based on your goals. Complement it with body brushing to really get your chi flowing. In our hectic and stress-filled modern lives, in which we’re overwhelmed with choice, sometimes the best solutions are the oldest ones. 🌿

Tibetan Ku Nye Massage at ila
www.ila-spa.com

Amethyst BioMat
www.biomat.com

Somaboard by Vibrasonix
www.somaboard.com

Chi Aroma Rejuvenation Facial at Roques Oneil Therapie
www.roquesoneil.com

Slapping Technique at Zhen Hua Integrated Oriental Healthcare
www.zhen-hua.co.uk