

REVIEW of Science of Energy Flow[®]: Foot Reflexology with Herbal Stress Relief by Steven Foster, Steven Foster Group

By Dr. Martha M. Libster

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[Editor's note: September 18, 2014, LLM hosted a book signing of this book with Dr. Libster]

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In the healthcare system, no medical personnel know more about the condition and needs of the patient than the nurse. A nurse is often the practitioner that knows how to listen to the patient with an open mind and how to use that information for the benefit of the patient with heart-felt care. Over 35 years ago, I had the opportunity to take a foot reflexology course with Emily Jensen, R.N. Through very specific reflexology points, acupuncture points, or if you prefer, nerve endings, she could manipulate energy in the body relative to specific regions or organs of the body to affect dramatic change and improvement. In the hands of a knowledgeable experienced practitioner, that road map or hologram of the body can have a profound effect. Perhaps any established mainstream medical protocol would scoff at the notion that it is possible to stop an acute appendicitis episode by skillful manipulation of a point on the foot. Emily proved it could be done. Seeing was believing, or if your feet are on the receiving end of a skillful provider's care, one's skepticism is easily melted into blissful relaxation. What's not to like about that?

Martha Libster, RN, PhD, is well-known in the nursing field and the herbal world for her holistic approach to herbal medicine and nursing care. Reflexology is one of those contorted left-of-center "alternative" healthcare modalities that Dr. Libster has teased away from its "out there" realm and placed in a context that can be understood both by the open-minded provider, as well as explored with a scientific mind in a conceptual repurposing of reflexology as the "Science of Energy Flow" (SEF).

She makes the claim, which some may view as over-stated and hyperbolic that "SEF is one of, if not the, most accessible, affordable effective, and holistic treatments on the planet today." My "non-believer" curmudgeon defenses would challenge that such claims must be backed by believable scientific evidenced coupled with the art of practical experience. That's exactly what Dr. Libster delivers —scientific underpinnings with the tools to inspire providers to put that information into practice.

At the very heart of various medical modalities, from Galenic traditions, Ayurvedic medicine, and Traditional Chinese Medicine is an understanding of the movement of energy within the body along with the effects of external energetic forces. Understanding of energy and energetics is also at the core of various spiritual traditions, stripped of religious dogma, including Buddhism, Christianity, and Hinduism, among others.

Dr. Libster spares the reader the process of attempting to pry the details of fact from fiction with a philosophical crowbar. Rather, she embraces what works, what is practical, what is common to the human experience in terms of kindness, grace, vision and spiritual belief. The practitioner becomes a "provider," and the patient is transformed into a "partner" in the process of embracing healing as a simple natural occurrence.

The book is designed to be both accessible and practical. It begins with an introductory conceptualization of the value of the Science of Energy Flow using foot reflexology in combination with herbal stress relief. Chapter one explains and provides practical approaches to the belief system that takes the reader into a preparatory mode, along with photographs explaining the techniques. The book is referenced throughout, pointing to both scientific and spiritual literature supporting the concepts the book introduces.

Chapters two and three deepen the knowledge necessary for a step-by-step systems approach to the foundational knowledge necessary to apply the SEF treatment described in the book. Once again, it combines the spiritual with the practical, supporting each concept introduced with reference material that adds depth to the presentation.

Chapter four introduces techniques, recipes and formulas for use in foot baths, infused and essential oil massage rubs, and various types of wraps and packs for achieving the desired results.

The fifth chapter, “Conclusion: the flow of health promotion and health care reform” gives the reader guidance in understanding how to integrate the simple, yet profound methods introduced in the book, into a professional practice (while still maintaining one’s license). Finally, “Appendix A,” presents a summary of the basic SEF treatment developed by Dr. Libster.

You probably won’t find this book added to the required text books for a nursing course in the near future—too bad. However, with practical, non-invasive, supportive and loving guidance that you either believe or you don’t, this book provides sound information that will find a ready-audience among a wide range of therapists, practitioners and providers to give ease to their clients and patients—their partners in healing.

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