

## TUNING UP THE TOUNGUE

by Kathy Brannan

I first began thinking about the tongue in 1986 when my son, Frank, began seeing a speech pathologist for a slight speech impediment. I was using muscle balancing in my work as a massage therapist, and after watching the therapist's speech evaluation, I began to think of the tongue as a muscle, or a network of muscles, controlled by the different hemispheres of the brain. With a little experimentation, I soon discovered that, by putting the tongue in extension and testing an indicator muscle, I could find the tongue positions that seemed to cause stress to the system.

Working with Frank, I made corrections on his tongue using spindle cells. Extending his tongue against two finger pads, the indicator muscle eventually stayed strong in the five positions; up, down, right, left and straight ahead. We did this once more the following week, and this time the muscle stayed strong without any corrections.

The therapist gave Frank exercises to improve tongue strength and position of the tongue in making certain sounds. This solved his speech problem and the only sign that the stress reduction techniques had made a difference was that, while the speech teacher had estimated that it would take eight months, Frank completed the course in only three-and-a-half months.

My next opportunity to work with the tongue was in Holland during the Advanced One Brain Workshop in August, 1986. There I met a 27-year-old woman named Jetti, who was born with what the doctors diagnosed as a "long tongue." As an infant it had been very hard for her to drink from a baby bottle, and spoon feeding was always a "fight." Even now, as an adult, it was difficult for her to drink liquids quickly. She had been to several speech pathologists with no results. On the last day she asked me to work with her. First

we put the stressful tongue positions into circuit. Then we started to find the outs. Her body told us to stack the outs, then to correct the one that was repeated twice in a row. We corrected, using Gordon Stokes' Visional Motivational Cards. Upon completion, her muscle stayed strong on all of the outs and with her tongue in all five positions.

After lunch she was elated and said she was able to drink a drink pretty much straight down. I think she suffered from tongue thrust which is a fairly common condition in which the tongue pushes against the back of the front teeth instead of the roof of the mouth. With tongue thrust it is very hard to drink, except in small sips. The main thing my own son liked about the speech therapy was it enabled him to drink more easily. After returning from Europe I received a thank you letter from Jetti. She referred to the work as "unknotting" her fixed tongue muscles, and said her tongue now seemed to feel twice as broad as before.

I worked on several other people on the trip. I developed a finger mode which is the third finger (counting from the little finger) held down in the palm. If that causes a stress, I join the second finger for emotional, then the fourth finger for structural. The difference being "emotional" is the emotional stress and "structural" is stress in the muscles themselves. If it is structural, I then see which position(s) are being affected.

Barbara Mangles, my son's speech pathologist, had taken Touch For Health I. She questioned if running a meridian would help to strengthen the muscle. We found a willing subject, my daughter, Jessie, who was taking speech for tongue thrust. Barbara measured the strength of Jessie's tongue in three directions and observed

Jessie's speech. I then did a quick balancing with Jessie that indicated her tongue was stressed structurally. I also checked meridians, circulation-sex was over energized. The body indicated that it would not benefit from any specific meridian work. Barbara then observed Jessie's speech and remeasured the tongue's strength. There was an improvement, and Barbara stated, "It appears more balanced." Circulation-sex was in balance as well. I have since found that if the tongue is out structurally then circulation-sex is either over or under energized.

Up to this point I was very gratified with the results I had been having with my tongue work. Then I happened upon a rather startling discovery. For no particular reason, a small, toy xylophone was on a shelf near my work area. One day while balancing a client, reactive ears came up and I couldn't find the right correction for it. Looking around the room my eyes fell on the xylophone. I asked the body if that was what was needed, and the arm remained strong. So I began to learn a new process. It went like this: to go from the long pipe at one end of the xylophone to the short pipe at the other end, I asked "long to short" and muscle tested, then "short to long" and tested. I tested if I should point to each pipe or sound each note. The body indicated I should just point. When the arm went down I found I was to hit the note 10 times. I did that and the muscle stayed strong. What next? I repeated the process until the ears were no longer reactive.

I have since concluded that the xylophone balancing process is very successful. In working with the tongue, if sound is not part of the corrections, then the circulation-sex meridian may not be corrected. Incidentally, I have used the xylophone for many people in my work as a massage therapist, and I have found that the client feels a

much greater sense of calm. My theory is that vibration is a part of the energy system that circulates the body, beginning and ending at the tongue, and the tones of the xylophone help to balance these vibrations.

In working with the tongue, I use the following exam. I look at how the body is processing information and whether there is integration in the brain. I also check to see if there are any colors or any notes on the xylophone that cause a stress. I check to see if a configuration I use to represent child/adult/parent is in balance. I test to see if the tongue is stressed.

In this exam we determine, "How willing is this body to feel better?" This is answered on a percentage scale of one to 100. I then do what corrections are needed to bring it up to 100%. I also ask, "How willing is this body to give up what it knows and loves in order to grow?" If less than 100%, we work on bringing it up to 100%. Then I ask if the body is willing to allow me to facilitate these clearings?

One thing that runs pretty constant is that the throat chakra always comes up at some point in the corrections. I either correct as I go or stack the outs, then correct at an appropriate time.

I find this work very rewarding. Some of my clients were in speech therapy not making the progress they had hoped for. My work isn't intended to replace speech therapy, but to reduce the stress in the tongue to aid the speech therapy process. It's my experience that these techniques help to promote self-esteem and improve concentration. I have seen an improved self-awareness. They also seem to feel more comfortable with themselves. They LIKE themselves. It truly is a joy assisting people in their growth. ■