

# THE HEALING ART OF SHIATSU

**"THE HEART OF SHIATSU IS LIKE A MOTHER'S LOVE. PRESSING THE HUMAN BODY STIMULATES THE FOUNTAINS OF LIFE." TOKUJIRO NAMIKOSHI**

## THE HISTORY OF SHIATSU

**T**okujiro Namikoshi, the originator of Namikoshi Shiatsu, was born on November 3, 1905 in Kagawa Prefecture on the island of Shikoku, Japan. Tokujiro developed the concept of shiatsu at a very early age. After his family moved from the warm climate of the Seto Inland Sea to a colder climate of the northern Japanese island of Hokkaido, Tokujiro's mother developed rheumatoid arthritis. Since no doctor or medicine was available in the village where they lived, Tokujiro and his siblings took turns stroking and massaging their mother. At seven years old, Tokujiro started his hands on therapy and was praised by his mother as she confided that "his hands felt the best." This gave him the confidence to work harder at helping his mother, and so he became even more sensitive to her condition. Though he had no knowledge of anatomy and physiology, he "listened" to his mother's body with his hands, and as a result of this receptivity, he sensed differences in skin condition, heat, and stiffness.

He experimented at changing the application of pressure according to these variations. When he used pressing, he found that it was more effective than massaging. So he continued this procedure of pressing 80% and rubbing 20% of the time while focusing on the places which were stiffest and coldest. By pressing on both sides of the spine in the mid-back region where it was the stiffest, he was unknowingly stimulating the suprarenal body releasing cortisone which is the natural cure for rheumatism. Eventually, his mother was totally cured of her rheumatoid arthritis which taught the young Tokujiro the power of healing in the human body.

This was the birth of the systematic approach and application of traditional shiatsu. Eventually, Tokujiro opened the Shiatsu Institute of Therapy in Hokkaido after enduring various challenges in the study of amma massage and Western-style massage. His devotion to establishing shiatsu as a recognized form of therapy led him to open the Japan Shiatsu

Institute on February 11, 1940. The school became a well known institute for the lectures and teaching methods. By 1955, shiatsu was legally approved but was still designated as part of amma massage. In 1957, the Japan Shiatsu School was officially licensed by the Minister of Health and Welfare, and was the first school of its kind in Japan. Shiatsu was recognized as a distinct form of therapy in 1964. Tokujiro passed away at 95.

## WHAT DOES SHIATSU MEAN?

The "shi" of shiatsu means "finger" and the "atsu" means "pressure" in Japan.

## THE PURPOSE OF SHIATSU

The purpose of shiatsu is to relax the nervous system, and improve one's health by stimulating the body's natural powers of recuperation. It is particularly effective in relieving stress.

## THE APPLICATION OF SHIATSU

### *How is Shiatsu applied?*

Shiatsu is administered to a client lying on a soft mat on the floor, special therapy table or chair. Loose-fitting clothing is worn during the treatment such as shorts, a t-shirt, or light track pants. The length of the treatment varies in time, depending on the nature of the problem, but usually takes one hour. Pressure is applied to the whole body except when there is a specific pathological condition, in which case the treatment is localized.

### *What kind of pressure is used?*

Shiatsu is a gentle, soothing pressure applied to specific anatomical points on the body using the thumbs, fingers and palms. There are 700 pressure points in the body. If you have an area in the body which is stressed, you might experience some "feel good" pain during the treatment. However, the focus of shiatsu is to encourage the body to heal.

## What specific conditions does Shiatsu help?

People who suffer from pathological conditions such as whip-lash, migraine headaches, lumbago, repetitive stress/strain injuries (i.e. Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, tendonitis, etc.), find an increase in mobility and return of strength to the affected areas. Also, shiatsu alleviates menopause, premenstrual stress, depression and numerous other conditions.

## Application Specifics

The founder of shiatsu, Tokujiro Namikoshi, never taught anything but the use of thumbs, fingers and palms because shiatsu utilizes pressure from the hands only. Hands, especially the fingertips, ball of the thumb, and the thenar part of the palm, contain sensory receptors which are highly developed so the practitioner can better detect the patient's condition. Shiatsu is characterized by gentle soothing pressure. It is not the amount of force that assists the therapeutic value. The art of shiatsu is the application of the appropriate amount of pressure on the correct point. Using other parts of the body is especially dangerous to certain patients such as the elderly who may have osteoporosis, or to babies, children or patients with delicate pathological conditions.

## When is Shiatsu NOT applied?

Shiatsu is not applied when these conditions are present:

1. Contagious illnesses.
2. Pleurisy, peritonitis, appendicitis, pyelitis, pancreatitis, peptic ulcers, duodenal ulcers, cirrhosis of the liver, leukemia, twisting of the bowels, intestinal obstruction, and cancer.
3. High fever immediately after surgery, extreme physical debility, infectious skin ailments.

## References:

- 1) *The Complete Book of Shiatsu Therapy by Toru Namikoshi, Japan Publications Inc., Tokyo and New York, First Edition, February 1981, Fourteenth printing, December 1992.*
- 2) *Thumbs Up for Shiatsu, Volume 11 Spring/Summer Issue 1999, and Volume 10, Winter Issue 1998.*
- 3) *Drawings provided by the Shiatsu Academy of Tokyo*

### Shiatsu therapy is given by appointment only:

A shiatsu session is an hour but if you want an hour and a half session, please indicate that when booking an appointment. Ms. Visconti is a member of the **Natural Health Practitioners of Canada Association (#20908)**. Depending on your employment benefits, shiatsu treatments are usually covered.

**Note:** If you are unable to attend an appointment, please give 24 hours notice.

### Attire:

Wear loose clothing like shorts and a t-shirt, light track pants for men or tights for ladies.

### Regular Price:

**\$80.00 + GST \$4.00**

### Discount Price

**2 - 4 treatments per month**

**\$70.00 + GST \$3.50**

### Random Treatments or One Treatment Per Month

#### Price

**\$80.00 + GST \$4.00**

### Days Available:

**Times vary for Mobile Shiatsu and it's flexible.**

Contact **Grace Visconti** at **(403) 500-0997** or **(587) 580-6491** to make an appointment. Payment is by check, Interac email transfer or cash. For more detailed information about shiatsu, email Grace Visconti at **grace.shiatsumaster@gmail.com**. A new shiatsu website will be up soon with more information.

## GRACE C. VISCONTI

### SHIATSUPRACITOR AND SHIATSU MASTER

Grace Visconti is a Certified Shiatsu Practitioner and Shiatsu Master where she received her shiatsu training from Kensen Saito of the Shiatsu Academy of Tokyo, in Toronto, ON Canada from 1991-1992. Also, she took a special seminar with Tokujiro Namikoshi's son, Toru Namikoshi, who traveled extensively worldwide to reinforce traditional shiatsu techniques.

After studying the traditional techniques of shiatsu with Kensen Saito that closely adhered to the original form conceived by Tokujiro Namikoshi, Ms. Visconti then worked at the school clinic for 6 months to practice this healing art form. Following this practicum, she went on to work with chronic pain patients at The Krispin Centre in Toronto which was associated with the Canadian Chronic Pain Association.

She continued to work out of her home and onsite giving treatments to those in need and also assisted with students and graduates at various shiatsu demonstrations produced by the Shiatsu Academy of Tokyo. In 1995, she participated in the 12th International Shiatsu Congress held in Toronto where Tokujiro Namikoshi was honored.

In 1996, Ms. Visconti assisted in the initiation process of regulating shiatsu in Toronto with her teacher Kensen Saito. When she was a member of the Shiatsu Diffusion Society in Ontario, Ms. Visconti designed, edited, wrote and produced the Thumbs Up for Shiatsu newsletter twice a year.

Ms. Visconti is also a Registered Graphic Designer (Toronto, ON Chapter) and a published freelance magazine writer for Canada and U.S. markets. After seeing co-workers sit for many hours in front of computers, she was concerned for Graphic Designers and other professionals who suffered from computer terminal stress disorders like Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS) and Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI). This prompted her to take the shiatsu course.

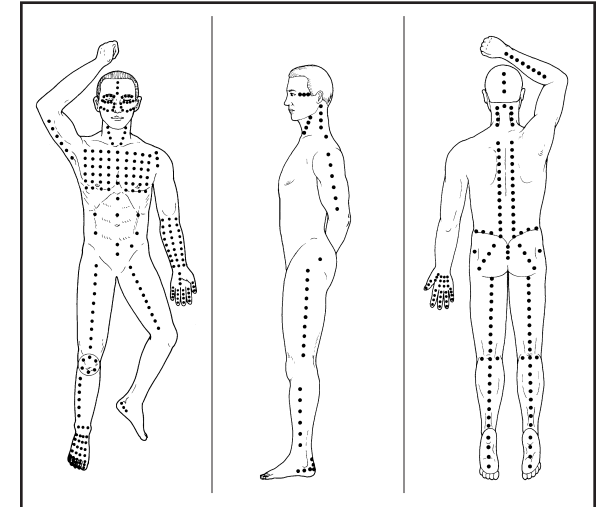
She worked at the Holy Cross Centre as a Shiatsu Practitioner from 2001-2010, sharing her knowledge of traditional shiatsu techniques with Calgarians and now she does Mobile Shiatsu.

### BRIEF HISTORY OF SHIATSU MASTERS

The term Shiatsu Masters refers to graduates who have been fully and successfully trained in the technique outlined by the founder of shiatsu, Tokujiro Namikoshi. The traditional shiatsu technique is a process that involves a specific procedure where the application of shiatsu is given on clients who benefit from the thoroughness of its procedure. The title Shiatsu Masters was initially created by the Shiatsu Academy of Tokyo in Toronto, ON to classify students who have graduated from this private school.

# SHIATSU

**"MY GOAL IS TO HELP PEOPLE ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS AND WHEN THEY ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS, I ACHIEVE MY GOAL." Kensen Saito**



Shiatsu Therapy, a contemporary healing art form, was conceived by Tokujiro Namikoshi of Japan in the early 1900's. Experience an effective way of alleviating tension in the body through the application of shiatsu. If you have an hour to spare, call to book an appointment with Grace Visconti, a Shiatsu Master, and she will do the treatment onsite at your home.

**Grace C. Visconti**  
**Shiatsu Master**  
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