

“Even if we feel fine, our bodies always keep score of any traumas that we’ve experienced”



practice itself like?

Described as a type of bodywork, many people get confused between Rolfing and massage and while it can be like massage, Rolfing is generally concerned with freeing up your tissue as opposed to relaxing it.

“Massage is a beautiful thing but the idea with massage is that it relaxes the nervous system. We feel great... [With Rolfing] we’re talking about touching tissue to change it,” says Jim.

“We’re looking for where the tissue is tight. So that may not be where the issue is but we know it’s tight or it’s tighter on one side than the other so we know, okay, that’s compensating for something... Generally our plan is okay, let’s release that and see where it goes in the body. See where the body can now adapt around that issue being free.”

Rolfing does sound intense so now the age-old question – does it hurt? Jim laughs and says initially Rolfing would have been quite intense.

“Originally it would have been: ‘We need to free that, elbow in there, let’s go!’ Essentially it had a terrible reputation – it did hurt. Now the benefits were amazing.”

Nowadays while it can hurt, practitioners are much more sensitive to the pain thresholds of their clients.

“If [a client] flinches you’ll see it yourself [and say], ‘That might be a bit intense. We’ll ease off a little and we’ll get it a different way,’” says Jim.

“The person on the table is always the boss. Always. As Rolfers we wouldn’t be saying, ‘We’re going to fix you’ or we’re going to do this to you. We’re going to work with you and that’s a big distinction.”

The important thing to remember is that everyone reacts differently. For you, something may not be painful at all but to another person it may be intense. The good news is that there’s very little recovery time. In fact, you’re encouraged to do what you normally would in your daily life after a session and the benefits of the practice can include a reduction in pain, discomfort and tension and an increase in flexibility and energy. In fact, the list of benefits goes on and on.

“I would say to people that you still do what you normally do [after a session]... You do whatever you feel up to.

“Some people might come out and feel really relaxed or full of energy or they might feel like the best thing they could do is go home and have a little snooze. Again, it’s the body’s individual reaction to it,” says Jim.

And the most interesting thing of all is that even if we feel fine, our bodies always keep score of any traumas that we’ve experienced. Jim describes the human body as “the record keeper.”

“The body just keeps a record. Not in a, ‘Oh, I’m ticking that off!’ way, it just remembers and the trauma of that, not in a dramatic way, the trauma – if you stub your toe, that’s a trauma – the body just adapts around it. I mean it’s amazing. Our bodies are truly incredible.” **WW**

If you’d like to find a certified Rolfier near you, log on to www.rolfing.org. Jim is an Advanced Certified Rolfier and Rolf Movement Practitioner, for more information about his practice log on to www.jimtherolfier.ie