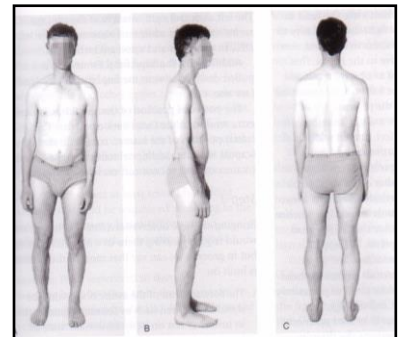


Bodyreading – Seeing is Touch at a Distance.
By Eli Thompson KMI

Long ago, I graduated from my Massage Therapy, eager and excited to enter the therapy world and help others. However, I found that with many of my clients, no matter how much I worked their problems always came back. Be it shoulder, neck, or low back pain, they felt better for a few days to a few weeks but my work seemed to be missing something. I was not able to get at the core of their problem. I was chasing symptoms.

As therapists (both manual and movement) we know everything in the body is connected, that it all works together to create our wondrous form and function. We sense on a gut level that our client's complaints and limitations are rooted in deeper, more global problem than just the localized issue. But it is hard to know how or why. We need a map and a new way of looking.

Tom Myers has drawn us such a map in his revolutionary Anatomy Trains theory. Not only do the Anatomy Trains validate our sense that everything is connected, but they offer us a road map for those connections. They help us 'see' and interpret these connections in our client's postures through Bodyreading. With the information gained via Bodyreading, we can develop quick and effective strategies for treating their complaints more effectively. For manual therapists this is taught in the context of Tom's fascial release technique library of KMI Structural Integration. For movement therapists it is taught in the context of Yoga, Pilates, and general functional movements and corrective exercises. With the insights gained from the Anatomy Trains we find the true potential of our work to rebalancing the body's structure and bring about lasting change

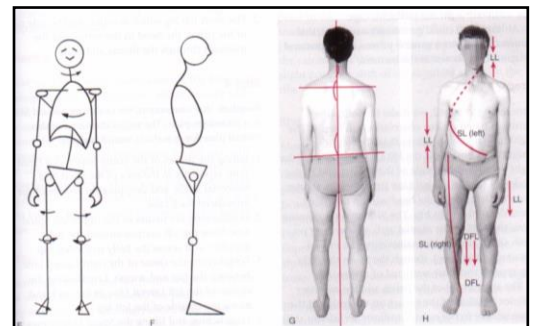


In Bodyreading, the more of the client we see, the more informed the work is (photo courtesy of Tom Myers).

Bodyreading.

Every client is unique, with their own long held, grown in patterns, customized by the uniqueness of their lives. Unfortunately, most modalities are generalizations. They help most people and improve the function of most bodies but ultimately they were not designed for that unique client. They may very well help or even resolve the clients dysfunctions but imagine how much more effective we could be if we customized our modalities to the uniquely grown patterns of the client? Bodyreading is a visual assessment technique that guides us towards such an understanding.

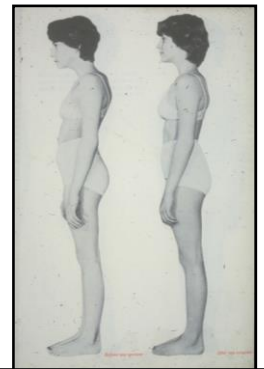
Another benefit to Bodyreading the Anatomy Trains is the ease of assessing the global patterns. Your clients' complaint is never a localized event. A client complaining of tendonitis or bursitis or a rotator cuff injury may have a very localized injury at the humeral – scapula relationship,



By studying the structural relationships in the body, we can gain important information for strategizing (photo courtesy of Tom Myers).

but the origin may be quite distant. If the scapula is anteriorly tilted over the ribs, over compensation happens at the glenoid humeral joint. Any time they reach up they must over push the joint past its normal range of motion with ever increasing force. It's a receipt for a slow growth accumulation of micro trauma and eventual injury. However, this kind of spatial imbalance in the scapula is also an indication of something happening in the thorax. If something is happening in the thorax it implies that there is something going on in the pelvis / low back. And, of course, that suggests something about the legs and feet. Thus, a clients' shoulder injury may be directly related to pelvic imbalance or foot problems. Unless we assess globally we may never actually treat the problem, leaving the same preconditions to play out again and again. Bodyreading the Anatomy Trains shows us where these structural relationships are fascially locked in and what we can do to free them.

Ida Rolf (the creator of Structural Integration) had a saying, "Seeing is touch at a distance." This simple statement conveys the power of Bodyreading. By "seeing" the roots of the problem we save ourselves, and our clients, time and effort. We practice smarter, not harder or longer or more often. We become more effective as both manual and movement therapists.



Strategies that are based on the whole body pattern create more profound results (photo courtesy of Robert Toporek).

What are the Anatomy Trains?

Anatomy Trains uses the most current research on the fascial system to give us a better understanding for how our tissues grow, organize, and function. We explore why the old bio-mechanical model of levers and pulleys really doesn't work anymore and one possible update to it via myofascial tensegrity. We gain a simple road map of how all the "parts" of the body relate via this biotensegrity. When we first start studying anatomy, we usually learn what all the parts are and what they do in isolation. This gives us a very mechanistic view of the body. If one part starts having problems you fix it. Since the theory of Anatomy Trains is based on the full body, fascial web, it gives a much more holistic, systems based perspective. The focus is on the system wide web of relationships between the parts. On how they relate and communicate with each other via myofascial continuities. In Anatomy Trains we find 12 such discreet myofascial meridians. They give us an understanding of why the problem often isn't were the pain is. How the arches of the feet may influence the pelvis and create low back pain. Learning to bodyread the Anatomy Trains will benefit every manual and movement therapist.

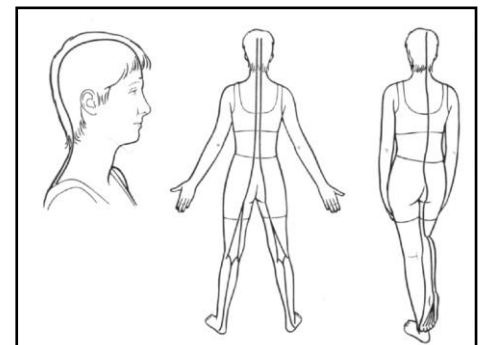


Fig. 8 The superficial back line.

The Superficial Back Line (photo courtesy of Tom Myers).

Eli Thompson is a certified KMI Structural Integration practitioner and faculty at Tom Myers' School of Anatomy Trains. He travels the US teaching Tom Myers' Anatomy Train: Myofascial Meridians workshops for Bodyworkers and Movement / Strength Trainers, as well as other CEU weekend intensives.