



INVENTING HEALTHY BODY BALL®

By Cheryl Zemont-Payne

While I was attending school at the Desert Institute of the Healing Arts to receive my certification for massage therapy, I took my first class on trigger point therapy. At this time, I had chronic pain in my back, which limited my ability to turn my head and neck. The instructor pushed on a painful knot in my back and I remember saying, “It hurt so good,” that when he released his pressure a few seconds later I said, “No, don’t stop *that* pressure.” He said “Cheryl, I am applying the same pressure now as when I started; it’s your body that “melted” that trigger point away; my pressure never changed.” I couldn’t believe how good I felt. I realized I had just learned something that was going to define my future. From that point, I was devoted to practicing and learning all I could about trigger point therapy.

When my practice partner moved back to Wisconsin later that year, I had a problem locating another therapist who could locate trigger points and hold them with the pressure required to melt them. Most therapists are not sufficiently educated in this form of treatment. This is in part due to the lack of regulation pertaining to massage education hours in the United States; for instance, Thousand Oaks, California may require 250 hours of training, whereas Tucson, Arizona requires 1000 hours of training. The other problem is that trigger point therapy is hard work physically, requiring a lot of strength and stamina, which, over time, can take its toll on even the strongest and best qualified therapists. I wasn’t getting the satisfaction I wanted and I was paying seventy-five dollars an hour to feel this dissatisfaction. That is when I made my first prototype of the Healthy Body Ball®, a hand-molded clay ball with clay replicas of ten of my thumbs protruding from the ball in all directions. A friend tried it and said, “You should patent this ball and let other people experience this relief.”

With the help of some outstanding developers, the clay ball turned into a silicone rubber ball, about the size of a tennis ball, with 10 strategically located nubbins protruding from the surface of the ball. The nubbins simulate the pressure and consistency of a massage therapist’s thumbs in the application of trigger point massage therapy. When the ball is positioned appropriately, body weight against the nubbin supplies enough pressure to allow the release of pain.

I am quick to say that I am not an inventor by trade, but because I have worked with people who were in such dire pain for years, I was inspired to invent something that could help them between therapy visits. There have been many challenges in getting Healthy Body Ball patented, produced and on the market but by keeping in mind the countless stories of my client’s pain, I have stayed motivated and committed to producing an effective self-healing device. Additionally, I know that not everyone can afford weekly massage therapy. And it’s not just the money. Going for therapy sessions is a time commitment for people with active schedules. Healthy Body Ball provides an economical alternative that allows people to experience pain relief wherever they are, including home, office, car, even movies and airplanes.