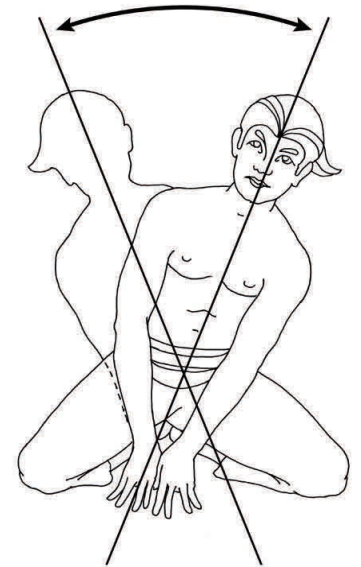
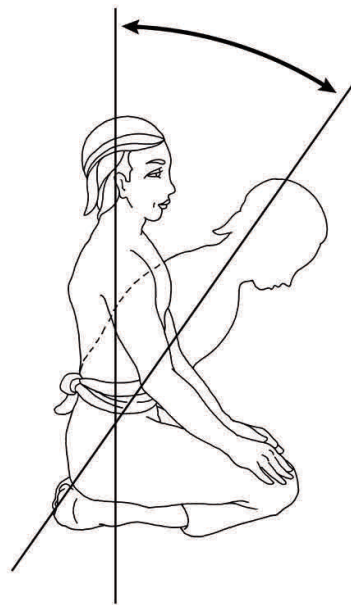


Basic Movement Patterns: The meditative dance of *nuad boran*

To bring about a Thai session that is less strenuous for the practitioner and more meditative for both parties, you should rock as you work. By rocking, the practitioner's bodyweight is transferred to the client in a uniform and comforting way. Your rhythm should be repetitive, but not mechanical, and there should be periods of stasis (rest) when you are applying pressure. Instead of using your muscles, rocking movements allow your energy to pass from your *hara* and sacral area onto the body of your client. Rocking also helps to keep you anchored and focused as you work. There are three general ways to rock during the course of a Thai therapy session, and variations of each one these basic movements may be explored during the course of a Thai session.

Side-to-Side Movement

With side-to-side rocking, the practitioner can be kneeling or semi-kneeling. If you are kneeling, you may open your legs and bring your feet together behind you to form a solid base. Keep your head level so your spine is straight. Straighten your arms and move your trunk from one side to the other, like a stalk of bamboo in the wind.

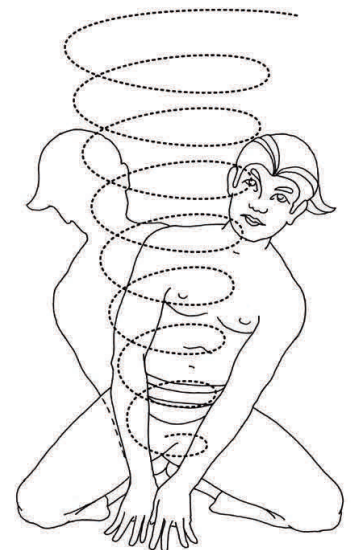


Front-to-Back Movement

With front-to-back rocking, the practitioner is usually kneeling, although some techniques may also be done this way in semi-kneeling, sitting and standing positions. When kneeling, your knees may be together or apart, but keep the top of your feet against the floor for firm support. Keep your back straight and your sacrum strong, but relaxed. Maintain this posture and oscillate the torso from front to back, like a rocking chair.

Circular/Spiral Movement

With circular rocking, the practitioner is usually kneeling or semi-kneeling. Keep the same ergonomic posture as in the above examples, and allow yourself to spin in a circle. The direction can be clockwise or counter-clockwise, and the range of your movement can be tight or wide, depending on the Thai technique you are using and the size of your client relative to your own body.



Although the three main movement techniques are often used while the therapist is in kneeling or half-kneeling positions, we should also use them when we find ourselves in other postures. Whether kneeling, standing or seated, the practitioner can almost always take advantage of the dance of movements; side-to-side, front-to-back, and spiral. Even in cases where it is not practical to physically move the body, we can experience an internal rhythm of movement.

Here are some photos of postures that are best executed in the state of meditative movement. How many Thai techniques are you currently doing without moving your body? Which other postures that you use in Thai massage could benefit from more body movement on your part? How can you integrate more gentle rocking into your work?

Front to back



Side to side



Spiral

