

A Guide to Healthy
TOUCH

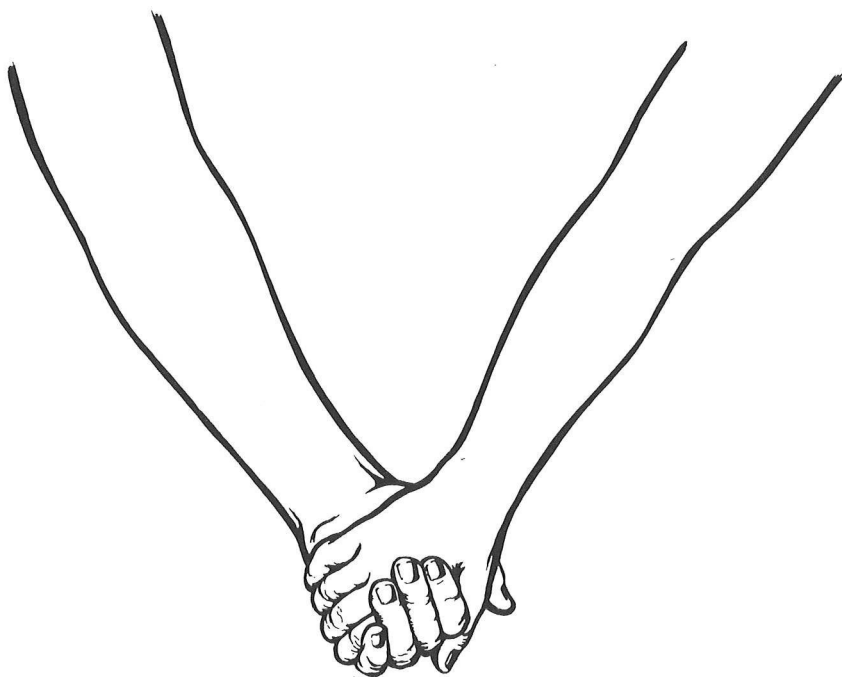


Vitamin
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By Bob Czimbal & Maggie Zadikov

Vitamin

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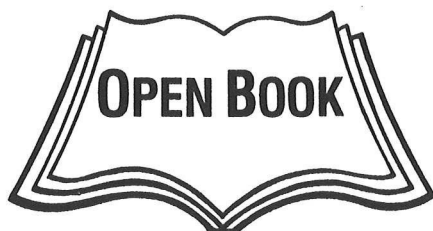
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By Bob Czimbab & Maggie Zadikov

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A Guide to Healthy Touch: Vitamin T

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Disclaimer

Vitamin T offers suggestions and information for your general health. Information provided here is not meant as a substitute for medical treatment or professional counseling. It is recommended that each individual reading this book take responsibility for deciding what activities to implement.

The authors, editors and publishers shall have neither liability nor responsibility to any person or entity with respect to any loss for damage caused directly or indirectly from information contained in this book.

No confusion is intended with Vitamin T and other real vitamins, such as A, B, C, D and E. There is an actual vitamin T, not listed as an essential vitamin. Little is known about it. It may help with coagulation and platelets. Sources are egg yolks and sesame seeds.

No medical or nutritional claims are indicated for Vitamin T. Vitamin T is not meant as a cure-all. It is simply one component of our health and happiness. Vitamin analogies are used in this book because of the similarities and parallels to how real vitamins affect us. Some parody is used, for example *The International Journal of Nurturing Education*. We use these nutritional terms because they are familiar concepts. Calling touch a vitamin is just for fun.

Foreword

Writing Vitamin T has been a labor of love. Upon beginning our task we quickly realized we had taken on a subject highly charged with emotion for almost everyone. We hoped to strike a balance between a light, playful approach and a serious look at the issues concerning touch.

While examining the underlying principles and beliefs about touch, we saw a need for the creation of a language to communicate them. Our goal was to develop a system for promoting healthy touch. On the one hand, we needed to find a way to explain the subtleties inherent in a gesture as simple as a handshake. On the other, we wanted to clear up the confusion associated with sexual touch by placing it back into a framework of healthy touch. We sought to translate complex ideas into practical, usable activities.

As a couple, authoring this book presented us with challenges and opportunities. While experimenting with different ways of working together, many personal issues were brought forth — issues about our relationship, parenting, power, and, of course, touch. When the going got rough, we made a special effort to let the language of touch express what words could not.

Each of us brought our individual touch histories and issues into the project. A wonderful blending of ideas and philosophy occurred as we got clear about our own touch needs. We also realized that each of us wanted more touch from other people in our lives. We had to come up with a way to do this that was clear and non-threatening to people who may be less comfortable with touching than we are. Slowly but surely, Vitamin T provided the answers.

This book is dedicated to you, the reader. It is you who bring our ideas to life. We encourage you to reach out and show your love and respect for one another with Vitamin T.

We hope Vitamin T enriches your life.

Bob and Maggie

Introduction

Vitamin T is guaranteed to have impact on how you feel about touch. This book offers insights and skills about creating an abundance of healthy touch from family and friends.

At one level, *Vitamin T* is a fun book about touching. At a deeper level, *Vitamin T* is about caring for yourselves and others. Understanding the basics of *Vitamin T* can help you to create a personal touching style that becomes an integral part of your life.

The healthy exchange of *Vitamin T* is an act of great courage. For some readers, touching may be a new and difficult task. For others, *Vitamin T* may add variety and a renewed commitment to touch. Learning to exchange *Vitamin T* helps to improve the quality of your relationships. This book offers you the tools to increase the amount of intimacy in your life.

"The more Vitamin T you dispense, the more you absorb."

How To Use This Book

Naming our publishing company OPEN BOOK is a reminder that books are like minds: they work best when open. Once a book is tucked away on a shelf, it is often “out of sight” and “out of mind.”

- Leave this book in a visible place as a cue to use the Vitamin T guidelines and activities daily. The illustrations and diagrams are designed to deepen your understanding of the Vitamin T philosophy.
- Ponder on the *Reflections* questions found periodically throughout the book. These open-ended questions about your background, attitudes and experiences personalize your interpretation of the topics covered. Some of the *Reflections* may strike a chord; others may not be relevant. You may want to keep a record of your *Reflections*.
- Review the boldface quotations in each section. These original phrases capture the essence of the concepts presented.
- Invite your family, friends or co-workers to browse through the book and practice exchanging Vitamin T with you.
- Use the buddy system. Give a friend a copy of the book so that you can discuss the concepts and practice the activities together. Try new forms of Vitamin T or practice revitalizing ones you already know. Share the results with your buddy.

Vitamin T

Vitamin T is the nurturing nutrient found in healthy touch. The US Department of Health and Happiness has established that Vitamin T is essential for every body. Natural sources of Vitamin T are handshakes, hugs, kisses, cuddles and rubs. Absorbed through the skin, this vitamin is obtained from family, friends and co-workers. One dose per hour yields an abundant supply. Megadoses are provided by massage. Positively habit-forming. No known overdose of this nutrient has ever been reported. Active ingredient: TLC (tender loving care).

When applied topically, Vitamin T:

- soothes the body
- calms the mind
- nourishes the spirit
- warms the heart.

Regular doses strengthen self-esteem and restore sense of humor fast. Effective at relieving stress. Vitamin T heals ~~ouches~~ or painful touches. Main symptom of deficiency is loneliness.

Guaranteed safe for all ages.

Keep within reach of children.

No artificial anything.

Wholesome and non-caloric.

Dispense with permission only.

"Give Vitamin T to friends and family."

Overview

The following is a brief overview of the contents of the book, *A Guide to Healthy Touch: Vitamin T*.

Chapter 1

Personal Touch History — Uncovering the origins of the your feelings about touch based on the touch experiences of childhood, teen years and adult experience.

Chapter 2

Guidelines for Healthy Touch — Explanation of terms defining the principles of the Vitamin T philosophy.

Sense of Touch — the importance of the skin as a sense organ; family and cultural touch traditions which shape the reader's touch experience.

Intimacy — the amount of closeness to another person based on association, contact and familiarity; implies respect.

Leveling — the process of establishing a mutually agreeable Vitamin T exchange; based on the **R.I.T.ual** of touch, including type of **Relationship**, the degree of **Intimacy** and the kind of **Touch**.

Permission — the main ingredient in determining if a touch is healthy.

Body Language — the ancient language of gestures, posture and facial expressions which help determine if permission to touch is granted.

Sensual/Sexual Touch — all Vitamin T touch has a healthy intention; the boundary between sensual and sexual touch is crossed only by adults with permission.

Self-esteem — healthy touch carries with it the message "You are valued." Vitamin T enhances self-esteem.

Deficiencies — shortages of healthy touch are minor deficiencies; obstacles to absorbing it are major deficiencies of Vitamin T.

ouch! — a painful experience with touch or a scarcity of healthy touch.

Space Invaders — people who invade personal space verbally, physically or sexually.

STOP! — self-defense skills for children and adults to ward off space invaders.

Chapter 3

Levels of Sensual Touch — This section explains the different levels in which Vitamin T is exchanged. Activities for creating an abundance of healthy touch at each level are suggested.

T-1 Public Touch — touch exchanges occurring in public, such as handshakes.

T-2 Professional Touch — touch dispensed as part of a service rendered by a paid professional, such as a visit to a doctor or massage therapist.

T-3 Social Touch — touch exchanged with neighbors, co-workers and acquaintances at social events or parties.

T-4 Friendly Touch — playful touch among friends to welcome, celebrate or console, such as hugs.

T-5 Family Touch — touch among members of immediate family and relatives, such as kisses and rubs.

T-6 Special Touch — touch between two people which communicates the special feelings you have for each other, such as cuddling and holding.

T-7 Personal Touch — getting in touch with oneself through bathing and self-care rituals, meditation, reflection and time spent in nature.

Chapter 4

Sexual Touch — Healthy sexuality is a blend of sensual and sexual touch. Sexual Touch utilizes all the principles of Vitamin T: permission, leveling and body language, etc. It represents the highest level of intimacy between two consenting adults. This section introduces new concepts and language to promote healthy sexuality. One of these is Pleasuring, the physical and emotional enjoyment which results when two people experience sexual intimacy in the presence of high doses of Vitamin T.

1. The purpose of this document is to provide information regarding the security of the system. It is intended for use by personnel who are responsible for the operation and maintenance of the system.

2. The system is designed to provide a secure environment for the storage and processing of sensitive information. It is intended to protect the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of the information.

3. The system is designed to be flexible and scalable, allowing for the addition of new components and the expansion of the system as needed.

4. The system is designed to be easy to use and maintain, allowing for the efficient operation and maintenance of the system.

5. The system is designed to be secure, providing a high level of protection for the information stored and processed by the system.

6. The system is designed to be reliable, providing a high level of availability and ensuring that the information is always accessible when needed.

Chapter 1:

PERSONAL TOUCH HISTORY

Exploring your touch history can be an adventure. Everyone has a very different personal touch history. The degree of caution about touch is shaped by the kinds of touch a person has encountered in the past. Reviewing your past can help you understand your feelings about touch. As you reflect back you may realize there were times when Vitamin T was abundant and other times when you wanted more touch.

Each section in this chapter includes an introduction followed by a series of *Reflections* questions. Each time you see a question mark, slow down and give yourself a chance to respond. Set aside a block of uninterrupted time to review and record your memories. As you consider the history of your childhood, teen and adult years, focus on these two questions:

- How does the amount of Vitamin T received in the past affect me now?
- What kinds of Vitamin T do I want in my life?

Childhood

Life begins at conception with an intimate sexual exchange. Sperm and egg are united. The new embryo is implanted in the lining of the womb and begins to grow. During the next nine months the baby exists in an environment of total contact with the mother. All of its needs are taken care of through the lifeline of the umbilical cord.

As soon as the cord is cut, each baby is thrust into a new environment that is uniquely its own. Each infant deserves to be touched with love. Yet, the amount of touch an infant receives varies greatly.

For instance, one baby may be showered with TLC (tender loving care). A smooth delivery introduced the baby into a nurturing environment. Mom, Dad and baby bonded at birth. Adoring parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents and other relatives provided an abundance of Vitamin T. This baby feels safe and secure, with all of its physical and emotional needs lovingly met.

Another baby's first life experience is less fortunate. A low birth weight causes the baby to go into a sterile intensive care unit in a hospital. The baby goes immediately from total touch in the womb to almost no touch in a strange environment. There is no family or community support system for the mother or baby. Because of the mother's health problems, the baby is put up for adoption. This baby's infancy starts off a bit rough. The quality of its childhood depends on who the adoptive parents are.

How did your parents respond to your needs as an infant? You may have an inkling or a "body sense" of this period. Most likely you will need to check with your parents or relatives to get a feel for the first years of your life. Find photographs of yourself. Try to sense what you were feeling at the time the pictures were taken.

Find out about your parents' beliefs about raising a child. What style of parenting did they employ? How were you nurtured with touch by men? By women? Did they respond to your needs to be held close?

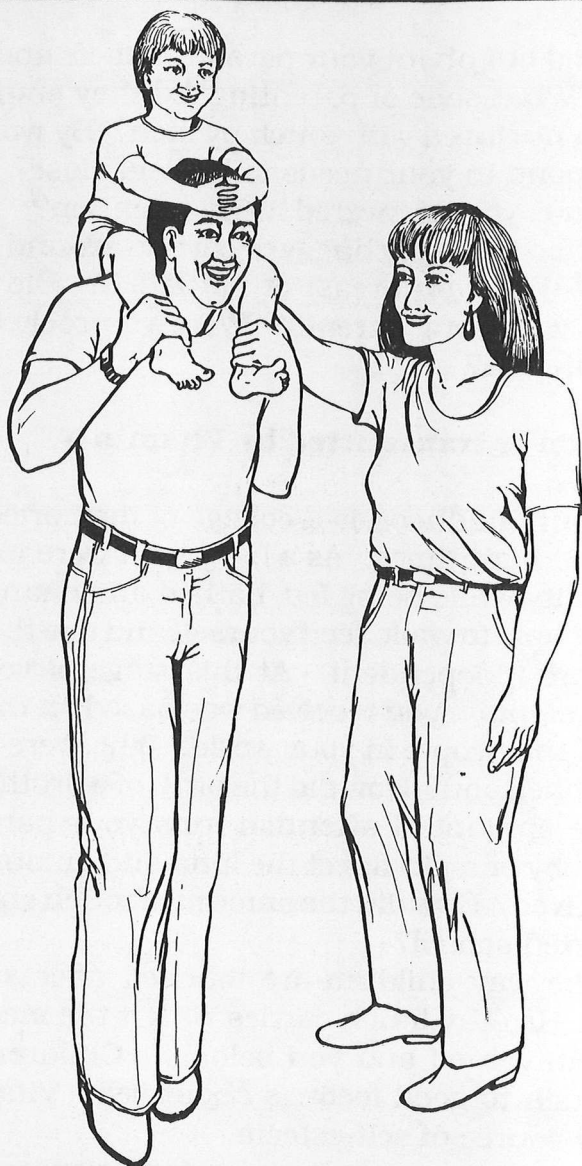
Were you showered with attention? Were you transported in a baby buggy or carried around in arms or a sling? Were you breast or bottle fed? Did you sleep alone or with your parents? Were you rocked, sung to and comforted?

"Affection is transmitted by Vitamin T."

Your childhood is a collage of memories of happy times and hard times. As a baby, you were touched out of necessity while being fed, bathed and changed. Once you were able to walk, feed yourself and use the toilet you were more independent. At this stage of your life the amount of touch you received was based on the personal styles of the people in your world. Who were the people that touched you? How did the birth of a brother or sister alter the amount of attention from your parents? Did being a boy or a girl affect the kind and amount of touch you received? How did the amount of touch change when you started school?

The way children are touched affects their self-esteem. Healthy touch carries with it the message "You are loved, valued and you belong." Children translate good touch to good feelings about self. Vitamin T is a primary source of self-esteem.

Once you can love and esteem yourself, you can pass it on to others. Your self-esteem is your most precious possession. Every feeling, thought and action is affected by self-esteem. How did the kind of touch you received affect your self-esteem?



Family Touch Traditions

What were the touch traditions in your family? What gestures did your family and relatives use to demonstrate that they cared about you? How were you touched and cared for when sick, injured or upset? Review the list to refresh your memory of touch received by parents and relatives. Which of these did you receive? Which was your favorite? Are there any touch traditions you wish were part of your history?

- Rocking
- Tickling
- Wrestling
- Bear hugs
- Back rubs
- Family hugs
- Rides to bed
- Kisses on cheek
- Back scratching
- Good night kisses
- Snuggling up together
- Being tossed into the air
- Sitting on someone's lap
- Drawing letters on backs
- Kiss it and make it better
- Being carried on shoulders
- Having your hair played with
- Holding hands while walking
- Blessings at table holding hands
- Having your hair brushed or combed
- Playing "This little piggy goes to market"

"Children feel loved when they are given Vitamin T."

Bob's Story

My favorite touch tradition was being carried from the car and tucked into bed by my dad. Our family would go out for the evening and I would fall asleep in the back seat of the car on the way home. I would actually fake being asleep just so I could be picked up and held in my dad's strong arms.

I can clearly remember the last time this happened. My dad woke me up and said, "I can't carry you — you're too big." I can still remember the sadness I felt as a "big boy" walking into the house unassisted.

What did you do to have fun as a child? Did you play with brothers, sisters, cousins or friends? How were you treated by other children? How did you interact with your friends? Did you hug, hold hands, play games or other activities that involved touch?

When were the times you felt lonely, abandoned or neglected? Since children often hurt other children, who hurt you? Were you ever hurt by parents, relatives or teachers? Were you hit, spanked, punished or abused?

Were there adults, besides relatives, with whom you remember having touch exchanges? Do you remember a teacher, a neighbor, a doctor or someone in the community who gave you Vitamin T? Who was the person who gave you your favorite form of Vitamin T?

Were there pets at home? What Vitamin T exchanges did you have with the pets? How important were your pets to you? Did you sleep with a pet cat or dog? Did you have a relationship with an outdoor pet or animal? What role did stuffed animals or dolls play?

Have you ever made angels in the snow and felt the cold softness of the snow underneath? Have you walked barefoot through the mud and felt the mud squish between your toes? What other touches from nature do you remember that make you feel happy just thinking about them?

Teens

Teens are in transition, with one foot in childhood and the other in adulthood. Everything seems new — bodies, emotions, responsibilities. During this stage, the amount of touch supplied by parents changes as peers become more important sources of Vitamin T. Teens want touch, yet often the supply is low. Feeling lonely, disconnected and needy is common. When teens receive abundant amounts of Vitamin T, they feel loved and confident.

Which Family Touch traditions from childhood lasted into your teen years? What new ones were added? Did you become too grown-up for certain kinds of Vitamin T?

How open to Vitamin T from your parents were you as a teen? What impact did puberty have on the way your parents touched you? When did you feel connected to your parents? When did you feel isolated?

What kind of Vitamin T role modeling did your parents provide? Which DOs and DON'Ts about touching came from your family?

Which adults other than your parents touched you in ways you liked? Did not like? Were you greeted with warmth or respect? Were you treated with indifference? Did you relate to any of your teachers or school staff through touch? Was there someone who paid particular attention to you?

Who were significant friends? How did you touch one another? When was the touch healthy and playful? When did it consist of pokes and put-downs?

Did you have friends of both genders with whom you exchanged healthy, non-sexual touch? Were there clubs, teams or cliques that provided a sense of belonging? Among your peers, what kind of touch was okay and not okay?

Who did you date? Who were some of the people you had your first crushes on? What memories do you have about holding hands, dancing, hugging and kissing? What Vitamin T exchanges occurred throughout these years? How did puberty affect your desire for touch?

How many nights did you fall asleep feeling full of Vitamin T? Who do you wish had supplied you with more Vitamin T?

"You never outgrow your need for Vitamin T!"

Adults

The longing to be held and nurtured is a lifelong desire. The way you are treated while growing up affects all of your relationships. The responsibilities of adulthood are easier to manage with generous amounts of TLC. Vitamin T strengthens the bonding with family and friends. Adults need to reach out to others who want to mutually exchange Vitamin T. Your history is unchangeable, but your future is in your hands.

How much Vitamin T are you getting throughout the day? Are you getting additional nocturnal Vitamin T? What kinds of touch are missing from your life now?

How receptive are you to receiving Vitamin T? Have you allocated the time and energy to develop meaningful relationships that provide the opportunity to exchange Vitamin T? How have your feelings about touch changed throughout the years?

Have you ever had a full-body massage? Think about the touch you have received on each part of your body. Are there vivid memories that come to mind? Are some so real that it feels as if you are experiencing that touch again?

Is there someone special whose loving touch made a difference in your life? If possible, contact them, thank them and share how much that touch meant to you.

Now that you are an adult, how comfortable are you exchanging Vitamin T with your parents? Who touches you on your birthday? Who cares for you and holds your hand when you are sick?

Who are the friends with whom you exchange Vitamin T on a regular basis? What kinds of Vitamin T do you exchange with males, females, younger people and older people?

Close your eyes for a moment and reflect. . .

What are your early adult sexual memories? What messages have you received about touching yourself or others sexually? Did your sexual education come from the home, school or friends? How did you handle the pressure to be sexual?

Can you maintain clear boundaries between sexual and sensual touch? Do you get an abundance of non-sexual touch from friends and family? Are you dependent on getting too many of your touch needs met through sex? How do you feel about your sexuality? How do hormones or cycles affect your desire for sexual touch? What are some of the hallmarks in your sexuality?

From Now On

Reviewing your personal touch history has brought many memories to the surface and deepened your understanding of the importance of healthy touch. Your history of touch has a dynamic influence on your present and future relationships. Every person you touch has a unique touch history. Different histories result in different interpretations about touch.

The way you were nurtured while growing up has a profound effect on how you care for yourself now. If you had plenty of Vitamin T growing up, it is probably easy to touch others. If Vitamin T deficiencies were common, it will take focused effort to change the pattern. Increasing the amount of Vitamin T in your life enables you to create an abundance of touch for yourself and for the people you love.

"The Vitamin T you give lasts a lifetime."

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Chapter 2:

GUIDELINES FOR HEALTHY TOUCH

The Guidelines for Healthy Touch explain the philosophy of Vitamin T. Terms for communicating with others about touch are defined. In this section you learn systems to improve the quality of your daily touch encounters.

The Guidelines describe ways to obtain the Vitamin T you want. They also cover skills to prevent Vitamin T deficiencies and to stop unhealthy touch. Your personal touch history combined with the information in the Guidelines provides valuable insights into touch behaviors.

Sense of Touch

The skin is the largest and most critical sense organ of the body. People can live without sight, hearing, taste and smell but they cannot survive without the functions performed by the skin. It communicates to the brain what is happening outside the body in terms of heat, cold, pain and pressure. Developmentally, the skin and all the sense organs come from the same layer of cells in the embryo, the ectoderm. In simpler terms, we can

think of the senses as differentiated forms of touch.

- Sight is the touch of light on the eye's optic nerve.
- Smell is the touch of particles on the nose's olfactory receptors.
- Taste is the touch of food on the taste buds of the tongue.
- Hearing is the touch of vibrations on the eardrum.

The skin covers the surface of the entire body measuring about 18 square feet. A piece of skin the size of a quarter contains more than three million cells, 100 sweat glands, 50 nerve endings and three feet of blood vessels. The skin is a huge, external nervous system covered with thousands of Vitamin T receptors. These receptors protect us from pain and have an enormous capacity to perceive sensation.

In the first months of a baby's life skin stimulation is crucial to the normal functioning of the entire body. Vitamin T is as essential as food and warmth. Without the human touch, babies can fail to thrive. Some have even died from the lack of nurturing touch. Vitamin T is not just for babies. All human beings need Vitamin T daily. The doses come primarily from skin-to-skin contact and additionally through the senses. Vitamin T receptors revitalize and help keep us in touch with our world.

Vitamin T Around the World

Touch rituals are as varied as the cultures from which they originate. Age, gender and status have an effect on different touch customs. In some cultures, eye contact is made; in others, it is avoided. Gestures like hugs, holding hands or arms around shoulders may or

may not be acceptable in public. Touching a child's head is fairly common in the United States, whereas it is considered disrespectful in some Asian cultures.

Vitamin T in various forms is used in greetings. In some cultures, people make physical contact with one another by shaking hands. In other cultures, instead of making contact, each person may bow with only their own palms touching. Sometimes a man may kiss a woman's hand. Sometimes men kiss each other on the cheeks as a sign of friendship. Kisses are exchanged only between men and women in certain countries. In others, public kissing is not acceptable.

The amount of touch contact in general also depends on the culture. Mediterranean cultures such as Greeks and Italians touch frequently. People of British and German extraction tend to touch less. Americans are somewhere in the middle of the touch spectrum.

Cultures tend to have certain touch norms. But within each culture individuals have a unique touch tradition composed of family rules and individual experiences. Dancing may be a playful way for some people to touch and interact. Other people may follow strict rules regulating dancing. Look for individual touch preferences rather than stereotyping according to cultural background.

When it comes to all Vitamin T exchanges, it is important to honor the individual's unique background. For touch to be healthy it must feel right to both people. When two people touch, their culture and history meet. Each person is responsible for communicating his or her touch preferences and learning how others wish to be touched.

Around the world, around the block, or around the house, every human being needs to be touched in a respectful way.

US Department of Health and Happiness Goals

The US Department of Health and Happiness has established the following goals for a well-balanced program of Vitamin T, "the nurturing nutrient." Review these goals to find out which ones are already satisfied and which ones need more attention. When it comes to Vitamin T, make sure you have the minimum daily requirements:

1. **An adequate daily supply:** One or more doses per waking hour is recommended.
2. **A variety of sources:** Sources include friends, family members and co-workers in a variety of ages, genders and cultures.
3. **A balance of giving and receiving:** Exchanging Vitamin T rather than only giving or only receiving.
4. **The removal of obstacles to absorption:** Distress, low self-esteem and fears are typical obstacles.
5. **The elimination of ouches!:** Removal of all painful forms of touching such as put-downs, pokes, pushes and punches.

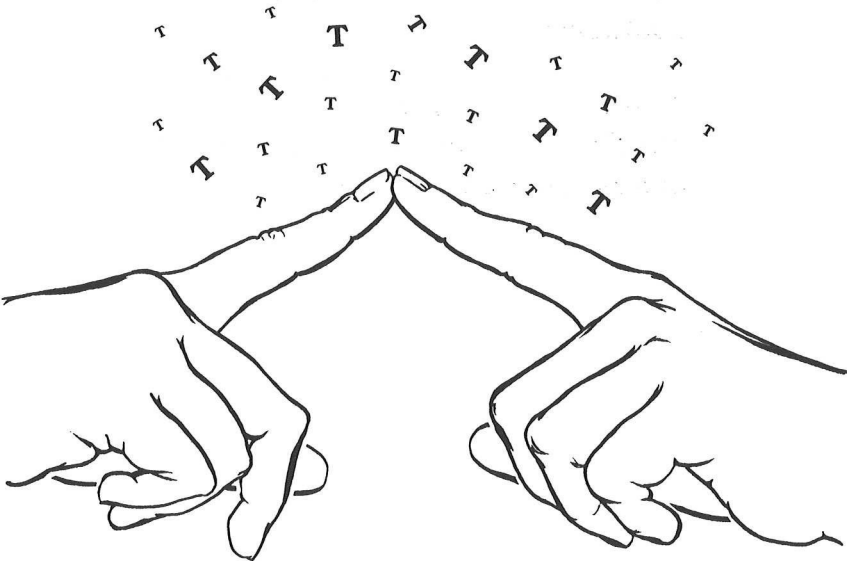
The Vitamin T Report and Research Findings

The *International Journal of Nurturing Education* recently published its research findings explaining how the exchange of Vitamin T occurs.

When Vitamin T is exchanged, the process evokes a spark of energy. A chain reaction has been observed that creates a warm glow as new Vitamin T units are created every one-tenth of a second. Individual Vitamin T levels are significantly raised when two subjects touch each other. A summary of the two effects, synergy and bonding, follows.

Synergistic Effect

When Vitamin T is exchanged, each subject receives many times more Vitamin T than they had before the exchange (synergistic effect). For example, a three-second handshake is capable of producing a zillion additional units of Vitamin T for each person.



A unique property has been isolated: the more Vitamin T a person gives to others, the more it accumulates in their body. This is due to the multiplication reaction that occurs as Vitamin T is exchanged.

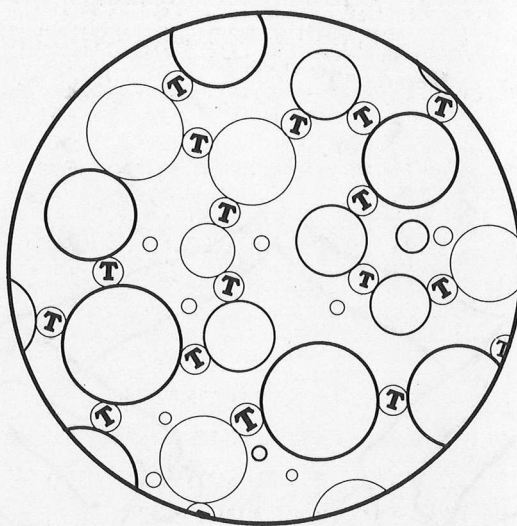
Note: Due to the magnitude of the surface area involved, the researchers were unable to measure the vast amount of Vitamin T exchanged during the execution of a friendly hug.

The amount of Vitamin T produced correlates with:

- length of contact
- amount of physical contact
- receptivity of both persons
- the level of friendship and intimacy.

Bonding Effect

In addition to protons, electrons and neutrons, a fourth subatomic particle has been identified. This particle is called a "teton" and is responsible for the bonding effect of Vitamin T.



Subjects with low levels of Vitamin T, and therefore low teton levels, often report that they feel “as if they are coming unglued.” When a person feels “out of touch,” the body responds with symptoms of a Vitamin T deficiency. Fortunately, an exchange of Vitamin T restores the diminished supply of tetons to a healthy level. The researchers can safely conclude that Vitamin T is a major factor in the physical bonding that exists among friends. Vitamin T actually keeps them together.

These findings can be verified by conducting independent research projects to test perception of Vitamin T exchanged during any form of contact. Notice, too, how the amount of Vitamin T generated fluctuates depending on the people involved.

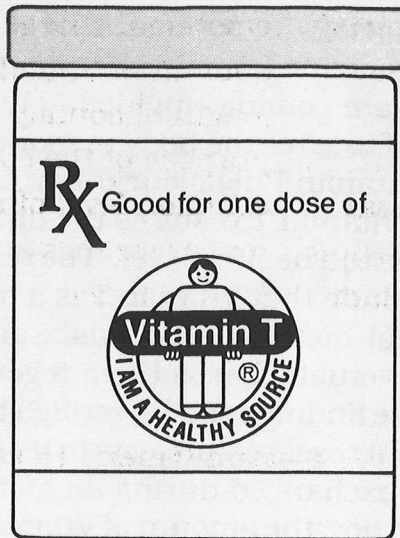
Permission

Permission is the key ingredient in all Vitamin T exchanges. Respect is demonstrated by waiting until permission to touch is granted. The individual’s right to choose whether or not to be touched must be honored.

Permission is required before increasing the degree of intimacy. Before crossing the line from sensual touch to sexual touch, the permission of both adults must be secured.

Any touch that comes as the result of pressure, obligation or coercion is not Vitamin T. Permission to administer Vitamin T is communicated either verbally or through body language. Each person is responsible for clearly communicating how and by whom they wish to be touched.

The prescription card illustrated is a request for a Vitamin T exchange. Giving this card allows the receiver time to decide if they want to honor the request for a handshake, hug, shoulder rub, etc.



Intimacy and Vitamin T

All touch involves some degree of intimacy. Closeness and familiarity create the feeling of intimacy. It can be physical, mental, emotional, spiritual or sexual. Respect and commitment are inherent to intimacy. As a relationship grows, intimacy blossoms.

With each touch there is an opportunity to cultivate trust and openness in a gentle way. The degree of intimacy fluctuates constantly depending on how two people feel about each other. When less intimacy is wanted, there is more distance and less touch. When more intimacy is wanted, people move closer and increase the amount of Vitamin T.

The degree of intimacy is influenced by the eight components listed. By understanding all the components involved, a person can select the desired degree of intimacy for a specific situation. Each person must determine the amount of intimacy they want.

I	Intensity	emotional charge
N	Number	amount of Vitamin T
T	Time	length of contact
I	Intention	purpose of the contact
M	Mutual	common level of respect
A	Affection	tender feelings
C	Contact	kind of touch
Y	Yes!	desire for Vitamin T

"Intimacy requires a commitment to reach out. "

Body Language

Gestures, posture and facial expressions are the oldest form of communication. Body language gives clues about a person's thoughts, feelings and intentions. A person uses their body to convey whether or not they are open to touch.

A baby uses its body and sound to get basic needs met. Some babies learn early that they can get parents to touch them by smiling and cooing. Others learn they have to kick and scream to get the touch they want. The baby also learns to recognize and mimic the body language of adults. As a child grows it becomes more dependent on words to express its needs.

Confusion can occur in sending, receiving or interpreting body language. For example, sometimes a person is saying one thing while their body is communicating something else. Ideally, words, touch, intentions and actions need to align so the message is accurately sent and received. It is crucial to integrate touch with words to make sure both people are "speaking the same language."

Priscilla's Story

When Priscilla comes into work she usually greets Sam, a co-worker, with a good morning hug. She notices that often Sam seems tense and doesn't really return the hug. Priscilla decides to stop hugging Sam. Several days later, Sam says, "You know, I really miss your morning hugs." Priscilla replies, "You seemed uneasy the last time I hugged you." Sam says, "You're right. I'm not very comfortable with hugging. No one in my family ever hugged. But I realize how important those hugs really are. Can we start today off with a hug?"

Body language can communicate the full range of human emotions from love to hate, from happiness to sorrow. Vitamin T expresses feelings that often cannot be communicated with words. Even the briefest touch can convey the following deep meanings:

I care.
I agree.
I am sad.
I love you.
I want you.
I trust you.
I am sorry.
I am angry.
I am needy.
I am lonely.
I forgive you.
I am friendly.
I support you.
I want to play.
I welcome you.
I believe in you.
I am affectionate.
I will protect you.
I congratulate you.

I am uncomfortable.
I am glad to meet you.
I want to be left alone.
I enjoy being with you.
I would like to get to know you.

"With touch you feel the message!"



Body language transmits messages about the degree of intimacy desired. Body language can either encourage or discourage touch. If body language is clear, it is easier to read. Some people show their feelings on their faces. A person who translates thoughts and feelings into body language is easier to read.

Vitamin T exchanges involve skill at sending and receiving body language. First decide if you want to make contact. Then communicate your intention with your body language. Finally, observe the other person's body language to see if he or she is open to Vitamin T.

Wanting to make contact: Not wanting contact:

smile	no smile
arms outstretched	arms folded
hands accessible	hands clenched or hidden
eye contact	eyes lowered
verbal communication	no verbal communication
friendly tone of voice	unfriendly tone of voice
person approaching	person stationary or retreating

It is fun to learn to read body language. Sharpen your skills with practice and by watching other people. Notice how they use their hands, arms and eyes to encourage or discourage touch. Observe PDAs (public displays of affection). Practice body language fluency with your friends so you can get feedback and make mistakes with less embarrassment. For example, you can say, "Hi. I'm studying body language. I don't understand yours right now. Please translate." By becoming a good interpreter of body language, you are less likely to miss opportunities for Vitamin T.

In social situations people often rely too heavily on words for making contact. Use a more direct approach by including Vitamin T in your interactions. Try holding hands as you walk and talk with a friend. Give a buddy a shoulder rub while you hear about her stressful day.

What are the messages you are sending with your body language? Are they the messages you intend to send? Are others misinterpreting your body language? How can you make your body language more clear? Is what you express in harmony with what you feel inside?

"When you are comfortable with touch, your body language invites others to touch you."

First Encounters

To touch or not to touch — that is often the question when two people meet for the first time. Since there is no prior history with the other person, it is sometimes difficult to know whether or not to even shake hands. Often, both people wait for the other to make the first move. If no one makes the first move, no Vitamin T is exchanged.

If contact is wanted, make the intention clear. If possible, gesture slowly so the other person will have a moment to decide how to respond. Some people may respond with a blank stare or apparent nervousness. If a mistake is made, apologize.

Dealing with first encounters takes some experimenting. Usually not much is known about a stranger's boundaries, comfort level or background in the realm of touch. Other people's actions in the same situation may provide important information. If others are shaking hands, extend your hand. If the new person responds, use the "Goldilocks test" to find out if their touch felt too cool, too hot or just right.

Sometimes meetings with acquaintances feel like a first encounter each time you meet them. A person's mood may help communicate if they do or do not want touch. Angry or grumpy expressions suggest that it may not be a good time to initiate touch contact. With a big smile or a welcoming expression, it is probably safe to conclude that a dose of Vitamin T is appropriate. Sometimes, both people may experience the urge to increase the level of intimacy, maybe from a handshake to a hug.

With any encounter, avoid projecting wants or fears onto the other person: "I want a hug, so they must want one, too." or "She probably doesn't want to hug me, so why bother trying." Instead, check with both body and verbal language.

If you find yourself feeling envious of people getting warm, affectionate hugs, ask yourself if you are getting enough Vitamin T in your life. You may need to check on

your body language to make sure you are sending out friendly energy. You may need to invest more time developing friendships. Look for people in your life who are receptive to exchanging Vitamin T. Practice with them. Once you begin to feel truly comfortable with touch, first encounters will be more enjoyable. You will be more willing to make the first move.

Make sure you are not using negative self-talk to prevent yourself from getting enough Vitamin T. Do you talk yourself out of touching and being touched? Are you convinced that you do not need Vitamin T? Do you tell yourself you do not like to be touched?

To increase your receptivity, try telling yourself that you deserve Vitamin T. Ask for the touch you want. Slow down and relish each Vitamin T exchange.

Uncertainty

Sometimes it is hard to tell from a person's body language if they are receptive to touch. When there is any uncertainty, verbally ask for clarification. For example, "Would you like a hug?"

People who love to touch need to be careful. Do not automatically assume others are as receptive as you are. Otherwise, the person being touched may feel overwhelmed. Try not to second-guess another person's touch wants. If you sense any uneasiness or discomfort, remove uncertainty by asking.

With touch, there is an element of risk. Sometimes you just have to reach out and make contact and see how they respond. Often you may be surprised that secretly the other person was wanting positive, healthy contact from you. If the person responds in a way that indicates no touch is wanted, do not take it personally. There is usually a good reason why someone is not receptive to touch. By removing the uncertainty, the touch becomes Vitamin T.

"Reaching out means taking a risk."

Sensual/Sexual Boundaries

Everyone has the right to protect their boundaries by maintaining a clear distinction between sensual and sexual touch. All Vitamin T exchanges require permission, but it is especially necessary when someone wishes to cross the boundary between these two forms of touch. This boundary is only to be crossed by consenting adults.

Intentions are comprised of wants, needs, hopes, fantasies and attitudes which combine to form a certain state of mind. Clearly stated intentions and boundaries establish respectful touch.

Sometimes the purpose is to be friendly and non-sexual. Sometimes contact is initiated in order to become sexual. In either case, a clear signal of intention needs to be made prior to any touch. If the intention is clearly sexual, the person must wait for a positive response before crossing the sensual and sexual boundary.

The following situations demonstrate non-sexual intention.

- A routine physical exam by a family physician may involve touching the genitals. Contact is strictly professional.
- Two friends greet each other with an affectionate hug and kiss. Although there is no sexual intention, one of them experiences a sexual response. Such responses are natural. Although one person has sexual feelings, there is no intention to act upon them. This is a clear choice to keep the interaction at a friendly level.
- A couple goes to sleep in the nude. They lie close to each other and enjoy the warmth and closeness of the body contact. They are just interested in a sensual form of contact.

The next two examples show clear sexual intention.

- Two single people are at a party together. They catch one another's eye across the room. As the party proceeds, their gazes keep meeting. Even before any words or touch passes between them, they sense the sexual intention growing. Both are enjoying the flirting.
- A husband is reading the newspaper and listening to music. His wife sits down beside him and begins to nibble on his ear. She is communicating her desire to cross the border into sexual touch.

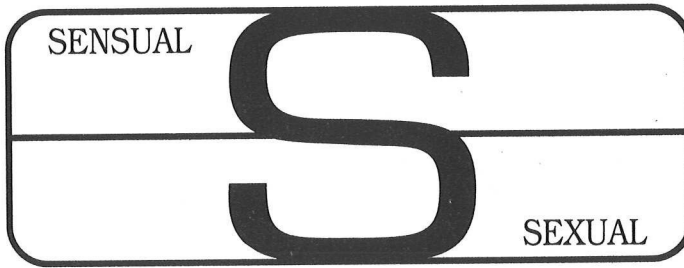
Double messages, ambiguous gestures, innuendos and secretly seductive behavior often hide underlying sexual intentions. This is confusing and harmful. Any touch that occurs under these circumstances is not Vitamin T. The following chart describes the general differences between sensual and sexual touch.

Sensual Touch

relaxing
friendly
public
normal sensitivity
affectionate
all ages
general permission
clothes on
no genital contact
feels pleasant
minimal skin contact
releases tension
non-aerobic

Sexual Touch

exciting
romantic
private
heightened sensitivity
passionate
adults only
specific permission
clothes off
genital contact
feels erotic
maximum skin contact
releases sex hormones
aerobic and anaerobic

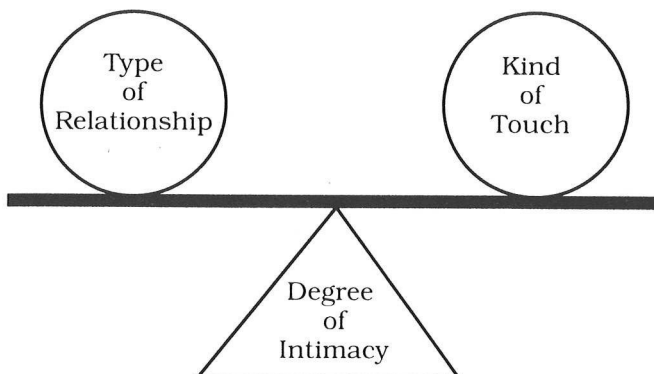


Confusion can arise between people when the fine line between sensual and sexual touch is approached. One partner may be feeling sexual; the other may be feeling sensual. This is a classic mismatch of intentions. It is time for the partners to talk about intentions and the appropriate forms of touch for their level of intimacy.

Leveling

Leveling is the process of establishing a mutually agreeable Vitamin T exchange. It requires clear communication of touch wanted and not wanted. The contact depends on the comfort level and preferences of each person.

The **R. I. T.ual** of touch establishes the balance between the type of **Relationship**, the degree of **Intimacy** and the kind of **Touch** shared by two people. **Intimacy** is the pivotal component of the Vitamin T exchange.



Type of Relationship	public, professional, social, friendly, family, special, personal or sexual
Degree of Intimacy	level of closeness and familiarity
Kind of Touch	handshakes, hugs, kisses, dancing and massage

Match

When both people are comfortable with the type of **Relationship**, degree of **Intimacy** and kind of **Touch**, there is a match. They are level and no adjustment is necessary. The goal is to try to get every Vitamin T exchange to be a match.

Examples of matches are:

- Two strangers are introduced and neither wants contact.
- Friends greet each other with a warm, welcome hug.

Adjustment

When both persons want a change in any of the **R.I.T.uals** of touch, a leveling adjustment needs to be made. To be level, the kind of touch and degree of intimacy will either increase or decrease. This is a mutual decision and can occur verbally or non-verbally.

Examples of adjustments are:

- Both people want to increase the level of intimacy. They change from a handshake to a friendly hug when greeting.
- Both people want to lower the level of intimacy. They used to be close friends who hugged. Now they are more distant and want less contact.

Resolving Imbalances

There are no right or wrong levels of intimacy. Each person has a different preference regarding the degree of intimacy desired. When a lack of balance exists, leveling is required to resolve a new balance.

The person wanting more intimacy must adjust to the level of the person wanting less. Resolving imbalances is difficult because two people have different needs. The person who wants less intimacy feels uncomfortable about the Vitamin T exchange. One or more of the components of **R.I.T.uals** feels off balance. The person who wants less intimacy has the right and the responsibility to clearly communicate their wishes to the other person.

The person who wants the higher level of intimacy must adjust to resolve the imbalance. He or she may continue to feel the same wants and needs, however a change in behavior occurs to respect the wishes of the person who wants less intimacy.

Examples of resolving imbalances are:

- One person wants a handshake; the other wants a hug. For leveling to occur, they shake hands.
- One person wants no relationship, intimacy or touch; the other person wants contact. For leveling to occur, no contact is made.

- One person wants only sensual touch and the other wants sexual touch. For leveling to occur, there is no sexual touch.

When the **R.I.T.ual** of touch is respected, leveling occurs. Touching without leveling is not Vitamin T. People who feel comfortable with touching should resist the urge to persuade another person to touch at their level. Respect the differences in Vitamin T needs rather than judging or criticizing.

At first sight, a split-second decision is made about how to interact with a person. All the **R.I.T.uals** of touch (Relationship, Intimacy, Touch) are considered when deciding on an appropriate greeting. Whether meeting someone for the first time or being in a long-term relationship, there are many opportunities for re-evaluation of Vitamin T needs. Usually, leveling occurs smoothly and nonverbally. But, when one person gives an insincere touch, the touch feels off balance because the level of intimacy is not authentic. When either person feels uncomfortable about a Vitamin T exchange, it is time to communicate feelings.

Vitamin T requirements may change. Be sensitive to the other person's level of receptivity to touch. Verbally check on their comfort level if you sense a shift.

If there is any discomfort or confusion when being touched, ask yourself, "Do I feel uncomfortable with the type of relationship, the degree of intimacy or the kind of touch?" Decide what you want as opposed to reacting to another person's needs or demands. Verbally communicate your feelings to the other person.

Practice leveling with friends, family and acquaintances. Which touch exchange seemed level or not level? Why? Share the concept of the **R.I.T.ual** of leveling with others.

"Permission and leveling go hand in hand for all Vitamin T exchanges."

The following story describes the concept of leveling including situations involving matches, adjustments and resolving differences.

Larry and Lena's Story

The setting is the 50th anniversary celebration in honor of a couple named Larry and Lena. Surrounded by family members and friends, there are many occasions for Vitamin T exchanges.

Larry and Lena greet family and friends one by one, and introduce them to the rest of the guests. Each smiles and nods as they are introduced. This is a match in leveling since no physical contact is desired between the family and the guests.

Larry and Lena are in the kitchen getting drinks for their guests. Their daughter, Janet, sees the two together, and is touched by the love they have for each other. With her arms open wide she moves toward them. They exchange hugs and kisses and express their caring for each other. This is a match because Larry, Lena and Janet want the same degree of intimacy and kind of touch.

Rick greets his mom, Lena, with a casual "Hello." He greets his dad with a handshake. Rick caught a glimpse of Janet hugging their parents in the kitchen and feels envious of the closeness they share. Later on, as Rick toasts his parents, he feels a tear spilling over. Larry and Lena respond by giving Rick a hug. An adjustment in the degree of intimacy and kind of touch has occurred.

Rick has invited his new friend, Sarah, to the celebration. Sarah gives his parents a warm hug of congratulation. During the party, Rick tells her how much he cares for her and asks her to go out with him. She says yes. An adjustment in leveling is made.

Janet greets Frank, a friend from work, with a warm hug and welcomes him to the party. She says, "I really enjoy our friendship, but I'm not comfortable with hugging at work. Rumors are circulating already." Frank agrees with Janet to make an adjustment to change the kind of touch at work.

Harriet, who used to live next door, arrives and corners Rick. "I haven't seen you since you were a kid!" She grabs him and gives him a big, wet kiss. Rick confronts her with, "Harriet, I didn't like the way you kissed me when I was a kid and I don't like it now." Harriet says she didn't mean to offend him. She offers her hand in friendship. Rick accepts. The imbalance is resolved by Harriet honoring Rick's wishes.

Janet introduces her 4-year-old son to Aunt Inge. He is told to give her a hug. The boy looks at the floor and starts to cry. Aunt Inge understands and says, "Johnny, I am so pleased to meet you. It's fine if you're not ready to give me a hug." Johnny smiles with relief. Leveling occurs when Inge resolves the imbalance and honors Johnny's wants.

Larry and Lena are alone at last preparing for bed. Lena gets a twinkle in her eye and says, "Larry, I can't help remembering what a stud you were on our wedding night." Larry replies, "This stud needs a good night's sleep. Can you hold your horses till morning?" Lena laughs and says, "Yes, dear." They cuddle and fall asleep.

Touch Taboos

We are born with a love for touch. A touch taboo is a mistaken belief that certain forms of touching is wrong or dangerous. Taboos lump all touch, healthy and unhealthy, together. The taboo becomes an internal avoidance system to prevent human contact based on superstition, tradition, status and past experience. As a result of taboos, millions of people are starved for Vitamin T although there is a plentiful supply.

Imagine a toddler in the grocery store watching her mother put brightly colored packages in the cart. The toddler starts pulling boxes off the shelf. "Don't touch that!" her mother says. They go to the produce section

and the mom starts feeling tomatoes. The little girl starts squashing them. “No! Do not touch!” The little girl comes back and wraps her gooey hands around her mom’s leg. “Don’t touch me with those messy hands.” The toddler goes over to touch another little girl only to hear her mother say, “Keep your hands to yourself.” What was once a natural curiosity becomes a taboo. This barrage of “Do not touch!” messages may make children fearful.

Children take “Do not touch” literally. They generalize it to mean, “Touch is bad.” or “I am bad if I touch.” Children need to understand when it is okay to touch and not okay. Parents can help a child learn about touch by describing the consequences of their touch. When a specific touch would cause an undesirable result, parents can suggest alternative touch. For instance, the mother in the above story might say, “Honey, if you squish the tomato, it will get all over your clothes. Let’s find an apple for you to play with.” This approach differentiates which touch is okay and which is not.

Vitamin T Deficiency

A Vitamin T deficiency results from a lack of contact with healthy sources of touch. Deficiencies may be caused by illness, stress, neglect or painful experiences with touch. Deficiency symptoms are physical or behavioral warnings that more nurturing touch is needed. Symptoms include feeling out of touch, lonely, isolated and grumpy. Deficiencies are so prevalent, most people do not know they have one. What is considered a “normal” amount of Vitamin T may actually cause a deficiency. Because people are used to it, there is a tendency to survive on scraps of healthy touch. People mask their hunger for touch with excessive amounts of food, drugs, work or material things. These distractions cannot fill the empty spaces caused by the deficiency. Skin hunger can only be satisfied by applying generous amounts of Vitamin T.

The Minimum Daily Requirement (MDR) for Vitamin T is satisfied by meeting the US Department of Health and Happiness goals:

- 1. An adequate daily supply.**
- 2. A variety of sources.**
- 3. A balance of giving and receiving.**
- 4. The removal of obstacles to absorption.**
- 5. The elimination of ouches!**

The Minimum Daily Requirement for each person is based on individual needs and preferences. The MDR is the amount of touch exchanges needed to be symptom-free.

It is recommended that each person exceed the MDR to create an abundance of Vitamin T. An overflow of this vital nutrient assures a plentiful supply to exchange with others. When an adequate amount of Vitamin T is absorbed, a person feels nurtured and nourished.

Minor and Major Deficiencies

Minor Vitamin T deficiencies result from problems with the availability of touch. Major deficiencies are caused by problems with receptivity to touch. The breakdown of the description, causes, symptoms and treatment of both forms of deficiency follows.

Minor Vitamin T Deficiency

Everyone experiences minor deficiencies occasionally. The individual may be receptive to touch, but touch may not be available. It is important to recognize early warning signs of Vitamin T deficiency.

Symptoms:

- loneliness, irritability or sadness
- a sense that something is missing
- mild impact on health and happiness
- needing to be hugged and touched
- feeling “out of touch,” disconnected

Causes:

- stress
- illness
- time pressures
- relationship conflicts
- changes in job, marital status, location

Treatment:

Maintain a variety of Vitamin T sources rather than depending on just one person to meet all your needs. Stay connected to family and friends. They are great sources of Vitamin T. Focus on self-esteem and the belief that you deserve healthy touch. Eliminate any attitudes or beliefs that hamper availability of Vitamin T.

Make Vitamin T exchanges a priority. With proper planning and appropriate action, the deficiency may be easily remedied.

Major Vitamin T Deficiency

Major deficiencies are caused by problems with receptivity to touch. The individual has difficulty absorbing nurturing touch that may be available. The person may have trouble giving touch and may actively discourage Vitamin T exchanges. Sources of healthy touch are probably limited.

Symptoms:

- feels unlovable
- self-destructive
- fear of touching

- deep sense of isolation
- avoids or dwells on sex
- overly protective of personal space
- angry and aggressive, pushes people away
- profound impact on health and happiness

Causes:

- fear
- pain
- abuse
- neglect
- self-imposed isolation
- negative experiences with touch
- low self-esteem, body-image problems
- negative attitudes and beliefs about touch

Treatment:

The first step in treating a major deficiency is to recognize and accept that a deficiency exists. Next is the decision to do the work necessary to cure the deficiency. Professional help is usually required to heal the causes and to remove obstacles to absorption. Extensive personal work is needed to increase receptivity when Vitamin T is already available.

People who have the symptoms of a major deficiency need not feel guilty or ashamed. It is important to realize that major deficiencies do not just happen — most have their origins in childhood. Early on, a defensive or protective posture was taken to prevent pain. What was once a way of surviving as a child may now prevent one from getting important needs met as an adult. These defensive or protective behaviors block much-needed Vitamin T from being absorbed.

Major Vitamin T deficiencies tend to be transferred from one generation to the next. Neglect and abuse are the main causes of multigenerational deficiencies. It takes great courage and skill to break this cycle. However, once the causes are understood, it is easier to be compassionate with those who have major deficiencies.

Curing or balancing major deficiencies takes diligence. It may feel impossible to treat such deep wounds, yet with time and Vitamin T they can be healed. Forgiveness is an important part of the process. *Chapter 3: Levels of Sensual Touch* provides suggestions for expanding sources of healthy touch.

"Every body deserves Vitamin T."

Twenty Questions to Identify Deficiencies

The twenty questions below may serve as a catalyst to identifying Vitamin T deficiencies. Ask each question aloud and record your responses, reflecting on each one. Share your insights. The questions with the most emotional charge for you need attention first.

1. What kind of touch do I like?
2. To whom do I give nurturing touch?
3. Do I go to bed hungry for Vitamin T?
4. When do I get insufficient Vitamin T?
5. Why do I have a Vitamin T deficiency?
6. What are my Vitamin T deficiency symptoms?
7. Do I know anyone with a Vitamin T deficiency?
8. Do I tend to wait for Vitamin T to come to me?
9. Am I able to reach out and ask for the touch I need?

10. Am I open to receiving Vitamin T when it is offered?
11. When did I have an abundance of Vitamin T in my life?
12. Does my body image create a barrier against Vitamin T?
13. What skills do I need to prevent Vitamin T deficiencies?
14. Do I believe that I deserve Vitamin T or am I still doubtful?
15. What is something I can do now to increase healthy touch?
16. Do I tend to have minor, major or both kinds of deficiencies?
17. How does my body warn me that my Vitamin T stores are low?
18. How do I stop myself from having the physical closeness I want?
19. What happens to my Vitamin T when I am feeling stressed out?
20. Which events from my past have contributed to my Vitamin T deficiencies?

ouch!

ouches! are negative touch experiences. There are three forms of ouches!: 1) scarcity of touch; 2) painful touches such as pushes, pulls, pokes, pinches, punches and put-downs; 3) soul scars which result from a prolonged lack of Vitamin T, neglect, ongoing painful touch or violent acts.

HEALTHY TOUCH

HEALTHY Touch

HEALTHY T . . . ouch

HEALTHY T ouch

ouch!

“When healthy Vitamin T is missing, an ouch! remains.”

Scarcity

A scarcity of Vitamin T causes touch starvation. Scarcity ranges from lack of sufficient touch daily to having little or no nurturing touch in one's life. Examples of scarcity include:

- a child crying herself to sleep at night because she never gets a hug, kiss or any form of a “good night” from her caregivers
- a man with a contagious illness who feels isolated from friends and family and suffers from a lack of Vitamin T

- a terminally ill woman who has few visitors and feels touch-starved and fearful of dying a lonely death.

These examples are extreme cases of scarcity, but the day-to-day scarcity hurts as well. A person may experience a vague sense that something is missing. He or she may feel sad, angry or depressed without realizing that the missing ingredient is Vitamin T.

A baby expresses its need to be held and cuddled by crying and reaching out its arms. The touch need is satisfied when contact is made. The baby develops a trust that its needs will be met. However, sometimes the baby reaches out and is rejected, ignored, isolated in its room, punished or even abused. If this happens frequently, the expression of the need for Vitamin T is conditioned out of him. When caregivers do not respond to the baby's touch needs, scarcity results. After prolonged rejection, the baby stops asking for caregiver's touch.

Sometimes, parents spend time touching infants, but when they become older, things change. There are reasons why some parents restrict the amount of touch they give their children. They may be unaware of the importance of healthy touch. Maybe they were not touched sufficiently as children themselves and they may be unable to give healthy touch to others. Different cultures or parenting styles may determine the kind of touch given. And sometimes parents are overworked, ill or in some sort of distress and are unable to respond to their child's needs.

After years of scarcity, the child may conclude "I better learn to fend for myself." or "There is never going to be enough for me." He may have decided it was too painful to keep asking for contact so the need for touch was blocked below the conscious level. This child may become a person with low self-esteem who needs the approval of others and is afraid of being rejected. As an adult, even though sources of healthy touch are readily available, he may find it too difficult to ask.

"Scarcity hurts whether you are a baby or an adult."

Healing Scarcity

There is a tendency to tolerate inadequate amounts of Vitamin T by pretending we do not need touch. Ask for more touch from people you trust. *Chapter 3: Levels of Sensual Touch* provides activities for creating an abundance of Vitamin T.

Painful Touch

ouches! are painful. They are caused by unhealthy touches like pushes, pulls, pokes, pinches, punches and put-downs. As children grow up, adults and other children inflict **ouches!** on them. Painful touch has a devastating effect on self-esteem. Children feel humiliated and degraded each time a parent yanks a young child's arm when she misbehaves in a store, a relative pinches a child's cheek too hard or a big kid pushes a little kid down at the playground.

It is difficult to feel good about yourself when others are hurting you. **ouches!** prevent intimacy; how can you trust someone who injures you?

"ouches! hurt at any age."

Without a constructive outlet for pain, we either hurt ourselves or others. Pain is too powerful to contain. When a person is upset, angry, hurt or overwhelmed, there is a tendency to inflict **ouches!** on others.

ouches! are like viruses — people may "catch" them and help spread them around. Under stressful conditions people are more susceptible.

Every painful touch is stored in cellular memory. If touch is associated with pain, an individual will tend to avoid all touch. Someone who has experienced many **ouches!** may feel defenseless and unworthy.

If healthy touch abounds, the negative affect of **ouches!** can be greatly diminished. The ratio of **ouches!** to Vitamin T has a strong influence on how we in turn touch others.

Healing Painful Touch

Everyone has had ouches! in varying degrees and frequencies. Painful touches can be healed. No one heals alone. The more ouches! a person has had, the more Vitamin T is needed. Healing takes time. Respect the emotional work that needs to be done to regain the desire for healthy touch. Remind yourself "I deserve Vitamin T."

The first step is to stop anyone who is hurting you. Second, avoid the source of the ouch! Third, protect yourself against further ouches! Finally, begin to heal the ouches! you already have by applying generous amounts of Vitamin T.

"A gentle, loving touch can perform miracles."

When you are ready, forgive those who have hurt you. Find ways to release the anger in a manner that does not hurt anyone or anything of value. As your work progresses and emotional safety is assured, exchange Vitamin T with people about whom you care. An abundance of healthy touch can diminish the power of painful memories.

Soul Scars

Pain that resists going away . . .

Sadness so profound it cannot be named . . .

A silent scream of anger . . .

Rage that seeps into words and actions. . .

A will to live that dwindles . . .

Soul scars are the result of extreme conditions of scarcity, painful touches and violent touch. Assault, rape, physical or sexual abuse can cause soul scars. Often no marks are visible on the skin, yet the soul is

wounded. Soul scars can happen at any age, but the most devastating are those inflicted when a person is young and defenseless.

“Soul scars are ouches! so deep that the spirit is damaged.”

Soul scars have a severe effect on health, happiness and, especially, relationships. People with soul scars attempt to develop defense mechanisms to ensure they are never hurt that way again. These defenses help with survival, but may cause problems, especially in intimate relationships. The constant need to protect and defend becomes a barrier preventing love, support or nurturance from getting through to the person's heart.

The pain of a soul scar is frequently lived out as destructive behavior toward self and others. People cause soul scars in others because they have scars themselves. Pain begets pain.

Healing Soul Scars

To heal soul scars, a safe and supportive environment is essential. Seek professional help to identify and come to terms with the source of the soul scar. In time, you may be able to heal yourself and your pain. Because soul scars affect body, mind and spirit, the treatment must happen at these levels, as well. Vitamin T, in the form of massage, body work or body-centered therapy, has a healing effect on all three levels.

If someone you know has a soul scar, be compassionate. Be sensitive to the person's needs and build a relationship based on trust. When they are ready, help them with their healing process by offering Vitamin T in a form that is comfortable for them. Knowledge of the Vitamin T philosophy and an awareness of the role of ouches! can be useful tools to understand how a person responds to touch.

HEALTHY TOUCH

ouch!

HEALTHY TOUCH

ouch!

HEALTHY TOUCH

ouch!

HEALTHY TOUCH

ouch!

HEALTHY TOUCH

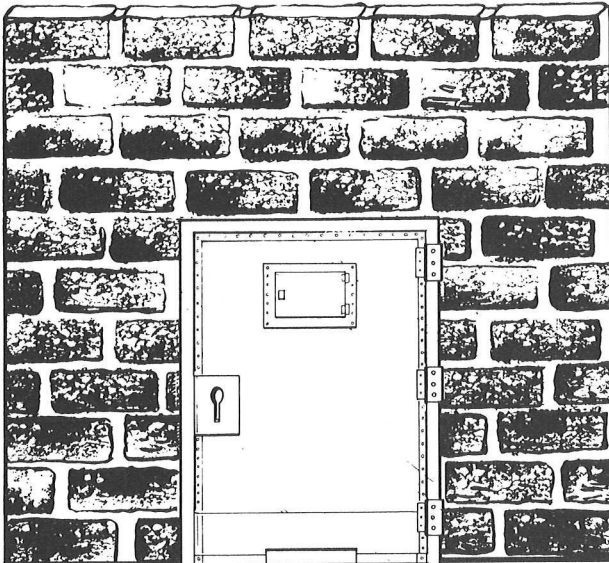
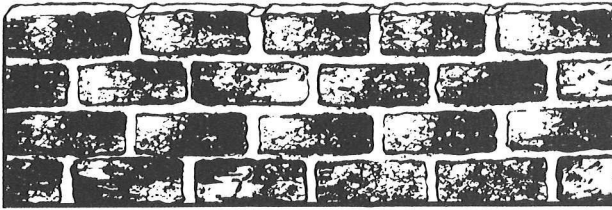
"Healthy Touch reduces ouches! over time."

Barriers to Vitamin T

Unhealed ouches! create barriers against interpersonal contact. People with a history of painful touch have good reasons for constructing barriers against further pain. They are justifiably afraid of being hurt again. A healthy reaction to an ouch! is to retreat to safety, heal and, when feeling stronger, to come back into the world. Barriers come in the form of blocks, walls or prisons. A block is a response to an ouch! With each painful experience, a block is produced to provide protection. Block by block, a wall is constructed as a defensive response to recurring ouches! When a wall becomes too high, there is difficulty reaching over it. People create blocks not because they are bad, but because they have been hurt.

A person wounded by soul scars has a tendency to shut others out and themselves in. This behavior creates a prison where the person is trapped by the pain. All touch and nurturance is avoided, and yet the prisoner craves intimacy. The only way out is to heal the ouches! and dismantle the prison a block at a time.

Creating blocks, walls and prisons can become a habitual response to pain. Until healing occurs, the barriers remain. When people build barriers, they are in isolation. Others may reach out to them, but will feel rejected as soon as they run headlong into a wall.



Symptoms of Barriers

One or more of the following behaviors may be symptoms of the existence of barriers. The frequency and intensity of the symptoms determines whether the barrier is a block, wall or prison. Which of these symptoms do you exhibit? When do you put up barriers? Is it out of a need to protect yourself or is it a habitual response?

Shy
Stiff
Rigid
Angry
Fearful
Grouchy
Guarded
Armored
Defensive
Withdrawn
Short-fused
Disrespectful
Unresponsive
Easily offended
Overly protective

Cold
Pushy
Clingy
Closed
Grumpy
Restless
Calloused
Hardened
Insensitive
Demanding
Thin-skinned
Thick-skinned
Overly sensitive
Snappy, lashes out
Fiercely independent

Reactions to Barriers

Sometimes you can perceive barriers by recognizing symptoms. Other times you can tell that you have run up against a barrier by your reaction. When you encounter a person's symptoms, you tend to have a strong emotional reaction. This reaction is a clue that this person has barriers to Vitamin T. Their behavior tends to push you away but "hook" you emotionally. You may feel one or more of these feelings as a direct response to another person's blocks, walls or prisons.

Violated
Agitated
Attacked
Engulfed
Rejected
Repulsed
Disgusted

Angered
Numbed
Confused
Controlled
Distressed
Discounted
Overwhelmed

For example, you have a colleague at work whom you greet daily with a cheerful “good morning” and a pat on the back. One morning, this colleague snaps back, “What’s *good* about it?” You immediately feel rejected and confused. You did not do anything to deserve this response.

If you find yourself thinking “I do not want to feel this way,” you have been “hooked.” When you experience this type of reaction, practice emotional self-defense. Ask yourself “Why am I reacting so emotionally?” Assess the situation rationally. You have a choice about how you respond to someone else’s behavior.

Realize that you are not responsible for other people’s behavior. See beyond the initial symptom and your response to it. Know that there are underlying causes that do not have anything to do with you. Once you can see the person and the pain, you will be able to “unhook” your reaction versus taking it personally. Detach and take care of yourself. Give yourself time and distance from the situation. A few deep breaths can help. If and when you feel ready, apply humor or Vitamin T.

Respecting Personal Space

Personal space is the area created by extending both arms straight out from the body in all directions. Each time you touch someone, you enter this personal space. Two people shaking hands are touching at the edge of their personal spaces. Two people hugging have

completely entered each other's personal space. Any time a person prevents someone from touching them, he or she is protecting personal space. Not wanting to be touched is ample reason to protect one's personal space.

When someone begins to enter your personal space, an instantaneous decision is made: "Is this person welcome or does my personal space need defending?" It is each person's responsibility to define and defend his or her personal space. Who we let in and who we keep out is each person's decision.

It is equally necessary to ask others if you may enter their personal space and, if so, what kind of touch is allowed. Hands, arms, shoulders and parts of the head are usually okay to touch. Other body parts such as lips, chest, thighs and buttocks are not. Always respect another person's right to refuse to be touched.

In general, a person feels that his or her space is respected when Vitamin T principles are followed. Personal space remains intact when leveling occurs, permission is granted, body language is interpreted, intentions are clear, and sensual and sexual boundaries are respected.

Each of us innocently invades someone's personal space at one time or another. Hopefully, by practicing being sensitive to others' space boundaries, we will cause fewer incidents.

The risk of reaching out to touch someone creates a possibility of body language being misinterpreted. One person may interpret an extended arm as permission to hug; the receiver may have been indicating, "Don't come any closer." If there is any doubt, state intentions. Ask permission first.

Make sure you are only dispensing Vitamin T by asking yourself: Am I being pushy? Do I have permission? Am I being too intimate? Is my touch inappropriate in any way? Does this person enjoy being touched by me? Is there someone whose personal space I am not respecting?

Space Invaders

Space invaders are people who intentionally encroach upon another's personal space. Space invaders seem to be all arms; they touch others in ways that are insensitive. Since space invaders are primarily concerned with their own wants, they rarely listen to the words or read the body language of other people. They disregard body language signs indicating OFF LIMITS, NO TRESPASSING, PRIVATE PROPERTY, DO NOT ENTER.

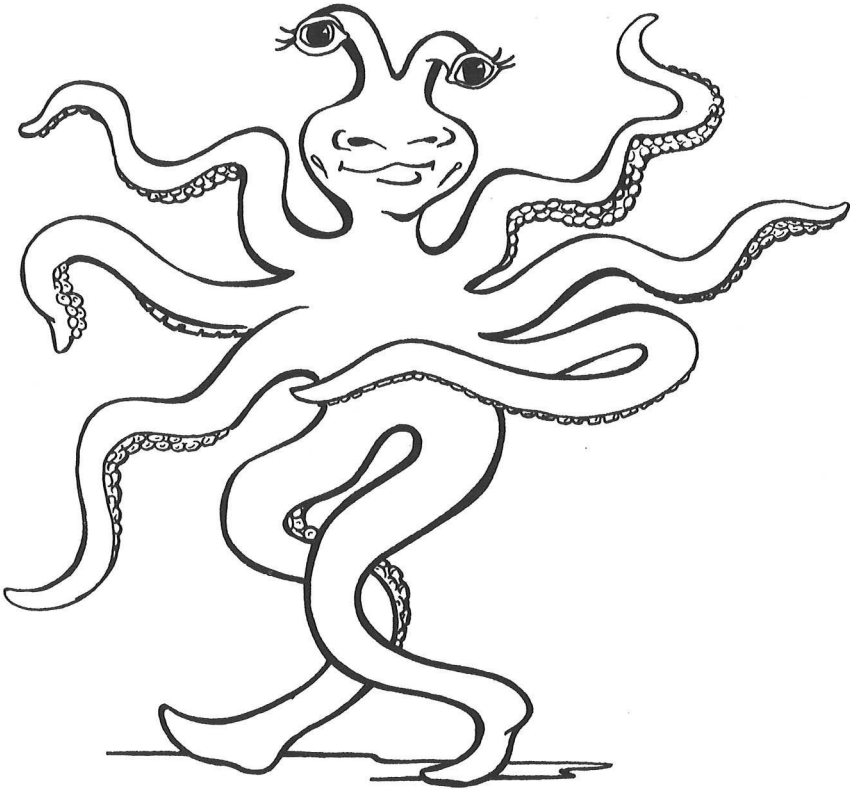
Space invaders are grabbers; they touch without permission. They are crushers; forcing too much intimacy and applying too much pressure. They are rushers; they barge into your personal space before you have time to react.

There are many reasons why people are space invaders. They may have a Vitamin T deficiency and are needy for touch. They may lack healthy touch skills because they have not had good role models. Often their own personal space has been violated. They may be in so much pain that they are not concerned with anyone else's needs. Alcohol or drugs may exaggerate an existing tendency to invade someone's space.

Invasion of personal space may be verbal, physical or sexual. The following chart will help to identify some of the characteristics of unhealthy touch commonly exhibited by space invaders.

Space Invader Tactics

Pain:	hurtful
Pace:	too fast or startling
Time:	too long
Touch:	not the kind you want
Setting:	not appropriate
Intimacy:	not at your level
Distance:	too close
Sexuality:	too sexy
Pressure:	too much or rough
Intensity:	too much emotion
Intention:	unclear or misleading
Approach:	sneaky
Sensuality:	too sensual
Frequency:	too much touch
Sensitivity:	not reading body language
Permission:	lacking
Eye Contact:	invading or staring
Abusiveness:	verbal or physical
Relationship:	too friendly



STOP

Occasionally someone may innocently try to express affection and touch you without checking first. This is not invasion, only a mistake. If a friend happens to misread your body language, a gentle reminder may be sufficient. For example, "I don't feel comfortable with you touching my hair that way. Please don't do it again." A space invader requires a firmer response.

Verbal Space Invaders

The old adage "Sticks and stones can break my bones, but words will never hurt me" is simply not true. Criticism, put-downs, yelling and harsh tones of voice affect you in a negative way. Verbal abuse invades emotional space and damages self-esteem. Everyone has the right to protection from verbal abuse. Say, "**STOP**. You can't talk to me that way. If you continue saying those things, I will leave the room."

Remember, there is no need to overly explain or justify your feelings. But it is a good idea to share such feelings one-to-one. Sometimes a note may be appropriate.

Physical Space Invaders

Everyone has the right to refuse touch any time, any place, from anyone, for any reason. If a touch is uncomfortable, communicate that information immediately. Vitamin T feels good. Any touch that feels uncomfortable is *not* Vitamin T. Feeling tense, confused or cautious is reason enough to refuse touch. Each person has the responsibility to clearly state that he or she does not want to be touched. Say, "**STOP**, I do not want you to touch me." Convey the information as assertively as possible.

Sexual Space Invaders

Sexual space invaders cross a person's sensual/sexual boundary without permission. Sexual space invasion can range from one episode to an ongoing invasion. The invasions can be in the form of verbal assaults or physical contact. The intention of the invader is either disguised or blatant. The invader's weapon of choice is intimidation. Sexual space invasions can occur at home, school, work or in public.

The following is a list of physical and verbal behaviors frequently used by sexual space invaders.

Sexual Space Invader Tactics

- sexual flirting
- sexual overtones
- pawing, pinching
- sexual innuendos
- indecent gestures
- seductive behavior
- grabbing, goosing
- pressing against you
- unwelcome advances
- inappropriate kissing
- hidden sexual intention
- frequent sexual references
- embarrassing sexual remarks
- trying to prove how sexy they are
- sexual jokes or inappropriate comments
- direct verbal propositions for sexual favors
- coercion, intimidation or pressure to have sex.

Confronting Sexual Space Invaders

Ideally, it is best to stop sexual space invaders as soon as an episode occurs. However, this is not always possible. Sometimes a person does not realize a sexual space invasion has occurred until afterwards. In other cases, a person may feel intimidated, caught off guard or unable to confront the invader face to face.

Following is a sample letter that could be used to confront a sexual space invader. Using a letter such as this one helps the individual with the difficult task of taking responsibility for confronting the space invader. The sexual space invader is presented with clear information so there is no possibility for confusion. The invader cannot delude him or herself into thinking permission to enter sexual space had been granted.

After reading the letter, the space invader knows that there will be further consequences if the behavior does not cease. Hopefully, the letter helps to prevent the problem from getting worse or necessitating legal action. In addition, there is a written record of the attempt to correct the problem.

Form Letter

To:
From:
Date:

STOP all sexual behaviors toward me immediately.

I believe your intentions are sexual. I insist that you respect my personal space. I do not want to have a sexual relationship in any form with you. I do not give you permission to touch me.

I am writing you this letter so there is no uncertainty about how I expect to be treated by you. I am leveling with you by making my boundaries very clear. Your sexual behavior is causing a distressing situation.

I hope this communication resolves this problem. If it does not, I will take more drastic measures.

STOP Techniques

Learning to protect yourself from a space invader is a challenge. It may require a direct, verbal confrontation face to face. A powerful way to protect your personal space is to repeat the following affirmation: "I insist that others respect my personal space." **STOP** the violation as soon as possible. Then, follow the guidelines below to prevent or interrupt an invasion of your space.

1. Identify any people you know who are space invaders. If possible, avoid interacting with them.
2. If you must interact with a potential space invader, use clear body language to communicate that you do not want to be touched.

3. Space invaders can be blind to your body language. If someone begins to invade your space, verbally say "**STOP**. Don't touch me." Use the firmest and most powerful voice you have. Also use your hand to indicate **STOP**.
4. Clearly state that you will not allow this person to continue treating you this way. Use a minimum of words, without explaining or justifying your position. If the person tries to engage you in a conversation about why, simply repeat your **STOP** statement. Do not respond to the invader's logic.
5. If verbal communication is not effective, physically deflect the invader's hands or body. Never allow yourself to feel embarrassed. Do not worry about hurting the other person's feelings. Your feelings come first. Your responsibility is to protect yourself.

Example: If someone approaches and tries to give you a hug, even though you have not given them permission, extend your hand as if to shake hands. Look that person in the eye to let them know you are not going to switch to a hug. If necessary, use the "stern approach": extend your arm straight ahead and point your fingers at the person's sternum. This will prevent the invader from being able to get any closer to you.
6. If the above strategies do not work, back away. Avoid contact completely. If the invader does not stop annoying you, proceed with a more severe intervention appropriate to the situation.

Who are the people who tend to invade your space? How can you avoid them or communicate your discomfort?

By practicing the **STOP** skills, people can become adept at refusing unwanted touch immediately and preventing a more serious problem from occurring.



Self-Defense for Children

Children need to be taught many skills in order to protect themselves. They must learn to cross busy streets, avoid dangerous electric shocks and know what to do in case of fire. As early as possible, they must be informed that there are people who may harm them at home, at school or in the community.

Children are susceptible to abuse from peers, older children, parents, relatives, babysitters, neighbors or teachers. The abuse may be verbal, physical or sexual. The degree may vary from mild to severe and from occasional to frequent. These ~~ouches!~~ hurt children. If

unhealed, the damage can last a lifetime. Children need to understand that they have the right to defend their personal space.

Why does this abuse happen to children? Children are especially vulnerable for several reasons. Their age, size, skills and status put them at a disadvantage. Children can be manipulated, confused and frightened by others who misuse their authority. When youngsters are taught to do everything adults say, they can be controlled by threats or violence.

Being a parent is a challenging responsibility. Most parents obtain little or no training in child-raising. When life becomes overwhelming, parents sometimes take it out on children. An adult in distress may take his or her pain out on a defenseless child. Children who are abused frequently become abusers — a vicious cycle.

Verbal Abuse

When a child is verbally abused, it feels like a slap on the face. Continued verbal abuse causes serious damage to a child's self-esteem. When belittled a child can be deeply affected. Adults need to work hard to avoid verbally abusing children. A child hearing a barrage of negative comments will tend to believe them.

If a child misbehaves, make sure the child understands that he or she is loved, but the behavior needs to change. The child may do something bad, but that does not make the child bad. Negative comments can be balanced by communicating three or more positive statements. When the ratio of positive comments is in their favor, children bounce back quickly.

Physical Abuse

When children are physically abused, they get the mistaken message that adults have the right to hurt them. Children end up feeling guilty and ashamed of their behavior. They incorrectly believe they deserve the abuse. Not only do children suffer from the abuse, they also hurt from the chain-reaction of emotional problems which ensues.

Children get confused when adults express anger. They interpret the angry feelings to mean the adult does not love them. They may feel they are totally to blame for the anger. If an adult loses control and hurts a child, the adult should apologize as soon as possible. The child needs to hear that it is not right for an adult to hurt them in any way. Any adult who is abusing a child must seek professional help.

Sexual Abuse

The frequency of child sexual abuse is a tragedy. All children, boys as well as girls, must be alerted to the dangers of sexual abuse. Any sexually motivated interaction between an adult and a child is wrong. No matter how a child behaves, no adult ever has the right to be sexual with a child. The adult is always responsible for keeping the relationship non-sexual. A child who has been sexually abused is never at fault. Sexual abuse represents a complete lack of respect for a child's personal space.

STOP . . .

LOOK . . .

LISTEN . . .

STOP

Parents need to learn to **STOP** the cycle of abuse. First, they must **STOP** believing the myth that abuse is committed by strangers. Most sexual abusers are not strangers; they are usually people the child already knows. The "beware of strangers" advice does not protect an innocent child from abuse by an adult who is supposed to be taking care of them. The caretaking relationship can allow the adult to slowly develop trust, control and power to intimidate. The child-abuser is often the last person to be suspected. Age, gender, relationship, marital status or position in the community do not provide a guarantee against abuse. Any adult who has time alone with a youngster has the opportunity for abuse. No one is above suspicion. Adults committing sexual abuse know that what they are doing is wrong. They do not want to be caught. They manipulate the child by any means to hide their crime. Often they tell the child, "This is a secret." Or they use such threats as, "If you tell anybody, I will hurt you or someone in your family." The victim becomes afraid and hides the abuse by keeping the secret.

The next task is to help children **STOP** keeping secrets. Any time a child is touched sexually, he or she must know that the right thing to do is to tell an adult. It is important for the child to continue telling adults until someone listens.

It is crucial to develop lines of communication with children for the prevention and early detection of abuse. Children need to feel there are adults with whom they can talk openly if they are being abused. Open communication between children and trusted grown-ups can pre-

vent sexual abuse. Have a heart-to-heart talk with your child. Ask him or her, "Has anyone ever touched you sexually?" Instruct the child to tell you right away if this ever happens.

When a child is touched sexually, or is asked to touch someone sexually, he or she has the right to tell the person who is acting inappropriately to **STOP**. Parents need to learn and practice the **STOP** techniques and then teach their children. Have them practice the **STOP** hand motion with you. Practice by pretending to be too rough and having the children say and motion "**STOP**." Instruct your children that whenever somebody tries to invade their space, tell them to **STOP**. If they do not, make sure to get an adult to stop that person for you. This practice may help prevent someone from abusing your children.

When a child who has been sexually abused becomes an adult, he or she will often create relationships or careers that provide access to children. Sexual child abuse is not just a crime against one child, but against all future children. We must all take responsibility for preventing child abuse.

LOOK

With physical abuse there are often signs on the body to indicate a problem. Keep your eyes open for evidence of physical abuse. Teachers and other adults who work with children need to report evidence of physical abuse. With sexual abuse, a child's behavior will often suggest that something is wrong. Be on the lookout for non-verbal signs that there may be a problem. Pay attention to body language. Children's behaviors often indicate a problem before their words do. For example, a child may all of a sudden *not* want you or anyone to touch them. Be on the alert for indirect ways a child is communicating a problem. Do not expect a child to run in crying saying someone touched their penis or vagina.

Signs that may be a cause for concern include:

- having little will of their own
- behaving aggressively or violently
- being too well behaved, nice all the time
- seeming afraid, confused and secretive
- always accepting what adults say as right
- exhibiting sexually inappropriate behavior
- acting too obediently, always trying to please
- never complaining, never sharing what hurts.

LISTEN

Talk to your child regularly about *ouches!*, space invaders and abuse. Make sure he or she understands that it is okay to refuse to be touched. Listen carefully when your child talks to you. A child's behavior may be telling you there is a problem long before it can be verbalized. When a child says he or she would rather not be with certain people, respect their wishes. Question if anyone is hurting them or touching private parts. Children must have someone in their life who protects them and is trustworthy.

Children may test you to see if you are listening. They may tell you a piece of the story and see how you react. For example, "I don't want to go to Uncle Bill's house." or "I don't like that babysitter. She's mean." Take the time to find out the whole story. Ask How? and Why? questions. For example, "I bet you have a good reason for not going to Uncle Bill's. Why?" or "How has the babysitter been mean?"

Remind yourself that children may be frightened and confused by the abuser. Go slowly. Try not to put words in the child's mouth. Remind him or her it is okay to tell you; it is not good to keep secrets. Keep assuring the youngster that telling you what happened is the right thing to do. Tell the child they are helping themselves and

other children if they tell you. Reinforce the fact that they are not “tattletales” or “snitches.” The adult who is abusing them is the one who is wrong. Promise that you will protect them.

Explain to children they are never to blame themselves if someone touches them the wrong way. It is always the adult who is wrong. Help children to establish healthy boundaries about touching. Tell them they have public parts and private parts of their body. Have them identify their private parts. If anybody touches their private parts, instruct them to tell you right away — no matter what!

Let children know that it is okay for them to touch their genitals. Explain that sometimes when bathing, or seeing a doctor, a child’s private parts may need to be touched by an adult. Even then, the adult must ask permission.

Control your anger if you suspect a child is telling you about an incident of abuse. Anger may make the child think you are mad at him or her for doing something wrong. He or she may become afraid of being punished and hide the truth. Always believe that the youngster is telling you the truth even if there are inconsistencies. Keep investigating until you have heard the whole story. The accused abuser may deny the charges. Do not assume the adult’s word is true and the child’s word is false.

Give youngsters regular doses of Vitamin T. With an abundance of healthy touch, children are less likely to tolerate abuse. Children want and need to be touched. When they become starved for touch, they become easy targets. They might settle for any touch even if it is an ouch!

STOP

U
C
H
E
S

A child's body is his or her personal property. No one has the right to touch it without permission. As adults, we must act to protect our children from abuse. An excellent educational book about sexual abuse for parents and children to use together is *A Very Touching Book . . . for Little People and for Big People* by Jan Hindman. Please look for listing in the Appendix.

"Children are fragile. Handle With Care!"

Vitamin T at Work

The workplace can provide us with a source of people with whom to exchange Vitamin T. Since people spend so much time at work, it makes sense to take care of each other while taking care of business. Healthy touch creates good morale, caring relationships and a productive work environment.

Workplace Vitamin T has a variety of healthy forms. A welcome handshake, a pat of the back for a job well done or a friendly hug as a thank you are usually acceptable. The appropriateness of touch at a workplace depends on three factors:

- the individual relationships between employees
- the formality or casualness of the workplace
- the amount of visibility to the public

Appropriate touch at work needs to be friendly, non-threatening and non-sexual. Touch at work can communicate support, appreciation, respect, encouragement and congratulations. Many situations provide opportunities for touch on a daily basis, such as:

Transfers	Illness
Birthdays	Holidays
Weddings	Retirements
Feeling stressed out	Death in family
Welcoming new staff	Project completed

All touch at work needs to be done in a professional and sensitive manner. Each workplace determines what is appropriate. Touch may be cool and formal in one company and warm and friendly in another. The challenge is to separate out unhealthy forms without losing the positive benefits of Vitamin T.

“Teamwork and Vitamin T go hand in hand.”

The following story illustrates an example of healthy touch at the workplace:

Brad's Story

When Brad worked at a county health department, a co-worker experienced severe headaches while working on the crisis line. She would frequently ask him for a five minute neck and shoulder rub. It seemed to help alleviate the headaches. At first, there were raised eyebrows around the office. People were confusing shoulder massage with sexual touch. Since this was an interaction between a man and a woman, both parties tried to keep their Vitamin T exchange clear and visible. Because the touch was kept playful and out in the open, other people began to ask Brad for tension-relieving shoulder rubs.

Carefrontation

Unfortunately, space invading situations arise at the workplace that could cause embarrassing problems. Confrontation does not have to be a serious or "heavy" experience. There are ways to confront people and still communicate caring. The following anecdotes illustrate how "carefrontation" can be used to deal with inappropriate behavior. In both situations, communication prevented a possible sensual/sexual boundary violation from occurring. Both confronters expressed their discomfort in a unique way that served to educate, not alienate, the offender.

Ted's Story

Ted is overly friendly with co-workers. His touches are too frequent, too intense and too long-lasting. He often makes comments that are off-base and tells jokes filled with sexual innuendos. One of his colleagues, Susan, tries to communicate non-verbally that she is not comfortable with his touch, but he doesn't get the message. She decides to confront him verbally in private.

Susan tells Ted that she enjoys his friendship and their working relationship, but that sometimes his manner of touch makes her feel uncomfortable. In particular she asks him to discontinue the jokes and reduce the degree of intimacy of his touch.

At first Ted is defensive, but then he realizes that Susan is really a friend and is sharing an important information. Ted thanks Susan for leveling with him and preventing a major problem from occurring.

Beth's Story

Beth comes to work wearing excessive makeup, tight clothing with plunging necklines and walking with a provocative swing. The staff brings her seductive behavior to the attention of their manager, Mr. LaRosa. He decides

to confront her in a light, humorous way.

The next day, LaRosa comes to work dressed very casually. His shirt is buttoned only half way up, revealing a hairy chest and gold chains. He wears a musky cologne. He calls Beth into his office. She finds him lounging at his desk. LaRosa says, "I have been meaning to say something to you for a long time..." Beth starts to laugh and says, "I get the joke. Are you trying to tell me something about the way I dress?" Her boss answers, "Yes, Beth. Your attire might be perfect for an evening on the town, but not for work." Beth smiles and says, "Thanks for telling me in such a caring way."

Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct establishes a clear policy for promoting healthy touch at work. It is recommended that employee groups meet with management to discuss feelings about touch. Groups may review the Code of Conduct and develop procedures for code violations. Use this book and review the concepts in this chapter, *Guidelines for Healthy Touch*. Make sure to address ways to foster Vitamin T at work, including appropriate forms of touch between men and women and between people of the same gender.

I agree to:

1. Create an atmosphere conducive to healthy touch.
2. Ask permission before touching if I have any uncertainty.
3. Honor the personal space of others.
4. Exercise my right to refuse touch.

5. Resolve differences in touch comfort levels by direct communication.
6. Exchange only non-sexual forms of Vitamin T at work.
7. Avoid invading another person's personal space.
8. Eliminate ouches!, painful touches.
9. Respect individual touch needs, histories and values.
10. Incorporate the principles of leveling and the **R.I.T.ual** of touch in all touch exchanges:
 - Type of **Relationship**
 - Degree of **Intimacy**
 - Kind of **Touch**.

Vitamin T and Stress Management

Stress

Stress is a natural part of being alive. Stress is a response to any type of demand on the body to adapt. A certain amount of challenge and change is necessary for health. Stress, when properly managed, can enrich your life. Dealing with day-to-day stress is easier with an adequate supply of Vitamin T. Stress management involves developing lifestyle habits such as regular exercise, quality time with friends and family and Vitamin T.

A person who effectively manages stress usually feels:

Alive
Alert
Playful
Energetic
Challenged
Comfortable
Enthusiastic
Ready to respond.

Warning Zone

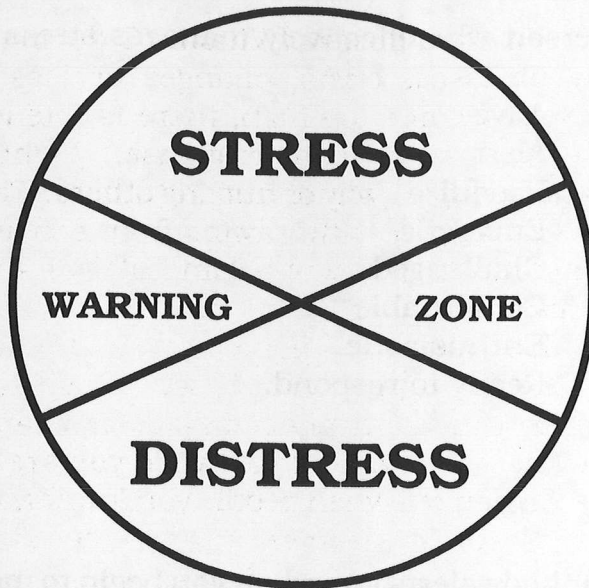
Your body alerts you when you begin to move from stress to distress. Warning signs include both physical and mental symptoms such as: headache, aching back, indigestion, irritability, sleep disturbance or attitude change. Most important is the loss of sense of humor. Symptoms of distress may be caused by too little stress, feeling “blah,” or too much stress, feeling “zapped.”

Too little stress:

Repressed
Depressed
Bored
Inactive
Too much time
Low ambition
Not enough challenge,
change
“I don’t care”

Too much stress:

Aggressive
Explosive
Impatient
Hyperactive
Not enough time
Too ambitious
Too much challenge,
change
“Don’t bother me, I am
busy”



Distress

Distress occurs when the rate of wear and tear of life is greater than the rate of rest and renewal. The normal daily grind can build until it becomes distressful. Distress is painful; it hurts, both physically and emotionally. Distress can lead to disease, disaster, despair, destruction or even death. Distress occurs when the mental or physical strain of life becomes too great to handle.

A distressed person feels:

Hopeless
Dispirited
Humorless
Overwhelmed
Loss of resilience.

We need extra doses of Vitamin T during distress caused by illnesses, crisis, changes or loss. When distress levels become too high, there is a tendency to react with the fight-or-flight response. Fighting may mean pushing people away or hurting others. Flight may result in distancing or withdrawing from people. Apply generous amounts of Vitamin T and allow its magic to make distress disappear.

How does your body alert you that you are headed for distress? During stressful times, which friends or family members can be depended upon for Vitamin T? Is there someone who can hold you when you are having a bad day? Can you tell when people you know are in their warning zones or in distress? How can you provide intensive care with doses of Vitamin T?

“Vitamin T is a protective shield against distress.”

It is a well-known fact that the medical profession has been the subject of much criticism and attack in recent years. This criticism has been based upon many grounds, some of which are entirely valid, while others are entirely unfounded. The purpose of this article is to present a fair and impartial view of the medical profession, and to show that it is a profession of high character and high ability, and that it is entitled to the respect and confidence of the public.

The medical profession has always been a profession of high character and high ability. The members of the profession have always been men of high moral and intellectual standards, and they have always been devoted to the service of their fellow-men. They have always been men of high character and high ability, and they have always been devoted to the service of their fellow-men.

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THE MEDICAL PROFESSION AND THE PUBLIC

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Chapter 3:

Levels of Sensual Touch

Vitamin T Levels 1-7

The first half of the book explored personal touch history and introduced the Guidelines of the Vitamin T philosophy. This section explains the seven Vitamin T levels: Public, Professional, Social, Friendly, Family, Special and Personal.

The Vitamin T levels provide a system for practicing the **R.I.T.**ual of touching. The Vitamin T level name refers to the type of **Relationship** you have with the people you touch. The numbers, one through seven, correspond to the degree of **Intimacy** appropriate for that type of relationship. In general, the intimacy increases as the level numbers increase. Finally, a multitude of suggestions are listed about the kind of **Touch** to be shared at that level.

Type of Relationship	Degree of Intimacy	Kind of Touch
Public	T-1	introductions with handshakes
Professional	T-2	touch dispensed by professionals
Social	T-3	greetings, talk touch, dancing
Friendly	T-4	hugging, playful touch, comforting
Family	T-5	cuddling, hugging, kissing
Special	T-6	holding, sleeping, hugging, dance
Personal	T-7	massage, bathing, time in nature

The suggested activities help create a balanced variety of Vitamin T in your life. Use the activities to heal any ouches!, prevent deficiencies, and achieve the US Goals for Health and Happiness. While practicing, remain aware of the leveling concept. For example, if you feel like hugging someone and they offer you their hand to shake, respect that person's lower degree of intimacy and shake hands.

Please understand that this system is meant to provide a general framework, not a rigid classification. Each person must evaluate the degree of intimacy and the kind of touch that is right for the situation. With all Vitamin T exchanges, take into consideration each person's comfort level.

T-1 Public Touch

Public Touch is a touch exchange occurring in public. The touch may be a handshake, receiving change or being inadvertently nudged in a crowd. The touch may be brief or lengthy.

Handshakes

Long ago, the handshake was a sign of peace and respect. The extended open hand indicated the lack of a weapon; the shake was proof that there was nothing up one's sleeve. In the past, only men shook hands. Women, if they were present at all in public, were acknowledged with a tip of a hat, a bow or a nod of the head. Now as men and women work and play together in professional and informal situations, women need to cultivate the handshake with men and with other women.

Hello and goodbye handshakes are the most common type of public touch. As you read, think about the various kinds of handshakes you have received. Then think about how you can adapt your handshake to communicate your warmth, openness and respect.

An extended hand lets strangers and acquaintances know that someone is reaching out in friendship. We shake hands when being introduced, when greeting for the first time or to let people know that we are really glad to see them.

In preparation for the handshake, make eye contact, smile and say hello. These three elements signal our intention to make a connection. We then extend our arm and make physical contact as our hands touch. The hand clasp occurs at the place where our personal spaces meet. A simple handshake makes acquaintances out of strangers. We feel connected and welcome. It is now more comfortable to move to the level of interaction of Social Touch.

Handshakes provide a great deal of information to both parties. Here are some suggestions for giving a positive and meaningful handshake:

- Establish eye contact before shaking hands.
- Be aware of your pacing. Is the other person ready to shake hands? Reach out slowly and gently toward the other person to honor their personal space.
- Touch with your voice by vocalizing a greeting.
- Be aware of the distance between you and the person you are greeting. The straighter the arms, the more formal the handshake. The more bent the arms, the friendlier the handshake since the distance is shortened.
- Grasp the entire hand, not just the fingers. Make sure to get your hand all the way to the web between the thumb and forefinger and then shake.

- Be aware of the rhythm of the shake. Not so fast that it seems hurried, but not so slow that it seems lethargic.
- Maintain the handshake for a couple of seconds, long enough to make solid contact.
- The pressure should be firm without being bone-crushing. A firm handshake indicates interest as opposed to one that is limp and apathetic.
- The touch is friendly and warm.
- Your hand usually feels warm and dry. However, occasionally it may be cold from nervousness, coming in from outside or holding a cold drink prior to the introduction. Use sense of humor to remedy the situation.



There are some handshakes that do not feel very friendly. The "limp fish" is hard to forget; the hand feels cold, clammy and boneless. The reaction is to back off and wipe your hand, maybe even shudder when you feel this handshake. The "death grip" feels like a power play; it is too intense, too long and feels like your hand is in a vice. The "pump handle" feels as if the person is trying to prime a pump to raise water from a deep well. It is a long, jerky handshake that just goes on and on. The "hit-and-run" handshake is so short it leaves you feeling like it never even happened.

In a class by itself is the "creepy crawly" handshake. It feels as if the other person wants to touch more than your hand. There is an uncomfortable, creepy sensation that seems to crawl up your arm. This handshake may be accompanied by eye or voice contact that is too intimate and intensifies the negative feeling of the handshake. Often there is sexual intention on the part of the giver.

Practice straightforward, meaningful handshakes. Try to stay present with the handshake rather than thinking about the next thing you have to do or worrying about remembering the person's name. Put out your hand more often and practice transmitting warmth and friendliness through your touch.

Public Touch Exchanges

Out in public, people may be nudged by others in busses, subways, airplanes, theaters, athletic arenas or lines. These touches are usually accidental. Most people avoid touching others in crowds. If you do happen to bump or brush against someone, a polite "excuse me" usually eases the situation. Comfort levels vary. Some people enjoy the energy and excitement of a crowd. Others may feel uncomfortable, even claustrophobic.

Public spaces present some challenging situations. The next time you are in an elevator, notice the polite silence as everyone files in, turns around to face the elevator door and makes themselves as small and unobtrusive as possible. The more crowded the elevator gets, the harder it is to maintain your own physical space. Are you comfortable? Do other people seem to be comfortable as well? If not, is there something you can do to improve the comfort level of the people in the elevator? What would happen if the elevator malfunctioned and you were stuck for a few hours? Think of something you might do to help yourself and others feel more at ease by interjecting humor.

Don's Elevator Story

Don is a friend who stands an imposing six-foot-four. He loves to go into an elevator and stand facing the other riders noticing the apprehensive looks on their faces as the doors closed behind him. Being a warm and gregarious fellow, he smiles, says hello and usually starts telling jokes. By the end of the elevator ride, people are laughing and interacting.

Notice how you feel if you are inadvertently bumped in public. Do you smile and accept apologies graciously? Or do you respond in a negative manner that causes both of you to feel bad? It is your choice how to respond. Some great friendships have begun as a result of an accidental nudge in a public place.

Any public exchange of goods or services provides an opportunity for Vitamin T. The simple act of receiving change can be a positive exchange of touch. Frequently cashiers place their hand under ours while giving change, and may even call us by name. The touch of the eyes and the touch of the hand all provide healthy Vitamin T.

Think about your last purchase. Did you do something to brighten the day of the person who rang up the purchase? Did that person do anything that made your day more pleasant? You have the choice of a positive or negative experience in the marketplace.

A touch on the hand, a smile in the voice and direct eye contact as you conclude a transaction can provide healthy Vitamin T to both participants.

Telephone Exchanges

The telephone is a wonderful tool with which to keep in touch. Keep in mind that the sound of your voice actually touches the ear of your listener. That touch may be angry, aggressive, hostile, demanding, or pleasant, funny, uplifting and comforting. It can be exciting and motivating or dull and listless. A good receptionist creates a friendly, warm, connection to the company. Have you ever made a selection based on a receptionist's vocal quality and enthusiasm? Fine tune the touch of your voice each time you use the telephone.

People Watching

Public areas and events provide us with great opportunities for people watching. We can observe body language, moods, energy levels and learn a lot about other people by simply watching. Keep your eyes out for different forms of Vitamin T offered and received. It is possible to see Vitamin T being exchanged in the form of hugs between friends, families holding hands, lovers walking arm in arm or a person rubbing his own shoulder. Watch the body language that precedes the touch exchange. Notice the reaction after the exchange occurs.

Notice how you feel in spacious public areas and among crowds. How do people respond to you? What do you want your body and actions to communicate? By noticing what you like and dislike in public space interactions, you can begin to make choices that more fully communicate your message.

T-2 Professional Touch

Professional Touch is Vitamin T dispensed as part of a service rendered by a paid professional. The services may be in the areas of medical or dental care, teaching, child care, personal care and emergency care. The essential word in these fields is "care" and yet this aspect is sometimes missing. In the "caring professions," sensitivity to the individual client as the receiver of touch is essential. Professionals can enhance the quality of the service they provide by understanding the therapeutic value of touch. As consumers, we have a right to be treated with compassion and concern as well as technical expertise.

Everyone at some time receives professional touch. Ideally, professional touch is a blend of technical skills and respect for the individual together with attention to the positive effects of human touch.

In some cases, a relationship with these professionals is established and maintained over time. At first, the relationship is strictly professional. As time passes it can become more friendly; then Vitamin T coming from this person feels more natural and comfortable.

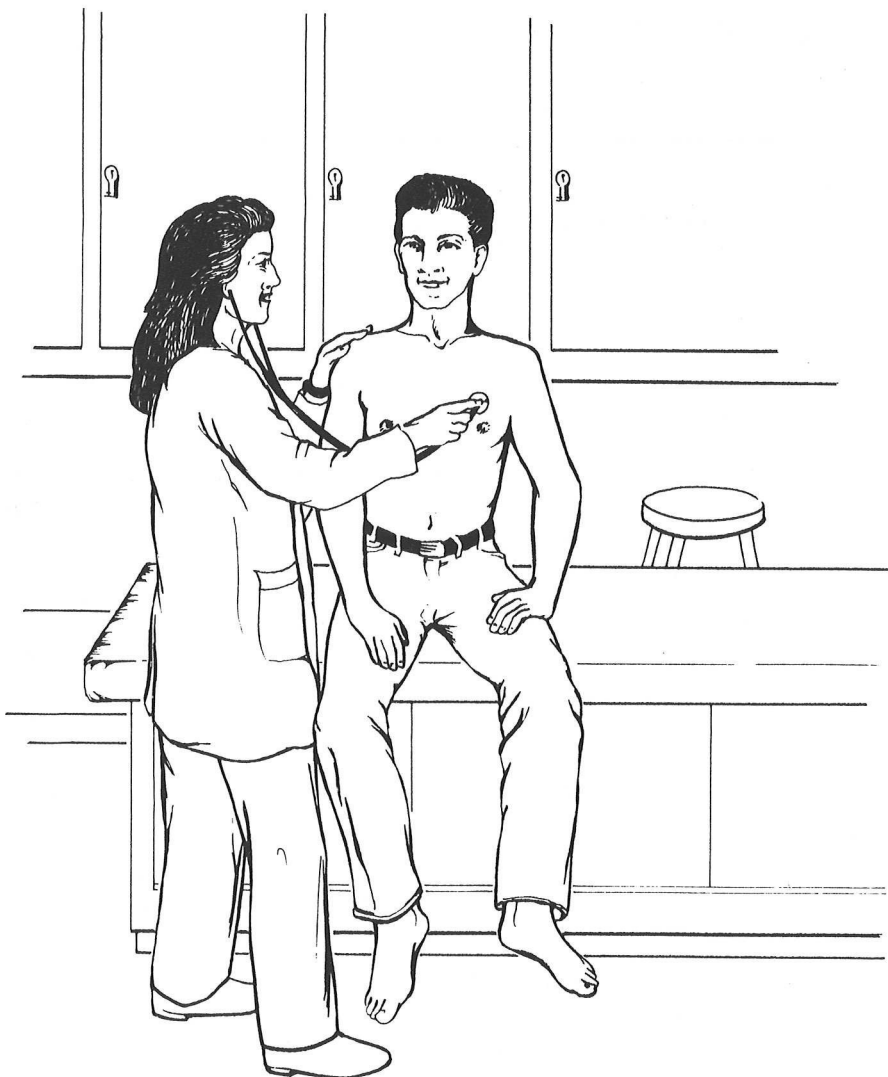
Medical and Dental Caregivers

Frequently, health caregivers are associated with pain. Injections, stitches, blood tests, root canals and mammograms are intimidating procedures. The negative associations need to be balanced with positive interactions with patients. To reduce apprehension, the human touch needs to be present. Doctors and nurses who show genuine warmth, who support their patients with a hand to hold or a listening ear can offset the harsher aspects of technology. Patients get well when healing touch transmits the caring concern the caregiver feels for them. Often, Vitamin T is needed just as much as a treatment.

As a patient, you have the right to ask for the kind of Vitamin T you want. The best way to get needs met is to communicate them. If you want a hand to hold while undergoing an uncomfortable procedure, ask for it. Or, if you experience a physical examination that feels a bit too rough or mechanical, then gently say something to the practitioner. You deserve to be touched in a way that feels comforting.

The health care professional can also help you feel more at ease by being sensitive to your fear of pain. Telling you in advance what to expect reduces your anxiety level. For example, it is helpful when a dentist explains that you will feel a sharp prick as she anesthetizes your tooth prior to filling it. It is also helpful if she tells you how to communicate if something causes pain while working on your mouth. This allows you, the patient, to feel more in control and less anxious about pain. It is important to remember that procedures that are routine for the dentist are not routine to the patient.

Too often, we avoid going back to a health care provider because of the way we have been treated, and yet we do not tell him or her why. Although difficult to do, it is our responsibility to communicate our concerns, needs, likes and dislikes to the professional. It is important to give feedback to initiate changes. Then, based on the response we get, we can choose to continue with that person or switch to a more responsive professional.



"Physician, heal thy touch."

Sometimes, medical professionals are overwhelmed with time constraints and responsibilities and cannot provide much-needed Vitamin T. In those cases it is up to friends and family members of the patient to augment care, especially in a hospital setting. The impact of touch is so effective it can be transmitted even though the patient is asleep or in a coma. It can affect the vital functioning and healing capability of the patient.

Steve's Story

Steve was in a coma for many months. His mother, Peg, made a practice of combing Steve's hair and massaging his hands and feet each day. Music was always playing in the background. Peg would invite friends to visit her comatose son. She encouraged them talk to him and hold his hand. The nurses eventually came around more often and paid more attention to Steve, too. One day, he awoke from the coma. Peg believes Vitamin T played a major role in Steve's complete recovery.

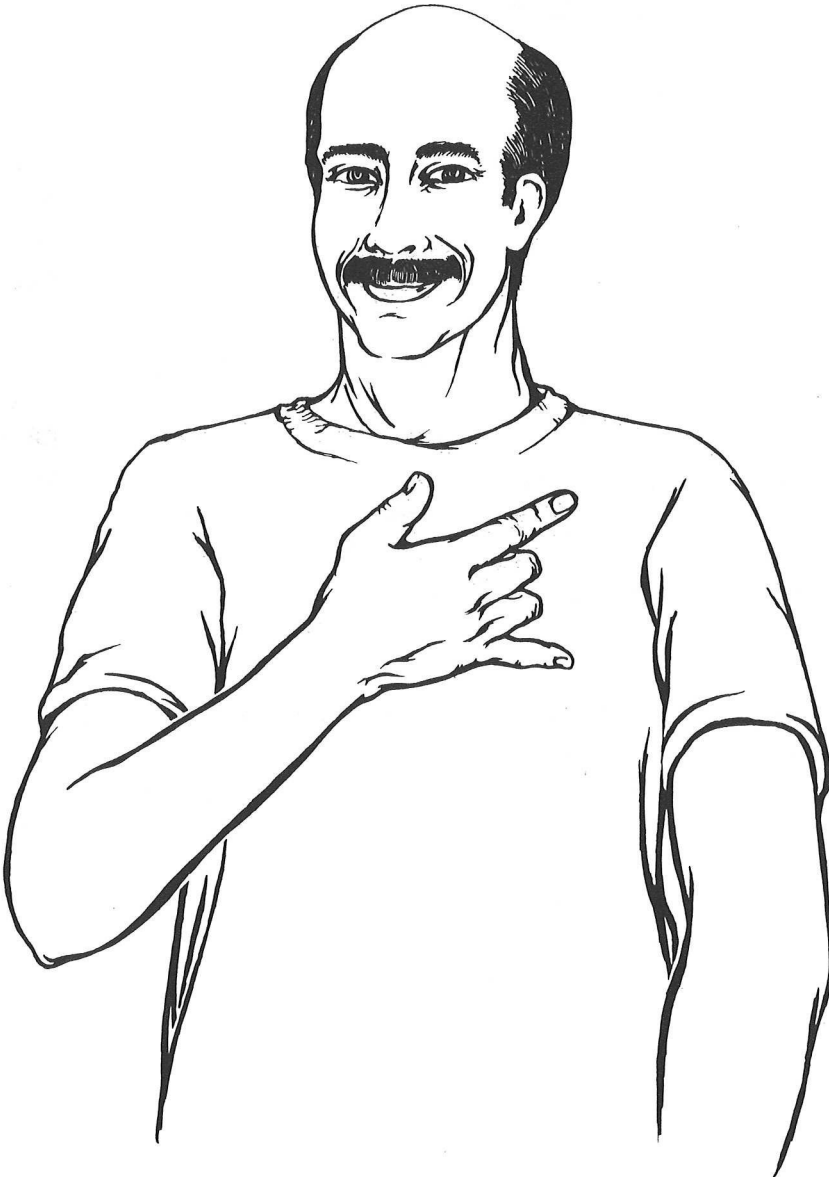
Child Care Professionals

Child care professionals have a potent impact on children. They take on many roles, parental as well as educational. Teachers, aides, coaches, babysitters and day care workers need to find a balance between professional competence and professional friendliness with their students. Warmth, compassion and understanding can be communicated in the ways they make contact with children.

Teachers who are comfortable with Vitamin T often model appropriate touch to their charges. They use healthy touch to encourage and reinforce. They need to respect each child's comfort level and move to that comfort level by giving the child choices about receiving

touch. For example, "Anyone who would like a good-bye hug, please see me at the door on your way out."

Teachers who are not as comfortable touching children directly can rely on supplemental touch by making positive contacts with children through other senses. They can touch students with a smile, a wave hello, a soothing voice or the American Sign Language sign for "I love you."



Responsibilities of child care professionals include:

- Creating a balance between setting limits that involve physically handling the child with opportunities for Vitamin T. Keep in mind that the amount of positive, healthy touch needs to outweigh the disciplinary touch by at least three to one.
- Teaching students how to touch each other in healthy ways such as shaking hands, hugging, scratching backs, rubbing shoulders and exchanging hand massages.
- Teaching students how to stop others from giving them ouches!
 1. Say, "**STOP**, that hurts."
 2. Make the **STOP** sign with your hand.
 3. Step back.
 4. Leave the situation and find a supportive adult.
- Identifying students with Vitamin T deficiencies. Some students will clearly show a lack of healthy touch in their lives. Others may have difficulty responding positively to touch. Provide them with opportunities to get Vitamin T from you, other students, classroom pets, dolls or stuffed animals.
- Apply the leveling concept to all students' needs. A teacher's desire to hug a certain child must be tempered if a child really does not want a hug. The teacher must respect the child's personal comfort level.

Tina's Story

Tina was a kindergarten student who avoided being touched. The granddaughter of a hearing-impaired woman, Tina knew sign language. She got herself in trouble frequently for not following rules and for hurting other children. The teacher began a program of positive reinforcement every time she noticed Tina following classroom rules and exchanging healthy touch. One day, the teacher flashed her the ASL sign for "I love you." Tina grinned from ear to ear, approached her teacher and, for the very first time, asked for a hug.

Personal Care Professionals

Personal care professionals are ready sources of Vitamin T. Everyone can relate to how soothing it feels to have someone wash your hair and massage your neck and scalp. This is a good place to begin to increase your intake of Vitamin T if you now have a deficiency.

Hairdressers, barbers and manicurists are in the category of personal care. They touch you as they cut and style your hair or give manicures. Touch needs to communicate respect and concern for your well-being. When it does not, tell the personal care professional your concerns.

Emergency Care

Emergencies require immediate attention that often necessitates touching a person. The goal is to improve the situation as rapidly as possible. Often, there is a need to comfort, console and reassure the person in trouble. The "good Samaritan" in us is called forth to render whatever assistance is needed until the professionals arrive.

There are situations where keeping a calm disposition, noticing body language and paying attention helps. In emergency situations, people are generally much more receptive to Vitamin T. Here are some hypothetical situations in which Vitamin T comes to the rescue:

- Your grandfather has a bad fall and injures a hip. You comfort him, help keep him calm while you call for an ambulance. You then bring pillows and blankets to make things as comfortable as possible without moving him.
- At the dinner table, your great aunt starts complaining about indigestion and a pain in her chest and left arm. Realizing she has a history of heart problems, you recognize this may be a heart attack. You ask another family member to call 911. You talk soothingly to her, stroke her hand and keep reassuring her that help is on the way.
- While dining at a restaurant, a client of yours starts choking. His hands are reaching for his neck. You stand him up, reach around him from behind and perform the Heimlich maneuver. You succeed at expelling the lodged piece of food.
- In the middle of dinner, you hear a banging at the door. You open the door and see a frightened woman begging you to let her come in. She has just been beaten and robbed. You put your arm around her and escort her inside, offering to help her and keep her safe.
- Your office mate gets an emergency call at work. Her parents have been killed in a car accident. You go to her and hold her and stroke her while she cries. You provide physical and emotional support.

Taking Care of the Caregiver

It is important that the caregivers also receive healthy touch. Commonly, members of the “helping professions” give, give, give and rarely replenish their supply of Vitamin T. We encourage caregivers to take a daily inventory of the positive touches they receive. Make it a habit to exchange Vitamin T with other healthy sources so that you both get your daily allowance. The quality of the care you deliver can definitely improve.

Georgia's Story

Georgia had been a patient of Dr. Bo for many years. At the end of her last dental appointment with Dr. Bo, Georgia said to her, “You know, I saw a bumper sticker that said, ‘Have you hugged your dentist today?’ Would you like a hug?” To this, Dr. Bo replied, “Are you kidding? I really could use a hug.”

As recipients of care, we can help replenish the professional's supply by giving that much-appreciated hug, handshake or pat on the back. It can make their day!

Professional Massage

In the last several years, massage therapy has become widespread as a form of treatment. Massage, which has been a healing modality for thousands of years, has only recently gotten the recognition it deserves. After earning credibility with Olympic athletes, professional athletes and dancers, the health benefits of massage are finally recognized. Physicians refer patients for massage treatments for auto accident injuries, migraine headaches, chronic pain and stress management. Some employers are offering on-site massage at the workplace as a healthy alternative to the coffee break.

Many people see licensed massage therapists (L.M.T.s) for much needed megadoses of Vitamin T. With massage, people learn how to relax and get back in touch with their bodies. Massage increases circulation, reduces muscle tension, strengthens the immune system and increases range of motion. Emotionally, massage helps people feel more connected and less alienated. For some, massage is the only major source of Vitamin T in their lives. Single clients say they really depend on the nurturing touch they receive from regular massage. Studies with premature babies indicate that massage improves weight gain and immune response. More recently, the healing power of massage is being shared with terminally ill patients. Massage allows them to feel supported and worthy of touch.

Although the licensing procedure has made it much easier to locate a well-trained, professional massage therapist, massage is as individual as the people performing it. It is beneficial to try out several massage therapists until you find one that is right for you. Look for a combination of skill, style and personality that suits your individual needs. Recommendations from friends and colleagues provide a good starting point. Fees for this service vary.

Increase Vitamin T by treating yourself to a full-body massage, a marvelous megadose. If you have never had a massage, schedule one as soon as possible. Massage is one of life's greatest joys. Use your birthday as a reason to schedule two or more massages in a row. The effects of a marathon massage last for weeks. Invite a friend to join you in taking a course in massage at a community college, hospital or massage school. Learn to be sensitive to another person's needs and wants in a safe, supportive environment. Instructors are particularly careful to ensure appropriate touch.



THE JOURNAL OF THE



T-3 Social Touch

Social Touch involves occasional, light contact with co-workers, neighbors, distant relatives and acquaintances. Social Touch is expressed at events such as dances, picnics and parties. More traditional touch occurs in reception lines at weddings and funerals, to express congratulations, greetings or condolences. Handshakes, pats on the back, games and dancing are accepted ways of adding Vitamin T to your social life.

Greetings

The first way people connect socially is with a greeting. When you say "Hello," "Welcome" or "Good to see you" an important contact is established. Even gestures like waving to a neighbor, smiling to an acquaintance in a check-out line or asking a distant relative how they are represent Vitamin T. These seemingly ordinary actions acknowledge a person's presence.

Handshakes

Social handshakes tend to last longer and involve more contact, than public handshakes. A handshake can transmit that you are especially happy to be in the presence of someone you know. A handshake is an easy way to exchange Vitamin T with people you know socially. Remember to smile and look the person in the eye. Here are some ways to add more fun to the basic handshake.

Hand Sandwich: Add more feeling by cupping your other hand around the hand you are shaking. This increases the intensity and length of the handshake. With a Double Decker, both people cup the other person's hand.

Viking Handshake: For something a bit different try grasping the other persons forearm just above the wrist. The other person's hand naturally closes around your forearm. This method decreases the distance between you and strengthens the bond. The amount of Vitamin T you absorb increases.

Ongoing Handshake: This handshake lasts more than just a few seconds. Usually executed while talking, you continue holding the hand you began to shake. This form of touch leaves both of you feeling close and connected.

Shake and Hold: This handshake entails shaking hands and placing the free hand on the person's elbow or shoulder. Contact is maintained and doubles the Vitamin T received because both hands are included in the touch.

Spaghetti Handshake: This is a great one to do with children. Grip the child's hand securely and then shake and wiggle the entire arm from side to side. It is delightfully silly and guaranteed to get giggles.

Left-handed Shake: Instead of always reaching out your right hand, give your left hand a turn. The other person reflexively starts to extend the right hand but switches to the left.

Uplifting Handshake: If you like to laugh, try jumping up as you shake hands. The other person can respond by jumping up too. It looks as if you are lifting each other up off the floor because you are so light. It takes some practice and coordination. Jump for joy.

Talk Touch

Talk touch is an extension of talking with one's hands. Talk touch involves touching the other person's hand, arm or shoulder while conversing. Contact is light and brief. This non-threatening verbal and physical touch is often utilized for emphasis or punctuation. It tends to have a subtle, positive effect on the interaction.

Pats on the Back

Pats on the back are a safe way of showing concern, support or appreciation for someone. This style of contact is a way to acknowledge a job well done or provide encouragement. An ideal pat is gentle but firm and does not surprise or startle the receiver. Keep in mind that what feels okay to one back, may not feel okay to another.

Games and Sports

Games are an invigorating source of Vitamin T. Young children touch each other with an innocence that is a natural part of play. They play patty-cake, cat's cradle and other hand games. Older children play tag

games, hiding games and various ball games most of which use some touching. Adults tend to play games less and less as they grow older and become more self-conscious about touching.

In sports there are plenty of opportunities for wholesome contact among players like huddles and hand stacking. Pats on back and butt indicate a good play. End-of-game line-ups, when members of both teams shake or slap hands, signify a game well-played.

Spend time playing games with children. Participate in "contact sports" that are fun and safe, with a healthy spirit of competition. Examples of games like these are Hug Tag, Three-legged races, and Pyramids. For great ideas about games that are fun for both children and adults, refer to the books *New Games: Play Hard, Play Safe, Nobody Hurt* and *Playfair* in the Appendix.

Dancing

Social dancing is a fun and acceptable way to integrate touch with exercise, movement, rhythm and sound. Dancing gives you the chance to enjoy your body in motion and to express yourself. It provides a comfortable way to communicate nonverbally with others. A rich way to relate to people of different ages in a social setting is to dance together.

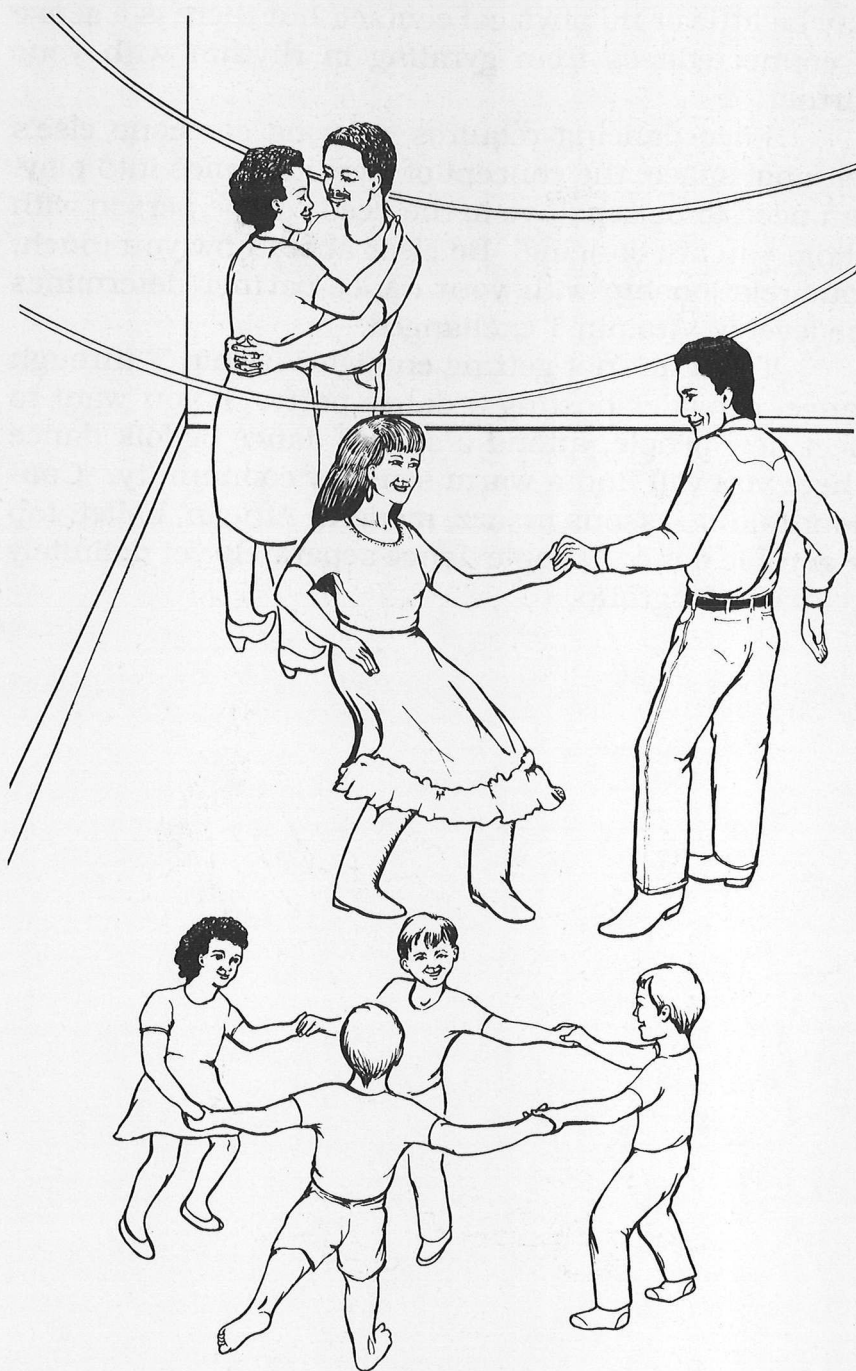
When you dance, you may meet new people or find it is a unique way to relate to people you already know. For small children, dancing is a way to play together. For teens, dancing is an acceptable way to connect with the other gender.

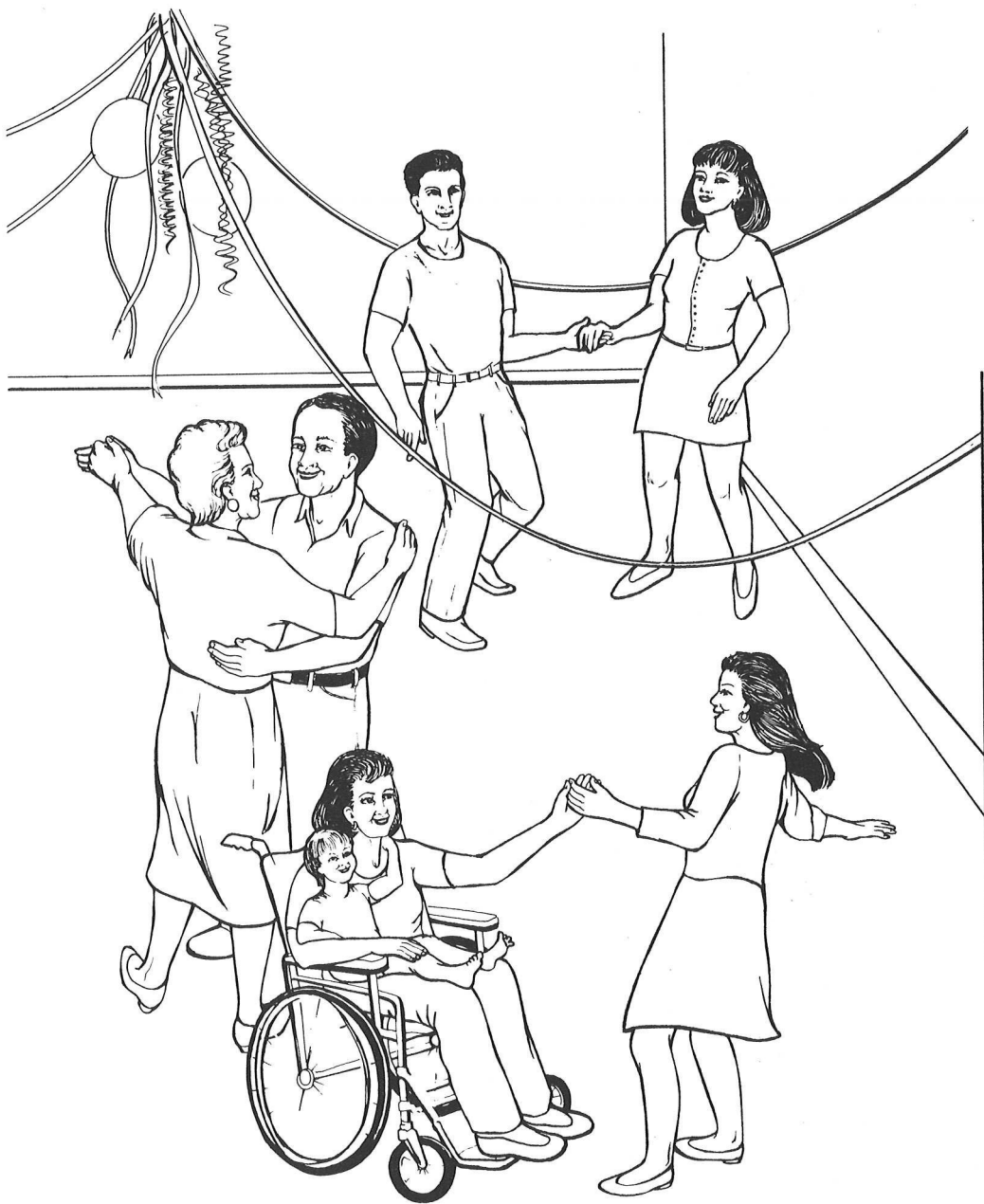
Dancing is one of the best ways to learn to feel comfortable with touching. The amount of touch involved varies according to the type of dancing. Partner dancing like folk, square, ballroom or swing usually involves hand holding and some body contact. People may have one partner for an entire dance or many different partners.

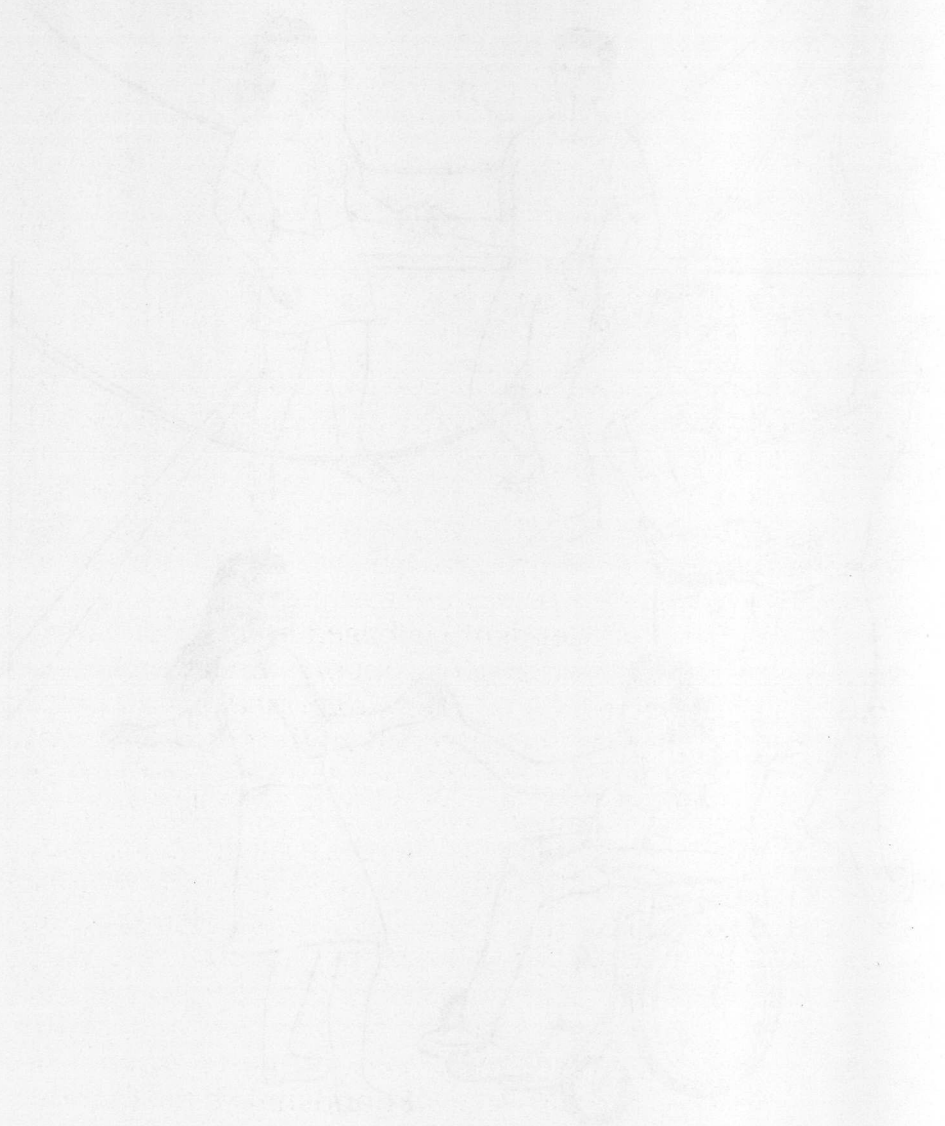
In other dance forms, such as rock and roll, there may be little or no physical contact, but there is a sense of connectedness from gyrating in rhythm with your partner.

Since dancing requires entering someone else's personal space, the concept of leveling comes into play. You need to be sensitive to the needs of the person with whom you are dancing. Be clear about how you touch. Your relationship with your dance partner determines the level of Vitamin T exchanged.

If you are not getting enough Vitamin T through dance, consider hosting a dance party. If you want to meet new people, attend a square dance or folk dance where you will find a warm sense of community. Consider taking lessons in jazz, modern, African, ballet, tap or aerobic dance. People dance separately yet definitely feel part of a group.







T-4 Friendly Touch

Spending time with friends provides natural opportunities to exchange Vitamin T. Friends, buddies and playmates are the people with whom we have frequent contact and fun. We join together actively to enjoy sports, games, exercise, dancing, camping and vacations. We deepen the level of intimacy as we touch friends in greeting, consolation or celebration.

The bond of friendship is based on mutual caring and concern. Friends can support, encourage and extend compassion to you. Friends connect from a place of openness and honesty. A touch on the shoulder, a pat on the back or an especially warm handshake helps to express the closeness we feel.

Between young friends there is a great deal of body contact. Touch comes easily and unconsciously to most youngsters. Children often hold hands, have their arms around each other and may comb each other's hair. They jump for joy holding on to each other. They tickle, wrestle and play games involving touch. They are expressive with their feelings and their touch. Older children have their own forms of touch like special handshakes for friends. Teens touch by hugging, holding hands and dancing. Adult friends may walk arm in arm, rub another's shoulders or hold a hand for support. The Vitamin T exchanged between friends sends a clear message, "I am glad you are in my life."

"Friends are special people who encourage our growth, enrich our self-esteem and by their presence, give comfort."

Hugging

The word hug originates from an old Norwegian term "hugga," meaning to hold tight and to soothe. The hug has two basic arm positions. The classic form is right arm up, left arm down in a criss-cross. The other is a high-low formation. One set of arms is on top of shoulders; the other set is around the waist. The high-low is good for huggers of different heights.

Hugging occurs easily and naturally as part of Friendly Touch. Hugs are a way for two people to open and connect with each other. A hello or a goodbye is a common time to exchange a hug. Every hug is unique. Each one involves different amounts of body contact and lengths of time. The type of relationship determines if the contact involves cheeks touching, shoulders and upper body touching or full torso hugging. A hug with a new friend is quicker and with less contact than with a longtime, dear friend. A hug to congratulate feels lighter than a hug to express empathy. A hug to provide nurturing may last longer than a goodbye hug to a friend.

"A hug welcomes a friend into our heart."

To initiate a hug, simply assume the T formation. Place your feet together and form a T with arms outstretched. This position says, "I'd like to give you a hug." in body language. Go slowly to allow the other person time to decide if they want a hug from you. Whenever there is uncertainty, ask if a hug is welcome.

There are some hugs that do not feel good. These are not healthy Vitamin T hugs. The “Are we done yet?” hug is rushed, with little contact or intimacy. A “smothering hug” is too rough, too long or too intense. You are hugged so hard it seems the air is being squeezed out of you. You feel as if your personal space has not been respected. With the “baby burping hug” the hugger seems nervous, uncomfortable and pats your back rather than hugging. The “seductive hug” involves too much body contact and too much intimacy for the huggee’s comfort level. It shows a mismatch of intent.

There are many kinds of hugs to suit a variety of occasions. Level to the type of hug that is comfortable for both of you. Try some of the following hugs and notice the different amounts of Vitamin T exchanged.

Upper Body Hug: This hug connects head, shoulders and arms. It is a light, brief hug with less contact than a full body hug.

Side Hug: This hug is performed side-to-side with arms around each other’s shoulders or waist. The Side Hug ranges from short to long depending on the relationship and comfort level.

Cheek Hug: A very friendly and cozy hug where the emphasis is on the cheek to cheek contact. You can actually feel the other person’s smile. Cheek hugs are a good way for people who are standing to hug people who are sitting or occupying a wheel chair. The cheek hug can be delivered from the front or the side.

Teddy Bear Hug: This is a soft, playful hug with lots of body contact. Arms are wrapped around the other person’s shoulders, back or waist. Vitamin T in this form feels extra warm and affectionate.

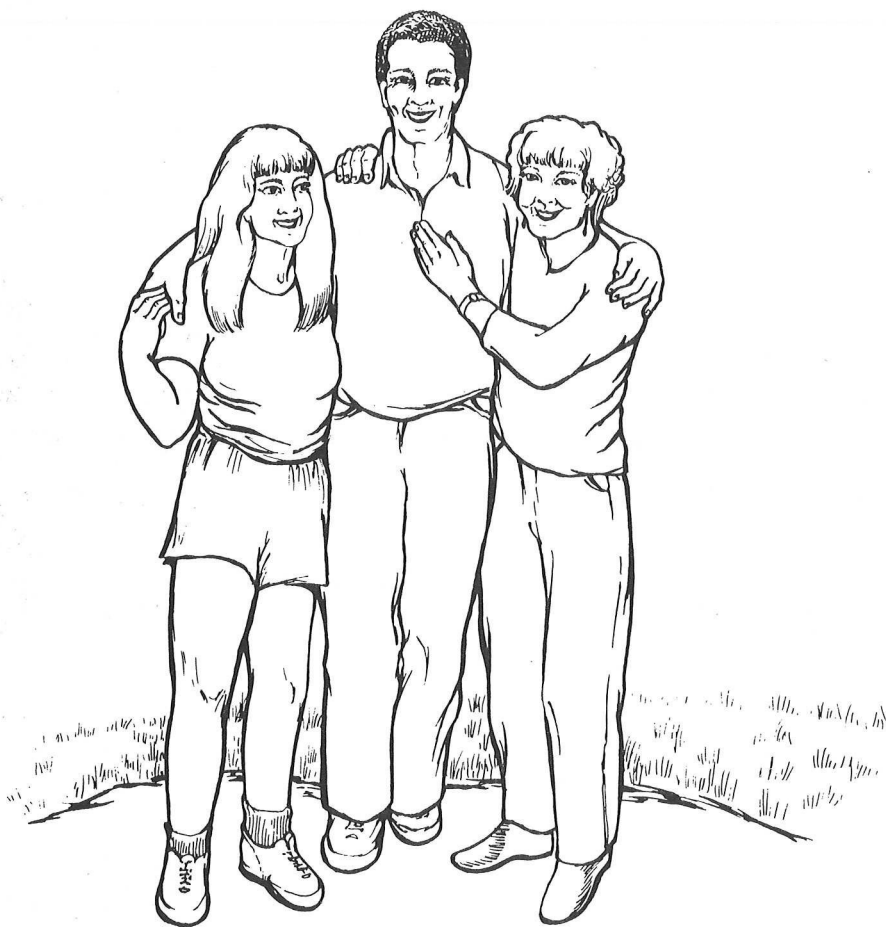
Dancing Bear: When you combine a Teddy Bear Hug with movement you have a Dancing Bear Hug. It involves spontaneous, playful rocking and swaying of the bodies. It is a freeing, energizing hug for people who want rhythm with their hug.

Hug and Rub: Huggers wrap their arms around each other's backs and rub the muscles along either side of the spine. This hug soothes, nurtures, relaxes and is suitable for hug breaks. Ahh!

Oasis Hug: When you have been without Vitamin T for days, this hug from a friend is like an oasis. You drink in the life-giving Vitamin T to quench your thirst. It involves hugging and leaning heads on each other's shoulders until each of you feels relaxed and refreshed. It can be done standing or sitting side by side.

Breathe and Hug: Great for close friends, this hug involves full body contact in a position comfortable enough to slow down and relax. Each person breathes deeply, relaxes and releases tension. A variation is the Hum and Hug. Hum as you hug and feel the subtle effects of a voice massage.

The Huggle: This is a special hug in which three or more friends all hug at once side to side or in a circle. The Vitamin T multiplies and gets passed around. For a real treat, try a Huggle with someone in the middle.



Kissing

Kissing among friends involves brief touches on the cheek, lips, forehead or hands. These kisses show affection and respect in a non-romantic way.

Many people sign notes and cards with "XXXOOO" for kisses and hugs. Why not hug and kiss your friends? It may take some practice if you are not used to it. Try greeting both male and female friends with enthusiastic kisses on both cheeks. This is the custom in some foreign countries.

Dancing

Dancing sets our spirit free. Dancing provides an opportunity for longer doses of Vitamin T. It is a common ritual, a merging of clans, a symbolic uniting of people. The dance floor provides a safe, friendly and playful place for friendships to deepen as we move in harmony with the music. We really get to know people when we dance with them. In fact, many people connect at a deeper level while dancing than in conversation.

Our culture presents a scarcity of opportunities for this longer lasting, more intimate touch with a friend. We have created arbitrary customs that determine when it is okay and not okay to touch. We must create additional ways to exchange friendly and intimate Vitamin T.

Consider this scenario. Imagine walking up to a friend at a party at which no music is playing and asking, "May I hold you close, put my hand on your waist, and move with you in a rhythmic way for the next five minutes?" The person would probably be shocked at your request. The other guests would begin to whisper about what the two of you were doing. However, when the magic of music is added, friendly touch in the form of dancing becomes acceptable.

Walking Touch

Walking hand-in-hand combines exercise with an extended, meaningful conversation with a friend. The message is “I am glad to be with you.” Going for a long walk or window shopping with a friend is a time to reconnect by sharing the joys and sorrows that have transpired since your last visit. Walking and talking arm-in-arm with a friend is comforting.

Trading Massages

In just five minutes you can give a friend a shoulder, neck, back, hand or face massage. This is a simple, nurturing, relaxing and tension-relieving gift for a friend.

To begin, ask your partner to bring their attention to the area that you touch. Suggest that they breathe deeply as you gently massage the muscles. Ask them to relax and let go of the tension as they exhale. Massage by gently moving the underlying muscles in a slow and soothing manner. If necessary, use oil or lotion to help smooth the surface tension. Have your partner let you know if the pressure is too light or too firm. Tell them they can “purr” if it is just right.

Massage Circle

This is a group activity that never fails to produce “oohs” and “ahhs.” The group forms a circle. Each person massages the head, neck and shoulders of the person in front of them. After a few minutes of pure enjoyment, the group turns the other direction and massages the person who was just massaging them.

Double Foot Massage

Two friends sit opposite each other and give each other a foot massage at the same time. Use two ends of a couch, chairs facing each other or opposite sides of a hot tub so that both people are comfortable. It feels luxurious, especially knowing how good it feels to both of you. For those with ticklish feet, use firmer pressure.

Foot Washing Ceremony

In olden days, weary foot travelers would be revived and welcomed at their destination with a foot washing ritual. A foot washing is a splendid gift of relaxation and caring for a friend. Done in a peaceful, undisturbed atmosphere, a foot washing is a chance to let our hands do the talking. All you need is warm water, two towels, soap, salt and lotion and a bowl large enough for two feet. To give a friend this gift, follow these steps:

1. Soak your friend's feet in warm, sudsy water.
2. While wet, rub salt all over each foot. Salt scrubs and softens the foot as the water transforms the salt from coarse to fine. Make sure there are no cuts on the hands or feet before applying the salt.
3. Rinse well afterward to remove all salt granules from your friend's feet and your hands.
4. Dry each foot gently and carefully.
5. Apply lotion to your hands and massage one foot at a time. Keep the other foot warm by wrapping it in the dry towel.
6. Notice how soft and silky your hands feel after administering Vitamin T to your friend's feet.

What kinds of Vitamin T exchanges occur when you are among friends? Try some of the new ones to supplement your daily requirements of Friendly Touch.

T-5 Family Touch

Family Touch is touch occurring in the context of the basic family unit. A family can consist of two or more adults with or without children or a single adult and one or more children. Living together in a household provides a variety of opportunities for Vitamin T. Family Touch focuses primarily on how children are touched in the family environment. The Vitamin T exchanges among adults in the family are discussed in the next level entitled *Special Touch*. Children learn touch by observing how adults touch and interact among themselves and with children. A positive role model helps children develop healthy sexuality and self-esteem. An abundance of Vitamin T exchanges allows children to form healthy touch traditions. Touch accompanies playing and laughing, soothing and consoling, bathing and dressing. Children associate the feel of a warm body with security and belonging.

Family Touch may be exchanged with friends who feel like family, or "family of choice." As far as relatives are concerned, you may feel closer to some relatives than others. The touch exchanged with distant relatives may be at the Public or Social Touch level. With closer relatives, Friendly Touch may feel appropriate.

Babies need megadoses of Vitamin T to reassure and protect them. Their first lessons about love and safety are transmitted via touch. It is essential to their growth and development that babies are cuddled, cooed, cradled, carried and cared for. Too often Vitamin T decreases as children grow up. Children are not as dependent on touch as are infants. Yet it is essential that they receive Vitamin T. Touch provides children with a cellular sense of being loved and nurtured.

Family vacations and outings create close quarters in cars, tents, recreational vehicles or motel rooms. These times are ripe for oodles of Vitamin T which literally brings the family in touch.

Family Traditions

Think about your most recent family reunion. Some of the relatives greeted each other in a formal manner. Others may have hugged, kissed and laughed as if they were long lost friends. How were the children greeted? How much and what kind of touch is acceptable in your family?

Most families have touch traditions and rituals that are unique to their family or culture. Touch traditions may be the way to say goodbye as you leave for the day or greet each other when you get home. It may be how you hold hands and say a blessing before a meal, the way you are tucked in before going to sleep or how hugs or kisses are exchanged.

What types of touch traditions did your family of origin have? Were you touched for being good or bad? For being healthy or sick? Or for being safe or hurt? Were you rewarded with touch for positive or negative behavior? Do you still expect a reward of touch or close physical contact during those times? If you were comforted when you were ill as a child, do you want to be similarly comforted and cared for as an adult? If you are feeling isolated or insecure, do you want to be held and assured

that you are safe? Or is your family tradition to deal with those feelings by yourself?

What are some unique traditions you are creating in your family? Do you model healthy giving and receiving Vitamin T?

Hugging

One of the best things about being in a family is that there can be lots of opportunities for hugging. Hugs help people feel loved. The close body contact feels warm, connected and safe. Children thrive on feeling they belong with adults.

Suggest that each family member tell their favorite way of giving and receiving hugs. Ask the children to describe how their friends hug in their families. If you do not already have hug traditions, create them. Explain to grandparents and other relatives that you place great value on touch as a way to esteem children. Hugging can be a challenge for parents and grandparents who do not have an existing tradition of hugging. There are great benefits to both children and adults when they give and receive hugs on a daily basis.

Give hugs at eye level. To hug a small child, lift him up to hug or squat down to his level. The same holds true for older people who might be seated or wheelchair bound. Get to their level to hug them. Remember to be sensitive to the individual who prefers not to be hugged and respect his or her style.

Create a balance of hugs and discipline for children. The message needs to be, "I may not like the behavior you are expressing, but I like you." A hug can express the caring behind the discipline in a way that can be felt as well as heard. Ideally, a child needs to receive three doses of Vitamin T for every disciplinary action.

All of the hugs in the *Friendly Touch* section are also great family hugs. The following are hugs children especially like.

Hello Hug: This hug and greeting acknowledges that you are happy to see this person.

Goodbye Hug: This hug sends the huggee out into the world with the message that they are loved.

Enfolding Hug: This hug is done while a child is involved playing, reading, doing homework, etc. The adult approaches from behind and enfolds the child.

Lap Hug: This is a great hug to combine with reading stories, telling tales or teaching hand games to small children. The child sits on the adult's lap which feels like a throne of warmth and affection.

Sitting Hug: This hug is appropriate for older children who might not be interested in other kinds of hugs. The sitting hug is executed by placing one arm around the shoulders of the person sitting beside you. It can happen subtly on a couch, at the dining room table or in a movie theater.

Hug Sandwich: This is another favorite. Two people hug each other with a child in the middle. Like the icing in an Oreo cookie, the child gets the best part of the hug!

Kissing

Family kisses are affectionate and playful. They are exchanged to say good morning, good night or to welcome someone home. Kisses are also exchanged at gatherings and celebrations. Parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins still want a touch connection with children as they enter their teens. Playful family kisses help maintain that touch.

Here are several playful varieties of kisses:

Blowing Kisses: Although it is given at a distance, the message gets through. The receiver gets to imagine feeling the kiss.

Butterfly Kiss: The kiss is given with the eyelashes. The softest and gentlest of kisses, it is performed by one person at a time. The giver touches his or her eyelashes to the receiver's cheek and blinks rapidly. It tickles and the receiver laughs and giggles. Then the kiss is returned.

Eskimo Kiss: This kiss is done with noses instead of lips. You look into each other's eyes, rub the tips of your noses from side to side. This kiss is bound to produce laughter.

Clown Kiss: This is like the Eskimo kiss except it is more exaggerated. Pretend you are clowns with red, rubber balls on your noses. You move from one side of the nose to the other in a wider swing and a faster rhythm.

Goldfish Kiss: This is a funny little kiss. You and your partner form your lips in a loose "O" like a goldfish and then connect lips. Imagine how two goldfish kissing in their bowl would look.

Hand Kiss: Kissing the back of the hand connotes respect and admiration for the owner of the hand. Kiss the hand, accompany it with a theatrical bow, and embellish it with audible, smacking sounds.

Porpoise Kiss: Both people purse their lips tightly and suck in slightly while making a high, kissing sound. It is a kiss with a "higher porpoise."

Raspberry Kiss: The Raspberry is a form of Vitamin T administered with the lips to a fleshy area of skin like the back or stomach. This kiss splatters, tickles and vibrates like a trumpet. It sounds as funny as it feels. Toddlers and babies really enjoy this kind of kiss.

Kiss-It-And-Make-It-Better-Kiss: This is a kiss with a mission. It is often used in preparation for applying a band-aid or attending to a hurt body part. There is a strong association with a comforting kiss as a healing aid.

Bald is Beautiful Kiss: Bald men have the advantage of greater surface area for kisses. This is a great way to show affection for a bald man. This kiss also brings to the kisser many years of good luck.

Triangle Kiss: In this kiss, three people try to get noses out of the way in order for all three pairs of lips to meet in the middle. Once you have mastered this one, try a Quad Kiss.

Adryan's Story

Our son Adryan and his friend Jesse came home and wanted to demonstrate a new form of Vitamin T they had created. In the past we had given each other "cheek," short for Cheek Hugs. He placed his cheek against mine and started tickling me by moving his tongue against the inside of his cheek. It evolved into a new kiss form they called "Tongue in Cheek." I laughed and said, "This feels like safe, french kissing." We laughed so hard our cheeks hurt. It may be the silliest kiss ever invented.

Family Dancing

Music, rhythm and touch combine in an enjoyable spirit of play when families dance together. Pleasant dance experiences as a child will increase the probability of dancing as an adult. Dancing is quality time and a great source of Vitamin T for family members.

Parents may begin dancing with their infants in their arms as a way to soothe and quiet them. Then, parents can pick up the small children and slow dance with the child between them. As the child gets older, it can stand on the parent's feet to get the feel of dancing.

Dancing can begin with games such as "ring around the rosie" where they sing as they dance. It combines music, motion, singing, fun and touch. Ice skating and roller skating provide the same opportunities for fun family touch while in motion.

Adults and children dance at family celebrations including weddings, holidays, parties and picnics. Introduce your family to social dance by attending cultural celebrations in your community. It is a great way to learn other customs of touch in a safe and fun environment. Dance can be a vital source of Vitamin T for family members of all ages. Give your family the gift of dance.

Maggie's Story

I remember dancing with my dad as a very small child by stepping on top of his feet and moving along to his rhythm. My dad also showed me how to rhumba at the tender age of ten. Some of my fondest memories include dancing with him.

Massage with Children

Massage is a megadose of Vitamin T for children of all ages. The touch is gentle pressure while kneading the underlying muscles in a back and forth or circular motion. The motion is slow, rhythmic and very soothing to both giver and receiver. Use oil or lotion to prevent pulling or stretching the skin.

Infant massage has gained popularity in the last few years as a way of comforting and relaxing a baby. As you bathe or dress your infant, take a little extra time to massage the hands, arms, feet and legs to help the baby feel the connection to you as well as to its own body. The change of a diaper can be transformed into quality time if you massage the back of the neck, shoulders, soles of the feet as well as the baby's buttocks. It becomes a nurturing time for the infant.

Bathe with your infant. Allow yourself to relax in a tub of warm water with the infant lying on your chest. You may experience a strong sense of bonding and connection in the warm water. Try to feel the place where your body ends and the baby's body begins. Carefully massage your baby as you wash him or her.

Toddlers and pre-schoolers spend a lot of energy using newly developing muscles. Massage helps these dynamos to slow down a bit. Try massaging their hands, feet, back, face, neck or head as you teach them the names of those parts of their body. Massage helps them wind down and fall asleep more easily.

Children like to be massaged to soothe sore muscles, cramps, headaches or growing pains. As they go out into the world, they still need to feel the link to parents. Massage allows parents to demonstrate the message, "I care."

Teenagers often want to feel grown up and self-sufficient, yet occasions arise where they do want Vitamin T from their parents. They may not know how to ask for touch. Rub your teen's shoulders while watching television or wake her up with a back massage.

Good Nights

It is important to make bedtime a relaxed time to increase the absorption of Vitamin T and to promote deep sleep. Since you will not see each other for several hours, give children enough Vitamin T to carry them through the night. Some infants go to sleep more easily if they are held and rocked as they drift off. Others need to have a parent lie down with them in order to fall asleep. Sometimes children need to have a parent sit with them or hold their hand until they fall asleep. Gently tap a child all over with your fingertips. It feels tingly and enjoyable, without being ticklish. The important element is that the children feel the touch connection to a parent.

Take a nap with a toddler. This can be a very relaxed time to cuddle with the child as you both drift off to sleep together.

Many children have a favorite memory of being carried and plopped into bed. Being carried creates warm, fuzzy feelings at bedtime. Children look forward to going to bed when it is Vitamin T time.

What bedtime rituals occur in your home? Do you tuck your child in at night? Do you take advantage of story time as a great opportunity for cuddling? Do you hug or kiss to say good night?

Sleeping Companions

In certain cultures, entire families sleep together until the children are teens. Some children like to sleep together or with a favorite stuffed animal or doll.

Betty's Story

Grandma Betty has a holiday tradition. She gives her total attention to one grandchild at a time for 24 hours during the holidays. The grandchild gets to choose how to spend the entire day. Betty makes the child's favorite foods and they eat it in whatever fashion the child desires. Sometimes they picnic on the floor. Betty buys special pajamas for herself and each child and makes a big production of the grandchild getting to sleep with Grandma for this one night of the year.

Silking

Silking is a new term for running your fingers through someone's hair. The motion is repeated over and over, from the roots of the hair up and out. Feels heavenly! This activity may be combined with brushing, combing, braiding and playing with the hair as an enjoyable Vitamin T activity. It works like a charm before bedtime for weary grownups or wound up youngsters.

Playtime

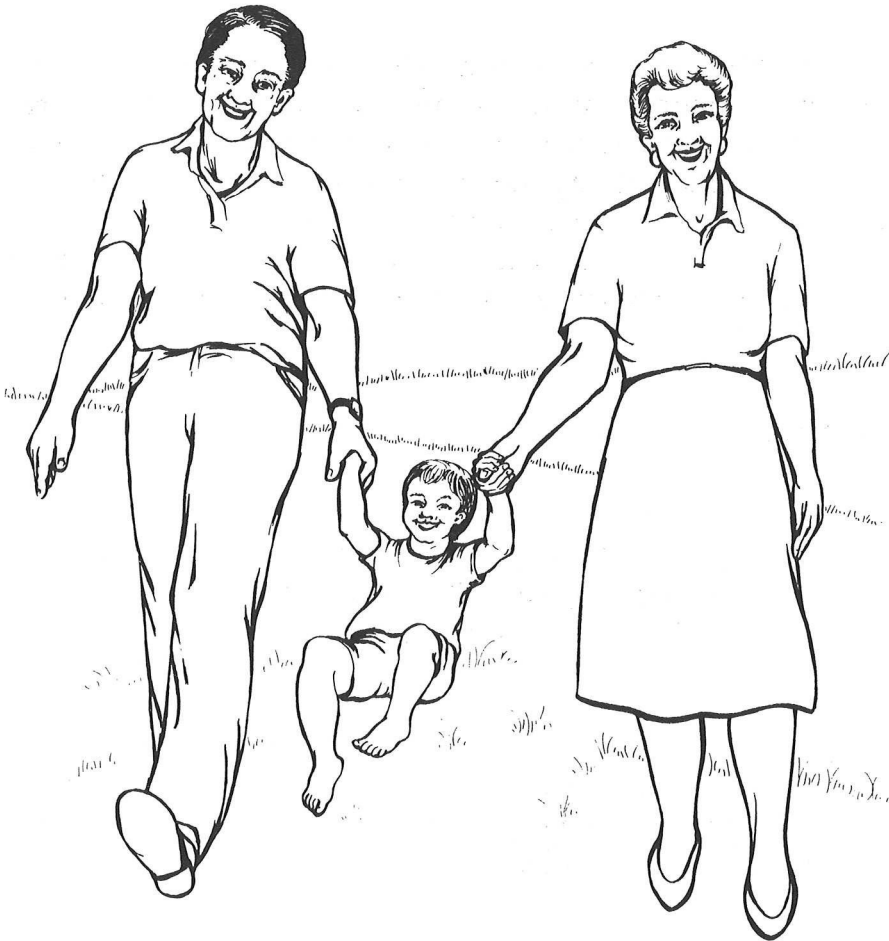
Kids love to be tickled, wrestled with, picked up, twirled around, carried and placed on our laps. Almost anything becomes a game if it involves fun, laughter and Vitamin T. Here are some playtime ideas filled with Vitamin T:

Ankle Weights: A fun way to play with little ones is to have them sit on your foot, wrap their arms and legs around your leg and cling while you walk around. Try it with two kids, one on each foot!

Crab Walk: This is more fun than a horsey ride. You are on all fours with your stomach facing up. The child sits on your belly as you skirt around backwards, forwards and sideways. This ride always produces belly laughs for crab and rider.

Hide and Seek in the Dark: The room is totally dark. Find your partner by using your sense of touch.

Human Swing: Little ones enjoy walking between two adults, holding their hands and being swung off the ground.



Staying in Touch

There are times when we cannot be physically close to family members. Letters and phone calls are an important long distance form of Vitamin T. Communication with parents, grandparents, children and siblings is a way of staying in touch with family around the world.

Here are some suggestions of ways to send Vitamin T long-distance.

- Funny cards
- Sympathy notes
- Flowers and gifts
- Family newsletters
- Cartoons from newspapers
- Videotapes of special events
- Post cards from exotic places
- Computer notes and graphics
- Short notes on pretty stationery
- Birthday cards and holiday cards
- Cards to congratulate or celebrate
- Cards that express difficult emotions
- Homemade cards, drawings, doodles
- Newspaper clippings of mutual interest
- Notices of congratulations or celebration
- Family pictures to put on the refrigerator
- Audio taped letters instead of written ones

Bob's Story

When Bob was traveling around the country, he wrote a letter to his Dad. Bob thanked him for being such a great father. Bob received a return letter thanking him for the kind words. Later, when he talked by phone to his mother, she shared the significance of the letter her husband had written. It was the first letter he had written in 35 years! The last letter he had written was to his parents while on active duty during World War II.

Child Contact

One of the US Department of Health and Happiness goals is to have a variety of touch sources from people of all ages. Children are great teachers and gracious receivers of Vitamin T, especially in the realm of touch. As adults, parents, grandparents, and relatives, we have the opportunity to share Vitamin T with children. Healthy touching lets children know they belong. We get great touch in return when we hug, dance or play with a child.

People who do not have children living in their homes may need to create opportunities to exchange Vitamin T with children. If you do not have children of your own, invite them into your life.

Here are some possibilities for contact with children.

- Become a Big Brother or Big Sister.
- Play games with neighborhood children.
- Coach a team in a sport of your choosing.
- Baby sit for children of friends or neighbors.
- Volunteer at a day care center, school or community center.
- Participate in an "Adopt a Family" program as offered by some church groups. Families who want grandparents, aunts, uncles or cousins are introduced to people who wish to fill those roles. They become families of choice and may get together for holidays and special occasions.

"Fill yourself with an abundance of Vitamin T and share your supply with the new generation."

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T-6 Special Touch

Special Touch communicates the unique feelings you have for an intimate friend, partner or spouse. Hugging, kissing, cuddling, holding and massage foster a deep sense of being alive and connected. Special Touch creates a feeling of wholeness, "I have someone to care for and someone cares for me." When adults exchange enriching touch, the bond of trust is strengthened.

Special Touch has a profound effect on health and happiness. The bulk of nurturing occurs at this level. Special Touch can be comforting, soothing or fun. At the Special Touch level the degree of intimacy is high, yet non-sexual. If mutually agreed upon, Special Touch may develop into Sexual Touch.

Special Touch is more accessible when people live together as a couple. It is important that this kind of touch not be taken for granted. For those who are single, it takes conscious planning to have an intimate friend with whom to share Special Touch. When there is not a special person in your life, it is important to seek out Vitamin T from other sources like family and friends. The goal is to have a steady supply of healthy touch as part of your daily life.

There is an intricate connection between self-esteem, the loving care we give to ourselves, and our ability to absorb Special Touch. When we believe we are lovable, receptivity to Special Touch is enhanced. When our self-esteem is low, we are less receptive to loving touch that is offered. Our self-esteem is enriched when we make Special Touch a priority in our life.

“Surround yourself with special people.”

A lack of Special Touch results in feeling lonely and out of touch. People may stay overly busy or numb themselves with food, alcohol or drugs to avoid lonely feelings. Special Touch is too important to leave to chance. There are ways to increase the dosage when you find yourself showing signs of deficiency.

The following stories show how two people created plans to increase Special Touch in their lives.

Patti's Story

Patti and John have been married for seven years. During their courtship, Patti and John could not keep their hands off each other. There was plenty of Special Touch and Sexual Touch exchanged. After they had two children, Patti started noticing that the amount of touch between John and herself had decreased over time. They were busy raising the children and working on their careers. In fact, Patti realized that the majority of touch they exchanged happened when she and John were being sexual.

Patti decided she wanted more healthy touch in her life. She wrote an action plan to create a variety of sources of touch. Patti did not want to depend on John to provide all of her touch needs. She wanted to respect John's touch comfort level without trying to make him change, and still get her own needs met. She looked at different Vitamin T levels and decided to increase her dosage in each one.

Patti's Action Plan:

Friendly Touch: I will reach out to my friends who also like to exchange touch.

Family Touch: I will continue to hug and cuddle my kids. I will re-establish a hugging tradition with my parents.

Special Touch: I will explore John's touch history with him and share mine to better understand our differences. We can work together to add more Special Touch ways of relating.

Personal Touch: I will nurture myself and make time for daily exercise, hot bubble baths, and grooming.

Sexual Touch: I will clearly ask John for what I want and encourage him to do the same. I will playfully try to rekindle that original spark between us by scheduling longer periods of time for closeness.

Victor's Story

Victor has had a difficult time since his divorce two years ago. He feels lonely and only gets to see his son on weekends. Some of his friends sided with his wife during the break-up, so he feels abandoned. Victor is aware that he has a deficiency of Vitamin T at most levels. He developed this action plan:

Victor's Action Plan:

Social Touch: I will join the Hike and Bike Club to expand my social contacts.

Friendly Touch: Most of my sources of touch in the past have been my mother, other women, girl friends, and former wife. I will join a men's group that plays contact sports to get male touch. I will find other men who are single parents to plan activities involving the kids too.

Family Touch: Since both my son and I need to giggle, laugh and play more, we will spend more time camping together. We love to make up ghost stories as we snuggle together in our tent.

Special Touch: I deserve to get what I want from a relationship. I will make a list of the qualities I seek in a Special Touch person and look for a friendship that might develop into a committed relationship.

Personal Touch: Since I spend too much time working inside, I plan to take better care of myself by spending more time exercising outdoors and working in the yard.

This next section focuses on touching hands and head, special forms of hugging, kissing, cuddling, holding and nocturnal forms of Vitamin T. Some of the suggestions may be very familiar to you. You may find yourself thinking, "Oh yeah, I used to do that." or "Why don't we do this anymore?" Some will be new and different. Take a chance and add more Special Touch to your relationship.

Hands

Hands have a starring role in the exchange of Vitamin T at all levels. The hands are unique tools for conveying, "I share my warmth because you are special in my life." Traditionally, people hold hands while walking, watching a movie or communicating an intense

feeling. By stroking the hand, intertwining fingers and cupping your hand on another person's hand, you communicate caring and understanding.

Hand Feeding: For a lot of laughs and fewer utensils to wash, try feeding one another while picnicking or at home.

Quiet Reflection: Spend a few moments in a lovely garden or park just sitting and noticing your surroundings while holding hands.

Hand Massage: This is a wonderful way to reward a hand for all the work it does. Hand massages feel luxurious and have a relaxing effect on the entire body. All you need is hand lotion. Focus on the fleshy parts of the hand and fingers, especially the palm area. Gently squeeze and pull each finger from the base, up over the knuckles to the fingertip. Massage the wrist. Stroke between the tendons on the top of the hand.

Cold Hands, Warm Heart: Hands can sometimes be as much as ten degrees lower in temperature than other parts of the body. Use both hands to sandwich and warm your partner's cold hand if he or she is tense, upset, angry or frightened. By holding and stroking someone's hand you share your warmth and show concern.

Hair and Scalp

Notice how many times people touch, pat or stroke the hair or top of the head of someone they like. People in the developing stages of relationships often touch the hair to communicate interest and affection.

Brushing: Having your hair brushed can be one of the most sensual experiences ever. Usually, we only have this done for us when we are little. Once we grow up, the ritual stops except for occasional visits to our hair-dresser.

Braiding: If you have long hair, let your partner experiment with interesting ways of braiding your hair. Use colorful fasteners, combs and brushes.

Styling: When you are feeling relaxed and creative, give your partner a new hair style. You may discover another side of their personality.

Rubbing: Gently rub and scratch the scalp with fingertips or fingernails in a soothing manner.

Shampooing: An ultimate experience is letting your partner shampoo you while in the shower or bath. Applying shampoo, scrubbing the head and rinsing the hair feels invigorating to both giver and receiver.

Bald is Beautiful: Fifty percent of all men lose their hair. Many are the brunt of jokes. Bald men have more exposed skin surface on their heads, and they are more sensitive to the elements. Bald men are particularly receptive to Vitamin T in the form of massage.

Faces

Faces are made for all kinds of tender touch. They enjoy being stroked, kissed and held. A face massage is another way to apply Vitamin T. Place a bit of lotion to your hand and warm it by rubbing your hands together briefly. Then apply it to your partner's face gently by smoothing it across the forehead, over the cheeks, down the sides of the nose and across the chin. Always use very gentle pressure without pulling the skin.

Face Massage Hints

- Stroke the skin of the forehead from eyebrows to hairline.
- Press gently around the eye sockets and under the cheek bones.
- Using fingertips, rub the temples in a soft, circular motion.
- Massage the muscles of the jaw and, if necessary, remind your partner to relax those muscles as much as possible.
- Stroke the skin over the lower jaw and around the ears.
- Gently squeeze and massage the ears.
- Finish by lightly tapping the face all over with the fingertips.

Hugging

In the Special Touch category, hugs are usually longer lasting and have more contact than in the previous levels of Vitamin T. Hugs communicate affection, esteem and gratitude. When we hug our Special Touch person, we surround them with our love.

Hugs help us to connect for lots of reasons: to say, “See you soon,” “Drive safely” or “Have a good day.” Special Touch hugs can be front to front, front to back, side to side, sitting together, standing or lying down. Whatever position you are in is the right position for a hug.

Try these three Special Touch hugs. The hugs can be practiced until you feel that they truly impart what you are feeling. Be sensitive to the responses you get from your hugs. Ask your Special T person for feedback about how you are doing.

The Embrace: The embrace is a gentle, warm, full frontal hug. You are glad to be in each other's arms feeling the love you and your partner share.

Comforting Hug: This hug is welcome at the end of a hard day, during a crisis, during sad times or disappointments. It is a frontal hug easily embellished with stroking and caressing. Swaying movement may be added.

The Long Hug: This hug may happen for any reason. It is a front-to-front, enfolding, appreciating, loving, relaxing, releasing, surrendering hug. Forget the rest of the world and let all your troubles drop away as you melt into the loving arms of your partner. You are glad to be together. You feel a physical and almost spiritual connection. You are happy to have someone to hold and share this moment. Enjoy the fullness of this hug.

Kissing

A Special Touch kiss communicates, "I'm glad you are in my life." Special Touch kisses are a playful, affectionate way of exchanging touch anytime. Kisses are non-romantic ways to say hello, good night or good-bye. Go beyond lips and kiss cheeks, foreheads, tops of the head, hands, necks or shoulders.

Hugging gets a lot of attention. We see bumper stickers that remind us to hug every day such as: "Have you hugged your kid today?" "Arms are for hugging" and "Hugs not drugs." It is time to restore kissing to its rightful place in the art of touch. Kissing by itself offers a delightful dose of Vitamin T to Special friends. Refer to Kissing in the *Family Touch* section for fun ways to kiss.

Cuddling

Cuddling is the action of tenderly snuggling up to another person. It provides physical and emotional closeness and a way of simply being together. Cuddling can occur while standing, sitting or lying down. In the standing posture, cuddling situations present themselves while waiting in line or admiring a beautiful sunset. A popular form of cuddling occurs while seated on sofas, loveseats, at the movies, on airplanes or in cars. A well-known form of seated cuddling is placing your head on your partner's shoulder. In the horizontal position, you may be molding into each others' contours on a long couch, bed or carpeted floor. A cuddle is a cosy way to be relaxed and still. A variation of the cuddle is when one person lies with the head in the other's lap.

Nocturnal Vitamin T

Sleeping can provide us with extra doses of nocturnal Vitamin T. Many couples share a bed and some form of contact throughout the night.

Spooning Position: The spooning position is very popular. Both people sleep on like sides, with one person's back in contact with the other person's front. It is a soothing way to fall asleep, although it is rare that spooning position is maintained all night long.

Back-to-Back Position: The back-to-back position, cousin to the spooning position, is another popular sleeping position. Contact occurs between backs and soles of the feet.

Sleeping Naked: The best form of nocturnal skin stimulation is sleeping naked. This is easy in warm climates. When it is cold, sleeping naked may be a challenge. If this is a preference of yours, simply warm up the bed. Make it cozy with flannel sheets and a down comforter for lofty, light-weight warmth. Try pre-heating the bedding with an electric blanket.

Other nocturnal alternatives include sleeping with hands touching, one or two feet touching, one arm resting on the other's arm or one leg draped over the other's person's leg. How comforting it is to drop off to sleep while cuddling or maintaining some form of physical contact. Be sure to exchange good night kisses or wishes for sweet dreams. A verbal reminder of your specialness always feels comforting. The same things hold true for greeting the day. Set your alarm a few minutes early and enjoy a morning cuddle.

Heart to Heart

Heart to Heart is an inspiring way to connect with someone close. It is a meditative way of just breathing and being with another person. Each person places the right hand on the other person's heart area. At the same time, each places the left hand on top of the other person's hand. You become aware of the beating of the other heart as you are aware of your own heart beating. Usually, both people maintain eye contact and simply breathe and enjoy this unique way to be in touch.

Holding

People in need of comforting or consoling often want to be held. Holding is a way to provide compassion without the use of words. It is a profound way of touching your partner with your presence while he or she is distressed. Holding may sometimes involve a rocking motion.



On occasion, adults need the opportunity to let go, to surrender completely to their feelings in the moment. When you are held, you are completely supported and allowed to feel secure. Often we want to let someone else know how we are feeling without explaining, without the need for them to "fix it" or give advice. Too often words get in the way of feelings. Feelings need to be felt and holding is a powerful catalyst for releasing them.

Ask to be held, when you feel the need. It is equally important to ask partners if they would like to be held if you notice they are upset.

"Special Touch involves a willingness to ask for what you want."

Greg's Story

Greg was already home when he heard Denise's steps on the stairs. He could tell by the way she walked into the house that something was wrong. When he saw her he asked her, "Is anything the matter?" She burst into tears. "Would you like to be held?" Greg asked softly. Denise just nodded her head and sat down on the couch as Greg enfolded her in his arms and started to rock with her. Without words, her body told him the story of the harrowing, hectic day she had had. After a few minutes, Greg felt Denise relax in his arms.

T-7 Personal Touch

The entire surface of your skin is an exquisite sense organ. Anytime your skin touches itself, you are giving yourself Vitamin T in the form of Personal Touch. In the other six levels of Vitamin T, Public Touch through Special Touch, there is an exchange with other people. This category creates a deep level of intimacy with self. It includes noticing those moments when you are aware of touch with respect to yourself. An example of Personal Touch is the simple joy of sitting with your hands wrapped around a hot mug.

Personal Touch encompasses the physical, emotional, spiritual and natural aspects of yourself. Included are the physical sensations of the skin touching itself, the play of natural elements like sun warming your skin or time engaged in personal reflection. Personal Touch can help replenish Vitamin T. It is crucial to give from a wellspring of abundance rather than needing only to receive touch from others.

“If you love to give, give to yourself first. Then you will have an abundance that can overflow to those around you.”

Rituals of Self-Care

Self-care is a reflection of your self-esteem. There are many opportunities to integrate Personal Touch into your daily self-care routines. An open attitude and increased attention will help you be aware of the various ways you give yourself Vitamin T.

How well do you care for yourself? Do you have role models who take good care of themselves? Is there someone who encourages you to nurture yourself?

Bathing: Learn to pamper yourself as you cleanse your body. Experiment with washcloths, sponges, loofas and brushes. Try different soaps that smell good or have a texture and shape that please you. Knead sore muscles with massage as you wash.

Shampooing: Compare the feeling of washing your hair in the tub and in the shower. Separate the sensations of the wetting, washing and rinsing processes. Remember to rub the scalp as well as the hair.

Shaving: Find ways to make shaving as painless as possible. Experiment with different razors, shaving creams or gels. Try a brush and shaving soap to make your own lather. Notice the smoothness of your skin after you have finished shaving.

Brushing your teeth: Brushing and flossing teeth and gums can be a highly sensual experience. Try different toothpastes and mouthwashes. Afterwards sense the cool, tingling feeling in your mouth.

Brushing your hair: Slow down and enjoy each stroke of the brush or comb. Let this be another opportunity for a scalp massage. Feel the many nerve endings in your scalp.

Applying lotion: Think of this procedure as a form of massage for your face or body. When applying lotion or cream to your face, use upward strokes from chin to cheeks, circular strokes at the temples, and inward strokes under the eyes to gently stimulate circulation. Use long massaging strokes to apply lotion or sunscreen to the rest of your body.

Clothing

The clothing, footwear and jewelry that you put on your body can be soothing or annoying. You can give yourself Vitamin T by making appropriate choices.

Since clothing is like a second skin, select clothing that feels comfortable. Clothing that eases your movement is preferable to that which restricts. Feel the difference when you wear cotton, wool, rayon or silk. Find fabrics that feel good to your skin.

Be kind to your feet. They need to feel good all day for you to feel good. Make choices in footwear that provide comfort as well as style.

Jewelry can provide Vitamin T if you enjoy the way it feels on your skin. Dangling earrings move as you walk and may provide pleasant touch. The feel of a ring or watch can be a source of comfort.

Eating

Often we have to grab food on the run to supply the nutrients we need. Sometimes we eat while reading or working and totally miss the experience. Eating involves all the senses: taste, touch, sight, smell and sound. If you take the time to notice all of these elements, you turn the simple act of eating into a sensory feast. All the senses come together as you focus on the selection, preparation and eating of food.

Select foods for freshness. If possible, plant a garden. Grow your own herbs to get the most fragrant aromas and flavors. Washing and chopping the vegetables and grinding the herbs for salad dressing can be the first touch experience of the eating process. Notice how you respond to the food as you prepare it.

The presentation of the food includes the visual aspects of color, texture and form. Set an attractive table complete with candles, flowers and cloth napkins to embellish your presentation. Then, lower the lights, play some relaxing music and sit down.

Pay attention to the sensation of the food as it touches your lips and teeth. Be aware of the movements of the tongue as you taste and chew the food. Notice every action from the first bite or sip to the act of swallowing. Focus on the after-taste as well. Take all the time you wish to fully experience the food from the time you pick it up until it becomes a part of you. If you eat slowly and consciously, you will wind up feeling satisfied without feeling stuffed.

"Nourishing ourselves with food is a celebration of life."

Exercise

Everybody deserves exercise. Choose activities that feel good to your body and do something active every day. You may enjoy several ways to exercise such as brisk walking, swimming, bicycling, stretching, dancing or playing.

Exercise provides the opportunity to feel your body in motion. It is an expression of the joy of being alive. You can sense your breathing and heart rate increase and feel the contraction and expansion of the muscles. After exercising, you feel alive, energized and confident.

Vitamin T in the form of exercise provides more than just cardiovascular conditioning. It is a chance to clear your mind and make room for original thoughts or solutions to problems. So get your body and mind in motion and deal creatively with stress, emotional upsets and challenges.

If you prefer a structured way to keep track of your daily exercise, *The F.I.T.ness Game*® is a fun way to motivate yourself to make the time to exercise regularly. See listing in the *Appendix*.

Music

Sound vibrations are transmitted to the ears and are felt by every cell in your body. Personal Touch includes singing, playing, dancing or relaxing to music. Experiencing sound can be an active or passive process. Choose the sounds that are music to your ears. Eliminate sounds that are unpleasant, whenever possible.

Music instantly touches us in unexplainable ways. Have you ever heard a song and been instantly transported to another time and place? Maybe it was hearing the national anthem at your first baseball game. Or that memorable song when you first fell in love. Music can instantly inspire us to dance, sing or feel joy. Each piece of music has its own essence that touches us.

Music is an easy form of Vitamin T to absorb on a daily basis. Because it is such a powerful form of expression, select music that expands your emotional range. Consider categorizing your favorite music by the mood it evokes: energizing, relaxing, joyous, melancholy.

“The rhythm and vibration of sound touches body and soul.”

Spiritual Touch

The word spirituality derives from a Latin word *spiritualis*, “of breathing.” Through our breath we are connected by our personal spirit to the eternal life force — God, Great Spirit, Higher Power or whatever name you choose. We celebrate the interconnectedness of all living things through rituals, prayers, meditation, reflection and ceremonies.

Your spirit is your vitality, essence, humor and love of life. Your spirit manifests in your stillness, inner peace, joy and relationships with every one and every thing on Earth. Spending time tuning into your inner self may bring up the age-old questions of “Who am I?” and “What is my purpose for being?”

When you spend quiet time with yourself you get in touch with your inner essence: your aliveness, breathing, thoughts and emotions. Usually, the eyes are closed and the hands are brought in contact with each other. Touching hands symbolize the link to the inner self.

What is the source of your spirituality? How does your spirituality touch others? Do you get so caught up in the hustle and bustle of life that you neglect your inner self? Or do you let the sense of joy and laughter and caring you receive from your connection to Great Spirit flow to others?

“Each person discovers his or her own spiritual path; all paths lead to the same place.”

Right now, close your eyes, take a few deep breaths and notice your innermost thoughts and feelings. Let your spirit soar and reach for the clouds, the mountains or sea. Use the breath of life to help you touch your spiritual nature. Then bring your awareness back to what you were doing. Enjoy the sense of calmness you may now experience.

Touch in Nature

Vitamin T can be obtained in a variety of ways from plants, animals, minerals and the elements. All things on earth are interconnected. Find new ways of relating to nature.

Plants

- Arranging flowers
- Picking fresh herbs
- Caring for house plants
- Hiking through a meadow
- Hugging or climbing a tree
- Harvesting your vegetable garden

Minerals

- Skipping stones
- Climbing a mountain
- Collecting rocks or stones
- Walking barefoot on the earth
- Playing in the sand on the beach

Water

- Kayaking a river
- Swimming in a lake
- Skating on an icy pond
- Soaking in a hot spring
- Showering under a waterfall
- Cross-country skiing along a creek

Elements

- Hearing the song of a flock of geese
- Feeling the energy of a vibrant rainbow
- Seeing the beauty of a spectacular sunset
- Absorbing the sun's rays after a long winter
- Smelling the fragrance and seeing the beauty of a rose
- Allowing the mist of a fresh spring rain to touch your face

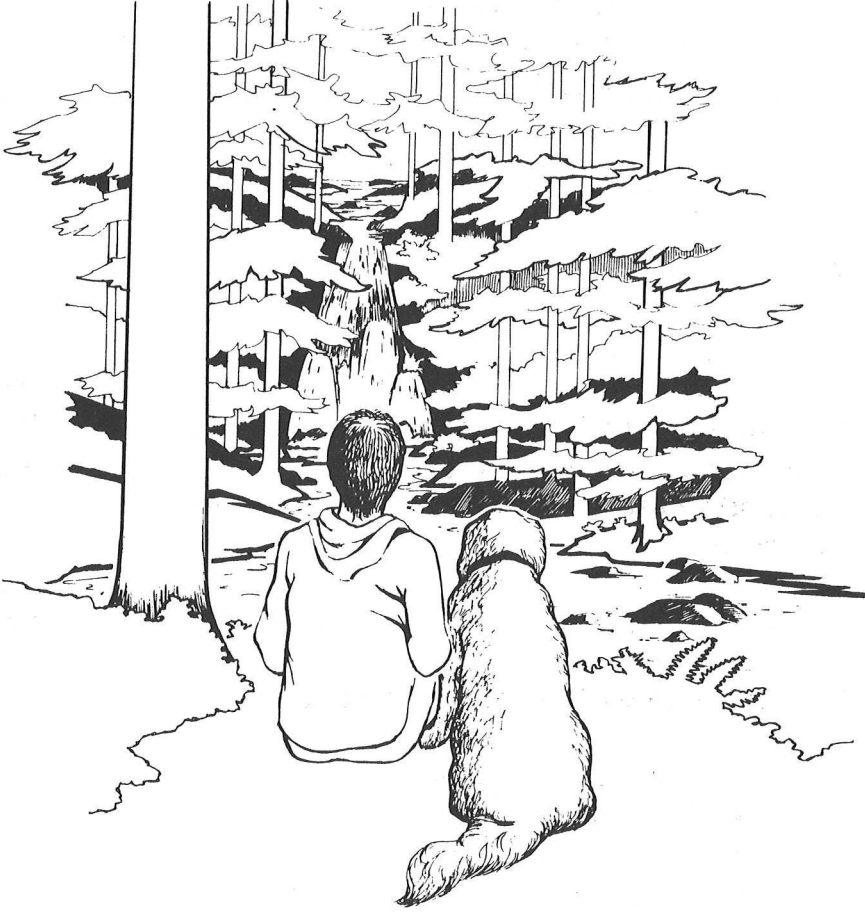
Animals

Our pets not only increase our levels of Vitamin T but also add richness and love to our lives. To pet an animal is to stroke in a gentle and loving manner. Pets love touch. If you give gentle touch to animals, they respond in kind. They are loyal companions and excellent sources of Vitamin T. Studies show that people with pets live longer, happier lives than those who do not share their homes with another living being.

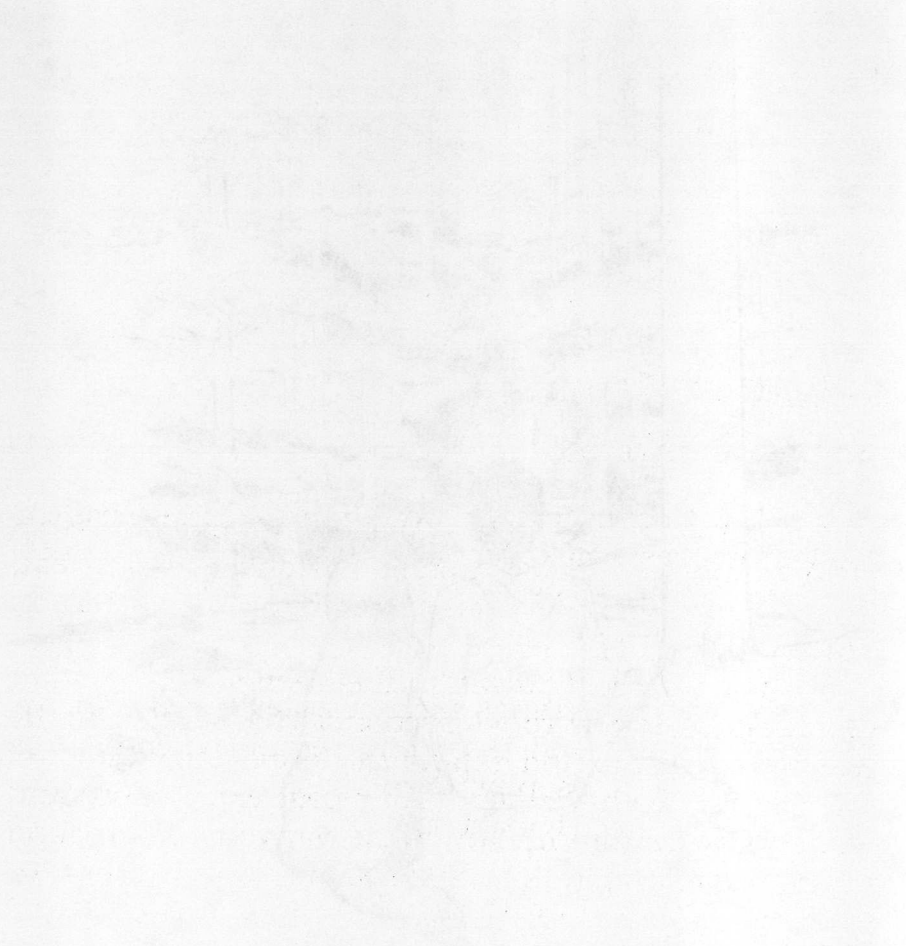
Things to do with animals, tame and wild:

- Milk a cow or goat
- Feed the squirrels
- Care for an injured bird
- Pet a cat and feel the purr
- Visit a petting zoo with a child
- Feel a ladybug crawl on your arm
- Watch fish in a tank or aquarium
- Ride a horse that wants to run at full speed
- Cuddle up on a couch for a nap with your dog
- Observe animals in their natural environment.

"Harmony in the world begins with peace in the heart."



Now that you have finished this section, put down the book, wrap your arms yourself and give yourself a big hug.



THESE ARE THE RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH
CONDUCTED BY THE RESEARCHER

Chapter 4:

Sexual Touch

SEX. Just seeing the word in print can unleash a flood of images: naked bodies glistening with sweat, deep, slow, passionate kisses, romantic encounters in exotic places.

If you skipped ahead to this section, great! After finishing the Sexual Touch section, go back and read the rest of the book to understand the terms and content of the Vitamin T philosophy. Your past experiences and values have a strong impact on the way you interpret and utilize the information in this section. A receptive attitude about touch can have a positive effect on your sexual experience.

Sexual Touch evolves out of Special Touch. Sexual Touch is defined as touch which has sexual intention and includes genital touching. Since all forms of Vitamin T exchanges require permission, both partners must be in agreement before crossing the sensual/sexual boundary. Sexual Touch is a model for healthy sexuality based on Vitamin T concepts and provides a language for explaining a fresh look at an old subject.

It is no coincidence that the most intensely pleasurable form of skin stimulation results in the reproduction of the human species. Sexual Touch provides one of the greatest opportunities for skin-to-skin contact. When

we become sexually aroused, we experience a heightened sensitivity to touch over the entire body. All parts of the body become erogenous zones, not just the genitals.

Sexual Touch emphasizes love and communication. Physical, emotional and spiritual intimacy evolves from a willingness to open to new ways of sharing pleasure. Healthy sexuality embraces both sensitivity and creativity. Couples need to define the type of sexuality that works for them.

Myths and Realities of Sex

There is no denying that sexual attraction is a primitive, powerful life force that stirs all of us. Besides the obvious need to reproduce, sex is fun and exciting. So why the problems and disappointments?

Our culture consistently projects the illusion of what sex is supposed to be like. You meet that special someone, you fall in lust and life becomes filled with romance and eternal youth. This fantasy view is the standard popularized in movies, songs and TV. When sexual encounters fail to meet the culturally established ideal, blaming sometimes follows: "I guess I'm just not sexy enough." or "My partner is insensitive to my needs."

There are many myths about sex that create unrealistic standards to live up to. It is helpful to dispel these myths and establish a more realistic view of sexuality.

Myth 1: "Sex is carefree."

The urge for sex is natural, even instinctive. Realistically, healthy sexuality takes constant work and conscious planning. Being sexual brings up problems in relationships and requires responsibility for pregnancy and health issues.

Myth 2: "How's your sex life?"

Our sex life is really not separate from the rest of life. Everything we do has an effect, for better or worse, on our sexuality. The passion with which we live our lives is the same passion that is called forth when we are being sexual. If we are full of energy and vitality, these qualities are reflected in our sexuality. Attitude or relationship problems often appear as sexual problems. Healthy individuals create a satisfying sexual relationship.

Myth 3: "Do you want to have sex?"

This yes-or-no question is a set-up for rejection. The notion that "I want you to want me the way I want you" can lead to anger, frustration and guilt. Since there are many choices, the question might be "What kind of sexual touch would you like?" In fact, pleasure is possible even if both people have different desires.

Myth 4: "The Opposite Sex."

This phrase is another myth which polarizes us and creates disconcerting dynamics. "In order for me to be a man, I must act the opposite way a woman does." Male and female are gender distinctions. Sex is sex. Men and women have different styles of expressing their needs for Sexual Touch. These needs are based on hormones, conditioning, role models, culture and cycles. The reality is that genders may be different, but they are not opposite. It is time to shift from the battleground to common ground between males and females.

Myth 5: "Sex equals orgasm."

The goal of the sexual experience is not orgasm. Sex focuses on the end, orgasm, rather than the means to that end, pleasure. The truth is that the only goal of the sexual experience is enjoying the process. The emphasis needs to be on mutual pleasure, intimacy and love.

Myth 6: "Sex does it all."

It is a mistaken belief that sex can satisfy a lack of basic touch in a person's life. Sex only satisfies sexual touch needs. A person can be in a sexual relationship and still be touch-starved and empty of intimacy. The Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA) for Vitamin T is obtained from a variety of non-sexual sources. Sexual Touch from a partner provides supplemental doses of Vitamin T.

Pleasuring

To describe the sexual experience our language has vague, confusing terms like "making love," "having sex" and various slang terms. These expressions fail to describe the beauty of Sexual Touch. Another word is needed to do justice to the most intimate form of touching in the world. That word is Pleasuring.

Pleasuring is the physical and emotional enjoyment which results when two people experience sexual intimacy in the presence of high doses of Vitamin T. Pleasuring represents the incredible human ability to combine passion, play, tenderness, caring and bonding with sexuality. It can be described as follows:

Pleasuring =	Sexual Touch	+	Special Touch
	desire		hugs
	arousal		kisses
	passion		massage
	genitals		sensuality
	titillation		sensitivity
	stimulation		nurturance

Pleasuring provides an opportunity to embellish the sexual experience with forms of Special Touch. The degree of pleasure increases with the intimacy and Vitamin T. The quality and quantity of the touch exchanged affects the amount of pleasure received. With Pleasuring, the entire body is an instrument of pleasure, not just the sex organs. There is enormous satisfaction in knowing that your partner wants to give you pleasure. Pleasuring encompasses the larger experience of caring for and giving to one another. The pleasure multiplies when there is a deep emotional connection.

Pleasuring is the expression of healthy sexuality. The desire stems from several sources each of which brings pleasure:

- the desire for orgasmic release
- the ancient, primitive sex drive
- the need for play, passion and excitement
- the need to share, bond and nurture one another.

Pleasuring is not dependent on intercourse or orgasm. The emphasis is not on how much sex one obtains, but on how much pleasure is experienced. Enjoying the entire process from the first inklings of desire to the final relaxation phase is the essence of Pleasuring.

“Pleasuring is the physical and emotional enjoyment which results when two people experience sexual intimacy.”

Maximizing Pleasure

Pleasuring is based on a couple's commitment to mutual enjoyment. The decision to share pleasure requires an agreement to create a time and space in which both partners feel safe and comfortable. It involves taking a break from the pressures and problems of daily life that tend to pull a couple apart. Discussions about bills, kids, chores or work need be postponed for a different time and place. Do not bring these topics to bed with you! By creating a wealth of pleasure in your life, the proportion of pain to pleasure diminishes.

The willingness to set aside time for play, rest and enjoyment must be based on the belief that you and your partner deserve pleasure. To strengthen this deserving attitude, consider repeating the affirmation "I deserve pleasure."

Create an atmosphere conducive to Pleasuring. Make sure the environment is inviting by adjusting lighting, temperature or background music. Remove possible distractions such as phones ringing, loud noises or interruptions. When you bring pleasure into your life, you are making a conscious choice to attend to the present moment.

Do whatever is necessary to make sure your bodies are as comfortable and receptive to Pleasuring as possible. If there is any discomfort caused by the position of your bodies, explore ways to change so that both of you are comfortable. Be aware of any physical tension or pains in the body, like back pain or headaches. Try some massage to relax tense areas. If there is pain or dryness in the genital areas, find ways to increase moistness with oil, saliva or other lubricants. Make sure that each of you is receiving Sexual Touch in a way that feels just right.

Communication between partners is essential to discover the appropriate level of Sexual Touch to be shared. Respect differences in style and rhythm. Be flexible to allow for changes in your needs or those of your partner. Get in touch with what you want for yourself and communicate with your partner. When both partners get what they want, pleasure is maximized.

"Pleasuring strengthens the bond of a relationship."

Checking In

Checking In is honest communication concerning similarities and differences in sexual energy. Checking In can prevent problems. Sometimes we misread our partner's intentions. Sometimes one person is feeling sexual and assumes the other person is too. As with all forms of healthy touch, in cases of uncertainty, talk about your feelings. Check In, tell your partner how you feel and find out how your partner is doing. Together you can increase the potential for more satisfying Sexual Touch by allowing yourselves choices and by avoiding excuses, assumptions and miscommunications. Use the language listed below for communicating your sexual needs in situations that are usually highly charged with emotion. Expand the choices to include YES, NO, MAYBE and LATER.

YES: Both partners are in the mood for Pleasuring. This represents a leveling match.

NO: Neither partner is in the mood. This is also a leveling match.

MAYBE: One person communicates the desire for sexual touch. The other partner, well . . . "Maybe." Maybe if I had more time. Maybe if I had more intimacy first. Maybe if I had more choices. Maybe if it is okay for me to be less turned on than you are. Either person may decide to make an adjustment.

LATER: One partner is in the mood for Sexual Touch. The other partner does not want to be sexual. There is a healthy way to resolve the differences without anyone feeling pressured or rejected. Consider these possibilities:

- The person feeling sexual can choose to wait till later or take care of his/her own sexual needs.
- Each honors where he/she is and agrees to check in later.
- They can choose Special Touch rather than Sexual Touch.

“Good communication prevents the withholding of affection when partners are at different sexual energy levels.”

What's Your Pleasure?

If couples waited until they were both at the same level of passion and desire, they would hardly ever exchange sexual touch. With the concept of Pleasuring comes a multitude of choices, ways of mixing and matching to satisfy similar or different levels of desire. Pleasuring is about respecting each person's level of sexual desire without shame, blame, guilt or pressure. Pleasuring relies on each person's willingness to honor his or her own needs and communicate the blend of Sensual Touch and Sexual Touch desired.

The focus of Pleasuring is enhancing Vitamin T and sexual pleasure. Intercourse with orgasm is no longer the sole objective of a sexual experience. Options may include hand stimulation, mouth stimulation and intercourse. In any of these options, orgasm may or may not occur. The Pleasuring choices can help to prevent problems. It is possible to deal consciously with differences in desire for sexual touch. The leveling principle enables each person to get his or her sexual needs met. The following choices help you be true to yourself while being available to your partner.

When both partners want to receive Sexual Touch:

Mutual Pleasure: Both partners exchange pleasure simultaneously. They have similar levels of desire for Sexual Touch. Both are aroused, stimulated and interested in climaxing.

Pleasure Exchanges: Each partner takes turns giving and receiving sexual touch. A wonderful opportunity to practice the art of receiving. At the same time, the other partner is practicing the art of giving sexual pleasure. One is in an active role, one is in a passive role. Later, the roles are reversed.

When only one person wants to receive Sexual Touch:

Sensual and Sexual Pleasure: Here, the pressure to have matching sexual intensity levels is removed. This choice helps free couples from the traditional way of being sexual. Instead of resenting differences, respect and celebrate them. (Vive la différence!) One partner wants Sexual Touch and the other wants Sensual Touch. Both people want to satisfy their partner's touch needs and also have their own needs met. The Sexual Touch person receives the stimulation he or she wishes. The Sensual Touch person explains what kind of touch is sought. It may or may not include genital contact.

Self-Pleasuring: When a partner is not available, "taking matters into your own hands" is an option when you are in need of Sexual Touch. Explore the range of sensual and sexual touches that feel good. Practice providing pleasure for yourself and letting it be okay. Supplement with plenty of non-sexual Vitamin T.

The Joys of Pleasuring

Descriptions of classic sexual intercourse emphasize foreplay and orgasm. The concept of Pleasuring expands and doubles the fun by defining four phases. There is an opportunity to enjoy and absorb Vitamin T during each. Sometimes all four phases flow together into one complete experience. Sometimes one phase may stand out as the most memorable. The four Joys of Pleasuring are:



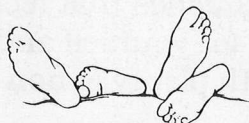
Signalling: the body language and verbal communication that convey your desire for exchanging Sexual Touch with your partner.



Playing: having fun together as you exchange Sensual and Sexual Touch which is arousing as well as nurturing.



Climaxing: the highest point of sexual intensity experienced by an individual which may or may not include orgasm.



Afterglow: the period of relaxation marked by increased sensitivity to touch and Vitamin T absorption.

Signalling

Signalling is verbal and body language that conveys your sexual intentions to your partner. Tune into your own thoughts and sensations to determine the potency of your desire for Sexual Touch. You may get further information from dreams or fantasies. Begin to communicate your interest and see how your partner responds.

During this phase, share with your partner the love you feel. Let the heat of your passion increase. Expose your desire. Your signals may appear as flirtatious glances, words or pet names. Explore the wide array of touch signals including pats, squeezes, tweaks, kisses and cuddles. Tantalize your lover with notes, gifts and surprises to transmit the message "I'm ready for pleasure."

Explore to see if your partner is interested in the pursuit of pleasure. Do not assume that your partner is ready just because you are. On the other hand, your partner might signal first and awaken the desire in you. Both partners share the responsibility for initiating the signal. Allow enough time for harmonizing your energies. Relish the anticipation. See how much fun you can have enticing each other with your signals.

Playing

Playing is the fun and frolic phase as you combine Special Touch with Sexual Touch. You begin to connect at a physical, mental and spiritual level. This is the transition from normal receptivity to touch to one of supersensitivity.

Focus on being together, nurturing, holding, stimulating and arousing. Since playing is a total body contact sport, include the entire body from head to toe. Teach each other how you like to play.

You may want to experiment with new ways to play together:

- dancing naked
- sexual massage
- bathing together
- painting faces or bodies
- dressing in special clothing, costumes or lingerie
- stroking with sensuous ribbons, fabrics or feathers.

Tune in to your partner while you play. Take the time to allow the genitals to become fully excited and aroused. This increases receptivity to pleasure.

Enjoy the time spent in sexual play. Prolong the arousal to last for days. Together, decide when and if you want to go on to climaxing. Play wholeheartedly.

Climaxing

The climax is the highest level of sexual intensity experienced during the Pleasuring process. The blend of motion, emotion and skin-to-skin contact is the catalyst for a climax. The term climax is being broadened and redefined to mean a heightened period of excitement or an orgasm. The climax is part of the Pleasuring process, not the goal. Pleasuring is not a performance, it is a journey to be enjoyed.

A climax is an opportunity to open our hearts to greater levels of intimacy. To experience a climax we surrender to the power of pleasure. Climaxing involves a momentary softening of boundaries. We may feel a sense of oneness with our partner and with life itself.

Each climax is completely unique and has its own rhythm and energy. Some are more powerful, others are more subtle. The climax may be experienced genitally or by the entire body. Since we cannot know in advance what a climax will be like, it is important to enjoy

whatever the experience brings. Climaxes may occur in three possible forms, separately or in combination:

- High Plateau:** a long period of heightened sexual intensity
- Series of Peaks:** peaks and valleys of sexual intensity
- High Peak:** a single high point of sexual intensity.

Afterglow

The afterglow is a period of relaxation, stillness and unhurried attention following the climaxing stage. A wonderful time to spend in close contact — holding, cuddling, stroking, being together. Enjoy the warmth, texture and moisture where body touches body.

Experience the paradox of feeling empty and full at the same moment. The afterglow is a time of sharing and bonding, a loving finish to the phases of Pleasuring. This period represents the transition from Sexual Touch back to Special Touch. Savor each moment of the afterglow. Pleasuring is not complete if you skip this stage. The luxurious ending to Pleasuring creates a sense of feeling well-nourished. Absorption of Vitamin T is magnified when bodies are intertwined.

Delight

Delight is the experience of another person's pleasure as your own. One person can experience pleasure but it takes two people for delight. An opportunity for delight is giving your partner a massage. While stroking your partner, you notice the smoothness of the skin and the silkiness of the oil. The contented smile on your partner's

face helps you remember how good your last massage felt. You feel the pleasure radiating from your partner. There is delight in knowing how much your partner enjoys receiving your gift of Vitamin T.

Sexual delight is the embracing your partner's pleasure. The passion for another's pleasure is the desire for delight.

I'm enjoying my pleasure.

I'm enjoying your pleasure.

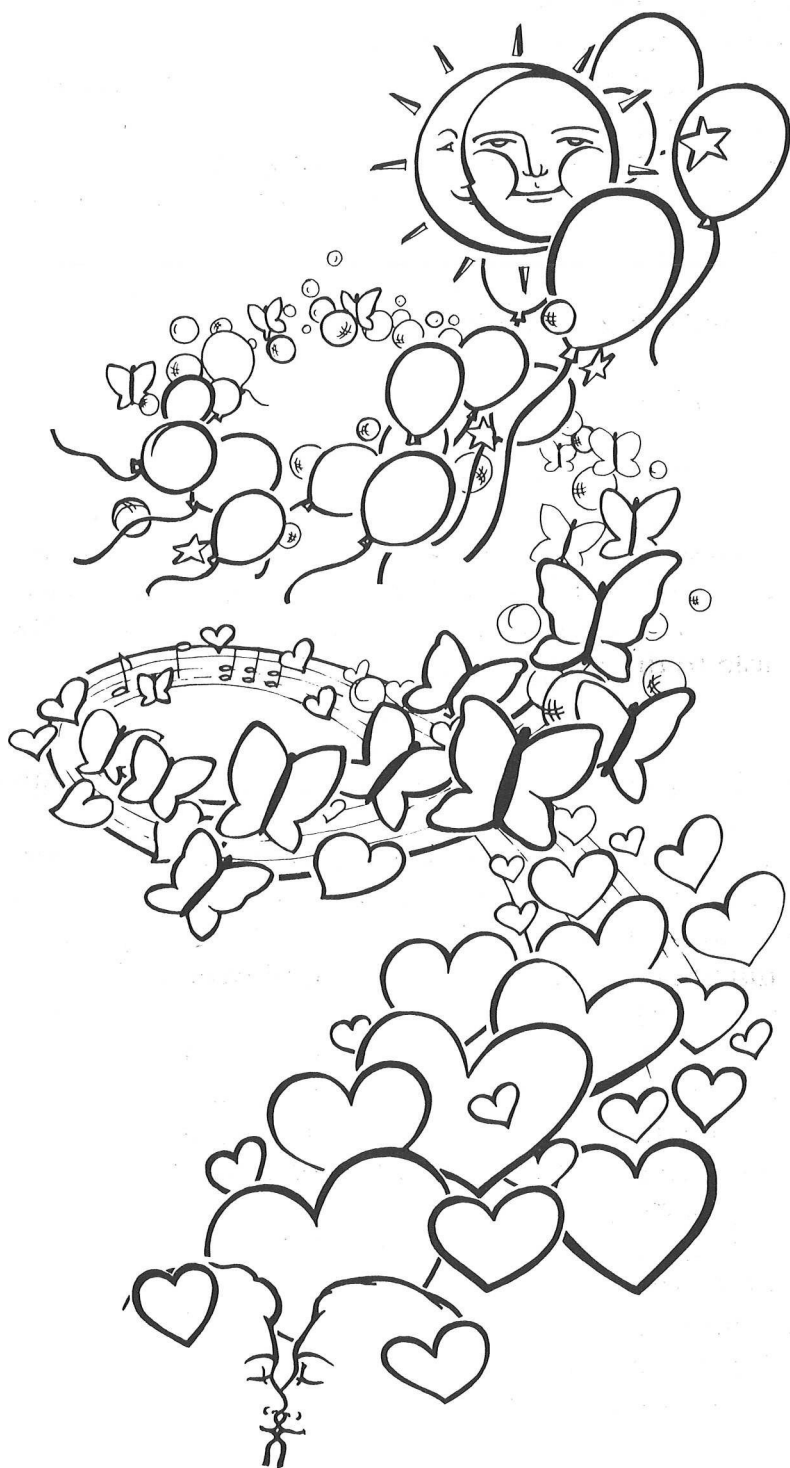
Our pleasure is my Delight.

Sometimes only one person experiences delight. When both partners feel it simultaneously, it is double delight. The pleasure is blended so well that it is impossible to distinguish whose is whose.

"Sexual Delight is as contagious as laughter."

Our senses carry us toward delight. The salty taste of the skin, the sight of an ecstatic smile, the feel of lips upon the body, the sound of moans and the earthy smells of love magnify our passion. The delight which follows is greater than the sum of both people's pleasure. Arousal increases when you sense your partner's desire for your pleasure. Delight can be experienced in any of the four phases of Pleasuring: signalling, playing, climaxing or afterglow. A mere twinkle in your lover's eye can recreate the feeling of delight.

The spiral of Sexual Delight begins with your personal desire for and receptivity to pleasure. Delight spirals and increases from the synergy of the relationship. The combination of pleasure excites both of you. It is intensified by the love you share.



Sexual Massage

Sexual massage transforms the entire body into an organ of sexual pleasure. Unlike professional massage, sexual massage includes the permission to cross the sensual/sexual boundary. There is a clear sexual intention to the touch. The resulting effect is stimulating and exciting to both giver and receiver. Partners may massage each other simultaneously or take turns. Pleasuring is enhanced when both people feel pampered in such a sensual way.

For many people, the touch in sexual massage is intuitive. For others, it may take some practice. Generally, almost anything will feel great. Once you know what you like, it is easier to ask for the kind of touch you desire. Massage provides a sensuous way to exchange Vitamin T. The quality of the touch will be somewhere between gentle and firm. Experiment with how touch feels over the entire body. Which areas are especially sensitive and pleasant? Remember to explore ears, toes, armpits, fingers and knees. Use lubricants such as oils, lotions or talcum powder. They make the skin even more inviting and increase Vitamin T absorption. Let your hands do the gliding.

Additional guidelines:

Pressure: Lighter pressure is used over joints, bony places, behind the knees and at the temples. Firmer pressure is appropriate on fleshy, muscular parts like the back, arms, legs, buttocks. In short, firm pressure is relaxing and light pressure is arousing.

Location: Massage can be done on the floor on a mat or in bed. Ideally, use a massage table so that both the giver and receiver are comfortable.

Pace: Experiment with slower and faster paces. Slow movements usually are soothing. Faster ones are stimulating.

Strokes: Light tapping with fingertips feels playful. Feather-light strokes are exciting on breasts and inner thighs. Gentle scratching is stimulating on the scalp and back. Long, smooth strokes with fingers and palms feel sensual on arms, legs, backs and torsos.

Atmosphere: Turn up the heat or light a fire in the fireplace. Light candles and incense. Experiment with different kinds of music.

Sex Talk

Schedule some time with your partner to sit down and have a Sex Talk. Share attitudes and beliefs about sexuality and touch. Talk about your history and background including positive and negative experiences. Discuss your parents' attitudes and beliefs and their impact on yours. Keep this discussion separate from your Pleasuring time.

Do you have any sexual secrets? Are there any beliefs, expectations, fantasies or past experiences you have not told your partner? Open and honest communication enhances pleasure.

Consider having a monthly talk to see how well your Special Touch and Sexual Touch needs are being met. Mention what is going well. In a non-blaming, non-critical way share suggestions for improving Sexual Touch. Let this check in become an important part of your sexual relationship without turning it into a gripe session.

Some suggestions for additional topics of discussion:

- Review the joys of Pleasuring (signalling, playing, climaxing and afterglow).
- Do you need to work on harmonizing energy levels or schedules?
- Are there things you have always wanted to do but have not done yet?
- Do you have any new insights about your sexual relationship?
- Consider writing a love letter about "How I like to be loved."
- Ask your partner "Are there ways I can love you better?"
- Have a special love journal in which both of you write thoughts, feelings, suggestions.

Teach Me

An important part of Pleasuring is being touched just the way you like. Frequently, you touch other people the way you like to be touched. But this is not necessarily what feels good to them. It is crucial to take the time to teach your partner exactly how you like to be pleased. Teach your partner what feels great to you and where. Convey your unique taste for pleasurable touch by describing or actually demonstrating on your body or on your partner's. You may want to include different kinds of pressure and rhythm, things that arouse and tickle, touches that soothe. Equally important is to find out exactly how your partner likes to be touched.

By being clear about your likes and dislikes, you remove the need for your partner to have to read your mind. Also, preferences change over time. Take joint responsibility for both of your pleasures.

Breathe

Deep breathing intensifies all aspects of Pleasuring. It increases your capacity for sensation and frees up emotional energy. When you feel tense, anxious or pressured, you tend to diminish or hold your breath. Receptivity to Vitamin T is blocked when your breath is restricted.

To maximize pleasure, focus on breathing deeply and rapidly. Adding movement also results in faster, more complete breathing. Think of how it feels when you exercise and your breathing increases along with your level of movement. When you become more active during Pleasuring, your breath follows suit. Deep breathing increases your receptivity to Sexual Touch. If you remain passive and allow your breath to be shallow, you experience fewer sensations and arousal may be difficult.

Some suggestions for enhancing Pleasure with the breath:

- Consciously quicken the pace of your breathing. Breathe through your nostrils. Notice the change in your ability to feel sensations.
- Try dancing as part of the playing phase. This gets the breath going and the juices flowing.
- Sit or stand while Pleasuring. More activity and breath result when you are upright. When you are lying down in bed, your body almost automatically goes into a relaxed, restful mode in which the breath decreases.

Breast and Testicular Exams

Use Vitamin T to assist in the prevention of breast and testicular cancer. Consult your health care provider or a local chapter of the American Cancer Society to find out how to do a breast or testicular self-exam. This

information may appear in the form of reading material, a video or an artificial simulation model. Direct teaching on your own body is best. Once you learn how to do the exam, go home and teach your partner how to examine you.

A couple of minutes of monthly Vitamin T in this form can provide for early detection of cancer. Combining Vitamin T with breast and testicular exams is a powerful way to show each other you really care. Look for lumps, irregularities or enlargements in the breast or testicles. If you find anything suspicious, consult a physician promptly for an accurate diagnosis. Do not get yourself alarmed or frightened, but do go in and get it checked. Most lumps are benign.

Is the Honeymoon Over?

This story illustrates how one couple salvaged their sexual relationship once the honeymoon seemed to be over.

David and Linda's Story

David and Linda meet at a party given by a mutual friend. It is love at first sight. They find that they have lots of common interests, including looking for a partner.

A romance develops. The courting phase, that blend of newness, desire and hormones that heralds falling in love, begins. Everything seems to happen easily and effortlessly. They seem to lose themselves as they bond to each other and their new love. David and Linda see only their similarities. There is a maximal level of Vitamin T including hugging, kissing, hand-holding and cuddling. They spend lots of time enticing each other. After six idyllic months, they decide to get married.

Two years later, the newness has been replaced with routine. Romance no longer sustains their relationship. Individual roles and responsibilities take priority. As David and Linda settle into the relationship, the amount of touch subsides. They hardly ever play together. They are aware that something is missing. Is the honeymoon over?

Conflicts surface around the issue of sexuality. Sex is reduced to a Yes or No situation, with too much emphasis on orgasm. Daily struggles start contaminating their sexual relationship. Each person realizes their needs are not being met. David wants sex more frequently. He wants to be nurtured by his wife and yet he feels rejected by her. Linda feels enormous pressure to have sex. She's more interested in being held and comforted. Tension builds as they continue to bring more and more emotional baggage to bed with them. "You aren't giving me what I want, so I won't give you what you want." The intimacy decreases and they both feel misunderstood.

There are two choices: 1) David and Linda may act as if they are two separate people still living together, or 2) They may realize that for their marriage to flourish, both of them may need to find a way to get more of their needs met.

They start sharing their issues and concerns with their friends, individually and as a couple. There is consolation hearing that other couples have reached a similar point in their relationship. They agree that falling in love is easy; marriage and love require hard work and commitment.

So Linda and David decide to come up with a plan. They choose to focus on Pleasuring to accommodate both their sensual and sexual needs. A win/win strategy begins to emerge allowing both of them to get out of the power struggle.

David and Linda make a decision to be more flexible and open. A commitment is made to coordinate schedules and set aside longer periods of time for Pleasuring. By using the choices in What's Your Pleasure, they can easily deal with differences in energy levels or desire without criticism. They agree to include all four phases of Pleasuring. They want to add back the fun and whimsy of the signalling and playing phases which they did so well in the early stages of their relationship. They used to jokingly refer to it as the "velcro stage" because they could not tear themselves apart. David and Linda decide to create the time for lavishing in the afterglow with long, intimate conversation. To maintain the health of their sexual relationship David and Linda want to nurture each other with plenty of Vitamin T and massage.

David and Linda identified the problem, figured out some solutions and ended up feeling a greater commitment to the relationship. Their self-esteem was enhanced as they dealt successfully with the challenges.

Sexuality can be a barometer of the degree of commitment to love and intimacy shared by two people. It is essential to stay current with your Sensual and Sexual Touch needs, especially in the middle of conflict. Vitamin T can do so much to heal, even when words do not seem to be effective.

The Beginning

Thank you for reading Vitamin T. We hope the book has helped you to make healthy touch a priority in your life.

You can make a difference in your life and the lives you touch. It takes courage to reach out and give Vitamin T at home, school, work and the community. Become a role model of Vitamin T using the guidelines and activities you have learned.

The challenge in life is to strike a balance between caring for yourself and caring for one other and the Earth. The power to nurture is in your hands.

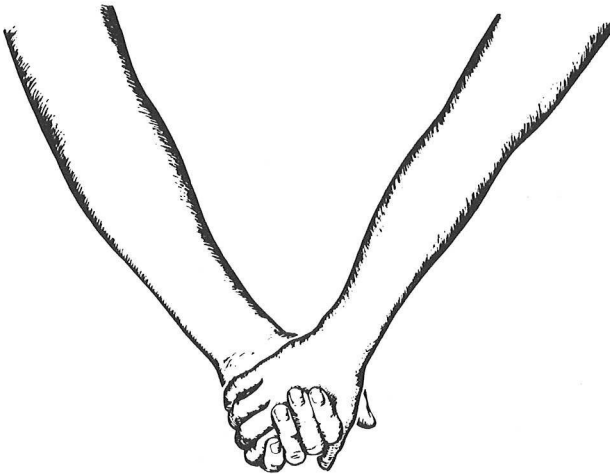
Let's Stay in Touch

We have enjoyed sharing our ideas and concepts with you. Now, we would like to hear from you. Your reactions, comments and suggestions are especially welcome.

- Which Vitamin T guidelines were helpful?
- What changes would you like to see in future editions?
- Are there additional touch traditions you experienced while growing up?
- How have you used the Vitamin T concepts at home, at school, at work or in the community?

If you would like a personal reply, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope and send it in care of:

Vitamin T
2501 SE Madison
Portland, OR 97214



Glossary

Body Language: the ancient language of gestures, posture and facial expressions which help determine if permission to touch is granted.

Carefrontation: a way of confronting a person in a way that communicates caring; expressing discomfort in a manner that educates, not alienates, the offender.

Deficiencies: shortages of healthy touch are minor deficiencies; obstacles to absorbing Vitamin T are major deficiencies.

Intimacy: the amount of closeness to another person based on association, contact and familiarity; implies respect.

Leveling: the process of establishing a mutually agreeable Vitamin T exchange based on the type of **Relationship**, the degree of **Intimacy** and the kind of **Touch**.

ouch!: a painful experience with touch or a scarcity of healthy touch; touch minus T equals ouch!

Permission: the main ingredient in determining if a touch is healthy.

Personal Space: the area created by extending both arms straight out from the body in all directions.

Pleasuring: the physical and emotional enjoyment which results when two people experience sexual intimacy in the presence of high doses of Vitamin T.

Self-esteem: healthy touch carries with it the message "You are valued." Vitamin T enhances our sense of self-esteem.

Sensual/Sexual Boundary: the boundary between sensual and sexual touch which is crossed only by adults with permission.

Sexual Touch: touch which has sexual intention and includes genital touching; Sexual Touch utilizes all the principles of Vitamin T, including permission, leveling, body language, etc.; it represents the highest degree of intimacy between two consenting adults; Sexual Touch evolves out of Special Touch.

Soul Scars: wounds which result from a prolonged lack of Vitamin T, neglect, ongoing painful touch or acts of violence.

Space Invaders: people who invade personal space verbally, physically or sexually.

STOP: self-defense skills for children and adults to ward off space invaders.

T-1 Public Touch: touch exchanges occurring in public, such as handshakes.

T-2 Professional Touch: touch dispensed as part of a service rendered by a paid professional, such as a visit to a doctor or massage therapist.

T-3 Social Touch: touch exchanged with neighbors, co-workers and acquaintances at social events or parties, such as dancing.

T-4 Friendly Touch: playful touch among friends to welcome, celebrate or console, such as hugs.

T-5 Family Touch: touch among members of immediate family and relatives, such as kisses and rubs.

T-6 Special Touch: touch between spouses, partners or intimate friends which communicates the special feelings they have for one another, such as cuddling and holding.

T-7 Personal Touch: getting in touch with oneself through self-care rituals, contemplation and time spent in Nature.

Resources

Touch:

A Guide to Healthy Touch: Vitamin T. Bob Czimbal and Maggie Zadikov. Portland, OR: Open Book Publishers, 1991.

Healthy Pleasures. Robert Ornstein and David Sobel. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1989.

Hug Therapy, Books I and II. Kathleen Keating. Minneapolis, MN: CompCare, 1987.

A Very Touching Book. for Little People and for Big People. Jan Hindman. Dundee, OR: McClure-Hindman Associates, 1985.

Touching: The Human Significance of the Skin. Ashley Montagu. New York: Harper & Row, 1978.

Massage:

The Massage Book. George Downing. New York: Random House, 1974.

Fun and Games:

The New Games Book. Andrew Fluegelman, ed. Garden City, NY: Doubleday/Dolphin, 1976.

Playfair. Matt Weinstein and Joel Goodman. San Luis Obispo: Impact Publishers, 1980.

Exercise:

The F.I.T.ness Game, Everybody Plays...Everybody Wins. Bob Czimbal and Maggie Zadikov, Portland, OR: Open Book, 1983.

The Vitamin T Song

© 1990 Words and Music by Miriam Witkin

If I ask permission, and you say okay,
There is something universal, we can share today!
It's something we all need so much.
It comes in many forms you see;
Like hugs, a kiss, a hand held out,
Support or a compliment we share
A gentle stroke, unlike a poke,
Will show a friend we really care, with,

Vitamin T,T,T,T,T,T,T,
It's catchy pass some down to me.
Vitamin T,T,T,T,T,T,T, stands for touch,
Thank you very much!!
Vitamin T,T,T,T,T,T,T, it's absolutely free, free, free,
Vitamin T,T,T,T,T,T,T, healthy touch.

Well, massage my feet, laugh and play with me.
Hug a tree, touch the earth, do a dance with me.
Gently snuggle in my arms with me.
Rocking back and forth and back and forth,
With Vitamin T.

Vitamin T,T,T . . .

Gentle words that say I care,
Appearing now from everywhere.
I love you the way you are!
Just be yourself, you'll go so far!

Vitamin T, T, T . . .

Ordering Information

Vitamin T Jar

The Vitamin T jar is a novelty item. It is a visual reminder to exchange Vitamin T daily. The label includes a description of this essential vitamin and instructions for use. The jar contains a one inch diameter, four-color enamel lapel pin which says "Vitamin T: I am a Healthy Source." This pin is depicted on the jar on the back cover.

In addition, there are two dozen Vitamin T prescription cards. These cards may be distributed to friends, family members or colleagues for a dose of Vitamin T when needed. The cards reinforce the importance of permission and contain a summary of Vitamin T concepts.

Jar Price: \$10.00, includes postage and handling.
Additional pins are \$4.00 each.

Please send check or money order payable to
Vitamin T.



Bulk Orders

For information on bulk orders of the Vitamin T book, jar or pins please contact:

Vitamin T
2501 SE Madison
Portland, OR 97214

Vitamin T Presentations

The authors are available for keynote presentations, staff trainings, conference workshops, weekend retreats and private counseling sessions for individuals and couples.

"Vitamin T is a gift."

About the Authors

Bob Czimbal

Bob Czimbal's professional background includes sociology and community planning. As Director of HEALTHWORKS, he implements workplace wellness programs and develops products. A national keynote speaker and trainer, Bob's presentation titles include Enhancing Self-Esteem, Friends and Fun, Laughing at Life, Motivation at Work, Yes to Life...to Wellness! and Vitamin T.

Bob is co-founder of The Institute for Self-Esteem Enrichment (I. S.E.E.). He started the Cherry Grove Wellness Center which he directed for five years. Publications include *The F.I.T.ness Game®*, *The Best of Stress Management*, *Wellness for Life* and the *Low Fat Grocery List*. Currently, Bob is writing three books on the topics of friends, self-esteem, and men's issues. He is the inventor of Z-ball.

Bob has a private practice in counseling. He learned massage in 1970 and loves exchanging Vitamin T with family and friends. Bob's daily walks with his golden retriever, Ruby, on a dormant volcano help keep him energized and ebullient.

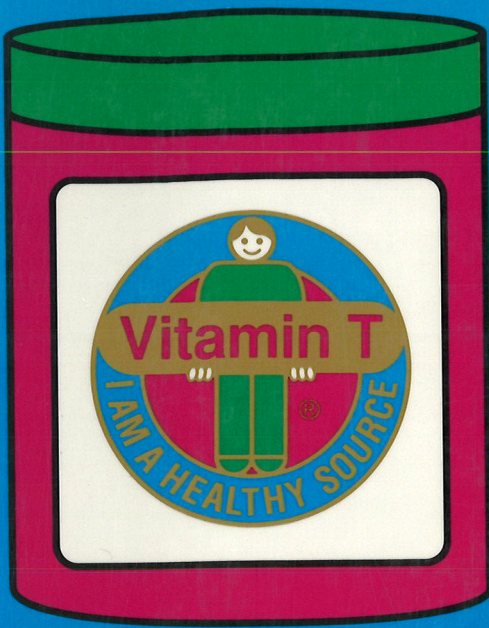
Maggie Zadikov

Maggie Zadikov has a Masters degree in Education. In 1973 she began her twelve-year career as an elementary school teacher, integrating Vitamin T into her work with children. Nine years ago, Maggie joined creative forces with Bob as Co-Director of HEALTHWORKS. Together as spouses, they have collaborated on many projects including *The F.I.T.ness Game®*, *The Best of Stress Management*, and *A Guide to Healthy Touch: Vitamin T*. In 1984, Maggie became a licensed massage

therapist and established her private practice, dispensing megadoses of Vitamin T.

For five years, Maggie worked as a health behavior specialist in smoking cessation and weight management programs. Maggie is an experienced presenter of Relaxation Skills, Massage, Eating and Weight Issues and Vitamin T. Currently, Maggie is studying Oriental Medicine, working toward licensure in acupuncture. She loves friends, dogs, dancing, hiking, kayaking and living in Portland.

Note: Depicted from left to right in the photograph on the back cover are Maggie, Bob and editor Ruby Allen.



Vitamin T is the nurturing nutrient found in healthy TOUCH. The US Department of Health and Happiness has established that Vitamin T is essential for every body.

Natural sources of Vitamin T are handshakes, hugs, kisses, cuddles and rubs obtained from family, friends and co-workers. Megadoses are provided by massage.

Positively habit-forming. Give with permission only. Guaranteed safe for all ages. Keep within reach of children.

Active ingredient: TLC
(Tender Loving Care)

Vitamin T:

- soothes the body
- calms the mind
- warms the heart
- nourishes the spirit
- relieves stress
- restores sense of humor
- strengthens self-esteem.

Explore the memories of your touch history from childhood to adulthood. Develop skills to prevent Vitamin T deficiencies, especially loneliness. Follow guidelines for healthy touch at home, work and school. Learn how to create an abundance of Vitamin T. Heal ouches!, painful touches. Discover new ways to enhance your sexuality.



Give Vitamin T to friends and family.

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