

Natural Healing Secrets for Rescued and Adopted Animals

Outline from the webinar presented by Megan Ayrault, LMP, L/SAMP

Rescued and adopted animals go through extra stresses and challenges: changing homes, confinement, confusion, and sometimes abuse. They often experience:

- Anxiety and stress
- Mistrust and confusion
- Health problems from a weakened immune system
- Destructive behaviors triggered by anxiety and confusion
- Aches and pains from extra muscle tensions

Your touch has the power to calm your animal's nervous system, which will help any physical and emotional healing needs.

Help your animal get...

- better at going into the “relaxation mode” of the nervous system
- a stronger immune system
- a deeper bond with you
- greater confidence
- better communication so you can tell how they're feeling

The Strokes

“Balancing the Back”

Central Nervous System
“Relaxation Mode”
(Parasympathetic System) vs.
“Fight or Flight”
(Sympathetic System)

Bladder Meridian (Master)
fear issues
energy of purification

The “Calm Down” Points

Immune Function
Lymphatic System
and Circulation
Lymph Fluid
Lymph Nodes
Lymph Vessels

Kidney Meridian
fear and aging
energy of purification

The Powers of...

The Breath

Oxygen

Rhythm

Relaxation

Synchronization

Visualization

Focus

Clarity

Positive Results

Communication

7 Steps to Relaxation and Health

Step 1: Plan for Success

Choose times to practice when your animal is relatively calm. Avoid distractions like feeding times. Choose a place that will be quiet and where your animal feels safest.

Step 2: Breathe: Focus and Calm Your Energy

Take 3 breaths (more is fine) to focus and calm your energy (Keep your breath going rhythmically throughout the next steps. Harder than it sounds, but just keep practicing.)

Step 3: Visualize the Positive Results

Picture your animal calm, happy and confident.

Step 4: Say Hello with Your Hands

Touch your animal at the shoulder, first with one hand, then add the other. Sometimes starting with the back of your hand can be less “intense” for them, more calming.

Step 5: The “Calm Down” Points (and an Immune Boost bonus at the same time!)

Keep one hand on the shoulder and move your other hand to the chest. There is one point on each side, near the top of the sternum. They’re the areas that feel softest and a little hollow. Massage in small circles, using flat, relaxed fingers. (Not digging in with finger tips.) Expect a range of anywhere from 15 sec to 2 or 3 minutes.

Step 6: Balancing the Back

Stroke from the back of the head alongside the spine to the tail. This is following both the Central Nervous System and the Master (Bladder) Meridian of Eastern Medicine.

You can also continue down the back leg over the paw or hoof. If your animal likes it, you can start additional strokes on the forehead, stroking over the top of the head, continuing as before. You can use finger pads or the heel of your hand to focus along the natural grooves you feel along the spine. Focus on one side at a time. Do 3 strokes on each side.

Step 7: Power Blessing

Take 3 breaths to consciously end your session. Your hands can be anywhere on your animal’s body that feels right to you, but use both hands as a rule for full connection. Imagine sending your “blessing” through your hands into your animal's body. Include positive feelings and images, such as your animal in a strong, happy and healthy state, emotionally and physically.

A Few “Don’ts”

Don’t worry if your animal doesn’t respond with relaxation right away. If you get frustrated or even disappointed, it will add to their stress. They will recognize right away that massage is not the same as petting. For some animals, this can make them feel uneasy because it’s unfamiliar. They also may have areas of their body that hurt, and they have a natural instinct to protect injuries from attention. Just keep trying with very short sessions, and at times when your animal is already relaxed if necessary at first. Using the back of your hand rather than the palm side can also help.

Don’t treat your animal like a victim that you’re saving, even if you are saving them. Having that approach can backfire in a couple of ways. 1. It can act as a reward for anxious behaviors you don’t really want to reinforce. 2. It can also confirm to them that you agree that there is something to worry about.

Apply the strokes with confidence and rhythm. Focus on picturing the physiological effects you want to create: relaxation and all that goes with it. Rather than saying something like, “There, there sweetie. It’s OK. I’ll protect you.” (which actually implies that there is danger to worry about), tell them something more like, “You’re strong and powerful, and you can have lots of fun exploring this cool world!”

Please don’t use massage as a substitute for other important needs, like veterinary care, good nutrition, good quality exercise (if possible), and also clear and positive training principles, whatever methods you use. All of these elements together, along with massage, will help you get the results you want.

Do these things right now to get started...

1. Write down the times and locations that you think will be good for practicing with your animal.
2. Practice some deep breathing, with hands relaxed in your lap, by your sides or on your belly. Notice how your own nervous system welcomes this chance to shift into relaxation mode. Remember this sensation when massaging your animal. This is a taste of what you’ll be giving them.
3. If your animal is nearby, practice one of the strokes as soon as you’ve practiced your own focused breaths. Or you can do the whole sequence (Steps 1-7 from earlier) right away if you like. If your animal is not with you right now, just sit a moment with your eyes closed and visualize doing one or both of the strokes.

Rescue Dog Massage: On-line, home-study class with e-mail coaching

Rescue Horse Massage: On-line, home-study class with e-mail coaching

(Click on the class title above to get more details, or to register.)

Each one month, on-line class is specific to either dog or horse, and includes:

- Video lessons: Each guides you through a new technique, with multiple variations
- Regular e-mails to deliver lessons, offer extra tips, and remind you to practice :)
- Expert Interviews (audio): Listen to interviews with other experts
who will share more tips and advice on Natural Healing for Rescued Animals
- “Anatomy Connections” lessons to go with the techniques learned
- Lessons on reading your animal's feedback to improve communication and trust
- Coaching by e-mail anytime you have questions

Thank you!