

Walt Fritz, PT's/The Foundations Approach to Evaluation and Treatment

I follow a somewhat novel way of performing an evaluation and applying the treatment, one that requires much more input from you, my patient. I need your feedback in determining such things as whether or not my input (stretching, pressures) feel like they would be helpful, hurtful or neither. I cannot know what you are feeling unless I ask/you tell me and I rely very strongly on this feedback in making treatment decisions. The need for feedback will most probably exceed what other health professionals have asked you in the past, allowing you (or requiring you) to contribute much more to the process. If you are expecting to have me make all of the decisions, then our therapeutic relationship may not work out.

- Before I begin, I will thoroughly explain the purpose of the session or technique and of my hand placement, followed by obtaining your permission to treat.
- I start in the area of complaint. Many therapists may try to convince you of the belief that your problem stems from issues (or causes) elsewhere in the body. While this could theoretically be true, I will begin where you notice your symptoms.
- I will lightly place my hand/hands on the area, but I initially do nothing. This slow introduction allows you to determine if my touch feels safe to you.
- If my touch feels safe, I will begin by adding graded pressures and stretch, trying to seek out areas of tightness.
- If I find tightness (or similar), I will lightly add a bit more pressure or stretch (what I term, “snagging the area”) to the area, to bring about your awareness.
- If you’ve not already given feedback, I will ask, “Am I reproducing a sensation that is familiar to you?”
- If you note nothing, I may linger a bit unless sensation is too negative. This lingering allows you time to process, but if nothing about the pressure or stretch is familiar, then I will move on.
- If I did replicate a familiar feeling, I would use the 0-10 pressure/pain scale to determine the intensity of the sensation, followed by 0-10, “At what number would you stop me?” You determine the pressures that you feel would be helpful, without me influencing your decision.
- I will adjust pressures according to your feedback.
- I may then ask, “Does this stretch feel like it might be helpful or useful?”
- If you respond to the previous question with, “yes,” then I will remain in the area and treat.
- If you respond to the previous question with, “no,” I will ask, “Is there anything about this stretch that feels like it might be harmful?” If you believe it might, I will immediately stop.
- If all feels right to you and you think that my stretch, pressures, or intervention feels like it might be helpful, my therapy involves me holding a slow, static stretch for long periods of time with the goal of improving your functional abilities and reducing any negative sensations. It is a very dynamic back and forth process between the two of us. I will require you to stay aware and present throughout the session, and I may repeat my questioning on numerous occasions throughout the session(s). Please remember, I cannot know what you feel unless I ask, and I will always ask. I will stop on occasion to allow you rest and to move a bit to see what you are feeling. The goal of my treatment is to let you move more freely, speak with less difficulty, swallowing with less problem, or otherwise decrease your complaints. I will typically follow-up with functional activities and home stretching or activities, as appropriate.

Walt Fritz, PT

Pain Relief Center in Rochester, NY

Foundations in Myofascial Release Seminars www.FoundationsinMFR.com