

# ACCENT

## HEALTHY LIVING



*Having a bad day?*

**Lace up your sneakers and go for a brisk walk.** You can expect a mood boost in as little as 15 minutes — and even happier thoughts if you keep it up for another 15 minutes.

*A head-to-toe*

# HOLISTIC HEALER

Renowned reflexologist **LAURA NORMAN** has offices in New York City and Massachusetts — but her home base is in Delray Beach where she works on clients.



Photo by STEVE DORFMAN

**'The feet are the most neglected part of the body':** Laura Norman says they support our entire bodies and contain more than 15,000 nerve endings, but they are restricted inside shoes all day. Reflexology helps get the energy flowing from the feet to the body.



**FOOT NOTES:** Each part of the foot corresponds to a body part. For example, the big toes are associated with the head and pituitary gland.

■ **Reporter Steve Dorfman jumps into reflexology session first, 4D**

By STEVE DORFMAN  
*Palm Beach Post Staff Writer*

The compact treatment room is intimate and welcoming — as one would expect a place of healing and relaxation to be.

The pure, sweet scent of aromatherapy complements the hypnotic, meditative music playing in the background. Asian influences are evident in the décor, as well as in the serene, centered demeanor of its proprietress.

In this peaceful *dojo* (Japanese for “place of the way”), Laura Norman wages a righteous battle against pain, stress, toxins and negativity. Her method of choice: a unique version of the healing art of reflexology.

### Unintentional guru

Norman, a child of the 1960s, says, “When I was in college at Boston University, I embraced many of the alternative mind/body disciplines that were becoming popular, such as yoga and meditation.”

The holder of three master’s degrees in education, Norman was introduced to reflexology by a friend and took to it immediately.

See NORMAN, 4D ►

### WHAT IS REFLEXOLOGY?

Part art, part science, reflexology is a centuries-old form of alternative medicine designed to activate natural healing in the body. This is done via a certain type of specific, evenly applied pressure to various strategic areas of the feet, which can produce a variety of positive effects in other parts of the body.

### HOW IS LAURA NORMAN'S BRAND OF REFLEXOLOGY DIFFERENT FROM OTHERS?

In addition to practicing conventional reflexology on recipients’ feet and, to a lesser extent, hands, Norman also incorporates reflexology principles to the face and ears.

### WHAT BENEFITS CAN ONE DERIVE FROM REFLEXOLOGY?

Everyone responds in his or her own unique way to reflexology. The effects that it can produce include relaxation, stress- and pain reduction, improved circulation, cleansing of bodily toxins and impurities, increased energy, mood elevation and improved focus.

Sources: *Feet First: A Guide to Foot Reflexology*; [reflexology-usa.org](http://reflexology-usa.org); [reflexology-research.com](http://reflexology-research.com)

## LAURA NORMAN'S CELEBRITY CLIENTELE



### REGIS PHILBIN

Norman worked on-air on the morning talk-show titan after Philbin’s producer, Michael Gelman, read about her in *New York* magazine. Famously proud of his aesthetically appealing hoofs (‘Look at my feet! Look at my feet!’), Philbin enjoyed his initial session with Norman so much that he re-booked her several times. However, her treatment turned serious when Philbin was hospitalized with a huge, severe kidney stone — on which Philbin’s doctor was prepared to operate. ‘The night before his scheduled surgery, I worked on him. Somehow, miraculously, he passed the stone during the night as he slept — and avoided surgery. He credits the reflexology that I did on him with ‘saving his life’ — but I’m just glad he was OK.’

### ROBIN QUIVERS

Norman met Quivers by chance: when the two shared a ride to an Upstate New York meditation retreat. ‘I had no idea who she was when she said she worked on *The Howard Stern Show*. I don’t watch much TV or listen to the radio,’ Norman explains. Before arriving at the retreat, Quivers said she had never been to one. Norman remembers, ‘Then, as soon as we got out of the car, everyone we saw is greeting her: “Hi, Robin”; “Hey, Robin”; “Good to see you, Robin.” That’s when she told me she was an on-air personality.’ Quivers had Norman work on her, at Quivers’ home, every night for years to help her fall asleep. ‘She’s always been concerned about getting enough sleep because she has to wake up at 4 a.m.’



### HOWARD STERN

One Christmas, Quivers gave everyone on the show — including Stern — gift certificates for Norman’s services. ‘Howard was the last to use his,’ Norman says. ‘Robin told him that he’d probably fall asleep during the session, but he said, “No

See CELEBS, 4D ►



EVAN AGOSTINI/The Associated Press

# GOLDEN GIRL

Why sassy Betty White makes 88 the new age of ‘fresh’

She helped ‘Saturday Night Live’ score its best ratings in nearly two years, but that’s not why we love her.

**Face it: America has a thing for slightly dirty-minded old ladies.**

By HANK STUEVER  
*The Washington Post*

Apple pie, apple Betty. The sweetness, the spacey granny thing. The twinkle, the dimples, the cotton-ball coif. It’s the simplest sort of television-era algebra: Let Sue Ann Nivens equal x. Let Rose Nylund equal y. Take the square root of all the love America has left to give. (Take those nights spent watching *Golden Girls* reruns on the Hallmark Channel, with the tray of microwave brownies and the fuzzy blankie — don’t pretend you don’t know.) For this equation alone, the comedy actress Betty White will be famous forever.

But she wouldn’t be an Internet-age sensation if Betty didn’t also know how to be naughty, outré. America loves a slightly dirty-minded meemaw with an unerring sense of comic timing. If not for this elusive factor, we wouldn’t be living through a long and building Betty White moment, which fittingly crested on Mother’s Day weekend with her hosting *Saturday Night Live* — an event that a half-million people more or less demanded through a Facebook campaign this year.

See BETTY, 5D ►

## THE YOU DOCS



By Mehmet Oz, M.D.  
Michael Roizen, M.D.

# Three breakfast foods that your heart will love

Put down that toaster pastry, back away from the pancakes and listen up:

Three of our favorite foods may be even better for you than we thought. Especially in the morning.

We’re sure you already know that eating a healthy breakfast helps with weight loss and mental focus, and gives you something to do while you read the latest YOU Docs column. But starting the day with these three goodies cuts your risk for heart disease, too:

**1. A glass of OJ or a juicy piece of citrus.** Two compounds in citrus (naringenin and hesperidin) power up your body’s defenses and cool down inflammation, which otherwise encourages dangerous plaque



buildup in your arteries.

**2. Fat.** Yes, fat. If you’re thinking, man, the YOU

See DOC OZ, 3D ►

# Reflexology helps with focus

► NORMAN from 1D

"It encompassed everything I was looking for — the mind, body and spirit," she recalls.

After graduating from BU in the early 1970s, Norman, a Long Island, N.Y., native, spent the next decade as an educator in a New York City institute for special-needs children. Concurrently, she furthered her reflexology knowledge, becoming certified in the practice (as well as several others in the healing arts).

"I found that when I practiced reflexology on the children, many of whom were emotionally disturbed and/or physically handicapped, they responded immediately. They became calmer, happier, and much easier to reach and educate," Norman says.

Gradually, she began introducing reflexology to friends, family and other associates in her life. For instance, "When my dentist complained that his neck was stiff, I explained how reflexology could help him and asked if he'd let me try it on him," Norman recalls.

Pretty soon, word spread. Before she knew it, Norman's part-time avocation "was keeping me as busy as my full-time job. I had to train other people how to perform reflexology to keep up with the demand."

Eventually, she transitioned into reflexology full time — and the media took notice. She was featured in *New York* magazine, local newspapers and soon began appearing on morning talk shows.

## 'The body has its own intelligence'

Owing to the interconnectedness of a person's physical, emotional and spiritual well-being, Norman believes, "The body has its own intelligence." In other words, the physical manifestations of minor aches, pains and illnesses originate in a body part connected to a specific issue.

"For instance, if your back hurts for no discernible reason, it might be because you feel the weight of the world on your shoulders. Or it might be because you let people walk all over you," Norman explains.

Regardless — for these and myriad other mind/body/spirit issues, Norman turns to the healing power of reflexology.

"The feet are the most neglected part of the body," Norman says. "They support our entire body and contain more than 15,000 nerve endings, yet are kept restricted by shoes all day. Reflexology helps get positive, life-affirming energy flowing back through the entire body."

► CELEBS from 1D

way!" Well, before his session was even halfway done, he was quietly snoring away.'

Norman, who has since appeared on *The Howard Stern Show* many times, explains, 'In real life, Howard is nothing like his brash on-air persona. When I've worked on him at his apartment, he's always so polite and solicitous — just a perfect gentleman!'



**Other celebrity clients of Norman include Oscar-winning actress Hilary Swank, comedienne Joan Rivers, and numerous other entertainers and athletes whose names she's not at liberty to reveal.**

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## Spreading the word

Norman believes so strongly in the healing power of reflexology that she spreads the gospel anywhere — and everywhere — she can: "People fly in from all over the country to take our certification courses. We've trained thousands of people over the years."

Local student Toni Will can certainly attest to reflexology's powerful effects. "After Laura worked on me, I felt grounded, focused, and just so positive and upbeat," notes Will, who has been training for several months to earn her reflexology certification.

"And the people I've practiced on have experienced similar results. One person who was suffering from migraine headaches got immediate relief that lasted for days," Will adds.

Norman moved to South Florida about a decade ago in order to be close to her healthy nonagenarian mother (who receives daily reflexology). But she also maintains practices in New York City and Stockbridge, Mass., so she rarely has a free day.

However, Norman never seems the least bit stressed or harried. She believes this is the byproduct of being immersed in what she does for a living: "Reflexology...is as beneficial for the giver as it is for the receiver."

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# Jumping feet first into reflexology



**Steve Dorfman**  
Boomer Health

## LAURA NORMAN REFLEXOLOGY

**Location: Paradise Spa**  
**140 N.E. Second Ave.**  
**Delray Beach, FL 33444**  
**www.lauranorman.com**

**Phone:** (561) 272-1220

**Services:** Norman's reflexology treatment sessions in Florida start at \$150 per hour; in New York and Massachusetts, it's \$200 per hour.

**Classes:** Norman's reflexology education programs start at around \$200. Her next local introductory three-day seminar is set for May 22-24.

**Products:** Aromatic, freshening mists, soaks, creams, powders and moisturizers for the hands, feet and face; colorful reflexology foot pillows; instructional DVDs; the bestselling book *Feet First: A Guide to Foot Reflexology*

The kneading of sore muscles.

The stretching of tight ligaments.

The manipulation of inflamed tendons.

Who doesn't love a good, professionally performed massage?

Well, Laura Norman for one — if you use the "m" word in relation to her unique brand of reflexology.

"What we do with reflexology is so much more than just massage," says the Delray Beach-based, world-renowned practitioner and bestselling author of the book *Feet First: A Guide to Foot Reflexology*.

Indeed, what Norman does with reflexology is also more than what most reflexologists do. "Reflexologists usually work only on the feet — which is fine," notes Norman. "We go farther, by working on other key extremities, such as ears, face and hands."

Norman says that, just as conventional reflexologists map the human body on the feet, manipulation of these other extremities can have dramatic effects on other aspects of our well-being.

"Because the face is located so close to the brain, facial reflexology can help you relax and focus," she explains.

"Likewise, working on the ears can help with pain management; and the hands almost mimic the feet in terms of mapping the body — but with fewer nerve endings.

I was going to experience all of this firsthand.

Before commencing with a reflexology ses-

sion, Norman requests that you fill out a questionnaire and chat with her for a few minutes about the recent goings-on in your life.

"Some clients prefer to bypass this part and keep the session purely physical, and I respect that," Norman says. "But if clients want the session to benefit them mentally, emotionally and spiritually as much as it does physically, then we can do that as well."

Norman and I briefly discussed a minor issue that was causing me self-inflicted strife. Reluctant to call what she does "life-coaching," she describes it more as "making positive suggestions and reminding people of what they already know."

Before starting my session, Norman recounted "a sweet observation from a client who's a baker. The man said,

'What you and I do is similar. Before I come to you, I gather all my ingredients, put them together and place it all in an oven. When you and I talk, that's the gathering of the ingredients; when you work on me, that's the placing of it in the oven. By the time I get back to work, the baking in my oven is done, and the "baking" you've done inside of me is done, too.'

With that image in mind and with rhythmic, Zen-inspired music playing, Norman darkened the room, encouraged me "to go with whatever sensations you feel" and began my session.

She started on my forehead and temples — which was immediately relaxing.

Next, she moved to my ears, which was a pleasant continuation of the facial work. By the time she reached my hands, I was as relaxed as could be. However, the manipulation of my hands had the reverse effect. I became extremely alert, which was not unpleasant — but a definite shift.

The work on my feet was extremely effective. At different times, I actually felt other body parts being affected. I took several deep, satisfying, oxygen-rich breaths when, I assume, she was working on the area that corresponded to my heart. I also enjoyed several euphoric little stomach flips when I would've sworn that toxins were being flushed from various internal organs.

In the ensuing days, I've felt energized, and have experienced an inner calm and focus that has helped allay the aforementioned strife.

Overall, the hourlong session with Norman was unlike any therapeutic body work I'd ever had before. But it's one I'd definitely consider having again.