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SECTION 1 - GET READY!

What is QST and why is it worth doing?

In this day and age when so many children have problems that cannot be solved with our Western medicine, parents are turning to the wisdom of Eastern medicine for ways to heal their children. And they are finding some beautiful tools. QST massage is such a tool.

What is QST massage for autism? It's a 15-minute, daily, parent-delivered massage for children with autism based on Chinese medicine. And it works for autism.

What does QST stand for? **Q** is the Chinese medicine part. It stands for qigong - pronounced chee-gong. It is an ancient form of healing that includes massage and movement. It is used to improve health, energy and circulation. **ST** stands for Sensory Treatment. This is a treatment for the sensory problems that stand in the way of development for children with autism.

What does the research show? The research shows that treatment with QST massage results in an average decrease in severity of autism by 32%, sensory problems by 38%, and parenting stress by 44% in the first five months. Continued treatment results in continued benefit. The treatment is an effective sensory treatment for autism. It is started at the time of the autism diagnosis and continued for 1-2 years.

Parents give the massage every day. They learn not to avoid uncomfortable areas, but instead to attune the massage techniques to their children's comfort level. As parents continue the daily massage and work through their children's difficulties, sensory problems diminish. Children start to relax, make eye contact and listen; they become closer and more affectionate with family members. Language and behavior improve. Children ask for their massage, and it is a relaxing, bonding time with their parents.

After five months children's sense of touch is greatly improved, they are better able to regulate behavior, and more comfortable participating in home and

school activities. Children with severe autism move towards moderate, moderate children move towards mild, and mild children move off the spectrum. Continued treatment results in continued improvement.

Higher-functioning children make faster progress than lower functioning children because they have more of a foundation for development. Some lower functioning children have cognitive disability and do not learn to speak. It is not possible to identify these children when they are young. Because all children treated with QST massage make sensory, behavioral and social progress, including those who are eventually found to have cognitive disability, we believe all children with autism deserve a chance at this intervention if their parents are willing and able.

Okay, now you know why the massage is worth doing. Let's get set to begin.

Letter to Parents Introducing the Workbook and the Year - Long Program

Dear Parents,

QST parent massage is a really different sort of treatment. It's not a medicine. It's not done by a professional. The parent does it. And the parent-child bond makes it more effective. Children respond to their parent's touch like no one else. Parents attune their touch to their children's responses like no one else. And most importantly, parents' love is communicated through touch.

"My husband and I do the massage for our son - no outsider can do it better than we can." Mom

The massage is based on ancient Chinese healing wisdom. This is not a mechanical set of patting and pressing movements. It's true, you have to learn the mechanics of the massage, but that's only the starting point. You also have to learn to read your child's body language during massage and know what to do. You will see where the problems are, attune your touch and work with the problems. Then the massage will help your child get better.

The key to success with this program is you - learning the massage properly and doing it every day for a year. Fifteen minutes a day is what it takes. Ideally, you would have a QST therapist working with you - our research is based on parents having that. But often that is not possible. There are millions of children with autism and not enough QST therapists to go around. If we wait till there are, the children will have grown up.

So we wrote this workbook to give more tools to parents who don't have a therapist - tools to help them understand their child's healing process and keep the massage going day after day for a full year.

The workbook should be used along with the book *Qigong Massage for Your Child With Autism: A Home Program from Chinese Medicine* and DVD. It is not a substitute. The book and DVD are the core of the program. The workbook will help

you keep the program going in your family. For instance, you will need to read the book and watch the DVD to learn the 12 movements of the massage before you start, but you'll use the workbook every day to record your observations.

We've learned a lot in the five years since the book was written. We now know more about how parents can maximize their child's success, how to adjust the massage to higher and lower-functioning children, and why the massage works. We'll be sharing what we've learned in the workbook.

If you are like a lot of parents we have worked with, you don't have a lot of extra time. The beauty of this treatment is that it doesn't take a lot of time. It's simple and it works. And you don't have to learn it all at the beginning. You learn some of it at the beginning so that it is possible for you to start. Then you just have to do the massage every day. You learn the rest as you go along. The workbook includes weekly letters from us that will help you build on your learning.

After you get started, you'll see that the massage starts a healing process in your child's body. You might be surprised at how quickly you see small changes. Try to be aware of them. Write them down on the Weekly Logs in the workbook so you'll have a record of your progress. Healing change is good. As you work through the workbook, we'll aim to prepare you in advance for changes that you might see as a result of the massage, and we'll give you massage tools and parenting tips to help.

We've found, after working with hundreds of parents, that after they do the massage for a while, they have questions about things they are seeing in their child and want to learn more. If parents don't get the chance to learn more, they can let the program drop. That's sad because then the child doesn't get the benefit of treatment. That's where we hope the workbook will help. We've included answers to many common questions parents have and some massage solutions.

In **Section 1** of this workbook, you'll see what you need to do before starting your child's program - like reading from the book, and getting yourself and your child ready. We'll also give you a list of goals for yourself - to help you be successful.

In **Section 2** you'll set some goals for the massage, learn why we focus on touch, and discover two tools for measuring your child's progress.

Section 3 is the heart of the workbook. It contains a year's worth of Weekly Logs, alternating with weekly letters to you from us. The Weekly Logs really help you stay on top of the program for the whole year. The letters are your continued learning about the massage. They will tell you what you need to know now, what you can learn later and where you can find additional information. We've also included letters from parents who have done QST massage with their children.

We've written our books so that you don't have to understand Chinese medicine to use the massage effectively. As time passes, you will see what the massage does. If you follow the instructions, it will work. We'll try our best to keep it simple. If you want to know more about the how and why of it, read ahead in the weekly letters.

Section 4 is the Appendices. This section suggests ways to talk with your health care providers and teachers about QST massage.

Section 5 is the index. This section is organized alphabetically so you can look up anything you might have a question about and find useful information. For example, if your child doesn't want you to touch his head during the massage, or she isn't sleeping, you can look up these topics in the index and learn about what this means and what you can do about it.

So here goes, best of luck and enjoy the adventure!

Louisa and Pam

Weekly Log - Week 23

♥ Always start with love

Check each day you do the massage

Sun ___ Mon ___ Tuesday ___ Wed ___ Thu ___ Fri ___ Sat ___

Things You Noticed:

During the Massage

- Mv1.** Lays down/won't lay down?
- Mv2.** Back - hums?
- Mv3-4.** Ears - avoids?
- Mv5.** Up/up/up - eye contact?
- Mv6.** Fingers - stroking or pressing?
- Mv7.** Chest - rubs eyes, yawns, relaxes?
- Mv8.** Belly - diarrhea/constipation?
- Mv9-10.** Legs - patting or pressing?
- Mv11.** Toes - stroking, pressing, bicycle?
- Mv12.** Soles - avoids?

During the Week

- Sleep _____
- Bowels _____
- Tantrums _____
- Affection _____
- Eye contact _____
- Listening _____
- Speaking _____
- Other _____

Positive things other people said about your child ...

Your thoughts and feelings about the process ...

Questions you had this week ...

Remember: Look for answers to your questions in the index and the book.

Week 24

Letter to parents - Doing the massage 6-7 days a week vs. 3-4 days a week in the second half of the year

Dear Parents,

It is really important to keep doing the massage 6-7 days a week in order to keep advancing the progress of your child during the first year of QST massage. Most parents don't have too much trouble doing that for the first six months because their children's improvements are so obvious and satisfying. For the second half of year, when children tend to settle down into a less dramatic pattern of growth, that may not be the case. In our research studies, we tracked the results in the first and second half of the year for parents who did the massage 6-7 days a week and for those who dropped back to 3-4 days a week, and we found a big difference!

In the second half of the year, parents who continued the massage 6-7 days a week could expect the same amount of new developmental skills as they saw in the first half of the year. So, for example, if their child improved 20% in language by mid-year, they could go to 40% by the end of the year. But the parents who dropped the frequency of massage to 3-4 days a week in the second half of the year did not get the same results. Their children kept the gains they had made in the first half of the year, but did not keep gaining skills at the same rate as those who got the massage every day. It was like they moved from catch-up mode to maintenance mode.

Medicines wear off and need to be given regularly. Massage is the most organizing, relaxing and energizing medicine we have. It boosts your child's nervous system in the direction of growth every single day. Your child's nervous system has been in a pattern of delayed growth for several years. If you want to change an established pattern, you need to give the daily treatment for at least half as long as the pattern has been in place. So if your child regressed into autism 3 years ago and you want to shift him onto a better path and keep him improving,

you might plan to give the massage for 1 ½ years. If he only regressed 2 years ago, you could plan for daily massage for one year.

Having said that, there are exceptions. The research showed that some children, specifically the higher-functioning ones, did continue to make good progress in the second half of the year with massage 3-4 days a week. So observe closely, know what the research says, know there are always exceptions, and make your decision based on your child. Continuing daily massage is never a bad idea!

All our best,

Louisa and Pam

Weekly Log - Week 24

♥ Always start with love

Check each day you do the massage

Sun ___ Mon ___ Tuesday ___ Wed ___ Thu ___ Fri ___ Sat ___

Things You Noticed:

During the Massage

Mv1. Lays down/won't lay down?

Mv2. Back - hums?

Mv3-4. Ears - avoids?

Mv5. Up/up/up - eye contact?

Mv6. Fingers - stroking or pressing?

Mv7. Chest - rubs eyes, yawns, relaxes?

Mv8. Belly - diarrhea/constipation?

Mv9-10. Legs - patting or pressing?

Mv11. Toes - stroking, pressing, bicycle?

Mv12. Soles - avoids?

During the Week

Sleep _____

Bowels _____

Tantrums _____

Affection _____

Eye contact _____

Listening _____

Speaking _____

Other _____

Positive things other people said about your child ...

Your thoughts and feelings about the process ...

Questions you had this week ...

Remember: Look for answers to your questions in the index and the book.

Week 25

Letter to parents - A skeptical parent comes to believe

Dear Parents,

I first heard about QST from my son's OT a few months after he started school, he had just turned six. Initially I was skeptical, it sounded like one of those mystic energy healing things I definitely didn't believe in. Then the OT showed me some of the scientific studies that found QST was effective and I was intrigued.

By the time of our next OT meeting a week later, I had bought a copy of the book and read it and had copies of all the studies that had been published. I was starting to be convinced. The scientific studies made all the difference to me.

At that time my son was having a very difficult time adjusting to school, he was hitting the staff and I was worried he would be thrown out of school. My house was very clean though as I couldn't sleep and was up most nights cleaning! He had many sensory challenges - hypersensitive to light, sound and some touch (he wouldn't wear socks). He also didn't like it when other children cried, including babies. At the park, we had to rush to be near him if a child cried as there was a risk of him hitting the child in an effort to stop the crying. A few times we were not fast enough and he did hit children at the beach, park and school.

He was not sleeping well, would sometimes take a long time to fall asleep or he would wake up in the middle of the night and not be able to go back to sleep. I always heard him so I didn't sleep much either. He would have some spectacular tantrums that could last for what seemed like forever. I used to call him my Ferrari because he could go from 0-60 in a few seconds. Food was another challenge, he was a very fussy eater.

When I started using QST, to be honest I wasn't expecting much. I decided I would commit to doing the massage faithfully for the five months indicated in the studies I'd read, and I was going to evaluate it then.

Around Christmas my son's class went to the nearby shopping mall to visit Santa. Some days later his teacher was telling me about the trip and commenting

that he loved fries. She had given him fries from the McDonald's at the mall. My first reaction was horror at the fact that she had introduced my son to the very symbol of junk food! Then I thought, "Wait a minute, he ate them?" my son who only ate a handful of things, with a particular texture. Until he was three years old I had to purée his food. I think it was then that I allowed myself a faint glimmer of hope that this massage might actually help him. Those fries represented a major step in a long journey for us.

At the end of the five months, he was wearing socks, tantrums were less frequent both at home and at school, he was sleeping much better and had even started playing around with words to make simple jokes! Two years later, we still do qigong massage several times a week. It seems to help him.

I would tell new parents, QST works! It has been tested in many studies. There's not much you can do wrong with it, all you have to do is spend a few minutes every day with your child, and that time together is very special.

Many thanks,

Sarah

Weekly Log - Week 25

♥ Always start with love

Check each day you do the massage

Sun ___ Mon ___ Tuesday ___ Wed ___ Thu ___ Fri ___ Sat ___

Things You Noticed:

During the Massage

- Mv1.** Lays down/won't lay down?
- Mv2.** Back - hums?
- Mv3-4.** Ears - avoids?
- Mv5.** Up/up/up - eye contact?
- Mv6.** Fingers - stroking or pressing?
- Mv7.** Chest - rubs eyes, yawns, relaxes?
- Mv8.** Belly - diarrhea/constipation?
- Mv9-10.** Legs - patting or pressing?
- Mv11.** Toes - stroking, pressing, bicycle?
- Mv12.** Soles - avoids?

During the Week

- Sleep _____
- Bowels _____
- Tantrums _____
- Affection _____
- Eye contact _____
- Listening _____
- Speaking _____
- Other _____

Positive things other people said about your child ...

Your thoughts and feelings about the process ...

Questions you had this week ...

Remember: Look for answers to your questions in the index and the book.

Week 26

Letter to parents - Widening social circles (siblings, grandparents, friends)

Dear Parents,

By now you may be seeing that your child is beginning to connect with other people more. Over the years, we have noticed that a child who is in QST recovery widens her social circle in a predictable way.

The center of the social circle is the parent-child relationship, and it starts at birth. One dad said: "When my daughter was born, she looked in my eyes and saw my soul. She has owned me ever since." This is the essential human connection - life affirming and life-sustaining.

If your child has started out closer to one parent, the next thing that will happen with QST parent massage is she will open up to the other parent. After that, she will open up to older siblings, and then younger siblings.

A mom had this to say about her young son and his baby sister:

"My son never really noticed his baby sister. He would even crawl right over her like she wasn't even there. Then I noticed that he started watching her play, and now he sits down next to her to play." - Father

Next, children will open up to grandparents and extended family members with whom they are familiar. Lastly, they will open up to relationships with children their own age. Now they are ready for school. Congratulations, it's been a long haul!

Best wishes,

Louisa and Pam

Weekly Log - Week 26

♥ Always start with love

Check each day you do the massage

Sun ___ Mon ___ Tuesday ___ Wed ___ Thu ___ Fri ___ Sat ___

Things You Noticed:

During the Massage

- Mv1.** Lays down/won't lay down?
- Mv2.** Back - hums?
- Mv3-4.** Ears - avoids?
- Mv5.** Up/up/up - eye contact?
- Mv6.** Fingers - stroking or pressing?
- Mv7.** Chest - rubs eyes, yawns, relaxes?
- Mv8.** Belly - diarrhea/constipation?
- Mv9-10.** Legs - patting or pressing?
- Mv11.** Toes - stroking, pressing, bicycle?
- Mv12.** Soles - avoids?

During the Week

- Sleep _____
- Bowels _____
- Tantrums _____
- Affection _____
- Eye contact _____
- Listening _____
- Speaking _____
- Other _____

Positive things other people said about your child ...

Your thoughts and feelings about the process ...

Questions you had this week ...

Remember: Look for answers to your questions in the index and the book.

Week 27

Letter to parents - How do I talk to the school about QST massage?

Dear Parents,

Chances are your child's teacher will be asking you what you are doing at home long before you go to talk to them! We often find that within a short time of starting QST massage, parents receive positive reports from the school. And teachers want to know what is happening. After all, they have a whole classroom full of children to teach, and something that helps one child, can help others too.

When your child's teacher asks you what you are doing, go ahead and give them the Information Sheet for teachers in Appendix 1. They will want to know about the research and what it showed.

We do not recommend that you teach the massage to your child's teacher or give them permission to give your child massage in school. You have spent a lot of time developing your child's trust in the massage. If school personnel are not sensitive to your child's body language or force the massage on your child, it can undermine your hard won goals. You can, however, share the transitions technique with your child's teacher and even show them how to use the Easy Button to calm your child and the Face-Me Button to get their attention. Teachers will be very glad to have these tools to support your child.

Keep up the good work!

Louisa and Pam