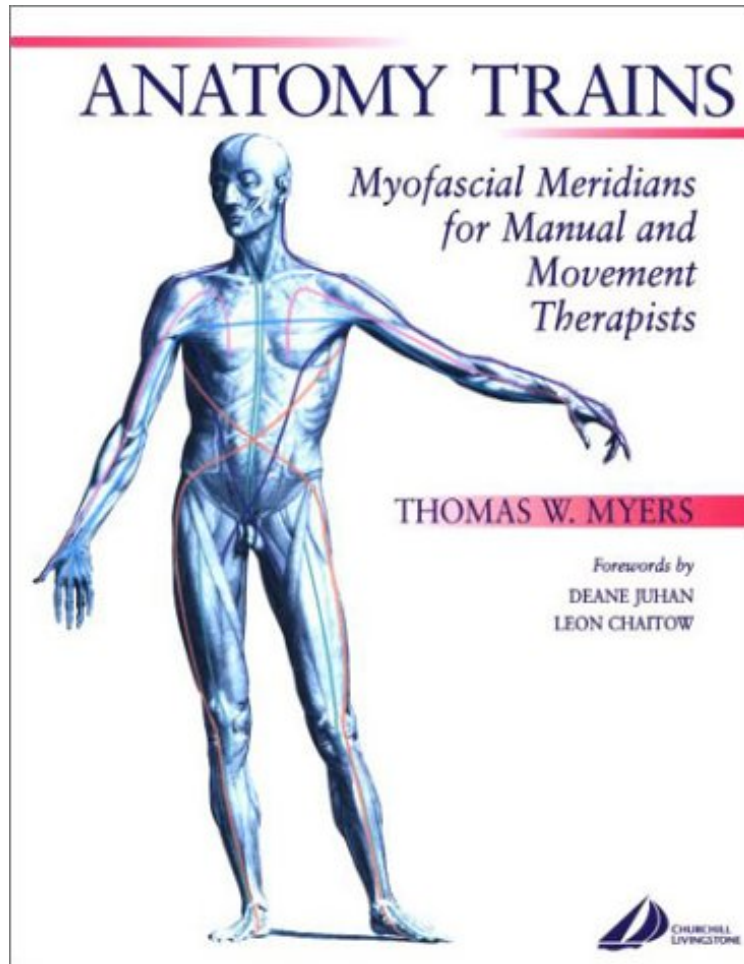


# Anatomy Trains: Myofascial Meridians for Manual and Movement Therapists, 1e

Thomas W. Myers

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**Thomas W. Myers : Anatomy Trains: Myofascial Meridians for Manual and Movement Therapists, 1e** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Anatomy Trains: Myofascial Meridians for Manual and Movement Therapists, 1e:

315 of 318 people found the following review helpful. Anatomy Trains bandwagon: An elegant theory unfortunately widely embraced as factBy Timothy R.Tom Myers in his two books presents an appealing if not compelling theory on fascial anatomy and its potential effects on movement and posture across broad planes. The theory itself is not new, with other Rolfers and osteopaths referring to the vast "network" of fascia throughout the body being the integrator of posture and movement. At least one other well known fascial bodywork author has equated the fascial network to a sort of sweater made of fascial yarn in which snags can form and propagate tension across long distances in the body.The book is wonderfully done, and the theory is well presented with ample and useful anatomical illustrations of

each anatomy train. There is a lot to learn from here, and as always, Tom Myers' writing is thought provoking, intelligent and easy to read. This is not one of those books that tantalizes you with tidbits and then says "but to really learn it you need to take my classes." Myer's doesn't hold back in his books. I would recommend this book to anyone interested in anatomy from a movement or manual medicine perspective. That being said I do have some reservations about the Anatomy Trains concept and the phenomenon of whole scale acceptance that surrounds the theory. If you want a great book that explains the Anatomy Trains concept clearly and deeply enough to take to the clinic or massage table, then definitely buy this book. Read no further, it is worth it. IF, on the other hand, you are reading reviews wondering what the Anatomy Trains phenomenon is all about, then read on. What is troubling is not the theory presented in this book, but the almost ubiquitous acceptance in massage and chiropractic circles as proven fact. One repeatedly reads reviews calling this book "essential" and referring to other theories on fascia as "outdated" or "misguided." I believe this speaks to the elegant and intuitive nature of the Anatomy Trains concept and the way it is presented, rather than speaking to its veracity. In fact, the most basic elements that would make this a relevant clinical tool seem to be completely missing from the scientific literature. I say this not as a skeptic of manual medicine. I myself trained with Tom Myers 20 years ago, trained and practice as a practitioner of structural integration (Rolfing) and use manual medicine in my veterinary practice. I've had anatomy instructors in Rolfing training, in pre-medicine in college, and in both chiropractic and veterinary college, and I can say Tom Myers is as good as they come in making anatomy relevant to clinical treatment. I think he is a visionary in stepping back to look at functional anatomy from a whole body perspective. While there has been a great deal of basic scientific work done on the microscopic structure and chemistry of fascia, the work has yet to be done to verify what Rolfers have always proposed: 1) that restriction in a small area of fascia can be propagated across long distances and across firm attachment points to cause global movement dysfunction and 2) that deep manual intervention is actually able to stretch or "free" fascial restrictions deep in the tissues. Over the years I have seen some prominent Rolfing authors back away from these theories after participating in actual anatomical dissections. I myself was taught that I could stretch the quadratus lumborum fascia with my elbow, yet even a cursory look in dissection at the depth and overlying muscle would lead one to doubt the possibility of achieving that outcome. I was also taught that I could "effect" the TFL and the very tough fibrous fascial attachments around the hip joint (think lateral line here) with manual intervention. Having actually held these tissues between my fingers, I have to doubt the possibility. In fact, given the strength and organization of those tissues and the forces they must withstand, any gross change in them whether manual or surgical would amount to tissue damage and joint capsule injury and would require substantial healing. While the Anatomy Trains concept is an excellent theory that, if true, would be a wonderful guide to strategy in manual therapies, there are other competing theories that make as much sense and may have a better scientific underpinning. One such theory is that deep fascial intervention, as a secondary byproduct, causes mast cell degranulation in superficial tissues and that the released histamine granules cause extravasation of intravascular fluid into the tissues which "hydrates" those tissues, bringing about better sliding between fascial planes. My Rolfing teachers often commented on this feeling of "tissue hydration" underneath their fingers as they worked. A German medical approach to fascial manipulation is based on this phenomenon. The redness you see on the skin after fascial treatment and acupuncture is partially due to this phenomenon of mast cell degranulation. Moshe Feldenkrais, one of Tom's teachers, repeatedly showed that supposed "physical restrictions" in the body were actually habitual parasitic muscle tensions that could be eliminated simply through a few minutes of low amplitude client-directed movements to bring awareness to those parasitic actions. Joanne Elphinston in her excellent text *Stability, Sports and Performance Movement* takes us critically through many of the stereotypical aberrant movement patterns we in the fascial world have always credited to fascial "restriction." She shows how these are often related to and corrected by addressing weakness in stabilization strength and stabilization strategies. She also shows how weakness in stabilization in one area of the body can demand compensatory and inefficient movement patterns elsewhere in the body. Like fascia, movement strategies are also global whole body phenomenon, and weakness in one area can result in visible movement compensation across joints distant from the weakness. Not only are these compensation strategies clearly visible, but being inefficient, often lead to pathology and injury, again distant from the underlying problem. Without fascial work these problems can be reversed through skill and strength acquisition. Lastly, where physical restriction and tension are actually palpable and measurable, current scientific research seems to implicate vascular, neural and local chemical mediators all playing an intertwined role in initiating, sustaining and propagating such restrictions. Fascial adhesion may be an end point, but to what extent and how far reaching from the initial insult its effects can travel are still unknown. The manual medicine and massage world has always struggled to get itself accepted in the mainstream world of medical treatment modalities. We have often stood by the roadside watching the parade of medicine and patted ourselves on the back for being visionaries and 20 years ahead of our time. We compliment ourselves for having already accepted what "they" have yet to discover. However this is no excuse for not recognizing the difference between fact and theory. This is why I see it so troubling that the Anatomy Trains concept has become so pervasively accepted as fact, yet the most basic premises, 1) that gross fascial strain can be transmitted physically across chains of firm anchor points and 2) that deep manual intervention can stretch or "release" fascia in vivo, remain completely unproven theories. I hope Tom

Myers continues to use his unique gifts to develop this and other theories that really feed the imagination. However I wish that the massage therapy and chiropractic worlds would embrace critical thinking rather than merely embracing every new enticing theory as fact simply because it has a certain intuitive appeal. Our clients invest a great deal in time, effort, hope and money when they come to us. We owe it to them to separate fact from theory, and to not sell them the latter as the former. As it is, the Anatomy Trains concept is an exciting theory, but it is as yet only a theory, not an essential revolutionary truth in manual medicine, as many claim. 35 of 35 people found the following review helpful. Buy the previous edition. By Jody The previous edition was a better book. This one has cuts to squeeze in more text and relies on you looking at the good illustrations at their website instead of in the book. Buy the previous edition if what you want is a book. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. and this book is brilliant. Everything I have read so far is pertinent ... By euphonicus I'm a massage therapist, and this book is brilliant. Everything I have read so far is pertinent to my trade and I have already begun to apply what I have learned from the author in my practice. Clearly this book is the result of the author's lifelong work. This work reads like a textbook; it is slow reading due to its thorough approach. Although I am working through it without the DVD, I imagine the video would help some understand the concepts better, especially those more removed from their AP/Kinesiology/Pathology lessons. The photographs and drawings are amazing, too.

An accessible and comprehensive approach to the anatomy and function of the fascial system in the body combined with a holistic overview of myofascial therapy. Many different therapists now use myofascial techniques to influence postural change and pain relief. This book demonstrates exactly how the muscles connect within the connective tissue to affect posture, compensatory strain and pain patterns. The aim is to present scientifically sound and often complicated material in a way which can be easily learned, understood, and applied by those who do not necessarily have a scientific background. Anatomy Trains is written and presented in a style that allows this new information on the myofascial system to be easily absorbed by a wide range of readers: from the student, athlete, or client to the most experienced therapist. Includes full-colour illustrations of 11 myofascial meridians and the rules for discovering other meridians. Uses numerous two-colour charts and drawings to detail the muscular and fascial structures involved in the meridians. Presents information on assessment of structural and movement patterns and gives related applications to manual therapy and movement education. Provides a selection of techniques from the library of structural integration. Includes an introduction to the fascial system as a whole, with new points-of-view and new research findings on the fascial system's responses. Offers a fun approach to learning essential structural anatomy, comparing the connective tissue system to a railway network.

"A significant contribution to the literature" Lisa Mertz, *Massage Therapy*, July 2002  
"shall have our hands full mining the insights presented in this significant contribution to the advancement of our field" Jack Baker, *International Professional School of Bodywork, Massage*, July 2002  
"important contribution in its field" *Caduceus Issue 55*  
"is Myers's theory of the anatomy trains that makes this book important... This book is so good that it deserves to sell out its first edition." Stephen Pare, *Journal of Structural Integration*, June 2002  
About the Author  
Thomas W. Myers is a massage therapist and Rolfer. He has served on the Rolf Institute Board of Directors and the National Certification Board for Therapeutic massage and Bodywork. He has lectured widely in the USA and runs frequent workshops around that country. He also lectures in the UK and Europe and his book has recently been translated in German by U F. He publishes regularly articles in *Massage Magazine* (USA publication for massage therapists) as well as in *JBMT*. Through his articles in these journals he is now becoming better known internationally. He is regarded very highly by his peers.