



## About MFR Stories

In the late **Fall of 2000**, a year and a half after graduating from Massage Therapy School, I took the introductory level of Myofascial Release Therapy, MFR 1. Having the basic understanding and knowledge of the principals was helpful, but for all practical purposes, I put the training "on the shelf". A phrase I use often is - different things work for different people at different times. While I do believe Massage Therapy can be good for almost everyone most of the time, in **late 2010** I had a few clients that I felt needed "something extra".

I then decided that when the MFR training came back into the area, I would retake it and get serious about Myofascial Release Therapy. In **June of 2011** I had the opportunity, with the training being offered in La Crosse, WI. Since then, and after having an "ah haaa" moment about the potential of Myofascial Release Therapy, I have been excited to be able to offer it to Massage by Joel clients.

Why the word "Story"? Some of the following, are not conventional testimonials, and - I would certainly not consider them medical case histories. I thought the word story was appropriate. The Stories and comments have been put together to try and give insight of what might be possible with MFR. Fascial restrictions (connective tissue that has lost its' flexibility) is what MFR can help.

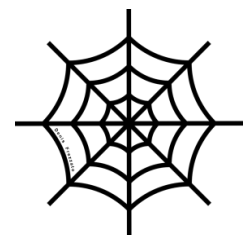
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It is not "magic", some people respond dramatically and profoundly (as in some of the Stories), some barely or not at all, and most, in-between. The structural principles are very simple, but from there on, results and benefits can be not only intriguing, but extremely gratifying!

I have to take a moment to profoundly thank Jeanne Mather (formerly) of Stratford Therapy Services (now Sport & Spine) for first suggesting (way back when) to take the MFR training, and actually - also for being part of the original reason I "got into" Massage Therapy. But that would be a story for another day!!

Take care, *Joel*

*~ The best candidate for MFR might  
be the person who has had "every  
test in the book", tried many things,  
and nothing can be found wrong,  
or helps. ~*





## Sharon's Story

"Sharon" (name changed) was a middle aged massage therapy client that visited Massage by Joel for the first time in **February of 2011**. Three sessions over a two month period of time were helpful, but she had what I would call, "traps of steel", extremely tender, tight, and hard, trapezes muscles that flowed into, and contributed to a very tight and sore neck. I had to use a lighter than usual touch with her. There had not been a "this happened" thing with them, it had just developed over a long period of time. Headaches were frequent, and she used a mouth guard when sleeping. You could see the discomfort in her face! A CT scan in that area of the body for Tinnitus, did not indicate any thing mechanically wrong.

As a Massage Therapist, you can never "guarantee" results, but usually when someone comes to Massage by Joel with a stiff/sore neck, they normally leave with significant improvement. With Sharon, we were not seeing the relief I thought we should be getting, no matter what I tried. She was definitely an inspiration to reinvigorate my MFR training, which I did in **June of 2011**. A **9/1/11** session with her was an experiment of half massage, half MFR. In late **April 2012**, after the death of a pet dog and a strenuous plane trip, Sharon came in and we did a mostly MFR session. On **5/4/12** MFR was done with a good response. She also mentioned that from her previous visit about 10 days earlier, her Hearing Aids seemed to work better. The next visit was **5/22/12** and again, her body responded well to MFR. **Three months later, in August**, Sharon's name was in the appointment book. She came in and wanted to do a conventional massage??

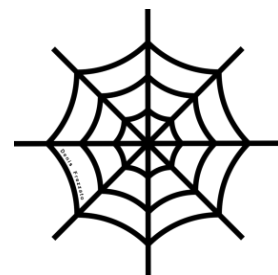
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*(Sharon's Story cont.)*

It didn't take long to feel that the neck and trap areas were almost "normal", a dramatic change from when we first met! I wanted to, on the spot ask, "Can you feel that?", but I resisted, and waited till the session was over. She knew she was feeling much better and, mentioned that over the **Summer** she had taken a road trip out West by automobile, and was dreading the hours to be spent riding, but, had a physically fine trip out and back. The improvements in Sharon's' neck, shoulders, and overall, were dramatic, and gratifying to see. I have to believe that the **John F. Barnes' Approach** style of MFR was the instrumental cause for the change.

**June, 2013:** (follow up) Sharon has relocated from Central Wisconsin, but (in a visit back here) indicated that she is doing well, headaches are all but gone, and has not been using the mouth guard for about a year now.

*"Find the pain ~ look  
elsewhere for the cause."  
John F. Barnes, PT*





## Jack's Story

On **October 27, 2011**, "Jack" (name changed) and his wife were in their car on an early morning errand, when they met a semi coming toward them. As they met, they believe a deer was hit by the truck and thrown into the front of their vehicle, causing the air bag to deploy. They were able to safely stop, and while the car received massive front end damage scaring the wits out of them, they believed they were physically ok. Jack felt a little sore in the neck but was not concerned. Jack, whom I happened to know personally, was an 81-year-old individual in excellent health, extremely vigorous, and very active. His ambition level would put many of us several decades younger to shame.

In that **November** and **December**, a persistent "achy-ness" set in on his neck and shoulders. By early **January 2012** a finger on one hand was starting to "curl", and it would be difficult to get, and stay straight. By **3/1/12**, all of his fingers were affected, and the soreness was throughout his neck, shoulders, arms, and hands. On **3/3/12**, Jack had x-rays on his hands and shoulders that were negative for damage. The **end of March** saw the achy-ness progress to the hips and legs. In **mid April**, he tried intensive Chiropractic work which was not helpful at that time. They did ask, "Have you been in an accident?". **April 30** saw neck x-rays and thorough blood work, that indicated normal. On **May 15** he had an MRI which also showed nothing wrong.

To back up a step, all this time I knew Jack was not feeling well, but had not really thought too much about it. He was good at not showing his "troubles" to others. His wife and mine had talked, and mention was made of the accident the previous Fall.

*(continued, page 6)*

**“Boing”**, the light bulb came on! On **May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012** I visited Jack at his home. I was actually shocked upon seeing him in his home environment. He was weak, stiff, and getting very frail. Although I am not a conventional medical practitioner, I was afraid the direction he was headed was, to a wheelchair, or worse! I explained to them the theory of MFR, and invited him to consider it. The next day, **May 8**, we had an interesting first session of MFR, and then decided to proceed with two visits per week.

Results were gradual but positive, and a sense of stopping the steep downhill slide in health was soon apparent. **6/8/12**, a one month evaluation: \*knee pain from 10 to 3. \*hand pain from 10 to 5. \*client was able to get on and off the therapy table unassisted (not so at start). \*was able to dress himself easily (barley so at start), \*used the stairs at the Y (the elevator at the start). \*was getting the “spark of life” back. On **6/12/12**, he felt he could get L. hand fingers 95% straight, R. hand fingers 65% straight. **6/15/12**, his legs could lay comfortably flat. Improvement continued, but then **7/9/12** this story gets a little murky when a Neurologist diagnosed Jack with inflammatory rheumatism and he received Progesterone shots. This did accelerate his mobility. On **7/26/12** Jack came in complaining of his legs being achy? He also mentioned the day before he had loaded onto a trailer, and unloaded, 150 landscaping blocks??? Improvement, from which ever source, continued with MFR sessions going through **August of 2012**.

In **May of 2013**, Jack felt he was 95% back to where he was before the deer hit. Most importantly, thanks in a big part to the John F. Barnes' Approach style Of Myofascial Therapy - he has His life back and is doing very well.





## Short Stories

**Laura F.** ~ came in for a Massage, we ended up doing MFR ~ ***"This brought up some very intense memories, good ones, but very intense."***

**Deb H.** ~ (her neck was starting to get sore again) came in 2 ½ months after her previous MFR session. ~ ***"I didn't think it (MFR) was going to make a difference or help, but it did!"***

**Barb I.** ~ four months after starting regular MFR sessions for a variety of "things", going on that conventional testing was not finding answers for. ~ ***"I do not think it is just a coincidence that since we started this, my appetite has improved."***

**Jody S.** ~ a long time Client, in because of an auto accident. ~ ***"Nothing else in my life has changed, but since we have been doing MFR the last couple of months, my several years old IBS symptoms have all but disappeared! Great!!"***

**Judy R.** ~ 5 months after her first MFR appointment ~ ***"We did that MFR "thing" last time and I have really felt good since till now, the neck and traps are bothering me again. I told my Husband after that first time I could breathe so much better, and that has not changed. Also, I was surprised then at how sore I was the next day from such a gentle touch, but then a day later felt great!"***





## Short Stories

Amy N. ~ after a MFR session ~ ***"I feel an inch taller."***

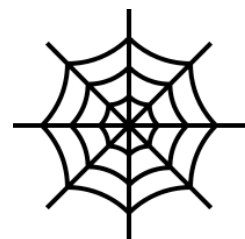
**Sue G.** ~ (8 of 2014) A client who had been in a few times over many years ~ ***"I felt that my whole body had "frozen solid" last winter (2013/14) and did not "thaw out" till June, except my right shoulder which has been stiff, sore, and troublesome yet, especially with the work that I do. The MFR stuff we did today was fantastic!! It almost feels normal."***

**Janelle** ~ was back in, 2 weeks after her first MFR session, & shared some results ~ ***"I really felt good after it, and actually, while I have been using sleeping aids for some time, I felt I didn't need to that night. I slept great without, and have not had to use them since."***

**Anne M.** ~ from a feedback questionnaire ~ ***"The MFR session was very relaxing and helpful – it eliminated the pain and tight sore muscles/fibromyalgia for quite a while. I will definitely be back for more MFR therapy! Thank you Joel!"***

**Shelly** ~ 2<sup>nd</sup> visit, did mostly MFR ~ ***"It was very subtle but I could definitely feel something happening. I liked it. Thank-you for suggesting it!"***

**Steve M.** ~ A December visit, still had "issues" going on after being "T-boned" in an August auto accident ~ ***"When you did the MFR pull on the legs, I could feel it all the way up my whole body."***







## Myofascial Release

MFR should ***not*** be thought of as a “quick or instant” fix.

That being said, occasionally, there are times when results appear to be gratifyingly swift. The following Stories of Gordon and Kathy (page 10) are interesting, and as always, while nothing can be “proved” definitively, I would be very suspicious the **John F. Barnes Approach** style of MFR played a big factor in the outcomes.

### Gordon’s Story

“Gordon” (name changed), a Massage by Joel Massage Therapy Client stopped me in a hall at the YMCA on the first Thursday or Friday in **September 2014**. He explained that he had been having a “water on the ear” problem for a month and had been doctoring with antibiotics, and trying every remedy he could think of to alleviate it, for he was scheduled to have it “drilled” (drained) the next week Friday if it did not go away. Having had no success, he was anxious to not do that if possible, and wanted to know if there was anything we could try with Bodywork. I was not overly optimistic, but suggested the best bet might some MFR Cranial type of work.

The following **Monday 9/8/14** he came in and we did some MFR work with an emphasis on the neck and head. I did not see him for a **couple of weeks**, but when we met in passing at the Y, he related that the “water in the ear” did go away and the scheduled surgery for it had been canceled! He said there were still some issues going on besides the water, so, the final outcome is to be determined.

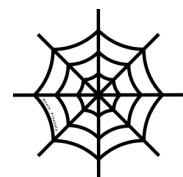


## Kathy's Story

"Kathy" (name changed) was a 27 year old acquaintance who was very active and did not "let much grass grow" under her feet. In **May of 2014** she started not feeling well, and amongst other symptoms, was feeling "weak" in the legs. She eventually saw a Naturopathic she knew of, and came away with a vitamin regimen that she followed, and for a while, & did feel better. By **July** her health started to deteriorate again, and the weakness in her legs progressed to the point that as she explained it ***"I would be walking along, and all of a sudden, I would drop to the ground with no warning!"*** That is of course not a good thing no matter what, but especially troublesome as she helped on a farm!

By early **August** Kathy had a pronounced limp and was using a cane for stability. In her own words ***"In early August I went to a regular Doctor. He had no answers so I was then referred to a Neurologist who found nothing. Within a week and a half I was so unsteady I went to Urgent Care. I had them stumped. I finally got into Neurology, and they said it has nothing to do with the nerves. I then saw Joel."***

On **Friday 8/15/14** she came in and we did a 45 minute session starting with an evaluation, and some specific MFR techniques. I ran in to her the following Monday or Tuesday and was pleasantly stunned to find her feeling much better and for the most part walking virtually normal! ***"After that I had a follow up with the regular Doctor who was not sure what had happened, but said to keep doing whatever it was I was doing!"*** We did do another MFR session on **Friday 8/29/14** (she said she thought she was feeling 90% back to normal) and at this time (**December 2014**) believes she is fine.





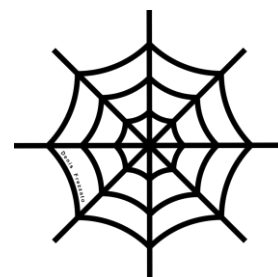
## Short Stories

**Susan** ~ Had a surgery (six weeks previously) to remove scar tissue on a nerve behind the right eye. Vision was improving, but she had an extremely sore eye from surgery trauma, and related the eye felt "stuck". She had come in to seek relief from a sore neck from a "black ice" fall 3 days before. A combo MFR/Massage session was planed, mostly MFR happened. Afterward: ~ ***"O my gosh, when you worked (MFR) the left arm, my right eye was twitching like crazy - and that is a good thing! It, and my neck feel so much better now."*** The human body has, an uncanny potential to go a long ways towards repairing itself.

**Cindy W.** ~ looking for massage therapy relief from a two week lingering headache, and "issues" from a stressful job. ~ ***"What was that "head thing" (an MFR technique) you did? The headache is completely gone, along with some congestion I had from a cold!"***

**John S.** ~ had a sore right arm/shoulder from a fall ~ ***"That MFR stuff we did the other day really seemed to help! That night was the first night that I was able to go to sleep without taking aspirin for a long time."***

**Laura W.** ~ new client - from comments ~ ***"Looking forward to a (specific) MFR session soon. I really appreciated your taking things that direction when I was in last week - I can feel a difference!"***





## Short Stories

**Nancy** ~ New client, from feedback comments ~

***"Don't remember the name of it- (MFR) but it was not a Massage like I thought I was gonna get. But overall, I think it did help."***

(note: permission was given by Her to try the MFR)

**Jill S.** ~ New client, from feedback comments ~ ***"I could breath better afterwards - helped the back/rib cage spasms, able to move neck and loosened up my hips, body stayed looser/more relaxed even until the next morning. Very pleased! Thank-you."***

**Connie S.** ~ New client (R. shoulder & low back), from feedback comments ~ ***"Everything super! Joel - you are an amazing & caring healer. I'm so happy my Son recommended you to me!"***

**Jane S.** ~ New client, from feedback comments ~ ***"It was an excellent experience. I greatly appreciated Joel's gentle approach, the explanation of everything, & his expansive knowledge of MFR & massage. --- highly professional & considerate. Thank-you! Jane"***

**A. A.** ~ Came in with a sore back from "sleeping wrong". I had seen A. A. 4 & 1/2 years ago for an extremely sore neck issue. ~ ***"When I came in back then, we did massage a couple of times and it helped some. We then did some of the "fascia thing" (MFR) and I really did not think too much of it that day but, three days later everything was great - that's why I did not have to come back at that time!"***





## Jamie's Story (The power of JFB-MFR!)

Jamie (name changed) is a young adult daughter of a Mbj client. Jamie had had several massages (at Mbj) over a period of years starting "back when", her Mom had to give consent to do so. Mom had given her a gift certificate for Christmas (2017) which she used **1/29/18**. Her main complaint coming in was with a "bad back" which has bothered her for years. After talking about it, I felt that the best way to proceed would be to use MFR. We did so, employing some fairly basic techniques.

I was very curious to get some feedback as to how the session went, and with her permission I e-mailed her several days later & received the following reply on **2/5/18**, one week after her MFR session.

***"Hi Joel, So far, so good! I have had no pain until last night at work. And last night it wasn't my normal pain. I haven't been taking it easy and I'm still in much less pain than normal. This is the longest I've been pain free in 13 years. Today my back hurts very little. I don't even notice unless I actually think about it. I'm curious to see how long this lasts. I'll definitely be back hopefully sometime in March, even if it's just a regular massage. I really can't believe that my back doesn't hurt. It's a strange concept for me and I thank you so much! You're the only person who has ever even given me 2 days without pain. Now it's been an entire week and I'm still not feeling that typical pain in my right erector spinae muscle that I've been having for 13 years!"***

***Thank you so much, Joel! I'll be seeing you again! Jamie"***

Again, MFR should not be considered a "quick fix", but can occasionally seem miraculous.

Time will tell here - most importantly, there is great hope going forward!



## Short Stories

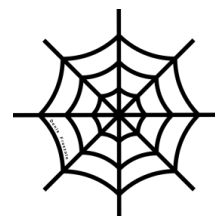
**I. H.** ~ A "new" regular Client. ~ ***"That stretchy thing (an MFR Neck/Thoracic release) we did last month made a huge difference in my shoulder area and in my breathing."***

**Rita** ~ A new client (with some back issues), after 5 sessions over a couple of months ~ ***"I told the P. T. that after seeing Joel (some massage - much MFR) I am greatly reduced, to off the pain meds I was taking. She said - "Keep doing what works!"***

**Kari W.** ~ After a ninety minute appointment, the first 1/3 being MFR which included the Neck/Thoracic technique ~ ***"It might sound strange, but I seem to be able to breathe easier."***

**Molly** (name changed) ~ Is a long time Central WI health care professional - and is a client that I have seen previously. She came in on a Friday afternoon for a 1:30 appointment concerning an EXTREMELY sore low back. She was walking "on ice" - very slow and timidly, and there was no doubt she was in a "world of hurt"! She mentioned that when laying down, the pain was much less, so after the session, when she left feeling better - time will tell?? Molly rescheduled for the next morning at 9:00 to follow up and - came walking in about 95% normally!! As I have said before, results this dramatic are not typical, but certainly are possible. One thing she mentioned was ~ ***"It was interesting that when you were pushing my feet, I could feel it in my neck."***

I am grateful to be able to offer  
*John F. Barnes* MFR to Central WI.







## Short Stories

**Julie F.** ~ New client (got a "combo" massage/MFR session) was asked "Was there anything done in previous massages you've had (elsewhere), that could make your visits here better?" ***"Not really, my previous Therapist did not spend much time on the hands and arms like here. I actually really like that!"*** And, at her next visit ***"That MFR stuff has really helped with my neck issues."***

**Sheila P.** ~ New client, from feedback comments ~

***"It (a combo MFR/massage session) helped with my shoulder pain significantly - Thanks so much!!"***

**Anne B.** ~ Is a recently newer, MbJ client, at her 3<sup>rd</sup> visit.

***"After a year and a half of Chiro. twice a week with not much difference, the (MFR) leg tug you did last time made a big improvement in my low back and hips. I can walk twice as far as I had been, and can stand much easier!"*** I often say - different things work for different people at different times - one never knows what modality might be of help.

**Vicky** ~ New Client (MFR)

Session #1 ***"Your music is so beautiful; it brings tears to my eyes. - I got a sense of good things happening."***

Session #2 ***"From two weeks ago, my neck tightness & tension and some headaches from them are much better. (after that session) I could feel a "vibration" in my body, is that normal? I think you have the qualities of a healer!"***

Session #3 ***"I can't tell you how much I appreciate feeling safe here."***





## Short Stories

**Beth S.** ~ I hear comments like this a lot ~

***“Awesome, when you worked on the neck, I could feel my sinuses and my lungs open up”. (And, from the follow-up survey) “I am hoping I continue to improve. I was barely able to walk. The next morning, I could do so with little to no pain.”***

**Joy M.** ~ new client, neck and upper back pain, 2<sup>nd</sup> visit ~

***“When I went home, that night was the first time in years that I went to bed with no pain! Also, with the work you did on the clavicle/pectoral area – I was surprised at how much looser it felt, and has felt since”*** (She had bilateral mastectomies 10 years ago.)

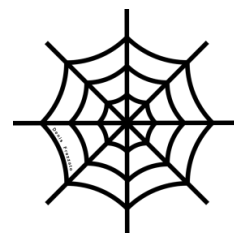
**Judy** ~ a client I have not seen for a while ~

***“When you did the MFR tug on the legs, all of a sudden I felt (or sensed) a pop, and all of the pain in my left hip was gone. It feels really good for now.”***

**Mike H.** ~ new client, low back & neck pain ~

***“This is going to sound crazy, my sinus’s and mind opened up.”***

**Mike K.** ~ 1<sup>st</sup> visit (did MFR), left leg pain (He thinks from low back). 2<sup>nd</sup> visit follow-up ~ ***“When I left here the first time, I thought I felt no change. Later on, we went shopping – my Wife said you are walking faster than normal – must have done some good! We also went on a trip that I was worried about my being able to do a lot of walking. Went much better than anticipated.”***







## Short Stories

**D. Z. ~** A Massage by Joel Client for around 2 & ½ years that comes in about once a month for MFR.

Visit #1: complaint was feeling over-all “achy”.

At Visit #2: reported feeling sore for a couple of days after 1st visit.

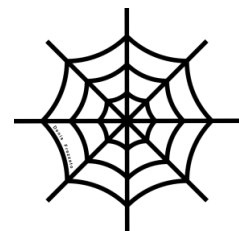
After Visit #3: commented that “could feel things happening”.

As I have mentioned before – I do **not** suggest that MFR is a cure for everything. Sometimes antidotal “things” need to be taken as such. In the last several months D. Z. has made comments about: ~  
***“\*at 70 years of age - I haven’t felt this good since High School. \*I have been able to sleep on my stomach - which has not happened for decades. \*another thing - I had toenail fungus on three toes that has cleared up by not doing anything for it that I know of. I was skeptical about MFR at first - and cannot “prove” anything but - at this time it seems beneficial to me!”***

**J. M. ~** (New Client) From an e-mail chain ~

***“am interested in scheduling a massage for some upper back/shoulder pain. (later - after doing MFR) Thanks again, I actually haven’t had that shoulder pain since.”***

**Maralyn ~** New Client that has some complex issues that might take time to address but - follow-up e-mail a day later ~ ***“I’m so happy to report that I no longer have the horrible tension and pain in my groin and leg - cautiously started walking but it is almost 11am and I am walking normally and have no pain. I think you untangled some fibers!”***





## Short Stories

**Roger** ~ had a variety of issues (including sore back) happening ~ ***“the pain has subsided (a month later) very satisfied with progress.”***

**Grace** ~ Came in with mobility issues. ~ ***“I can raise that right leg at the knee. Haven’t been able to do that in six months.”***

**John** ~ New Client - significant stiff neck - two months along ~ ***“there is slow but steady progress - \*better ROM \*head is lighter \*my wife tells me I stand straighter.”***

**Scott A.** ~ 2<sup>nd</sup> visit ~ ***“My neck is still a bit stiff but the pain that was radiating down to my shoulders is gone!”***

**Paul M.** ~ New Client, 2<sup>nd</sup>. visit for R. leg & glut pain ~ ***“I thought that MFR stuff was going to be some hocus pocus - but right now the way I can feel it - I think you’ve really got something going on here Buddy!”***

**Mary** ~ A Client that was in originally because of being rear-ended in a car accident - and continues to come for MFR work - sent this text ~ ***“Joel! Working on my stomach was pure genius! I feel better than I have in a long time. I feel like I can stand and sit straight without my back hurting. Thankyou!!!!”*** And at her next visit. ***“I wish we would have done this earlier.”***

Mary had received MFR work a long time ago at a Physical Therapy Practice and has an affinity for the work.

