

What is  
**your  
body**  
trying to  
**tell  
you?**



**The Rubenfeld  
Synergy Method®**

*A Dynamic System for the Integration  
of Body, Mind, Emotions & Spirit®*



International  
Association of  
Rubenfeld Synergists

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## RUBENFELD SYNERGY METHOD® FACT SHEET

### WHAT IS THE RUBENFELD SYNERGY METHOD®?

The Rubenfeld Synergy Method® (RSM) is a unique therapeutic approach that combines the power of gentle touch, talk and compassionate listening to tap inner resources for improving health and wellness, in all aspects of the self, body, mind, emotions and spirit.

Throughout life, stress, memories and emotions are stored in our body. These 'holdings' show up as tensions, aches and pains and can cause us to feel chronically tired, emotionally drained and disconnected. Chronic stress and tension can manifest as dis-ease when we repeatedly ignore our body's way of communicating to us.

RSM helps us to learn to listen to our bodies, and become aware of habitual patterns and tensions and translate their messages, empowering us to make concrete improvements in our daily lives and relationships.

### WHAT IS INVOLVED IN A RUBENFELD SYNERGY® SESSION?

Clients are fully clothed and may lie on a cushioned table or sit in a chair. The Synergist, as a caring facilitator, creates a safe and accepting environment and skillfully weaves together a combination of touch and talk to heighten the client's awareness in the body. Clients are invited to notice physical sensations and express any feelings and thoughts that may emerge. The Synergist supports and intuitively deepens the client's experience with touch, talk, movement and/or imagery. They safely explore habitual holding patterns, repressed emotions and distorted perceptions of self and others.

Sessions are generally 45-60 minutes in length. Boundaries are always respected and sessions are strictly confidential. The amount and frequency of the sessions depends on the individual's needs. Unlike many other therapeutic modalities, in RSM, the client is an equal and active participant in their own healing process.

### WHAT DOES THE RUBENFELD SYNERGY METHOD® DO?

The result of this gentle interactive process is an accessing of hidden psycho-physical "blocks" that can lead to the release of stress and tension and an empowered sense of emotional and physical wellbeing. With new awareness, comes the possibility of changing limiting behaviors. RSM uses the body as a doorway to the self. In the process of listening to their bodies, clients often have the experience of 'coming home to themselves'.

Some of the reported benefits of the Rubenfeld Synergy Method® include recovery from physical and emotional trauma, pain management, increased ease of movement, improved body image and greater self-esteem.





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**RUBENFELD SYNERGY METHOD®**  
***ILANA RUBENFELD, PhD ~ BIO***

Ilana Rubenfeld PhD, creator of the Rubenfeld Synergy Method®, has earned the distinguished reputation as the "Grande Dame of the body-oriented therapy movement". Since the 1960s, she has been an influential teacher, healer, and workshop leader, who has trained thousands of practitioners in the art and science of integrative healing. The powerful and gentle holistic approach that bears her name is a unique fusion of touch, talk and compassionate listening, known worldwide as a groundbreaking modality.

Rubenfeld is distinctly known for directing mind-body energy as if conducting a symphony — which is understandable considering her former career as a music conductor. She graduated from the Juilliard School of Music and went on to have an accomplished career in conducting. However, a debilitating back spasm permanently shifted the direction of her life — starting her on a remarkable journey of commitment to innovation in the field of health, wellness and healing.

During her musical career, the rigorous demands of conducting resulted in severe pain. In search of relief, Rubenfeld went to a practitioner of the Alexander Technique, an educational approach that teaches how to use balance and posture to alleviate pain. When gently touched by her Alexander teacher, Rubenfeld's back muscles softened and a sudden welling of emotion followed. Untrained in the emotional realm, Rubenfeld's teacher referred her to a psychotherapist. 'On the couch' Ilana's intense feelings felt like a distant memory. Through her experience Rubenfeld intuitively understood a relationship existed between the body and emotions.

In her quest to explore this relationship, Rubenfeld became an Alexander teacher. She then studied with Moishe Feldenkrais learning the Feldenkrais Method, which explored habitual patterns of holding in the body. At the Esalen Institute in California, Rubenfeld trained with prominent Gestalt therapists, Fritz and Laura Perls. Their use of Gestalt therapy helped Rubenfeld discover another missing piece to the integration puzzle – the importance of the "now" (present experience) in mind-body work. From her experience with these techniques, Rubenfeld was inspired to develop her own integrative approach to healing that combined both talk and touch.

Ilana Rubenfeld explains that, "both the Alexander Technique and Feldenkrais' method taught people how to release tense habitual patterns held in the body. Neither, however, addressed the emotions behind those patterns, or their often vivid expressions when the patterns were unlocked. Conventional psychotherapy relied on talking through problems, and bodywork addressed their physical aspects. To me, these disparate approaches were fragmented, denying the unity of the body, mind and emotions." To create an effective bridge between these therapeutic approaches, Rubenfeld developed The Rubenfeld Synergy Method®. In 1977, she founded a Professional Training Program to teach practitioners how to move clients through various physical and emotional conditions by using her well-honed method. The program has since certified more than 400 Synergists.

At present, Ilana Rubenfeld is a renowned faculty member of the Omega and Esalen Institutes and is a former faculty member of New York Open Center. She is a sought after keynote speaker, known best as a storyteller who combines education with history and a healthy dose of humor. In 1994, she was honored by the Association of Humanistic Psychology with the "Pathfinder Award" for outstanding and innovative contributions. In 2002, she received the "Lifetime Achievement Award" from the United States Association for Body Psychotherapy. Among her many published works in the field of integrative healing, Rubenfeld is the author of *The Listening Hand: Self-Healing Through The Rubenfeld Synergy Method of Talk and Touch*.

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**RUBENFELD SYNERGY METHOD®**  
*It's Hip To Be True*  
*Tapping into the Wisdom of Your Body*

Summit, NJ, — From chronic sinus conditions, to migraines, to tendonitis...sometimes the most common aches and pains are the body's way of saying that there's more going on inside than meets the eye. The Rubenfeld Synergy Method® is a powerful, effective bodymind therapy that addresses a multitude of issues with a unique approach that can uncover the source of the client's discomfort. The combined use of gentle touch and talk is the hallmark of the Rubenfeld Synergy Method® and can access hidden "blocks" of emotional stress, trauma, anxiety, tension and uneasiness in the body. Using light touch and expertly directed dialogue, a Rubenfeld Synergist can assist clients in getting to the core of their discomfort. The results can be empowering experiences of release, relaxation and restoration of emotional and physical harmony and wellbeing.

Karla\*, a 40-something single, professional happened upon Rubenfeld Synergy after trying various self-help methods to manage an unexpected onset of lower body aches, moodiness and lethargy. As a believer in holistic health, she was uninterested in pharmaceutical pain relief options; but knew that she needed more than a simple massage, a vacation or a day off from work. So at a friend's urging, she decided to try the Rubenfeld Synergy Method®. Immediately, Karla felt at ease with the Synergist's gentle manner, cozy office and comfortable treatment table. But little did she know that she was in for a far greater experience than simply an hour of R&R.

"After I was comfortable", recalls Karla, "the Synergist gently placed her hand under my right hip, which made it feel higher than my left. Then she asked me what I felt." Much to Karla's own surprise, she simply let out a little laugh. Then, when asked about her laughter, Karla replied, "This may sound crazy, but with my hips in this position, it feels like the right side of my body has a real attitude." The Synergist encouraged Karla to keep sharing honestly about her observations. So Karla went on to describe another unexpected sensation. She explained that the Synergist's hand near her left knee made her think of the Virgin Mary kneeling to pray. "I don't know why", shared Karla, "but it feels very serious and religious on the left side of my body. But my right side feels sassy, like it just wants to shimmy and sway like a dancer." As the Synergist encouraged these two sides of her body to continue "speaking the truth", Karla was pleasantly surprised by her own discovery. By the end of the session, Karla exclaimed, "Wow! I think I get it! One part of me wants to be sexy and free-spirited and another side of me feels concerned about my religious beliefs and responsibilities! It's like the two sides of me are at odds with each other."

Karla had recently begun a new spiritual course of study; and it occurred to her that she was worried about how her new path would impact her ability to have a good time. When these thoughts arose, Karla usually chose not to acknowledge them, fearing that they might be signs of weakness in her faith. But the Rubenfeld Synergy Method® helped her realize that, not only was it OK to be honest with herself, it was necessary for her health. She felt relieved to discover what was actually at the "heart" of her aches. Over time, Karla was able to relax and experience a stronger sense of "knowing herself". With subsequent sessions, she gained more ease with being truthful about her desires. Discovering her truth allowed Karla to have better balance in her life without feeling guilty!

While all results are unique to the individual's experience, the Rubenfeld Synergy Method® explores each client's internal wisdom and unites the natural connection between their body and mind. The result is gently guided awareness that leads to an active and empowered role in their healing. Without drugs or invasive procedures, the Rubenfeld Synergy Method® offers a safe, holistic complementary approach to physical and emotional health and wellbeing.

*\*Client's name was changed to protect confidentiality*

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RUBENFELD SYNERGY METHOD®

*Can We Talk?*

*What Your Body Would Say If It Could Speak*

Summit, NJ – The Rubenfeld Synergy Method®, “What’s that?”, wondered Kathy C.\* when she first met a “Rubenfeld Synergist” at a women’s workshop. The name may have sounded unfamiliar, perhaps even a little intimidating. But as most people who try the Rubenfeld Synergy Method® soon find out, this unique talk/touch method is anything but complicated or daunting. In fact, it’s arguably one of today’s most gentle and effective ways of relieving stress, anxiety, aches, and pains in today’s society — which misconstrues “no pain” with “no gain”.

Here is what Kathy\* had to say when she finally decided to give the Rubenfeld Synergy Method® a try: “For about a week, I was experiencing aches in my shoulders that I thought were just sore muscles from sleeping badly. But they persisted for several days even after taking ibuprofen. So, I figured...why not give Rubenfeld Synergy a try. I had no idea what to expect. But when I got there, the synergist’s office was very comfortable. She put me at ease on a massage-type table, and right away I started to feel more relaxed. I was surprised when she started my session by putting her hands gently on my feet. She asked permission each time she switched positions to different body parts and I agreed. As she touched each area gently, she asked me questions about how I was feeling and what I was experiencing. It didn’t even occur to me that she hadn’t touched my shoulders at all. But it didn’t matter. My shoulders started to relax as I found myself telling her about the things that I’d been ‘shouldering’ in my life. I had no idea I would be discussing this, but it was true...I’d been feeling overwhelmed and off balance at work and in my relationships; and it felt like I was carrying the “mother load” around with me. By the time we were done, I had a strange urge to start moving my body like I used to when I had more free time to go dancing. So that’s what I did later that evening! The shoulder aches were totally gone. No drugs, no physical therapy, no psychiatric counseling. I didn’t need to change my mattress or quit my job. I just understood that I absolutely had to make more free time for me. I can’t believe how one session made such a huge difference! I don’t really know how it works, but it does.”

The Rubenfeld Synergy Method® combines an effective systematic use of touch and talk to allow the body to speak for itself. It starts with the premise that the body already knows what it want and needs. Rubenfeld Synergy recognizes that the mind and body are connected and together they contain tremendous insights. A trained Rubenfeld Synergist facilitates the body’s ability to open up, “explain itself” and reveal the hidden sources of discomfort as well as the solutions to ease, comfort and wellness. Without drugs or invasive procedures, Rubenfeld Synergy offers a safe, gentle effective way to approach healing and overall wellbeing. It activates the body’s own internal wisdom.

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## RUBENFELD SYNERGY METHOD®

### *Who Is That Pain In Your Neck? Listening to Your Body's Messages*

Summit, NJ — Who can forget the old song, "I gotta wash that man right outta my hair"? Well, believe it or not, sometimes a painful break-up, a job lay-off, even an old memory from childhood can leave messy traces of emotional residue in or on the body; and it takes a little more than shampoo to get rid of it! Today's fast paced society might rely on catchy quick-fix slogans like, "Get over yourself!", "No pain, no gain!", or "He's just not that into you!" But oftentimes uncomfortable experiences (especially those involving grief, sadness, confusion, betrayal, abandonment, unworthiness or anger) get swept under the rug, only to resurface disguised as physical "dis-ease". Even the most successful, confident, well-adjusted people encounter life experiences that leave them with unresolved feelings which sometimes masquerade as conditions such as irritable bowel syndrome, seasonal affective disorder, insomnia, even tennis elbow!

Understanding this hidden link between what happens in the mind and what shows up in the body is the beauty behind a groundbreaking therapeutic healing technique called the Rubenfeld Synergy Method®. Developed by Ilana Rubenfeld in 1977, Rubenfeld Synergy is one of the most effective solutions for addressing stress, trauma, anxiety, tension and discomfort. It is a proven method that incorporates light touch with guided dialogue in a way that allows the body the freedom to uncover the sources of physical stress and discomfort. The results include accessing and releasing hidden physical/emotional tension stored in the body and restoring and maintaining health and wellbeing.

When Kay\* discovered the Rubenfeld Synergy Method®, her goal was just to address the feeling of neck and back strain that was causing her sleepless nights. Her grandmother had been arthritic, and experienced achy muscles, but Kay had a "gut feeling" that this was more than just a sign of getting older. Kay had some prior experiences with massage, Reiki, and other forms of bodywork, but was pleasantly surprised by what she discovered with Rubenfeld Synergy. Kay says, "I tried everything to deal with this problem. Then I found out after a few Rubenfeld Synergy sessions that I didn't need any more rubs, herbs, pills or potions to get rid of my aches. I just needed help hearing what was inside me. I was looking for what was physically wrong with me. But who knew that the heated arguments I had been having with an old boyfriend had literally become *'a pain in my neck!* On the outside, I seemed fine, but on the inside I honestly did feel like I was *'stabbed in the back!* Understanding this connection made all the difference in the world. It helped me let go of the pain."

Like so many people who experience the Rubenfeld Synergy Method®, Kay was able to feel safe and secure enough to uncover what was beneath the surface of her discomfort. Founder Ilana Rubenfeld explains in her book *The Listening Hand*, "Emotions and feelings are embedded both in our body and in our brain, and to reach them, we need touch — nonverbal communication — and talk. Through touch you can understand the body's message, and through talk you can understand the brain's, even if the message is "hiding" in the unconscious.. I strongly believe that everything — mind and body, thoughts, emotions and feelings, bloodstream and brain, soul and spirit — must be in a state of synergy if we ourselves are to become whole."

*\*Client's name was changed to protect confidentiality*

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## RUBENFELD SYNERGY METHOD® PROFESSIONAL TRAINING FACT SHEET

### WHAT IS THE RUBENFELD SYNERGY METHOD®?

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### WHY CHOOSE TO BECOME A RUBENFELD SYNERGIST?

Says Founder Ilana Rubenfeld, "As we enter the 21st century...it becomes clearer that human beings must be treated as whole entities. Practitioners (of the Rubenfeld Synergy Method®) must be able to help clients access their whole selves. Integration (of mind and body) is still a scarce phenomenon in therapy and in health care. Many practitioners do excellent work with body or with emotions. Few can do both. Even fewer know how to synthesize the two. As a practitioner of the Rubenfeld Synergy Method® you will be able to reach this profound level of integration—both for your clients and for yourself. This program offers you the most powerful, most complete advanced body/mind training available. You'll study and practice the contributions of others in such a way that you naturally synthesize what you learn with your entire wealth of experience."

### WHAT TRAINING IS INVOLVED IN BECOMING A RUBENFELD SYNERGIST?

Training and certification are offered through the Rubenfeld Synergy Training Program. The training is a 12 week/12 weekend intensive program spread over a four year period. This model allows trainees to continue with their professional lives while they complete the training, thereby making it accessible to a wide and diversified group. Classes have included physicians, massage therapists, physical therapists, psychotherapists, nurses, and even actors, musicians, and business executives. Trainees must actually experience the Rubenfeld Synergy Method, so they are required to participate in 20 private sessions a year with a Rubenfeld practitioner. Graduate practitioners are referred to as Certified Rubenfeld Synergists®.



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**RUBENFELD SYNERGY METHOD®**  
*Rubenfeld Synergy Training Program Co-Directors*

The Rubenfeld Synergy Method® is a unique therapeutic approach that uses talk, touch, and compassionate listening to alleviate tensions, imbalances, and blocks in the body which often contribute to pain, illness and emotional discomfort. For over 40 years, this safe, effective practice has helped thousands of people achieve greater health and wellbeing. Practitioners of the method, known as Certified Rubenfeld Synergists®, (CRS) are certified and trained professionals who come from backgrounds as varied as: massage therapy, medicine, physical therapy, psychology, business and the arts. Each CRS commits to an intensive 12 week/12 weekend process of training over the course of four years in order to become certified. This program is facilitated by Co-Directors and Master Synergists, Joe Weldon and Noël Wight.

**Joe Weldon, MS**, is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist who has been a teacher of the Rubenfeld Synergy Method® for over 25 years. His background includes teaching at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Social Work and Villanova University. Joe maintains a private practice in Philadelphia and Huntingdon Valley, PA where he has brought the Rubenfeld Synergy Method to a variety of populations including head trauma, and multiple sclerosis patients. Joe believes that, "There is an honesty in RSM, since the body cannot lie. RSM helps you to know your movements and sense your body's emotional and physical desire to belong and *be long* which is at its core. It helps you decode what is real and true for you by offering tools to help you understand and appreciate your bodymind's language." Joe is a true believer in the innate wisdom of the whole being and the healing power of humor.

**Noël Wight, MA**, has a Masters in Integrative Psychology in addition to being a Master Rubenfeld Synergist and Co-director of the Rubenfeld Synergy Training Program. Noel has been teaching with Rubenfeld Synergy Method® founder, Ilana Rubenfeld, for over 18 years. She also maintains a private RSM practice in Philadelphia, PA. Noël's professional experience includes expertise in the innovative Waldorf Education system (an integrative and holistic academic style that educates children from "the heart, the hands and the head") and a background in social work. Noël brings a deep sense of respect for the resiliency of the human spirit to her work with students and clients. Says Noël, "My practice is devoted to guiding clients to a more satisfying and meaningful life. As a guide, listener and witness, I bring my clients into relationship with their body where they learn to connect with themselves in an authentic way. Together we create a compassionate space that supports an experience of their body as a resource of wisdom."

Joe and Noël travel extensively throughout the United States and Canada teaching Rubenfeld Synergy workshops and training sessions. As educators, facilitators and Co-Directors of the Rubenfeld Synergy Method® Training Program, they have presented at such established centers as the Esalen and Omega Institutes, The Renfrew Center for Eating Disorders as well as in the corporate setting at Lucent Technology.





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## RUBENFELD SYNERGY METHOD® Suggested Editorial Questions

- What is the Rubenfeld Synergy Method®? Is it new?
- How does this treatment differ from traditional therapy or body-work?
- What types of conditions does this technique help alleviate?
- Is it expensive?
- Is this invasive? Does it hurt? Are your clothes on during the session?
- If someone is in traditional therapy or under a doctor's care for a medical condition, is this technique recommended?
- Do only sick or distressed people go to a Rubenfeld Synergist?
- Is this OK for cancer patients or people with chronic illness?
- Is this safe for all people? Pregnant women? Children? The elderly?
- Where can I find a Rubenfeld Synergist?
- Are Rubenfeld Synergists licensed, certified? What is their training and background?
- Does Rubenfeld Synergy actually treat diseases?
- Is this "faith healing" or "new age" healing?
- How long should you be treated with the Rubenfeld Synergy Method®?
- How do I find out more about the Rubenfeld Synergy Method®?