EXERCISE 9: Strokes

Everyone needs physical contact. Think about how you can use. your knowledge of strokes both at home and at work for the benefit of yourself and others. Do you give your children enough physical strokes? What about your partner? Do you show enough warmth and affection, or are there too many habits and rituals in your relationship? What about your parents? A little hug now and then, or a pat on the cheek, can work wonders on the people you care for.

Can you give strokes in a natural way at your place of work? A friendly squeeze on the arm or a light touch can have a tremendously positive effect on yourself and others, and light physical contact can have a calming effect on people who are upset. Obviously, strokes must be given naturally, with feeling, and in a manner which is appropriate to the situation, so that motives are not about strued. The other person must not get the feeling that strokes are some kind of sexual harassment.

In cultures and countries where people are not so accustomed to physical contact, one must be particularly careful to avoid misunderstandings in connection with strokes. This, however, in no way diminishes the immense human need for physical contact. Lack of touching is certainly one of the reasons why people behave in a chilly man ner, and are inhibited or withdrawn.

When you touch someone else, you too receive physical strokes. Furthermore, you can increase your own well-being through massage, bathing, etc.

Give some examples of situations where you can work positively with physical strokes:	