

# THE FEET

## THE HANDS THAT TOUCH THE EARTH

**Z**ola Budd, the wispy South African famous for her middle-distance running records, is even more famous for something else: running barefoot. Like Nia, she knows the power of getting intimate with the feet. According to Steven Robbins, a Montreal internist, she's got it right! Running injuries are actually more common in runners who wear shoes than in barefoot runners! Good news for Nia, but we knew that! And everyone knows that when your feet hurt, you hurt all over because there are over 7,000 nerve endings in each foot. Your feet, like computer centers with pathways, send energy to every organ and gland in the body.

When feet are free to move, and can move, you and your whole body are healthier. Keeping the feet healthy can mean the difference between a relaxed and feel-good body, or an uptight, feel-bad body. The size and shape of your feet change with age, body weight, and certain diseases such as heart problems, kidney disease, arthritis, and diabetes.

Take a few minutes to get to know your feet intimately so that when you dance and walk through life you have a better, healthier relationship with them. Feel them and look at them to keep them healthy. Touch and nurture them throughout the day with love. If you wear orthotics while dancing, keep doing so, and get the feet naked for a few minutes to see what they are up to. They support your whole body.

If you have questions regarding your feet, go to the student forum on the Nia web site, into the student forum and log on. We and all of the Nia teachers can help!



### Feet are amazing parts of the human anatomy. They each:

- Have 26 bones
- Have two arches: a longitudinal arch and a transverse arch
- Support three leg bones: the thigh bone, and the two lower leg bones
- Directly support three joints: the ankle, knee and hip
- Have 7,000 nerve endings
- Have 11 muscles



*Through Movement We Find Health*

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### Foot Questionnaire

1. Do you like your feet?  Yes  No
2. Do your feet hurt? If yes, when?  Yes  No
3. How do you take care of your feet?  
 Pumice  Pedicures  Massage  
 Chiropractic Care  Oil Treatments  
 Good Shoes  Socks
4. How well do your feet support you in organizing your movement to move gracefully?  
 Poor  Good  Excellent
5. How well do your feet support you in moving into, out of, and around spaces?  
 Poor  Good  Excellent
6. How reliable are your feet?  
 Poor  Good  Excellent
7. How well do your feet provide you with the awareness, insights, and clarity needed to support you in reaching your fullest potential?  
 Poor  Good  Excellent
8. What do your feet fear most?  
 Falling  Running  Attack  Dancing  
 Abuse  Walking  Water  Sand  Hot  
 Cold  Concrete  Being out of control  
 Men  Women  Feeling Overwhelmed  
 Children  Dogs  Cats  The Dark  Food  
 Sex  Shoes  High heels  Crowds
9. What do your feet love most?  
 Falling  Running  Attack  Dancing  
 Abuse  Walking  Water  Sand  Hot  
 Cold  Concrete  Being out of control  
 Men  Women  Feeling Overwhelmed  
 Children  Dogs  Cats  The Dark  Food  
 Sex  Shoes  High Heels  Sleep
10. What are the predominant emotional qualities found in your feet?  
 Angry  Fearful  Proud  Triumphant  
 Attentive  Reliable  Daring  Sad  
 Confident  Aware  Generous  Peaceful  
 Disinterested  Victimized  Happy
11. What is the mobility of your feet? Are they:  
 Tense?  Able to soften?  Able to move your toes?  Able to flex?  Able to expand?  
 Able to narrow?  Able to widen?  
 Able to shake?  Flexible?  Able to spread?

### The benefits of living in healthy feet are:

grounding • relaxation • balance • connection  
awareness to sensation • consciousness  
ability to breathe deeply and naturally  
comfort • sensuality • joy • aliveness  
alertness and readiness • a sense of safety