

360

Pain Killer

Former dancer **Katie Plummer Adams '94** now helps set bodies straight.



PHOTOS BY GUS FREEDMAN

BY JEFF CANDURA '01

Katie Adams likes to think of herself as a bit of a detective. But instead of hunting down criminals, she hunts down pain. Katie is the owner and founder of 360 Neuro Muscular Therapy (360 NMT) in Needham, Massachusetts. NMT is massage-based bodywork that addresses soft tissue tensions, trigger points, and sensitive nerve endings that can cause pain.

"We want to find the source of your pain and treat it," says Katie. This is where the detective work starts. Perhaps, Katie points out, the pain in your back isn't due to a problem in your back at all; it could be that your hips are out of alignment or you could have a sore muscle somewhere else that affects your posture and provokes the back pain. For Katie and her staff at 360 NMT, pain is a case to be solved, not just a symptom to be treated.

Katie herself has plenty of experience with pain. She began her career as a dancer and quickly piled up leg injuries. She looked to massage therapy as a solution to nagging ankle pain.

After spending two years at the Boston Conservatory, Katie transferred to Ithaca College, where she majored in drama. "I really wish I could have spent all four years at Ithaca," she says now, "because I was interested in so much more than just dance. Ithaca gave me the conservatory inside a liberal arts college . . . I found a home there." She also found a home with a massage therapist near Ithaca. "The massage room



was in an old house, and it looked out onto this bucolic scene," remembers Katie. "I knew that I wanted to [be a massage therapist]."

Katie spent time after school working as a dancer and actor (she is still involved with local theater), but continued to work towards becoming a neuromuscular therapist. Now she is therapist first and dancer second, but she is sure that her time in theater and dance helps her to be a better NMT practitioner.

For that reason, she also hires colleagues with similar experience. "I look for people who have a movement background to join the practice," she says. Of the four other therapists in her practice, two are triathletes, one is a gymnast, and one is an equestrian. "They just know how the body works," Katie says.

Though it offers traditional relaxation massages, 360 NMT is more focused on getting athletes back to performing shape, with injuries healed. Katie says she'd "rather help you recover from an strained knee from your last marathon

than from your tough day at your office job."

This practitioner knows that when she does her job well, she won't see a client too long. "We want you to come in, and after three sessions, get better," Katie says. "Because then when your friend gets injured, you can tell them that you tried NMT and in three weeks you felt great." ■