

How to Introduce a Friend to Massage

Sharing the Benefits of Bodywork

When we experience something good, it's natural to want to tell everyone about it. Massage is no exception. Here are some ways to share your enthusiasm for massage therapy.

Gifting Massage

Gift certificates are a great way to share massages with the people in your life. Looking for the perfect birthday present? Purchase an hour gift certificate for them with your favorite massage therapist. Thanking someone for pet sitting? Reward them with a half-hour reflexology treatment. If it's your spouse or significant other that you're hoping to get interested in this healing therapy, perhaps a couple's

makes them want to pay for another one.

Outline the Benefits

Most people are aware that massage is effective at relieving stress and promoting relaxation, but there are myriad benefits you can highlight depending on your audience. For those who suffer from low-back pain, a study by the Group Health Research Institute in Seattle has shown that massage is more effective than medication at reducing pain. Some massage therapists provide specialized sport massage, something that might appeal to your golfing buddy who needs to loosen up his swing and increase his range of motion.

*Tension is who
you think you
should be.*

*Relaxation is
who you are.*

-Chinese Proverb



Describing the benefits you get from massage therapy could convince others to try it.

massage, where two people receive massage in the same room, could be an anniversary gift.

Giving someone a gift certificate allows the recipient to experience massage without financially committing to something that they might not be sure about. After the initial visit, it is up to them to evaluate whether the experience

In addition to helping people reduce pain or cope with physical injuries, the supportive touch of a massage therapist can be a powerful positive encounter during times of emotional distress. If someone in your life is dealing with grief or loss, you might recommend massage as a way for them to relax and be

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tended to without having to actively share their feelings, a welcome relief for many people.

Here are just some of the positives that massage and bodywork can provide. You can tailor your "pitch" to your audience by focusing on those specific to their situation:

- Alleviate low-back pain and improve range of motion.
- Enhance immunity by stimulating lymph flow--the body's natural defense system.
- Exercise and stretch weak, tight, or atrophied muscles.
- Help athletes of any level prepare for, and recover from, strenuous workouts.
- Improve the condition of the body's largest organ--the skin.
- Increase joint flexibility.
- Lessen depression and anxiety.
- Promote tissue regeneration, reducing scar tissue and stretch marks.
- Pump oxygen and nutrients into tissues and vital organs, improving circulation.
- Reduce postsurgery adhesions and swelling.
- Reduce spasms and cramping.
- Relax and soften injured, tired, and overused muscles.
- Release endorphins--amino acids that work as the body's natural painkiller.
- Relieve migraine pain.

Take Baby Steps

If the person you are trying to introduce is intrigued by massage but reluctant to dive in headfirst, there are several ways to encourage them to stick a toe in the water. Many massage therapists offer chair massage in smaller time increments than a typical one-hour appointment. This is an ideal way for a person to experience the benefits of touch without having to worry about undressing or being overwhelmed by a full session.

Consider inviting your "recruit" to meet your massage therapist before your next session. Most therapists would be happy to give a potential client a brief tour and talk with them about the process of receiving a massage. For many people, being able to put a face to the person who is going to be touching them will calm some of their fears of the unknown.

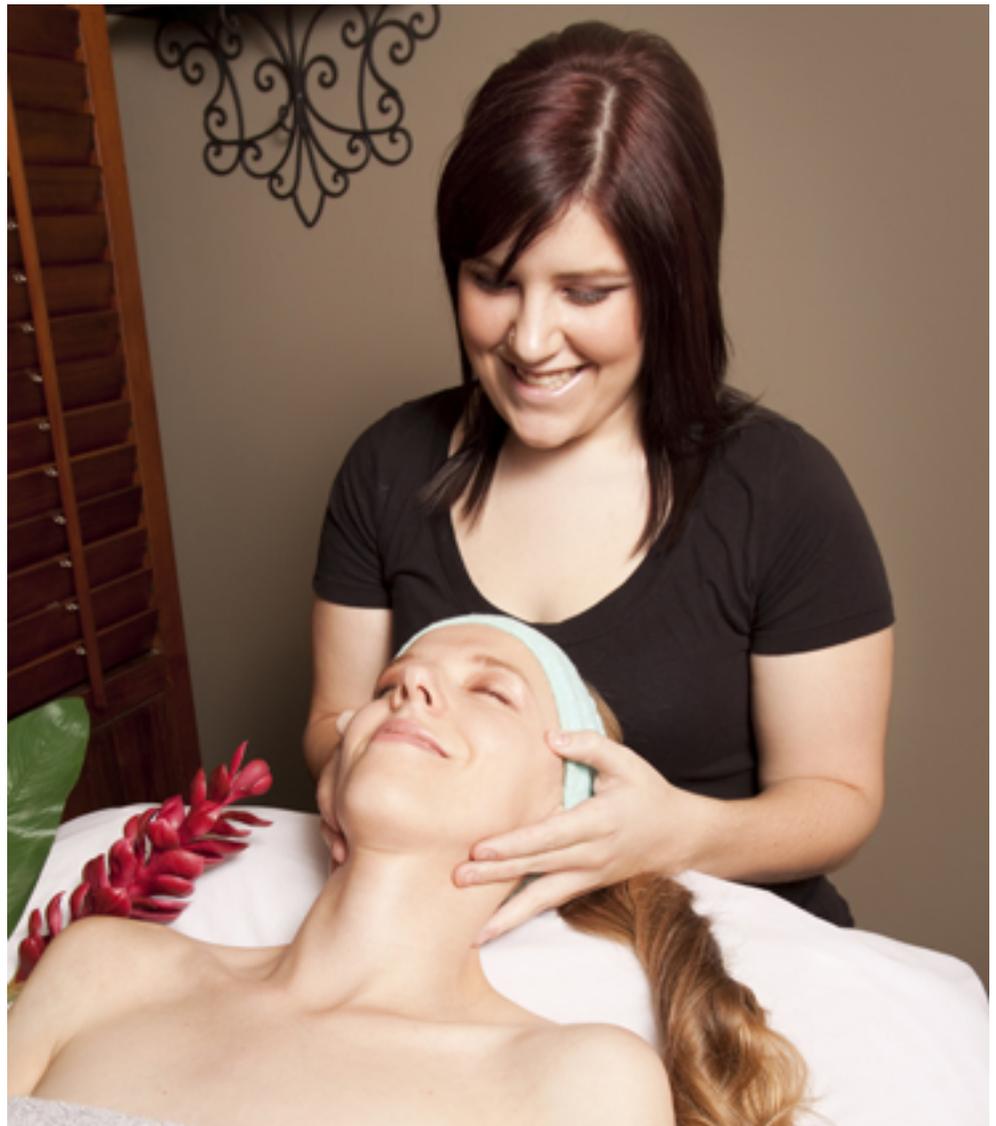
For those who need more specific information about massage, you can direct them to Massagetherapy.com, a public education site provided by Associated Bodywork and Massage Professionals (ABMP). On the site they will find an introduction to massage and its benefits, information on what to expect from a session, and a glossary of terms and techniques to help them understand massage lingo. There is also an archive of articles from *Massage & Bodywork* magazine to help the potential client answer any questions they might have before taking the plunge.

Be a Billboard

Friends and family are more likely to follow your lead if you show them that you enjoy, and benefit from, receiving massage. If you have a regular routine and are feeling good, when you recommend bodywork to others it will

be more influential. Whether it's increased range of motion, a sunnier disposition, or an improvement in posture, what you've gotten out of massage will be the best advertisement you can show them.

If, after all of your encouragement, they are still reluctant, you need to respect their feelings. Not everyone is ready for the hands-on experience of massage therapy, and some may even have some serious personal issues about touch. If you allow them to come to massage and bodywork on their own terms, they are more likely to be open to the safe, comforting, professional touch that the massage therapist provides.



Taking a friend to meet your massage therapist can help them get comfortable.

Why Buy Organic?

Is the Higher Price Worth It?

While shopping in your grocery store's produce section, you may notice the organically grown apples are pocked and not as big and perfectly round as the conventional produce, but they are more expensive. What's the difference, and which do you choose? Your decision may significantly impact not only your health but the health of the planet and the economy.

DEFINING "ORGANIC"

Organic foods are derived from sustainable farming practices that maintain and replenish soil fertility without the use of toxic pesticides and fertilizers. These foods are minimally processed and do not include artificial ingredients or preservatives. On the other hand, conventional farms often rely heavily on pesticides, genetic modification, synthetic hormones, and antibiotics.

DOES IT REALLY MATTER?

To understand the fallout of conventional farming is to realize the argument for organics. Bob Scowcroft,

executive director of the Organic Farming Research Foundation, touches on the devastating consequences of pesticides. "DDT nearly eliminated the American eagle by affecting their ability to reproduce" he says. "Since World War II, we've introduced more than 9,000 chemicals into the environment. And we don't know the full impact on humans and different sized humans," he adds, alluding to studies revealing damaging effects on children.

When you buy organically certified foods, you're ensured they are free of pesticides, hormones, antibiotics, and genetic DNA modification.

"Organics are better for the environment, and it's an investment in the revitalization of rural America," Scowcroft says. Organic farms are usually smaller, family-owned farms contributing to the economy of struggling rural America, he explains. The organic choice may be a little more expensive, but it's an investment in your health and the future.



Organic foods are free of pesticide residue.

Handwashing for Your Health

How to do it and why it helps

You know that washing your hands is important, but studies suggest that washing frequently and thoroughly can help keep you, and the people you come in contact with, healthier.

Clean and Healthy

Researchers in Denmark instructed students to wash their hands three times a day. According to the study, which was published in the American Journal of Infection Control (August 2011), the children that learned new habits significantly reduced their amount of absences due to illness.

Sanitizers or Soap?

A study by the American College of Preventive Medicine showed that

alcohol-based hand sanitizers are less effective than soap at preventing outbreaks of norovirus in long-term care facilities.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends using these sanitizers with at least 60 percent alcohol. Here is some more hand-washing advice from the CDC:

When Should You Wash Your Hands?

- Before, during, and after preparing food and before eating
- Before and after caring for someone who is sick
- Before and after treating a cut
- After using the toilet or changing diapers

- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After touching an animal or animal waste
- After touching garbage

What Is the Right Way to Wash Your Hands?

- Wet your hands with clean, running water and apply soap.
- Rub your hands together to make lather, then scrub the entire hand.
- Don't forget the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- Continue for at least 20 seconds.
- Rinse your hands well under running water.
- Dry your hands using a clean towel or air-dry them.

Sometimes the most important thing in a whole day is the rest we take between two deep breaths.

-Etty Hillesum

Spring arrived early this year. Enjoy the sunshine with laughter and fun! Did you know that laughter is a form of massage? Laughter is vibration which also relaxes you:) Take Care! Julia Cini

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