

# The Massage Monthly

April 2023

Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

## Let's Talk

### Communicating with Your Massage Therapist

Sharron Leonard

People get massages for a variety of reasons. Perhaps you're seeking stress relief from the weekly work commute or your wanting to cleanse your body of toxins. Or maybe massage is helping you recover from a sports injury or surgery. Whatever your reasons, it's absolutely important that you explicitly communicate to your therapist the reason you made the appointment. Otherwise you run the risk of not getting what you want.

In addition to explaining any wellness requirement, you also need to clarify your comfort needs during the session so that you feel completely at ease. Most practitioners work to create an appropriate environment with elements

### The Body

Sandy Anderson, owner of Relaxing Moments Massage in Reno, Nevada, asks at the beginning of each appointment, "What is the focus of our session today?" -- whether it's the client's first or 21st appointment with her. The therapist needs to know your wellness context. Even if she has your health history, circumstances -- and bodies -- are always changing. Perhaps you were traveling for the last two months spending significant time in cramped seats on airplanes. Maybe you're training for a marathon race, logging numerous miles each week. Or, a more likely scenario, you're stressed and feeling emotionally tapped.

*If you change  
the way you  
look at things,  
the things you  
look at change.*

-Wayne Dyer



Communicating with your massage therapist is always important, but especially for new clients.

such as the temperature, music, aromatherapy, and table setting. But if anything makes you uncomfortable, feel free -- or rather, feel responsible -- to say as much. Your therapist is as interested as you are in making sure you get what you want from the massage, and building a communicative partnership is key. Remember, communication is a two-way street.

Furthermore, it's important she or he knows about your massage preferences that just make your massage more pleasurable, such as getting extra work on your feet or ending the session with a face massage. Perhaps it's important to you to have the therapist "stay connected" by keeping her hands on you

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#### Office Hours and Contact

218-263-1501

[www.ohanatherapeutic.com](http://www.ohanatherapeutic.com)

Monday through Thursday

10am-5pm

Fri, 4/14 & 4/28: 9am-3pm

Sat and Sun: Closed

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rather than, for example, going from your feet to your shoulders. By simply letting her or him know of any such information can vastly improve your session.

## The Setting

"I have designed my treatment room to offer a basic comfort level based on my professional experience," Anderson says. "But I need the client to tell me if something is not to her liking. For example, I have provided a small fountain that I thought provided soothing background sounds, but two of my clients have requested that it be turned off because it made them feel as though they needed to run to the restroom."

One important amenity issue that should be discussed by the client and the therapist is massage-table comfort. "I use a heated table covered with a sheet and a blanket because as the active therapist I need the room temperature lower than what is comfortable for the client," Anderson says. "Then I ask the client what adjustments she might want me to make." Even if your therapist doesn't specifically ask about the temperature, background sounds, aromas or whatever other subtle amenities in the room, if there's something that's making your massage less than great, be sure to discuss it with your practitioner.

## The Conversation

Conversation can sometimes be a point of contention. Because some clients like to talk during a session while others prefer silence, Anderson believes it's up to the client to dictate this aspect. She does not inhibit talking nor does she initiate conversation if the client is silent. If you want to tactfully make certain your therapist is not overly conversational, it is appropriate to say something like, "You will find that I am not very talkative. I just like to totally relax during this time." While your practitioner may communicate aspects of the massage, don't necessarily take this for her trying to make conversation.

Angie Parris-Raney, owner of Good Health Massage Therapy in Littleton, Colo., believes it's very important for the therapist to explain her actions so the client is not surprised. "Whether I'm

easing a first-time massage client's apprehension by explaining I will only be uncovering one part of the body at a time or I'm doing a rehabilitation treatment for injury, illness or surgery, I have learned from experience the client wants detailed information on what is going to happen," Parris-Raney says. "It is also helpful if she tells me how she feels about what I am doing. Is the stroke too deep or too light? Does she want me to use a slower or faster pace?" If you are unclear about an expectation or a procedure, even if it is something as simple as, "Where is the safest place to put my jewelry?" feel free to ask.

Massage client Andrea Scott explains her frustration with one massage session where she wishes she'd been more vocal. "I like deep tissue massage, and the practitioner was giving me a very light Swedish massage," she says. "I just didn't

feel like I was getting anything out of it and found myself looking forward to the session just being over. For some reason, I thought it would be rude to say anything, but in retrospect, I'm sure she would've appreciated it." Instead, notes Scott, she left disappointed and the massage therapist never had a chance to address the issue.

Your goal as the client is to get what you are specifically seeking in each session. Your practitioner wants the experience to meet your expectations and will appreciate you verbalizing your wellness requirements and personal comfort needs. Your massage therapist is your partner for healthy living, but you need to speak up.



**A massage will be much more beneficial if you let your practitioner know what you need.**

# Lavender

## An Essential Oil for Fundamental Health

Laurie Chance Smith

Lavender essential oil is a one-stop medicine chest, helping to reduce anxiety, fatigue, and stress and balance hormones, increase the immune response, lower blood pressure, and relieve pain. To utilize lavender's healing benefits at home, mix five to 10 drops of lavender essential oil in one ounce of jojoba oil or unscented lotion. (Essential oils shouldn't be applied directly to the skin; it's best to partner them with a carrier oil, liquid, or lotion.)

### EARACHES

For earaches, dab one drop of lavender massage oil behind the ear and rub gently. Alternatively, place one drop of lavender oil on a cotton ball and carefully place inside the outer ear.

### HEADACHES

Inhaling lavender is also effective for headache relief. Add a few drops to a bowl of warm water and breathe. Gently rub lavender massage lotion on the temples, forehead, and base of the neck.

### COLDS

Lavender oil can also help break up coughs and clear sinuses. Colorado-based holistic aromatherapist Nicola McGill suggests the regular home-use of antiseptic essential oils such as lavender to help avoid colds and other infectious diseases. Add a few drops to a vaporizer to help clear colds and infuse the home with lavender's scent.

### STRESS

At night, six to eight drops of lavender added to a warm bath helps melt away stress and relieve fatigue. Blend a footbath by adding three drops of lavender to a bowl of warm water, sink your feet in, and relax. For help inducing sleep, add two or three drops of lavender essential oil to the underside corner of your pillow.

### TRANQUIL AROMA

A human takes 23,040 breaths a day, and each inhale floods the system with scent. Rely on lavender's tranquil aroma

to clear the way toward peaceful days.



Lavender is loaded with wellness properties.

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# The Scoop on Meditation

## A Simple Practice with Profound Benefits

People who meditate regularly appear internally and externally five to 10 years younger than their non-meditating peers, according to author Deepak Chopra. That's good news for the estimated 10 million people who practice meditation on an ongoing basis and experience the resulting calm it cultivates.

The rich benefits come from doing something that looks like nothing: Sitting still, being quiet, and breathing deeply. Meditation works simply but profoundly by defusing the onslaughts of life - a racing mind, busyness, deadlines, commutes, all of which have physiological effects on well-being. Meditation calms the nervous system, decreases metabolic rate, heart rate, and blood pressure, and lowers levels of cholesterol, stress hormones, and free

radicals. It also has a direct effect on breathing, slowing and deepening respiration so more oxygen circulates throughout the body. Not only that, meditation is said to lessen feelings of anxiety and depression and improve memory and concentration. And all of this culminates in slowing the aging process, as Chopra notes.

There are many meditation techniques, including focusing on a mantra, a sacred word or phrase, or your breath. But the basic intent of all meditation is focus and attention. And it doesn't take hours a day in an ashram to meditate effectively. Benefits kick in with even a short period of devoted time.

How to begin? Wear comfortable, unrestrictive clothes, sit on a cushion or chair with your back straight (think once

again, comfort), rest your hands on your legs, let your eyes go soft and out of focus or close them, breathe slowly and deeply, and - the hardest part - attempt to empty your mind of thoughts and quiet the internal dialogue. When thoughts flit through your mind, let them pass without judging them and come back to your focus (your mantra, counting, etc.) and breathing.

Start with this sitting meditation technique for five minutes a day, and add on time as you get more at ease with the process. For more information on techniques and benefits, check out [www.abc-of-meditation.com](http://www.abc-of-meditation.com).

*The truth is  
there is more  
than enough  
love, creative  
ideas, power,  
joy, happiness to  
go around.*

-Rhonda Byrne

**APRIL OFFICE HOURS!**

Monday - Thursday: 10am-5pm

Friday, 4/14 and 4/28: 9am-3pm

\*Please note\* Paula and Ashley have limited appointments after 5pm.

**PRODUCT OF THE MONTH!**

This April, save 15% on doTERRA products!

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