Know how to apply safe massage strokes and free tips on how to make your therapy business successful from the experts and much much more!

*Please set your page view at 100% as sometimes programmes open manuals at over 200% which will make it appear blurry*
### Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Know your limits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Benefits of good body use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>• Good Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>• Body Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>• Practice makes perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>Tools of the trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>• Using the hands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>• Using the forearms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>• Using the elbow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Early warning signs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>The working environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Completing the treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>General tips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Tips from JM Change Coach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>• Know your audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Annie Lawlers gives us an insight on:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>• Developing other income streams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>• 10 ways to show confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>• Maintain your focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>• Smarter, working shorter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>• Downturns in finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>• Challenging times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>• Save time and money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>• Procrastination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>• Never give up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>• Perfection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>• Top 10 secrets to achieving your goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>• Is your vision getting in the way?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>• How do you judge success?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>• Who and what is holding you back?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>What does your salon say about you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Is your advertising effective enough?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Insurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Products</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the West, Swedish Massage has been the norm for the beginning of training as a massage therapist, but as the demand for massage in the West grows, we need to look at the problems some of the common techniques can cause you if overused, especially when using the thumbs.

In the massage world today, statistics show that the working lifespan of a therapist is between seven and ten years if you are not coming into the industry already carrying injury, wear and tear to thumbs, fingers, wrists, shoulders and more importantly backs. Repetitive strain is a major cause of therapists having to give up their practice.

The following information gives you guidelines to help you fulfil your desire to be a therapist for many years to come. Something you should ask yourself at the end of a working day is how does my body feel?

Protecting your career is very important, therefore noticing strain on your body as you are massaging your clients will cause you problems in the long term, especially as it will be this repetition day in day out.

Try building your working tools with strokes and techniques that will help you work with little or no strain in your body. Ask yourself what bad habits have you allowed yourself to develop when massaging, as it is these habits that accumulate to causing you pain and discomfort.

Learning to use your whole body and keeping your body moving throughout any stroke is important and always using other parts of the body rather than using some of the smallest digits on the body i.e. thumbs and fingers. Learning to use elbows and forearms is a major help in preventing injury to yourself.
Knowing your limits

Always work within your capability, being totally aware of your own fitness level and your limits of stamina and strength; exceeding these limits will inevitably cause you problems.

So try not to push yourself too hard and take into account how events in your work situation and the rest of your life can affect your energy in doing massages. At times, you could reduce your workload.

Keep yourself fit and active.

Walk your talk

How often do you hear a therapist say they don’t get massaged, using the excuse they don’t have the time? If you don’t look after yourself then how can you take care of your clients?

A question for you to ask yourself is how often do I encourage my client to have a massage, once a week, once a fortnight, once a month? Then that is what you should be doing for yourself.

In addition, why would you not support the industry that you are in? If we as therapists don’t get massaged and support each other, how can we expect others to? Food for thought!

Good body use

Your size does not matter when massaging if you are in good shape yourself. By using your whole body properly when massaging, you can be a very effective therapist, adding depth and power to your massage.

If you apply your strokes and techniques in easier ways and keep your whole body moving during a treatment, using your weight more rather than straining specific parts of the body, this will make a massive difference to how long you can massage for and how many clients a day you can effectively treat.

Being totally relaxed when massaging is critical to the client response to the massage. If you are tense or straining, you can guarantee the client will pick this up on some level therefore they will find it difficult to relax and let go of their own body’s tensions.

Know that the first touch you give your client is the most important touch; if this is done in the right way then the client will respond accordingly, if the touch is hard, fast or just matter of fact then this will also determine the outcome for the client.

Balance throughout the therapist’s body is also important, so one side of the therapist’s body is not used more than the other. Being left or right handed will often determine which side we use the most which can lead to overuse of one or the other hand. The clients will also pick up on imbalance from the work of the therapist, if they feel balance in the massage received then that can travel through to their tissues.
**The benefits of good body use**
As well as looking after yourself, good body use can add depth and effectiveness to the massage that you deliver. Wherever possible:

- **Reduce strain**
The most important reason for learning to use your body well when doing massages is to reduce the cumulative strain on your body.

- **Increase effectiveness**
As you gain experience in using your body well, you can become more efficient and effective in the precision and the power that you apply in your work.

- **Monitor the client’s responses**
If you do not involve your whole body in the massage, you are likely to be tensing your shoulders and arms unnecessarily to deliver the power. This makes it harder to feel the client’s responses. The more relaxed your body and hands are, the easier you will find it is to monitor the responses and adapt to them. This is important when applying pressure; the firmer your pressure, the more you need to monitor its appropriateness for the client.

- **Conserve your thumbs and fingers**
Practitioners with small hands or long and slender fingers need to be especially careful about how they use them. Strain in these areas can lead to debilitating damage over time if they are not identified.

- **Keep your hands relaxed**
Massage beginners often use their hands in a stiff awkward way as they initially struggle to master techniques. With practice, you can gauge the required effort for each stroke, which conserves energy and makes the delivery of the massage more fluent and effective.

- **Look after your wrists**
People with small wrists need to be particularly careful of the pressure that they put on them. Learning to use your forearm and elbow can help this.
**Good practice**

Wherever possible avoid straining your thumbs, fingers and wrists. When working larger surface areas such as the back and legs, use the forearm, making sure you are not using the ulna edge as this will be uncomfortable for the client. Use the thicker part of the arm close to the elbow with the palm facing down, this will be much softer and if you use your body weight you will be able to effectively get deeper into the body than you can do with the hands anyway and you will be covering a much larger surface area using the whole of the forearm.

Practice using your elbows on family and friends who will give you honest feedback, until you get used to feeling through the elbow. Using the elbow requires very little effort on the part of the therapist, but needs lots of awareness when using this sharp, hard tool. Then you can use the elbow rather than the thumbs if you are doing trigger points etc.

Using the flat surface of the knuckles will also help you protect your hands. When you clench your fist, gently use the flat of the back of the fingers, the area from the edge of the knuckles (metacarpals) of the fists, to the proximal phalanges. Keep your arm and fist in a straight line, this is a very powerful stroke which is easier for the therapist but deeper for the client - again great over large surface areas such as the back, upper thigh and back of calf.

It is always good practice to go slow whenever you are performing a new stroke on a client until you are confident you have mastered it, then there is little chance of injuring or hurting the client or yourself.

**Keep your body moving**

Always move around the couch, never over stretch, make life easy for yourself and keep repositioning your body until you know you are comfortable and not causing any strain.

If you feel strain in your back then change your position, if your back goes then you can almost say goodbye to a career in massage.

When applying a stroke to your client’s body, the movement should not come from the back down the arms to the hands, and no movement should happen from the legs, the movement should come from the soles of the feet. You should have a nice wide stance, push up through the sole of the foot, up the back leg, taking the torso forward and the front leg should begin to bend giving you momentum and flow forwards. To come back you need to push off the front foot, begin gently straightening the front leg to give you backward momentum to take you to your starting position.

Your massage should almost feel like a dance when working, constantly moving slowly and faster at times, but all the movement coming from the soles of the feet, so you are not relying on the smaller muscles of your body such as the arms and hands, but harnessing the power of the larger muscles through the legs and trunk of your body.
Massage speaks louder than words

You probably find when working on your clients that their muscles and tissues tell you a lot about what’s going on in their bodies. That communication is also reversed, if the therapist is relaxed, comfortable and delivers the massage with certainty, confidence, balance, strength and fluidity then the client’s muscles and tissues will register these as much as they can register hesitation, imbalance, weakness etc.

Therefore the therapist’s ease of working is equally as important as applying any specific stroke or technique.

Maintaining contact throughout the massage is also important, the client needs to know where you are, if you break contact for more than a second or two then the client is often unsure if the treatment has finished or if you have even left the room without them knowing. This will instil insecurity in the client. Remember that clients are always vulnerable when having a massage. It takes a lot of courage to undress and be exposed to massage, so sensitivity and understanding should always be at the forefront of the therapist’s mind.

Ensure spare towels, your oils and anything else you might need, is within reaching distance so that you do not lose contact completely from your client.

Practice makes perfect

Some bad habits we use in massage can easily be remedied if practiced, if you have a bad habit that is causing you concern in the body, find an alternative way of working and keep practicing until it replaces the bad habit.

Monitor yourself, after doing a treatment; ask yourself what am I aware of in my body? Is anything aching, paining or causing discomfort? Be aware if you are left or right handed and if the dominant hand is being overused. Keep the use of both hands even.

Don’t do the same strokes and techniques over and over again with each client. Learn lots of different ways to massage, so you do not create repetitive strain in your body. This will also stop you getting bored, as no two massages should be the same, as no two clients are the same.
Tools of the trade

Your most important tool is your therapy couch, this is worth investing in. Make your couch your best friend, it would be advisable to get a height adjustable couch and one that is comfortable for your client to lie on for a full treatment.

Even if your couch costs you £1000.00, this divided by the average price of a massage £33.00 would only mean 33 treatments and thereafter you will be making profit every time you use the couch. A quality couch will also last you longer.

More importantly, using it at the right height will assist your posture. Working on a table that is too high will hinder and strain you, as will one which is too low. No two clients are the same, so you need to adjust the couch according to the individual client’s body type. Working with your couch at the right height will enable you to use your whole body to apply pressure, therefore reducing strain on your shoulders, arms and hands.

Notice if you are moving with every stroke you do, is your torso static and only your arms, wrists and hands moving? Make sure you move from the soles of the feet, driving the strokes from the legs and the hips.

Make sure there is space to move around your couch, overreaching is a major cause of lower back strain. It is good practice to always have your feet firmly on the ground, lower your body so your legs are gently bent.

Working with a couch that is height adjustable means you can work with the couch slightly lower thus allowing yourself to work symmetrically, by working from the head or foot of the table.

As a therapist when you first learn massage techniques, it is difficult not to put all your focus into what you are doing. As time goes on and you practice and master the techniques, then you can focus on your own body and how it feels to massage in this way. If discomfort or stain is being felt, adjust your position or change the technique you are using.

It is not good practice to put any strain on the body when working. If the therapist strains themselves or becomes incapacitated due to poor posture when working, this could lead to the therapist having to give up massage. If the therapist takes the time to be aware of the aches and pains when massaging and omits those strokes or learns new strokes, that will prevent strain and injury.
Using the hands

Effleurage movement with the hands using the lunge stance, having one foot forward and one back is the technique that many therapists use the most. This is a very good position, enabling the massage pressure to come from the feet, through the legs and hips to create the momentum and evenness when applying a long flowing stroke.

As the whole body moves forwards, pushing with the back leg and bending at the knee into the front leg, the weight goes forward, allowing the therapist’s body to continue moving and whilst moving there is little room for strain. The pressure can then be adjusted to the client’s needs, the deeper the lunge as your whole body goes forward, the deeper the stroke. Push back on the bent knee again from the foot, through the leg and hips, pushing the torso back to your starting position.

Remember breathing is very important for the therapist as well as for the client. Use your breath during each stroke, breathe in and when applying the stroke breathe out, this will allow you to relax and create a good rhythm.
Using the forearms

Forearms can be used one at a time or both arms together when working over the back.

If using both arms it is a little like doing the breast stroke when swimming. Stand facing the side of the couch and the client’s torso. Stand with legs a good width apart for you and place both forearms close together across the middle of the client’s back, with both palms facing down, lying flat and relaxed on the client’s back. Bend at the knees and then push up through the legs covering the nearest side of the client’s back, with forearms going in opposite directions, adjusting the depth by how much you lean your weight on to the client’s back. Go round the table to do the other side. Using the forearm gives you greater coverage of the client’s back than using the palms. The wide leg stance with bent knees will take the pressure off your lower back.

When using one arm, use the wide leg stance, with the front foot pointing up the table, make sure the palm of your hands is face down so you are not using the ulna edge and creating discomfort for the client.

With your palm face down you are using the larger muscle of the forearm (Brachioradialis and the Extensor Carpi Radialis Longus) which are softer if the arm is relaxed and will mould over any bones such as the scapular. (Try putting your forearm out in front of you, clench your fist and with your free hand press on these muscles, they should feel quite hard. Let the hand relax and press these muscles again, they should be nice and soft, this is how they should be when massaging).

Stand with your back leg level with the hips of the client with wide stance and the front foot pointing up towards the client’s head. Rest the non- working arm across the folded down towel over the gluts, keeping this arm relaxed and using it for support to softly lean on the client as you work up the back with the other arm.

The working arm again should be palm down and kept soft and relaxed. Start the stroke at the lower end of the client’s back just in front of the draped towel. Push off the back leg slowly at first (the speed can vary as you grow in confidence with the stroke). As your torso moves forwards bend into the front leg and allow the working arm to travel up the side of the back you are working on, keep your body behind the working arm as you fall forward. (shoulder and elbow should be at a 45 degree angle). Complete the stroke to where it is comfortable for you without overreaching depending on the length of your client’s back and the length of your body. Push back off the front foot through the leg and hips to drive you back, just leave the weight of the arm on the client as you come back to start the stroke again. Putting pressure on the back on the return stroke would cause you back problems, so always keep the pressure on when you are moving forward and allow the weight to do the work.

This can also be done by starting at the top of the client’s back and working down towards the sacrum. Same as above, just make sure your back leg is level with your client’s head and your non-working arm can be rested at your side so you can cover the whole back from top to bottom. This movement with the forearm is also good over the backs of the legs.
Using the elbow

Caution should always be observed when using the elbow. Get used to using your elbow when working on family and friends first who will give you honest feedback. The elbow is a powerful tool if used correctly and a damaging tool if used incorrectly.

The elbow is a great replacement if you know how to do trigger point work, first find the trigger point and what you have been doing with your thumbs you can now replace with the elbow. If the elbow is used regularly you will be able to feel through the elbow as you can with fingers and thumbs. You will also find you do not need to work very hard with the elbow to get great results, it often feels like you are doing very little work.

When using the elbow, again make sure your posture is comfortable; you can use either stance as used with the hands or forearms, apply the elbow very slowly and you only need to lean in a little to be effective. It would be good practice if you feel the need to use the elbow to ask the client to let you know when you are in to the tissues deep enough for them.

A good way of using the elbow instead of thumbs would be when splitting the gastrocnemius muscle in the back of the calf. This is traditionally taught in Swedish massage using the thumbs.

To use the elbow, use a wide legged stance, standing straight on to the lower leg, gently placing the elbow on the base of the calf just above the Achilles tendon. Gently lean just a small amount of weight in and slowly work your way up the calf until you come to the top of the muscle, do not go over the back of the knee.

All the above techniques need practice. Be sure to keep repositioning your body, doing consecutive strokes, keeping your bodyweight behind your working arms. Constantly moving your body sideways, forwards and backwards will keep the massage feeling smooth to the client and feel fluid and co-ordinated to the therapist. The massage should feel like doing yoga, thai chi, and a “dance” around the couch.

This may seem a little demanding to begin with but the old saying ‘practice makes perfect’ could not be more true. The practice will be worth all the effort and remember to keep dividing your focus between the client’s and your own posture.
Early warning signs

Moments of strain or overworking can cause little concern in one massage, but build into problems if they are repeated over weeks and months. Persistent aches, niggles and fatigue are all danger signs that could indicate that more serious problems could be further down the line if not addressed sooner rather than later.

Common problems present themselves by:
- Persistent pain after massaging
- Hypersensitivity to bumps and bangs in those areas
- Pain keeping you awake at night
- Weakness, often in the wrists and hands
- Strain in the lower back
- Tense and tight shoulders

If you are developing any of these signs then consider addressing them sooner rather than later, if left unchecked they could lead to long-term problems. One of the best things you can do for yourself is get massaged.

Some problems such as reaching too far over the table have straightforward remedies – stop doing it! It does take time to become conscious of these habits and change them and you may find yourself reverting to them in times of stress.

Knowing about these potential problems enables the practitioner to monitor and to modify unhelpful ways of working, or replace them with other less straining techniques.

It is important to monitor your own body whilst doing massage as well as the client’s responses and adapt your massage accordingly until this becomes an automatic part of your way of working.
The Working Environment

There are a number of things that you can do to make your working environment comfortable and easy to use. Checking and assessing where you are working can also help with making life more comfortable.

**Space**

- Keep your working area uncluttered and organised
- Position equipment to how it would suit you when delivering massage
- If possible, try to get natural light in the room
- Take time out for fresh air even just for five minutes especially if you work in an air conditioned environment.
- Drink plenty of water to keep hydrated

**Plan your day**

- If you have control over your bookings give yourself time between clients and make sure you plan time out in the day for yourself to replenish and rest.
- Don’t work beyond your physical capabilities, this is not only damaging to yourself but also you will not be able to give your client the best treatment you are capable of.
- Massaging is not only physically demanding but also mentally and emotionally, especially when your clients present with physical pain and distress through emotional issues that may arise during the treatment. You need to give yourself time to bring yourself back to a grounded state for your next client and enable yourself to switch off at the end of the day and not take on board your client’s problems.
- Pacing yourself is so important to prevent illness, getting rundown, especially during hormonal cycles or recovering from an illness.
- Reflecting at the end of each day on how you feel will enable you to reduce, adapt and change what you need to do to protect yourself.
- Ensure when doing your consultation for a first time client that you find out what their needs are from the massage, ensuring there are no contraindications and you are aware of your own limitations. Only work with any conditions you are trained to work with.
- If in doubt get doctor’s consent and if this is not available, best practice would be when in doubt ‘don’t do it’. Refer them if possible to someone you know that has more experience than you.
- Make sure the client is in full agreement with the treatment you are going to initiate, enabling you to meet the client’s expectations.
- Ensure you get feedback from the client during the treatment to make sure that at any point they feel uncomfortable or if the massage is too deep or too light for them they feel confident to let you know.
Completing the treatment

When finishing up on a treatment, ensure you adhere to your boundaries and that you finish on time; otherwise client’s expectations will be that it’s ok to run over when they receive every massage. This can put you under undue stress, knowing the next client may well be waiting.

You also need to have the space to disengage from the current client to enable you to then competently engage with the next. More so if the current client has left you with uncomfortable thoughts because of their issues or illness.

Give your client your aftercare advice, to encourage them to get the best from their massage and the possible self-healing process that may take place. This may come in the form of frequent visits to the toilet as the body detoxifies or experiencing disrupted sleep or vivid dreams etc.

It would be a good idea to talk to your client about these, especially if it is their first treatment. Reassure them that it is normal following a massage and will only last 24 to 48 hours as their body takes the opportunity to detoxify.

Finally, remember you can’t help people effectively if you are not happy and healthy yourself. Looking after yourself is the most important thing you can do if you want to help others.
There is a common attitude that the therapist should give everything that they have to a client, no matter what the cost is to them. It is important to pace yourself so that you can get through the working day, with some energy left for the evening and the next day.

It is vital to:
- Maintain your time boundaries
- Mentally let go of each client when you’ve finished with the session
- Make sure that you have breaks during the day
- Look after yourself outside of the massage workplace
- There are limits to every person’s strength, stamina and resilience. Such things as your build and inherited constitution, your levels of fitness and medical history and the pressure that exists in your personal life will determine these.
- It is important to approach each massage session with realistic expectations about the possible outcomes to each individual. Aim to do your best within your capabilities and energy on any given day. Try to approach each session with enthusiasm but don’t exhaust yourself. Bear in mind, that it generally takes more than one session to deliver long-term effects.

Massage is a two-way process and you can only do your best to help clients. This does require their co-operation during the treatment and them involving themselves by asking questions and taking your advice. They may want to take away information such as gentle exercises that they can do. Some clients expect you to do all the work with no effort at all on their part.

Massage is an easy profession in which you can feel burnt out or overloaded and empty by constant giving. Symptoms of constant giving include:
- A loss of resilience and perspective
- A reduced ability to cope
- Physical symptoms such as backache, headaches, stiff shoulders and constant tension in your working tools
- An inability to relax

It is important to make sure that you replenish yourself in the rest of your life, especially when responsibilities are becoming more and more heavy. Three areas that need attention are: general self-maintenance, doing things that nourish and replenish you and getting support to deal with clients and work issues. Get enough restful sleep, eat healthy nourishing foods and drink enough water. Keep yourself flexible and energised enough through stretches and exercise.
Working full time in a spa environment is primarily a young person’s activity. As you get older, you may use your knowledge and experience to work differently in treatment sessions. This can help you to build on creating a related career in admin of a clinic or health facility, teach massage or exercise classes or sell health-related products.

**Changing treatment sessions / changing your clientele / changing your career**

If you are self-employed, it may be possible to gradually change how you work with clients or at least the nature of treatment you offer new clients. You might consider changing your clientele, for example, referring your client to staff members who want to concentrate on deep tissue work or particular areas of massage etc. Sometimes people work part-time, balancing out the physical and mental demands by doing a very different professional activity. The possibilities are as wide as your interests and imagination can make them.
Know your audience

Many therapists often wonder why they spend lots of time, effort and money designing and developing leaflets and other promotional material, then distributing or displaying them to not get much of a response.

Believe it or not, the success or failure of your marketing can often boil down to one simple issue: you’ve not been specific enough about your target audience.

I’ve lost count of the number of times I’ve asked the question: who is your target audience and get answers like:
- A variety of people
- The local community
- Women of all ages
- Ladies, mainly 35+
- Men and women

Why are these answers a recipe for marketing disaster? Because they’re not specific enough.

Think about it – how on earth are you going to effectively communicate with a variety of people, your local community or women of all ages?

Unless you have the marketing and advertising budgets of Waitrose or ASDA, I’m afraid to say you’re never going to reach women of all ages.

And if we stick with our two examples, even Waitrose and ASDA are more specific about their audiences. Yes, they ideally want to reach women of all ages but they actually target specific women of all ages.

Think about it: are the women who shop at Waitrose going to be the same as the women who shop at ASDA? In the majority of cases, no. Generally speaking Waitrose is targeting women of all ages at one end of a spectrum (commonly known in advertising and marketing as ABC1s) while ASDA is targeting the other side of that same spectrum (C2s and Ds). Because both retailers are targeting different types of women (and are clear about that), they will also choose to advertise in different ways and through different media.
Learning point: Be specific about your target audience
How:
Instead of making generalisations about your audience (ie a variety of people, women of all ages), be as specific as you can eg:
• Stay at home mums who need some “me-time”
• Professional women aged 35-55 who need to de-stress from their busy desk jobs
• Professional men and women aged 30-45 who are into fitness and running and who need regular sports massages
• Older people aged 65+ who suffer from rheumatism and other age related issues and need massage to alleviate symptoms

Why:
Because by being specific you begin to build a picture of the people you are trying to reach.

And by building a picture of the people you are trying to reach, you can begin to be more specific about how and where you can reach them.

Learning point: Build as clear a picture as possible of the people you are trying to reach
How:
Start imagining what your target audience is like. So, for stay at home mums, for example, ask yourself:
• Why do they need “me-time?”
• What are the benefits of “me-time” to them?
• How can I deliver those benefits?
• Where do stay at home mums hang out?
• How can I reach them where they do hang out?
• What sort of things do they read?
• How can I reach them via what they read?
• How else can I reach them?

Why:
By asking yourself these detailed questions about your target audience, you begin a) to understand what they might need b) to understand how you might directly meet those needs c) work out how best to communicate this to them and d) work out where and how best to reach them.

Once you’ve understood and worked out the points above, you’re already well on the way to developing a more strategic (defined and specific) marketing or promotion strategy as opposed to the “shoot and pray” method that so many other people end up using.

Learning point: Use language and stories that touch your target audience
How:
Once you’ve built a picture or got a good feel for your target audience, make sure you speak to them in a way that will make sense to them. In other words, focus on what they might need and tell them how you can meet those needs.
Why:
To really influence an audience you need to talk their language and connect with what matters to them. Yes, you may be the best therapist in the world but what exactly will that mean to your clients?

So, with the example of the stay at home mums, for example, yes, they find it useful to know about the different techniques you use but they’ll also want to know a) that you understand the pressures they’re under and how that can make them feel and b) how you can help them feel better. Be sure to strike a balance between explaining process (what you do as a therapist) as well as telling a story (how they will feel as a result of having your therapy/treatment).

If you begin to apply these three simple tips, you’ll be amazed how much more targeted and effective your marketing efforts can be.

Jackie Mendoza is a change coach and start-up consultant with a wealth of experience in helping individuals and organisations deal resourcefully with change. She is available for one-to-one coaching via www.jackiemendoza.com.
Whether or not your practice is thriving, there are opportunities to increase your profits by developing products for sale. Have you ever considered what products you could offer your clients that would enhance their experience with you and make you more money?

**What sort of products am I talking about?**

Well, to give you an example, my business specialises in stress management. People come to me for consultations and I run seminars for organisations and groups. Over the years, I realised that a lot of stressed people feel they don’t have the time to come and see me, so I’ve developed a range of products that gives them access to stress management techniques which they can use in their own time and space. These include relaxation & hypnotherapy CDs, telephone consultations, teleseminars, an e-learning stress management programme and I’m just about to launch a series of recorded Master classes on stress-related subjects. The next plan is an e-book and probably a book, which will go to full publication.

An added benefit for me as well as the income is that I can do this work from anywhere. So, if I choose to take a few days break in Spain or somewhere else, as long as I have access to a computer and a phone line, I can carry on as normal. Just somewhere more relaxed!

So what products could you think about that would generate additional income for you and perhaps make your life easier?

If you’re a massage therapist for example, could you write a short e-book or book about the benefits of massage or perhaps you could make your own range of aromatherapy room sprays or massage oils or make a DVD about massage and its benefits? The important thing is to find out first from your clients and through research on the web and in other salons what you think might be missing (the gap in the market) and which would be appealing to your client base.

If you didn’t want to make your own product from scratch then perhaps you could find someone who would be happy to white label products for you. That means you buy existing products but put your own branding on it and gain commission for sales.

You could choose to sell these in your practice or, if you have a website, you can create a shopping page and set up an account with PayPal so that people can buy online.
Whatever products you choose to sell, if they’re going to have appeal, they need to be done professionally and to look the part and they need to give good value for money (which doesn’t necessarily mean cheap!). Have a look around and see what else is on sale, where and for what price. What do you think your clients would be willing to pay for these products? There’s little point in making a product, which is targeted at a high-end market if your clients are middle or low income and may not be able to afford what you have. So you need to do your homework and use friends, family and close clients as a means of market research.

Getting your products manufactured and packaged so they look professional need not cost the earth, so it’s also good to shop around for people who are good at what they do and will do a professional job, whilst also giving you an affordable rate. A great way of sourcing good people is to ask around amongst those you know. For example, my recording studio is the same one that recorded some music CDs with my musician brother. He’s very reasonable but really knows what he’s doing and is a perfectionist. By the way, don’t forget, you’ll need to build any production, manufacturing, packaging & distribution charges into your retail price.

If you’re going to carry stock, you will also need to decide where you can comfortably store it. It could be you have loft space; a garage or stock room or you may want to negotiate with one of your manufacturers to see if they will stock the products for you and you can call them off. You’ll need to agree any charges up front and to have regular reconciliation reports on stock (probably monthly).

Finally, you’ll need to decide how you’re going to market the products and get them out into people’s hands. For example, you may choose to sample some in your salon or practice, you may ask other practices to stock them and give them a commission on sales, perhaps there are distributors who would be interested in selling your product or maybe a party plan idea would be good for you. You may also decide to send review copies or samples to key editorial staff in titles relevant to your marketplace so that you get coverage in local and trade press, for example.

Whatever you do, make sure that your product is safe and professional and carries any kind of cautionary words on the packaging that may be required. You may need to take out additional insurance for this liability. Speak with your insurance broker about this and they will advise you.
Here we talk about having confidence in the products and services you offer your clients. After all, if you’re not demonstrating confidence in what you do, why would anyone want to buy it? It sounds obvious, but too many people in the caring professions are too shy about promoting their businesses professionally and with self-belief.

So here are some top tips to help you inspire confidence in yourself and your products so that you can promote your business knowing that what you offer is valuable.

1. What qualifications do you have? Do you think you would have achieved them if you couldn’t demonstrate your ability? Of course not! Use your qualifications on your business cards, your website and when you are speaking about your business.

2. Do you ask for testimonials from your clients or even get unsolicited ones? If not, ask for testimonials of how people have benefitted from using your products and services. Keep them in a ‘success’ file and refer to them whenever you’re feeling a bit ‘shaky’ on confidence. Testimonials are also a great marketing tool, as people love to see what others have said about you. Just make sure you ask for permission to quote their comments and remember, you can change names and places to protect privacy.

3. Note how people have benefited from their contact with you and communicate this on your promotional materials. This is far more powerful than telling people what you actually do. The effect of what you do is much more important to prospective clients and will also instill confidence in you.

4. Resist the temptation to compare your performance unfavourably with that of others in your business and use it as a tool of self-criticism. This undermines your confidence and is likely to adversely affect your business. Concentrate on what’s in the market and where you can improve or fill in the gaps. How can you do things differently, which is even better than the best?

5. Don’t wait until your offering is ‘perfect’. Usually this is just a barrier because you’re frightened of moving forward. Be prepared to go beyond your comfort zone to get your products and services out there. Provided you have the qualifications and ability and you act professionally, you’ll learn more quickly once you’re using your knowledge and can ‘tweak’ your products and services if need be along the way.

6. In areas where you are genuinely uncertain, use your Supervisors, Mentors and Friends to support you and to offer advice. It’s not weak to ask for help - just good common sense!

7. Try out your ideas on friends and colleagues before you launch them, so you can clear up any barriers or potential misunderstandings before you ‘go public’.

8. Be safe in what you do. Be aware of the pitfalls, contra-indications and so forth, so that you avoid getting into difficulties in the first place.

9. Love what you do and be enthusiastic in the way you speak about it. Not everyone may ‘get it’, but that doesn’t matter. Not everyone has to like it and you don’t need everyone’s approval. The people who are open to what you have to offer will be affected by your passion and enthusiasm for what you do, so go for it!
When we’re in the business of wellbeing, there are so many different methods of delivering it and, if you’re like me, you’re absolutely passionate about what you’re doing and how you do it. However, it’s easy in your enthusiasm to become distracted and to lose track of what you’re actually trying to achieve with your complementary health practice. So, here are a few tips to help you stay on track to the success you want.

• Review your business regularly to check that you are still on track, to review what’s working for you and what isn’t and to examine what else you might need to do to achieve what you want to achieve.

• If you’ve become a little side-tracked, don’t worry. You can come back to what you were doing later and go back to what will get you most quickly to achieving your goals and ambitions. If you do find yourself distracted, whenever you think of it, check with yourself whether what you are doing now is the thing you REALLY need to be doing next so that you can do what you set out to do. If not, stop and concentrate on what really needs to take priority.

• Write lists of what you have achieved each day. This is really encouraging and motivating and also keeps you on track. You can then write a list of what needs to happen to reach the next stage of your plan.

• Make sure your goals for your business are written down and kept somewhere where it’s easy for you to access them and review them. That way, it’s easy to remind yourself of where you want to be and what you have to do to get there.

• Break your goals down into easy stages. That way you can see more clearly what needs to be done, step-by-step, put realistic timings on when you can achieve each step and log when you have completed each one. This means you can see progress every time you complete the next part of the process.

• Take regular breaks. They need only be short or can be longer if you need a bit more of a break. Remember, some of our best ideas come when we give ourselves a bit of space just to think things through and see them from an objective perspective. Research has also shown that breaks of only 3 minutes per hour make us 15 per cent more productive and accurate. So, you can improve your efficiency by taking it easy. How good is that!

• If you find what you had originally planned isn’t working in some way and after having reviewed it carefully you realise it isn’t likely to work the way you first intended, be bold and change what you set out to do. Remember there are no failures, only feedback! This means, if we find ourselves on the wrong track we can usually, by thinking things through, see what has been working for us and what has not. That means we can learn from our perceived mistakes and put that learning to good use by doing something different the next time. So try and recognise when things are not working out the way you had envisaged and don’t be afraid to learn from it and move on as soon as possible, putting what you learned into practice.

Remember Jefferson got it wrong 999 times, before he invented the light bulb. He just learned each time until he got the result he wanted. I do hope this has given you some food for thought.
**Smarter, Working Shorter**

With a lot of pressure on us to be on the go 24/7, it’s important to prioritise your work and to make sure that the time you put into work is time spent effectively.

Too many people are sitting at their desks for too many hours rather than planning their time effectively. Part of this is to do with peer pressure and the misconception that we are doing better if we never leave our desks and part is to do with lack of organisation.

**So here are three of the top tips:**

---

**Eat lots of unprocessed, fresh, local foods in their natural season**

Remember the foods we eat are fuel for our bodies and minds. What we put into our bodies ultimately turns into tissue, bones, muscles etc. It affects our brain as well as the other organs in our bodies and so it makes sense to pay attention to what we feed it.

There are a lot of foods available which look and taste great, but which may have lost a lot of their nutrients in processing, transport and preparation. Many of them are loaded with chemicals, colourings, preservatives, salt, sugar and so on, which may not be obvious. When we haven’t prepared them ourselves, it’s difficult to know what’s in them and to know whether we are receiving a balanced diet.

**Get organised. Save Time.**

Personal organisation can have a huge effect on our stress levels. What may take a minute or two now can save half an hour or more at a later stage when we may be under even more pressure and can’t find what we’re looking for. Short cuts can often appear attractive as ways of managing our time, but all too often shortcuts end up creating problems and taking more time in the long run because we haven’t taken the time to do what we’re doing thoroughly, to check our facts or to communicate effectively.
Maintain Your Focus

When you’re busy, it can be very easy to find yourself wasting time by getting side-tracked. For example, how often do you find yourself at the end of the day, having done a pile of things that weren’t on your list to start with and nothing from your real priorities? How frustrating is that and why does it happen?

Often we have so many things on our list, we fail to prioritise properly. If we do have our top 3 tasks for the day, it’s also easy to be thrown off track. E-mail is one of the key areas here. We have a tendency to check them very often and think we’ll just deal with a couple of things before we start what we know is our priority. Then, before you know, half the day is gone and you haven’t even started what you intended to achieve.

Check your email once every hour at the most and limit the time that you’re on it. Each time you find yourself starting to get drawn into something on email or from any other source, ask yourself, is this really what I need to be doing right this minute? If not, go back to what you were doing and keep your focus. This way you’ll find it much more likely that you cover the jobs you need to complete during that day and your stress levels will remain healthy.
Tips on how to cope
So what can you do to manage things and how can you get through it still feeling like you’ve gained something and your time has been well spent?

Here are a few tips for you to consider.

• When times are considered to be hard financially, some people might not go on holiday, so why not offer special summer treats and 3 for 2 or 6 for 5 treatments so that people can spoil themselves by making visits to you (perhaps instead of a holiday). A 3 for 2 offer is better than 2 for 1 as it has a higher value and ties people in over a longer period. Time your offer to coincide with a quiet period and encourage your clients to tell their friends.

• If you have a quiet week with only a few bookings, try and concentrate them into as short a period as possible so that you can perhaps take some time off yourself and do something really nice for yourself.

• Use any extra time you may have to do all the things you’ve been meaning to do with you practice. Get up to date with the filing, update your database, write some articles and so on, so that you’re ready and in fine form when the business is busier.

• You might also use this time to decorate or reorganise your practice space or take a good look at your plans for developing your business from here, go to some additional training, read up on some new techniques and so on. Make sure you’re clear on your goals and that you have written them down and placed images around you that remind you of your aim.

• Get rid of any old or out of date material and update your advertising and PR materials.

• Get in touch with old clients and give them an incentive to come in and try a treatment at a special rate or with a bonus gift. This might also help you clear out some older products that you no longer intend to stock or use.

• Make sure your accounts and bookkeeping are up to date and that everything is in order so that your job will be much easier later in the financial year.

• If you have staff, you might use this time to do some additional training so that they feel good about what they do and feel like they are progressing and learning. Maybe you’ll want to ask their opinion about how you could improve your product and encourage more business. You could even incentivise them to bring in new clients themselves for a commission.

• Try and get an article published in your local paper and include an offer for all readers to drum up some extra business. The benefits of a good PR campaign can extend way beyond the date of publication, especially if it’s an on-going effort.
• Make sure any directory entries on and offline are up to date and have an attractive offer in place.

• Pay any outstanding bills and make sure you have been paid all you are due. Chase any outstanding payments and get the money in.

• Hold an event, which encourages people to visit your practice and perhaps sample some of the services on offer. Invite the local press to get any additional coverage and have suitable refreshments and offers, which make the event a real draw. Include competitions and free draws and perhaps have live demonstrations. If you do, make sure you’re ready to collect names and addresses of all those who come and be ready with your diary for bookings. You can even take a deposit up front.

These are just a few ideas for you so that you can still affect your business positively, even when there may not be as many people coming through the door. Anything you do now could well pay back many times when the market picks up and the holidays are over.

The final thing you may want to do is to consider your charges. Are you charging enough or can you raise your charges in line with others in the area? Can you offer something additional in a package that would encourage people to pay a little extra, which might involve minimal costs to you, increase perceived value for the customer and make up for any decrease in receipts you may be experiencing?

When business is slow, it’s a good time to catch up and also to get creative with your business. In the long run, it may be just this kind of thing that encourages more customers or greater loyalty or spend from your existing ones.
How do we deal with the need for flexibility and creativity in challenging times?

As always, periods of change can be unsettling and can create challenging circumstances. How we deal with these affects whether we come out of it having learned something about ourselves, our lives and our businesses or whether we allow ourselves to fall into a period of doom, gloom and depression.

Many of you who help clients deal with psychological issues will know that a positive approach to life makes all the difference. Where we can face challenges is when we resist what’s going on and continue to run our lives and our businesses in the same way we have always done, just hoping and clinging on for dear life.

Sometimes this approach works and it’s just a case of sitting it out. However, it’s a passive approach and you’re more likely to see more positive changes if you’re willing to think outside the box and be open to a different way of doing things. Be proactive in your approach. Just because things have always been done that way or this way and have worked in the past, isn’t necessarily relevant in the current climate. When we are rigid in our thinking, it’s difficult to adapt to changing circumstances and rigid structures put under pressure, have a tendency to break.

So if business isn’t going as well as it did at present, how are you going to choose to move forward? Are you going to stick to your old ways of doing things which worked in different conditions or are you going to be open to looking at things a different way and challenging yourself to answer some issues which have arisen because of the current climate?

Even challenging markets bring with them opportunities. For example, it occurred to me recently that there’s an awful lot of wasted negative energy around the issue of redundancy and the fear it creates. Even before we have been made redundant, a lot of us spend time worrying over the what if scenario. This is understandable, but it’s not actually very productive. So, having experienced redundancy twice in my life (once in the middle of the last recession), I spotted a need for people to switch their focus and start to look at things differently.
In the meantime, here are a few tips for you on trading in the current climate:

- Rather than getting bogged down and dragged into a fearful situation where you’re full of negative thinking, look for the opportunities that were not there when circumstances were different.

- Review the way you do business and see if there is a better/different way that might encourage people to buy from you. Remain flexible and move with the times. If you need to do something different or even to change what you do, then be flexible and willing to make changes. Explore your talents and skills and be ready to adapt. In the long run, even the most trying situations can turn out to be the best thing that ever happened to you.

- Limit the time you spend with news items, entertainments, music and people that bring you down. It doesn’t help to wallow and maintain a focus on what’s wrong and not working for us, so be aware of how you spend your time and the effect this has on your moods. If you need to change your activities to something more positive, do it sooner rather than later. Change negative conversations, remove yourself from depressing situations and switch the mood by changing the music or the activities you’re involved in.

- Take simple, practical steps to make your financial situation as stable as it can be and cut back on non-essential spending, review services such as water, telephone, gas charges etc and see if you can make changes and so on.

- Consider teaming up with other people to produce something you may not be able to do alone but which is relevant and fulfils a current need in the marketplace.

- Think of ways that people will still wish to buy products and services from you. Perhaps you can offer 2 for 1 treatments or offer staged payments, for example.

- Work on your own mental attitude each day. Make a list of the things that ARE working for you at the moment; things you can be grateful and happy for, and review them daily.

- Remember the current market situation is not a personal reflection of how good or bad you are at what you do. There’s no doubt these are challenging times, but getting bogged down in self-criticism will not help. Switch your focus onto the positive and be determined to find a way to continue doing what you love or to make a choice to either permanently or temporarily do something else which will keep you financially stable.

- Remember too, that things never remain the same and challenging situations pass in time. By remaining proactive, you give yourself the best possible chance of surviving now and/or of making a speedy recovery when things turn around.

- Keep it light! It’s still OK to have fun and to laugh. Try to see the funny side of things and look for the bright elements of what is happening. It’s quite often in these times when people are more willing to do things for each other and be a little more forgiving. Keep your focus on the positive.
How can we save time and money by using other people’s learning?

What I mean by this is that it’s often easy when you are starting and running your own business to feel that you’re on your own and we tend to want to do everything from scratch.

Sometimes, it’s necessary to do this, but on many occasions someone else has done the same thing or something very similar, has learned all the pitfalls, shortcuts and so on and has valuable experience that we can tap into. For example, when I recorded my stress-relieving CDs, I didn’t know where I was going to record them at a reasonable price and still get a good quality recording. I started looking around and realised I really had no idea how to differentiate the good from the bad and of course everyone tells you they’re better than everyone else because they want to sell their own services, understandably.

It was then that I remembered my brother (who is a poet and songwriter) had recorded a CD the year before and the result had been good. I contacted him and asked him who he had used and whether he was happy with the service he’d received and the costs. He was very forthcoming with this specific information: “I used Graham of Dove Studios in Yorkshire and we now have a great relationship and I use him for all my recording work.”

The point is, if I hadn’t thought of asking my brother, I could have spent a lot of time using other people, finding that they weren’t what I’d hoped for and having to look around again and so on. It’s a small example, but the principle applies in many cases.
So for example, if you’re thinking of writing a book and you know someone who has published one, ask them how they set about it and how they would recommend you proceed, so that you can gain the value of their experience and give yourself a shortcut! In my experience most people are only too happy to offer their opinion, tell you their experiences and make recommendations, which can save you a whole bunch of time.

In the same way, if your ultimate aim is to build your business up and sell it for mega millions, then find someone who has done the same and learn from their experience. There are plenty of books around on the subject including 7 Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen R. Covey.

So what sources might you tap into when you’re building your business? There are numerous possible avenues, but here are some thoughts for you:

- Always look around your own friends, family and contacts and think about whether they have some experience which may be of help to you.
- There are often books available and sources on the internet on “How to” subjects and there’s a lot of good learning there.
- Do you have colleagues or peers in the area who might have done something similar and would be willing to share their thoughts and experiences with you?
- What about the people who trained you? A lot of those either run now or have run their own businesses and they’ll be interested in seeing you succeed as it’s an endorsement of their training.
- Join an online or face-to-face business-networking group. There are two which I find very helpful in terms of resourcing and they are ecademy.com and selfgrowth.com and there are numerous others, including Gateway4Health!
- If you are thinking of using someone’s services or products, ask the vendor to put you in touch with some of his/her customers so that you can talk to them about the service they have received and their experience of the product/service. If they’re reputable, they’ll have no problem with this.
- Another source that I have personally found invaluable is Bernadette Doyle of Client Magnets. She runs courses and teleseminars (some paid for, some free), where she discusses a lot of methods of increasing business and has a lot of very good advice to give specifically for complementary health practitioners. Her website details are www.clientmagnets.com.

In short, there are many ways in which you can save time and money by learning from the experience of others. You don’t have to reinvent the wheel each time.
Are you a Procrastinator?

Many of us are so busy these days we have a To Do list as long as our arms! However we often put things off and they’re usually things we’d rather not do or we don’t rate them highly enough on our list of priorities.

Procrastination is a huge stressor and in fact, a double whammy! Why? Because even if we put things off, they still niggle somewhere at the back of our minds. So, not only do we have to do something we don’t like, we also know deep in our subconscious, that we haven’t dealt with it.

These are a couple of tips I’d like to give you to help you avoid procrastination so you can get done what you need to do.

- If something is important enough that you think you should do it, it’s probably important enough to do something about it. However its always useful to check before diving headlong into something that it is what you want to do, whether it serves you to do it and where it is on your list of priorities, so that you can schedule it in.

- If it’s something you don’t want to do, just do it as soon as possible and get it off your plate. Often the way things turn out are not as bad as we expect them to be anyway and there’s a great relief in offloading things we’re not looking forward to. Why not set yourself an incentive that you can enjoy when you’ve done something you’ve been putting off? The reward doesn’t have to be huge (a 10-minute break, a biscuit or something like that) but incentives are effective, as we all know.

- If you find yourself putting things off, ask yourself whether you’re waiting for things to be perfect. For example, if you have a product or service you want to get off the ground, many of us tend to wait until we think its perfect before putting it out in the marketplace. There’s a lot of sense in thinking things through carefully and making sure were aiming it at the right target etc., but waiting for perfection can simply be a mental block or a fear that we might not get something quite right. However, its often when we put something out there, we find out what the reaction is and have the chance to adapt it without damaging our reputation. So if you have something you’ve been waiting to do, don’t wait any longer, get it going! It could be the best thing you’ve ever done!

- If there is something that needs doing, ask yourself, “What’s the best use of my time here? Shall I do it, delegate it or dump it?” This is a great technique and just gives us a few minutes to think about whether it REALLY needs doing, whether we really need to be the person doing it or whether we have something more important to spend our time on and can ask someone else to handle it for us. If it’s simply a distraction, dump it!

Finally, remember that there are only so many things any reasonable person can do in a day, so prioritise those things that are the most important at the start of each day and do them BEFORE you start anything else. Tick them off, cross them out or delete them when you’ve finished and you’ll feel like you’ve really achieved what you set out to do.
Do you sometimes feel like you keep on trying things with your business or with other ambitions in life and wonder why you never seem to make any real headway? Do you look at other similar businesses and see them thriving whilst yours stands still? Do you get disheartened sometimes because you really want to make a difference and yet you can’t seem to move forward in the way you would like?

Well, number 1, you’re not alone and number 2 here’s some advice and a recommendation, which may help you.

You may have heard of the book Think & Grow Rich? It’s by a guy called Napoleon Hill and was written in the early to mid-1900’s, but its contents still holds true today, if not more so.

There are various points covered in the book, which are valuable and have been put into practice by world-famous successful politicians, entrepreneurs and people in all walks of life. But what I want to cover with you today are the following rules:

• Be clear about what it is you really want to achieve and write it down, including the exact amount of money (if that is relevant) that you want to make. Even if you’re not fully prepared or ready, take action and be committed to what you are doing.

• Take note of, but don’t necessarily believe those who say that what you want to achieve can’t be done. Even if things don’t seem to be going your way, keep trying and never give up if this is truly what you want to achieve. Help may come in ways and from sources you least expect, so keep an open mind.

• If you haven’t read Think & Grow Rich before, I strongly recommend it. It has tons of unusual advice and tips for making more than just money! There’s also a great website linked to it called www.asamanthinketh.net which has lots of free resources. Go and take a look now and see what new insights you get about your business and your life.

• Whatever happens, keep on working on what you love to do and really want to achieve no matter what. Each time you appear to fail (incidentally there is no such word!), see what you can learn, adapt your thinking and activity and see what happens. NEVER GIVE UP ON YOUR DREAMS!
It’s great to have high standards and to pay attention to the detail that makes you stand out from the crowd. But there comes a point where we set ourselves impossible targets by expecting perfection and this can cause huge amounts of unnecessary stress. So here are a few points to bear in mind when you’re dealing in business or at home:

- Perfection is impossible to define, because what is perfect for me may not be perfect for you. Therefore it’s all a matter of perspective.
- High standards and attention to detail are valuable assets, especially in business. Perfectionism however, creates standards which are almost impossible to live up to; therefore you run the risk that nothing is ever good enough. And if that’s the case, then your enjoyment of life is severely restricted.
- It also creates problems for those around you, as perfectionists tend to be extremely critical which can result in them driving people away because nothing anyone else does is ever good enough either. So this creates division.
- Perfectionism stems from a need to be in control to cover for insecurity. However in life there are things we cannot always control and if lack of control makes you anxious, critical and impatient, that creates a great deal of stress.
- You may not be able to control every situation, but you can control your reaction. If you learn to be more accepting and just let go a little, life can become so much easier for you and for those around you.
- Perfectionism is a Type A character behaviour, which means you will be more susceptible to undue stress and all the emotional and physical illnesses, which result.
- Perhaps perfectionism stems from a subconscious belief that you are not good enough in some way and so, without ever intending to do so, one creates a situation where we make ourselves feel better by proving to ourselves that nothing is ever good enough, which not only makes us anxious and prone to anger and frustration, but is self-sabotaging.
- Perfectionism shows a lack of flexibility too and inflexible things tend to break. They also restrict innovation, so where are the benefits of this kind of behaviour?

Try and practice letting go a little. When you find yourself feeling frustrated that something is not ideal, ask yourself Does it really matter that much? It may be important, but not worth making yourself angry and upset about. So allow yourself to breathe and let go just a little. You’ll find life considerably more enjoyable and can even find fun in imperfection.

After all, life would be pretty dull if we were all the same and nothing new ever happened. We’d all be like Stepford Wives and where’s the fun in that?! Try to be flexible, because it’s often our imperfections that make us appealing or which create a new idea.

If you’re one of those with perfectionist tendencies, you may want to look at why you feel such a need to be in constant control.
Achieving Goals: Devise your own ‘ad’ campaign

1. Write down your specific goal (remember the SMART principles) and refer to it every day to keep it fresh in your mind and maintain focus.
2. Write it in the present tense as if it already happening; otherwise you’re always putting it subconsciously in the future. Ensure your language is positive, i.e. avoid goals like “I want to stop, give up or quit...” etc. Voice it in what you want to achieve instead, e.g. “I want to become, achieve, reach...” etc.
3. Think about how you will feel and how things will be different as a result of achieving your goals, then find images from magazines, the web, amongst your photos and so on, that reflect this vividly. Post those images where you will see them frequently, e.g. as a screensaver, on your fridge, on your pin board, in your diary. Repeated messages change behaviour. It has been proven time and again and is the reason that companies and politicians spend billions on ad and PR campaigns.
4. If there are statements which will support you, boost your confidence and your commitment to your goal, write them down and repeat them to yourself as often as possible during the day. To take an example, if your goal is to improve sales but you are not confident in your sales ability, you might write something like, “I am an excellent and convincing salesperson who is confident in my ability to close a deal and make money out of my ideas and passions”
5. Break mega goals down into smaller steps to avoid being overwhelmed and make them more accessible. Before you know it, you’re well on your way to achieving your goal.
6. Take one small step each day, log it in a bullet point journal and reward yourself for your efforts by taking a break, doing something you enjoy doing or buying a small treat. This helps you maintain motivation and momentum and the journal allows you to track progress on the days you need to remind yourself how far you’ve come and why.
7. Find examples of people who have had success with similar projects and ask their advice or read about their methods, so you’re not constantly ‘reinventing the wheel’.
8. Don’t be afraid to admit you don’t know some of what you need to know and get whatever help/training you need. It’s not weak; it’s good management and common sense.
9. Visualise yourself as having achieved your goals. Close your eyes and engage all your senses – see what your success looks, sounds, tastes, smells and feels like and see it all in glorious technicolour every day. This powerful technique helps keep you focussed and motivated and reinforces your intention.
10. Avoid distractions and people who hold you back. Seek solutions & honest opinion, learn from your mistakes and be open and flexible. Remember, it took Eddison 1,000 attempts before he invented a light bulb that worked! If you believe passionately in something, go for it and keep going!
Sometimes we find it difficult to see the positive in a situation no matter how hard we try and at times like this, it’s worth asking someone else what they think or just talking to them about the situation and waiting to see what response you get. This can be a very interesting exercise.

For example, a few weeks ago, my partner was going away on business unexpectedly, which left me to continue a holiday alone. To be honest, I was feeling a little sorry for myself after he’d gone. But on chatting to a few friends, they were saying, “How marvellous to have time to yourself – I’m really jealous!” and “What a blessing to have time for you. I wish I had that chance.” Interestingly, they were all women who said that, but perhaps that’s another story!

Their comments and perspective on my situation changed my mood completely and allowed me to really embrace my situation and truth be told, much as I love my partner, I truly enjoyed some time where I could do what I wanted to do, when I wanted to do it.

If you’re feeling sad or uncomfortable about a situation, think about how someone else might view it or chat to someone about it. You may find, for example:
- “I really hate flying” turns into “How lucky you are to travel as you do!”
- “I can’t stand my job” turns into “Lucky you that you have work and are earning a living!” or “The weather here is always miserable” to “Isn’t it great that you live in such a green place and where the temperatures are so comfortable!”

There are always many more sides to a view than one and it’s interesting to note how your mood changes once you realise that something you viewed as being negative is viewed as positive by someone else.
Do you find yourself feeling discouraged at times about how your business and life are progressing? If so, on what criteria are you judging your performance and how does that make you feel?

Current society tends to view success solely in financial terms, but what other criteria could you possibly use and how might that affect how you feel about what you do?

Clearly financial success is important to a degree if you rely on your income to live and you will need to do all you can to ensure you maximise your potential in your career, as long as it isn’t at the expense of others, of the ecology of our planet or of your own health and happiness. That’s a whole subject in itself and if what you’re doing is affecting you or others adversely, you may want to start thinking about why you’re doing what you’re doing and reassessing things a little.

You can have all the wealth in the world and still be unhappy if you’re not doing something you feel has a value to you and/or someone/thing else. Likewise you can live at a slightly lower level but LOVE what you do and feel energised and excited by it.

If we don’t judge success purely on how much money we make and what possessions we have though, what other criteria could there be? Here are a few suggestions. Does what you do:

- Help others and make a positive contribution to their lives?
- Sustain services which help the environment?
- Make a positive difference to someone else?
- Make you feel you’re doing something worthwhile?
- Make you feel you’re contributing to society?
- Make you feel good?
- Allow you to live at an affordable level?
- Allow you to live with a balance of work and leisure time?
- Fund something that you do outside of work that you love?
- Allow you to fully express who you are?

Exercise: Next time you’re feeling down about what you’re doing and how much money you are/are not making, ask yourself:

1. What am I currently doing for work?
2. Why did I choose it and what makes it worthwhile?
3. If I need to make a change, could I survive on less?
4. If I made a change, what benefits would that give me, including financial aspects, but also other criteria such as those listed above?
5. What evidence do I have that I am successful (include jobs you gained, salary increases, promotions, changes of career, exams passed, trophies won, acknowledgements and praise received. List them all and refer to them every day as many times as possible.
6. How does what I do make me feel?
7. Could I use my talents in some way which would make me feel better?
8. What changes would I need to make that happen?
9. What would the benefits be?
10. How does what I do make me feel about my life and me?

If you need to make a change and you feel it’s worth it, do it and put your plan into action straight away. And remember always, if we can’t change anything else, we can change our attitude.
You can do anything you want. Stop waiting for someone to tell you, you deserve it. Wow! What a thought!

How many of unintentionally avoid living life as we would like it because somewhere, back in our subconscious, we don’t believe we deserve it? How often do we avoid doing something because we want to please someone else or because we think we’ll disappoint them or lose their love if we did it? How often do we use these “excuses” as shields and put up barriers so we don’t have to face what we’re scared of doing but would love to do? I know at times, I have certainly done that. How about you?

Does this ring a bell with you?

I thought this was a wonderfully inspiring thought and I hope you’ll like it too. If you’re holding off doing something that your heart tells you want to do, here are a few thoughts on the subject that may help you:

What is it that you would love to do in life? Think about what it is and what or whom you believe is holding you back. Then ask yourself, is this really what is holding me back or am I unwittingly using this as a barrier because I fear the consequences of actually doing it? Do I truly believe I deserve to be happy and to be fulfilled?

As I have found in my coaching/psychotherapy practice, many of us hold false beliefs about our own abilities and worthiness. Often we’re not even aware of these beliefs until we start to dig deeper into why we feel and behave the way we do. Often we wait for a crisis before we choose to examine what we believe and how that affects us and those around us.

Take a close look at what it is you want to do and try doing a SWOT analysis on it - a list of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. It’s an old marketing technique but I find it works just as well with decision-making and helps clarify what you’re actually taking on.

Life is not and never will be risk-free. Sometimes we just have to take that first step forward into the unknown to get to where we want to go. I remember a friend sharing with me the saying “A ship is safest in port, but that’s not what it’s built to do”. Are you prepared to leave safe harbour to do what you came here to do and what you would love to do? What would it take to make it happen?

If your ‘dream’ seems too big and overwhelming to handle, break it down into small steps, starting with the very first thing you would need to do to make it happen. If you took one of these small steps every day, before you know it, you’d be on your way to achieving what you set out to do, yet the small steps seem so much less daunting than the overall ‘big picture’.

If your ‘dream’ affects someone else, don’t assume what they will think. Discuss your wildest dreams with them and ask them to support and help you in achieving them. One thing I’ve discovered is that even when I’ve taken steps which may have made someone else’s life difficult for a while, if they have truly loved me for who I am, they STILL love me - sometimes because of rather than despite what I’ve done.
Whatever anyone else thinks, you are unique and only you have the exact same experience of life as you. You have a limited time on this physical plain. Only you can know what you need and want to achieve in this time. What do you need to do for you? What legacy do you want to leave? What meaning do you want your life to have?

It takes courage to go for your dreams, but never let fear or a lack of confidence or worthiness hold you back. You know in your heart what it is you need and want to do. So trust your intuition and take the first small step today.

Remember you can do anything. “Stop waiting for someone to tell you you deserve it.”
What does your salon say about you?

- What’s the difference between your salon and the next?
- Is your work attracting more clients than other salons?
- How does the salon atmosphere feel and is it different and unique to you?

You could ask yourself many questions and still wonder why something is not working or bringing in new clientele.

The answer is in this perfect solution. It is the way YOU and the way you market yourself.

Your work environment has to be the ‘wow factor’ for the client and their experience from their first point of contact through to every appointment. This can be portrayed in all means of advertising, marketing materials and how you promote your company to the outside world.

Ask yourself what VALUE do you bring to your business?

Most clients will come over and over again, due to the relationship you have built with them and the level of service and experience they felt whilst being with you. From time to time, many of us can face obstacles that we may not be good enough and clients only visit to reasons such as: price, location, skills, connections through friends and special offers, but it is all in the ways of thinking outside the box and looking within yourself to achieve the goals you have set or gain the clients you desire.

Some useful tips on attracting more clients:

- Don’t be afraid to promote your services – if customers haven’t heard about you, how will they find you?
- Follow the same principles when clients initially contact you and follow through to every appointment
- Keep on top of new skills and trends in the industry
- Create more client relationships by keeping in touch with them via email, face to face, social media adding that special touch
- Create advertising and promotions to keep repeat clientele and build on new ones
Is your advertising effective enough?

When devising an advertising campaign, you tend to put in all your effort in getting it to look right. Do your efforts always work?

If your answer is no, it could be the message is ineffective in the way you promoted your business. Ask yourself from the following options, where would be the best place to advertise to gain the right results you are looking for:

- Local newspaper
- Local businesses
- Mail drop offs door to door
- Social media
- Website
- Cars

The answer to this is the key to your results – who are you reaching out to, what are the key messages you are delivering and where do you find these people/companies?

If you don’t get this right, your time and effort into creating a marketing campaign will be pointless.

New clients need to be ‘touched’ by your advertising and presence and this will drive more customers to help you build on more profits and have a busier salon.

Here are seven tips on marketing strategies to reach that lifestyle you desire:

- **Experience/ customer service**
  The experience that you give your clients will be the ultimate base from which to set the stage for the entire relationship. Make your salon stand out by delivering great service and presenting your values.

- **Word of mouth**
  The more effective experience you give to your clients, the more referrals you will gain from people talking about your salon. It is the most successful way of promoting your business. Having an online presence and reflecting this through social media can also be of benefit.

- **Self promotion**
  You must represent what you do with excellence and maintain relationships, this will be achieved by your willingness to talk to clients, hand out advice, listen and be friendly.

- **Website**
  As a business, it is very important to have an online presence. Make it clear, concise and easy to navigate. Talk to experts in that industry, especially when choosing keywords for SEO options.

- **SMS service**
  Many salons have an SMS system available which can help encourage business by enabling you to send appointment reminders, special offers etc.

- **Mobile Apps**
  To reach to a wider audience, a mobile app will bring in any business opportunities, leading to more referrals and new clients/sales.
Below you’ll find a suggestion of just one of the trusted organisations recommended by Gateway Workshops that you may wish to use and we have included some discount information should you wish to use it.

HOW TO GET THERAPIST INSURANCE AND ALSO INFORMATION ABOUT JOINING A PROFESSIONAL BODY

We recommend The Guild of Holistic Therapists; you can get a free quote by using the link below. You can also join them for professional body cover; you can obtain a free quote for both.

We are delighted to say they are offering £10 off to all Gateway students and by using the promotion code in the link below it allows you to have this instant reduction.

They cover holistic therapies as well as beauty, from massage to nails. You can have a professional body cover and insurance under one roof as the Guild offers both at competitive prices, or you can just sign up for therapist insurance only: https://www.beautyguild.com/membership.asp?pcode=10151

You will see a referral code of 10151 which gives you a £10 discount!

If you prefer to get a quote over the phone please call Dave - The Guild of Professional Beauty Therapists Ltd on 0845 217 7384 and remember to give the Gateway code of 10151 to get your discounted price.

Today’s salon clients expect the best when they visit your salon and even if you do not work in a salon and you are a mobile therapist, people take you more seriously when you belong to a professional body. They want to be advised and treated by fully trained and qualified therapists. Membership of The Guild of Holistic Therapists shows them that you are a true Beauty Professional.

You do not have to register with a professional body this is personal choice but it is professional to do so. For students in Ireland they offer cover in Northern Ireland however not yet in the Republic of Ireland however if you already have a certificate in anatomy and physiology and massage we have found an alternative company in Ireland who WILL cover you.

Please contact:
Deirbhle Gaughle
O’Brien Finlay Insurance Associates Limited
Bridge House
Baggot Street Bridge
Dublin 4
Phone: 01-660 1033
**Organic Natural Skin Care**

_Are you looking for an extra income?

Gateway have teamed up with a wonderful company called Botanicals, Gateway tutors use their products and are able to offer these to their students allowing a great discount. We would like to extend this offer to all of our manual readers._

Become a Botanicals consultant today and sell products which will complement your treatments. These products are very popular with our students and it’s also a great way to make an extra income.

_Visit the product/shop section of our web site to sign up now!_  
http://www.botanicals.co.uk/become-a-botanicals-consultant-therapist/?bpid=gateway
Take advantage of purchasing these superb guides at a little cost of just £10. Please click on the links below, order and pay via the Gateway website.

**Marketing Manual**

How happy you will feel when the new marketing ideas begin to work and when the phone calls come in and people are looking to book a massage or beauty therapy appointment with you?

Gateway now offers a Marketing Manual ‘How to get more clients and build a successful business’ specifically for Complementary and Beauty Therapists. This can be purchased through the Gateway Products website via the link below:


**Beauty Manual**

A must for all beauty therapists - This popular manual is vital if you are new to the beauty business or if you are established therapist as it is everything you will need to run a successful salon, mobile or home practice.

Take advantage of receiving these superb guides when you book and finish a course with us.

**Accounts Package**

As you know your accounts is very important to keep updated, so why not make your life simple and let us provide you with what you need to keep on top of your records easily to take the stress away.

This downloadable accounting guide contains blank spreadsheets already set up for you to use to calculate both your income and expenditure. In addition, it has a completed example of each spreadsheet to demonstrate how you may wish to keep your accounts along with some simple instructions on how to use the guide.

Click here to get this gift from us for FREE, after you have finished a course with us: [http://www.gatewayworkshops.co.uk/products/therapists-accounts-guide-package/](http://www.gatewayworkshops.co.uk/products/therapists-accounts-guide-package/)

**Anatomy & Physiology Manual**

Downloadable E-Book

Get the knowledge of Human Anatomy & Physiology, when you book a course with us. We will give you this informative e-book FREE.