

Nine ways to find the best Massage Therapist for you

1.



Attentive and Present:

From the very beginning of your interaction with your massage therapist, you want to feel that she is there for you and to serve you.

She listens attentively and is focused on you. A therapist will ask how you are feeling and give you time to respond. The intake for your first session can be brief, but it should feel unhurried and relaxed.

2.



Inquisitive and Professional:

Massage therapists are trained to ask you (verbally or via an intake form) about injuries, medication, or any special condition you may have.

Taking the time to cover these specific aspects of your health ensures that you receive the proper care and treatment. Inexperienced massage therapists may skim over this step and important issues that you may be unaware of can be missed. Also, she might be able to help you with issues you may not have known could be addressed by bodywork.



3.

Clear and Honest:

She is clear and honest about what types of services she offers. Massage therapists are there to help you de-stress and relieve pain. With their skilled and loving hands they can help you reconnect with your body and heal. They are often trained in a myriad of techniques that can be very helpful for a variety of physical and emotional issues. It is important to know however that massage therapists are not qualified to make a diagnosis or offer prescription. In acute cases (if you just injured yourself), a cautious therapist may ask you to see a doctor before she works on you.



4.

Enables the Client:

After her initial evaluation, your massage therapist will help you set the intention for your massage: she will offer possible courses of action for the massage (focus on a particular issue or part of the body, or general relaxation, centering, nurturing). While you may choose to simply follow her suggestions, know that it is appropriate for you to be very specific about what you want.



5.

Educates:

She is able to explain the work she is doing and why she is doing it. A good part of a therapist's work comes from intuition and feeling; but this is in addition to a thorough education and hands on training. You should feel comfortable asking questions about the work. Knowing what is behind the work can be very valuable to your healing process. Massage offers a wide variety of healing paths, with each their own philosophies and intentions. A massage therapists who takes the time to explain what she is doing empowers you to be an active participant in your own healing.



6.

Resources and Tips:

If applicable, she offers additional information, or suggests additional avenues for improving your health. She may demonstrate specific stretches that can be very helpful and show you other tools for self-care. For example, she can point you to certain common remedies for muscle aches and swelling. Many massage therapists are also certified as nutritionists, acupuncturists or herbalists.



7.

Referrals:

Dedicated massage therapists will be able to refer you to other massage therapists who may offer a technique that's more applicable to your condition. They also will know acupuncturists, chiropractors, and other practitioners of natural medicine that they can refer you to as needed.



8.

Location:

Take into account how easy it is for you to go to your therapist. Is it near you or on an easy route? Is it easy to find parking and get to? Allow for your journey there to be stress free. Is her office pleasant and relaxing? These are important factors that can affect your massage experience. If you want to have a therapist come to you, be sure you have a space that's quiet and comfortable. Receiving a massage at home is one of the most delightful experiences one can imagine.



9.

Specials and Incentives:

Higher rates don't necessarily mean you will get a better massage, but it can indicate that the therapist is well-established and confident in her work. Massage is a gift of relaxation to yourself, and you can free yourself of feeling anxious about the cost by finding someone who is just right for you and affordable, so that you can receive massage regularly and with ease. Ask if they offer a sliding scale, or specials.



Ultimately, it comes down to how you feel before, during, and after your massage. Finding the right massage therapist is like finding the perfect place for a nice dinner. You can take into account all kinds of explainable factors, but in the end, the real reason you come back for more is that it just feels really great!

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