



WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A GOOD MASSAGE THERAPIST AND AN EXCEPTIONAL MASSAGE THERAPIST? Written by Vicki Hobbs, Owner / Operator of Phoenix Therapies Wellness & Pregnancy Centre

I believe that I am an exceptional massage therapist. The difference between me and a good massage therapist is hands on experience, ongoing training and the understanding that you will never know everything and that is why it is important to constantly seek out more knowledge, more experience and more understanding.

From the moment I meet my client, I watch the way they stand, sit and walk. I look at their posture and the way they hold their neck and shoulders. I look at how their feet are positioned as they walk and when they are lying on the table. Before I have even spoken to them I already have an idea of the muscles that need work based on my observations. I look at what they have written on their client history form, checking what they do for a job, any past or present conditions that might be affecting muscles, what type of exercise they do, how much water they drink and what are their stress triggers and my mind is ticking over all these important clues of how I can perform my clients treatment. When my client is in the treatment room I ask questions and I listen to the answers, all the while formulating my treatment strategy. Once they are on the table I look at their alignment and the tell tale signs of tense muscles.

For me the best massage a person can give you is one in silence. A therapist who is constantly talking is not thinking about the treatment they are giving you or the muscles that they are working on, no matter how good they are. Yes they may still give a good massage, but not an exceptional massage and you as the client deserve value for money – you deserve the best!

During the treatment as I run my hands over my clients body initially in the warm up phase of the massage I just “feel”. Massage is all about touch and feeling for areas of dysfunction. I can instinctively pick the areas that are causing you problems immediately just through that initial touch.

During my remedial training, one of my awesome lecturers made us close our eyes and feel each muscle while we worked. To this day, I still close my eyes from time to time while working on a client and in my mind I visualise every muscle I am working on, visualise the attachment points, visualise the tension being worked out of each muscle and the muscles lengthening, I visualise the stress, anxiety and discomfort being released from my clients body, and as I work I notice the calm and peacefulness coming over them.

I take my job very seriously. I am passionate about massage and how much it will benefit a person not only physically, but mentally and emotionally as well. Massage is not about a quick rub down of the body. Massage is about incorporating many different techniques such as trigger point release, deep tissue, relaxation and positional release of muscles.

My centre is not a day spa where most therapists are trained to certificate level in swedish massage, which is for relaxation and they definitely do create a beautiful experience for someone who needs pampering. When you come for a remedial massage at Phoenix Therapies, it is our job to work on your problem areas, however I guarantee you will leave feeling relaxed and calm as well, rejuvenated and re-energised because we make it our mission to work on all levels of the mind, the body and the emotions.

Testimonial by Alison of Edgewater

I have been attending Phoenix Therapies on a regular basis for over 2 years now. Initially I visited Vicki for relaxation massages. When I moved back to Perth I sought Vicki out when I hurt my back. The time she took to assess my personal situation and then create a remedial plan ensured that my injury healed completely. I now see Sarah every month for continued massage therapy. These regular visits are a part of my personal management plan to ensure my physical and mental wellbeing are looked after. I have always found Vicki and her team to be very caring. Vicki as a business leader is keen to take on any feedback - positive or negative. She has the courage to act on this feedback and then make the changes necessary to improve her business. I know when she was looking to expand she spent a lot of time finding the right personnel for Phoenix Therapies. People who would not only be able to do the job but also to fit in with the ethos and principles of the business. Vicki's holistic approach to massage is the key to her success. I have no issues recommending Phoenix Therapies to friends and colleagues.

The same goes with pregnancy massage. Massage therapy during pregnancy is a necessity, not just a luxury to assist in reducing stress, anxiety and to promote relaxation, but not only that it helps to prepare muscles and joints for childbirth along with so many other benefits. As a mother of two (born 15 years apart), I have experienced two very different pregnancies and my second pregnancy was made all the more rewarding and manageable by having regular pregnancy massage incorporating remedial techniques.

Again, when I work on a pregnant woman I visualise and “feel” all the problem areas that need attention and I utilise all the right techniques to ensure that when that pregnant mum leaves my centre she not only feels those sore spots have been managed or eliminated, she also feels the calming sensations and relaxation of the mind and body.

My training in pregnancy massage and maternity care has been extensive and I just can't get enough in terms of soaking up like a sponge new information, therapies and remedies to ease pregnancy related discomfort. I am a certified Doula / Birthing Assistant and Childbirth Educator and I love

sharing my knowledge with pregnant mums and giving them support and natural alternatives to the medical model of pregnancy care.

Working with pregnant women gives me the opportunity to share ways that you can ease your discomfort at home with really simple stretches, positioning and handy tools. I can provide you with information that will be of benefit to you during your pregnancy, labour and birth. If I don't know something then I will definitely find out for you as I belong to a wonderful network of like-minded Doula's, Midwives and Natural Therapists. I want you to feel empowered as a woman and about your birthing choices.

I feel so honoured when a first time mum who has visited our centre and felt their care with us was so exceptional that they return after baby is born for postnatal massages and then for subsequent pregnancies. Our pregnancy massage club is rapidly growing with all the beautiful little cherubs we helped to bring calm and peace while they were still growing inside. It's fantastic when the husbands or partners visit as they too benefit from deep tissue remedial massage incorporating relaxation techniques, as let's face it, our men can get pretty stressed out from time to time and they feel that with tense muscles, headaches, lower back pain and shoulder and neck pain too.

Testimonial by Mel of Hamersley

I was given a gift of some money to have a massage to pamper myself during my pregnancy, and my Obstetrician's team suggested trying Phoenix Therapies and I am just so happy that I decided to try it. I had been experiencing a lot of back pain and the general discomfort of pregnancy, and was not expecting more than a few moments of relief. But not only did I completely relax during my session, I had the most blissful nights sleep that night and following nights! Staff took the time to find out about my specific needs, made me so comfortable both physically and emotionally, and even took the time to show me some ongoing exercises that I could do at home to keep my back pain at bay. I really appreciated the holistic way you cared for me and created a really special memory for me during my pregnancy, as well as providing much needed practical physical relief.

All our therapists who work at Phoenix Therapies have all been chosen for their excellent training opportunities and their beliefs about massage, the body and the mind and for their ability to perform an exceptional massage. Keep in mind that what works for one person may not necessarily work for the next and that is why we suggest alternative treatments to clients so they can find what works best for them.

Similarly, you may not like the technique of one therapist so try one of the others to find who suits you best because at the end of the day I want you to leave my premises feeling you got value for money and an exceptional massage experience so that you keep coming back and recommending our services to your friends, family members and colleagues.

MORE TESTIMONIALS

After a recommendation from a friend, I started attending Phoenix Therapies Wellness Centre, and have maintained a monthly visit for a therapeutic massage for over 3½ years, and more recently the services of the on-site Chiropractor. I personally, have found the difference between this centre compared to other massage places vastly different, not only due to the professional attitude of the staff, but also their friendliness, knowledge of their work and the general ambience of the Centre. The atmosphere of the Centre is one of absolute peace and calmness, which to me, is what the whole experience of massage and the related services are all about. I plan to experience some of the other services on offer in the near future, and have no doubt at all to recommend others to the Centre for their own personal experience, whether it may be therapeutic or just 'feel good'.

Sue of Marangaroo

Having been a happy client of Phoenix Therapies for the past 4 years, I am more than willing to state that the level of service and professionalism with which I am treated on every occasion that I visit is absolutely second to none. I was impressed from my very first contact with Vicki and her team of attentive therapists. Having enjoyed the specialised Pregnancy Massage service whilst expecting my first child, I was eager to return for the same indulgent and remedial magic again, now that my second baby is on the way. I find the conscientious attention to detail, during the in-depth pre-treatment interviews very reassuring, and know that my unborn baby and I are in the best of hands. Vicki also regularly sends out relevant and interesting email newsletters about new services available at the practice and also about unique upcoming workshops and courses. These newsletters are never intrusive or trying to sell me something, but more educational and structured to compliment my course of treatment in a holistic way. The staff at Phoenix Therapies are very friendly and courteous, always welcoming me with big smiles as I walk in the door. I also appreciate the reminder text I am sent automatically the day before my appointment, and their ability to keep me on short notice waiting lists for opening appointment times. I certainly feel like one of their valued clientele, and am always telling my family and friends about my great experiences with Phoenix Therapies. Especially anyone who is pregnant, as it is very difficult to find qualified, experienced and trustworthy therapists in this field in the northern suburbs of Perth. I wish Vicki and her team every success with their growing and evolving business, and I consider myself lucky to have access to their invaluable services.

Megan of Wanneroo

The residents of Darch and surrounding suburbs are lucky to have such a fantastic business like Phoenix Therapies at their local neighbourhood shopping centre. Vicki and her team of happy staff have grown a great business which seems to be adding to its products and services to experience each time I hear from them via email/Facebook or visiting the centre. From the moment you enter the centre you feel relaxed and calm and while waiting for your therapy to commence there is a wonderful range of products in reception to view and purchase to take home a little piece of the experience. I usually visit the centre for remedial massage and have been lucky enough to meet both Sarah and Kieko who usually look after me with happy and friendly service while delivering an exceptional remedial massage. I can't speak highly enough of Phoenix Therapies and their wonderful staff.

John of Darch