

Article 6: Goals of Massage
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Goals of first massage session:

- 1) Start to calm concerns about the massage process
- 2) Start to help the body clear out old toxins from the muscles
- 3) Start to teach the body to relax
- 4) Start to teach the body to re-connect
- 5) Start to release tense muscles
- 6) Start to build trust in my massage style
- 7) Perhaps - start to touch more-readily-available trigger points

Long-term goals:

- 1) Release any trigger points
- 2) Improve muscle function / range-of-motion
- 3) Improve harmony between body (muscles) and mind
- 4) Start to touch into muscle memories to track down source of (pain / fears?)
- 5) Discuss lifestyle changes to support a healthy life.

The client can benefit even from being partially dressed during the first couple of massages.

Initial massages may be separated by a week or even more, according to the comfort level of the client. At some point, the most effective massage for the reduction of muscular damage / pain is about 2 times per week. When the massages are received too infrequently, it is as though the work starts from the beginning. With 2 massages per week, the improvement keeps building.

The goal is complete relief from pain under normal conditions for extended amounts of time without drugs or further treatment. Frequently, this requires making some lifestyle and thought-pattern changes.

Maintenance massages are sometimes necessary, if the damage has been long-term.

1) In the beginning sessions, use long, extremely slow strokes similar to lymphatic drainage, but somewhat deeper, as appropriate to the client's discomfort level. At this point, it is EXTREMELY counter-productive to add any pain, as their body cannot tolerate even "normal" pressures. If you use excessive force or speed, they will have extreme discomfort the next day or so. If this occurs, it is a reminder to your client that they need to reduce the allowable "OK" discomfort level – and MUST let you know so you can properly reduce the pressure.

2) In subsequent sessions, as you find fewer painful points, the pressure can increase, but the speed must remain slow.

NEXT - Article 7: Specific Techniques

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