



FALL 2022 | Volume 38 | Issue 4

MASSAGE

Message

**Invest In
Yourself
and Your
Practice**

Feed Your Kids First!
by Cliff Korn

Life's Ebb and Flow
by Matthew Howe

Free resources to become the “go-to” therapist in your community!



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MASSAGE *Message*

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MASSAGE MESSAGE MAGAZINE INFORMATION

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ABOUT US

Massage Message is published quarterly by the Florida State Massage Therapy Association, Inc., a not-for-profit organization. We reserve the right to edit, accept or reject any material submitted for publication. Advertising appearing in this publication does not imply endorsement of products or services by the FSMTA. Contributors to Massage Message are solely responsible for the statements they make in this magazine. Contents of submissions do not reflect the opinion of the FSMTA. Should the Massage Message choose to publish a submission, the editor reserves all rights to edit content and placement. All submitted articles will be considered but the editor and FSMTA do not guarantee they will be printed. Articles should be educational in nature, designed to be informative and related to the massage profession. Articles should be no longer than 1,200 words and may be edited for content.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"The mind, once stretched by a new idea, never returns to its original dimensions." — Ralph Waldo Emerson

By Crystal A. Howard
(Central Florida Chapter Member)

When we attend massage therapy school, we are investing in education that allows us to enter the massage therapy profession. The money, time and sacrifices we make ensure that we obtain the qualifications necessary to become a licensed healthcare professional. This initial investment is merely the start.

Success is not a horizontal path but a vertical one dependent upon the effort we put forth. Continuing education and professional relationships lay the bricks for each step. As a member of FSMTA, you know the value of professional membership and the benefits of staying informed with changes that impact our license and ability to practice. Gratitude for connections with other practitioners and opportunities for growth are comments we regularly hear from members. We are proud that FSMTA serves as a resource allowing massage therapists to think outside the treatment room, gain a broader perspective, help avoid burnout and contribute to career longevity. Members that volunteer within the association also discover additional benefits of knowledge and experience that can be utilized in their practice and other endeavors. Consider getting more involved with all the opportunities FSMTA has to offer and what it means to be truly vested in yourself and your profession.



LEGISLATIVE/BOMT UPDATE

By Ian McIntosh
Director of Legislative Affairs
(Heart of Florida Chapter Member)

The Florida Board of Massage Therapy will hold their next quarterly board meeting October 27-28, 2022 at the Crowne Plaza Orlando Downtown, 304 W Colonial Dr., Orlando, FL 32801. If you attend for at least 4 hours you will receive Continuing Education for 2 hours of Florida Laws and Rules and 2 hours of Professional Ethics. For more information about the FL Board of Massage Therapy, visit www.floridasmassagetherapy.gov

In November, members of the FSMTA Legislative Team will be in attendance for the Florida Spa Association (FSA) event at the Carillon in Miami. The importance of our continued collaboration with FSA is to educate spa owners and managers regarding all massage therapy laws and rules.

You can make a difference! In November, make your voice heard and vote in your local and state elections. With elections being determined by extremely narrow margins in the past few years, every vote counts. Volunteering and voting are the best way to be heard. Would you like to help the direction of our profession? Make your impact on massage therapy in Florida by volunteering for the FSMTA. Have you ever thought about changes you would like to see in and for the massage therapy profession? Getting involved with your Chapter Legislative Committee is one of the many opportunities at the chapter level to help shape our profession. Remember the only way to exact change is to get involved. If you sit on the sidelines and do nothing but talk about what you want, how bad do you really want it? The difference between a goal and a dream is the amount of effort you are willing to put forth.

As always if you have any questions please feel free to contact me at legislativechair@fsmta.org.



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FSMTA Member Schools

Big Bend Technical College

3233 S Byron Butler Parkway, Perry, FL 32348
(850) 838-2545 | www.bbtcc.edu

Central Florida School of Massage Therapy

450 N. Lakemont Ave, Suite A, Winter Park, FL 32792
(407) 673-6776 | www.massagetherapy.cc

Dragon Rises College of Oriental Medicine

1000 NE 16th Ave, Gainesville, FL 32601
(352) 371-2833 | www.dragonrises.edu

Fortis Institute

4081 E Olive Road, Suite B, Pensacola, FL 32514
(850)-476-7607 | <https://www.fortis.edu>

Health & Beauty Institute of America

460 State Road 436, Suite 200, Casselberry, FL 32707
(407) 636-6361 / (407) 797-2597
www.healthandbeautyus.com

International Institute for HealthCare Professionals

6870 N Federal Hwy, Boca Raton, FL 33487
(561) 394-5822 | <http://www.iihcp.com>

Orange Technical College

2201 Crown Hill Blvd, Orlando, FL 32828
(407)-622-2900 | www.orangetechcollege.net

Ridge Technical College

7700 State Rd. 544, Winter Haven, FL 33881
(863) 419-3060 ext 4808
<http://www.polkepathways.com/ridge-technical-college>

Sarasota School of Massage

5899 Whitfield Avenue, Suite 300
Sarasota, FL 34243
(877) 613-7768
www.sarasotaschoolofmassagetherapy.edu

Soothing Arts Healing Therapies School of Massage and Skin Care

12605 Emerald Coast Pkwy W, Suite 2
Miramar Beach, FL 32550
(850) 269-0820 | www.soothingarts.com

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(321) 308-8000 | www.spacecoast.edu

Summit Salon Academy

4802 Gunn Hwy, Suite 144, Tampa, FL 33624
(813) 833-8660
www.summitsalonacademytampa.com

Attention potential contributors to the FSMTA Massage Message Magazine

The Magazine Editor and Committee encourage you to submit credible and timely content for your magazine. We want to hear from you.

To further assist you, we have determined the themes for our first two 2023 issues.

January:

Honoring Ourselves & Clients through Optimal Health & Wellness Goals

Submission deadline: December 1st (6 weeks prior to publication date of January 15th)

April Issue:

Honoring Our Professional Purpose

Submission deadline: March 1st (6 weeks prior to publication date of April 15th)

As a reminder, our minimum publication guidelines include three credible references, no more than **1200** words in an MS Word document.

Feel free to submit articles that may not fit the themes cited, as we may be able to use them, depending upon space availability.

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to Lesli Lopez. As Editor, she is happy to assist you in your article submission efforts. Email article@fsmta.org

FSMTA Social Media Guide

Connect with us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/FsmtaFloridaStateMassageTherapyAssoc/>
<https://www.facebook.com/FSMTAConvention/>
<https://www.facebook.com/FsmtaSportsMassageTeam/>

Members Only Group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/FSMTAmembers/>

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<https://www.facebook.com/FSMTATampaBay>
<https://www.facebook.com/FSMTATreasureCoast>

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<https://www.instagram.com/fsmta1939/>

Check us out on Pinterest

<https://www.pinterest.com/fsmta/>

Watch us on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/user/myfsmta>
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6H0EseMykLNecgBSr5VVg>

CHAPTER MEETINGS

Some Chapter Meetings may be held virtually through Zoom. Every attempt is made to accurately provide Chapter Meeting information both in the magazine and on the FSMTA website. Visit www.fsmta.org/calendar for more information. Contact the Chapter President to confirm meeting location(s) and time(s).

BIG BEND CHAPTER - President Karen Vilmenay, bbpresident@fsmta.org, (352) 246-6270 Meetings and events held in collaboration with Suwannee Valley Chapter.

BREVARD CHAPTER - President Danny De La Garza, brevardpresident@fsmta.org, (321) 536-2173 Meetings held the 2nd Tuesday of every month (except April, June, August and December) from 5:30-8:30pm alternating locations between Cocoa and Melbourne.

BROWARD CHAPTER - President Lygia Edghill, browardpresident@fsmta.org, (754) 224-8449 (text) Meetings held the 1st Tuesday of every month (except June and December).

CENTRAL FLORIDA CHAPTER - President Thomas Buck, cflpresident@fsmta.org, (619) 609-6271 Meetings held the 3rd Monday of every month (except June and December) from 5-8 pm.

DADE CHAPTER - President Renee O. Scioville, dadepresident@fsmta.org, (786) 230-6313 Meetings held the 2nd Wednesday of every month (except June and December) from 6:30-9:30pm.

EMERALD COAST CHAPTER - President Jocelyn Daniel, ecpresident@fsmta.org, (850) 736-5280 Meetings held the 2nd Monday of every month (except June and December) from 5:30-8:30pm.

FIRST COAST CHAPTER - President Eric Dancy, fcpresident@fsmta.org, (904) 482-8542 Meetings held the 3rd Thursday of every month (except June and December) from 6:30-9pm at Unity Church of Jacksonville, 634 Lomax Street, Jacksonville, FL 32204.

FLAGLER/VOLUSIA CHAPTER - President Gina Burroughs, fvpresident@fsmta.org, (386) 748-5927 Meetings held the 2nd Wednesday of every month (except December) from 6-8:15pm.

GULF COAST CHAPTER - President Donna Smith, gcpresident@fsmta.org, (850) 896-4118 Meetings held the 2nd Wednesday of every month (except June, July and December) from 7-10pm.

HEART OF FLORIDA CHAPTER - President Teresa (TJ) Jones, hofpresident@fsmta.org, (863) 449-0670 Meetings held the 3rd Tuesday of every month (except June and December) from 6:30-9pm alternating locations between Lakeland and Winter Haven.

KEYS CHAPTER - President Michael Abriola, keysresident@fsmta.org, (305) 509-2710 Meetings and events to be announced.

NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA CHAPTER - northcflpresident@fsmta.org Meetings and events to be announced.

PALM BEACH CHAPTER - President Lesli López, pbpresident@fsmta.org, (561) 319-1814 Meetings held the 3rd Thursday of every month (except June and December) from 6-9pm at Forest Hill Community High School, 6901 Parker Ave, West Palm Beach, FL 33405.

SARASOTA/MANATEE CHAPTER - President Nancy Avishar, smpresident@fsmta.org, (941) 228-7789 Meetings held the 3rd Monday of every month (except December) from 6:30-9:30pm.

SOUTHWEST FLORIDA CHAPTER - President Emil Guido, swflpresident@fsmta.org, (239) 849-1486 Meetings held the 1st Tuesday of every month (except July and December) from 5-8pm.

SUGAR DUNES CHAPTER - President Chester Cyrus, sdpresident@fsmta.org, (850) 225-0737 Meetings are held the 2nd Tuesday of every month (except June, November and December) from 6-9pm.

SUWANNEE VALLEY CHAPTER - President Laurie Taylor, svpresident@fsmta.org, (352) 317-4755 Meetings held the 2nd Wednesday of every month (except July and December) from 6:00-8:30pm at Florida School of Massage, 6421 SW 13th Street, Gainesville 32608.

TAMPA BAY CHAPTER - President Anna Allen, president-TPA@fsmta.org, (813) 215-5050 Meetings held the 3rd Thursday of every month (except June and December) from 6:00-8:45pm.

TREASURE COAST CHAPTER - President Ross Hoffman, tcpresident@fsmta.org, (772) 359-3608 Meetings held the 3rd Wednesday of every month (except June and December) from 6:30-9pm.



Feed Your Kids First!



By Cliff Korn, LMT, BCTMB

My Grandson, a college Junior at Northeastern University, recently had a terrific opportunity to take part in a program in Denmark studying business sustainability methods resulting from differing cultural norms. As I followed his time there, my social media feed began including articles and blogs on “things Danish.” One such article titled “What It’s Like to Parent in Denmark” discussed a Danish value called *Janteloven*, which means individual excellence should not come at the group’s expense. The author, Joanna Goddard, says, “At my kids’ Danish elementary school, the most important thing is to learn how to collaborate with each other, to the point where you’re not necessarily encouraged to express your full potential if it will come at the expense of the group dynamic.”

Here in the US, a pillar of our parenting frequently is encouraging our children

to reach their full potential through individual excellence. My point here is not to argue the merits of these philosophies. There are, I’m sure, many good arguments to be made for both. I am an “outcome optimist” who, with the *Investing in Yourself and Your Practice* theme of this issue of *Massage Message* in mind, believes that prioritizing investment in oneself and one’s practice will result in not only realizing self-potential but improving society as a whole.

There are many forms of *Investing in Yourself and Your Practice*, and my own practice experience demonstrated to me the importance of prioritizing investment and reinvestment as a recurring theme. Given the liberty of stereotyping, most massage therapists are giving people and enter the profession to help others. It’s a beautiful thing – it’s who we are and what we do. I’d like, though, to discuss

several ways to ensure that we can maximize and sustain our helping capabilities so it's a win-win for both our clients and us. We can help no one if we don't listen to our needs. We've long heard axioms like "pay yourself first," which are true. The title of this article reflects this thought – we may have dreams of altruism and wish to feed the world's hungry, but we need to provide for our own kids before we give it all away!

Self-investment is simply investing or contributing time and energy to yourself and your happiness. Whether investing in developing yourself personally or professionally, developing a skill you already have, learning an entirely new skill, or making healthy lifestyle choices, you need to give to yourself first before you can give to others or expect others to give to you. "Investing in yourself is the only one guaranteed investment you can make. Not only are you the person you have to spend the most time with, but you also get to see an immediate return on the investments you make in yourself. By investing in yourself, you are also ensuring that you are well taken care of in the future."²

My old college Economics textbooks (were I able to find them) defined investment as an action or process of investing money or capital assets in financial markets for profit or material result. In this article, I define self-investment as a process of courageously exerting one's time, human capital, ability, and efforts, as well as money, into making yourself a success in the long term.

There are many forms that self-investment can take. Some of the obvious ones: learn to play an instrument, read a book, volunteer for a cause you love, discover your spirituality, take a "mental health day," practice a hobby, reward yourself for achieving goals, plan a

pamper day, write down what you like about yourself, listen to motivational podcasts, create art, get out of your comfort zone, or adopt a pet. But let's also look at investment in practice. Do you believe that with time and experience, you will grow and get better and that you will maybe, just maybe, achieve more success in your practice? Do you think it will just happen?

I recently had the opportunity to give a keynote presentation at the World Massage Festival. I told the story of my career, followed by several takeaways from my experiences. Those takeaways fit right in with our theme and I will share them here.

First, massage can be very lonely, no matter how busy your practice is. Time with clients has built-in professional boundaries. Invest in socialization with other therapists as an essential part of your time. Enrich yourselves with the experiences of others at conventions and conferences like FSMTA!

Second, there's no such thing as being too smart! Invest in as much continuing education as you can afford. Your clients deserve more than a practitioner who does the bare minimum to meet requirements. Rejoice in being a lifelong learner.

Third, don't assume clients or potential clients can't afford regular massage therapy. Your filters don't accurately reflect how others see value. If you invest the time and effort to exceed client expectations with your treatment results, you can have the highest therapy rates in town and still be seen as providing excellent value.

Fourth, never see a client without jotting down treatment notes. Let me say that again. Never see a client without investing the time to jot down treatment notes. I've done expert witness work for years and see

time and time again the extensive medical records from someone litigating against a massage therapist who has only a reflective statement from remembrances of months or years ago about a specific client outcome. Act like the professional you want to be seen as.

Fifth, reinvest in your profession first. We have many places to invest our time and money, but if we hope to make a living from massage therapy, this is where the lion's share of our investment should be. The Massage Therapy Foundation is this profession's primary philanthropy. When I was still in practice, I always set aside my first massage revenue of the month for donation to the Foundation. You can too. It's easy, it feels good, and it's important!

Lastly, don't forget to reinvest in yourself! Make sure you are modeling appropriate behavior to your clients and peers – get regular massage therapy!

About the Author:

Cliff is a Licensed and Board-Certified massage therapist with thirty years of experience. He's from Sun City Center, FL, has retired from active practice, and is the Immediate Past Chair of the Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation (COMTA).

References:

1. <https://cupofjo.com/2022/08/29/parenting-in-denmark/>
2. <https://medium.com/@MsFalilat/but-first-you-self-investment-and-its-importance-75da4a2b0b4e>

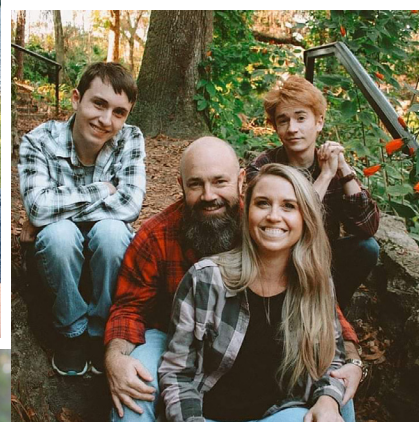
ANATOMY OF A MASTER TEACHER - MATTHEW HOWE, LMT, NCBMT

Master Teachers are insightful, knowledgeable, and lifelong learners. They share a purpose of passing along what they have learned and experienced to the next generation. Their humble resolve to ignite the fire of purposeful learning in their students, allows the passing of the torch of knowledge to continue generation after generation.

Matthew Howe epitomizes this ideal and purpose-minded philosophy. He, along with his wife, Nicole, believe in empowering people to achieve their own highest potential toward a life well lived. From humble beginnings, great Masters are born. Their ability to go with the ebbs and flows of Life's challenges defines their true character and spirit of giving. We are honored to acknowledge Matthew Howe as the FSMTA Massage Message Magazine October Issue recipient of our Spotlight on Excellence.

Matt's chronological roadmap to the present follows:

- 1995 - Graduated High School
- 1995 - 1997 Attended Rio Grande College (pronounced Rio, like Ohio) in Rio Grande, Ohio, which offers educational opportunities to make college more affordable to many families at the edge of Appalachia.
- 1998 - His DAD passes away (We all have challenges to overcome).
- 1999 - Both arms broken in June
By November, Matt makes a leap of faith decision to move to Florida
Receives his first Reiki treatment ever (a pivotal point in his life's journey)
- 2000 - (Jan.) Enters the Massage Therapy program at Central Florida School of Massage; graduates in Aug/Sept. and begins working for a Chiropractor
- 2001 - Begins working in area Spas
- 2003 - 2020 Taught at Central Florida School of Massage
- 2007 - Becomes a CE Provider through his business, Touch Education Inc. through NCBTMB
- 2010 - 2020 Nationally teaching coursework, including at the Costa Rica School of Massage Therapy
- 2010 - Developed Spa Therapy courses/Deep Tissue coursework
- 2011 - Developed Fluid Dynamics Bodywork course
- 2012 - Developed PTSD coursework
- 2013 - Integrative Craniosacral Therapy
- 2020 - Opened practice office in Winter Park, FL
- 2021 - Relocated to hometown in Cincinnati Ohio area
- 2022 - Their vision moving forward...Bringing the Fluid Dynamics to the Midwest





By Crystal A. Howard
LMT, BCTMB
(Central Florida Chapter Member)

“Life is an echo. What you send out, comes back. What you sow, you reap. What you give you get. What you see in others exists in you.”

– Zig Ziglar

Volunteering can have a significant impact on a person's health and well-being. It can reduce stress levels, combat depression, increase mental stimulation, boost activity, and provide a sense of purpose. Ninety four percent of people who volunteer say that volunteering improves their mood. Psychologists even call it a “helper's high.” Because, just like a runner's high after a workout, giving back releases endorphins in the giver's body that leads to a feeling of exhilaration followed by a sense of calm. The social contacts realized by helping and working with others can also have a profound effect on psychological well-being. Nothing relieves stress better than a meaningful connection with another person. Volunteering keeps you in regular contact with others and helps develop a solid support system, which in turn protects against depression. Being of service to others delivers immense pleasure as human beings are hard-wired to give. The more we give, the happier we feel.

In addition to health benefits, volunteering provides education and experience that can enhance your career. Important skills used in the workplace

Volunteering Offers a Substantial Return on Your Investment

such as teamwork, communication, problem solving, project planning, task management, and organization can be honed by serving in a volunteer position first. Volunteering allows you to connect to your community and help make it better. Dedicating your time and talent helps create new friendships, expand your network, and boost your social skills.

Consider the professional benefits of volunteering:

1. It can be a great opportunity to network. Collaborating with like-minded individuals can be fun and fulfilling. Volunteering offers an effortless way to make meaningful connections with other professionals, many of whom may be looking to mentor others, establish contacts for referrals, or expand their social network.

2. It can help with determining career goals. Serving in a volunteer position can be an effective way to discover more about how you function. Do you like working independently, or as part of a team? Do you enjoy getting your hands dirty, or do you prefer coordination and administrative tasks? Are you better behind the scenes or do you prefer to take a more visible role?

3. It looks great on a resume. Not only do you look qualified, but also conscientious about your profession. The fact that you give of your time to be involved in your industry shows passion for and commitment to the work you do.

4. It makes you more confident. Taking on a volunteer role can bring about a sense of pride and identity. Increasing your skill set, expanding your professional connections, and increasing your knowledge base help build feelings of confidence and competency. The better you feel about yourself, the more likely you are to have a positive view of your life, career, and future goals.

5. It can help build upon skills you already have. Volunteering can provide an opportunity to further develop and improve public speaking, communication, and marketing skills. It can also introduce you to new information and tools that could be of benefit to your business, job search and professional reputation.

6. It can increase your motivation. The sense of accomplishment that results from volunteer participation creates a desire to continue building upon those experiences. You are likely to start looking for opportunities to utilize your increased knowledge.

Volunteering can be an enjoyable experience if you take some time to identify your goals and interests. Think about why you want to volunteer. What would you enjoy doing? Do you have a particular skill or talent that would be useful? Opportunities that match your goals, interests and capabilities are likely to be the most rewarding. Before jumping into a volunteer role, it is also important to ask yourself how much time could and/or should you devote to volunteering? Research shows that just a couple of hours per week can confer the most benefits—to both you and the organization or cause. The important thing is to volunteer an amount of time that feels comfortable to you. Volunteering should feel rewarding and should enhance your most valuable assets: compassion, helpfulness, and positivity.

Resources referenced for this article:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5504679/>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/alankohl/2019/09/05/why-volunteering-is-good-for-your-employee-wellness-program/?sh=434e0a3280fa>

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/healthy-living/volunteering-and-its-surprising-benefits.htm>

<https://www.themuse.com/advice/5-careerboosting-reasons-you-should-volunteer-in-addition-to-the-fact-that-it-makes-you-a-good-person>

Looking Backwards to Move Ahead



By Felicia Brown, LMBT
(Member-at-Large)

Elisa DiFalco's article *Raising Our Value by Raising Our Standards Through Continuing Education* in the Summer Issue of *Massage Message*, noted resources which stated continuing education providers and classes "are not to reteach subjects taught in school but should be preparing professionals for what is ahead." Though DiFalco was discussing professional CE's, this idea can also be true for investing in one's self-care as well.

Plato once said, "All learning is remembering." Similarly, I believe the investments we make to develop ourselves need to look backwards while they push us forward. This is not to say that we want to move backwards or get stuck in the same old same old routines or habits. Instead, looking back at what has worked well - combined with examining and assessing what hasn't - can be helpful in practicing effective self-care today as well as creating our best selves of tomorrow.

As one who practices what I preach, I wrote about some mistakes and "failures" I've experienced in my massage and spa businesses in the July issue of *Massage*

Magazine - and *SCARS to Stars: Stories of Vulnerability, Resilience and Overcoming Adversity - Volume 2* (release planned September 2022). These weren't little issues like forgetting to pay a bill or leaving someone off the schedule. No, these were BIG problems involving the loss of thousands of dollars - and rather large helpings of my self-esteem.

At one time, it would have been humbling and scary to share these blunders - and for a time I did not look back on them at all. However, I've learned that hindsight is an incredible tool for understanding lessons from good and tough times alike. Taking stock of the past has also helped me to be grateful for the lessons and experiences. Though I was initially concerned sharing past errors and missteps would cast a negative shadow on my professional reputation, I've found that by talking about them, I've helped many others get through their own challenges. Seeing positive outcomes blossom from events I once considered "negative" brings continued growth and healing to me. It's also helped me reclaim and strengthen my power, confidence, and belief in myself.

So how can you use hindsight and other tools to invest in YOUR growth, healing, and success? The article *5 Ways to Turn Your Mistake into a Valuable Life Lesson* by Amy Morin on Forbes.com suggests acknowledging your errors and asking yourself tough questions about your "failures" in order to grow.

Think back on a past personal or professional challenge that seemed insurmountable at the time but which you got through. This could be anything like failing



your anatomy final exam, encountering a delay in getting your massage license, or having a problem paying your rent. Make sure it's something you really struggled with or thought - at the time anyway - was an insurmountable challenge.

Got it? OK great.

Now that you are on the other side of the problem, think of two or three things that you learned from the challenge which you didn't know before.

Example: "My license renewal paperwork got lost in the mail, so I had to take two weeks off until it got straightened out and I could work again."

Lessons Learned:

- 1) Renew early rather than waiting until the last minute
- 2) Send renewal paperwork by certified mail with a return receipt or tracking
- 3) Make and keep copies of everything in the folder
- 4) OPTIONAL: Plan a fun vacation after expiration deadline just in case there is a delay :)





Now think about the positive qualities you showed or proactive steps you took to resolve the issue. An example based on the license renewal example:

- 1) I was tenacious tracking down the missing letter
- 2) I set up a better filing system for next time
- 3) I made the most of the down time by taking all my renewal credits for next time

Can you see how the “problem” was in fact a teacher or guide which helped you learn or improve yourself? Do you now understand how looking back at a past problem can be a good thing?

Another way to invest in the you of the future is to clear up your “issues” from the past. An example from my life...not long ago I called a trusted counselor I’ll call Connie; about a new challenge I wanted her guidance on. After we exchanged pleasantries but before the session even started, Connie called me out on something of which I was unaware. “Felicia, you are SO angry. Before I or anyone else can help you with this problem, you’ve got to do something about that first.”

Me...angry? The lucky duck lady (read more below if you don’t know) who is super positive and loves everyone?

I didn’t see it and was surprised by this comment. But I took Connie’s observation to heart and began meditating on what the cause could be. Turns out there was a lot, actually.

To determine this, I began thinking about past experiences which caused anger that might still be lurking. As each memory surfaced, I journaled about it, often dedicating part of that day’s work out to releasing the anger with every step, pedal, or punch. I spent other moments releasing that anger aloud but without confrontation when I was alone in the car or while walking my dogs, expressing previously unsaid feelings about the past, family members, and even myself.

By clearing anger, resentment, frustration, and sadness lingering about old experiences, I gave myself room and time to deal with the new situation which brought me to the counselor’s door in the first place. Kudos to Connie for noticing things I was missing!

Similarly, in her book, *Make Miracles in Forty Days*, Melodie Beattie writes about creating miracles in her life by examining unresolved emotions and situations. Beattie’s method in part focuses on expressing gratitude about the “negative” feelings and emotions one is experiencing so they can flow more freely and be resolved rather than resisted. I’ve usually found that once I can get past the anger around a situation, I am able to find the gifts, lessons or opportunities which came along with the “bad” stuff. Sound familiar?

How else can you invest in yourself by looking backwards or revisiting things you may have already learned or gathered from life?

From a professional standpoint, why not look backward at the techniques or modalities you loved learning about in school. Do you still offer or receive them? Were there things you got just a taste of but never explored further. Did you put other skills or talents on the backburner to pursue massage that you’d like to get reacquainted with? On a personal level, consider searching your past for sources of joy and fun you may have put away or forgotten about. Are there past creative, athletic, or intellectual pursuits which could add value to your life or career in the future?

For me, creative writing is something I’ve been able to reconnect with since the onset of COVID. This actually started not by looking back at my childhood, but by remembering a particularly fun evening at an FSMTA Convention and wanting to reconnect with the joy of the night. As a result, The Dream Team Ducks came into existence to help me make it through a challenging time and ended up becoming my creative muses and unofficial teaching assistants. Now the ducks, well actually four ducks and a whale, and I give out “lucky ducks” to those we meet and are currently writing a series of children’s books which will tie back to some of my other professional interests.

In short, I agree with Plato that learning is about remembering, be it the good, the bad, the painful or the joyful. Looking back indeed can give us both a solid foundation and a powerful push forward towards our best selves and a better future.

SIDE NOTE: I am not a counselor, psychologist, psychiatrist, or mental health professional but rather an individual sharing my personal experiences with what I consider to be practical solutions which I have utilized and found to be helpful. I hope they are of help to you. However, if you are experiencing mental health issues, please reach out to a mental health professional or a trusted medical professional for appropriate guidance.

Resources:

Raising Our Value by Raising Our Standards Through Continuing Education by Elisa DiFalco; *Massage Message*; Summer 2022

Check Out the Rear-View This is How Hindsight Can Help You Appreciate Just How Strong You Are by Felicia Brown, *Massage Magazine*, July 2022

5 Ways to Turn Your Mistake into a Valuable Life Lesson by Amy Morin; <https://www.forbes.com/sites/amymorin/2017/07/17/5-ways-to-turn-your-mistake-into-a-valuable-life-lesson>

Make Miracles in Forty Days by Melodie Beattie

BIO

Felicia Brown, LMBT is a Business, Marketing and Life Coach for Massage, Spa & Wellness Professionals, and other heart-centered entrepreneurs. She is the author of *Creating Lifetime Clients: How to WOW Your Customers for Life*; *Free & Easy Ways to Promote Your Massage, Spa & Wellness Business*; *Quacking Up*; and several other books. Felicia loves helping others create lives and businesses filled with passion, joy, abundance, and gratitude, speaking at conferences around the US, Canada and abroad. Felicia is also an award-winning massage therapist, repeat spa owner and serial entrepreneur. In her free time, she loves living an active lifestyle, taking photos of wildflowers and racing rubber ducks in her backyard. Connect with Felicia and The Dream Team Ducks™ at www.FeliciaBrown.com and www.TheDreamTeamDucks.com.





MASSAGE THERAPY AWARENESS WEEK OCTOBER 23-29, 2022



Each year we work to promote Massage Therapy Awareness Week (MTAW) as a dedicated time frame to hold events and activities that increase awareness of the massage profession to the public. To celebrate Massage Therapy Awareness Week (MTAW), we would like to encourage you to promote awareness with some of the following ideas:

- **Encourage clients to purchase a gift certificate** or gift card for a friend and present it in an envelope that includes a card with the MTAW logo that lists the benefits of massage therapy.
- **Offer a discount or complimentary upgrade** to massage services scheduled during Massage Therapy Awareness Week.
- **Send a message** to every client thanking them for their business and share a link to research that supports the benefits of massage they receive.
- **Schedule social media posts** that feature MTAW and the importance of regular massage therapy treatments.
- **Ask clients to offer a story** of how massage therapy has helped them and (with their permission) share anonymously, one for each of the 7 days during MTAW.

In 2021, several FSMTA Chapters held MTAW events. The Tampa Bay Chapter provided massage therapy on October 29, 2021 at 24/7 Chiropractic in Spring Hill, FL. On October 30, 2021, Broward and Miami-Dade Chapters held simultaneous MTAW events at YMCA facilities in South Dade, Downtown Miami, Greater Hollywood and Weston, FL.



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Online Learning Workshops:

Check website for your local time zone.

Lymphatic Balancing: Upper Quadrant (LBUQ-V)
November 17 - 20, 2022

CranioSacral Therapy 1: Lecture Content; Distance Instruction Assessment of Central Nervous System and Fascia for Full Body Treatment Protocol (CS1-VC)
January 22 - 23, 2023

Upledger's Beyond the Dura Exploration & Research Conference – Virtual
April 22 - 23, 2023

For more online learning workshops, please visit us at iahe.com/virtual/

In-Person Workshops:

UPLEDGER'S CranioSacral Therapy 1 (CS1)

| | |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| Orlando, FL | December 1 - 4, 2022 |
| Jacksonville, FL | January 12 - 15, 2023 |
| Palm Beach, FL | April 27 - 30, 2023 |

BARRAL'S Visceral Manipulation: Abdomen 1 (VM1)

| | |
|----------------|------------------------|
| Tampa Bay, FL | December 15 - 18, 2022 |
| Palm Beach, FL | February 16 - 19, 2023 |

D'AMBROGIO'S Total Body Balancing 2-3 Intensive (TBB23I)

| | |
|----------------|------------------------|
| Palm Beach, FL | December 15 - 18, 2022 |
|----------------|------------------------|

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Life's Ebb and Flow



By Matthew Howe, LMT

Life can be brilliant and full of wonder. Rich with color. Bubbling with emotion. Like the anticipation of a great road trip and all the memories created along the way. Life can also have a way of smashing you flat, leaving you hopeless. Breathless and unable to see any light from the loneliness. Some of our highest highs are the direct benefactor of our darkest moments. The stagnation of life is when one's perspective gets rusty. We lose our ability to adjust how we see things. We get stuck in our heads and surroundings. New views or vantage points are foreign due to our lack of resiliency or movement.

Life has shown me repeatedly that the waves will continue—good and bad—Some waves crash at my feet while others propel my surfboard. Only occasionally do they deliver a wipeout. I've enjoyed my share of incredible waves as well. Always with a lesson or blessing.

At my darkest, life was bleak. I'd given up on hope. I managed to break both of my forearms in a car accident. I felt low and alone. I looked around at my ecosystem and didn't like what I saw for my future. So, with casts on, I launched a dart in the general direction of a map. It hit Florida. Six weeks later, I lived in a sunshine state zip code.

My physical body was a mess, and my emotional state was a complete wreck. I couldn't hold a two-liter soda bottle in my left hand, and my heart was still reeling from the loss of my dad. My life was in shambles. Just then, the seed for my life in the healing arts was planted, germinated, and sprouted.

One of my roommates came home from work and asked me if I wanted to get some Reiki. I responded, "I don't really like raw fish, but whatever. I have nothing else going." I had NO idea what he was talking about. I went into this new adventure with an open mind mixed with skepticism. My session started with a grandmother. The daughter and granddaughter showed up sometime later. I was blissfully unaware of their presence as I bounced around my existence and awareness, riding the wave. The granddaughter asked if I had hurt my arm, to which I replied affirmatively. She said, "They won't hurt anymore." -I was on the edge of full skepticism, then I surrendered and thought, they're not going to hurt anymore... that sounds good to me. Post session, as I was processing, I grabbed the water bottle on the floorboard with my left hand. I could feel the bottle. The wet. The cold. I could feel my hand! I could touch my thumb to my little finger. I could fan my fingers out. NONE of which I could do before the session. Dumbfounded as to what just happened, I jumped on sweet dial-up AOL and looked up Reiki. (The seed was planted)

There is no reason ever to stop learning. There will always be more that you don't know than what you do. ~Dr. B. Thompson

About two dial-up internet pages, and one hour later I found a massage school. I decided to set an appointment and go for an interview. I walked through the Central Florida School of Massage Therapy (CFSMT) doors, and it felt like home. The couch was comfy, and the vibe laid back. I interviewed with one of the owners and then got my first massage. I didn't know that I could feel this different. I drove back to Cincinnati to meet with my orthopedic physician and have my final check-up. He was delighted about my decision to go to massage school. He mentioned that being an athlete my whole life, I knew best how to heal myself. His support then and to this day meant so much. (The seed has germinated)

I got back to Orlando and began clearing my work and social schedules. I wanted to focus on school. No distractions. Then the first day of school comes. Ready to fly and full of spirit I hadn't felt since my days at the University of Rio Grande. (A small institution in Ohio with a then-budding soccer program) I had it all set. Ready to learn and grow. Then she walks in. Nicole, but her family calls her Nikki. Something in my DNA shifted. My soul knew something I couldn't fathom consciously. The love of my life, my best friend, my muse had entered my life. Nicole didn't feel the same out of the box as I did. Her initial impression was more about how much of my arm hair she had to massage on the second day of school.

Massage school gave breath to my life. The color of life became rich again. Something deep in my being, sprouted. The darkness gave way to divine comedy, two broken arms to becoming a licensed massage therapist in less than one year. Oh, the irony is not lost on me. The seed now germinated into a profession built on passion, learning, and sharing.

I did outcalls to start when I wasn't working for a chiropractor. I left massage school full of moxie. Then I found myself in the luxury resort spa world in an on-call capacity. There were countless new things along the way, like being shot out of a learning cannon. I was a sponge soaking up good nuggets and advice. I learned a lot about what to do and what not to do.

Resort spa work in Orlando was slim pickings at the turn of the century, yet there were lessons to learn. Products, ingredients, treatment protocols, and



customer service are a few topics of note. I was fascinated watching other therapists during couples' massages. I'd observe how they talked to guests. Then there was surveying body mechanics and effort expended in each session. One night a fellow friend/LMT and I had a conversation about massage, massage therapy, and massage therapy education. My background in playing soccer led to the discussion around what 'touch' means to the game and our profession. Touch Education was born on the back of a restaurant place mat.

I've always had a passion for learning and sharing. It blossomed from observing my grandfathers' ability to have a conversation with anyone, asking questions with genuine curiosity, and listening with intent. With life lesson statements like, "Everyone has something worth sharing or a story to tell," "You can't push a rope," or "The only difference between a rut and the grave is a couple of inches." I traveled the world with that conversational curiosity, a great blessing from those people. I enjoy having conversations where I can grow my perspective and learn from another's life experiences. Add in twenty-plus years of delivering professional massage and bodywork; those stories, lessons, and supplemental perspectives are stacked up.

Becoming an instructor at the massage school I attended fostered a new wave of growth that has since generated a lifetime of adventure. Pathology, spa, hydrotherapy, and craniosacral therapy are the topics I spent the most time on. I taught at the school from 2003 - 2020 under the guidance and mentorship of my former instructors and the owner

MM. He was the one that encouraged me to cultivate my passion and ability for teaching into becoming a continuing education (CE) provider. I am grateful. Between teaching at the massage school, working at luxury resort spas, and outcalls, I began to build a catalog of CE workshops. Years later, I was invited to fly south and teach at the Costa Rica School of Massage Therapy. Which I happily did for several years. Teaching at a massage school allows me to keep fresh eyes on things. The passion of a new student is contagious. Helping to shepherd and shape their development drives my evolution as well.

Learning is a gift. Continuing Education is a choice that allows us to keep learning beyond what we picked up in school. We may sit in humility as old ideas or techniques get challenged with new research. We hear other points of view that may further hone our skills and expand our knowledge. I appreciate this investment of time, travel, and finances from both the student and provider vantage points.

Studying craniosacral therapy just made sense to me from both the clinical and artistic sides early on. I also knew that a single modality on a pedestal was *not* the answer, merely an answer. Then the questions came. Where did the person I am learning from learn what they taught me? What do I want to pass down from them? What will be my contribution to move the work forward?

***"Every artist is a cannibal
every poet is a thief
all kill for inspiration
and then sing about the grief."***

~Bono

Circa 2009, I'm sitting in my office thinking about my next steps. My office was a ticker-tape explosion of notes and books from every class I had taken. I was tired of the spa world and hungry for teaching. I wanted to help move our profession forward. *Integrative Craniosacral Therapy* (ICST) was born from this chaos. I worked with a colleague to shape what we felt was the next evolution, and we rolled out a new program. We cross-pollinated schools of thought with new directives backed by current research and understandings. We strove to foster therapy that would blend with any massage and bodywork practice. We created an approach that could be stand-alone or woven into diverse massage settings. My wife, Nicole, and I continue this innovation and application of therapeutic touch. My collaborative cohort D.T. retired from teaching years ago, but his influence is intact.

The ICST program gave birth to a unique class where we thought to take our approach to touch and add nature. The Gulf of Mexico, Samara Bay (Costa Rica), and a range of pools have played host to the offspring, *The Fluid Dynamic*. A unique educational offering with the setting of water. Gentle sets of hands fully support you while water's buoyancy helps reduce gravity's grip. The four-day workshop is part continuing education and part therapist retreat. We take the table-time and lecture to the water for integration. Learning to surrender to the water and the therapists' hands is challenging yet deeply rewarding. We can release our baggage into the ocean or fill our cups up. Each experience is as unique as the human participating. This class is one where I am happy to participate in with the hands-on time.

As massage and bodywork professionals, we often find ourselves in the flow state—the point in our sessions where our hands are doing and going without conscious thought. This flow space is where *Bodywork for PTSD* sprung. I was helping Nicole recover from a minor fender bender by simply listening to her body and (in my mind) chatting with her nervous system. She got off the table and said, "It's time for you to write the class. The PTSD class." I wasn't sure I had much to offer, but then I started developing the core of what I felt mattered. I wanted to create a class that supported trauma survivors regardless of the traumatic source. Drawing on personal and professional experiences, it all just clicked. We need to create an environment for people to feel safe in their bodies and learn how to take their power back. That is Touch Education. *Bodywork for PTSD* is my contribution to helping the helpers, as they help humans to human better.

I am grateful. There is no way 22-year-old Matt would foresee the love he'd experience and the adventures he would have from the darkness of hopelessness. I cannot imagine my life any other way. Being a licensed massage therapist for 22 years has been grueling yet rewarding. This ride is limitless, from the daily grind in the spas of Orlando to teaching in Costa Rica to speaking at conventions and building a practice (several times). Growing, learning, failing, succeeding, and creating the life I have with the woman I love as we dreamed together is priceless.

Thank you to each human that helped shape my career. Thank you for the chance to do good.

Ease into Mobile Massage



When you are just starting out as a massage therapist, things can be overwhelming and scary. Starting and running a business is a big task. You must take time and plan out all of the business details so that things will run smoothly, and you will make a profit.

Have you thought of a business name? What is your mission statement? What is the purpose of your business and what are your goals? What type of services and modalities will you offer? Spend some time thinking about and answering these questions and while you are at it create a descriptive biography so potential clients will be able to read about how awesome you are!

Have you thought about the type of client you would like to work with? Who is your ideal client? Where can you find them and how will you get them on your table, or chair?

When I started my career, I started out as a mobile therapist and was an independent contractor for several companies while I worked on building my business. I knew that I wanted to be a mobile therapist because there is a large chunk of expenses that I did not have to worry about, and I could work for myself. There are no over-head costs for mortgage or lease of a facility, minimal utilities, and no maintenance. You can create your own schedule and decide to work for others if you need additional income. This makes mobile massage a great option for those who are ready to start building a business and investing in themselves.

I wanted to work with professional athletes and celebrities. I started contacting well-known personal trainers and chiropractors in my area that collaborated with athletes. I offered to barter services with them so that they could see what an awesome therapist I was and refer their clients to me. I contacted concert promoters and

asked if I could provide massage therapy backstage for their performers. I researched events in my area to see where massage therapy would fit in. I invested so much time into trying to find my ideal client so that I would attract the clients that I will be happy working with.

I recommend investing in an excellent quality massage table, you want your clients to be comfortable, so don't go with the cheapest option! A portable massage chair is one of the best purchases I have made! Massage chairs are lightweight and great for marketing and networking. I always keep my chair in the car so that I am always prepared if there is a last-minute event I can attend.

I started investing in more education and took additional courses that worked well with the clients I wanted to see. I took sports massage, cupping, IASTM, orthopedic massage, hot stone, and numerous other courses so that I had a wide variety of services to offer and would stand out to my clients. I took pediatric massage because I had so many clients with children who also wanted massage therapy. And most recently I took a manual lymphatic drainage course because this modality is being frequently requested in South Florida, where I live.



It is a smart idea to research massage therapists in your area to see what they are up to. What type of business do they have? What modalities and services do they offer? What hours do they operate? Schedule a massage with them and get to know them. Maybe they specialize in a modality you don't know and vice versa. This therapist would be a good therapist to network with because you can refer clients to each other. Ask other therapists to barter so that you can understand how they work



By Michelle Roos, LMT

and hopefully get some amazing bodywork while you're at it! Don't stress out if they don't barter either. The busier therapists who already have a network of people they see may not be looking for a new massage therapist. To get a feeling for how they work, pay for a treatment.

Spend time creating a personal and business budget each month so that you know what you need to charge to cover your expenses and lifestyle. How much are you going to spend on a website, business cards and professional photos? How much do you need to make each month to cover your living expenses? Total everything up and decide how many hours you want to work to determine your pricing.

What are you going to do to market yourself? Are you good with social media? Does your ideal client even use social media, or do you need to get out in public to access them?

There is so much to think about. All of these questions are a great start, but don't stop there. Keep asking and investing time until you are happy with how business is going. Businesses aren't built over night, so keep trying and your hard work and investment will pay off.



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