



Massage Today

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DearLyndaLMT

"Touching the Massage Today readers one letter at a time"

By Lynda Solien-Wolfe, LMT

Author's Note: Welcome to my monthly column, DearLyndaLMT, where I will be answering questions from you, the readers.

I have been blessed this past decade by working with many experts in the massage profession who will serve as resources, mixed with a touch of Dear Lynda's views and advice.

So ask away with all those things you've wondered about but didn't know who to ask! I can't guarantee that all of your questions will be published, but I will do my best to answer you, or at least point you in the right direction. Please remember, as with all advice, it is just that: advice. Always check to make sure that you're working within your scope of practice in your city/county and state.

Please send your questions to dearlyndalmt@aol.com or:

DearLyndaLMT
P.O. Box 173,
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Dear LyndaLMT,

I have been practicing basic Swedish/deep tissue massage in a corporate environment (I work at USA Today) for four-and-a-half years. I am interested in learning a new technique that will complement my existing technique, and was hoping that you might be able to suggest one that would benefit my clients. They are primarily stressed-out journalists with the typical neck/shoulder problems, and also occasional

runner/athletes with piriformis issues. I have been recommended NMT and Bowen technique. Any suggestions? I appreciate any advice that you may have.

-- *Ellen in Virginia*

Dear Ellen,

I find the best way to find new techniques is to go to different convention workshops; that way, you can try the techniques out and see what interests you. Have you taken any Mattes Active Isolated Stretching method classes? There are books and videos from which you can learn. I think the recommendations on NMT and Bowen are fine ones also. You also might look into taking orthopedic or sports massage classes, or get one of the many available videos on these topics.

I have found myofascial release techniques beneficial for many of my stressed clients. I get great results from NMT and Mattes stretching, using both a table and a chair.

Dear LyndaLMT,

I am developing workshops to teach to massage therapists. I'm a licensed practitioner and I have more than five years experience working in a specific field. I've developed several protocols. I'm offering one, two and three-day workshops. I'm trying to offer these workshops to massage schools to make the CEU process easier. How much do I ask the schools to pay me? Do they usually give you a percentage of the total price, or a flat fee? I don't really want to ask the schools themselves, because they obviously have a vested interest in offering me less. Do you have any idea? Thank you for your time.

-- *Kris in North Carolina*

Dear Kris,

I contacted several schools to see what they are charging for sponsoring workshops at their schools; I got everything from 50/50 to 70/30. You need to look to the future and find an amount that is comfortable for you at this point in your development, leaving room for growth.

I also contacted James Waslaski, owner of a prestigious pain management seminar company in Dallas, Texas. Here's what he had to say:

Dear Lynda:

In response to Kris' question, I personally think that educators of massage should at least make what they would make doing massage. The higher the demand for your unique work, the more your worth becomes. At the high end, I would say that top educators might demand 70% of income taken in for the workshop. The schools do all the marketing and registration, which is a lot of work. I typically need to have a minimum of 20 students, and get 70% and sometimes air and motel expenses. You have to also realize that there is a great marketing benefit in associating your school with the quality of work from top educators such as George Kousaleos; John Upledger; John Barnes; Bob King; Aaron Mattes; Paul St. John; Judi Walker; etc. You are going to enhance the credibility of your school when you offer what I call "higher education and specialization skills," and that will ripple down into the basic attendance.

Bringing in top educators has become a business both for organizations and individuals. Certain individuals have made several thousand dollars for hosting me for one seminar - but you need to slowly earn respect to demand this type of percentage. Some top educators may make less than 70% of the generated income. I am just blessed to have put my work in such demand that I am requested over a year in advance by many schools, and the uniqueness of the retreats we offer gives the practitioner much more than just classroom tools. I hope this will give some direction as to the income potential of up-and-coming educators.

Dear LyndaLMT,

I trade massages with a fellow massage therapist, but she always talks on her cell phone during my massage. I always treat her like I would any other client. I have asked her not to bring her phone into the treatment room, but it happened again this week. Do you have any advice for me?

-- Barbara from Texas

Dear Barbara,

Sounds like it's time for a change. Next time you agree to trade services, you need to sit down with that person and discuss your expectations ahead of time.

On a personal note, I gave up trading many years ago. I pay for all my treatments. Yes, I get a professional price, but I get treated as a client, not a therapist friend. It is my hour and I get his full attention during my treatment -- the way I think it should be! I called around and found that most of my therapist friends have the same view, mostly because they want a massage on their own schedule and the therapist's full attention. Trading is not uncommon, but guidelines must be established ahead of time to make the experience beneficial for both parties.

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