

## **Therapist Profile**

### **Dymphna O'Brien (M.I.R.I, Dip. Ki Mass.)**

My first experience with Holistic Therapies began twenty years ago, I took up Hatha Yoga, very quickly I decided I liked the philosophy of the Holistic way of life.

The word Holistic comes from the Greek word 'Holos', meaning 'whole'. Therefore, holistic therapies bring healing and balance to the whole person – Body, Mind & Spirit.

I decided to study to become a yoga teacher and while I was doing this I came to appreciate the many benefits of massage, the idea of just lying on a plinth while your stresses were melted away leaving you feeling relaxed and energized, was the ultimate therapy for me.

I became a Ki Massage Therapist and loved giving the treatment as much as receiving it. I have since qualified in Hot Stone Massage and Maternity & Infant Massage all are beautiful treatments to give and receive. My personal favourite to give and receive is Reflexology, I qualified from Walmer College in September 2007, since then I have taken workshops in cancer care through reflexology and pregnancy and infertility. For me it is an enjoyment to further educate myself in anything to do with the "Body, Mind & Spirit". In January 2007 a dream came true for me, I got the opportunity to work full time in the area of Holistic Therapies at Southshore Therapy Centre.

The centre **truly is "an oasis of calm"** bathed in symbols and reminders of the sea. The sea for me is my escape from the busy world we live in and the sense of calm I get from it is incredible.

I look forward to sharing this sense of calm with you when you come to Southshore Therapy Centre for the treatment of your choice.

## **Reflexology**

### **A Step to Better Health**

Reflexology is pressure massage to the feet or hands in order to stimulate the reflex points and bring about a balance of the eight bodily systems in order for the body to work together in harmony and unison and thus creating a feeling of well-being and optimum health.

The eight bodily systems are:

- Skeletal
- Muscular
- Neurological
- Respiratory
- Digestive
- Endocrine
- Genito urinary
- Vascular

## **The Benefits of Reflexology**

Reflexology is suitable for all ages and throughout every stage of life. This gentle therapy may bring relief from a wide range of both acute and chronic conditions. Reflexology has been shown to

- Reduce stress and induce relaxation
- Improve the circulation of both blood and lymph
- Provide a more efficient removal of toxins and impurities
- Allow the body to balance itself
- Revitalise energy
- Strengthen the immune system
- Help body to adjust and deal with symptoms of pregnancy and prepare for labour
- Help couples with fertility issues
- Give relaxation and relief of symptoms for cancer patients and their families

A reflexology treatment lasts for one hour. As it is the feet which are usually treated you simply remove your socks and sit or lie back and enjoy.

## **Hot Stone Massage**

Hot Stone Massage is a variation on the classic holistic massage therapy. Stone Massage involves the application of water heated basalt stones of varying sizes to key points on the body, creating sensations of deep relaxation, warmth and comfort. The direct heat relaxes the muscles, allowing me the therapist to work the muscles releasing all stress and tension from the body.

### **What happens during a Hot Stone Massage?**

The stones are always sanitized and ready for use for each client's arrival. I use traditional Swedish Massage strokes while holding the heated stones. Heated smooth, flat stones are placed on key points on the body to aid relaxation.

### **How will the stones feel?**

The stones are flat and very smooth, they are never rough. I always hold the stones first before placing them on your body, which ensures that the temperature will not be too hot.

## **Benefits of Hot Stone Massage**

- Increases circulation.
- Increases your metabolism.
- Increases the inflammatory response.
- Decreases pain.
- Decreases muscle spasm.
- Softens the tissues.
- Raises the body temperature.

**Hot Stone Massage is beneficial for anyone suffering from any or more of the following:**

- Tension around the neck and shoulder area.
- Lower back pain and aches.
- Poor circulation
- Stress, anxiety and tension.
- Insomnia
- Arthritis
- Stiff neck
- Headaches/Migraines

## **Pregnancy Massage (prenatal massage)**

Massage during pregnancy is therapeutic bodywork which focuses on the special needs of the mum-to-be as her body goes through the dramatic changes of the childbirth experience.

While providing emotional support and nurturing touches, it provides relaxation by relieving stress on joints, eases neck and back pain, helps to keep good posture and relaxes and provides flexibility to birthing muscles. Massage can aid the circulatory and lymphatic systems, which can keep blood flowing to both the mother and the baby and reduce fatigue. It stimulates different glands in the body, which help to stabilize hormone levels and relieves nervous tension throughout the body.

## **Postpartum Massage (postnatal massage)**

Massage therapy is not only good before childbirth, but also afterwards. Postpartum massage focuses on helping to restore the woman's body to its pre-pregnancy condition. Massage therapy plays an important part in the restoration of the abdominal muscle wall and the uterus to its normal state. It helps to realign the body weight to its original distribution and tones the over stretched areas of skin over the belly. As with all massage, it relieves muscle tension and stress from everyday activities, especially new mothering duties. It not only helps restore the physical body to the new mum but also helps to revive her emotional state. The loving touch of hands can provide a time to relax for the new mum.

## **Infant Massage**

Babies need touch to survive.

The benefits derived from infant massage are just beginning to be studied and understood, but already they seem to indicate long lasting effects on health, growth, development and on the general well being of the baby.

Massage for the baby begins in the uterus with uterine contractions. The process of labour and contractions stimulate the baby's skin, which in turn activates the nervous system sending messages to the respiratory system signaling the baby's first task after birth – to breathe.

Babies delivered through C Section do not get the cutaneous stimulation of the birth canal and so they benefit enormously from massage.

**Some of the many benefits for all infants include the following:**

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- Massage stimulates internal organs
- Massage helps to relieve colic and intestinal gas
- Massage helps stimulate the immune system
- Massage exercises the baby and teaches them about their body
- Massage promotes fuller. Deeper respiration thus increasing cardiac output
- There is a faster weight gain and all round well being. Low birth weight babies benefit from infant massage by an increase in appetite.

Performing infant massage is a deep and meaningful experience for the parents too. The baby learns that daddy can also offer physical and emotional support. The bonding between father and baby can be enhanced by him being able to massage the infant. By taking the time to massage the baby, parents will teach love, respect and caring.