In a society where fast-living, fast-food and popping quick-fix pills is the norm, complementary therapists are increasingly being called upon to patch up the physical and emotional chinks that people are left with as a result of their demanding lifestyles.

Unlike Doctors, therapists have the luxury of being able to talk to their clients in-depth about all aspects of their lives (providing this is relevant, of course), from diet and exercise regimes, to medical history and current niggling symptoms. Even more information can be gleaned during the course of the treatment itself, and from the casual comments exchanged before and after. The question is, are you putting all of this information to good use and providing a truly holistic service, or are you just giving your clients a good treatment?

Every therapist needs to ask him or herself on a regular basis; “Can I improve on the services I have to offer? Am I wholeheartedly addressing my client’s needs?” And just as importantly; “Am I helping my clients to help themselves beyond the treatment couch?” If the answer to all of these questions is a resounding “yes”, then the benefits of your treatments will be significantly enhanced. Obviously, you can’t force a client to heed good aftercare advice, but you can certainly do your best to arm them with all of the necessary knowledge they need to help themselves in-between treatments should they wish to do so.

Remember, the more able you are to instill knowledge........................................................................... into your clients, the more likely your client will see results and recommend you to others.

Sometimes, it may be more appropriate for your client to see another professional, such as a chiropractor, counsellor, or chiroprist. If asked, would you know what these professionals are able to offer, how much a session would cost, and how the client should go about finding someone suitably qualified in their area? It may also be worth finding out the contact details of support groups in your area, in case any of your clients express the need for such help.

Keep abreast of current therapy and health issues that will be of interest to you and your clients! If your client asks you a question, it is important that you are able to give them an informed, accurate and up-to-date answer. Regularly attend FHT seminars and conferences to improve your knowledge and meet exhibitors.

library...................................................................................

It may be worth setting up an informal library service for your clients. Lend out books, CDs or DVDs that will be of interest to them. For instance, if you have a client who is suffering from stress, you may like to lend them a book on the subject, and perhaps a meditation CD. They will undoubtedly appreciate this gesture, and it could help to reinforce your good work if these items prove useful. If the client is interested in getting copies of what you have lent them, you could provide them with relevant contact numbers and prices, or even offer to order it in on their behalf (though do confirm prices, including postage and packaging, and delivery dates with the client before going ahead with an order).

qualities...........................................................................

Have you considered gaining further qualifications that may help to address more of your clients’ needs? For instance, the client who comes for a body massage who have hard, cracked skin, look to see what foot products/treatments are on the market, and whether these might be worth discussing or selling to your clients [please note, if you wish to sell essential oils, you will need to be a qualified aromatherapist and take out an extension on your insurance]. Quiz suppliers and ask them for samples/demonstrations so that you can test their performance out for yourself.

alternative support....................................................................

Sometimes, it may be more appropriate for your client to see another professional, such as a chiropractor, counsellor, or chiroprist. If asked, would you know what these professionals are able to offer, how much a session would cost, and how the client should go about finding someone suitably qualified in their area? It may also be worth finding out the contact details of support groups in your area, in case any of your clients express the need for such help.

knowledge...........................................................................

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