

NATURAL HEALTH

WELLNESS

NUTRITION

THERAPIES

BEAUTY

FASHION

How to have a MINDFUL RELATIONSHIP

Simple wellbeing techniques
for a deeper connection

Meg Mathews

Breaking the
taboo on
menopause

SEE PAGE 22

Therapy clinic

HOMEOPATHY

TACKLE MIGRAINES
AND CHRONIC FATIGUE

HERBALISM

HARNESS THE HEALING
POWER OF PLANTS

SOPHROLOGY

YOUR NEW HEALTH
PHILOSOPHY

Win!
prizes worth
£5,000

PATSY KENSIT:

"HOW I COPE
WITH STRESS,
HOLISTICALLY"

Sattva for your soul

WHY AYURVEDIC SELF-CARE IS
YOUR KEY TO QUITTING THE CHAOS



ALSO INSIDE: JO FAIRLEY'S MIRACLE BENEFITS OF MAGNESIUM • 10 NATURAL WAYS TO AGE-PROOF YOUR SKIN • WHAT TO EAT FOR A LOW LIBIDO • YOGA TO STRETCH YOUR SPIRITUAL SIDE



So you want to be a **THERAPIST?**

Is it your dream to escape the rat race and help people? This could be the career change you've been dreaming of!

Sometimes you want more meaning from a job than a normal 9-5 can give. So have you ever thought about retraining as a therapist? We asked Julie McFadden, registrar and compliance manager at the Federation of Holistic Therapists (fht.org.uk) for expert advice...

THERE ARE SO MANY GREAT THERAPIES OUT THERE - HOW CAN I CHOOSE ONE?

First, try the therapy for yourself and get an understanding of what it involves, feels like and its potential benefits, and see if it gives you an appetite to learn more.

Bear in mind that some therapies can be very physically demanding. Treatments such as reflexology, which typically concentrate on the client's feet, are less onerous than full body treatments. However, where your fitness levels allow, it can be useful to learn a range of different therapies or some 'hands free' techniques – not only will this add to your therapy tool kit, having variety in your working day will help to reduce the amount of stress you are placing on specific joints and other areas of your body.


Before you enrol on a course, check that, as a minimum, it meets national occupational standards (NOS). And if it's a hands-on therapy

– such as massage or aromatherapy – check that the training is also hands-on rather than online, otherwise you may struggle to join a professional association and take out insurance once you are qualified. Similarly, if you are hoping to work in health care, you may not be eligible to be listed on an accredited register.

IS THIS THE RIGHT CHANGE OF CAREER FOR ME?

It's an excellent career choice if you enjoy caring for others and are looking for work that you can fit around your family and other commitments. We know from our latest annual survey that 86 percent of FHT members enjoy the flexibility of working on a self-employed basis, with the majority either working from home or on a mobile basis, supporting clients in their own home, in clinics, health centres, hospitals and hospices, to name but a few.

However, starting your own business from scratch can take time, and particularly in the therapy industry, where our members report that 90 percent of their clients are gained through word of mouth (as in, are



of your client; knowing your own limitations and when to refer a client to another therapist or health professional; and a strong appetite to learn and continually develop your skills for the benefit of your clients and business.

Much of your success will depend on your ability to promote and market your therapy business effectively, particularly if you are self-employed. This might include using social media, attending local networking events, giving presentations or taster treatments to groups of people that fit your 'ideal client' profile, and forming good relationships with relevant businesses, organisations, charities or health providers in your area.

Remember, a little market research can go a long way. Find out what's already available in your area and if there are any 'gaps' or opportunities that you can identify. Specialising in a particular therapy or area of work can also give you a USP – for instance, you might want to specialise in treating clients who are pregnant or trying to conceive, or providing an on-site massage service to corporate businesses to reduce the risk of stress and musculoskeletal problems in employees.

WHAT SUPPORT IS THERE FOR SETTING UP ALONE?

You may be eligible for certain grants to help support your training and business start-up fees, but much will come down to where you live and what's available in your area. Searching online will get you off to a good start – for example, enter 'small business grants' and the county where you live in an online search engine. The government's website also offers free advice and support, including information on book-keeping and how to claim back certain expenses – visit gov.uk/guidance/help-and-support-if-youre-self-employed

WHAT KIND OF INSURANCE DO I NEED?

At the FHT, we strongly recommend taking out combined medical malpractice, public and products insurance, to cover you for liability claims from your clients or other third parties for accidental death, bodily injury, illness, or accidental damage to property, as a result of your therapy business activities.

The level of cover you require (for example, £3 million or £6 million) will depend on the type of clients and organisations you work for. For example, if you are working with professional sports people or for a certain

organisation, your client, employer or insurance provider may require you to hold a higher level of indemnity.

At the FHT, we also encourage student therapists to take out insurance, to cover any case study work that is completed outside of the classroom – something that is expected of most therapy training courses. Taking out insurance at this early stage also demonstrates that you are a responsible therapist in the making, who has their clients' interests and safety at heart.

DO I NEED TO JOIN A PROFESSIONAL BODY?

It's not a mandatory requirement, but it's extremely advisable. As well as offering you valuable support throughout your therapy career, belonging to an organisation like the FHT demonstrates that you are a true professional, are appropriately qualified and insured, abide by a strict code of conduct, and are accountable for your actions. It also helps to set you apart from those who are unqualified or poorly qualified.

COULD I WORK WITHIN THE NHS?

A large number of hospitals offer their patients access to a complementary therapy service, particularly within cancer care units, however very often this relies on substantial support from volunteer therapists. Paid for opportunities are available – for example, the therapist leading the service may receive an income – however such roles are typically funded by charities, grants, legacies, fundraising initiatives or self-sustaining models rather than the NHS.

While working as a volunteer obviously means offering your skills for free, it is important to note that very often, these positions come with on-site training and also provide valuable experience under the supervision of health professionals.

It is worth noting that the NHS Long Term Plan published at the beginning of the year has a strong focus on personalised care, which means more patients will be signposted to services available in the local community and therefore outside of the more 'traditional' NHS settings. Hopefully, in time, this will mean that more patients will be pointed in the direction of complementary therapists, who – alongside standard medical care – will be able to help them manage and improve their health and wellbeing and promote self-care.

recommended by a friend). Even though you are likely to gain some clients while you train, this is something worth bearing in mind if you need to maintain a steady income, which is why some budding therapists choose to hold on to their regular job in the early stages, or go part-time, while they work on building up a strong client base.

Of course, another option is to opt for a salaried job at a salon or spa, which will offer you a guaranteed income. The nice thing is that there are lots of options to choose from!

WHAT SKILLS DO I NEED?

As with any vocation in life, you need to have the necessary skills and knowledge to practise your chosen therapy safely and competently. But just as knowing a subject inside out doesn't necessarily make someone a good teacher, being a successful therapist is not as clear cut as providing excellent treatments. Other qualities that make a good therapist include: being passionate about the therapy you practice; having a caring, empathetic and non-judgemental approach; the ability to adapt your treatments to meet the individual needs