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Presents

# How to Have Your Family Thriving Guaranteed

7 Simple Yet Powerful Strategies  
to Help Your Child's Behaviour  
Without Medication



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# **Chapter Five: Case Studies**

“Real life examples from my practice”



Rather than keep repeating the various ways massage can help you and your family thrive, I thought I would take the time to share with you some of the different case studies that come through my practice on a regular basis. Each one of these is a true story, but any names mentioned have been changed to protect their confidentiality.

### ***A Mum and Dad; Mum pregnant with second child***

It was Mum who came to see me when she was pregnant with her second child. She and her husband were both very stressed out about the new birth because the first pregnancy had not gone well; the birth was very traumatic and was nothing like what they had planned. The Mum was quite upset and fearful, but she had kept her fears to herself and was hoping that the massage would help her relax.

I noticed when I was massaging her that her shoulders were very tight and she had a lot of pain in that area. By pointing this out to her, I was able to get her to explain the fear and pain she had been going through since she got pregnant the second time. She was also concerned about her husband and her first baby who was now a year old.

Studies have shown that when mothers are stressed, their unborn child can experience that stress as well, especially if the mother does not talk about or express her fears and anxiety. This can often lead to a

difficult birth process and a fretful, hard to settle new baby. These babies can have problems feeding properly, and don't settle well into a good sleeping routine, increasing the stress a mother can feel. Research has also shown that this "unknown" stressful feeling can be generational where the child goes through similar fears and anxiety when they become pregnant or are partner in a new life and so the cycle keeps repeating.

I was happy to be able to give this young Mum to be information on a new way that Midwives are now using in pre-natal classes that encourage breathing techniques, and a positive attitude. Birth is a natural process and these ideas are not new. But in our advanced technological age many medical practitioners have forgotten about the impact a positive attitude can have on the birth experience. The Calm Birth classes can help the family to relax and enjoy the forthcoming birth. This relaxed focus also helps parents and the baby bond and this connection is a lot earlier as stress is no longer a barrier to this, and this in turn again helps the little baby to thrive.

In this case study the Mother felt really good after her massage. But she was also empowered with new knowledge about the birthing process and she understood the importance of talking things through with her husband and their little boy – as he is also an important member of this new family group and the new baby's arrival will impact him too.

I am happy to report that since our massage and coaching session Mum and Dad are now a lot more relaxed and their little one-year old is sleeping soundly through the night and is much more relaxed and happy. Now Mum and Dad can realize their dream of having a thriving family team and feel both empowered and relaxed as they await the birth of their second child.

Sometimes our prior life stresses can actually prevent a much- wanted pregnancy as you will see in this next case study.

### ***Massage for Mind Stress***

A woman came to see me recently who was unable to fall pregnant. She was 28 years old and had done a lot in getting her husband and her to the point where they could manage their house payments from one way, while she was able to work from home. The next thing on her list of things to do was to get pregnant and have a family, but things were not happening yet. She didn't know why she wasn't able to conceive yet as she did not feel there were any stresses in her current life.

When I massaged her I noticed she was carrying a lot of tightness and stress even though she claimed her life was good right now. During our coaching session I found out though that she was involved in an incident at school when she was a teenager, to do with preventing pregnancy. For some reason this incident has created in her fear, shame and pain, and she had been carrying around this barrier to getting pregnant ever since.

This woman did not know why she felt the way she did, but she was really excited about the fact that she could see an obvious reason as to why she wasn't getting pregnant now. Her massage really relaxed her and our talk helped her to identify her problems, and let go of the past experiences so that she could honestly say that she was ready now to start a family. The identification of the problem empowered her, and with the massage relaxing her, she left very excited about her new life from that point forward.

Children can offer suffer from sports injuries and their continued participation in that sport, without allowing time for the injuries to heal can cause major health problems in later life as this next case study will show.

### ***10 year-old Gymnast suffers lower back pain***

A woman brought in her ten year old daughter for a massage as she had lower back pain and pains in her wrist. The daughter participated in gymnastics two days a week and some of the movements involved her bending over backwards. This action can cause an over-extension of the muscles in both the front and back of the body. Another action the child did was handstands, and this was causing her wrists to ache and a continual shooting pain as she kept doing the exercises. Her pain in her wrists was that bad that it was affecting her ability to use the computers during her school lessons and to write and draw effectively.

I was able to give the child immediate relief by massaging her arms and hands. This enabled the muscles in her wrists and arms to feel a lot more relax, thereby encouraging the natural healing process. Unfortunately if the little girl continued with her gymnastic classes though, she would keep incurring the same injuries over and over again. The weight placed on her wrists from standing upside down; her back and neck being placed at wrong angles through unnatural movements, falling out of balance and overloading the muscles with repetition of these unnatural moves all place stress on the body. Likewise many children fall awkwardly when they are doing gymnastics and quite often hurt themselves when they hit the floor mats, or the floor itself.

I went along to a parent's day at a gymnastic class recently and noticed that both the teachers of the group had their wrists bandaged to support the damage and weakness caused by their own actions in earlier life. They will be carrying permanent damage to their own wrists, yet they don't see anything wrong in helping other children to make the same mistakes they did.

Of course doing gymnastics is not the only way a child or adult can sustain permanent damage to their wrists and hands – basically any repetitive loaded muscle activity can cause the same damage, but what people need to realize is that firstly this damage can be alleviated through massage with a therapist, (or you massaging your child) and that time to heal is of utmost importance, especially in younger children. If the little girl in the case study above keeps going to gymnastics twice a week her body is not getting the time it needs to heal properly and she is in danger of causing herself permanent injury in her future life. This is also the problem with the next little girl in the case study below. DVD Now mum massages her legs and wrist.

### ***Little Ballerina***

A mother bought along her five year old daughter for a massage. The little girl had been going to ballet for 30 minutes per week before she had started school, but once she started school her ballet teacher and mother decided that she could do ballet for one hour a week instead. This was in addition to her schooling, playing and playing sport. The little girl had actually said to her mum that she didn't want to go to ballet anymore and her mother had noticed that she was quieter than normal, was not moving around very well and that she spent a lot of time laying in a beanbag in front of the television. Her mum asked her why she didn't want to do ballet any more and the little girl had replied that her legs hurt when she did it.

Mum did what she thought was best and went to see the ballet teacher. But the ballet teacher did not have any experience or support network to help children who suffered from pain and aching limbs from doing ballet. She suggested a couple of different things that the mother could try, but none of it was very helpful.

NOTE: If your child is complaining of pain in the lower leg muscles and her ankles, then definitely get them checked over by a doctor first in case they have any broken bones, or fractures, but once that is sorted, then massage can make a very definite difference to pain in the muscles.

So mum had brought her little girl to me to see if massage could help her. The little girl's muscles were very tight, and were hurting because she had been doing too much physical exercise. I massaged her legs releasing the knots and tension and massaged her feet because the muscle under the foot makes the toes work.

From a family perspective parents (that is Mum and Dad) need to work out how much exercise their small children are doing in a week. Children don't need to be doing more than two sessions of after school activity in a week. Any more than that and not only does their body start to suffer, but also there is not enough time left for family life and homework time. Communication also suffers when everybody is so busy all the time.

It is really easy to get pulled into doing too many activities at the same time, but for both children and parents it is their overall health, and balance of school, home, family and friends that is important. But back to our little ballerina. Mum decided that her little girl should come in for regular massages – the little girl was growing up quite quickly and some of the pain she was experiencing were “growing pains” which we explained earlier in this book. By giving her regular massages, I could help relax any tension in the muscles from activities, and reduce the pain the muscles were going through as a result of fast bone growth.

When muscles get overstressed and children are in pain (and adults too of



course) then they will quite often get upset and just want to be left alone. They don't want to move because it is painful for them, but when they don't move they also stiffen up more, so that when they do finally move, it actually hurts more. The longer you carry pain and tension in your muscles the longer it will take for your muscles to get well. Many older people carry around their pain and tension for years and then wonder why it takes months of treatments to help them achieve a pain-free, happy and relaxed lifestyle.

As for our little ballerina, her first massage made her feel really good and she was noticeably happier. I showed her mother how to do the massage actions herself and they both went away confident that the problems this little girl had been having, were being helped and she was well on her way to being all that she could be in life without pain.

This idea of "doing too much" is clearly illustrated in this last case study which concerns an over-worked mother as a client. This woman came to me for a massage because she was feeling overstressed and really tired. She was busy running around after her children going to different activities every night of the week and she could see any end in sight. She just wanted to stop being out all of the time as her children went to different places for dance, music and sporting activities.

She told me about how that very day her daughter's ballet teacher had rung her to tell her how great her 8 year old was doing, and that she (the teacher) thought it would be a good idea if the daughter went to ballet four nights per week so that she could improve to the point of being able to dance at a competition level. Although the mother was really pleased she actually declined the offer. She explained that her daughter was already anxious and really tired at night. She also explained how hard it was to help the children get their homework done

every night after the sports, dance and music, and how the children were snapping at her and each other because they were so tired. In the morning none of the children wanted to get out of bed for school.

I had a good talk to the mother about how massage could benefit herself and her children. In particular how it would help them all to relax more at night, thereby allowing for a good sleep. It would also help with any pain issues in the children from doing too much during the day. The mother brought the DVD and an e-book off the website that I had made showing how Mums and Dads could massage their child in as little as five minutes and how this really helped the children to sleep better. The mother called me back a few weeks later and was thrilled to report that now they have implemented massage time for all of their children and that these massages have helped reduce the pain, stress and fatigue symptoms in the whole family. They are well on their way to being the thriving family they want to be.

I have been fortunate to be able to help a diverse range of people. I love working with expectant mothers as I can see the real benefit they get from getting a regular massage. Especially in cases where the mother already has other children, they are often unaware that they put stress on their body when they are trying to carry their unborn child and young children all at the same time. The body can quite often go out of balance with the sheer effort of doing this, especially in the hip joints and massage can really help ease that tension; thereby creating a more relaxed and healthy mother to be, and a calmer new born when he/she finally arrives.

One area I was particularly thrilled to be able to help with was with a teacher who came to visit me to ask for advice on how to help her young students when they were suffering from ADHD. As you may be aware if

you have an ADHD child, resting especially in the presence of others is a really hard thing to do, but the teachers I have worked with have reported having excellent results during class rest time, with gently rubbing the child on their legs, arms and back – always through the clothes, and always with parental permission. What they found was that their students were a lot calmer and were able to rest, which meant they had more balanced energy and focus in other class lessons. The rubbing techniques used can be seen in my DVD.

***Massage helps you fall into a deep and restful sleep.***

Massage is absolutely brilliant for people who suffer from insomnia. Clients who have come to me suffering from lack of sleep and insomnia found that they could sleep 90% better after a massage than previously. I usually recommend a full massage once a week for clients with sleeping difficulties.

Another little studied area where massaging your children can help them get through school life has to do with the stresses placed on their bodies from carrying heavy school bags all day. Many children who do have to carry around this extra weight all day can suffer from tight shoulder muscles and headaches because of the weight from the straps of their school bags. Their lower backs can also be affected because the lower back pushes forward in its effort to support the bag and this can result in lower back pain, buttock tightness, sore legs and stomach pain. Regular massage helps relieve that tension and pain, and helps prevent muscles from developing large mats of fibrous knots, which then undermine the effectiveness of the muscle overall.

***Dads get tired, work very hard and suffer muscle pain and stiffness***

**Dads** can often be reluctant to seek help when they feel any form of pain and stiffness, but they can get some great improvements to their general physical and mental health from having massages regularly. I remember one particular case where a man knew that he was having physical problems from sitting all day at his desk at work, and from travelling long distances in his car. He came to me because he felt generally tight and stiff and he had found himself getting impatient with his children because of it. Now the whole family reaps the benefit of his weekly massages because he is feeling so much better physically and that puts him in a better mood when he is home with his family.

### ***Never had a Massage***

A second older man also came to see me on the advice of his daughter. Since his retirement this gentleman found that he was getting stiff all over to the point where he was not able to walk very far, and he found he could not even turn his head around when he was backing out his car. His daughter actually bought him in for treatment and when I had finished he said he felt so light and floaty, and in need of a good sleep – which he was able to go home and do. He now comes in to see me once a month for his massage and has reported feeling great ever since we started.

### ***Nurse helping everybody else***

One younger chap that came to see me worked as a nurse. He complained of feeling really tired and he ached all over. Part of his job requirements meant that he often had to lift and hold down patients, which he found physically tiring. But he also had to be giving and nurturing to others all day and his own energy tank was running on empty. He had found as time went on he would develop illnesses such as colds, flu and coughs and ended up having to spend sick time in bed. His

problem was that he had no more energy to give others, or himself and so was always tired.

He felt marvelous after his first massage. While he was with me we talked about other ways of making sure that he looked after himself, because of course none of us can give to others if we don't have the energy we need in our own fuel tank. He now comes in for up to 4 massages per month and feels a lot more energetic and capable in his job.

### ***Mum worn out***

It has often been said that motherhood is the hardest job of all and most of the mothers I see can testify to that. One woman who came to see me had a full time job and was a permanent full time taxi service for her children. She would just collapse in her car with fatigue and she didn't know what to do – she complained of “always” feeling tired and it is not surprising given what she pushes herself through everyday. She found the massage I gave her relaxing on two levels – firstly of course I was helping with muscle fatigue and tiredness; but the massage also helped her “stop” for a while and this was a huge benefit to her as well. She had a weekly massage for two weeks and now comes in at least once a month for one and claims she feels a lot better.

### ***Relief from aching legs...after just one massage!***

Another wonderful client I had some very positive success with was an older woman who absolutely loved her golf. When she was in the peak of fitness she was playing at least three times a week, but she started developing a number of pains in her joints, to the point where she found it difficult to walk. It got so bad that she had to stop playing golf, and was considering surgery when a friend suggested to her that she try having some massage therapy. When she first came to see me she had

pain in her hips, down the back of her legs and in her feet. She said that her feet were that sore that walking was like being on cut glass, and she would try and keep her feet out of the bedcovers at night, because they were so hot and sore.

She started to feel some relief from her very first massage. She has now been coming to see me for more than eighteen months and all her other pains have gone too now. She comes for massage when she is home and in that time she has been able to play golf again, walk up and down stairs with ease and has been travelling overseas. Her need for surgery has gone completely and she is reaping the benefits of feeling pain free and happy.

### ***Restless Legs (Common in adults and children)***

Another mother came to see me recently who had a different kind of problem – what I will call “restless” legs. She had a lot of pain in her legs and would find it difficult to sleep because of this. She would spend a lot of the night rubbing her legs on the outside bed covers. I found when I massaged her that her knees were really tight and this was why she had trouble standing up straight. Her massage not only helped her physical problems, but her attitude as well – she was a lot more relaxed. She now schedules a massage for herself every month and has noted a lot of improvements in her level of health through doing this.

### ***Back Pain***

Back pain, either upper or lower back, can make it difficult to move. People who suffer from back pain might find it painful to sit down, stand up or walk around. It often hurts when they try and roll over in bed and so this can also interrupt sleep patterns.

Massage is the most effective way of dealing with any form of back pain

(although please remember that if the back pain has been caused by an external injury to seek medical advice first). The key to a helpful massage for back pain is to ensure that the pressure used to rub the back muscles is only as firm as the client can bear. Some people believe that for a back massage to be effective it must actually hurt the client, when in fact the opposite is true and massaging harder can actually cause more issues with back pain, rather than less.

The most effective way to massage someone with back pain is for the injured person to lie down on a towel, face down on their tummy. Then following the techniques laid out in the massage DVD you can gently massage up and around the shoulders and then back down to the buttock area. Keep your movements smooth and relatively gentle and make sure that you do not put any pressure on the actual spine as this too can cause further back problems.

### ***Stomach Pain***

Muscular stomach pain (as opposed to digestive upset) can be caused by a number of different things such as bending over too long at work perhaps; or for children lifting their heavy school bags. Adults can also get some stomach pain if they lift heavy objects, especially if this is something they are not used to doing, such as when they move house for example. Discomfort can also be caused by over exercise or heavy exertion and in some cases as a hangover from having a bad cough or cold. In these cases the muscles of the diaphragm (just under the rib cage) can feel tight and sore.

The important thing about massaging the stomach area is that it must be done by an accredited Remedial Massage professional. The pain can be caused by both abdomen and back. The lower abdomen can also indicate constipation; and massage will be able to alleviate tension.

## ***Headaches***

I often see clients in my practice that suffer from headaches of various forms. Headaches, especially recurring ones, can cause a number of problems for busy family members, especially if you are the one getting them, but they can be equally debilitating to family members of all ages.

One case example I saw recently was a university student who was in her fourth year of study. She was supposed to be studying for her mid-year exams but she was being plagued with headaches. Her headaches were making it difficult for her to concentrate on her studies and she was feeling tired all the time and she had sore eyes. As I started to massage her back I noticed that she had very tight back muscles as well as pain in her shoulders and around her shoulder blades. This pain was actually travelling through her neck and into her scalp and temples causing the headaches.

Accordingly I administered not only a gentle massage of her back muscles, but also up through her neck, face, temples and scalp. When I had finished she said that she felt more relaxed than she had in a long time and that her headaches had completely gone. She continued to visit for weekly massages during her exam period and then monthly thereafter as a general "pick me up" and treat to herself for doing so well in her studies.

Many students suffer from stress even when they don't have exams to contend with as well. This stress is often carried by the body, through the back muscles to other areas of the body, such as the head, neck or scalp. Regular massage can help alleviate the problems associated with stress and headaches before they start to impair a person's ability to study and do well at school.



### ***Office Worker/ Students at School***

An IT Dad came to see me after he found it increasingly difficult to sit at his computer for more than thirty minutes at a time. He was experiencing burning pain in his shoulders, and he complained that his shoulders seemed to be pulling and he was suffering from sharp pains through that area. He was also having problems with his lower back area, especially his buttock muscles that would become uncomfortable if he sat still for too long. However, this pain was also making it difficult for the Dad to get up and move around and he had problems standing up straight for minutes after he had risen from his chair.

As I massaged him I noticed that he was carrying a lot of tightness in his back, and in the top of his legs. I concentrated the massage on his back and right down his legs. After his massage he did feel a lot more relaxed and was able to get up from the table without feeling any pain. I recommended to him that if he felt similar pains at home he could try laying out flat on the floor, or even lay backwards over a fitness ball to help stretch the muscles out and relax them further.

### ***Pain in Calf Muscle and Back from Bike Riding***

One keen get-fit Dad got himself into trouble when he decided to take up bike riding for his health. He found he was suffering from pain in his lower calf, and feet as well as pain in his lower back. What was happening in his case was that he had not given his muscles enough time to stretch to cope with the new level of exercise he was doing and so they had tightened up – causing pain. Through regular massage I was able to get his muscles to relax and adapt to the new movements more easily, making his new hobby a lot more fun for him instead of it causing him pain. He got my DVD and his loving wife massages his legs when she has time and he visits a massage practitioner when she was too busy.

These cases are just a tiny representation of the hundreds of clients I have helped over the years. I chose these specific case studies because they illustrate just how important relaxation is to people and children of all ages, and how learning simple massage techniques can help the entire family become a happy, vibrant, thriving family.

In the next section I will outline some of the simple massage techniques you can use to massage your children at home.



The website [www.HelenBrougham.com.au](http://www.HelenBrougham.com.au) is here to support you and give you what you are looking for in different areas of your life. I'm so grateful to have you as one of our clients and one of our friends!

Enjoy!

Helen