

How to Have Your Thriving Family, Guaranteed!

Bring love and empowerment back into your family life using 7 simple yet powerful strategies to take control of your life and your family...with the soothing power of massage.

Helen Brougham

Here's How to Reduce Stress, Ease Muscular Aches And Pain, And Have Your Whole Family Thriving... **In As Little As 5 Minutes A Day!**

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By

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About the Author and an Introduction to This Book

Massage and touch to soothe your child's painful muscles, stress and sleep disorder.

For Parents who may not be aware their children are having problems. You're not alone, and it's definitely not your fault

Hello Mums, Dads, Grandparents and Friends

Welcome, my name is Helen Brougham and I have been involved in the wellness industry for 18 years now, mainly as a business owner, massage practitioner, coach and Author. It all started when I had my first massage when I was 33-years old. I found such relaxation and peace that I over come some of my greatest fears to go on to do a massage course in the city.

Throughout this time I had noticed that children are overlooked when it comes to massage. It was always thought children recover quickly after sport injuries, and issues were handled by talking to their family and extended family. But in both cases that is not always correct. Over time and through experience, I can see that life has changed rapidly from when I first heard of massage and naturopathy many years ago.

My path began when I met a naturopath who encouraged me to do a course. Through the course I started to see that I could change many areas of my life and I experienced a sense of freedom never

realized before. I realized I craved that freedom, but that the feeling had to come from within – so now I had a dream and just needed some way of “putting it out there”. It was about then that I had my first massage and all I can say about that experience is WOW!

“That one massage 19 years ago showed me it was possible to release all of the stress that I held inside”...

I had never felt so good in my life. I realized that I wanted to learn more on how I could keep feeling this good and within two months I had traveled by bus to the city and learnt how to massage. I also assisted as a sports trainer at the local football and netball and learnt a lot through massaging, strapping injuries and basically helping to make a difference. My life path was set – I became a Massage Practitioner

Being a farmer’s wife, my massage business started in a country town. We moved to the city 11 years later, so that our children could have a higher education, and I am now living in the city with my husband and four adult children, plus two grandchildren. I feel I have achieved a sense of family. Having my own clinic in the city, has been the culmination of an amazing and fulfilling journey.

The benefits from my new profession became quickly evident in my home and our community. I was able to improve and release my children’s sport injuries, as well as massaging the A grade teams down to the mini colt levels and A grade ladies down to young netball children from our local football and netball clubs, while I started a massage business in my local area about 45 minutes away from home. So my business grew and I have now been a Massage Practitioner for more than 18 years.

My family loves their massages and so do their partners and my grandchildren.

I found a clear link between regular massages and a good quality of life we all can have...

Massage helps children remain pain free. It also relaxes and empowers both the children and the parents doing the massage.

Let me explain.

I call parents aged between about 30 and 65 years old “freedom seekers”. They want the very best for their children. They have worked hard to overcome problems experienced in their earlier life and they truly want to be free, relaxed and empowered as parents. – They don’t want to see their children growing up with the same problems they went through. So they work hard to achieve a different outcome

Their children –the “empowered ones” are those who are self-sufficient. They have learnt how to see the world as a question of “what’s next?” and they seek out and get results through adult eyes. They know about taking responsibility for their own lives and they think about how their thoughts and actions impact on others. They have been raised in an environment of unconditional love; but one that is tempered with responsibility and a genuine caring for others.

But so many people still struggle to really connect with their children, in a deep and meaningful way. As parents they want to gain a sense of empowerment, and to feel they are really making a

positive difference in their children's lives. Sometimes they don't know what to do, and throw their hands in the air in frustration.

This is why this book was written. I could see through my work as a Massage Practitioner there is a need for connection within family, and what better way to do that than through massage. This book will teach you more than just massage techniques. I want to show you the importance of connection – the freedom that can come when parents work with their children from conception right through life until they leave home and have children of their own. Explore the world, have fun and experience life, meet the special person that becomes your life partner and moving towards being parents themselves. The cycle of family starts again.

Dad has an equal place in raising the child – he is in partnership with mum. Did you know that when Mum and Dad are lovingly connected during the pregnancy, there are far less incidences of illness and problems associated with the birth? If there are problems in a pregnancy it can be brought about by stress from work, business, money issues, home life and relationship.

Birth is a wonderful experience for both mother and father; and many women feel, in many ways, birth is what their bodies were designed to do naturally. But so many expectant parents listen to the horror stories from well meaning friends or family about how traumatic the birth process can be and they get all worried, upset and anxious. This is not the ideal mindset for a wonderful birth. If parents together, both Mum and Dad, can see how wonderful bringing their very own little baby, into the world can be, then they have taken the first positive step towards raising a child that will be happy and secure. Living in an environment of unconditional love and acceptance is amazing and safe for the child. This is what

creates empowerment in both the parents and the children in the family team.

By now I am sure you can see where I am going with this, and you can start to see a glimmer of a new direction for your own family. Parents who share in the raising of their children equally are empowered parents and this empowerment brings love, freedom, open communication and joy – basically an amazingly thriving family team raising empowered children. Nobody is left out.

As parents you might have to let go of the childhood horrors instead of reliving them through anger, upset and frustrations. At this point you may not even be aware that your children are having problems.

“It is so hard for parents to understand their children might be stressed, fatigued or in pain until the child starts to do things differently”.

Perhaps their happy nature changes to sadness, anger, or being quiet; they don't want to talk any more, and they might be prone to misbehavior. Even then many parents can't act on what is going on because they are too busy being the taxis, during the week and over the weekend a sports supporter, working, and appointments to give the children the attention they require; or they just don't know what to do about the problems their children are having.

I know you don't want that environment for your children to grow up in. You need to look towards the future and embrace your dream the whole idea of a thriving family. By doing this you can break the cycles of negativity, upset, feeling alone, anxiety and fear that pervade so many families today and raise your children to be the very best that they can be. Your family can thrive and by

reading this book, and taking the advice contained within, you have taken the first steps towards making this happen.

To Your Thriving Family With Love

Helen Brougham

Chapter One: Daily Stress

“How to reduce the daily stress of your child, and your family...in just 15 minutes or less”

If you have a typical family life then I should imagine you have a busy household. Families come in many forms from the traditional model right through to grandparents raising children, single parents and various forms of step families. One or both of you as parents are working; there is the children's schooling to take care of; then after school activities such as sports, and other clubs and games. Then throw in household chores, getting meals ready in the evening, supervising homework and before you know it everybody is busy, tired and too stressed to go to bed. Sleep becomes something that is neither stress free, nor nourishing to your body, but rather something that gets fitted in between all of the other activities that are in a twenty four hour period.



Let's look at this a little closer. Most of us have a day that starts with stress – we get up in a hurry; rush to get children and ourselves ready for work and school try to organize domestic chores that need to be done and then all dash out of the house. It's a rush to school, rush to work, and rush to do the chores and then you get stuck in traffic. Then when the children are due to finish school the rush starts again.

Children don't need to (but do) attend their after school activities dance and more sport: they also have a strong need to talk to their friends on the phone, mobile text, talk via computer chat. Maybe they want a friend to come over



and play, or they just want to sit in their room. Maybe computer games are their habit of choice but no matter what they want to do, family time as such and any resemblance of a routine are being eroded with each passing minute.

What is clear in family homes like this is that firstly there is very little time for family connection; one on one connection with parents or a relaxation or shut down period. Now we as adults can sometimes take some "me" time or a glass of wine before going to bed, but...

**Have you ever considered what your children are doing to
reduce the stress in their lives?**

Increasingly, children are taught by school and society to know they have rights, and that is fine. Unfortunately what they are not

taught is that with these rights comes a certain degree of respect that they should have for their parents, teachers and other adults in positions of responsibility. The reason this has occurred is a result of the increasing awareness and backlash against child abuse. Children were encouraged to “speak up” and to be “heard” and while it is absolutely vital that all of our children understand their right to do so in connection with abuse, neglect, bullying and other problems children might encounter; what this right was never intended to be was a tool to cause parents even more stress.

In modern homes children often have what I call the ‘upper hand’. They have learnt that if they nag their parents for the latest gadgets, for their friends to come over; to be taken somewhere (NOW); or for money to buy something that absolutely “everybody” else has and then parents will often just cave in to these demands. This is because it is often easier to do than to spend the time explaining to their child that their demands at the time are not practical, are not affordable, and is not considerate of others or anything else. Unfortunately once a parent has given in once then the child learns that with time and persistence (not to mention an often annoying attitude) that they can continue to get their own way. A more proactive way of dealing with this problem for example would be to teach them about money and how to create making the money for what they want.

Another stress that is placed on families in recent times is the problem of eating disorders, and the increasing incidence of childhood obesity. This problem, where children are either carrying too much weight, or are developing really tall but very thin, can occur for a number of different reasons including poor diet, and a lack of exercise. Many children are pushing to do what their friends are doing, and parents are going along with what they demand, not

realizing what is happening to their child's health. Some parents do notice what is happening but are unsure as to what to do about it so they let the situation continue. This means many children might be going to before school training, after school training, and then playing sport on the weekend as well. Nobody knows how much each child is doing, because the teachers, parents and coaches are may be working in isolation from each other and so no-one becomes aware of any potential health problems until the child becomes really ill, feeling pain, overtired or stressed.

Children need to be heard by the adults around them. They need to know that it is safe for them to let you know when they are getting too tired or over stressed. But this is often difficult when parents too are trying to cope with the stress the child's activities place on the household. Parents need to find ways to empower themselves as parents and learn how to first notice things that are going on with their children and then have the tools to cope with the situation as it occurs.

Society today is about too much exercise and few realise the huge impact this will have on children's growth. Parents are trying to cope with stress, fatigue, money issues, huge medical problems, and sickness in elderly parents.

Children are undertaking heaps of activities plus doing the hard work at school, ready to go to university and having careers and full on jobs. They know exercise does make them feel better in the short term, but too much exercise can lead to problems with the family home life, long term injuries, stress and fatigue and children who can end up suffering permanent health problems before they reach thirty years of age. Using exercise as a means of dealing with

both overweight, and under nourished children is a double-edged sword for most families and this is affecting all children.

Over exercising has an impact on family life in so many areas. There are increased costs for the families who also have to pay for additional uniforms, fees, extra fuel and running costs. Time together as a family is reduced as is the opportunity to create home cooked meals – fast foods becomes an easy option which is simply perpetuating the problem with their overweight children. Fast foods often contain addictive elements and most lack any nutritional value for growing children.

The family also suffers from the fact that the parents are often away from home nearly every night, transporting their children to various activities. Parents get tired; children get tired. Homework and school work becomes harder and basically as the family gets more worn out they become stressed and grumpy with each other because they have no time to relax.

Finally many parents are becoming aware that their children have become individuals who need to be kept entertained nearly all of the time, and this usually involves them being out of the home. If this is happening in your home you might want to work out what level of exercise and entertainment works for you all as a family. As adults you need to ensure that your children have enough energy and sleep for them to be able to do well at school. They need some quiet time and family time; rather than having to be entertained all of the time, and if you want your children to grow up into steady and happy adults, then it is time to help your children enjoy the peace and quiet of the home environment on a regular basis.



What lesson does a hectic home environment teach the child or children? In families where there are more than one child resources such as money, time and energy are even more depleted and the stress situation worsens.

In this type of environment the child learns that their own personal needs are the only important thing in their life, and they spend all of their time and energies making sure things stay that way. They cease to be caring of Mum's workload and won't help with the chores. They fight with, rather than play with their siblings and this extends into the community as well.

Children who get their own way constantly are less likely to listen to teachers as people they should respect and soon find it hard to get on with others. A large number of children suffer physical ailments they don't discuss, as well as emotional problems such as anger, frustration and stress. Yet when it comes to communicating with a parent their discomfort often turns to playing up which adds stress to the family.

How can we deal with this in a new way? Respect gets respect. Children watch and learn from their parents. They don't know what their parents have put up with all the name calling, be seen and not heard, school bullying constantly all day nothing was ever done to stop it. Children today know how to get what they want, they don't give up, and they have no barrier that says back off and behave.

Children should be doing chores to earn pocket money- it doesn't come for free. When children are asked to do something their next thought is often, "What in it for me" - you answer "your dinner, love". Tell your child that if they want a new toy - a want instead of a need, then they have to find ways to get the money for it. This way they are learning the value of the things they have and that they can't expect to get everything they want in life for nothing. It is helping them to become more responsible.



This is where a family routine, rules and consistency becomes so important and it is up to you as parents (and as a couple) to implement these things to help your children. A child is not old enough to understand the need for quiet time; they are often too busy worrying that they are missing out on the latest gossip from their friends or getting homework done. While their concern is valid enough, you as a parent have to be concerned with their well-being, so one of the first limits you might want to impose in the home is on their communication with their friends and the insistence on family time; one hour of relaxation time before bed during which you could incorporate a massage.

Other things you can do to increase the relaxed atmosphere in your home is to use aromatherapy oils or relaxation music though out the home.

Electric oil burners are a safer and better option.



Avoid Fragrance oil and incense sticks especially during pregnancy, pure essential oils are best, there are many books that are available on this subject.

While it is difficult to reduce the amount of stress that occurs during the day a well rested and calm child is better equipped physical and emotionally to deal with these stresses. Some of the things you can do to help create an environment that will assist in this stress relief (for you as well) are:

- Getting things such as clothes, school equipment, school lunches and other necessary items laid out the night before. Your children can help or do this organizing
- Working towards and make sure that all homework is done before the evening meal so that the children have a time to relax before bed.
- Make getting dinner ready a family affair – children as young as five years old (and younger at times) can help by preparing, peeling vegetables, setting the table and stirring

dishes. Watching & learning about all the lovely smells. To be involved and spending time with parents

- Insist that everybody sits down together at dinner time at the table. As parents explain to the children how you would like this time together to go and ask what each child would like to share; open the communication lines between you all. This may be new for you as parents but watch what happens. Use this time for you as a family to share your day communications, about what has happened to each of you. To help set the mood have a relaxation DVD music on in the background quietly. See more in resources for more ways to help.
- Ensure that everybody has their cell phones off or in their room during the meal preparation time and meal eating times.



What you are trying to do here is create an oasis in the day for you and your children to spend time together as a family. This quiet family time will also lend well into the evening activities when massage can be introduced as part of the bathing and getting ready for bed routine.

Another helpful tip to help consolidate this family and to promote a stress free environment in the home is to set a block of 30 minutes time on Sunday for example, for each person in the family to spend in quiet time. You could have one DVD playing slowly and gently in the background, while the family can just lay on the lawn, or to lay on their bed with a rug over them, or even on the carpet in the lounge. Just lying quietly; eyes closed, resting.

One of the biggest blocks to quality family time in the evening is the scheduling of too many after school activities for the children; especially sports. Some parents feel that their children need sport and activities for life and communication skills but how much is too much? While it is true that some colleges do like to see students who are “well-rounded” your child may not make it through college, if he or she has been pushed through a stressful school life, filled with extra curricular activities as well.

One or two exercise sessions, or out of school sport per week is more than enough for a school aged child. Children are using a lot of energy naturally just to get through their day and if you combine this fact with the knowledge that their bodies are still growing and developing then you can see this tip makes perfect sense. Children who do not have enough rest time do not have the time to let their bodies heal naturally from minor ailments and medical professionals are now seeing many incidences of hip, knee, shoulder, legs and ankle problems in people aged 20 – 30 years old who participated in a lot of sporting activities during their younger years.

In my own practice I see a number of incidences of neck tightness, not able to sleep, aching legs, sore arms, wrists and hands, backaches, stomach aches and headaches in young children who are simply doing too much. Many children do not sleep well or deeply causing change in food habits, attitudes, mood changes, become unhappy, put on weight. Later life can see them start to



misbehave, and as these issues increase it can slow their mind and school results start to fall. These children also frequently carry a degree of stress that results in them becoming frustrated although they are often too young to appreciate why they feel this way.

As a parent you may have seen changes in your teen's behavior as their natural hormones kick in and they also start to act out because of the frustrations they carry. You would be amazed at the number of children who think they are 'not good enough', have low self esteem and yet who do remarkably well at sport and struggle in school. But especially as children get older the pressure to perform and get results, increases stress both emotionally and physically

Unfortunately many teenagers who are left to their own devices experiment with drug and alcohol around this time. Children have no other skills to deal with their feelings. In other cases caring parents, are at a loss to know what else to do, take their children to medical practitioners and are then prescribed medication that is often not necessary and can sometimes be very harmful to the child over the long term.

I have found personally that massage has an amazing effect on children and teenagers, both boys and girls. Massage treatments can take **as little as five to fifteen minutes to do** and yet the benefits from doing it (either yourself as parents, or if you prefer through accredited remedial massage professional) are far reaching, and in many cases long term success.

Take the case of minor physical ailments for example. Our muscular system is a wonderful piece of machinery that enables our body to move. If you can imagine the bones are a coat hanger that holds body shape upright and the muscles like a silk shirt that provides movement.

In cases where the body and muscles are tired or are over stressed small tears can occur in the muscles. Although the fibres do heal up they get small knots in the fibres and over time you start to get very sore and tight in various muscle groups. What is happening is that over time the knots that form to mend muscle fibres end up causing a scar inside the muscle, which then gets larger, weaker and restricted over a very short time, making the problem worse. When this happens it is more difficult for the muscles to return to their strong and flexible natural state. The muscles become permanently overloaded and stressed, but the more gradual damage they sustain the more likely they are to get to the point where they start pulling the bones in a different direction to what was intended.

The body feels tired and stressed all the time and eventually the body just stops! Migraines, sharp and chronic back and shoulder pain, or extreme fatigue, is all indications that your body has had enough and it wants some time out or help.

By massaging the muscles on a regular basis you are helping to prevent scars build up, and reduce muscle fatigue and this in turn helps prevent major injuries and ill health. If ill health and major injury does occur this will require ongoing massage treatment for many years just to help the individual get some level of comfort; whether this be in the whole leg, arm, wrist, neck or back. Massage helps unlock muscle pain and provides a relaxing mindset for the body to heal naturally; in its own time. Because the muscles feel more relaxed, so does the rest of the body; which helps combat the problems of over tiredness, stress and frustration; which in turn then allows the body to stay healthy and strong.

Things to note when massaging children's sports injuries:

- If the child has sustained physical damage or injury make sure that first aid is done. As soon as possible RICE- Rest, Ice, Compression Elevation is very good start. Talk about having massage treatment with your Doctor or other medical attention required before any massaging treatment takes place Learning first aid can empower you know what to do with different injuries and help you provide support your family.
- Take care to not push down on the effected muscle itself – this will cause more discomfort say on a leg, for example, DON'T massage around the effected area.
- Always use gentle and soft movements when massaging children

- Pay particular attention around main bone groups – never press directly over child's spine or on any other joint and search instead for the tightened muscle groups
- Make sure that the room you are massaging in is warm enough so that the child can relax naturally, rather than tensing their muscles against the cold weather
- Be calm when you are massaging your child; speak to your child quietly. It is okay for them to talk to you or to move around if they wish – just adjust your movements accordingly.

As you are reading this it is easy to feel a little overwhelmed by it all, especially if you can recognize the need for change in your household, yet don't feel you have the energy to put these changes in place. This is a totally understandable way to feel, but I do urge you to look at cutting down the number of outside activities you have to taxi your children too; making sure that there is some quality family time in the home everyday and making the time to have a real connection with your children.

The benefits from doing this will include well-rested and unstressed children who are more willing to be responsible in the home and who will help you out with chores and keeping to a family routine. These children will also be less demanding on all of your resources, including money, your time and energy. They will actually respond very favorably to being given more responsibility in the home as they will perceive this as part of growing up, and all of this contributes towards the happy thriving family life I know you have always dreamed of.

Chapter Two: Childhood Stress

“The common signs of child stress, and how to help them cope in today’s ever changing environment”

Stress is one of those conditions that can, if left untreated, cause total havoc with your health, your mind and body. Unfortunately many people are not aware they are suffering from stress. Even when adults start taking a lot of sick days, many people actually use this time to do many things in the home, instead of relaxing to get better. Then they stress when they see others around them coping with work loads and not falling behind. Don’t worry about other people: they are probably just as stressed but they haven’t gotten around to showing it yet. The way to release stress is make time for slow steady exercise like a walk around the block to relax, gentle yoga and regular massage.

For children the problem is just as obvious. They often over-exercise and keep busy for too long when what they need to do is STOP. What all children MUST HAVE is:

1. A parent’s ear to listen to them about everything - all the upsets, hurt and anger.
2. Don’t leave your child in the middle of an upset time. If you have to, ask permission first.
3. There is nothing to fix for them: just LISTEN and be connected.
4. Later that day sit on their bed and do a foot massage. Always ask first if they would like with a nice moisture lotion then powder on their feet with socks on after. See your videos.

5. Check how your child is feeling frequently

One of the key ways to help reduce stress is to identify the symptoms, and then look at their own lifestyle and physical lives, so that they can correctly identify what is going on. Below I have listed some of the common symptoms of stress. By the way, many people who have visited me for a massage say they should have come in months ago – how long have you been experiencing symptoms like those below?

Signs to look for

- Tightness in or stiffness neck and shoulders
- Not able to sit in their chair at work without fidgeting
- Getting tired and fatigued
- Sit on the couch all night
- Find going to sleep difficult
- Headaches and blurry vision
- Stomach pain and cramps
- Pain and restless legs while sleeping
- Unable to sleep or excessive sleep
- Hold breath
- Decreased immunity – always getting sick
- High Blood pressure

Emotional Symptoms of Stress

- Feeling irritable
- Feeling frustrated or having no patience
- Feeling itchy and restless
- Unable to go to sleep deeply or throughout the night
- Becoming easily confused
- Having memory problems
- Negative self-talk or lack of confidence

- Having mood swings
- Over eating or eating when not hungry
- Unable to eat, or never feeling hungry
- Finding it difficult to concentrate
- Lack of energy
- Feeling you can't cope
- Finding it hard to make decisions
- Having emotional outbursts of crying and anger or both
- Lack of sense of humor
- Lack of libido
- Increased use of stimulants like drugs, alcohol or cigarettes
- Relationship problems

The thing to remember is that the symptoms listed above, can be reduced. If you answered “yes” to three or more symptoms on the lists then your body is suffering the effects of stress.

The health risks associated with on-going stress can vary. While stress has been linked directly to health problems such as high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, obesity, some skin problems, digestive illnesses (such as ulcers) and recurrent illnesses there are also secondary problems associated with over or under eating, insomnia and a lowered immune system. As you can see stress can be a problem, but it is surprisingly easy to reduce and for you to return to feeling younger, happy, relaxed, energized and fulfilled in yourself.

What you need to remember is that if you are not functioning at 100% then you are going to find the rigors of family life difficult to deal with. One of the greatest gifts a parent can give his or her children is to look after themselves, and learn to take time out when it is needed. I know there are probably times when you feel

you are “running on empty” and you need to stay alert for signs like that, or like those outlined above, because if you are not feeling 100% then your family life barometer won’t be reading that either. So take the time to deal with the sources of your stress, so that you can be the type of parent you dream of being.

Basically what stress symptoms indicate is that there is an imbalance either internally (within your mind-body-spirit system) or in your life. In both cases massage can be an amazing tool to help address that balance both for grandparents, parents and children. At this point you may not be aware that your child is suffering from symptoms of pain, stress or fatigue. Maybe your child has difficulty sleeping, or wants to eat all of the time (especially bad food), but you feel this is just a normal part of their growth process. Well don’t be so sure. Other clues indicating stress in children are their susceptibility to colds and flu’s for example.

Mum, did not know what else to do

I had one young client who was brought to see me as a massage therapist by his mother. He had many stress signals and Mum had run out options. The young child was 12 years old. He had undergone a range of tests by his Doctor and nothing appeared to be wrong. The



child had stomach aches and back pain and a sore neck. This is real pain brought on by stress.

An innocent question asked while giving a massage however, revealed that the child concerned was getting bullied at school. His parents were totally unaware this was happening and the child had been too scared to speak up.

Obviously once the problem was known, part of the concern had been lifted, and I finished the massage, Mum brought one of my DVD's so she could learn to massage her child herself. Mum was able to massage. Now Mum and Dad can take over and have far more confidence about dealing with issues within the family group.

Now your child might not be showing such clear indications of stress, but they will become obvious if you observe your child's behavior pattern for a few days. Ask yourself questions like

- "Does he seem happy, or is he withdrawn and reluctant to play with others?"
- "Does he eat his food with enthusiasm, or just play around with it?"
- "Is he happy to go to bed at night, or does he stay awake for long periods of time after going to bed?" (Longer than ten – fifteen minutes of awake time is often indicative of a problem here with sleeping)
- "Does he struggle to get up in the morning?"
- "Does he appear clingy, or complain more than normal?"
- "Does he constantly pick fights with his siblings, or with you?"
- "Has his performance in school work changed at all?"

These questions can only provide a short guideline for you to follow but the key things you are looking for is what indicators show your

child is trying to cope with stress, like changes in behavior, eating and sleeping habits and their attitude during the day. What you also need to remember is that children can suffer stress from little changes in their lives – maybe a new child in their class at school; picking up problems between parents at home; Mum or Dad getting a new job; things like that.

Massage (whether from you or a professional Massage Therapist like me) can be extremely beneficial for children (and parents) who suffer from stress. Firstly and most importantly it helps provide a medium for releasing tension build-up – this can have an immediate and positive effect on children and adults alike as I found when I had my first massage. It can also help set the body up to heal itself. Now this takes a bit more time, and the results will not always be as evident immediately. After all it took a long time for your (or your child's body) to get into a stressful state it is. But in children especially, receiving a massage will help them relax.

Points to note when massaging a child/adult with stress symptoms

- Use longer slower strokes as you move your hands over the body
- Think and infuse calm and peace into your actions
- Go with the body's natural energy rhythms, moving your hands outwards from the center to help release stress and tension
- Make sure the room you are massaging in is comfortable safe and relaxing

If you are able to understand that most of the stresses you suffer from everyday can be controlled, managed and reduced, then you are well on your way to achieving the thriving family team you long for. Taking care of Self is often a difficult concept for parents (especially mothers) to understand – how many times have you used your spare time to clean up after your children; do some extra work for the office; or taken on extra duties for a community organization or church. We all do this type of thing because we have in us a type of “guilt” factor that seems to make us uncomfortable with actually taking time out for self or just plain doing nothing.

By changing your perspective so that you can see how important it is for you to be 100% healthy and happy so that you can have the thriving family life you have worked so hard for, you will feel a lot more empowered to have some “me time” and will be far more confident in handling any stressful situations created by other family members, as they occur.

Chapter Three: Pain

“How to quickly and easily release pain from your whole body...ease tension, and soothe tired, aching muscles.

Pain is debilitating, it wears you out; stops you from doing what you want to do and can render you powerless. Pain can come from three sources – either a direct blow from the outside; or sport as a direct cause of something going wrong with the body; or as a result of build up of tension or muscular stress caused by repetitive movements (or lack of movement) incurred during the day.

We mentioned in section one about how muscles can tear and how the fibres re-knot themselves, sometimes causing a matting in the muscles, in turn making them less flexible and often causing localized pain. Even if the muscle fibres don't tear, the muscle itself can often become stiff and sore because of repetitive movement or straining with unnatural movements and this can also create a build up of tension through out the entire body.

There are a number of ways we can reduce the impact of pain in our lives. Massage is one of the most effective ways of encouraging specific muscle groups to relax. Massage helps the muscles to remove toxins, clear the mind. This in turn helps increase the body's own natural ability to heal itself and you will feel a lot better as a result.

Massage is most effective to the body when used as on-going maintenance like regular service for your car. After all how many old cars do you see running around perfectly without some kind of

maintenance in its life? Your body is the same. Through massage you can look after the body parts as individual units, and you can service the mind and spirit connection through the relaxed state you achieve when getting a massage.

Sometimes pain might be located in a specific body region where



you have had an accident sometime in the past. For example they might start to feel sore in their back, or neck and yet have no memory of how the pain occurred. This happened to a client of mine who was 32 years old when she came to see me with severe neck pain and stiffness in her back. Upon talking to her parents she found out she had been involved in a car accident

when she was very young and the pain she was feeling was a residual build up from that accident that had not been previously dealt with.

Basically in life we are all doing too much; from when we are small children, to well past middle age. In the past it is likely that five or six people probably did the one job you are doing by yourself now. We are also prone to injuries that stem from falling over, or having an accident, and even then we are not likely to seek any medical attention. But what a disservice we are doing to our children if we keep getting them to get up and keep going when they fall off their bike, or have an accident when playing sports. Sooner or later they will wear themselves out too, and suffer the pains associated with doing too much. Short massages can help us stop for long enough

to help our bodies recharge their natural energies and go on with the day.

Many children are prone to what medical people call “growing pains”. This occurs when there is fast growth in all the bones; usually in the hips, legs, knees, vertebrae and ankles. Shoulders can also be affected. This is what is happening to your child; the more activities they do, the more they suffer. The muscles tighten up under the stress and this is what causes the child to feel the pain. Massaging the affected areas softly and using an outward or upward motion will help relax the muscles, thereby enabling them to stretch the way they need to.

Other children can suffer pain as a result of high level fitness training. This includes tearing muscles, ankle weaknesses, back pain and headaches. Always allow time between training sessions for their muscles to heal because even a small muscle tear puts more stress on the body as a whole. You may notice this if your child is playing more than one type of sport or engaging in heavy exercise (such as dance) more than once or twice a week. Keep a watch on the number of times and the length of time they actually engage in these activities.



Remember your child's body needs time to grow and heal, and so pushing it too far will result in long-term damage that is more difficult to fix.

Some points to note when massaging children in pain.

- If the injury is recent make sure you have sought medical attention first and that first aid was used at time of injury.
- Remember to work on the area around the affected muscle group rather than rubbing directly on the sore muscle but ease very slowly toward the pain
- Keep your voice soothing and calm as this will help relax the child and make the massage more effective
- If you are unsure as a parent what you should do see your see your Accredited Professional Massage practitioner (they can offer health funds rebates for tightness and restrictions), and always check with your doctor first.

Having the tools, like massage, to help your child when he is in pain is a very empowering thing for you as a parent. We all want to do our best for our children and if we know what to do in certain situations, especially if our child is in pain, stressed or uncomfortable, then we feel better in our role as parents. This leads to a higher level of confidence when we deal with other aspects of family life and not only that but our children respond more positively to us, when we are in a confident frame of mind.

Massage of course is not the only tool you will need to be an effective and empowered parent, but it does have a multitude of

uses. It can be used to calm a troubled child; help you to connect and bond with your new baby; can relieve the problems associated with outside stresses, and in itself be a great communication tool for a “dialogue” of caring and compassion with your children. Other tools you can consider for example are the scheduling aspects we talked about in the previous section; being organized yet flexible; having the confidence to say “no” to your child when appropriate and making sure your whole family enjoys some quality one-on-one and family time.

Chapter Four: Anger and Fatigue

“Dealing with Anger and Fatigue”

Anger is a symptom that shows there is clearly an imbalance in you or your child’s life. It shows itself when a person is either frustrated with a situation, or when a person has been emotionally; or to a lesser degree physically hurt. While it is okay to feel anger most of us express it inappropriately in that we lash out physically or verbally at others; or throw and break things that can never be fixed. In some cases we lash out at we care about, which negativity impacted because we have to apologize for what has happened and hope that they forgive us afterwards. Anger against a loved one can damage a relationship beyond repair and can often lead to relationship break-ups.

So how do you express the built up anger without hurting those around you. The best way to deal with this is to find some inanimate object you can hit, in private. Maybe use the cushions on your couch.

You can hit these items, yell at them and tell them they can go for it until they have no anger left and know they won’t do anybody else



any harm – just inform others around you. Let the children know they can do it too if they are supervised. By showing the children this technique at a peaceful time and letting them practice you are showing them a good tool they can use to help themselves. This is a great way to help you release you and your children tensions and

without having to deal with any guilt or traumatizing people around you afterwards.



To help your children understand and cope with their anger and they will have some, you can show them the technique outlined above. But what is more important is to let your child know when

its ok and when it's not to release anger.

Lashing out in anger on the sport's field.

As a Sports Trainer I witnessed first hand what can happen when anger is not being expressed appropriately. There was a case I treated of a young man in his late 20s who was playing football. He was angry because a younger 17-year old was stopping him from getting the ball. The older man was so angry that he ran at the young lad, who had the ball, hit him with his fist in the jaw and broke the young man's jaw in three places. After operations and complications the younger man was still never able to play his sport again. The 17-year old still has pain in his neck and constant headaches and is still traumatized by the whole thing. The man that hit him has never said sorry or apologized in any way. It is cases like this that illustrate the problems that can occur when you don't help your teenagers learn how to deal with their anger constructively.

A friend of mine had **teenage sons** who had been physically abused as young children. When they hit teen years they started to

get really angry and couldn't explain why. What my friend did was let them know that it was okay to be angry and that they could talk about it. But then when the anger comes out she used to encourage them to either go and chop up wood with an axe (the older one) or punch the punching bag they had in the garage (the younger one) until they felt better. By doing this they had an out. We all have anger at some time or another, and it is better, rather than ignoring it and having their anger cause problems in the family, to deal with it in a helpful manner that doesn't hurt anybody else.

This is a serious issue as the problem is increasing each year. I can't emphasize enough the importance of connection with your children; whether it is through massage and open communication. As a parent you cannot ignore the warning signs. I have highlighted a couple of pieces in the list given before to show you that these problems– can happen any where anytime, it can happen to any child particularly if they are quiet, shy and uncommunicative by nature.

Setting up a massage routine at home, or with a massage professional can be one way of helping a child find an alternative coping mechanism for their problems with stress and anger. It then helps the mind to find some peace and quiet; which enables the young person to find better solutions to their problems. And perhaps most importantly it helps you as a parent to open channels of communication with your child so that they realize they can talk to you about their problems.

Fatigue can be another result of imbalance in your body's coping mechanisms and shows that this thing you or your child has in place is not working. You might be experiencing a tired and heavy feeling in your body; short temperedness, no motivation, not coping with

demands asked of you; or simply wishing for sleep and not being able to sleep and you don't show any enthusiasm for activities you usually enjoy. Children can feel that way too, and will often not mention it, but if you see them isolating themselves from others then you know they are having a problem with their energy levels and probably could benefit from a massage to help them relax and open up to you about what is going on for them in their lives.

While of course the focus of this book has been mainly on the benefits of massage to help your family thrive, if you find yourself or any family member dealing with anger issues, or fatigue then there are other ways you can help yourself and your family. I mentioned earlier in this section about how one client of mine used diversion tactics to help her teenage boys cope with their anger issues. Getting your child to exert some energy in a constructive fashion is both effective and empowering for you both. But don't underestimate the importance of communication as well, between you and all family members.

Your children need to know that they can come to you if they do have problems. They don't necessarily need you to "fix it" but if they know they can share with you what is going on in their lives, then they will be more secure in themselves because of it. If you have a busy lifestyle make sure you schedule in one-on-one time with each of your children individually at least once a day. It might only be the five – ten minutes you spend giving them a massage, for sore feet or an aching back, but make sure your child knows he can talk to you and that you will listen.

If you or other family members are suffering from symptoms of fatigue Massage is the most effective tool you can use against these symptoms...

**It can literally be a life saver in your fight against stress,
pain and fatigue.**

Remember the best gift you can give your thriving family is a healthy, happy YOU, so don't neglect your own health in favor of others.

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 bought 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 massage her feet because the muscle under the foot make 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 a 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.

Dad's get tired, work very hard and suffer muscle pain and stiffness

Dad's 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 along 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 this next section I will outline some of the simple massage techniques you can use to massage your children at home.

Chapter Six: How to Massage Your Child

“Simple and effective Massage Techniques to ease your child’s stress and pain”



Most of the information outlined below is based on massaging babies and very young children; however the techniques can be used for older children and even adults. Basically with young babies the massage is to help the child relax and sleep better, so make a point of keeping your massage strokes light, and gentle and do not try and manipulate the child’s joints or bones in any way. That said, providing you are gentle, there is no wrong way to massage your baby as it is your soothing touch they are getting the most benefit from.



Before we start you need to make sure that the room you are going to be massaging baby in is warm and comfortable. The best time to give your little one a massage is after they have had a bath, but don’t try and give a child a massage if they are crying or irritable, due to be fed or over tired. You can usually tell

when a little one has had enough because they start to fidget – remember a child’s attention span is very short and so keeping the

massage time to between five and ten minutes for small children is more than enough. (See later on in this section for information about massaging sports injuries and stress in older children).

If you have a very small baby you might be most comfortable doing this by either sitting on the bed or the floor (make sure your own back is supported). Then bring your legs up and allow your knees to flop apart so you are creating a type of cradle with your legs. A warm towel or a blanket then put over your legs will allow baby to have his head supported by your feet arches, and be close enough to feel secure. If your baby is a little older (and for older children) lying down on the bed or the floor is best.

When you are massaging baby it is best to start with the baby's front half. Start by gently stroking the baby's head – starting at the middle of the forehead with both hands and moving outwards towards the baby's temples.



Next stroke the baby's cheeks, from nose to ears and then down from cheeks to chin. You can finish this part of the massage by stroking gently across the eyebrows, then back around and under the eyes. Don't forget the jaw line as well; again move from the center of the chin out towards the side of the face.

(What you are doing here is helping baby to relax by following natural lines in the face: By making your movements outwards to the side of the face you are helping to dispel any tension).

From the jaw line gently put your hands behind the baby's neck and stroke downwards. After you have done this a couple of times then continue the movement down and out across the shoulders.



Once you have repeated this movement a couple of times, you can make longwise strokes up the whole torso and out to the arms. Do this three or four times.

Then gently pick up each arm and using a circle of your thumb and first finger gently encircle the arm and move downwards to the hands.



You need to be very careful with baby's hands – gently massage the fleshy areas and then squeeze and pull down on each individual finger in turn: starting from the thumb, moving outwards to the little finger. Do each arm/hand separately one at a time.



Now move back towards the torso again and make some circular motions around baby's stomach/abdomen. To work in with the body's own natural digestive rhythm you should make the

movements anticlockwise as this then follows the baby's stomach and large intestine movements.



Once you have done this a few times feather your touch and move down each leg to the feet. Working on one leg at a time, gently raise the leg and use a slight wringing or squeezing movement up each leg, before

feathering back down and then massaging the foot area. Very carefully put slight pressure on each of baby's toes and then use soft circular motions on the heel and ball of each foot.



Now gently roll baby over. Some babies are not very happy spending too much time on their stomach which is why we do a lot of the detail work on hands and feet etc when we are doing their fronts, because they are happier laying on their back. While baby is

on his front gently stroke up and down the back and out along the arms.



NOTE: Do not press down on baby's spinal column. Instead move gently up and down the muscles on either side of the spine, from the base of the neck down to the tail bone.

Next gently knead the baby's shoulders – be very gentle over the shoulder bone. Then you can move in an outwards motion from the base of the spine out to just under the rib cage.

Finally move down to the base of the spine, moving first down one leg and then the other. To finish off your massage you can do a couple of fluttery passes completely down the body from the top of the head, to the soles of their little feet.

By this time your little one will probably be asleep and that is great. Gently put a nappy on him and wrap him up so he stays warm and put him down for a while. Being so relaxed he should have a decent sleep and give you a chance for some rest.

To learn how to give a full massage with much more detailed information about how to “read” your child when they can’t tell you what’s wrong.

Remember: When massaging your child always cover them with a towel.

You can continue to massage your older children using the techniques outlined above for as long as they are comfortable with it. Once they get a little older and insist on some privacy then allow them to keep on their undergarments or a towel – respecting their right to privacy is a very important self-esteem concept.

You may also notice that your older children are not as keen to lie still for as long as a baby might – five to fifteen minutes is likely to be all you can do before they start fidgeting. In this case shorten the amount of time you spend on their hands and feet and instead focus on their larger muscle group areas – back, shoulders, legs and arms.

A NOTE ABOUT ASPERGER/AUTISTIC CHILDREN:

Autism and Aspergers syndrome is not usually diagnosed in children under the age of three, but one common symptom of this condition is the child’s aversion to touch. By starting massages early in your child’s life (from new born) it can be possible to overcome this as your child will come to accept your massaging him as a normal part of the day however if your child totally resists your advances then don’t push it. The idea of massaging children before bedtime is to help them relax, but in the case of some autistic and Aspergers children the massage can actually create the opposite

effect. Watch our videos and start massaging your children, or seek professional massage practitioners in this area.

Sports Injuries and Muscle Strain

Unless you do have some anatomical knowledge, in particular about muscle groups and how they work you are better to take your child to a massage therapist to work on particular sports injuries. However if the condition is minor, you can give your child some relief by using a firmer “whole hand” approach – working on the muscle affected and using outwards, or kneading motions to help the muscle relax.

If you are hearing warning bells going off and you are not sure if the problem is serious or not see your doctor to get the “all clear” to use massage techniques.

Do not dig into the muscle, but instead use the palm and heel of your hand to put more generalized energy into your massage strokes. If the area you are massaging gets overly warm this is an indication of muscle inflammation and you would be best to have the area looked at by a massage therapist. Never use massage therapy in the place of doctor’s advice – as with any injury get your child seen to by a medical practitioner first and seek their advice on how massage can help with the healing process.

A Personal Message to You

Parents, now you have read the book I know you will see not only the amazing difference you can make to the health of your family by massaging your children, but also the benefits of visiting massage practitioners in your neighborhood for more remedial massage treatments. But remember the main drive of success and empowerment in any family is the adults. The more Massages you have, the more your life will shine and excel because your children are a mirror of your success as parents. I know this because of the experience I have had with our own four children. The amazing part is their growing and their self confidence; it will be amazing time to enjoy them and enjoy yourselves and extended family.

**Now, who in your family would benefit from having regular
massages?**

Who would like to know more about family?

Coming soon

How parents can get a life of empowerment

How grandchildren can massage Grandpa and Grandma
hands.

Pregnancy Massage and care and the family

Sleeping Family

How to stop sciatic PAIN

And much more to come

Concluding Remarks



When we have children we all want the very best for them and so we work harder, we do more and we generally stress ourselves out, which ironically enough is what causes the most problems families are facing today.

By introducing massage into your family home, along with some commonsense rules, and boundaries, I know you will be well on the way to having the thriving family you long for. Remember that it is equally important to look after yourself, as well as those dependent on you, so pay particular heed to the stress symptoms in chapter two. If you find you are answering “yes” to too many of those symptoms then maybe it is time you got in touch with me so you too can appreciate the value of massage for yourself, and your family.

The key things to remember is that parenting is a learning curve – there is no set right or wrong way to do it; but there are things that you can include in your household that will help facilitate your child’s success. If your child is not doing well; at school or in the community or even at home, don’t blame yourself. Blame is not a constructive emotion and can cause you even more stress in the long term. Instead look at the things you can do to create change within your family environment. I advocate the use of massage for this because it not only has healing qualities but it also provides a

means of you as parents communicating love in a positive and healthy way.

It is your choices as parents that will ultimately determine the type of child you raise. Children that work together stay peaceful and calm as they move through their life. When children are massaged in the home, and through a massage therapist, they are told through touch and caring that they are okay. This improves their self esteem and they go to school with a better frame of mind. They work with integrity; they communicate better with others and can often be inspirational to their peers. Their happiness and relaxed attitude is contagious and people around them will be happier just for being in their presence.

Their performance at school and in the community is enhanced by the support they have within the family environment and the unconditional love they receive from you. They are not trying to live your life for you, they become instead a beacon of honesty and inspiration in their own right and you as parents can be proud of your children as they go on to become the leaders of a more positive future for all of us. A world with compassion is a world saved and your children can be part of achieving that goal.



The dreams you nourish in your children are the dreams that will shape their future. Your nurturing family environment will serve as an example to others, and your children will be the illustration of your success as parents. It is never too early or too late to implement simple massage techniques in your family home – like

me I am sure you will be truly amazed with the results you will achieve.

To your thriving family

Love

Helen Brougham



Further Resources

To learn more about Calm Birth
visit www.helenbrougham.com.au

**To learn more about how to give full massages and improve
the quality of life for your family**

visit [www. Helenbrougham.com](http://www.Helenbrougham.com)

Information about Chelsea Massage:
<http://www.Chelseamassage.com.au>

Check us out at www.Helenbrougham.com

Ps. For any emails chelseamassage@live.com.au

PPS: Questions and Answers.

Is there any thing else that could be added to the e-book?

Did the e-book come up to your expectations?

Was the service up to your expectations?

What would you like to about know about?

See you soon, at my website:
[Http://www.helenbrougham.com.au](http://www.helenbrougham.com.au)