



SPA Standards

Exceeding expectations

**Improve your quality standards and boost customer loyalty
with TISS - the »Training for International Spa Standards«**

Mindfulness in spa treatments

In the context of massage, body or cosmetic treatments, mindfulness means paying attention to complex details as well as to touch quality in general. The overall workflow should always be more than just a sequence of small steps. A good treatment is like a good story: it needs a beginning, an arc of interest (the middle), and a successful ending. This is true of everything from Ayurveda or Hot Stone to classical Full Body or Sports Massage.

The following exercises and methods are important elements of a mindful spa culture – and core components of the TISS Training for International Spa Standards.

Preliminary talk

The therapist initiates this face-to-face dialogue before the treatment, while the guest is still dressed.

By simply asking: “How are you feeling right now, in this moment?” the therapist can easily bring the guest into the present moment. The next step in mindful communication is to listen carefully without prejudice. This means being aware of the guest and giving them space to describe their feelings and expectations. Using this information, the therapist can then provide individual, needs-based treatment in the context of what has been booked.

Body scan

This brief exercise focuses awareness. It is performed twice – once just before, and once just after the treatment.

The guest stands next to the massage table in a relaxed posture, with closed eyes. He or she then moves their awareness through their entire body for approximately one minute. In the process, they become aware of all areas consciously and deeply, and take a ‘mental snapshot’. After the treatment, most guests perceive their body differently. Bringing this change into their conscious awareness can enhance the positive effect of the treatment several times over.

First contact

Every guest wants the initial contact and the first touch to be mindful and respectful. Mindful hands communicate respect and acceptance. This is also a good opportunity for the therapist to 'tune in' mentally to the treatment and come fully into the present moment.

Communication during treatment

Any words spoken during a treatment should serve to direct the guest's attention to the place where they are being touched. This deepens the massage experience and significantly enhances body awareness.

Phrasing questions correctly

If a therapist asks "Is this pressure good?" during a treatment, most guests will say yes even if they are not completely happy. In their relaxed state, guests tend to avoid long explanations or criticism. Instead, they accept an element of their treatment that is sub-optimal, and rarely mention it during post-treatment feedback. Hence, therapists should rephrase the question by asking: "Is this pressure and intensity good, or should it be more gentle or stronger?" In this case, mindfulness means being aware of the power of your own words.

Covering and uncovering correctly

Special uncovering techniques create a professional sense of distance. They signal to guests that they are safe to relax and enjoy their massage while feeling touched in an appropriate context. Specifically during cross-gender treatments, it's particularly unpleasant when misunderstandings arise due to details that could easily have been avoided, or because a guest's need to be covered was not respected.

Breath integration

Matching the massage rhythm to that of the breath creates conscious awareness. It usually deepens the breathing and has a calming effect. Try this experiment for yourself: Place one hand on your belly and close your eyes. Be aware of your breathing: in ... and out. Notice how your belly rises and falls with each breath. Try to simply observe your breathing without changing it. Your breathing will deepen all by itself. Since most guests seek calm and relaxation from a massage, breath integration makes a lot of sense.

No half-hearted touching

In a mindful massage or cosmetic treatment, every touch and every technique has a clear intention, a clear quality, a clear beginning and a clearly defined ending. Casual or accidental touching is a sign of inattentiveness that guests will register. Mindful treatment also means not simply performing standard procedures on automatic pilot.

Energy balancing and stroking out

During a massage, guests close their eyes and experience their body as if from within, as a living field of energy.

Using simple holding techniques and connective or dissipating stroke outs, the therapist can help to balance this energy body. Their 'mindful hands' act like a ray of light, illuminating a specific body area and enabling guests to heighten their own awareness. Energy always follows attention. Stroke outs feel better when they extend to the very end of the body part concerned.

Staying present

A treatment given with presence and awareness has huge benefits for the guest, and ensuring the best possible guest experience is always the main aim. That said, presence and mindfulness also benefit the therapist. By turning a treatment into a form of meditation, they help therapists to conserve their own energy and resources long term.

Signalling the end clearly

Ending a treatment with clear holds helps guests to rest afterwards in a more relaxed way. They know the treatment is over, and nothing else is about to happen.

Living wellness, not just selling it

The TISS Training for International Spa Standards is a highly effective method that trains therapists in all these so-called 'details' and more besides. In a short space of time, participants can significantly improve their treatment quality through mindfulness exercises and awareness training, and by learning to express feelings with clarity and precision. Once the method and the training culture are embedded, a tangible atmosphere of mindfulness permeates your entire spa all by itself.

Contact

I look forward to supporting you and your team on your road to success.

I would be happy to provide you with comprehensive information on TISS and advise you on the most effective measures.

Please send me an e-mail or call me.

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