

Ten Ways to Get a Great Massage

Want to get the most out of your massage? Consider this on-the-table advice adapted from the book *Massage for Dummies*, by Steve Capeuine.

1. **BREATHE.** Deep breathing during the massage focuses on your mind, enlivens your body and relaxes you all at the same time.
2. **VISUALIZE.** As the massage therapist works on tight areas or knots, visualize those places loosening up.
3. **LET GO.** Don't help the therapist lift your arms or turn your head. Therapists call this hanging on. The opposite is letting go.
4. **STOP THINKING, START BEING.** You think all day long. Massage is a great opportunity to do a "massage meditation" – to focus on the sensations you're experiencing and think about nothing else.
5. **NO PAIN, NO GAIN – NO WAY.** Firm, well-focused pressure can do wonders for the knots and patterns of tension, but how much pain should you experience? Zero.
6. **LISTEN TO YOUR EMOTIONS.** Memories and feelings are buried in your body, and it's natural that they emerge when you are touched with care, compassion and gentleness. Relax, breathe and allow your tears or laughter to come.
7. **BLISSING OUT IS OKAY.** Sometimes massage makes you feel ecstatic, like you're floating. Enjoy.
8. **CLOTHING IS OPTIONAL.** If you're uncomfortable with any kind of skin exposure, stay covered. You can get a perfectly good massage fully clothed.
9. **YOU'RE THE BOSS.** Just because you're lying down doesn't mean you have to be submissive. Don't like the music? Want the room cooler or pressure deeper? You're in charge. Ask.
10. **BE GRATEFUL.** During your massage, be grateful for what you're experiencing in the moment. Afterwards, share your experience with the person who gave it to you. He or she will appreciate the feedback and will look forward to the next massage just as much as you will.