

In brief:

- Biodynamic massage is good for maintenance, stress relief and self-development as well as work with specific issues and medical problems.
- I do not practise it as a 'one off' massage, other than as an initial trial session. I am also happy to offer a free 20 minute assessment session (with no massage).
- New clients are asked to commit to six sessions at weekly intervals, after which continuation is by negotiation. Sessions may extend over months or years, during which regularity is important.
- Psychological, emotional or physical patterns can take time to shift. If, for example, you have for several years had symptoms which recur two or three times a month, things are likely to take a while to start to improve. It is also likely to take several months before these initial signs can reliably be confirmed.
- The process can be likened to peeling the layers of an onion, with different stages becoming apparent. Progress is guided by the sensitivity of the therapist's hands, and your awareness of it by verbal interactions. It is like embarking on a shared journey into yourself.
- Every session is different, a variety of techniques being used as appropriate. Most people are surprised by how gentle and enjoyable the work is.
- No oils or talc are used and there is no need to undress if you would prefer not to.

You don't have to have a particular problem to benefit from biodynamic massage therapy, but these are some of the reasons people commonly bring to sessions:

Physical complaints

- ✓ **bodily aches/pains** – headaches, muscle tension, stiff joints, backache, arthritis, bones that 'never felt right' since a previous fracture
- ✓ **specific medical conditions** e.g. IBS, ME, migraine, sinusitis, constipation, asthma

Psychological problems

- ✓ **self-development/self awareness** – lack of confidence or self-esteem; can be a useful adjunct to, or substitute for, talking therapies
- ✓ **emotional issues** – depression, anxiety, panic attacks, overwhelming emotions, being cut off from feelings

General and lifestyle-related

- ✓ **stress** e.g. irritability, panic attacks, anxiety, sleep problems, tension headache
- ✓ **people who would like to function better, or need support through a time of change** e.g. bereavement, divorce, being away from home, recovery from trauma or illness e.g. cancer
- ✓ **those who desire a better relationship with their body, or who feel a need for quality touch in their lives**
- ✓ **abnormal activity levels** e.g. finding it hard to stop/to truly relax in body or mind – or tiredness, lethargy and inability to 'get going'

All sessions last one hour. You may be liable for a fee if you cancel on the day of, or the day before, a previously booked appointment. Fees are published on my web site.

Biodynamic Massage Therapy

Bio = life

Dynamic = force or movement

Biodynamic = life force
or life movement

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Sessions available in Bury St Edmunds and Wicken (a village between Ely, Cambridge and Newmarket)

*Member of the Association of Holistic
Biodynamic Massage Therapists*

The No-Nonsense Guide to Biodynamic Massage Therapy

Biodynamic massage therapy is a little known but extremely powerful approach to bodywork which works with the mind-body connection.

It is the brainchild of Gerda Boyesen (1922-2005), a Norwegian clinical psychologist and physiotherapist.

Biodynamic massage is a therapy in its own right, but is also used by some psychotherapists as a way of contacting a client non-verbally, stimulating a client's emotional and physical self-awareness and helping someone to process difficult experiences.

Some talking will almost inevitably occur in biodynamic massage therapy, but how much and what form it takes will vary enormously from session to session and from client to client.

Why should I have it?

People come for biodynamic massage therapy for lots of reasons, although the only reason you really need is wanting to experience it! Because we are all unique, our experiences of it vary and the therapy progresses in different ways for different people.

A key aim is to encourage you to fully inhabit and enjoy your body (to be 'embodied') and to recognise and value the signals it gives. This is fundamental to good health and to a feeling of being really 'alive'.

Maintenance and stress relief

Modern life takes us into our heads! Long hours, computers, deadlines etc. all conspire to make us forget our bodies so that we lose touch with natural cycles of activity and rest. Our innate ability to recover from the effects of stress then tends to close down.

Working with a stethoscope on the client's belly enables the therapist to monitor the body's response in real time. In Western terms, the sounds of the gut reflect the balance of the autonomic nervous system (parasympathetic vs sympathetic activity). These effects can also be understood within a model utilising Eastern concepts of body energy or '*chi*'.

The aim is to restore your ability to spontaneously do what feels appropriate to the moment, rather than being locked into what you are driven to do. Biodynamic work tends to be non-prescriptive because the aim is to get you back in touch with your self, and with the rhythm of life – so that you can *truly* relax.

Self-development and specific issues

Some approaches to bodywork dictate that deeply held tensions must be forcibly broken down. In contrast, biodynamic theory holds that tension generally has an underlying psychological cause; we tense our bodies to shield ourselves from undesirable or threatening situations – notably past issues that we haven't been able to resolve. We retain an embodied 'memory' of life events. Only in a safe, supportive environment, using mostly very gentle techniques, will such patterns release; using more forceful methods may well make us shut down even more.

For some people, thoughts and feelings surface during sessions and can be shared with the therapist; for others it seems that the body 'digests' things without them necessarily rising to consciousness.

Biodynamic massage therapy is not a 'quick fix' system, but it brings lasting benefits; your body literally 'comes alive' and you become more able to live (joy)fully in the present moment.

Work with medical conditions

Using our bodies to (involuntarily) protect ourselves in the way described can lead to or exacerbate a wide range of medical problems. Biodynamic massage therapy can then bring relief from symptoms as well as an increase in general well-being. Applying the Eastern model of energy to such scenarios brings parallels with therapies such as traditional acupuncture or reflexology.

The Therapist

Vicki originally trained as a veterinary surgeon and holds a degree in physiology. She completed her training in biodynamic massage therapy in 2003 and brings to her practice a strong interest in energy work, Chinese medicine and Taoism, about which she has published several articles.



As a member of the Association of Biodynamic Holistic Massage Therapists (AHBMT), Vicki is required to hold relevant insurance, to adhere to a code of ethics, and to be in supervision with a psychotherapist.