

## HORMONES AND HYPNO/MASSAGE

Why didn't we think of this before? Well, our ancestors would be turning in their very very old graves if they heard that. The mind and body are so interlinked and affect each other in every way, so why don't we treat them together? Why are they separated? Not any more.

My speciality is in pregnancy and birth, and what this has taught me is that us women are all going through a similar thing at different and significant stages in our lives. And they all have one thing in common: hormones! The menstrual cycle stuff, fertility issues, pregnancy and birth stuff, postnatal stuff, menopausal stuff. And it all involves those pesky hormones.

As a midwife I always felt like there was something missing when helping women through pregnancy and birth but couldn't always put my finger on it. I knew that there were things missing, availability of time, no money, lack of a holistic approach, lack of looking at the bigger picture. In the health service the focus is on one particular issue and that means we miss opportunities in getting to the root cause and thereby not helping others to help themselves. We have become a spoon-fed society, and therefore not trusting in our own abilities. Yes of course we need help at times, but that help can be so much more beneficial to us when it empowers us. So that is why I have brought all these things together to help us women be re-empowered and to re-balance our physiological and emotional selves.

I realised that the two modalities of hypnotherapy and therapeutic massage I was using separately, were equally effective and had the same end-game. So what would happen if I brought them together?

**How hypnotherapy helps...** hypnotherapy works on the foundation of providing space within the thought processes so that we don't jump to our fright/flight part of the brain (the amygdala). It thereby gives us peace, and this is where the magic starts to happen. Hypnotherapy is an amazing one stop shop where it uses

its multitude of healing powers to do so many wonderful things. One of its healing powers is the ability to readjust the hypothalamus's actions by rebalancing other parts of the limbic system within the brain. For example, the amygdala, which is on high alert when anxiety is in the picture, is able to step down and resurface only when we really really need it too. Then you have the hypothalamus; this wonderful part of our brain is what keeps our system stable, keeps us in homeostasis. It knows when and what hormones need to be in balance and alignment by releasing what we need and stopping what we don't need! It does this by linking the endocrine system to the nervous system which is a super important job, and one that has a wide-ranging impact on much of our emotional and physical health and wellbeing. Hypnotherapy also works with the subconscious which means your theta waves in the brain are activated and this is where changes begin. So, by talking to your hypnotherapist about any problems or issues, can set that process off and allow the intuitive and deeply self-aware part of the mind to sort out problems or issues. It's so wonderfully simple in some ways but needs to be treated with respect and reverence. Then the mind and body as one component can do what it needs to do, as it knows better than any professor, doctor or therapist what that need is.

**How massage helps...** Well, where do I start with this? Massage is an ancient practice that has been used for centuries to help us heal. It is basically a fundamental aid in healing. It helps with sleep issues, reduces pain, heals injuries and prevents and cures illnesses. It does this in many ways; moves toxins out of our bodies by stimulating the lymphatic system; it promotes the energy levels in the body to strengthen the organs' function and improving our immune system; it reduces the symptoms of stress by rebalancing our hormones; it can be very specific in its healing by its nature and the types of massage available; it is a therapy in its own right. Physiologically, massage is an all-rounder but why I love it for this particular concern is that it helps women in 3 ways.

1. Reconnect ourselves to our bodies. By this I mean that we can become too focused and self-aware of the superficial side of image. This means that we can

forget the wonderful capabilities, abilities and basic love and care that we then start on a negative downward spiral to self-criticism, sometimes self-hate and other nasties. Massage reminds us of all the good things our bodies do for us without even asking!

2. Endocrine. Massage has an immediate and very positive impact on our endocrine system. The endocrine system affects many aspects of our lives, our respiratory system, our sensory perception, our metabolism and our reproduction system. In reducing our stress hormones, we can impact our weight, mood, reproduction and menstrual issues can be changed for the better.

3. Relaxation. Well, this is a no-brainer. By being relaxed, the body can rest and allow all the micro and macro components of “us” to be checked, repaired and replaced if necessary.

In using these 2 amazing, effective and wonderfully relaxing therapies, so much can be achieved. However, the clue is in the word “therapy”. Both these modalities are at risk of being misunderstood and should be treated with respect. Using them both for full benefit means that the ‘user’ needs to enter the treatment with an understanding that they need to take therapeutic responsibility. I do not believe that spoon-feeding is in any way good for anyone. Taking accountability for our health and wellbeing is not only so empowering, but so sustainable. It lasts for longer. You learn so much about yourself, so you are able to be more in control of yourself, your life and therefore some things around you! We all know that not everything in life is controllable, nor do we need to be concerned with that. We can however, take control of ourselves, our behaviour and the way we think.