

Getting started with your Holistic Healing Business



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You have trained as a healer or therapist. You have a dream to provide your services to others, to spend your time doing something fulfilling, perhaps to help make the world a better place. You love what you do, and you want to spend more time doing it. Maybe you want to work as a healer or therapist full-time and earn your living from it, or perhaps you see it as a part-time activity alongside other work. Maybe the money is not important, you just want to help people.

Whatever your goal, one thing is certain: you need clients. The more clients you get, the more people you can help, and the more your experience will grow. And if you want to make a living (even part-time) out of your holistic healing business, you also need to earn an income from what you do.

In order to have a successful healing practice, you need to build appropriate business activities into what you do, such as:

- Making sure potential clients know about you.
- Having systems in place so that you handle enquiries professionally.
- Charging fees that reflect the value you are providing.
- Delivering a quality experience to the client.
- Generating referrals from satisfied clients, and from other sources.

Many holistic healers are not comfortable seeing what they do as a “business”. After all, they did not train as healers in order to spend their time selling or advertising their services. The good news is that you can do these things in ways that fit with your values, and that reflect the needs of your clients.

About Me

I know what it is like to set up and run a holistic healing business, because I have done it myself.

I have been running a Reiki practice since 2006. I have run classes in three countries, and worked with people from almost 30 different nationalities (and growing).

I trained as a Reiki Master in 2003. I had been learning more about Reiki and researching how to develop a Reiki practice for three years before starting my Reiki practice. I had also trained as a coach and an NLP practitioner, and I had attended marketing courses and learned skills which I was keen to put into practice. From my "day job" (as a project manager working for banks) I also had a lot of experience of setting goals, making detailed action plans and carrying them out.

Even so, I made plenty of mistakes. I wasted a lot of time and energy, and it took me longer than it should have to get to where I wanted to be. Running my Reiki practice was a big learning experience. In order to succeed, I had to think like a business owner. I had to think about what the customer wants. I had to step outside my comfort zone. I learned that there are several key steps I needed to take to make my holistic healing business successful.

My experiences with running my Reiki practice inspired me to start coaching other holistic practitioners, to help them achieve their dreams. In my coaching work, I help holistic healers and therapists to develop the business side of their healing practice, and to make plans and take the action necessary to make their practice a success.

Here are ten tips to help you get started with your holistic healing business. These are taken from the process that I follow when I work with clients.

1) Work out what your ideal client looks like

Think about the type of client you want to work with. In business, this is often called your “niche”.

- a) Who do you want to work with? If this is not clear, think about what kind of people would be fun or inspiring to work with?
- b) What are they like, these people? The more detail, the better.
- c) What kinds of problems do they have?
- d) What will they come to you for?
- e) Where do they hang out (physically and online) so that you can find them?

For example: as a Business Coach, my niche is people who are either running a holistic healing business and want to get bigger results, or who have been trained and want to start such a business. In many cases their practices are part-time, alongside a day job or other part-time activities, or alongside being a full-time mum or dad. I enjoy working with these people, and I enjoy watching them succeed.

Once you have worked out what your ideal client is like, it will be much easier for you to reach out to them.

2) Market yourself – in ways that work for you and your potential clients

For many holistic healers, one of the main challenges is how to market your services. Some healers are just not comfortable with the idea of “selling” – sometimes this is due to fear; other times it seems to conflict with their values. This can make it hard to generate the clients you need, or to earn a worthwhile income from your healing practice.

Fortunately, there are many ways to market a business. You should focus on the methods that work for you – methods that align with your values and strengths, and with what your customers need.

For example:

- If you enjoy meeting people, then attending holistic healing events or talking to businesses who could introduce clients to you could be a good idea.
- If you have a talent for writing, then you could write e-books, articles, maybe start a blog.
- If you like presenting, make some videos about your service and post them on YouTube.

I generated a steady stream of Reiki clients (most of them repeat clients), and taught classes in three countries, with literally only a few dollars of marketing expenditure. I never made a “cold call” or had a “sales” conversation. In my case, I focussed on three things:

- maximising my internet presence (at zero or low cost)
- getting referrals from satisfied clients
- making sure I created plenty of satisfied clients

Some useful ways to do that are covered elsewhere in this article.

3) Make sure people can find you on the Internet

For most holistic healers and therapists, the internet is one of the main sources of clients. So make sure people can find you there!

New businesses tend to think first of getting a website. A website is useful for credibility, for providing information about what you do, and for delivering a “freebie” once you have created one. But it should not be your top priority if you are just starting out. For most new businesses, a website does not generate much business in itself, and it can take a lot of time to develop good quality content.

So where to start?

There are many online directories for holistic healers. Some of these are free, others charge a small fee. This is how I started building my business. These directories are far more likely to appear near the top in Google searches than your website is.

Search for your healing modality on the internet. Track down every internet directory you can find that covers your field. See how other people describe themselves. Put your details on the free directories, and consider using the paid ones as well if other practitioners in your area are using them.

You can also set up a Facebook business page, and a LinkedIn page. These are free, easy to set up, and good practice for designing your website later on.

4) Know how to explain what you do

When potential clients contact you, or when you get an opportunity to tell people what you do, what will you say to them?

The speech you make to friends, colleagues or strangers telling them about your business is often referred to as an “elevator speech”, because it has to be short enough to be delivered to someone while you are riding an elevator (or at a networking event, if you like that sort of thing).

I still cringe when I think about my early attempts to describe what I did! But this taught me to get clear about my message, and tailor it to my audience.

Potential clients for holistic healing can be divided into two types:

- 1) Those who already know something about your healing modality, and are interested or open to receiving it from somebody.
- 2) Those who have an issue that you could help with, but they know little or nothing about your healing modality.

Your explanation should cover both possibilities. You should briefly explain:

- What kind of people you work with.
- What you do.
- How what you do helps your clients.

Practice this many times, until you get something that feels right to you. It shouldn't sound like a speech – it needs to come from your heart.

5) Ask for referrals and testimonials

Every satisfied client is a potential introducer of another client, and a potential good reference for you. But many clients would not think to do this. So...you need to ask them.

A referral is when someone introduces a potential client to you. A testimonial is a recommendation from a satisfied client.

You can ask for **referrals** at the end of a session with a client. Make sure your clients know that you are happy to receive more clients. You can also ask for referrals from people you have spoken to about your services – if they don't need your help themselves, maybe they know someone else who does. Get some business cards printed so you can hand these out if people say they might know someone.

The best time to ask for a **testimonial** is after you have delivered the service that the client wanted. The testimonial should be in writing, and either signed by the person giving it or sent by email.

People often don't know what to say in a testimonial. It can be helpful if you talk to them, write down what they say, and then email it back to them and ask them to confirm or change it.

The best testimonial also contains details of the person, such as their name, their occupation, where they live.

You can include testimonials on your website and in brochures.

6) Deliver a quality service to your clients

Referrals and repeat business are important sources of clients for any holistic healing business. So give your clients an amazing experience!

Firstly, this is about the physical environment. When I started teaching Reiki I mainly had to teach classes in my apartment, using my kitchen and dining room tables for the healing exercises. To improve the environment I used incense, candles, turned the lights down, bought CDs of suitable music. I emptied my spare bedroom and used it for attunements and meditation exercises. As I became more successful, I bought massage tables and Yoga mats.

Do not try to “make do” with an unsuitable environment – because the client is likely to feel uncomfortable as soon as they walk in. If you don’t have suitable premises or equipment, try to find a local centre where you can rent a room when you need it.

When I work at a centre, I have a list of requirements I review with them in advance. I make sure I see the room I will be using, and find out what is likely to be going on next door while I am working (I don’t want an aerobics class next door when we are doing a guided visualisation!).

Second, if you are working with groups, you need to manage the group well. Sometimes the difference between a repeat client and someone who comes once and never returns is the interaction with the other people in the group. A group member who dominates the conversation, or who contradicts or scores points off the other group members, will create a bad experience for some people – which will reflect on you. Equally, if you are too controlling, people may not get enough chance to speak or ask questions, and will not enjoy the class as much.

If possible, it is good to create a group that will work well together – especially if the groups are small. When I teach classes, I am careful about the mix of students.

7) Become an expert

The more you understand about your chosen field, the better you will be able to help your clients, and the more confident you will feel. This is also helpful when you are talking to potential clients about what you do.

Expand your knowledge. Go deep into your chosen field, and also read around the subject. Learn about other healing modalities. Talk to other practitioners. Read books. Go to talks, fairs or exhibitions, if these are available in your area. Join LinkedIn discussion groups about holistic healing subjects, and read the discussions.

Make a point of using what you learn. Perhaps you can add new techniques to your healing practice, or write articles or a blog.

8) Expand your comfort zone

You will build your business more quickly if you are willing to do things that are outside your comfort zone.

You may have heard that we have three behavioural states or “zones”: the Comfort Zone, the Stretch Zone, and the Panic Zone.

- The **Comfort Zone** is where we spend most of our time. It is comfortable and familiar, but not much learning takes place here.
- The **Stretch Zone** is where we learn the most, and where we grow as individuals. When we take action here, we feel motivated and inspired, and our confidence increases.
- The **Panic Zone** is where we feel out of our depth. There is no learning here – we just want to get back to our Comfort Zone as fast as possible!

Get into the habit of working in the Stretch Zone. Be willing to do things that make you feel uncomfortable. This will help you to boost your confidence, and generate results more quickly.

If you can see that something needs to be done, then being afraid is not a reason to avoid doing it! Find a way to deal with the fear, or else break the task down into smaller tasks to lessen the fear.

For example, if you are afraid of public speaking (as many people are), you can start by speaking to a very small group first (say one or two friends). Then expand to a larger group. Rehearse the speech over and over until it becomes second nature. Or you can improve your skills as a speaker by joining Toastmasters or taking classes in speaking and presentation skills. Or you can focus every day on the benefits of achieving your goals, and get really excited about this, so that the fear of public speaking becomes less important. Or you can do all of these things!

9) Make a Plan and take action every day

Make a plan, set deadlines, and take action every day. Keep reviewing the plan and the action you are taking. Are you making enough progress? Could you do more? What is stopping you?

This is especially important for people who are running a business alongside a day job. Most of your time and energy is spent on other things, and the work on your business tends to get done at the end of the day or at the weekends (where there are also other demands on your time). Plans can get pushed back because you are tired or “not in the mood”. There is a tendency for things to drift.

By setting deadlines and being disciplined about taking regular action, you become better organised, and greatly increase your chances of success.

Another benefit of setting deadlines and taking action is that you send a message out to the Universe. Then things can start to happen that you did not expect. I have seen this many times with my own life.

When I decided to launch my Reiki practice, I had just started a new job and moved to Amman, Jordan. I gave myself six months to settle into the job, and then I would start my Reiki practice. I set the date when I would start my business, and put it in my calendar. In the meantime, alongside my day job, I focussed on building my internet presence, expanding my Reiki and business skills, and working on myself.

On the exact date that I had put in my calendar, I received my first enquiry! Then a second enquiry came the next day, and another one shortly afterwards. How did this happen? Two of the callers had seen a program about Reiki on a Lebanese TV channel the day before the first call. The third person did not know about the TV program, but had been at a spa with her friend, and just decided to have a Reiki session. The experience she had at that session led her to decide to learn Reiki. That lady went on to introduce several new clients.

10) Take more action!

There is no way around it: the more action you take, the more results you will get! If you want to succeed more quickly, you need to find the **time** and the **energy** to do more.

If you find you don't have enough time or energy to do everything you need to, here are two activities that can help:

- Look at how you spend your time. Can you find ways to use your time better? Could you get up a little earlier? Could someone else help out?
- Work on your motivation. Get clear about why you want to create your business. How will this benefit you? How will you feel when you have succeeded? Write this down, and keep reminding yourself. Get excited. This will definitely give you extra energy!

So...what next?

These ten steps will help you to build solid foundations for your holistic healing practice. Follow them consistently and you will get results. And, as it says in the final step, the more action you take, the more results you will get!

So, is now your time to achieve your dream of having a successful holistic healing or therapy business? Are you ready to:

- Turn your business dreams into reality?
- Overcome the things that are holding you back?
- Attract more clients, make a difference and do what you really want to do?

If you want some help getting started with your holistic healing business, or getting better results, contact me. I will help you take a structured approach to building your business: being clear what you want to achieve and what is standing in your way, making a clear plan, taking consistent action, and learning from your experiences.

As a first step, I provide a free consultation, where we can discuss your goals for your practice, your motivations, and some actions you could take to get moving quickly.

Contact me for a free consultation.

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