



Massage Therapist

Dear Jackie

My business partner and I run a therapeutic massage center for the past 50 years. This partnership is based on friendship, goodwill and trust and we share the profit equally. So far, we enjoy a steady stream of business due to the loyal support of our clients who enjoy our personal touch.

But everything changed when my partner suffered a stroke, rehabilitated and came back to

work. Everything was fine at the beginning. But of late, I received complaints from his clients that his massages are giving them pressure instead of pleasure. I asked these clients whether they would want a change of hands for the massage. They are too embarrassed to make such requests because of their long standing relationships with my partner. I tried to talk to my partner to fix up the problem but he avoided me. I talked to his wife hoping that she will help me to talk to him but she is having the same problem with him. There is a breakdown in communication between both of them lately.

His work ethics also deteriorated. He will come late to the office and not answer phone calls nor attend to clients' enquiries. He is unable to return to his normal work routine.

Everybody from families, friends and clients saw the work imbalance and expresses the unfairness. I feel the emotional and physical drain as he consistently lets me down.

I want to know how long will this strain continue and when can I retire?

Eric age 70 right-handed

Dear Eric

I was expecting to see a large hand in you because in massage, one often thinks that size of the hand matters due to the physically demanding nature of the job.

I was surprised to see a medium-sized hand but your hands are very muscular and well- balanced.

The structure and shape of your hand is sturdy and solid, the mounts are fully developed, the fingers in general are firm and the lines are long, deep and clear. All these attributes give you a splendid constitution and an incredible amount of energy and stamina to perform the rigorous exertion and maneuvering of massage.

On top of that, you have a good head line which allows you to grasp the broad knowledge and skill used in the various types of massages to meet your clients' needs.

The refined fingertip of your index finger and the overall clear skin ridge pattern in the palm give you a keen sense of awareness and fine sensory touch to feel and work through the most difficult knot in the body.

The extraordinary depth of your heart line gives you the ability to feel and care genuinely for your clients' well-being and health.

You are also a natural planner and together with your tireless enterprising personality, you are able to meet your clients' expectations and needs and thrive successfully in the industry.

That should answer your second question regarding your retirement.

There is no retirement for you. You will have no time to retire because your clients will keep you going.

You will join an expanding group of the elderly who held their careers from being a TV producer at age 88, Prime Minister at age 94, scientist at age 103, barber at age 106, judge at age 95 and doctor at age 105, just to mention a few.

You will stay active in work because you like to keep your mind sharp, engage in meaningful activities and maintain social interaction.

As far as the partnership is concerned, I do not see an immediate dissolution, meaning your partner is still healthy enough to continue to work for another six good years or more, although he may not be able to perform at the level required of him. I hope you are not fainting after hearing this.

If you have exhausted all avenues to communicate with him and he still does not respond positively, then reinvent yourself. Change your mindset and adapt.

Accept your partner that he would not be able to perform the essential function of a job required of him. A lot of stroke survivors have problems with fatigue and concentration level, not to mention a relapse. Hire another therapist to take over those clients that cannot put up with his disservice.

Develop compassion that you are doing something larger than yourself by generating goodwill and love for your partner who had, prior to his stroke, played an important part in helping you to prosper and expand in the business and who is now not handling the situation in ways that you prefer.

Stay in an attitude of thankfulness and humor which will help you to get through the tough time and realize the most important thing you have in your life is good health and vitality.

You started off the business with your partner in friendship, goodwill and trust. You will end the partnership on the same footing.

Jackie