



qualification of remedial massage, aromatherapy, deep tissue ligament tendon therapy, which is more of a sports injuries-related diploma. I then studied a traditional Chinese massage diploma and went into studying yoga and I am currently a yoga teacher. I grew up in a family food business and started working with the public from when I was 10 years old. My mum encouraged us to work in the business and I was serving customers from a really young age. That's probably one of the biggest skills that helped me to be really comfortable with customer service and approach and speak to customers in a very natural way.

Q *When was Human Nurture established? Was it a new building or did you take over another business?*

My husband John and I established the business in 1999. We took over the building and turned it into Human Nurture.

Q *What was your initial concept?*

Our initial concept was beautiful healthy skin inside and out. With John being a highly-qualified acupuncturist, shiatsu practitioner and Chinese herbalist, and I being a skincare therapist, nutritionist, massage therapist and yoga teacher; it was a good chance pull these together and create a program that represented our business. Clients can come in for facial correction skin treatments; however they can also see John for pain, discomfort or any other wellbeing concerns. We've put together a whole wellness concept. It looks at diagnostics of the internal workings of your digestion, cells and systems, which therefore gives you a reflection of the skin.

Q *Did you encounter any problems during the set-up of the salon and how did you deal with these?*

The biggest concern we had from the beginning was finance. It's a big financial concern setting up a business from scratch and wanting to provide so much for our clients and customers. Financially it seemed really intense. It was also a challenge to consistently find regular clients and new clients.

Q *Who makes up the team?*

Our team consists of our beauty therapist Britt Kaplan and our beautiful Natasha who works with Gernetic full-time. She is our trainer, educator and rep, but on Saturdays we're lucky enough to have her helping out in the salon. There's also John and myself.

Q *How important do you feel ongoing education is for your team?*

It's critical. I cannot emphasize this point enough. It is the key to keeping ahead. Being the leading health and wellness salon in Sydney, information and health is always being highly researched and we want to be ahead of that research. I recently completed my Ageing Skin Masters Post-Graduate with Florence Barrett-Hill and Brit has just done skin, cells and systems training with Gay Wardell. John is also always updating his skills in nutrition, inflammation, and anything to do with the body, disease and disorders.

Q *How did you go about selecting team members?*

It's becoming more challenging these days as there is an abundance of therapists out there. We do tend to start by advertising online. We've also placed advertisements on the front window and that's how we found our beautiful Brit. Word-of-mouth has always been popular, too. We interview over the phone and if their attitude is right, we embark on interview process which includes a written process and a skills test, and then we start a three-month trial.

Q *Do you have any competitors in the local area and how do you set yourself apart from them?*

We have a lot of competitors in the area, but the way we set ourselves apart is we're not only beauty; we're a holistic beauty and wellness centre. We focus on skin correction, health and wellness. We work internally to achieve a beautiful skin inside and out. We also truly love what we do. And we never want to be out of touch with our clients. Whether it's through an SMS or a letter, we do quite a lot to keep them up-to-date.

Q *How did you tailor your services to suit local clientele?*

It was the other way around really. We focused on our strengths and passion and those skills led clients to us. We're an established area in Sydney's eastern suburbs, so the clients here are very educated, professional and family-orientated people. They're people who are prepared to spend the money if they see the value in what's being presented. They also like to develop relationships, trust and loyalty.

Q *Which skin conditions are most commonly presented?*

What I'm seeing a lot of is sensitivity, rosacea and an impaired acid mantle. In the last six years the amount of rosacea I've seen and treated has definitely increased. Our lifestyles are a lot more acidic. Harsh exposure to the elements is really breaking down our natural skin barrier defense. It's not just the acid mantle that's impaired or weakened; it's our diets, as they're more acidic than usual. There are a lot of refined foods out there, and a lot of sugar. Many people are going to therapists who are stripping their acid mantle with treatments like dermabrasion and harsh ingredients. We can't be doing that; we need to be restoring the skin.

Q *What's your most popular service/treatment and why?*

Our most popular treatment is our holistic corrective facial rejuvenation. I can proudly say that no-one else in Sydney is treating the skin this way. It's a comprehensive yet beautiful experience that comes with six modalities I'm highly-trained in.

Q *How important do you believe advertising is for your business and what types have you undertaken in the past?*

Advertising is critical; we have tried the standard routes, but print media is overblown these days and so expensive. We have a great referral system and loyalty program. Everything is advertising - the way we are, the way we present ourselves and the way we treat our clients.

Q *What product lines do you use in your clinic and why?*

We use Gernetic; we've been using it for 14 years. It's been in the industry since the 70s and it's also highly-researched and that's what I love about it. It's a very nutritious, highly-effective product range. I also love that it's made by a biochemist. He understands the cells and the nutrients cells

need to grow and re-grow. It's a very dense product in the sense that the micronutrient can infiltrate the blood supply (percutaneous) - it works in the same way as a nicotine patch or hormone replacement therapy, but in a natural form. We also use MetaGenics, because it simply is one of the highest vitamin and mineral-rich professional products on the market. And of course, Jane Iredale Mineral Make-up.

Q *What motivates you personally each day?*

I'm a very self-motivated person. I look at my value system and three of my highest values are my health, wellness and relationships. Personally, my health and wellness really motivates me. Health is so important to me. As a therapist, it's easy to let your health deteriorate when you're giving a lot all day, every day.

Q *What's your salon philosophy?*

Our philosophy is to create an environment of wellbeing and beauty in our circle of influence by providing holistic products and services with love and dedication.

Q *What is the best part about your job?*

There are so many areas I love about my career. I love consultations. I've just spent the majority of my research and training in skin diagnostics, nutrition, skin anatomy, biology and physiology. I love the aspect of accurately diagnosing the skin, and now that I've completed my advance skin analysis training (the Pastiche Method), I love the fact I can go deeper into skin diagnostics and analysis. I can now give the client more insight into their skin. I also love that the industry is well-rounded; it's not linear and is always expanding.

Q *Where do you see the beauty industry in the next five years?*

I can see products containing a lot more stem cells. Dermarolling, also known as facial acupuncture, will also become more popular. We really need to move away from the chemical peels and the stripping of the acid mantle. We need to get savvy when linking product composition to the skin composition. I can also see more wellness-based salons and centres. The boom of organics and bio-organics will also continue. Beauty and health won't be separate; it will become a merged industry. **PB**

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One of the first Sydney salons to combine beauty and wellness, HUMAN NURTURE in the stunning seaside suburb of Vauchuse works from inside the body to help you glow on the outside. SALON OWNER, NAOMI NAHOUM chats with PROFESSIONAL BEAUTY on how she and husband John combined professions to create a sanctuary of health and wellbeing.

Q *How long have you been working in the beauty business and what skills did you bring to the salon from your previous working life?*

I've been working in the beauty business for 20 years. I qualified with my Cidesco diploma in 1999. I continued working in the industry for three years before I started my natural therapies