

**My name:** Vincent

**My town:** Balaclava, Melbourne

### **My COVID19 story**

I set up a clinical and relaxation massage service in February and a month later we had to close because of COVID19. I used to be an office worker until my dad got sick. He had kidney disease and I used to massage him to relieve his pain and it helped him. I loved doing that so I decided to become a massage therapist. I love this work and I love helping people. I help them to feel better. My skills come from my country, Thailand and also training in Melbourne. I love the work that I do. I found myself and now I work without fear. Now every morning I am happy. I found the job I love.

When COVID19 hit in February I was thinking is this just like a Flu? I didn't expect it to go so viral. I am strict with personal hygiene and so are all my staff. We wear masks all the time. The COVID situation got worse and worse and we had to close for three months. During this time, I started to learn how to make candles. Later I made them and sold them online to help us survive financially.

In June we were able to reopen. A month later we had to shut again until late October. We were closed for 7 months in total. I got Job Keeper payments and the real estate agent reduced the rent to 20%. That was helpful. I was quite lucky because I also got a business grant. Unfortunately, my staff did not get Job Keeper. They were students of massage and I didn't have the budget to support them at all. Some of them had to change their career to manufacturing or farm work. Some also went back to their own country. But now they are all back on the pay roll and they are more secure. It was a very tough time. It was stressful and I thought of giving it all up. But I knew I couldn't give up. I had to fight it. I had to make it work. I said I have to stand up and fight it.

Most of my clients had to work from home. They had a lot of anxiety and were stressed about their lives. They were stressed about Covid and their isolation and most didn't have good office set up at home – so they had bad posture. I have been treating more headaches and muscle tension. Also because the gyms were closed, some clients gained weight, and that created more fatigue and tension.

I also notice now that my clients are more quiet when I massage them. They are tired and not talking as much. They feel strange because life is not yet back to normal. Coming for a massage helps them to feel that it is ok.

### **My act of kindness**

I am a good listener and I love to listen. One day a male client looked very upset. I asked if he wanted to talk to me. He started crying and told me his wife was having an affair. He was crying. I hugged him and he hugged me. This is the kindness I can give people. I don't just rub people's backs – I care about what is happening to people. I give them all support.

Website: [mypersonaltherapy.com.au](http://mypersonaltherapy.com.au)

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