



# John Gifford, LMT, CBPM, BCTMB

Bonnie Prudden Master Myotherapist® & Exercise Therapist® • Licensed Massage Therapist  
Clinician • Professional Speaker • Self-Care Training and Continuing Education Provider



[johngifford.com](http://johngifford.com)

## Missed Appointments & Cancellations

Many clients will insist they pay for their missed appointments. From a very different perspective some feel strongly against paying for a canceled appointment and will feel as if they are being gouged if asked for payment. Others feel there should be exceptions such as a sick child. Another issue can arise if clients are running late due to poor traffic conditions. Can they still expect to be seen for their full time? If not, will their fee be reduced? Which view is right? Each view is valid from its own perspective which means the policy you choose won't be comfortable for everyone.

In this practice, clients will be asked to pay their full session fee for appointments canceled with less than twelve hours notice if their reserved slot cannot be filled. I specifically say they will be "asked" for payment. The outcome is not successful if someone pays for their missed session, and then harbors resentment to the practice. As my grandma would say, "You may have won the battle, but you have lost the war." So, what if people keep cancelling yet still don't want to pay? If someone cancels the second time and they are not comfortable paying for their missed

session, we will continue to care for them; however, due to the financial risk on our part, we won't be able to book appointments in advance. In the case of running late, the client will be seen in the time originally allotted without a reduction in their fee and while we personally understand issues with traffic and illness, our practice still has a need to be reimbursed for the time reserved.

Though a practitioner may feel guilty in having to consider the financial aspect of a bodywork practice, caring for the financial needs of your practice can be seen as another way you care for your clients. They cannot benefit from your hands-on skills if your business fails. Be proactive in educating your clients on the way you need to operate your business and invite people to ask questions. However you choose to handle cancellations, remember this: clients are much more likely to respect (not to be confused with like) your important policies when they are informed before the issue can arise. Grandma speaks again: "The best time to find a doctor is before you need one." Till next time,

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-John C. Gifford, CBPM, NCTMB  
Owner, Motionwise®



John Gifford has performed over 40,000 sessions as an approved provider of sports massage and a unique style of bodywork called Bonnie Prudden Myotherapy® and Exercise Therapy®. His mission as a clinician, lecturer, consultant, and author is to empower people to lead more active, successful, and fulfilling lives through the reduction and prevention of their muscular pain and tension.