

- The client is spoken to in a demeaning or threatening manner by the accompanying individual.
- The client appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- The client does not interact with you during services or only gives single word responses.
- The client acts withdrawn, uneasy, or afraid.
- The client has tattoos or brands showing ownership (names, symbols, and so on), typically in highly visible areas.
- There is visible bruising on the client.
- The client shows signs of poor hygiene, malnourishment, or fatigue.
- Services are paid for with cash only.

### WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

Education and awareness are key to breaking this cycle. Times have changed – social media has become a major platform for sex traffickers. Social media has a dark side and has made it increasingly easy for traffickers to lure victims through insincere promises and relationships. As our use of technology increases, so will the use of it for sex trafficking. Encourage your local schools, PTA groups, and religious organizations to include educational programs about sex trafficking, the dangers of social media, and the signs to watch for. Remember that the target age for sex trafficking victims is 11 to 14 years old.

Volunteer and support anti-trafficking efforts in your community. Search for organizations in your area that are assisting victims of sex trafficking and get involved. If there is not an organization near you, start one. Know who in your community is at the highest risk of being a victim and help them find programs that can assist with their unique situations. The more active a community is, the harder it is for traffickers to blend in with everyone else.

Urge local businesses, gas stations, and restaurants to post resources in the restrooms stalls about how to get help and the phone number to the National Human Trafficking Resource Center. These signs are readily available online.

Support efforts outside your community that educate and assist victims of sex trafficking. Most organizations that work to help victims of sex trafficking and human trafficking are supported through donations from people like yourself.

Unfortunately, sex trafficking is a widespread crisis that may even affect some of our clients. We as aestheticians can play a pivotal role in identifying victims and spreading awareness. If you believe someone is in immediate danger, is being sexually exploited, or may be a victim of sex trafficking, report your suspicions to law enforcement by calling 911 or by calling the National Human Trafficking Resource Center hotline at 1-888-373-7888 or texting “BEFREE” or “HELP” to 233733. Additional resources can always be found at [humantraffickinghotline.org](http://humantraffickinghotline.org).

## Make Like a Tree: The Benefits of Forest Bathing



**F**orest bathing, or Shinrin-yoku, has recently stepped into the spotlight within the wellness community as this Japanese practice now finds itself at the forefront of wellness and spa retreats. Forest bathing melds nature with mindfulness to not only improve health, but also boost immunity and mood.

With help from a trained guide, wellness seekers can indulge in the beauty of nature while releasing their mind. Forest bathers are accompanied by a guide who leads the individuals towards certain areas of the forest for cultivating a deep connection to nature. Forest therapy is a practice that can be implemented every day. The practice allows the forest bathers to walk and awe at nature's power and beauty, while remaining transformed by the impact the earth and nature has on human life.

Many forest walkers experience lowered blood pressure levels, increased parasympathetic nerve activity, and overall stress relief. Many wellness professionals see forest bathing as a way to release tension and anxiety. Most individuals spend almost 100% of their time indoors and are not frequently outside for more than 30 minutes a day. By engaging in forest bathing, many individuals see immediate results such as:

- boosted immune system function
- reduced blood pressure
- reduced stress
- improved mood
- increased energy level
- improved sleep

Forest bathing is a simple way to incorporate fresh air and sunlight into a daily routine. Wellness and retreat spas see this as an added bonus for helping individuals find peace and tranquility during their stay.