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Gunnur Unver-Arnold

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—Dr. Kevin Cross, Cross Medical Group



Gunnur Unver-Arnold

An Oasis Built Just for Her

At **GUNNUR HOLISTIC MASSAGE FOR WOMEN** in Narberth, women who crave restoration in mind, body, and spirit enjoy a calming escape cultivated exclusively for them.

BY **JENNIFER UPDIKEE**
PHOTOS BY **JODY ROBINSON**

Whether they're fulfilling multiple roles at home—wives, mothers, and caregivers—or working as professionals, executives, and business owners, women lead lives that overflow with responsibilities and problems to solve. The burdens seem to get heavier by the day. Regrettably, many women permit themselves to seek out some expertly guided R and R only after they have reached the point of mental, emotional, and physical exhaustion.

Gunnur Unver-Arnold and her husband, Jordan Arnold, founded Gunnur Holistic Massage for Women on two shared beliefs: one, that women need to reliably practice self-care in order to perform at a high level in all aspects of their lives; and two, that women deserve to make time for themselves in a place that looks and feels as if it was made specifically for them.

"Many of my clients come to us carrying much more than physical tension," says Unver-Arnold. "They may be dealing with demanding careers, family responsibilities, personal challenges, or simply the constant pressure of a busy life. When they walk through our doors, I want them to feel that, even if only for an hour or two, those concerns can fade into the background."

Entering Gunnur Holistic Massage for Women feels like an undoing, in the best possible way. From the calming ambience to the professionalism of the all-female staff to the high-quality oils used in each massage, Unver-Arnold carefully designed every aspect of the experience to help women feel fully at ease. It begins the moment a client enters the treatment room and the door closes quietly behind her. As the therapist works her magic, tension releases and knots dissipate, the body on its way to a state of complete relaxation.

Whether a client opts for a full-body massage or a facial massage, each targeted therapy is crafted to make her feel more like herself. One area of specialty, known as lymphatic massage, can facilitate a woman's recovery from a cosmetic, reconstructive, and other surgical procedure. Kevin J. Cross, M.D., a board-certified plastic surgeon with Cross Medical Group, which has offices in Philadelphia and Villanova, is one of the medical professionals who have partnered with Gunnur Holistic Massage for Women to provide this specialized brand of postoperative care for their patients.

"As an aesthetic plastic surgeon, my reputation comes down to patient results and patient recovery," Dr. Cross shares. "The best result in the world is only as good as the patient experience, and the patient experience is largely determined by recovery time. Gunnur Holistic Massage [for Women], and specifically their technique and skill in lymphatic massage, has been such an incredible partner in our ability to get patients recovered quickly.

"The team is as advanced and skilled as anyone in the region for postsurgical lymphatic drainage and reduction of inflammation," he continues. "They help my patients get back out in the world enjoying their results as quickly as possible, especially the challenging patients with delayed or





prolonged postoperative edema."

Suburban Life spoke with Unver-Arnold about the personal attention, specialized expertise, and welcoming atmosphere women can expect when they enter the spa-like atmosphere of Gunnur Holistic Massage for Women in Narberth, which, quite tellingly, has more than 160 five-star reviews on Google and MassageBook.

Q&A

You created Gunnur Holistic Massage for Women for women only. How does the environment help make women feel seen, safe, and like they can drop their armor?

What makes our practice different is that we don't approach massage as simply another appointment or service. We see each woman as an individual, with her own experiences, physical needs, emotional stresses, and personal goals. When they come here, they don't have to be the boss, the mother, the wife, or the person everyone depends on. For that time they spend with us, they can simply be themselves.

Our female therapists provide all hands-on services. This arrangement allows us to maintain the privacy, comfort, and atmosphere that are so important to our clients. From the way our studio looks, to the way it smells, to the way it sounds, I want every woman to feel that she can relax, trust the experience, and know that her comfort and well-being are our highest priorities.

How do you work to understand each client's needs and make sure those needs are met?

The most important part of any treatment begins before the massage itself. We get to understand each woman's health history, physical concerns, and what she hopes to achieve from her visit. We also take time to talk. I ask how she's feeling, what is happening in her body, where she may be experiencing discomfort or tension, and what she needs most that day.

Massage is not a fixed routine for me. I listen to what my client tells me, pay attention to how her body responds, and adapt the treatment accordingly. When a woman's tension has softened, her shoulders have relaxed, and she leaves with a different expression than the one she arrived with, I know we've not only done our job, but we've also accomplished something meaningful.

What do you enjoy most about working with clients?

What I love about massage is that it allows me to communicate with people through touch, attention, and understanding. Every



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Gunnur Holistic Massage for Women

450 N. Narberth Ave., Suites 3 and 4
Narberth, PA 19072
www.gunnur.net
info@gunnur.net

client's body tells a different story. I enjoy the challenge of understanding what someone needs and finding ways to help her feel better. The greatest reward is seeing the transformation that can happen during a session.

Please tell me about your background and training.

I was born and raised in Turkey, where I earned my bachelor's degree in Physical Education from Black Sea University. I'm a Licensed Massage Therapist in Pennsylvania with 20 years of experience in massage therapy and bodywork. Throughout my career, I've continued to build on that foundation through advanced training and certifications in specialized massage techniques, always looking for ways to provide my clients with the highest level of care.

One of the highlights of my professional training was traveling to New York to study with Joanna Tringali, a nationally recognized expert in facial massage known for her innovative approach to natural facial lifting and sculpting. I had the opportunity to work directly with Joanna and earn my certification in the Joanna Tringali Method. Her approach combines buccal massage, myofascial release, lymphatic drainage, and gua sha to release facial tension, reduce puffiness, improve circulation, and promote a naturally lifted, more youthful appearance—all without injections or invasive procedures. Drawing on this training and my own years of experience, I developed my own signature approach to natural facial rejuvenation, incorporating these techniques into treatments tailored to each client's individual needs.

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> **—DR. KEVIN CROSS, CROSS MEDICAL GROUP**

Over the years, I've developed my own approach to massage, combining the techniques I've studied with the experience and intuition that come from working with clients for two decades. I believe that when someone trusts me with their body and well-being, I have a responsibility to continually refine my skills and deliver thoughtful, individualized care. My goal has always been to help women not only look and feel their best, but leave each session feeling restored, renewed, and genuinely cared for.

What are the benefits of a Gunnur Holistic Massage for Women membership?

Our membership program was created to encourage women to make their own well-being a consistent priority. You don't have to wait until you're completely exhausted, overwhelmed, or experiencing physical discomfort to take care of yourself. We want to help change that pattern. Our hope is that every client leaves a session feeling not only better physically, but also appreciated, renewed, and more connected to herself.

What are your goals for the practice going forward?

As we grow, we want to maintain the personal attention and care of a family-owned business while expanding our range of sophisticated, specialized services to meet the evolving needs of women.

Whenever we have a new therapist join our team, I consider the ability to listen, connect, and genuinely care for other people just as important as her technical expertise. A wonderful example of this is the recent addition of Valentina Agudelo to our team. Valentina is incredible with clients, because she cares so deeply. Her addition has also helped us expand our services to include craniosacral therapy, myofascial release, reflexology, and restorative abdominal bodywork, plus abdominal massage, castor oil wraps, and guidance on at-home self-care.

We see ourselves as a destination for women who value exceptional care, privacy, and a genuinely personal experience. We'll continue to build on that vision by having a team of talented professionals who share our philosophy of offering women increasingly specialized treatments in an atmosphere that is private, welcoming, and made just for them. ■