

Tab 2

Touch HighQ for Therapists

Embodied, consent-forward support that complements therapy

Many clients come to therapy with struggles that are not only emotional or cognitive, but embodied.

They may be dealing with anxiety, chronic vigilance, numbness, loneliness, grief, relational confusion, loss of agency, identity shifts, or difficulty sensing and expressing what they want.

Therapy can help clients understand these patterns.

Touch HighQ gives them a structured place to practice something different in the body.

Touch HighQ offers nonsexual, consent-forward, body-based experiences that help clients build regulation, agency, and relational capacity through choice-based touch exploration.

Why refer to Touch HighQ?

Therapists can help clients process boundaries, consent, attachment, fear, and relationship patterns, but most cannot provide embodied touch practice inside the therapeutic relationship.

Touch HighQ offers a separate, ethical, structured space where clients can explore safety, comfort, boundaries, requests, refusal, and bodily awareness in real time.

This can be especially useful for clients who struggle to:

- notice a yes, no, maybe, or freeze response
- stay connected to themselves while near another person
- ask for comfort, adjustment, or space
- receive care without bracing or performing
- identify what feels good, neutral, unwelcome, or overwhelming
- practice boundaries in the body, not just in theory

The triadic approach

I think of this work as a triadic model:

1. Therapist

Holds the clinical relationship, therapeutic goals, emotional processing, and case conceptualization.

2. Client or couple

Brings their lived experience, needs, patterns, fears, and hopes.

3. Touch HighQ

Provides a structured, non-clinical, consent-forward environment for embodied practice.

This creates a clear division of labor.

The therapist helps clients make meaning.

Touch HighQ helps clients practice safety, choice, connection, and self-awareness in the body.

The client returns to therapy with more language, more clarity, and more usable experience.

Three areas of support

Regulation

For clients who may benefit from embodied support around:

- anxiety
- chronic bracing or vigilance
- shutdown or numbness
- loneliness and lack of safe touch
- grief
- difficulty settling into comfort or connection

Agency

For clients working to rebuild:

- boundaries
- self-trust
- voice
- consent capacity
- the ability to notice and honor hesitation
- a stronger felt sense of choice

Relationship

For clients who want to strengthen:

- communication about needs and preferences
- comfort with closeness
- touch literacy
- receiving and declining touch
- the ability to stay present to themselves while with another person

Services

Touch HighQ Labs

Small-group experiences focused on nonsexual touch, consent, boundaries, and relational self-awareness.

Labs may include fully optional, low-stakes exercises such as:

- proximity and orientation
- shoulder-to-shoulder contact
- hand holding
- making requests
- declining or renegotiating touch
- noticing body cues
- helping one person become more comfortable through requested support

No one is ever required to touch anyone or be touched.

Everything is invitational and choice-based.

Private Sessions

One-on-one or paired sessions for clients who would benefit from a more tailored environment.

These sessions can support:

- boundary practice
- comfort with asking and adjusting
- voice and self-advocacy
- sensory and touch awareness
- nonsexual intimacy skills
- greater self-possession in the body

Therapist Collaboration

I work with therapists who want a trusted referral partner for clients needing embodied, practical, consent-forward exploration outside the therapy room.

This may include:

- referrals for individuals
- referrals for couples
- customized groups for a therapist's clients
- collaborative conversations about fit and scope

Important boundaries

Touch HighQ is not psychotherapy.

It is not sexual touch.

It is not sex work.

It is structured, nonsexual, embodied practice rooted in consent, choice, communication, and clear boundaries.

About Dr. Alissa Gardenhire

I am a Harvard-trained qualitative researcher and embodied facilitator with more than 16 years of experience studying people's lives, systems, and behavior. Through Touch HighQ, I now bring that depth of inquiry into the body.

I create spaces where people can explore consent, connection, comfort, and self-possession through structured, nonsexual, consent-forward experiences.

Referral and collaboration

Touch HighQ may be a fit for therapists seeking an ethical, thoughtful referral option for clients who need embodied support alongside therapy.

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