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Bowen - an amazing treatment for back pain et al

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15-Jun-2011, Janey Lee Grace

Here's a specially revised extract on Touch Therapies and specifically The Bowen technique from 'Imperfectly Natural Woman' by Janey Lee Grace followed by a press release about Sarah Yearsley Bowen practitioner.



The power of touch is amazing. Have you ever seen how elderly people respond when touched or cuddled by children? Or pets for that matter, there was a scheme a few years back where a charity took friendly dogs into care homes for elderly people to stroke. I believe we can actually boost our immune systems when we are stroked and touched. It can help with our response to pain and

increase our feelings of well being.

Most of us don't think of treating ourselves to a therapeutic touch session. We just expect our bodies to do their thing day in day out and feel greatly miffed when we develop a pain or a pulled muscle. In truth if we all had regular treatments as a preventive measure we would probably have far less aches and pains and we'd certainly have an increased sense of well being.

All the many forms and styles of touch therapies have different things to offer for different people. Personally I love Aromatherapy, but make sure you find a practitioner with 'healing hands' who really understands and intuitively knows how to blend essential oils, Reflexology, but again don't get someone who is just 'fiddling with your feet - a good reflexologist will be able to diagnose and treat a whole variety of ailments. You have to literally find 'what works for you' and absolutely above all get a recommendation to a good therapist) A good starting point is [The Federation of Holistic Therapists](#). A fairly well kept secret and the one that was a revelation for me was....

The Bowen Technique

Go with me back to 1999, I was one of those women who was due to have millennium baby (and no it was not planned that way!) I was 7 months gone, and on my way to co host on 'Steve Wright in the Afternoon' for the BBC. Up until this point I'd been literally 'blooming marvellous.' but for the first time in my life (without revealing my age, save to say the hospital records showed 'Primagravida') I was racked by excruciating back pain. It hurt like hell. I could barely walk, let alone lift anything, and it felt like I was dragging round a huge ball and chain.

Helpful midwives and friends all cheerily informed me that back pain was common in pregnancy, and "not to worry, it will probably go after the birth." I didn't particularly care for 2 more months of mild agony, so I decided to throw money at it. Aromatherapy relaxed me, but there was no real pain relief. Osteopathy, a bit more heavy duty to say the least, didn't work either.

I turned to my wonderful natural birth 'guru' Gowri Motha who recommended I see a Bowen practitioner. She'd been having good results with pregnant women. I was willing to try anything so off I hobbled off to meet her. She was an unlikely looking 'healer'. Not you're regular floaty new age hippy type smelling faintly of patchouli, but more a regular, calmly confident style former NHS Director of Nursing. I'd never heard of the Bowen technique but the practitioner Fiona explained it a little as she went along. "Bowen is not a miracle," she told me, "but it is amazing! It was devised by Australian Tom Bowen, working alongside Osteopaths before developing the treatment on animals". (At this point my shoulders tensed a little). She goes on... "Physios, Osteopaths and Doctors are now training to practise Bowen, but it's not actually 'officially' recognised." She had a track record in successfully treating

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lower back pain, RSI, migraine, hayfever, arthritis, MS, and worse. "Sometimes one treatment is all that's needed" she told me. Chequebook in hand, I vehemently decided that I was all hers.

I lay down, fully clothed and Fiona gently stimulated and 'rolled' muscles which in turn (I'm told) stimulated a nervous response in my brain saying 'listen Brain, there's a problem here, please sort it.' With a Bowen treatment it's your body that actually takes on the information and starts to action it. It's painless and I could hardly feel it. After a few little 'moves' though, she quietly left the room. This is the point where you may suspect a charlatan at work, but it's all for a good reason. It "allows the body's energies solo space in which to heal"



20 minutes later, and she had finished, leaving me alone again to 'cook' as she called it. I had to pace around the room and drink lots of water, continuously, every hour, interesting when you're eight months pregnant because you pee for England every few minutes anyway! but would Bowen have convinced my body to decide to heal its own muscular problems? Well I had limped in to see her as if carrying the weight of the world on my lumber region but lo, after the session I leaped up the steps from the basement treatment room like a veritable miracle from the New Testament!

Back "on air" I was waxing lyrical. Now, some of you may know that my fellow broadcasters, Steve Wright and Tim Smith have me down as a bit cosmic and new age anyway, so after much cackling, and impressions of 'Jim Bowen', Tim bet me that the treatment wouldn't work on his tennis elbow. He had tried everything and was now taking drugs for it, even considering an operation. After one session - sweet relief, after two - cured. Ever the cynic, he was totally converted. Many listeners called me after that little plug on air, including a guy whose elderly mother heard me talking about the 'bone lady'. This 82-year-old woman who could barely walk after a nasty fall had one treatment, and is now another satisfied and totally amazed customer. I've since had great reports from a friend who has been 'cured' of early onset arthritis, a neighbour who was told he'd never walk again but is now driving, walking, and back on the golf course.

So does it work for everyone? Fiona says it's not always a total cure, but in her experience it almost always alleviates symptoms. I'm convinced that it is an amazing treatment, though I would guess it depends on the quality of the practitioner. It's important that they know how to treat the whole body. Our bodies are amazing, and as Hippocrates said, "the body has the innate ability to heal itself, provided it's given the opportunity to do so."

A treatment usually costs around £45 but the beauty is you rarely need many.

For further info: www.thebowentechnique.co.uk
and www.bowen-therapy.co.uk

'Imperfectly Natural Woman – getting life right the natural way' - published by Crown House Publishing £12.99

See below for a press release from Sarah Yearsley -

Bowen Therapy helps chronic pain roll of your back

According to a recent report* there are eight million chronic pain sufferers in Britain alone. **Most problems involve the back, which costs the nation £12.3billion annually, in health bills and lost productivity.** GPs tend to refer patients to chiropractors, physiotherapists, acupuncturists and in some cases suggest surgery, with no guarantee of success. Bowen Therapy is an alternative therapy which has slowly but surely been sweeping the nation over the last 20 years.

The Bowen Technique is a natural, drug-free non-invasive complementary therapy which was invented in Australia and introduced to the UK in the 1990's. Bowen Therapy has a particularly strong record of success in the treatment of back pain. A national study, carried out by The Bowen Therapy Professional Association (BTPA) in the summer of 2006, showed that 95 per cent of back pain sufferers experienced either complete relief or a marked improvement, after a series of no more than three Bowen

treatments.

It prides itself on being able to trigger the body's own healing systems. Rather than 'making' the body change, Bowen 'asks' the body to recognise and make the changes it requires. With primarily fingers and thumbs, the Bowen practitioner makes small, rolling movements over muscles, tendons, ligaments and soft tissue at precise points on the body, using only the amount of pressure appropriate for that individual. No hard-tissue manipulation or force is needed or used. Between each set of moves, the body is allowed to rest for a few minutes, to allow it to absorb the information it has received and initiate the healing process.

Bowen is generally pleasant to receive, each session lasting 30 – 60 minutes, depending on the age of the client and the nature of their condition. Many clients become so relaxed they fall asleep during the treatment.

Short-term (acute) injury may be resolved in one to three Bowen treatments, while long-standing (chronic) conditions may require longer. A gap of five to ten days is recommended between Bowen sessions; so that the body can process the subtle information it has been given. As well as back pain Bowen Therapy also may help with a host of other health issues such as: frozen shoulders, sports injuries, whiplash, migraine, hay fever, asthma, IBS, fertility matters to name but a few.

Brighton Bowen therapist, Sarah Yearsley, has treated Channel 4's Born Survivor Bear Grylls for many years now. Grylls says of his Bowen treatments with Sarah "It (Bowen) has helped keep my body together despite the continual bashing it takes," he explains: "It's a vital support in putting right a whole range of new aches and pains, making sure that old injuries don't cause me problems, and helping me fight stress and fatigue."

As with many other alternative therapies the success of a treatment mainly depends on visiting a legitimate, well trained practitioner, like Sarah Yearsley who is a member of BTPA (The Bowen Therapy Professional Association). BTPA is the largest UK professional association for qualified Bowen Therapists. Members of this association are qualified in Anatomy & Physiology and First Aid. They are also fully insured, abide by a strict code of conduct and ethics and are committed to a programme of continuing professional development.

For further information on Bowen Therapy, registered BTPA members in your area, how to become a BTPA member and/or testimonials visit www.bowen-therapy.co or call 0844 561 7173

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