

Bowen

Therapy for the whole family

Diagnosed as asthmatic at the age of two months, James was having to use his facial 'pump' up to four times a day. He seemed to have a permanent cough and cold, was wheezing all the time and regularly suffered from croup. His mother heard about the Bowen Technique, a complementary therapy that involves a series of mainly gentle movements. After three treatments the wheezing had gone and James no longer needed his pump. His health improved dramatically.

That's just one of many stories I've heard in my years as a Bowen therapist. There are many examples of the therapy making a significant difference across a whole range of conditions, enhancing the lives of the people who are treated and their families.

What can Bowen do?

The Bowen Technique is one of Europe's fastest-growing complementary therapies. First developed by Tom Bowen (1916–1982) in Australia, it was brought to Britain in 1993. Bowen studied many forms of remedial bodywork, and other methods of healing, incorporating what he felt was most effective from each into what we now know as the Bowen Technique.

There are several theories as to how Bowen works. Many of the moves made by a Bowen practitioner are on recognised trigger points, acupuncture points and meridians, neurolymphatic reflex points, golgi receptor cells and joint proprioceptors. One of the most profound effects Bowen can have is on the autonomic nervous system – which controls over 80% of bodily functions – releasing stress at a very deep level.

Bowen has been shown to help with muscular and skeletal problems and with problems such as arthritis, asthma, hay fever, eczema, migraine, IBS and stress. It can help babies with colic or clicky hips, young children

who have glue ear or earache, who bed-wet, or who suffer from allergies, croup, psoriasis or sinusitis, and those who have suffered trauma or exhibit behavioural problems such as ADHD. Several practitioners specialise in helping children affected by cerebral palsy, dyspraxia or autism, with very positive results.

Bowen can support a family during conception, pregnancy and beyond. It can help women with breast pain, pre-eclampsia, symphysis pubic dysfunction, malposition or malpresentation, perineal discomfort, haemorrhoids or mastitis.

The treatment

Using only thumbs and fingers, the Bowen therapist makes small, rolling movements over muscles, tendons and soft tissue at precise points on the body. This effectively rewrites the message being received by the brain, which then triggers a re-aligning, self-healing response in the body. The pressure exerted is gauged by the practitioner according to the age and physical condition of the client and can range from very gentle moves for a tiny baby to more robust moves for an athlete with a sports injury.

A treatment normally takes between 45 minutes and an hour and includes periods of rest to allow the body to absorb the information it has received and initiate the healing process. Some clients become so relaxed that they fall asleep during the session. Acute injury is usually resolved in one to three treatments, whilst chronic conditions may require several more. Many people return regularly for 'top-up' treatments, to boost their feeling of health and wellbeing and to strengthen their immune systems.

My fellow practitioners and I are convinced that many people would benefit from Bowen if only they knew about it. ●



Written by Christine Burd
Photos courtesy of BTER

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