

# Controlling Ménière's Disease with The Bowen Technique

*By Lindsey Sandy*

I have been reading Spin Magazine [the magazine of the Ménière's Society] for years and have found it a "friend in need" during the many dark moments that come with Ménière's disease. However, I do remember in the desperate times with the illness, getting very depressed reading about people's bad experiences and preferring to read the positive stories and try out any advice. I promised that if I did find a "breakthrough" that I would send an article that might lift people's spirits. I am still on my "journey" but feel the time is right to write this and if it can help just one person, then it is worth it!

I had been struggling with Ménière's Disease for many years when I read a letter in Spin Magazine recommending McTimoney chiropractic treatments. Unfortunately, McTimoney was not the answer to my prayers but the practitioner did notice that there was a problem with my jaw being out of alignment. A friend then recommended another therapy called The Bowen Technique, which she thought might help with my jaw. I had never heard of Bowen before but it was a major breakthrough for me and it has changed my life and enabled me to control my Ménière's disease. I found a wonderful therapist and I still have treatments to keep my body balanced.

The Bowen Technique is a very relaxing treatment, which is non-manipulative, and works on the whole body, physical, emotional and mental. Bowen literally resets the body to heal itself and balance is restored. The treatment consists of a series of gentle rolling moves, using a light touch and can even be done through clothing. There is a brilliant move called the TMJ (jaw), which releases the jaw, the neck, and the ears. This move, along with standard body release moves managed to stop my Ménière's attacks. Even the deafness in my left ear has gone although I am still working on the tinnitus.

I began to cope with my life from that moment and was so impressed with the Bowen Technique that I decided to learn it myself. I packed in my job and I have been a Bowen therapist for the last two and a half years. Bowen never ceases to amaze me, and I love seeing people get well. I have had no further attacks, although I would never say that I have permanently beaten Ménière's Disease. However, if the attacks do return, I know that Bowen will balance me. One of my clients also suffered badly from Ménière's. I could empathise with him, sensing his fear as he tried to cope with Ménière's, but Bowen worked its magic and he is free from attacks.

I don't think anyone, unless they have experienced Ménière's Disease, can understand how it can control your every waking moment.

I spent years desperately trying to find a "cure" for my Ménière's which I have found so frightening, debilitating and isolating. My family and my doctor have been very supportive but following the diagnosis from the consultant, I was given very little information other than it was incurable. My doctor did give me details of the Ménière's Society and a prescription for Serc and Stemetil. As with many others of you, I have read everything I can about the disease in the hope of finding something that will help. Four years ago I was having regular severe attacks, was virtually deaf in my left ear and had experienced the dreaded "drop attack". That has to have been the worst nightmare. In desperation I tried every therapy going, but nothing worked until I found Bowen and then I began to live my life again rather than allowing Ménière's to control me!

Although it might seem strange to some of you, I have to say that Ménière's actually made me get on with my life. My doctor had warned that the attacks would get worse as the disease progressed and I would probably go completely deaf in my left ear and that it might go across to the other ear. I started a lip-reading course immediately and as I had always wanted to travel, I started travelling the world, blocking out my fear.

My first trip was to New Zealand and Australia via Hong Kong. I must admit that I was terrified because I had a very severe Ménière's attack lasting three weeks before I went and as I was doing the first leg of the journey on my own, and having a 3-day trip to the Barrier Reef on my own at the end of the holiday, I did question my sanity a few times. However, with the help of Halls Mentholated sweets to clear my airways on the ascent and descent of flights (a brilliant tip), I coped really well.

I also put a note in my passport to warn people just in case I had an attack while I was on my own, that I was not drunk or on drugs! I have always believed in the quotation "feel the fear and do it anyway!" but The Bowen Technique has been the answer to my prayers! I have always felt that if you have the tools (Bowen) to deal with things, and I am still learning more tools, then you can cope with whatever life throws at you!

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