

# Bowen therapy

by Jennifer Parker

**T**his therapy is an intriguing modality, with multi-levels of application.

Many people are now aware of Bowen, and the fast and highly effective results this bodywork can produce. It is a non-invasive treatment that can be done through clothes. Comprising small gentle moves on soft tissue, it is safe to use on anyone, from newborns to the aged, immobile and hospitalised. The muscles and tendons are gently manoeuvred cross-fibre, and this stimulates energy flow, restoring the body's own resources to heal itself. Working on all levels - physical, emotional, mental and spiritual - it has been described as the homeopathy of bodywork.

Bowen's underlying assumption is that bodily dysfunctions are a result of disturbances in the tissues. The universal life energy (chi, prana, mana) must flow freely throughout the body for full health. The dynamic system of moves reinstates this natural flow, restoring structural and therefore functional integrity to the body, thus keeping nature in balance. The key to this technique's success is its holistic action; which means that areas of the body which have not been directly treated often respond.

When the body is worked holistically, according to the law of natural cures "the body can be treated as a whole, without referral to named disease". Although there is no situation that cannot safely be treated with Bowen, the person is being treated rather than the condition or disease itself.

Therefore there is every chance that any complaint will improve after receiving Bowen. Musculo-skeletal problems such as a frozen shoulder, back pain, systemic problems such as menstrual irregularities, digestive and respiratory problems, stress related symptoms, bed-wetting in children, general malaise, even jetlag, all respond favourably to Bowen work.

At the very least, patients can expect to get off the table with a wonderful feeling of lightness, calmness and peace of mind. Many habitual worriers have come back saying that they just couldn't muster up the energy to find something to worry about. The treatment itself is like a meditation.

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Treatments can be done through clothing, and sessions generally last around 30 minutes to one hour, depending on the client's condition.

Another advantage of Bowen therapy is that there are virtually no contra-indications. It can be used even in acute situations, where other forms of therapy might be avoided. In fact, as far as Bowen is concerned, the more acute the better.

Throughout the treatment, in between each set of moves, the practitioner will leave the client alone in the treatment room. The length of the breaks will vary from client to client, and with different procedures, usually around two minutes. These pauses give the body's computer time to process the moves, and direct healing energy to where it is needed. It also serves the purpose of blocking any interference from the practitioner, in the healing process.

Bowen therapists adopt a wonderful assumption, that the human body knows more about fixing itself than any practitioner ever will. The technique can be described as this: if you walk into a cold dark house and flick the switches, you can get the heating and lights on. Bowen gets the body's healing processes up and running.

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Bowen simply prompts the body into doing its own healing. There is no conscious manipulation or energy transfer from the practitioner. Bowen honours and allows the body's healing intelligence to get on with the healing

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process, doing what it knows best.

It's not up to the Bowen therapists to decide what's broken and what needs fixing. Their role is to facilitate the stimulation of energy flows, so that your healing intelligence can direct where this energy should be sent - be it a conscious or unconscious decision. The best healings occur when therapists get out of their own way, allowing the infinite healing energy available between the universe and the patient to go to work.

Each individual body will decide where the healing energy, which is activated by the Bowen moves, should go first to bring the body,

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mind and spirit back into complete harmony. Everyone's body tells its own unique story, a most fascinating process, as no two clients are the same. The next step is to bring this story into conscious awareness, thus empowering patients to come to the realisation, that they are their own healers.

This realisation is created by getting patients to become aware of their body, in the two-minute waiting period. People will see, hear, feel and sometimes even smell and taste those indicators that piece their healing

story together. There is a never-ending range of possibilities. Some will see colours, or a picture will flash of some injury or event that was the original cause of the presenting problem. Some will hear guidance as to what they need to do in the form of a lifestyle change, or what they need to release inside in order to move beyond the pain.

Most will feel sensations in different parts of their body, which highlights where their body is prioritising its healing needs. The sensations can be anything from tingling, pins and needles, numbness, heaviness, to warmth and coolness around the body. Some people can feel the flowing energy very precisely, and this will invariably relate to the

meridian flows around the body.

This process has a twofold purpose. It tells the practitioner exactly what moves are needed for the problem, and also wakes up patients to their own healing powers within. Relevant injuries from the past, which have sometimes been forgotten, and body parts that are compensating for imbalance, are revealed. The healing journey of the body that unfolds, by taking Bowen to the next level, is unique to each individual. No two identical problems on different bodies will necessarily tell the same story.

One client suffered from pain in his right hip. He could feel sensations in the left leg whilst having a treatment. This reminded him of an accident he had eight years before, where he had injured his left leg. He came to the realisation that the hip pain had started after this accident, by way of compensation. His body was telling him that the left leg needed to be brought back into balance first, in order to heal the hip pain.

Bowen, used in this way, is a hugely empowering tool that brings more conscious awareness of the body and its workings. The process installs a deep tuning ability in you, so that you can discover for yourself what your body is telling you at any time. You get an undeniable experience that you are actually healing yourself, instead of the practitioner fixing it for you. This ultimately brings great self-confidence and significant results. The more conscious awareness you open up to, the more enlightenment you download into your system.

Everyone has the ability to tap into their own healing intelligence. This process elevates a treatment from remedial to regenerative. Applying this deeper application of Bowen therapy brings this healing ability into your conscious awareness, and the realisation that you can tap into this knowledge anywhere at any time. This then leads you into paying more attention to your body, because the ability to notice and acknowledge the more subtle energy signals has also been brought to light.

One client reported that during the week following a treatment, which got rid of her shoulder pain, she became aware of what was going on in her head when her shoulder started to niggle with pain again. She decided to work towards

changing these damaging thought patterns. Prior to this, the pain just appeared without her knowing the cause. She simply changed her thoughts and the pain disappeared.

Pain in the body is the soul's last resort at trying to attract your attention. There are many far more subtle signposts that you can become aware of. This process installs within you the ability to be aware of the earlier warning signals when you are going against the grain. You inevitably get yourself into the routine of taking responsibility for your own health on a deeper level, as you become aware of how you caused the problem in the first place. When you can get to the cause of the problem, you can bring about the desired change in your life.

Just like people, animals become sore, tired, depressed, irritable and suffer injuries or genetic dis-ease. They are also being treated with great results and more and more people are requesting this gentle therapy for their pets. From race horses to dogs, animals respond very rapidly to Bowen therapy, and they love it. Because animals don't hold as much 'stuff' as humans, and because they live in the now, results are often immediate - seemingly miraculous.

Why not enhance your experience of

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well-being, or that of your animals, by experiencing Bowen therapy. This gentle body therapy has improved the quality of many lives - let it touch yours.