

● In the clinic

Bowen Technique provides the only answer for Coronation Street's Jack

A gentle pain-relieving therapy has worked wonders for this Street star. "Try it, and you may get one heck of a surprise!" says actor Bill Tarmey.

Bill Tarmey – one of *Coronation Street's* best loved characters, Jack Duckworth – found his life transformed by the Bowen Technique. Bill is convinced that without Bowen he'd still be suffering great misery from severe and continuing pain in his muscles and joints, especially at night.

For more than a year his nights were ruined by being woken up three or four times by intense pain in his shoulders, arms and hips. "It was a really upsetting and distressing time," he explains. "I was desperate to find an answer."

The sleepless nights were affecting his ability to be properly focused on the *Coronation Street* set. "Ironically, I'd previously been cured of sleep apnoea, which had caused me to fall asleep on the set," he says. "But almost as soon as that was sorted, I started to have sleep problems for an

entirely different reason."

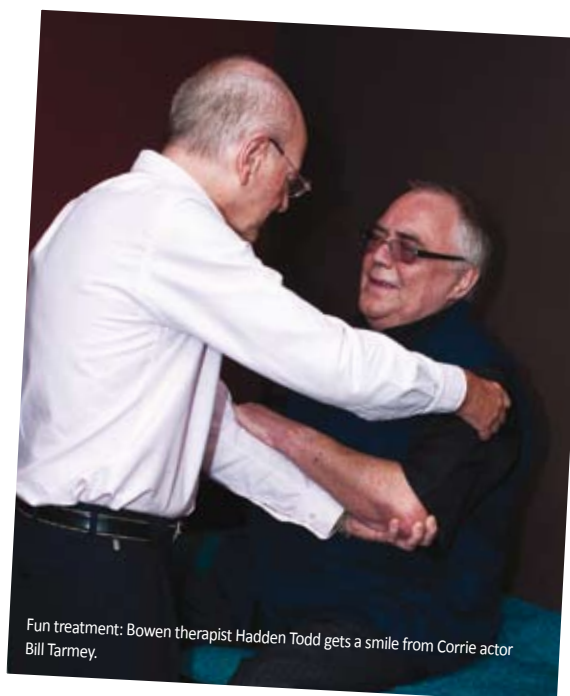
He had tried all the conventional treatments for his pain. He didn't want any more surgery – "I'd had enough of people going inside me" – but he was willing to try anything else. "I would literally have done whatever anybody suggested – including standing on one leg playing a banjo – if I'd thought it would help."

He found out about Bowen through his brother and arranged to see Manchester-based therapist Hadden Todd. Hadden explained that Bowen would almost certainly help, although the fact that his problems were so intense meant that it would take up to three treatments before the full effect would be felt. "I made sure that I had those three treatments in three weeks, the minimum time," explains Bill.

Wonders

By the third visit, Bowen had achieved wonders. "The difference for me was enormous, really enormous," says Bill. "Even in that short time, I simply wasn't waking up any more – and the most I have felt since has been a dull ache."

Though he retires shortly from *Coronation Street*, he now has a "maintenance" Bowen session every four to six weeks – and it's become a family thing! Bill was so impressed by Bowen that he suggested it



Fun treatment: Bowen therapist Hadden Todd gets a smile from Corrie actor Bill Tarmey.

to his wife, who had been attending pain clinics with a spinal problem for some 15 years. "She now has Bowen regularly, just like me," he explains, "and my daughter is also having Bowen."

Gentle

He is puzzled by the unwillingness of doctors to suggest Bowen as a possible solution. "If they know about it, I can't understand why they don't gently recommend it," he says. "It's not as though the Bowen therapist is going to stick knives or darts in you!"

Bill now recommends Bowen to anyone who is experiencing pain. "The point is, Bowen is so gentle in comparison to other hands-on treatments: no one is going to throw you around the room by your legs – so it at the very least it can't do any harm.

"I say give it a go before there's any talk of surgery or other more drastic treatment. Try Bowen ... and like me, you may get one heck of a surprise."

■ Bowen therapist Hadden Todd practises at Reborn Holistic & Beauty, 264 Manchester Road, Audenshaw, M34 5GJ; 0161 292 1320.



Always welcome: Bill is greeted outside the clinic by Hadden and inside by Amita Patel.



Bowen: succeeding in difficult times

Relieving stress, restoring balance and promoting healing: it's been a breakthrough year for the acceptance and recognition of the Bowen Technique, explains Christine Burd.

Bowen has always been recognised as a therapy that can help with a remarkably wide range of conditions: musculo-skeletal problems of all sorts, including sciatica, tennis elbow, RSI, carpal tunnel syndrome and frozen shoulder; arthritis, asthma, hay fever, eczema, migraine and IBS; colic, high/low blood pressure, pre- and post-natal problems, hormonal imbalance, and even fertility.

Bowen has won a reputation for being able to tackle difficult, hard-to-treat conditions and is also flourishing in difficult economic times. The past year has been a particularly important one for the drug-free, non-invasive, hands-on therapy which came to the UK in the 1990s. And not just because a *Coronation Street* actor has gone public about how much it has helped him! It is now one of the nationally-recognised, Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council - registered therapies, which should encourage its acceptance by the NHS and by health insurance companies. And as the recession continues, with all its consequent pressures, the help Bowen can offer to those affected by stress and depression – and those desperate to return to work – has been brought very much into focus.

Bowen is safe for people of literally all ages, from small babies to the very elderly. There is no pulling or cracking of joints, no insertion of needles and no painful manipulation. With the client in whatever position is most comfortable, the Bowen practitioner, using only thumbs and fingers, makes small rolling movements over muscles, tendons and soft tissue, at precise points on the body. The pressure exerted is gauged by the practitioner, according to the age and physical condition of the client.

Deep stress relief

Working primarily, but not exclusively, with the fascia of the body, one of the most profound effects Bowen can have is in shifting the Autonomic Nervous System (ANS), which controls over 80% of bodily functions, from sympathetic (“fight or flight”) to parasympathetic (“rest and repair”) dominance, helping to release stress at a very deep level. This subtle but dynamic process allows the body to re-align, address imbalances in functions and chemical composition and, as far as possible, restore

homeostasis (physiological equilibrium) within the body.

In effect, Bowen “asks” the body to change, balance and heal, while encouraging both body and mind to reach a state where that can be achieved. The immune system is strengthened and the client’s feeling of health and wellbeing noticeably increases.

Acceptance

There’s been a major step forward for the therapy this year, with its recognition by the Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council (CNHC). This formally came into effect in February and CNHC already has several hundred Bowen therapists on its Register.

CNHC is a regulatory body for complementary healthcare set up with official Government backing, through the Department of Health. By ensuring an independent verification of quality and safety, CNHC aims to provide protection, assurance and a national “gold standard” for users of the approved therapies.

Registration should enable Primary Care Trusts, NHS Trusts and health insurance companies to view Bowen as a valuable addition to the health services

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MICHELLE'S MIGRAINES GET FIXED

Michelle is a bank manager. She was experiencing two migraines a week, lasting from 4 to 10 days, accompanied by vomiting. She found it very difficult to work through them and was regularly off work, usually having to stay in bed. She feared that she might lose her job because of the migraines, which were also significantly affecting her overall quality of life.

She tried the Bowen Technique on the recommendation of her GP, who had tried it for migraine and tension headaches and was “cured” after only a few treatments. For Michelle, regular Bowen treatment quickly reduced frequency and severity of attacks – now she has a migraine only once every 2-3 months and can usually work through them. Her work is no longer affected, she is secure in her job, and her quality of life has been restored.

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they offer. Medical practitioners, in health centres, clinics, hospitals and surgeries, will also be able to refer patients, with confidence, for Bowen treatment.

Back to work

As the relief of tension is so fundamental to Bowen's objectives, more and more people are finding it to be of enormous help with stress and depression, especially in these financially uncertain times. As Bowen clients report "It helps the mind to become more focused, seeing solutions to problems more clearly and putting those problems into perspective".

For those forced, by injury or ill health, to be off

work and desperate to start earning again, Bowen is an option that may help when little else can. It can be particularly useful for people whose jobs involve sitting, standing, driving or lifting for long periods of time.

Acute (short-term) problems are usually resolved in one to three sessions, while chronic (long-standing) conditions may take longer. Together with a very reasonable fee structure, this makes Bowen an extremely cost-effective health solution.

Not only does Bowen help people to return to work and then maintain their health; it also helps organisations to improve efficiency and save on costs, by reducing the incidence of both short-term and long-term staff absenteeism.

An option for all

Despite CNHC recognition, there is still not enough awareness of Bowen's benefits and cost-effectiveness, amongst the health services, corporate bodies and insurers. So, if you think that Bowen may be able to help you – or if, indeed, you're a satisfied client - please consider contacting your doctor, employer and health insurance company and urging them to investigate the Bowen Technique.

Bowen might not only be the answer for you: it may well help them!

■ Christine Burd is the Communications Officer for the Bowen Therapists' European Register.

FINDING A THERAPIST

The Bowen Therapists European Register (BTER) is the UK's largest body of qualified Bowen therapists. Its helpline and website have more information about training, research and the therapy, including a DVD demonstration, case studies, testimonials and a "find your local therapist" feature.

* www.bowentherapists.com,
Helpline: 0844 561 7173, info@bter.org



Gentle moves: Bowen therapy uses light touch and works through clothing.